

ABSTRACT

In many parts of the world, there are children who learn to read before entering primary school. Some of them are taught by their parents at home. Such phenomenon explains that the acquisition of reading does not require readiness period. It also implies the crucial role of environmental input in child's early acquisition of reading. Based on the environmental input theory, the writer makes a research on parents' role in child's early reading acquisition.

This study provides a real description of preschooler's reading ability acquired through parents instruction. The samples are three preschool children aged 3-4 years old with their parents taken from middle socio-economic background in Malang. As a tool measuring reading ability, the writer uses verbal tasks on reading. Besides, the process of the acquisition of reading is also investigated through the interview with parents whose results are presented in three case studies.

From the results of the tasks, the writer concludes that prekindergarten readers have average reading ability. In the one hand, they are proved to be able to identify uppercase and lowercase letters as well as to distinguish the features between the two. They can also read simple words comprising common letters. On the other hand, the failures in doing some items of the tasks are basically the same.

Some possible factors can explain the inabilities. The inability to identify certain letters is caused by low-frequency usage of those letters in child's learning process and short term memory factors: that is the children's difficulties in recalling the letters. The inability to distinguish certain letter features is quite possible due to children's visual immaturity. Meanwhile, errors found in reading some disyllabic words are caused by two factors: poor sight vocabulary and repetitions of small size vocabulary. Failure in reading trisyllabic words is caused by some possible factors. The first is word span which is related with child's limited memory capacity. The longer the word, the more difficult for the children to recall the component of the word they have just spelled. The second is children's age level which explains that children at these ages do not yet have capacity to process graphic-semantic feature in parallel. All in all, a child's reading achievement cannot be separated from the method of teaching reading that the parents are using. However, preschool children's reading ability can be considered as an achievement though they cannot develop reading strategy themselves.



CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION