

# A Case Study of Expressive Language Disorder (Psycholinguistic Study)

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## ABSTRACT

Language disorder is a phenomenon that can happen to anyone, from children, adolescents, and adults to the elderly. There are several kinds of language disorders experienced by someone. This study aims to examine expressive language disorders in adolescents. The data of this research was extracted from the subject's conversation, which was considered to have elements of language errors. The data source for this research was a teenager with the initials "NS," who was used as the research subject. Data collection techniques used recording techniques, observation, and interviews. Data analysis techniques were carried out by describing, interpreting, and then explaining the forms of expressive language disorder and its causes. The analysis showed several forms of expressive language disorder experienced by NS, namely limited vocabulary, frequent vocabulary mistakes, difficulty forming long sentences, inability to start conversations, and difficulty rejoicing an event. Then the causal factors are cognitive, genetic, gender, and environmental factors.

**Keywords:** expressive language, language disorders, psycholinguistics.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a socially consented code or a conventional system representing concepts with symbols and combinations based on certain rules (Ihsan *et al.*, 2018). The language process is a communication process in the form of symbols from human speech organs carried out between members (Khairina *et al.*, 2020). The function of language is to express ideas and thoughts. Language as an organized activity which uses words to accomplish its aimed function (Ononiwu & Njemanze, 2022). Someone who thinks about something but conveys the results of his thoughts is called a person who speaks (Farhan *et al.*, 2022). Language and communication have a very close relationship, a person can communicate well when supported by good language skills (Larasari *et al.*, 2021).

Language skills are a person's ability to express his thoughts through communication, ideas, or ideas to others (Tantawi, 2019, p. 137). Language skills are divided into two aspects, namely, receptive language skills and expressive language skills. Receptive language ability is a person's listening and reading skills (Aisyah *et al.*, 2022). Expressive language skills are the ability to pronounce and express ideas, feelings, and thoughts to other people (Rizkiani *et al.*, 2022). This ability is essential for a person because it can make it easier to convey an idea to those around him (Larasari *et al.*, 2021). However, some people have obstacles in mastering language skills. There are not a few people who experience language disorders, both receptive and expressive language.

Language disorders can happen to anyone, children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly. This research focuses on analyzing expressive language disorder in terms of its types and the causative factors. Expressive language disorder is a condition when a child is unable to express his feelings and thoughts using words to people. A person with expressive language disorder will have difficulty expressing what he wants.

Based on the results of observations made by researchers, a description was found of the condition of children with expressive language disorders. The subject is a male teenager in grade 2 of Senior High School. The subject has an expressive language disorder characterized by his inability to express what is on his mind entirely. He tends to express something non-verbally by moving his hands.

There are previous research that is relevant to this study. First, research conducted by (Hasiana, 2020) entitled *Kasus Anak dengan Gangguan Bahasa Reseptif dan Ekspresif* (Case Studies of Children with Receptive and Expressive Language Disorders). This study examines forms of expressive language disorder in children aged four years. Second, research conducted by (Rizkiani *et al.*, 2022) entitled berjudul

*Keterampilan Berbicara Anak dengan Gangguan Bahasa Ekspresif* (Speech Skills of Children with Expressive Language Disorders). This study examines expressive language disorders in speech-delayed children aged six years.

Many research studies on language disorders, especially expressive language disorders, with children as research subjects. As far as the researchers know, there is no research on expressive language disorders with adolescents as the subject of study. For this reason, this study aims to examine the forms of expressive language disorder experienced by NS and the factors that cause it.

## II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

### A. Psycholinguistics

Psycholinguistics combines two sciences, namely psychology and linguistics, which the Carnegie Corporation first initiated. This science was later developed by John B. Carroll, a psychologist who, in 1951, held a seminar to combine the relations between these two sciences. At this time, the term psycholinguistics was formed, and Greenberg's work became the first in linguistics (Dardjowidjojo, 2005, p. 3). Psycholinguistics is an independent discipline because it has a directed object that can stand alone (Sudarwati et al., 2017).

*Emmon Bach* (in Khotijah & Ismail, 2013) states that psycholinguistics is a scientific discipline that examines how language users construct specific sentences. In its development, psycholinguistics studies human language activities, understanding, acquiring, and using language.

### B. Language Disorder

Language disorder is a disorder in communication in the form of decreased ability to understand information and difficulties in expressing ideas or thoughts. Language disorders tend to occur in every family, with a percentage of 40% to 70% (Fitriana, 2019). Language disorders are one of the factors interfering with children's development (Merdiyasi et al., 2017). In general, language disorders can be divided into two, namely receptive language disorders and expressive language disorders.

