

TESTING ACQUISITION RATE OF THE UZBEK MORPHEMES OF -(I)M AND -NING IN UZBEK CHILDREN

¹Iroda Azimova, ²Odinaxon Saidaxmedova, ³Jahongir Jurayev

¹Assistant Professor, Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature named after Alisher Navoi, Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

²PhD student, Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature named after Alisher Navoi, Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

³Lecturer, Department of General Science, Tashkent State University of Law, Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

E-mail address: saidaxmedova92@mail.ru

Received: 05.02.2020

Revised: 15.03.2020

Accepted: 25.04.2020

Abstract:

The issue of natural order in acquiring morphemes of the possessive -(i)m and the genitive case -ning in Uzbek has been an interesting one in psycholinguistics and applied linguistics. In this article, it is sought to test Krashen's Natural Order Hypothesis employing Uzbek children in the first language environment. Research on this issue has been conducted in Uzbek as first language and the outcomes have been generalized. The present study has been experimented with 15 Uzbek children in different age groups from 1.5 to 3.0. The participants were asked to tell the answers to given questions which demanded the right morphemes. The results showed that the morpheme of possessive -(i)m to be acquired earlier than the genitive case -ning in Uzbek.

Keywords: Natural Order Hypothesis, first language acquisition, Brown's Age Stages, inflection, word combination.

© 2019 by Advance Scientific Research. This is an open-access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.31838/jcr.07.07.67>

INTRODUCTION

Some morphemes are more complex than others and are typically acquired later. Early or later acquisition of morpheme depends on its semantic complexity. Moreover, form complexity impacts the process of morpheme acquisition. Every language possesses morphemes that represent similar semantic function, but the forms of expression are different. Despite sharing same function, certain morpheme is acquired before than another morpheme which has more complex structure.

In 1958, Jean Berko empirically examined the output skill of morphology in children learning English as L1. [3] The researcher studied the children between the age of four and seven using non-existent words to examine the generalization of inflectional rules, thereby, eliminating the possibility of testing specific learned responses. Children were shown the picture of a "wug" (fictional word in English) which had the picture of an object looking like a bird and said to children that this was a "wug". Then second picture with two "wugs" was shown and examiner asked what creatures in the picture were. Children answered "wugs", they added plural -s to the noun stem. The result of the experiment determined that the plural form -s on the noun is acquired earlier than quantitative words in word combination, such as **more** fruits, **much** juice, or the plural form of making changes in bare stem, for example, foot - **feet**, ox - **oxen**.

An initial publication on acquisition of first language belongs to R.Brown (1973) reporting the findings of a longitudinal study of morphological development. The subjects of this study were three monolingual English-speaking children. After analyzing the data obtained, R. Brown outlined five stages of early language acquisition. These five stages of cumulative complexity were described as follows:

Stage I, semantic and syntactic relations;

Stage II, grammatical morphemes and meaning modulation;

Stage III, modalities of simple sentences;

Stage IV, embedding one sentence into another;

Stage V, simple sentences facilitation and propositional relations.[4]

Stage II was characterized by beginning the acquisition of inflection or conjugation. Inflection is an adding possessives and noun cases to noun stem and tenses and person morphemes to the verb stem. R.Brown used C.Cazden's (1968) criterion for acquisition to determine the children's acquisition of morphemes. A morpheme was "acquired" when it was used correctly in 90% of its obligatory contexts. [5] R.Brown noted that during Stage II, the children acquired the morphemes "-ing" plural, and "in". In Stage III, the children acquired the morphemes "on", and the possessive form, for example, mommy's hat, and concluded to the results of kind experiments that a morpheme marking x is acquired before one that marks x+y.

In the late 1970s, S.Krashen introduced Natural Order Hypothesis. To the hypothesis grammatical morphemes acquired certain sequences, and acquiring process causes to form systematic order. Natural Order Hypothesis served to obtain certain grammatical morphemes order in other languages.

In Portuguese, the development of person markers on verbs was studied by M.Perroni, and S.Gammon (1979). [7] They observed 4 Brazilian children and concluded that person markers on the verb are acquired before tense markers. Because person marker is a common for all persons on verb in one tense, tense markers are inflected different forms in verb's each person. Different forms of the verb tenses causes to acquiring them later.

E.Bates and J.Rankin (1979) investigated morphological development in Italian children. [2] They used both longitudinal and experimental procedures to study the development of adjectives vs. inflections for the expression of size and values concepts. To the obtained data, diminutive -ino and augmentative -etto morphemes are acquired before adjectives with quantitative words (for example, quite, very, little, slightly).

