

ABSTRACT

Duwila, Shanty A. Y. P. S. A Study of The Ability of 7-11 years-old children to Comprehend Linguistic Ambiguity of Verbal Humor. A thesis submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Sarjana Degree of the English Department, Faculty of Letters Airlangga University, 2004.

A sense of humor belongs to everyone including children. Children have capacity to comprehend and enjoy humor. A child's sense of humor can be used as an indicator of their cognitive growth. Cognitive ability, which makes understanding possible, develops in two major periods involving four stages - the sensory motor stage, the preoperational stage, the stage of concrete operations, and the stage of formal operations. In this qualitative study, the writer would like to describe the ability of 7-11 years old children in comprehending linguistic ambiguity of verbal humor. Furthermore, the writer also would like to find out the type of linguistic ambiguity, which is the most easily comprehended by children at the age of 7-11 year age. Conducting the research, the writer chooses five children who are in 7-11 year-age as respondents of the study. The data of this study are data from the children's comprehension that are made based on the category of type of ambiguities. In dealing with data analysis, Incongruity Diagram by Wilson is used and will continue with the writer's interpretation. Eventually, the result of this study reveals that children show an average ability to find the incongruity of double meaning word and explain it. The timing of the transition of incongruity (by giving complete and correct meaning) raises the possibility that this transition period may be related to the onset of concrete operational thought. This would make sense in very general terms since the systematic organization of cognitive schemes that is characteristic of concrete operations might well serve as a necessary background for the need to resolve or explain incongruities in order to enjoy them. Further, the writer finds that the grammatical ambiguity humor is easier to be comprehended by the children than lexical and phonological ambiguity humor.

Key words: Incongruity, concrete operational thought

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION