

**ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH ADJECTIVE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN NON-
SPEAKING ENGLISH COMMUNITY OF SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD TEENAGERS**



A THESIS

**Submitted to the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University
In Partial Requirements to Obtain Bachelor Degree in
English Literature Study Program**

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**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES
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2022**

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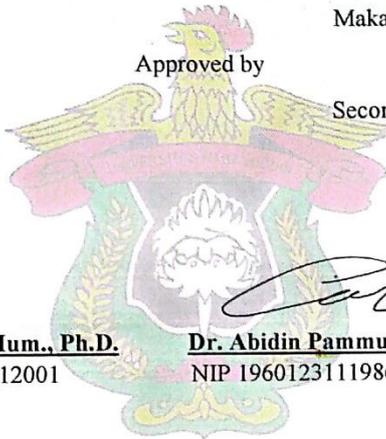
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THESIS
ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH ADJECTIVE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
IN NON-SPEAKING ENGLISH COMMUNITY OF SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD
TEENAGERS

BY

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It has been examined before the Board of Thesis Examination on September 5th,
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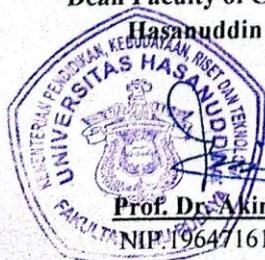


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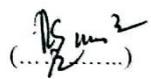
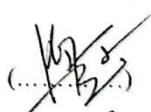
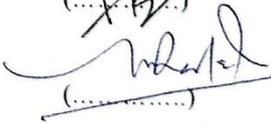
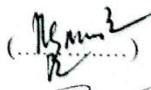
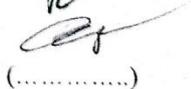
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AGREEMENT

On Thursday, September 5th 2022, the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by Julianto Pratama (F041181513) entitled, Acquisition of English Adjective as a Foreign Language In Non-speaking English Community of Sixteen-Year-Old Teenagers submitted in fulfilment of one of the requirements to obtain Sarjana Sastra (S.S) Degree in English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

Makassar, September 5th 2022

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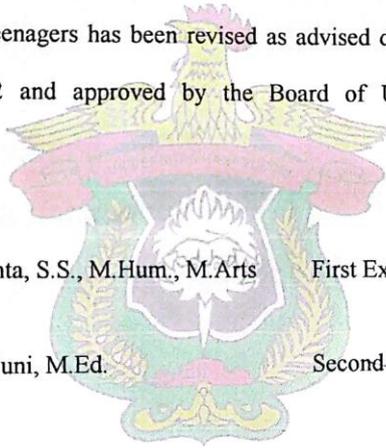
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DECLARATION

The Thesis by JULIANTO PRATAMA (F041181513) entitled, Acquisition of English Adjective as a Foreign Language In Non-speaking English Community of Sixteen-Year-Old Teenagers has been revised as advised during examination on September 5th 2022 and approved by the Board of Undergraduate Thesis Examiners:

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Yang Menyatakan,
Julianto Pratama

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Assalamu 'alaikum warohmatullahi wabarokaatuh.

First of all, the writer would like to express his gratitude to Allah SWT, God the creator of nature, the most forgiving, the most merciful. For His mercy and grace, the thesis entitled “**Acquisition of English Adjective as a Foreign Language In Non-speaking English Community of Sixteen-Year-Old Teenagers**” can be completed. The author also wants to convey *sholawat* and *salam* to the great prophet Muhammad SAW who has become a role model for all mankind. The author would like to thank all the parties that have been involved and assisted the author in writing this research.

Therefore, the author would like to thank all parties who have provided a lot of help and support for the author in the journey of getting a bachelor's degree.

1. Fransisca E. Kapoyos, Dra, M.Hum and Rezky Ramadhani, S.S, M.Litt as the author's academic counselors, who have provided extraordinary guidance in the journey of getting a bachelor's degree.
2. Dra. Nasmilah, M.Hum., Ph.D. and Dr. Abidin Pammu, M.A., Dipl.TESOL. as the first and second supervisors of the author for all the endless guidance and help during the writing of this research.
3. All of lectures and staff of Cultural Science Faculty and especially English Literature Study who has helped the author during his studies.
4. My beloved parents, as well as the whole family of the author who have provided support, prayers, and motivation so that the author can complete this research.

5. All of the Department and Faculty staff who helped the author with the administration matter.
6. Author best friend's, Muhammad Nur Fauzi, Iqra Birazul Fathur Islam, Wahyu Aldi Anugrah, Muhammad Aryadin Taufan, Syahrul Anami, Harun Adisua Toding Rante, especially the author special person, Novitasari Sulestiyani.
7. All of Author's Batch friends which could not be mentioned one by one, for all the valuable memories and experiences.
8. All participants of this research, who were very helpful and cooperative during the research being carried out.
9. Finally, the writer would like to thank himself for his hard work in completing this thesis. Also, the writer apologizes to himself for being inconsistent and lazy which hinders the completion of this thesis.

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ABSTRACT

Julianto Pratama. 2022. ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH ADJECTIVE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN NON-SPEAKING ENGLISH COMMUNITY OF SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD TEENAGERS, supervised by **Nasmilah** and **Abidin Pammu.**

This research aims at describing the method or strategy of acquisition of English adjectives used by teenagers aged sixteen-year-old in Awang Tangka Village and classified the types of adjectives that have been acquired by the students.

This study used descriptive qualitative method. The data presented in this research were collected by conducting direct interviews and distributing online questionnaires. After collecting the data, the authors then classify the method or strategy of adjective acquisition. Finally, the authors classify these adjectives according to the types of adjectives acquired by adolescents aged sixteen years.

The study finds that sixteen-year-old teenagers use three general methods in their English adjective acquisition process, namely the acquisition process via the internet (youtube, social media, news, etc.), acquisition through video games, and acquisition through the environment. The writer also found that there were thirteen types of adjectives acquired by the sixteen-year-old teenagers, namely comparative adjective, superlative adjective, predicate adjective, compound adjective, possessive adjective, demonstrative adjective, proper adjective, participial adjective, limiting adjective, descriptive adjective, interrogative adjective, attributive adjectives, and distributive adjectives.

Keywords: Psycholinguistic, English Adjective Acquisition, Teenagers

ABSTRAK

Julianto Pratama. 2022. ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH ADJECTIVE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN NON-SPEAKING ENGLISH COMMUNITY OF SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD TEENAGERS, dibimbing oleh Nasmilah dan Abidin Pammu.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan metode ataupun strategi akuisisi adjektifa bahasa Inggris yang digunakan oleh para remaja usia enam belas tahun di Kelurahan Awang Tangka dan mengklasifikasikan jenis-jenis adjektif yang telah diakuisisi oleh para remaja usia enam belas tahun.

Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Data yang terdapat pada penelitian ini dikumpulkan dengan cara melakukan interview langsung dan menyebarkan angket secara online. Setelah data terkumpul, selanjutnya penulis mengelompokkan metode atau strategi akuisisi. Terakhir penulis mengklasifikasikan sesuai dengan jenis-jenis adjektif yang diakuisisi oleh remaja usia enam belas tahun.

Penulis menemukan bahwa remaja enam belas tahun menggunakan tiga metode pokok dalam proses akuisisi adjektif bahasa Inggris mereka, yaitu proses akuisisi melalui internet (youtube, media sosial, berita,etc), akuisisi melalui video game, dan akuisisi melalui lingkungan sekitarnya. Penulis juga menemukan bahwa ada tiga belas jenis adjektif yang diakuisisi oleh remaja enam belas tahun, yaitu comparative adjective, superlative adjective, predicate adjective, compound adjective, possessive adjective, demonstrative adjective, proper adjective, participial adjective, limiting adjective, descriptive adjective, interrogative adjective, attributive adjective, dan distributive adjektif.

Kata Kunci: Psikolinguistik, Akuisisi Adjektif Bahasa Inggris, Remaja

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Language is a communication tool used by humans throughout the world. According to Derbyshire, language is undoubtedly a kind of means of communication among human beings. It consists primarily of vocal sounds. It is articulatory, systematic, symbolic, and arbitrary. This definition of Derbyshire utters that language is the best source of communication. It also portrays how human language is formed and what are the fundamental principles of language. Various kinds of languages are used in activities of everyday life, such as English. In Indonesia, English is considered a foreign language and is the first foreign language taught in schools from elementary to college levels. English is taught to develop students' verbal and written communication competencies to achieve a functional literacy level and can play a role in international activities both informal state activities and professional activities or social activities.

The ways of acquiring English for the learners are also varied. Second language acquisition refers to the learning of another language or language besides the native language. Krashen (2009: 10) says that acquisition is a subconscious process where the learners acquire language which understandable and meaningful to them. By concentrating on meaning, they subconsciously acquire form. Whereas learning includes the formal study of language rules and patterns. It is also known as formal knowledge of a language or explicit learning.

Language acquisitions happen normally to us since it works inside our short-term memory. The actual definition of language acquiring tells us that we need far beyond the gathering of data; it must be coordinated, inspected, and rehearsed until we achieve a level of comprehension. Acquisition happens on a subconscious level.

Different from children when trying to learn a new language mostly by imitating what they hear, teenagers have more methods that can be used or even create new methods to learn a new language because the thinking and reasoning abilities of adolescent brains are better than children. Carmen Muñoz, professor of English linguistics and applied linguistics at the University of Barcelona, Spain, and her research team found that children who learned language did not outperform adults when the two groups received the same amount of language instruction. They drew these conclusions from data collected through a long-term study of developing English proficiency in students aged 8, 11, 14, and over 18 in Barcelona.

In a similar study, an Austrian psycholinguist, Simone E. Pfenninger, and his colleague, David Singleton also drew the same conclusion. They analyzed data from 200 respondents who learned English from various age groups from 2009 to 2015 in Switzerland. They concluded that adults can quickly catch up with children.

English in Indonesia is categorized as a foreign language because it is not widely used by many people and is still being studied by the public for a specific purpose. Some language observers argue that English is categorized as the second

language after Indonesian because Indonesian is the first reference in interacting with the people of the archipelago as well as in social activities both formally and informally. However, the process of acquiring language in the community continues both as a mother tongue, a second language, and a foreign language.

Based on the background explanation above, the reason the writer chose this topic as research material is that even though this topic has been widely researched by previous researchers, the author realizes that the participant studied is mostly people who have educational backgrounds such as those still in the school stage and currently attending school. Therefore, the authors wanted to examine this topic in a non-speaking English community.

1.2 Identification of the Problems

English has been made mandatory by the Indonesian government as a language that must be studied starting from elementary school to college. This is done with the aim that all Indonesian people are not left behind in terms of education and are not left behind in terms of developments caused by ignorance of a language and can communicate well both domestically and internationally.

One of the main objectives of the mandatory teaching of English is to improve students' communicative competence in spoken and written form to achieve functional literacy levels. Unfortunately, this obligation does not increase students' interest in learning English. Based on data from EF Adults for the period August 2018 – to June 2019, it shows that 58% of prospective new students were at the elementary level when starting their studies. From these data, it shows that the mastery of English for Indonesian people aged 16-18 years and over who are

prospective EF Adults students is still at a fairly low level. These data indicate that the main objectives of teaching English in Indonesia have not been achieved due to a lack of interest and tedious learning methods for students. Therefore, it can be concluded that the main problems are:

1. Lack of interest in English
2. Tedious learning method
3. Mastery of English language in teenagers is still at a fairly low level.

The strategies or methods of teaching English currently used if not changed, there will be no increase in interest and as a result, this goal will not be achieved. Developing new learning strategies can be a solution to this problem. The solution to this problem can be obtained by directly observing the strategies that students want or have used that can increase their interest in learning English.

This proposed research aspires to identify and explore options that are widely used by students in obtaining adjective words and can be a reference for creating a new method that can be used in increasing interest in English for 16-year-olds in Awang Tangka, Bone. To do this, the researcher carried out an in-depth analysis and use it to find out the media and method that the teenagers used in their process of acquiring adjective.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This research is a psycholinguistic study that focuses on the English adjective acquisition of adolescents. In this case, the researcher limits the research on the acquisition strategy of adolescents in English adjectives. In addition, this study focuses on the media and method used by adolescents in

obtaining English adjective and the kind of adjectives they acquired. Even if he used it with bad pronunciation and grammar or not, researchers were sure that he could understand it.

1.4 Research Question

The ability of teenagers to acquire a language, especially English adjectives, is influenced by various aspects that can affect them when learning a new language. Based on this fact, the researcher formulate the research question as follows:

How is the acquisition of English adjectives in teenagers aged sixteen years?

The formulation of the problem above can be developed with several more focused research questions which are:

1. How do sixteen years old teenagers acquire English adjectives?
2. What kinds of adjectives do sixteen-year-olds acquired?

1.5 Objectives of the research

Based on the Problem Statement above, the objectives of this research are to discover:

1. To figure out adjective acquisition strategies of sixteen years old teenagers.
2. To figure out the kind of adjectives that sixteen-year-olds acquired.

1.6 Significance of research

1. The authors expect that the results of this study can be used as a reference or as a comparison to determine the process of acquiring English adjective in other teenagers.

2. The researcher expects that this research contributes to the development of psycholinguistics in Indonesia, especially in the English department of Hasanuddin University Makassar.
3. Researchers also expect that the results of this study can be useful for other researchers as a source of information in developing adolescent English adjective skills and acquisition strategies.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Previous Study

The writer found several articles that examine the same problems related to adjective acquisition in adolescents. The writer tries to compare them to support the results of his research. Based on other research, the writer found several similarities and differences. Below are the results of previous studies.

Togi Bertuah Silalahi (2019) in His research “*A Teenagers Vocabulary Acquisition and English Interest as a Second Language*”. The purpose of this research was to find out the English vocabulary acquisition and interest in English in a teenager. The researcher observed the improvement of his vocabulary for three weeks for six meetings and found a significant development in his vocabulary acquisition. Teenagers can get new vocabulary from English songs and stories. The new words he found from the song and the story add to his vocabulary because those are the new words he ever heard. He also got the new vocabulary from the teacher who gave him the vocabulary of things. Based on the data analysis and findings, it can be concluded that English interest affects vocabulary acquisition in English as a second language in teenagers. The teenager can acquire the vocabulary by listening to English songs, English stories, and the vocabulary he got directly from the teacher. The interesting way of acquiring the English vocabulary is also very important to improve someone’s vocabulary.

Karolina Leslak (2015) in Her research “*Teaching English to Adolescents*” deals with a challenging matter which is teaching the English language to adolescents. Teaching as a process of transmitting knowledge is very important but habitually, it may be very problematical at a particular age level. Teenage learners differ from other learners as they are thought to be the most disobedient in behavior and most discouraged to learn. Adolescence is a difficult time in a child's life when a lot of psychological and physical transformations take place. Therefore, it is significant for teachers to become familiar with these changes to work effectively. There are plenty of useful and efficient methods that teachers can integrate into their lessons to increase students’ understanding and improve overall comprehension. The result shows that at this particular age level, students cause a lot of problems for a teacher. It is strongly related to the fact that adolescents go through a very stormy period, including significant psychological and physical transformations. Therefore, the teacher has to know the characteristics of adolescents to have a correct attitude toward them. This information also makes it easier to understand the reasons for the problematical teenagers’ behavior and allows the teacher to intervene, as well as help. The teacher has an important role to play because he is responsible for making the students learn in the best possible way. To facilitate the language learning process the tutor may use many different methods and techniques which he finds most suitable for teenagers. While preparing the lesson the teacher should also become familiar with the types of learning styles and learning strategies and decide which method to use to adjust them.

Jerome C. Bush (2014) in His research “*The Effects of the Age Of Onset On Vocabulary Acquisition in the Second Language*”. The results of this study suggest that age of onset may not have an impact on vocabulary acquisition. The surprising finding here was that the two groups performed almost identically, except for one student. This finding supports some previous studies (Izura & Ellis, 2002; Schwartz & Katzir, 2012) that found the educational environment to be a more important factor for vocabulary acquisition than the age of onset. If this is the case, then starting EFL education earlier may not have an appreciable impact, at least in terms of vocabulary development, unless attention is also paid to the educational environment, including materials, facilities, and teacher quality. However, this study was done on a small scale. A larger-scale study with modifications in the measurement instruments is recommended before definitive conclusions can be made.

Based on the studies described above, the researcher assumes that all three of them have similarities with this research and also observed language acquisition. But in another thing, there are some differences; such as in the first research which belongs to Togi Bertuah Silalahi conducted this research in an environment where English was considered a second language. While this thesis is focused and conducted on the environment where English is still considered a foreign language. The second research belongs to Karolina Leslak, who conducted this research by observing every aspect of teenagers’ general characterization. while this research is focusing only on one of teenagers’ general characterization which is cognitive processes. Then the third study conducted by Jerome C. Bush is focusing on the

early onset sequential bilinguals and late-onset sequential bilinguals participant. While this research is focusing on adolescents who are sixteen years old.

2.2 Theoretical Background

2.2.1 Vocabulary

According to Hatch and Brown (1995: 1) vocabulary is a set of words for a particular language or a list of sets of words individual speakers of a language might use. Richards and Renandya (2002: 255), stated that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how learners speak, listen, read and write. Without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners often achieve their potential and may be discouraged from making use of language learning opportunities around them such as listening to the radio, listening to a native speaker, using language in a different context, and reading or watching television.

A possible way of learning vocabulary according to Kustarjo (1988: 24), is learning vocabulary through derivation. The passion for accuracy in English sentence patterns involves four classes. They are:

1. Noun

A noun is a word for a person, place, or thing. Everything we can see or talk about is represented by a word that names it. That "naming" word is called a noun. Noun consists of five categories:

- a. Proper noun. Examples: Martin, America, Monday
- b. Concrete noun. Examples: tree, rain, beach

- c. Abstract noun. Examples: happiness, danger, friendship
- d. Collective noun. Examples: family, government, crew
- e. countable noun. Examples: pillows, chairs
- Uncountable noun. Examples: sugar, water

2. Verb

The verb is a word used to describe an action, state, or occurrence, to form a sentence. There are some types of verbs:

a. Modals

Modal is tensed that help verbs. Modals must be paired with verbs. Therefore, modal is also often called pronouns. For example: can, could, may, might, will.

b. Finite Verb

A finite verb is a form of the verb that is influenced by tense and agreement with the subject in terms of the person (first/second/third) and number (singular/plural).

c. Non-finite Verb

Non-finite verbs, even though it contains the word "verb" in their names, do not act as a verb in a sentence. Non-infinite verbs act as nouns, adjectives, or adverbs.

d. Linking Verb

The linking verb connects the subject and the complement. Those in the words that follow the linking verb. It creates a link between them instead of showing action.

3. Adjective

The adjective is a word used to describe a noun or pronoun which can be a person, place, animal, object, or abstract concept. An adjective modifies a noun or a pronoun by describing, identifying, or quantifying words. For example:

The young man brought me *very* long chocolate from the neighbor, and *then* she *quickly* disappeared. Oh my!

There are 13 forms of an adjective:

a. Comparative Adjective

Comparative adjectives are used to compare two things.

For example; “We bought a *cheaper* car.”

b. Superlative Adjective

Superlative adjectives are used to describe an object or people more than two to determine which one is the most supreme or extreme. For example; “Rudy is the *smartest* in His class.”

c. Predicate Adjectives

Predicate adjectives do not appear directly next to the nouns or pronouns that they modify, but appear in the predicate of a sentence as a subject complement. For example; “The satay looks *delicious*.”

d. Compound Adjectives

Compound adjectives are adjectives that are connected by hyphens that are formed from multiple words. For example; “The new Louis Vuitton bag is a *must-have*.”

e. Possessive Adjectives

Possessive adjectives are used to express possession or ownership. For example; “He always rides *His* bike every morning.”

f. Demonstrative Adjective

Demonstrative adjectives are used to express relative positions. For example; “*That* store will be open soon.”

g. Proper Adjectives

Proper adjectives are used to say something specific whether it is place or person. For example; “*Korean* food is delicious.”

h. Participial Adjectives

Participial adjectives are adjectives that usually end in *-ed* or *-ing* which derive from verbs and are based on participles. For example; “Please help me look for my *reading* glasses.”

i. Limiting Adjectives

Limiting Adjectives does not describe the qualities or traits of a noun or pronoun rather limiting adjectives modifies

a noun or pronoun by restricting it. For example; “I threw *some* rock to His house.”

j. Descriptive Adjectives

Descriptive Adjectives describe the qualities, traits, or characteristics of a noun or pronoun. For example; “She told a *scary* story.”

k. Interrogative Adjectives

Interrogative adjectives are used to ask questions. For example; “*What* is your favorite food?”

l. Attributive Adjectives

Attribute Adjectives are directly next to the noun or pronoun that they modify, but they can sometimes appear after them. For example; “Jack gave Her wife something *special* for their anniversary.”

m. Distributive Adjective

Distributive Adjective refer to a member of a group individually. For example; “I will be sad if *either* club wins the champions league.”

4. Adverb

The adverb function is to explain words or sentences. Adverbs are divided into several categories:

a. Adverbs of manner.