### C. Expressive Language Disorder

Expressive language disorders are generally termed as difficulties in expression, in which a person can understand what other people are saying but has difficulty expressing what he wants (Kurniasari & Prima, 2020). Meanwhile (Aisyah et al., 2022) said that expressive language disorder is a person's inability to express through words. However, he understood what the person was saying, but it was difficult to express it in the form of a sentence. Expressive language disorder causes a person to experience difficulties in solving problems. At school, he will experience obstacles in receiving lessons.

Some of the symptoms of expressive language disorder described by Hasiana (2020), namely, (1) Limited use of vocabulary, (2) Difficulty assembling sentences in the form of words, (3) Difficulty finding vocabulary in memory, (4) Frequent mistakes in vocabulary, (4) Difficulty starting a conversation, (5) Difficulty retelling an event, and (6) Difficulty in forming long sentence.

### D. Factors Causing Expressive Language Disorders

Factors that contribute to expressive language disorders are internal factors (cognition and genetics) and external factors (environment). Prastuti (2020) suggests the following factors cause language disorders, (1) Genetic factors, genetics of families with language disorders, (2) Environmental and social factors, and (3) Risk factors, such as birth order, socioeconomic, and mother's mental status.

From the description above, it can be concluded that external factors of language disorders include cognition, genetics, and gender. While the external includes the use of two languages in the family and an environment that does not support language development.

## III. RESEARCH METHOD

This research used a descriptive qualitative method. The descriptive method is used to describe the findings in detail. This research was conducted in Senior High School with adolescents aged 17 years who experienced language disorders, namely expressive language disorders. The researcher gave the initial name "NS" to keep the subject's privacy. The research data is in the form of excerpts from the subject's conversation, which indicate an element of language error. The data source for this research is the subject, the NS, and the closest people who interact with him daily. Data collection techniques are carried out by communicating directly with the subject, then recording the conversation using tapping techniques. In addition, researchers also conducted interviews and observation techniques. After the data was collected, it was analyzed by describing, interpreting, and then explaining the forms of expressive language disorder and its causal factors in teenage boys at Darussalam Islamic Boarding School, Banyuwangi, East Java

#### IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

##### A. Form of Expressive Language Disorder

Based on the results of the study, it is shown that expressive language disorders experienced by NS include limited vocabulary, frequent mistakes in vocabulary, difficulty forming long sentences, unable to start conversations, and difficulty retelling an event.

##### 1) The Limited Use of Vocabulary

In communicating, NS often only brings up a piece of words that does not seem have a clear meaning and has difficulty arranging these words into a complete sentence. When someone asked a question, NS always answered with a single or two words that were considered to represent a sentence. As an example, in the quote below.

- Peneliti : *NS, sampean kok gak nggawe sragam?* (NS, how come you do not wear a uniform?)  
NS : *Jawah Kang.* (raining, sir)  
Peneliti : *Oh, sragame teles?* (Oh, the uniform is wet?)  
NS : *Nggeh Kang.* (Yes, Sir)

This data indicates that NS cannot express answers using sentences in detail. This can be seen in the two words, “rain, sir.” These two words show that he cannot compose a complete sentence. After the researchers conducted interviews with NS’s friends, it was discovered that he was not wearing a uniform because his uniform was wet in the rain. So the sentence he wanted to say was “*tidak pak, seragam saya basah terkena hujan*”. (no sir, my uniform got wet in the rain).

##### 2) Frequent Mistakes in Vocabulary

Mistakes using vocabulary are also often made by NS in communicating. As an example, in the quote below.

- Peneliti : *Nyapo kok sampean gak sekolah?* (Why don’t you go to school?)  
NS : *Sekolah mboten.* (No school)  
Peneliti : *Opo dino iki terah prei?* (Is today a holiday?)  
NS : *Nggeh.* (Yes)

This data shows that NS often chooses the wrong words when answering questions, such as the expression from NS, “*sekolah mboten*” in the quote above. The answers from NS did not match the questions raised by the researcher. Actually, NS wanted to say that school was on holiday, but he had difficulty saying it. It was proven when the researcher continued the conversation by asking whether the school was indeed on holiday, and NS answered, “*nggeh*.”

##### 3) Difficulty in Forming Long Sentences

This research also studied NS’s inability to form long sentences. When NS is asked to explain something, he always conveys it with short sentences, which cannot even be complete. Like the quote below.