A.Aksu Koch and D.Slobin (1986) also proved that inflective words occurred in child's speech earlier than word combinations in Turkish language. [1] Turkish is a highly inflected language. Usually, the morphemes of the word combination's compounds are left by the children in early language acquisition, because the discomfort of using more

than one word takes over, and makes omission of inflection or commission of morphemes preferable.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Uzbek language belongs to Turkic language family, one of the agglutinative languages. Uzbek is also highly inflected like Turkish. Every morpheme has different functions in agglutinative languages. Both possessive -(i)m and genitive case -ning mean that subject or object possess / belongs to speakers in Uzbek. Possessive -(i)m is a part of one noun

(a), and after that any joined word is not required. Genitive case -ning is the morpheme of the word combination. It is in the first word compound of word combination (b) and is added to noun or pronoun stems.

- (a) **onam** ((my) mother), **otam** ((my) father), **o'yinchog'im** ((my) toy)
- (b) **mening** onam (my mother), **Solihaning** otasi (Solihā's father), **bolaning** kiyimi (boy's cloth)

In the research work, we attempted to find the answer for these research questions:

- (a) Does occurrence of inflection take place earlier than word combination in Uzbek?
- (b) Which factors impact acquiring earlier or later of possessive -(i)m and genitive case -ning?

To obtain data, we examined acquiring processes of possessive -(i)m and genitive case -ning. For this task, we used 2 types of experiments: questions and pictures that required necessary morpheme in the answers.

EXPERIMENTS

Experiments are conducted with 15 Uzbek children in different age groups from 1.5 to 3.0. The children were assigned to one of the three groups on the basis of their age: Group 1 - 1.5-2.0 ages; Group 2 - 2.1-2.5 ages; Group 3 - 2.5-3.0 ages. Each group included 5 children. They are tested individually in a quiet room outside their classroom.

In the production experiment we attempted to elicit children's production of the possessive -(i)m and the genitive case -ning. For this purpose the 8 questions that demand the use of possessive -(i)m and the genitive case -ning in answers: 4 questions for possessive -(i)m and 4 questions for genitive case -ning are given to the children. The questions are given in the Table 1.

Table 1

Nº	Particle morpheme	Questions
1.	-(i)m	1. How many people are there in your family? 2. Who has bought your dress / shoes? 3. Whom takes you to the kindergarten? 4. What is it? (question is given child's private things, such as his/her ball, toy, doll)
2.	-ning	1. Whose socks are they? 2. Whose telephone is it? (The telephone belongs to you or anybody) 3. Whose bag is it? 4. Whose meal is it?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Given answers were correlated using the Spearman's rho correlation coefficient. According to this, possessive -(i)m morpheme is used with only **onam** ((my) mother) and **otam** ((my) father) names in Group 1. Children in Group 1 did not use possessive -(i)m morpheme with no other family names or object names. Genitive case -ning did not appear in all responses in this group.

In Group 2, based on the results of children aged 2.1-2.5 years, possessive -(i)m morpheme was used with variety of family names, such as, **onam** ((my) mother), **otam** ((my) father),

buvim ((my) grandmother), **bobom** ((my) grandfather) names, but rarely with item names. The use of genitive case -ning with personal pronouns and item names was not actively exploited by these respondents. The children of this group were observed using personal pronouns or nouns without this morpheme or a noun additive -niki (-reflexive suffix).

In Group 3, children aged 2.5-3.0, answered all the question without much effort that required possessive -(i)m morpheme. The morpheme was used appropriately in necessary place. There was a parallel use of the genitive case -ning and the noun additive -niki.

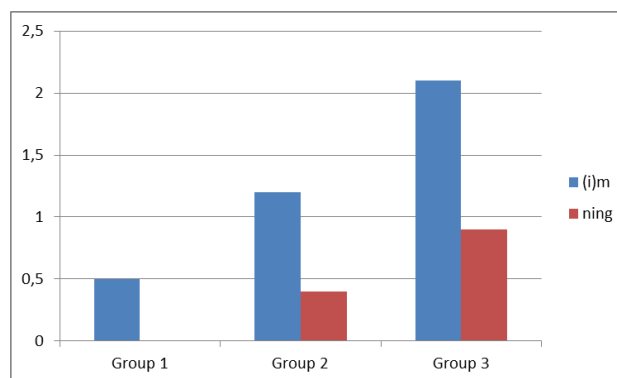


Figure 1 shows the ratio of correct answers to the question:

Figure 1.

To check the occurrence of possessive -(i)m morpheme's speech productivity we used children's family member pictures in from all three groups. Family member's pictures were shown and the children were asked to name who their names.

For checking the existence or non-existence of genitive case -ning morpheme's speech productivity the pictures of girl with a ball, a boy with a banana, a woman with an apple were shown to children and they were asked who owned the items in the pictures (ball, banana, apple). The responds were noted by the researcher.

The findings obtained by picture comprehension are similar to obtained by listening comprehension. 2 children in Group 1 used possessive -(i)m morpheme not only with **onam** (mother) and **otam** (father) names, also with **bobom** (grandfather) and **buvim** (grandmother) names. When their brother(s) or sister(s) pictures were shown and asked who they were, they answered with their given names, not with relative nouns, such as Komila, Akmal. In some cases, children pointed with finger their brother(s) / sister(s) in the picture, but no words were used.

The pictures of girl with a ball, a boy with a banana, a woman with an apple are shown to the children they only answered with stem words, in some cases, they pointed the subjects (girl, boy, woman) in the pictures with finger, but did not respond verbally.

In Group 2, children had a finger-pointing pattern for the genitive case -ning, mainly children used noun additive -niki (given answers of the this morpheme were used with given names, for example Ahmadniki, Guliniki in Uzbek, not with relative nouns), genitive case -ning appeared in some answers, such as **qizning** koptogi, **opaning** olmasi.

In Group 3, the nearly same outcomes were observed as for Group 2, but genitive case -ning in answers occurred more than Group 2. Children in the Group 2 and Group 3 answered all bare stem with possessive morpheme that they used from possessive morpheme not only family member, besides with near relative names, such as uncle, aunt (in Uzbek language relative names differ to the gender: for mother's sisters is used xola, for father's sister - amma; for mother's brothers - tog'a, for father's brothers - amaki). All Uzbek children in this group used possessive morpheme: **xolam**, **ammam**, **tog'am**, **amakim**.

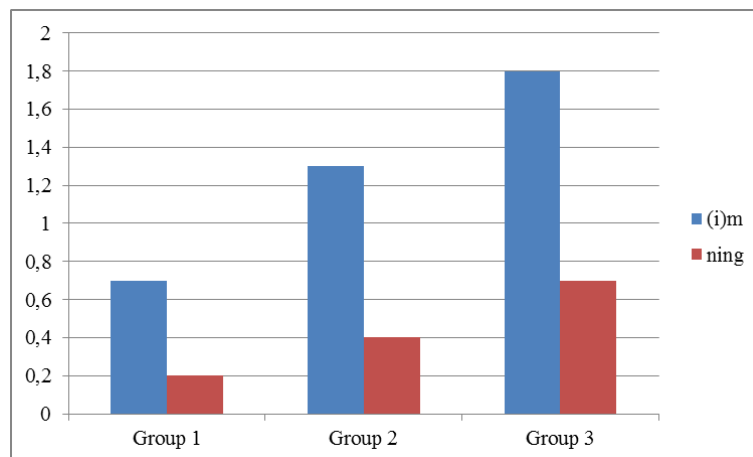


Figure 2 demonstrates the number of correct answers for the pictures:

Figure 2.

The results show that, the production of possessive -(i)m exist in child's youngest ages, from their 18th month. In Group 2 and Group 3, the usage of possessive morpheme has been extended. The children who are at the age of 3 have mastered possessive -(i)m. They can use possessive morpheme with family members and different object names.

Genitive case -ning did not occur in of children's speech in Group 1, as well as, the process of acquiring genitive case was observed in the next Groups, in other words, even in Group 3 genitive case was used parallel with reflexive noun additive -niki.

CONCLUSION

The result of the experiments that possessive -(i)m is acquired earlier than the genitive case -ning in Uzbek. It is provided that, multi-morphemic utterances (word+morpheme) are acquired earlier than multi-words utterances (word+word). Children should acquire the simpler type earlier than the more complex one. In many research works, it was noted that word inflection appear earlier than word combination (R. Brown 1973; Burt and Dulay 1979; Slobin and Aksu 1986; E.Clark 2009). It is required another suitable word after the word which added genitive case -ning. In this process the children have to find word combination not only semantic meaning, also word forms appropriately, and they should separate bare stem and morphemes. Besides, the children should be able to add genitive case -ning which causes word combination. So these factors cause later acquiring of genitive case, even children in 3 years old, they do not master genitive case, this morpheme is in acquiring process.

REFERENCES

1. Aksu, A., and Slobin, D. A psychological account of the development and use of evidentials in Turkish. In *Evidentiality: the linguistic coding of epistemology*, ed. W. Chafe and J. Nichols, 1986, 159–167. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
2. Bates, E., Rankin, J. Morphological development in Italian: connotation and denotation. *Journal of Child*, 1979.
3. Berko, Jean. The child's learning of English morphology. *Word*, 14, 1958, p.p.150-177.
4. Brown, R. *A first language: The early stages*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973.
5. Cazden, C. The acquisition of nouns and verb inflections. *Child Development*, 39, 1968, p.p.433-448.
6. Clark, E. *First Language acquisition*. Cambridge University Press The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK. Language, 2009, p.p.53-67.
7. Perroni, M., Gammon, C. The acquisition of inflections in Portuguese: A study of the development of person markers on verbs. *Journal of child language*, 6, 1979, p.p.53-67.