

Language Acquisition of Children Aged 2.0–2.6 Years in Lapolea Village: A Psycholinguistic Study

Pemerolehan Bahasa pada Anak Usia 2,0–2,6 Tahun di Desa Lapolea: Kajian Psikolinguistik

Asni Sasnita¹, Sulfiah², La Ode Adili³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Halu Oleo

*Correspondence: asnisasnita123@gmail.com

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Page

55-64

Abstract

This study aims to describe the language acquisition of children aged 2.0–2.6 years in Lapolea Village from a psycholinguistic perspective, focusing on phonological, morphological, phrasal, sentential, and semantic development. The study employed a descriptive qualitative design with a case study approach involving two children: Azahra Riskiani, aged 2 years and 6 months, and Muhamad Rizki Azmi Rahman, aged 2 years and 5 months. The data consisted of the children's natural utterances collected through observation, listening, note-taking, audio recording, and contextual interviews with parents over a two-week period. Data were analyzed through transcription, reduction, coding based on linguistic categories, data presentation, interpretation, and verification through parental confirmation. The findings indicate that both children had acquired the basic vowels /a/, /i/, /u/, /e/, and /o/, most consonant sounds, free morphemes, nominal phrases, verbal phrases, adjectival phrases, prepositional phrases, as well as declarative, imperative, interrogative, and simple negative sentence forms. Azahra demonstrated relatively longer and more complex utterances, whereas Rizki predominantly used single words or short phrases; however, the intended meanings of his utterances remained comprehensible. Semantically, both children were able to adjust their utterances according to contextual meanings. The study concludes that the language acquisition of both children is within the expected developmental range for their age, although individual differences are evident and influenced by articulatory maturity and the intensity of social interaction. This research contributes empirical data on child language acquisition in a rural setting, particularly in Lapolea Village, thereby enriching psycholinguistic studies of Indonesian children and providing useful references for parents, early childhood educators, and researchers in child language development.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan pemerolehan bahasa anak usia 2,0-2,6 tahun di Desa Lapolea berdasarkan kajian psikolinguistik yang mencakup aspek fonologi, morfologi, frasa, kalimat, dan semantik. Penelitian menggunakan desain deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus terhadap dua anak, yaitu Azahra Riskiani berusia 2 tahun 6 bulan dan Muhamad Rizki Azmi Rahman berusia 2 tahun 5 bulan. Data berupa tuturan alami anak yang diperoleh melalui observasi, teknik simak, catat, rekam, dan wawancara kontekstual dengan orang tua selama dua minggu. Data dianalisis melalui transkripsi, reduksi, pengodean berdasarkan kategori linguistik, penyajian data, interpretasi, dan verifikasi melalui konfirmasi kepada orang tua. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kedua anak telah menguasai vokal dasar /a/, /i/, /u/, /e/, dan /o/, sebagian besar konsonan, morfem bebas, frasa nominal, frasa verbal, frasa adjektival, frasa preposisional, serta kalimat deklaratif, imperatif, interogatif, dan bentuk ingkar sederhana. Azahra memperlihatkan ujaran yang relatif lebih panjang dan kompleks, sedangkan Rizki lebih dominan menggunakan kata tunggal atau frasa pendek, namun maksud tuturannya tetap dapat dipahami. Secara semantik, keduanya mampu menyesuaikan ujaran dengan konteks makna. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa pemerolehan bahasa kedua anak berada pada tahap perkembangan yang wajar sesuai usia, dengan variasi individual yang dipengaruhi oleh kematangan artikulatoris dan intensitas interaksi sosial. Kontribusi penelitian ini terletak pada penyediaan data empiris pemerolehan bahasa anak di lingkungan pedesaan, khususnya Desa Lapolea, sehingga dapat memperkaya kajian psikolinguistik anak Indonesia dan menjadi rujukan bagi orang tua, pendidik PAUD, serta peneliti bahasa anak.

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INTRODUCTION

Language is a system of sound symbols used by humans to convey ideas, manage social interaction, and construct knowledge. In psycholinguistic studies, language is not merely understood as a structural system, but also as a mental phenomenon related to the ways in which humans acquire, process, store, and use linguistic units in communication. First language acquisition in children has become a significant issue because the process reveals the interplay among biological maturation, environmental input, social experience, and children's communicative needs. Chomsky (1965) emphasized the existence of an innate device that enables children to acquire grammar, whereas Skinner (1957) viewed language acquisition as a product of conditioning and reinforcement. These perspectives were enriched by Vygotsky (1978) and Tomasello (2003), who affirmed that language develops through social interaction and the use of language in real contexts. Contemporary empirical studies further indicate that the quality of input, adult responsiveness, and two-way conversation contribute to vocabulary development and the structural growth of children's utterances (Huttenlocher et al., 1991; Rowe, 2012; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2001; Weisleder & Fernald, 2013).

The phenomenon of language acquisition in children aged 2.0–2.6 years is particularly compelling because, during this phase, children begin transitioning from single-word utterances toward combinations of two or more words. Brown (1973) explained that early language development can be observed through the increase in mean length of utterance and the emergence of basic meaning relations. Bloom (1970) demonstrated that children's early syntactic structures are closely tied to the semantic intentions they wish to express. Clark (2009) affirmed that children construct vocabulary and meaning through the mapping between linguistic forms, objects, actions, and contexts. Ingram (1989) explained that phonological acquisition proceeds gradually through phonological simplification processes, which are natural at an early age. Accordingly, the language competence of two-year-old children cannot be evaluated solely on the basis of standard form accuracy; rather, it must be assessed in terms of the child's ability to use sounds, words, phrases, sentences, and meaning to fulfill communicative functions.

The urgency of this study lies in the need to document children's language development in natural contexts, particularly in rural settings. Many studies of child language acquisition have been conducted in urban family environments, early childhood education (Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini/PAUD) institutions, or with specific child cases, whereas the variation in language acquisition among rural children still requires more detailed description. The social context, parenting patterns, family language, conversational intensity, and children's play experience can all influence the types of utterances that emerge. Huttenlocher et al. (1991), Rowe (2012), Weisleder and Fernald (2013), and Gilkerson et al. (2018) have demonstrated that the quantity and quality of child-directed speech are associated with vocabulary growth and subsequent language outcomes. Hoff (2006) affirmed that social context shapes variation in language development, while Kuhl (2004), Roseberry, Hirsh-Pasek, and Golinkoff (2014), and Hirsh-Pasek et al. (2015) emphasized the importance of responsive interaction in early language development. In practical terms, such information is valuable for parents and educators in recognizing normal language development and providing appropriate stimulation.

Previous studies have demonstrated that language acquisition in young children can be observed through phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic aspects. Suwandi (2010) described the language acquisition of a two-year-old child through phonological, morphological, syntactic, and simple discourse abilities. Fiona and Agustina (2019) found that a child aged 2.5 years had acquired a number of vowels and consonants, but still exhibited phonological simplification. Selsia and Setiawan (2022) showed that a child aged 2.5 years displayed phonological and syntactic acquisition in forms that were not yet fully stable. Natsir (2023) affirmed that children's phonology and morphology develop in accordance with age, but remain influenced by articulatory ability. Bysmantara, Konisi, and Sulfiah (2024) found that children aged 2–3 years in Laiworu Village (Kelurahan Laiworu) had reached the holophrase stage, two-word utterances, as well as interrogative and negative sentences. Hidayatika (2025) also demonstrated that a child aged 2 years and 11 months exhibited phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic development in the context of natural communication. These findings collectively reinforce the view that age two is a productive period for observing the transition from simple utterances toward more complex structures.

