

NARRATIVE ABILITIES MALAY CHILDREN AGED 3 AND 4: A PIONEER STUDY

Siti Zaharah Misman

ABSTRACT

Limited research has been conducted to investigate the development of narrative amongst Malay speaking children in Malaysia. This cross-sectional study was done to obtain initial description and understanding of narrative structures and the nature of syntax in narrative of Malay children aged 3 and 4 years old. This study involved 24 Malay children aged three and four years and eleven months old and was divided into four age-ranges of six month intervals (3;0-3;6 , 3;7-3;11, 4;0-4;6. 4;7-4;11). The narrative data was collected through story retelling and relating experience tasks. All the narrative samples were analysed using Labov's (1972) narrative structures and Language Assessment Remediation and Screening Procedure (LARSP). For story-retelling, findings showed that in general children's use of narrative structures increases according to age. There were no gender differences in narrative structures between male and female subjects. At the age of 3 and 4 years old, most children produced action complication, result, evaluation and coda. In terms of the nature of syntax on narrative, children at the age of 3 years old produced LARSP Stage 1 and children aged 4 years produced LARSP stage II. Besides that, most children at the age of 3 and 4 years old produced type phrase [V +V]. For relating experience, there was a new structure which is a sub-event that was not introduced in Labov's (1972) narrative structures. At ages 3 and 4 years old, most children produced orientation and sub-events. In terms of the nature of syntax on narrative, children at the age of 3 and 4 years old produced LARSP Stage II and type phrase [V + V]. This research showed that the narrative structures and the nature of syntax in narrative are suitable for assessment of narrative abilities of preschool children in Malaysia.

Misman,S.Z. 2010. *Narrative Abilities of Malay Children Aged 3 and 4:A Pioneer Study* . Bachelor of Speech Science Thesis. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.