Is an adverb that is used to express the way an activity is carried out or an event occurs. How can be used to ask questions related to adverb of manner. For example, if we are asked "*How is the situation of the distribution of food*" the answer will be "*shared equally*". "*Equally*" is the adverb of manner.

b. Adverbs of place.

Adverb of place is an adverb that is used to indicate the position or place where an action or event occurs. For example, "*She waited for me there*". "*there*" is the adverb of place.

c. Adverbs of time.

Adverb of time is an adverb of time that explains "when", "how long", and "how often" from a question. For example, "*I have a meeting this afternoon*". "*this afternoon*" is the adverb of time.

d. Adverbs of frequency.

Adverb of frequency is an adverb / addition to express the frequency, whether or not often or how much a job or event occurs. For example, "*sometimes I cry in my room alone*". "*Sometimes*" is the adverb of frequency.

e. Adverbs of degree.

Adverb of degree is an adverb used to express to what extent (level or degree) an activity or event. For example, “*He completely beat up that guy*”. “*Completely*” is the adverb of degree.

f. Adverb of affirmation.

Adverb of affirmation is an adverb that is used to express affirmation, emphasis or approval for an answer. For example, “*His story is absolutely fake*”. “*absolutely*” is the adverb of affirmation.

g. Adverb of comment.

Adverb of Comment is an adverb that gives an explanation of our personal opinion about other people, or about things that happened. For example, “*Unfortunately, I will not support Her*”. “*Unfortunately*” is the adverb of comment.

h. Adverb of conjunction.

Adverbs of conjunctions are adverbs as well as conjunctions that connect two sentences and make them into compound sentences or two specific clauses. For example “*The tree has burned down. As a result, we can't make a tree house*”. “*As a result*” is the adverb of conjunction.

2.2.2 Language Acquisition

Language acquisition means absorbing a target language's sound system and structure, ideally without ever thinking explicitly about the language's actual structure. According to Krashen, the 'acquired system' or 'acquisition' is the product of a subconscious process very similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language. It requires meaningful interaction in the target language - natural communication - in which speakers are concentrated not in the form of their utterances, but in communicative act. Krashen is most widely known for his "comprehensible input" hypothesis, which suggests that learners acquire language by taking in and understanding language that is "just beyond" their current level of competence. Krashen defines comprehensible input as 'i+1', where 'I' is the current level of proficiency and '+1' is the level of proficiency just beyond the learner's current level.

In addition, Chomsky based on his theory on the idea that all languages contain similar structures and rules (a universal grammar), and the fact that children everywhere acquire language the same way, and without much effort, seems to indicate that we're born wired with the basics already present in our brains which means that since humans were born, humans have had the basic ability to process the sounds they hear into a code or sentence that is acquired unconsciously.

B. F. Skinner behaviourist theory divided language acquisition based on the habit-forming. This was known as positive reinforcement where the their behaviour will be rewarded. While negative reinforcement is undesirable behaviour with a punishment or simply not rewarded. The behaviourist B. F. Skinner then proposed this theory as an explanation for language acquisition in humans. In *Verbal Behaviour* (1957), he stated:

"The basic processes and relations which give verbal behaviour its special characteristics are now fairly well understood. Much of the experimental work responsible for this advance has been carried out on other species, but the results have proved to be surprisingly free of species restrictions. Recent work has shown that the methods can be extended to human behaviour without serious modifications."

(cited in Lowe and Graham, 1998, p68)

2.2.3 Adolescent/Teenagers

According to Britannica, adolescence is a transitional phase of growth and development between childhood and adulthood. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines an adolescent as any person between ages 10 and 19. This age range falls within WHO's definition of young people, which refers to individuals between ages 10 and 24. In the

adolescent stage, the physical changes will begin to look drastically changed. Starting from body weight, height, and hair growth in certain parts that were not there before. The emotional condition of a teenager in this phase also becomes unstable. Their emotional state is determined by their surroundings and they usually have difficulty controlling their emotions. Changes with puberty (sexual maturation) may happen gradually or several signs may become visible at the same time. At this time, problems become difficult for both boys and girls to overcome. This is because throughout childhood problems are often solved by parents so that they are less experienced in dealing with problems and when offered help they tend to refuse and feel like being independent. Because of their inability to solve problems in the way they believe in, many teenagers found that the solutions do not always live up to their expectations.