Nevertheless, several research gaps remain. First, studies specifically examining children aged 2.0–2.6 years in Lapolea Village (Desa Lapolea) are scarce. Second, previous studies have generally focused on one or two aspects — such as phonology and syntax — whereas integrated studies combining phonology, morphology, phrasing, sentential structures, and semantics within a single psycholinguistic framework still require strengthening. Third, some studies present findings in which data and interpretation are intermixed, making it necessary to distinguish objective results from analytical discussion in order to produce more accountable conclusions. These gaps provide the rationale for the present study.

Based on the foregoing, this study focuses on the question of how language acquisition manifests in children aged 2.0–2.6 years in Lapolea Village across phonological, morphological, phrasal, sentential, and semantic dimensions. The objectives of the study are to describe the forms of language acquisition in the everyday utterances of two children aged 2.0–2.6 years and to explain the language development tendencies of each subject within a psycholinguistic framework. The main conceptual foundations employed include theories of language acquisition, phonological development, morphological acquisition, early syntactic development, semantic development, and the role of social interaction in language acquisition. Within this framework, the study is expected to provide an empirical picture of children's language acquisition in a local context and to expand the documentation of Indonesian child language studies.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design with a case study approach. This design was selected because the study aims to describe the forms of children's language acquisition as they occur naturally, rather than to test relationships between variables in a quantitative manner. The study was conducted in Lapolea Village (Desa Lapolea), and the primary data sources were the utterances of two children aged 2.0–2.6 years: Azahra Riskiani, aged 2 years and 6 months, and Muhamad Rizki Azmi Rahman, aged 2 years and 5 months. Both children were selected purposively because they fell within the age range relevant to the study's focus, resided in the research location, engaged actively in verbal interaction, and their parents provided informed consent for observation.

The research data consisted of the children's utterances produced during everyday interactions, including while playing, speaking with parents, responding to the researcher, and communicating with peers. Supplementary data sources included contextual information provided by parents regarding the children's language habits, the situational contexts in which utterances occurred, and the intent of utterances that were not fully clear. The primary research instrument was the researcher as observer, while secondary instruments included an observation checklist, a brief interview guide, field notes, and a mobile phone as an audio recording device. The observation checklist was developed based on the categories of phonology, morphology, phrasing, sentences, and semantics in order to ensure that the collected data aligned with the study's objectives.

Data collection was conducted over two weeks through listening, note-taking, audio recording, limited participatory observation, and contextual interviews. The listening technique was employed to attend to the children's utterances without disrupting the natural communicative flow. The note-taking technique was used to document the context, interlocutor, situation, and notable utterance forms as they emerged. The audio recording technique was used to capture utterances that required more careful transcription, particularly for phonological data. Observation was conducted during play and family interaction situations to ensure that the data reflected the children's everyday language use. Brief interviews were conducted with parents or caregivers to confirm the meaning of the children's utterances, particularly those that exhibited phonological simplification.

Data analysis proceeded through several stages. First, all recordings and field notes were transcribed while preserving the children's utterance forms, including non-standard forms such as *kula-kula* for *kura-kura* (turtle) or *dali pasal* for *dari pasar* (from the market). Second, the data were reduced by selecting utterances relevant to the phonological, morphological, phrasal, sentential, and semantic aspects under study. Third, the data were coded according to linguistic categories: vowel and consonant sounds, free morphemes and affixed forms, phrase types, sentence types, and the relationship between utterances and meaning. Fourth, the data were presented in the form of tables and descriptive narratives. Fifth, the data were verified through

repeated readings, cross-referencing with the speech context, and confirmation from parents to ensure semantic accuracy. This procedure enables the study to be replicated by other researchers working with comparable subjects, age ranges, analytical categories, and data collection techniques.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The research findings are presented across five language acquisition categories: phonology, morphology, phrasing, sentences, and semantics. This section presents only the findings derived from the children's utterance data in an objective manner, without providing theoretical interpretation.

