

The Elderly Language Activity In Aisyiyah Nursing Home of Surakarta (Psycholinguistic Threats: Information Consistency on Elderly through Storytelling)

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Abstract - One of the strategies to inhibit dementia process can be realized through giving someone attention or providing them storytelling media. People with dementia generally suffer from short-term memory loss, however, they have detailed memories of past events. The unique thing in this study is related to the lack of short-term memory (things that have just happened) and long-term (things that happened in the past) occur hypothetically because of the lack of media to tell personal matters, media interaction, and knowledge. This study was conducted at the Nursing Home of Asiyah in Surakarta, after previous studies which had focused on mastering semantic features, in which 10 subjects were indicated to have a tendency suffering from dementia. Therefore, an attempt to test their language competence, and indicate potential possibilities which enable them to overcome the symptoms of dementia by the virtue of language use, will suppose to be an alternative of suppressing the number of patients with dementia in Surakarta City and in Indonesia on a general scale. The results of this study indicated that educational levels are not an absolute factor affecting the consistency of information conveyed by informants, even though these qualifications contribute to the nuances of choice diction. Other findings are related to non-linguistic factors, such as attention, which also contribute to language retention on informants as well as providing psychological effects on them in recalling semantic features.

Keywords - elderly, dementia, storytelling, psycholinguistics.

I. INTRODUCTION

Elderly speaking conditions are one of the links in one's language use. The age of elderly is unavoidable, likewise their language conditions too. Initially, humans recognize their world, and then recognize the language use, along with other developments, which is the visio-motor development (a combination between fine vision and motor) and social development. However, language development is often deemed as a measurement for children's level of intelligence even though in essence of a child's development is a whole and complementary entity. That is why, a child can never be considered smart if he /she is only able to solve the visiomotoric problems and is fluent in language without necessarily being able to socialize.

This study was mainly motivated by a reality on the lack of attention of both family and government to the elderly. They feel like being exiled by their family, "dicuekin", ignored, even though they are part of the society or community who also may be entitled to receive information, wish to convey their experiences and feelings. They also want to tell what they feel, tell about themselves and their families, however, no partner will patiently listen to their stories and feelings. Regarding the language

activities of the elderly, of course researchers will offer a solution that allows all the wishes of the elderly to express their feelings, and share their thoughts freely.

This phenomenon really attracts the interest of researchers to get involved and study more deeply. This is because everyone wants perfect conditions throughout their lives. However, the age factor inevitably becomes a real barrier, including memory. Often found, the aging process in a person is directly proportional to the decreasing physical condition, in addition to the inevitable presence of senility or dementia, even though such disease is actually not only found in the elderly. As reported by the Asian Population Fund United Nations (UNPFA), the number of elderly people from year to year has increased, namely in 2009 has reached 737 million people and by 2050 it is estimated that the population above the age of 60 reaches around 2 billion (Ulfah, 2009). The elderly phenomenon in the world synergically relevant with reality confronts in Indonesia which shows that in 2012 the number of elderly people reached 28 million or around 8% of the Indonesian population, and it is estimated that in 2025 will increase to 40 million, as well as in 2050 to 71.6 million of people (Badan Pusat Statistik 2012).

II. THEORY

The elderly experience a decline in all their anatomical functions within themselves including physical function, social function, psychological or emotional. That is the reason, the elderly need others as assistants in helping them move, in addition to the loss of financial and work, of status, loss of friends, acquaintances and relationships, loss of spouse, and others that make their self-confidence fade away. Such conditions need to receive careful attention, of course it is undertaken to fulfill expectations that will change the public's assumptions about 72-year-old people whose existence is no longer considered a burden. Therefore, appropriate and optimal promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative efforts are needed (Euis, 2012).

Interestingly, this study deals with the language specifications used by the elderly who live in *Panti Wredha* 'the Elderly Nursing Home'. The institution that was the target of the study was nursing home of *Aisyiah Surakarta* with a total of 10 respondents. This study is a follow-up research from previous research, one of which was obtained from thirty research subjects (from three *Panti Wredha*: *Aisyiah*, *Manahan Surakarta*, *Panti Wredha Dharma Bakti Asih Laweyan Surakarta*, and *Panti Wredha Santa Theresia of Kadipiro Banjarsari, Surakarta*) with only four people who were identified to have forgotten to remember their names. That is, 86% of the elderly in those three *Panti Wredha* are still capable of remembering their names, memory of the number of children (65%), being able to remember their partner's work (52%), with the average ability to remember self-identity shows an almost even number, which is 35-48%. Meanwhile, the elderly memory towards their surrounding objects reached 71.6%.

