

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES OF A MALAY CHILD SUSPECTED WITH SPECIFIC LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT (SLI): A CASE STUDY

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the language difficulties of a Malay child who was in primary school (level 1), suspected as having Specific Language Impairment (SLI). Subjects were screened based on several tasks which are Cognitive Test, Language Screening Test, Phonological Awareness Test, Reading test and the latest examination results of Bahasa Melayu Subjects. This study aimed to describe the aspects of language difficulties using language tests which are Sentence Repetition and Narrative tests. Subjects consist of a child who was suspected as Specific Language Impairment (SLI) and 8 children who showed normal language development as Control Group subjects. The results showed that the performance of the child who was suspected as Specific Language Impairment (SLI) was lower than the Control Group for both the Sentence Repetition and Narrative tests. The current findings identified that the child who was suspected as having Specific Language Impairment (SLI) had difficulties in aspects of language which are Semantic, Morphology and Syntax. Difficulties in semantic and morphology involved substitution, omission and addition of words. Difficulties in Syntax involved incomplete sentences, inaccurate meaning of sentences, and inaccurate sentence structure and word order. It was observed that Narrative skills were also affected such as the omission of characters and time settings, omission of connectors (temporal and cause-effect), inappropriate order of plot and incomplete and less elaboration of episodes. These findings give the overview of the language difficulties of a Malay child who was in primary school (level1), suspected with Specific Language Impairment (SLI). This will help in developing the effective tools and programmes in identifying and managing children with Specific Language Impairment (SLI) in this country.

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