Table 1. Summary of children's phonological acquisition

Subject	Vowels Produced	Consonants Produced	Sounds Not Yet / Less Stable	Data Examples
Azahra (2;6)	/a/, /i/, /u/, /e/, /o/	/b/, /c/, /d/, /f/, /g/, /h/, /j/, /k/, /l/, /m/, /n/, /p/, /r/, /s/, /t/, /y/	/q/, /v/, /w/, /x/, /z/ not yet present; diphthongs not apparent; phonological simplification observed	<i>ambil, ini, untuk, oke, beli, cicak, daun, gigi, rumah, susu meleka</i> [mereka / they]
Rizki (2;5)	/a/, /i/, /u/, /e/, /o/	/b/, /c/, /d/, /f/, /g/, /h/, /j/, /k/, /l/, /m/, /n/, /p/, /s/, /t/, /y/	/r/, /q/, /v/, /w/, /x/, /z/ not yet present; diphthongs not apparent; phonological simplification observed	<i>ayam, itu, uang, empat, obat, baju cali</i> [cari / look for] <i>kula-kula</i> [kura-kura / turtle] <i>dali pasar</i> [dari pasar / from the market]

In the phonological domain, both children produced all basic vowels. Azahra displayed a more complete range of consonant variation than Rizki, particularly because the sound /r/ appeared in some of Azahra's data — such as in *rumah* [house] and *campur* [mixed] — although simplification still occurred in certain forms, such as *meleka* for *mereka* [they]. Rizki had not yet produced /r/ in a stable manner, and several of his utterances showed sound substitution, for example *cali* for *cari* [to look for], *kula-kula* for *kura-kura* [turtle], and *dali pasar* for *dari pasar* [from the market]. During the observation period, diphthongs were not clearly apparent in the utterances of either child.

Table 2. Summary of children's morphological acquisition

Subject	Utterance Data	Morphological Forms Produced	Factual Notes
Azahra	<i>Makanan siapa ini?</i> [Whose food is this?] <i>Minum dulu</i> [Drink first] <i>Simpan lagi</i> [Store it again] <i>Tiada hp mu</i> [Your phone is missing]	makan + -an; minum; simpan; tiada; -mu	Base words, -an suffix, possessive pronoun -mu, and function words appear in conversational context.
Rizki	<i>Mama mau mainan</i> [Mama wants a toy] <i>Bebek</i> [Duck] <i>Ayam</i> [Chicken] <i>Tembak-tembak</i> [Shooting (play)] <i>Di situ</i> [Over there]	main + -an; bebek; ayam; lexical reduplication; di + situ	Base words, -an suffix, lexical reduplication, and simple prepositional phrase appear.

In the morphological domain, both children used free morphemes in the form of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and function words. The suffix -an appeared in the utterances *makanan* [food] and *mainan* [toy]. Azahra produced utterances such as *makanan siapa ini* [whose food is this],

minum dulu [drink first], *simpan lagi* [store it again], and *tiada hp mu* [your phone is missing]. Rizki produced utterances such as *mama mau mainan* [mama wants a toy], *bebek* [duck], *ayam* [chicken], *tembak-tembak* [shooting play], and *di situ* [over there]. The data also revealed the presence of a possessive pronoun in Azahra's utterances through the form *-mu* in *hp mu* [your phone].

Table 3. Summary of children's phrasal acquisition

Phrase Type	Azahra	Rizki
Nominal phrase	<i>roti donat</i> [donut bread]	<i>baju tentala</i> [baju tentara / soldier shirt]
Verbal phrase	<i>dia masak-masak</i> [she is cooking (play)]	<i>da menangis</i> [dia menangis / she is crying]
Adjectival phrase	<i>enak sekali</i> [very delicious]	<i>ananya kecil</i> [anaknya kecil / the child is small]
Prepositional phrase	<i>di sekolah</i> [at school]	<i>i guali</i> [di Guali / in Guali Village] <i>dali pasal</i> [dari pasar / from the market]

In the phrasal domain, both children produced nominal, verbal, adjectival, and prepositional phrases. Nominal phrases are evident in *roti donat* [donut bread] and *baju tentala* [soldier shirt]. Verbal phrases are evident in *dia masak-masak* [she is playing at cooking] and *da menangis* [she is crying]. Adjectival phrases are evident in *enak sekali* [very delicious] and *ananya kecil* [the child is small]. Prepositional phrases are evident in *di sekolah* [at school], *i guali* [in Guali Village], and *dali pasal* [from the market]. Non-standard forms were recorded as produced by the children, with their meaning equivalents noted in parentheses.

Table 4. Summary of children's sentential acquisition

Sentence Type	Azahra	Rizki	Utterance Function
Declarative	<i>Ada kucingku saya di rumah warna hijau</i> [There is my cat at home, the green one]	<i>Mama kula-kula</i> [Mama turtle (referring to a toy)]	To convey information or name an object.
Imperative	<i>Mama bukakan</i> [Mama, open it for me]	<i>Mama minum</i> [Mama, drink]	To request assistance or express a desire.
Interrogative	<i>Ini rumahmu?</i> [Is this your house?] <i>Mana hp mu?</i> [Where is your phone?]	<i>Ban nya mana?</i> [Where is the tire?] <i>Kaka mana?</i> [Where is big sister/brother?]	To request information or ask about the whereabouts of something.
Negative / Prohibitive	<i>Tiada hp mu</i> [Your phone is gone] <i>Tidak mau saya ditanya-tanya</i> [I don't want to be questioned]	<i>Aaa jangan kaka</i> [No, don't, big sibling] <i>Bukan temanku ini</i> [This is not my friend]	To refuse, deny, or prohibit.

In the sentential domain, both Azahra and Rizki produced declarative, imperative, interrogative, and negative or prohibitive sentences. Azahra produced longer declarative utterances such as *ada kucingku saya di rumah warna hijau* [there is my cat at home, the green one], whereas Rizki produced simpler declaratives such as *mama kula-kula* [mama turtle]. In the imperative category, Azahra used *mama bukakan* [mama, open it for me] and Rizki used *mama minum* [mama, drink]. In the interrogative category, Azahra used *ini rumahmu* [is this your house?] and *mana hp mu* [where is your phone?], while Rizki used *ban nya mana* [where is the tire?] and *kaka mana* [where is big sibling?]. Negative and prohibitive forms were evident in *tiada hp mu*, *tidak mau saya ditanya-tanya*, *aaa jangan kaka*, and *bukan temanku ini*.

Table 5. Summary of children's semantic acquisition

Subject	Utterance	Identified Meaning
Azahra	<i>Ada monyet di rumahku</i> [There is a monkey at my house]	Informing about the presence of a monkey at home.
Azahra	<i>Beli rok</i> [Buy a skirt]	Expressing the desire to buy a skirt for school.
Azahra	<i>Buka ini</i> [Open this]	Requesting help to open food packaging.
Azahra	<i>Tidak mau saya ditanya-tanya</i> [I don't want to be questioned]	Refusing to be asked questions.
Azahra	<i>Palfum nya bapakku ini</i> [This is my father's perfume]	Indicating that the perfume held belongs to the father.
Rizki	<i>Bukan temanku ini</i> [This is not my friend]	Stating that the person referred to is not his friend.
Rizki	<i>Pancing ikan</i> [Fishing]	Referring to the activity of fishing.
Rizki	<i>Guai</i> [Guali Village]	Referring to Guali Village (Desa Guali) as the location of his father.
Rizki	<i>Odong-odong</i> [Children's carousel ride]	Naming a children's fairground ride.
Rizki	<i>Kuning</i> [Yellow]	Naming the color of a toy chicken.
Rizki	<i>Buy (beli)</i> [Buy]	Expressing the desire to buy something.
Rizki	<i>Kula-kula</i> [Turtle (toy)]	Naming a turtle-shaped toy.

In the semantic domain, the data indicate that the utterances of both children can be linked to specific meanings based on the speech context. Azahra used utterances to inform, request, refuse, and indicate possession. Rizki used utterances to deny, name objects, refer to activities, identify colors, and express desires. The meaning of the utterances could be identified through the interlocutor's responses, situational context, and confirmation from parents or caregivers.

Discussion

The research findings indicate that the language acquisition of Azahra and Rizki follows a developmental pattern consistent with the characteristics of two-year-old children. At this age, children no longer rely solely on holophrases but begin using words, phrases, and simple sentences to fulfill communicative functions. This is consistent with Brown (1973), who explained that early language development in children is reflected in the increase in mean length of utterance and the emergence of basic meaning relations. Azahra's data reveal longer structures, such as *ada kucingku saya di rumah warna hijau* [there is my cat at home, the green one] and *tidak mau saya ditanya-tanya* [I don't want to be questioned], whereas Rizki's data show shorter forms such as *mama minum* [mama, drink], *ban nya mana* [where is the tire?], and *kula-kula* [turtle]. This difference does not represent a deviation but rather reflects individual variation in the rate of utterance production. Within a psycholinguistic framework, such variation is common because language acquisition is influenced by the maturation of speech organs, the intensity of interaction, and the child's communicative needs.

From a phonological standpoint, the mastery of all basic vowels by both children indicates that vowel sounds stabilize earlier than some complex consonants. This finding can be linked to Ingram's (1989) view that children's phonological acquisition is gradual and characterized by simplification processes. The forms *meleka* for *mereka* [they] in Azahra and *cali* for *cari* [to look for] in Rizki reflect sound substitution or deletion that is natural during the period of articulatory development. Roach (1991) explained that phonology concerns the functional role of sounds within a language system, and in children, the ability to produce sounds does not always immediately correspond to the adult phonological system. These findings also align with Fiona and Agustina (2019) and Natsir (2023), who found that children around 2.5 years of age have generally produced vowels and many consonants, but still encounter difficulty with certain sounds. In Rizki's case, the absence of /r/ indicates that the alveolar trill requires more complex

articulatory coordination, and thus the relative delay in producing this sound can be understood as part of the developmental process.

In the morphological domain, the emergence of the forms *makanan* [food] and *mainan* [toy] indicates that children are beginning to recognize word-formation patterns through the suffix -an, even if they do not yet explicitly understand morphological rules. According to Clark (2009), children construct word forms through the mapping of form, meaning, and usage in context. These findings also support Tomasello's (2003) view that children's language structures develop from concrete, repeated use in interaction. Azahra and Rizki did not produce morphemes in an abstract manner but used them because these forms recur frequently in everyday communication. This aligns with the findings of Bysmantara et al. (2024), who showed that children aged 2–3 years begin to use word forms and simple utterances in communication. However, the present study extends those findings by demonstrating that morphological forms do not exist in isolation but are inherently connected to semantic function and interactional context.

Phrasal acquisition in both children demonstrates that they are already capable of combining two linguistic units to convey more specific information. The phrases *roti donat* [donut bread] and *baju tentala* [soldier shirt] illustrate the ability to expand nouns with modifiers, while *enak sekali* [very delicious] demonstrates the ability to mark intensity of quality. Within the framework of early syntax, this capability signals the transition from single words toward more complex structures. Chaer (2009) distinguished nominal, verbal, adjectival, and prepositional phrases based on their head element and function. The research data reveal that all four types of phrases appear in the children's utterances, even if their phonological realization is not yet fully standard. In comparison with Selsia and Setiawan (2022), these results corroborate the view that children aged 2.5 years have already shown the foundations of syntactic acquisition. Moreover, this study demonstrates that phrasal structures do not merely reflect grammatical development, but also the children's ability to categorize objects, actions, qualities, locations, and origins.