This fact shows that the maintenance of individual languages, especially the elderly as well as the process of acquiring language in children, all require a process. A child who grows up in a quiet, busy family environment, as well as an indifferent community environment, the language development will not be as good as a child in his/her communicative caring, and warm family environment. Certainly, this would be relevantly occurred to the elderly community who try to maintain language in their brain structure, bearing the importance of language as one of the absolute and effective instruments in measuring individual quality. This happens due to the weakening on the brain force in the elderly, as revealed in *Suryantoro's* study (2012) that in the elderly there is a faster attenuation on the right brain function so that the elderly experience a decline in their visual memory, i.e., they are easy to forget and difficult recognize people's faces, have difficulty in concentrating, quickly switch their attention and others. This certainly relates to the function of each hemisphere. The left hemisphere brain serves as the center of logical analytical reading, calculating and writing, while the right brain functions as a protection for the social, spiritual, musical, artistic, language and emotional environments.

Hendrie's (1995) study reveals that genetic factors play an important role in a dementia occurrence in addition to the related environmental factors. Dementia based on *Lerner's* (1999) study mostly occurs to women, because life expectancy is greater than that of men. The same thing was found in elderly in *Elderly Nursing Home of Aisyiah in Surakarta*, all residents were 26 people, and all were female. This study is a follow-up study which in the previous study there were identified 10 people leading to symptoms of dementia.

This phenomenon at least motivates this study to examine the problems surrounding the language activities among the elderly community in *Nursing Homes* a to find patterns on how to optimize language retention in the brains of the elderly through the means of language, as a strategy for binding memory in the brain. Thus, the elderly have a longer life expectancy, contributing more positively than negatively, thus this study hopes to change public perception and reality on the condition of the elderly who no longer need to be considered a burden

III. METHOD

Ten (10) of the twenty-six (26) elderly residents living in the *Aisyiah* nursing home in *Surakarta* were selected as this research subjects. The selection of 10 informants was based on identifying their tendency of dementia. The data related to the background information of each research subject was taken from the institution's documents and the manager who was actively played a role

as the informant who was also being interviewed. The data collection strategy was undertaken through applying interview method. The interviews were conducted four times (4 times) for each informant to find out the consistency of the information being submitted. The distance between the first, second, third and fourth interviews is one week each. This applied strategy is expected to obtain information about various things, including consistency of the meanings of information being conveyed. This ability test is carried out with guided interview that directs the research subjects to show their ability in remembering things being asked and the consistency of the given information in a well-order stucture.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The elderly language activities at the Aisyiah Surakarta nursing home revealed that their tendency of being communicative residents. The elderly people with a secondary education or higher education shared better language quality, reflect more coherent, in addition to the given information was also more consistent than that of others. In addition, the factor of family attention (intensity of family visits) makes the elderly more comfortable so that they are able to communicate smoothly.

TABLE I. THE ELDERLY LANGUAGE ACTIVITY (SUSPECTED DEMENTIA) AT PANTI LANSIA AISYIAH NURSING HOME OF SURAKARTA

Names	Education	KIOT	KIP	KIT	Information
Inf 1	Elementary (unfinished)	±	±	±	The informant still remembers the names of both her father & mother, unable to remember the names of her grandson and her brothers. The informants were consistent in mentioning the names of her male-in-law, but there were differences in the brothers' names, conducted at ranging from the meetings I to IV.
Inf 2	Never goes to school	-	-	-	The informant mentioned her husband & brother's names relevantly. There are differences in reporting their profession, interviews conducted ranging from I to IV. The informants' anthusiasm seemed to be more increasing from the interview stage.
Inf 3	Junior High Scool	+	±	+	The informant forgets her husband's work profession, but she remembered her own.
Inf 4	Elementary (unfinished)	±	±	±	found difficulty in remembering their family names, there is a change in information the profession both at the interviews I and II, and even she did provide any response
Inf 5	Junior High Scool	±	+	±	The informant really remembers her profession and her life partner's, remembering well the names of both her father and mother and her siblings. However, the change in names especially about her husband's name at the 4th meeting of interview. The first he who was called Joko Maryono, but soon she called real name of her husband, which is Suherman..
Inf 6	Junior High Scool (unfinished)	±	+	±	Informants were found to be inconsistent in providing information about their home city. She is an unmarried woman, she can't remember the names of her parents but remember the names of her siblings.
Inf 7	Senior High School	±	±	±	Information development and interaction intensity occur. At first the informant did not remember the name of the husband, where the school was, etc. In the end everything can be remembered again.
Inf 8	Never goes to school	±	±	+	Informants are able to communicate well, even from time to time it increases after intense meeting with the research team.
Inf 9	Junior High Scool	±	±	+	There is a slight difference in information on the number of children in interviews I, II, III, and IV. In interview I mentioned the number of children 3 people, interview II mentioned 2 people. After being confirmed, she confirmed that there were 2 people (consistent with the interview at stage IV).
Inf 10	Senior High School	+	+	+	Reported a well-information order from interviews I to IV. Informant 10 was quite enthusiastic about storytelling, with a unique characteristic, the closest family to her was informed continuously from the interviews of I to IV.

Information:

KIOT : The Informational Order about Nearby People

KIP : The Informational Order about Informants' Works and their partners

KIT : The Informational Order about place / city of origin

Referring to the data above, it is observed that the level of education does not provide relevance to the quality / one's language order. This can be observed that even the informants who have never attended school posses a memory of relatively the same as

those of elementary, junior high, or high school education backgrounds. This is applicable to the informant 8. The type of a person occurs to informant 8 is very unique, for she initially was a typical introverted person, however, after being invited to communicate intensely, with good and pleasant words, informant no. 8 seemed so comfortable that he was serious about absorbing information and conveying it. However, there were also informants who were both uneducated but very fast in recalling the memory. This is certainly a reflection of what is happening behind all that.

Factors such as the intensity of communication and attention shown by the closest people turned out to have an effect on one's memory processing. The intensity of visiting relatives to nursing homes is a highly anticipated moment. The simple missing things relate the attention and opportunity to mingle through language. This is certainly in line with the theories proposed by several psycholinguistic experts among others; Soenjono, Abdul Chaer, and also Sri Utari Subyakto Nababan, that language does require a learning process. It also implies that the language maintenance strategy is undertaken processes through language. Language that reflects positive energy can foster a sense of optimism, so that information retrieved by the elderly will flow and continue to a process of recalling information of the previously existed in their minds.

Informants of the education backgrounds ranging from the elementary, middle, or high schools are capable of demonstrating a variety of abilities in terms of providing information in a coherent manner. The information demands are well maintained, meaning that they are consistent from the beginning to the end, however, there were also those who experience changes at the time data collection process takes place as much as four times. The difference between the names of husbands from interviews I and II is something quite intriguing, since the name of her husband, a person who should be very close to the informant turned out to be a strange person, and it was quite hard for her remembering the husband's name. It is surprisingly none of her siblings were forgotten their names.

The unique thing that was also found in this study was related to grandchildren, who according to Javanese beliefs were very close to both their grandmother and grandfather. However, the fact shows different, that even among the informants there were only two informants whose the grandchildren's names were remembered. This again goes back to the proximity factor, meaning that the more the elderly get in touched with, the interaction will be well-memorized. The intended interaction is not only physical interaction but more than that, namely language interaction. The informant who did not remember her husband's name was on average because at the time of building a household the husband had never had time to get in touch and share something with the informant. This is of course a very unique thing and deserves careful attention that taking the time to socialize in a family social environment through language will be able to provide retention information storage capacity in one's brain. In essence, the more often words, sentences, or languages are used, the better they are able to be neat in the structure of the human brain.

This principle reflects similar phenomenon with how children are being taught about language. Children who are often invited to communicate will grow up to be cheerful individuals and have good language skills. In addition, children who are often invited to interact with many people with different environments and the presence of positive energy constantly change them to be better than that of children who have never been invited to interact. Likewise for the elderly, in case no one would invite him/her to speak in the daily bases, the more lost the vocabulary which have been managed in their brains.

Recalling semantic units among the elderly living in Aisyiah nursing home of Surakarta, can be proven by intensive communication. This is evident from the experience at field, that in beginning of the data collection, the average elderly felt so awkward, however at the second chance, third, and fourth interactions were carried out, the atmosphere started and the concerned was very enthusiastic in answering all the provided questions. Everything about adolescence, time to spend with her husband, working periods, then just obtained smoothly before being asked. This shows how elderly people nursing homes would highly need media in expressing about themselves, friends to vent, to ensure that they are still very much needed in this life so that their confidence turns getting more and more stable.

V. CONCLUSION

On the basis of the results of analysis and discussion, it reveals that not fully educational experience exactly can contribute to recalling the Semantic units in the elderly people's minds, despite the fact a language capability requires a learning process. Thus, the learning specifically linked to the previous research explanation, that not only those of undertaken at schools, but also in 'the university of life' or life experience based-learning. It should equally take into consideration, that it is about how the elderly would provide time to interact with people around them, both with fellow residents and including the managers, most significantly the attention that they receive from relatives. By receiving regular visits, and interaction will be reducing their level of stress and loneliness, because of that the elderly will feel much better and comfortable. Thus, language production will continue be processing and well-managed, even though the age factor is believed to be able to take away memory.

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