- Peneliti : *NS, jaja ceritakne wingi pas liburan sampean nyapo wae?* (NS, tell me what you did on the last holiday)  
NS : *Anu, santai.* (Um, chill)  
Peneliti : *Oh, sampean santai-santai wae?* (Oh, you are just chilling?)  
NS : *Nggeh* (Yes)  
Peneliti : *Terus ono maneh gak seng mbok lakoni sak liyane santai?* (Then, is there anything else you do besides chilling)  
NS : *Pas sore, bazar.* (Evening, bazar)

This data shows that NS can’t reveal the answers to the researcher’s questions in particular detail. He only said short sentences when he spoke. This can be seen from the researchers who repeatedly asked questions to stimulate NS so that he could fully express what he wanted to say. NS had difficulty finding vocabulary in his memory, so he could not explore expression in a long sentence.

##### 4) Difficulty to Start Conversation

Skills in starting a conversation are very much needed to support smooth communication. The skill of starting a conversation is a measure of the success of a communication, on the other hand, the inability to start a conversation can hinder ongoing communication. It was also experienced by NS, who kept silent when being asked to explain something, as in the quote below.

- Peneliti : *NS, mau karo pak Anas sampean diwei tugas opo?* (NS! Earlier, Mr. Anas said that you were given an assignment, what was the assignment?)
- NS : *Anu kang, niku, pecahan, wau dikengken pak Anas.* (Anu Sir, that fraction, was told by Mr. Anas)
- Peneliti : *Oo, dikongkon ngerjakne PR bab pecahan?* (Oo, asked to do homework about fractions?)
- NS : *Nggeh* (Yes)

The data above shows NS's condition, which has difficulty starting a conversation in answering the researcher's questions. This was marked by the word's "anu" and "niku" by NS when starting a conversation.

#### 5) *Difficulty Retelling an Event*

The last form of expressive language disorder experienced by NS is difficulty in retelling a story. Sentences that are expressed tend to be disorganized, he does not be able to tell a story coherently. In this case, the researcher asked NS to talk about the Kanjuruhan tragedy, as in the quote below.

- Peneliti : *Sampean ngerti gak, wingi-wingi iki enek kejadian seng viral neng stadion Kanjuruhan?* (You know, recently, there was an incident that went viral at the Kanjuruhan stadium)
- NS : *Nggeh kang, Aremania.* (yes Sir, Aremania)
- Peneliti : *Ngeri gak pie kui kejadiane?* (Do you know what happened?)
- NS : *Ngertos Kang.* (I know Sir)
- Peneliti : *Jal pie?* (How did it happen?)
- NS : *Anu kang niku, pokok enten polisi kaleh suporter.* (Anu Sir that, basically there are police and supporters)
- Peneliti : *Ngono tok?* (Just like that?)
- NS : *Mboten, enten kebul pisan.* (No, there is smoke too)
- Peneliti : *Terus, pie maneh?* (Then, what else?)
- NS : *"Nggeh ngoteniku lah Kang, pokok katah seng mati.* (Well that's how it is, Sir, just a lot of people died).

This data shows that NS cannot tell perfectly about events he once knew. It can be seen from researchers who constantly ask NS questions to continue his story. Because if not given a stimulus, NS will stop telling stories.

### B. *Factors Causing Expressive Language Disorders*

Based on the results of observations made by researchers on several parties, starting from the subject himself and some of the closest people who interact with him every day, it was found that the factors causing expressive language disorder experienced by NS include internal and external factors.

#### 1) *Internal Factors*

- 1) Cognitive. Some of the data that the researchers obtained stated that NS had weak cognitive power and a lack of understanding of learning. In learning, he feels less confident and afraid of being wrong in every action, even in doing assignments, he is still often assisted by his friends.
- 2) Genetics. The data that the researchers obtained stated that the language disorder NS experienced was due to hereditary factors from one of his family from the father's side.
- 3) Gender. Data related to gender is a factor causing language disorders, which is still being debated, whether men or women experience more language disorders. However, researchers have read a journal (Tomia *et al.*, 2020) dengan judul "*Gangguan Berbicara (Gagap) pada Siswa SLB Batu Merah Sirimau Kota Ambon*" (Speech Disorder (Stuttering) in Student of Batu Merah Extraordinary School Sirimau Ambon). The journal explains that stuttering mostly happens to males who are still children to adolescents.

#### 2) *Eksternal Factors*

The research data show that the external factors that cause expressive language disorders in NS are environmental factors. NS's parents, who already knew that he had a language disorder, rarely took him out of the house to be able to interact with the people around them.

## V. CONCLUSION

Based on the research that has been accomplished, it is known that the form of expressive language

disorder experienced by NS includes limited vocabulary, frequent mistakes in vocabulary, difficulty forming long sentences, unable to start conversations, and difficulty retelling an event. Then the factors that cause NS expressive language disorder are internal factors, namely cognitive, genetic, and gender. And then the external factors which NS environment are less supportive of language development.

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