In the sentential domain, the presence of declarative, imperative, interrogative, and negative structures indicates that the children's language is already being used for diverse pragmatic functions. The children do not merely name objects; they also convey information, request assistance, ask about locations, issue prohibitions, and express refusal. Azahra's *mama bukakan* [mama, open it for me] and Rizki's *mama minum* [mama, drink] reflect an instrumental function to meet needs, while *mana hp mu* [where is your phone?] and *ban nya mana* [where is the tire?] reflect an information-seeking function. These findings align with Tamis-LeMonda et al. (2001), Roseberry et al. (2014), and Levickis et al. (2023), who demonstrated that adult responsiveness, social contingency, and the quality of interaction help children use language for genuine communicative purposes. The responses of the mother, researcher, and peers in the research data constitute part of the interactive environment that enables children to test and expand their utterances.

The semantic dimension demonstrates that both children are already capable of linking utterances to meanings that can be understood by their interlocutors. Azahra's ability to say *palfum nya bapakku ini* [this is my father's perfume] illustrates the relationship between an object and its ownership, while Rizki's *kuning* [yellow] illustrates the connection between a word and a color attribute. Bloom (1970) explained that meaning plays a central role in the early structure of children's language because children construct utterances to express experiential relationships. Rezeki (2020) similarly found that children's semantic acquisition proceeds in accordance with developmental age and is strongly dependent on context. In this study, context is key, because several children's utterances could not be understood from their phonological form alone but required linking to the situation, bodily gesture, the object being indicated, and the interlocutor's response. Consequently, semantic analysis of young children must take into account the relationship between utterance form, social context, and meaning as negotiated in interaction.

Compared with previous studies, the findings of this research reveal both similarities and specific contributions. The similarities are evident in the general pattern that two-year-old children have already acquired most vowels, several consonants, base words, simple phrases, and interrogative and negative sentences, as found by Bysmantara et al. (2024), Selsia and Setiawan (2022), and Hidayatika (2025). The difference lies in the fact that this study focuses specifically on two children in Lapolea Village (Desa Lapolea) and presents five aspects of language acquisition in an integrated framework. Accordingly, this study not only confirms general theories of language acquisition but also contributes local data on the variation in children's language

acquisition in a rural environment. The theoretical implication is that children's language development must be understood as a multidimensional process encompassing sound, word form, phrasal structure, sentence type, and meaning. The practical implication is that parents and educators should provide stimulation through responsive conversation, open-ended questions, story reading, symbolic play, and repetition of correct utterances without excessively correcting the child. In this way, children can receive a rich language model while still feeling secure enough to experiment with their utterances.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the language acquisition of Azahra Riskiani, aged 2 years and 6 months, and Muhamad Rizki Azmi Rahman, aged 2 years and 5 months, is within the developmental range expected for their age. Both children had acquired basic vowels, most consonants, free morphemes, several affixed forms, nominal phrases, verbal phrases, adjectival phrases, prepositional phrases, and declarative, imperative, interrogative, and simple negative sentence forms. The primary difference was in the complexity of utterances: Azahra tended to produce longer and more complex utterances, whereas Rizki more frequently used single words or short phrases. Nevertheless, both children were equally capable of communicating their intentions, enabling their interlocutors to understand the meaning of their utterances.

The relationship between the research problem, findings, and discussion indicates that the language acquisition of children aged 2.0–2.6 years cannot be assessed solely on the basis of standard form accuracy. Phonologically imperfect utterances can still demonstrate meaningful linguistic development when the child is capable of using them to ask questions, make requests, refuse, name objects, indicate location, and convey experience. Accordingly, language acquisition must be understood as a gradual process involving articulatory maturation, cognitive development, and social interaction support.

The contribution of this study lies in providing an empirical description of the language acquisition of children aged 2.0–2.6 years in Lapolea Village (Desa Lapolea), encompassing phonology, morphology, phrasing, sentences, and semantics. These findings may serve as an initial reference for psycholinguistic studies of Indonesian children, particularly in local rural contexts. Future research may expand the number of subjects, extend the observation period, compare children across different sociolinguistic environments, and incorporate additional developmental measures such as mean length of utterance (MLU) to map children's language acquisition more comprehensively.

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