



## **Syntactical Development on Second Language Writing: A Case of L2 Child Learner on Immersion Experience Abroad**

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### **Abstract:**

*Development of child language is tremendously complex, remarkable and wondrous. In a second language acquisition context, a child can acquire his second language in either acquiring both languages at the same time or learning the second language after mastering the first one. This present research is concerned to describe the syntactical development particularly for second language writing of an eight-year old child who has experienced immersion abroad for one year in L2-speaking country. The participant is an eight-year old child from Jakarta Indonesia who has experienced immersion environment in Australia for one year. The research will be carried out qualitative naturalistic research design. Not less than 38 documents of participant's paperwork during her school year were then collected, grouped and analysed. From the findings, it is known that morphological processes on L2 such as affixes and verb changes have emerged. Meanwhile, the findings also show the development on morphemic, phrasal and sentential level on acquiring L2. Some morphemes have been acquired such as the suffix, the changing of verb, the -ing form. Moreover, post-noun prepositional phrases are the most emerged phrases. On sentential level, active declarative sentences are the most frequently appeared. However, some errors and inconsistency also occur indicating the development of her second language.*

**Keywords:** *child language, second language, syntactical development, writing*

## 1. Introduction

The field of child second language acquisition (SLA), compare to adult SLA, has scarcely gained full attention. Consequently, we know little about SLA issues particularly on child language development (Paradis, 2008). But then, nowadays the research and studies about it are growing in numbers (Miller, 2012). It happens because of some reasons. At first, SLA comes as a field of inquiry in the 1970s; and the programs, such as French immersion and bilingual program, have been opened in the United States (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 2014; Paradis, 2008). These then emerged interest to search on how second language is acquired particularly by the children. However, the language development particularly in the aspect of syntactical features on second language writing is still undiscovered.

Development of child language is tremendously complex, remarkable and wondrous. A child can acquire and produce from unmeaningful sounds and dental words such as 'maamaa' and 'paapaa' into structural complete sentences only approximately four to five years. Just like what Owens (2012) stated, in twelve years, child develops from a dependent newborn to an adolescent with amazing overall rate of development including language development. Children have ability to intensively acquire, creatively modify and extensively produce language/s they hear from adult people as language users on their surroundings.

In a second language context, a child can acquire his second language in two ways. First is by acquiring both languages at the same time in early childhood; otherwise, he learns it after mastering the first language (Berk, 2006). Berk stated it the process of bilingualism; the ways child become bilingual. Likewise, Paradis (2008) said almost the similar viewpoint. "Bilingual child" is not exactly the same population to "child L2 learner". Simultaneous bilingual children acquire both languages during their preschool years. Meanwhile, L2 children have developed one language before start to learn the other and commonly use the L2 at school but speak the L1 at home.

Research related to second language acquisition in childhood has extensively been investigated. Those discussions mostly presented the morphological unit, clausal/sentential construction, vocabulary knowledge and other factors affecting the development. At first, Krashen (1982 cited by Paradis, 2008) show that order sequence of morpheme acquisition is similar to that found in L1 English: for example, early-acquired morphemes in English L2 are progressive [-ing] and plural [-s]; late-acquired morphemes are past tense [-ed] and third person singular [-s] (Paradis, 2008). Moreover, clausal level of acquisition has been deeply explored by Mobaraki & Saed (2016) and Yamaguchi & Kawaguchi (2016). Mobaraki and Saed (2016) concluded that functional categories, such as Yes/No Questions, WH-questions, and embedded clauses, are not emerged in early stages of interlanguage development of the child L2 acquisition. Meanwhile, Yamaguchi and Kawaguchi (2016) reported that some types of relative clause constructions emerge at earlier stages in L2 English acquisition, particularly in the Japanese child's English L2 develop in the similar way to those reported in L1 studies. Then, Goriot, Broersma, McQueen, Unsworth, & van Hout (2018) investigated whether relative lexical proficiency in Dutch and English in child second language (L2) learners is related to executive functioning. A longitudinal study of a three-year old child whose first language is Indonesian language and English-L2 came from Fitriani (2019). She described that the child has mainly improved and understood short phrases and simple words in both Indonesian and English at the same time.

Despite its complexity, the study of SLA brings benefits for drawing upon knowledge of other fields, such as linguistics, psychology, psycholinguistics, and others, and provides an insight of language teaching and learning (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 2014) because a language teacher should understand the natural processes of language acquisition which may facilitate language learning in the classroom. In spite of the fact that the numerous studies have been researched to gain fuller understanding on child language acquisition, those are mostly conducted in investigation through oral language production and language test. Listening comprehension test and vocabulary test were used by Kulunday & Gabriele (2012) and Pili-Moss (2017) to find out L2 syntactic development and L2 morpho-syntactical development respectively. On the other hand, Fitriani (2019) preferred the daily notes and recordings to collect data of spoken utterances in natural setting; while, longitudinal oral production using audio recordings was gained by Mobaraki & Saed (2016) to figure out the functional categories among two Farsi-speaking children during their settlement in the UK. Then, Yamaguchi & Kawaguchi (2016) also used regular audio-recordings to take the Japanese child's spontaneous speech in English particularly in relative clause constructions.

However, none of those studies are comprehensively captured the morpho-syntactical development of a child who has experienced acquisition his second language on the L2-speaking country. Moreover, there is still a little knowledge about child morpho-syntactical acquisition on the writing system, particularly in early stages of second language development. In addition, the study of speech and writing is largely about errors of the learners, correct form of language production reveals little information about the actual linguistic system (Brown, 2000). As a result, a research that serves to fill the gap on morphological and syntactical development on second language writing on child SLA is significant and crucial to discover its natural process. The results may help some parties, such as language teachers and parents who handles children that are still acquiring their L2, to give fuller, deeper understanding as considerations. Therefore, this present study addressees to make inquiry about the morpho-syntactic development on second language writing by a child who has experienced immersion on the L2-speaking country.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Child Second Language Acquisition**

The study of second language acquisition (SLA) has gained attention when Lado proposed published his work entitled 'Linguistics across cultures' in 1957. Lado stated that difficulty of second-language learning is based on the distance between the native language and the target language. Elements that are similar between languages will be relatively easy to learn whereas elements that are dissimilar will be relatively difficult to learn. Since then, his view was argued and questioned by many linguists (Kootstra, Dijkstra, & Starren, 2015). Meanwhile, the term language acquisition can be defined as the learning on structures or rules. It refers to the grammar construction, the phonological elements of sound patters, syntactical structures of language and others; while, the term 'development' is commonly characterized by the use of the acquired language and its element (rules, structure, and meaning) in various language contexts (Wray & Bloomer, 2006 in Fitriani, 2019).

In addition, acquisition can be ranging from linguistic knowledge to the ability to use that knowledge in speech and the ability to process language in real time (Gass & Selinker, 2008). It is not supposed to be easily simplified, yet it can be stated that second language

acquisition refers to the acquisition process of the second language, can be for a child or an adult. To be more specific, McLaughlin (1978 in (Miller, 2012) stated that a child SLA as the sequential acquisition of two languages in childhood.

*Table 1. Child SLA Paradigm (Miller, 2012)*

Child SLA Paradigms	Descriptions
<b>The Generative Paradigm</b>	Founded by Chomsky (1965), it proposed the framework of child L1 acquisition by arguing that language knowledge has nothing to do with extrinsic habit formation and, instead, everything to do with innate, brain-based mechanisms that allow all learners to form mental representations of morpho-syntactic.
<b>The Emergentist Paradigm</b>	Emergentists typically emphasize either input-related factors, such as type and token frequencies, or processor-related factors, namely, the cognitive interface between the learner's efficiency-driven mental processor and working memory.
<b>The Psycholinguistic Paradigm</b>	An early example of a psycholinguistic approach in the domain of phonology appears in Winitz, Gillespie, and Starcev (1995) investigating the Silent Period Hypothesis (SPH). A more recent psycholinguistic child SLA study occurs in Anderson (2004), who examined the L1 / L2 knowledge relationship in phonology acquisition by five early L2 English learners
<b>The Neurocognitive Paradigm</b>	the neurocognitive paradigm tends to address relationships between brain anatomy and the psycholinguistic aspects of L2 / L1 acquisition, i.e., comparisons of L1 and L2 neurological representations, sometimes as a reflection of processing, storage capacity, and cognitive workload in each language.

Beside the above-mentioned, some individual differences may affect the development of child L2 acquisition. Paradis (2008) explained some individual psychological factors and cognitive characters to external variables may come as the sources of individual differences. Those individual variables can be motivation, aptitude, personality characteristics, first language typology, age of acquisition that may influence the child SLA. Likewise, social-economy status is viewed as factor as source of individual variation in some child SLA research as well as quality and context of second language input. The almost similar insight has been reported by Fitriani (2019). Based on her research, it was concluded that the linguistic input, language acquisition devices, imitation, environment and immediate family are factors affecting the child L2 spoken utterances.

From child SLA research and studies, it is known that patterns and rates between L1 and L2 are highly similar; for instance, the difficult and the late acquired morphosyntax is the same for L1 and L2. Meanwhile, rates of vocabulary accumulation between L1 and L2 seem to be same for children as a group. Moreover, it is commonly believed that child L2 learners, unlike adults, acquire a L2 quickly and with uniform native-speaker ultimate attainment; however, research does not substantiate these beliefs (Paradis, 2008).

## 2.2 Morpho-Syntactical Development on Child SLA

To be specific on morpho-syntactical development in L2 acquisition, some studies have revealed their findings related to its development, language errors, and language transfer. Moreover, they are mostly examined the errors on grammatical morphemes and syntactical structures. The foremost investigation was conducted by Heidi Dulay and Marina Burt in 1973 (Cook, 2008; Paradis, 2008) that 85% of errors in spoken English were errors in grammatical morphemes. Concerning to the grammatical inflection, they also reported that

the sequences of the easiest morphemes to the most difficult to acquire were plural '-s', progressive '-ing', copula form of *be*, auxiliary form of *be*, article 'the' and 'a', irregular past tense, third person '-s', and possessive '-s' as the most difficult morpheme, respectively (Cook, 2008; Miller, 2012).

Regarding to the developmental production of grammar L2 sentences, Cook (2008) proposed the view to create a broader-based sequence of development to reflect the ease with which certain structures can be processed by mind, called processability model. In this model, the language learners ascend the structural tree from bottom to top of stages of acquisition. It views that some sentences are formed by moving from one element to another. It starts firstly to deal with words, phrases, then with simple sentence, and finally in complex sentence (Table. 2).

*Table 2. The Stages of Grammar L2 Sentences (Cook, 2008)*

Stages	Descriptions
1	the learners can produce only one word at a time, say, 'ticket' or 'beer', or formulas such as 'What's the time?' At this stage the learners know content words but have no idea of grammatical structure; the words come out in a stream without being put in phrases and without grammatical morphemes, as if the learners had a dictionary in their mind but no grammar.
2	learners acquire the typical word order of the language. This is the subject verb object (SVO) order – 'John likes beer', 'Hans liebt Bier'. This is the only word order that the learners know; they do not have any alternative word orders.
3	the learners start to move elements to the beginning of the sentence. So they put adverbials at the beginning – 'On Tuesday I went to London'; they use wh- words at the beginning with no inversion – 'Who lives in Camden?'; and they move auxiliaries to get yes/no questions – 'Will you be there?' Typical.
4	learners discover how the preposition can be separated from its phrase in English – 'the patient he looked after' rather than 'the patient after which he looked' – a phenomenon technically known as preposition-stranding, which
5	It comes question-word questions such as 'Where is he going to be?'; the third person grammatical morpheme '-s', 'He likes'; and the dative with 'to', 'He gave his name to the receptionist'. At this stage the learners are starting to work within the structure of the sentence,
6	The final stage is acquiring the order of subordinate clauses. In English this sometimes differs from the order in the main clause. The question order is 'Will he go?' but the reported question is 'Jane asked if he would go', not 'Jane asked if would he go',

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1 Participants

A case study was selected as a research design. Specifically for language learning, Nunan (2013) wrote that a case study can be defined as "the investigation of that single instance in the context in which it occurs" and is related to the documentation and analysis of a single instance; while the researcher commonly explores the characteristic of an individual unit, such as a child.

In this case, the participant of the research is an eight-year old child (when the first time the data are gathered), named Dissa (pseudo-name). Dissa's father was pursuing his Master Degree at Monash University in Melbourne Australia. She came to Australia along with her mother to accompany him for about one year. It was from July 2018 to June 2019.

Dissa went to one public school in Melbourne. At the first place, she attended 1/2 F class until December 2018. Then, she was on grade 3 in 3/4 A class from January until June 2019. When the first coming, she directly entered to class without attending language class/course in which is usually taken by the foreign students from non-English speaking countries. Meanwhile, the classes she has attended were filled by students from multicultural backgrounds and they were L2 use only setting (English). However, at home, her parents speak to her using their L1, Indonesian; sometimes mixed with L2.

Dissa's L2 proficiency and knowledge was unknown when the first time she landed in Melbourne and attended the class. Despite the fact that she never interacts and get in touch with L2 native speakers before coming to Melbourne, at the age of 5, she once joined English course in Jakarta for one term or about 2 months. Moreover, she frequently watched videos or kid movies that use L2. It was as her early exposure of L2. Meanwhile, she almost never used L2 for communication in daily life.

### **3.2 Instruments**

The data were collected from documentation during her school year. To get access to the data, researchers provide a consent form to participant's parents because she is underage and under responsibility of her parents/guards.

The documents were divided into two: 16 documents from term 1 (grade 2) and 22 documents from term 2 (grade 3). They were all papers during the school activities that given to the parents at the end of the term/school year. They were school diary, journals, worksheets, coursebook, etc. that provide the language writing products of the participant.

### **3.2 Data Analysis Procedures**

A qualitative data analysis was used to examine the data. The collection of research data from documents were then gathered, named, and coded. The unit of analysis consisted of one phrase or sentence or expression that convey one meaningful unit. After that, the units will be presented to answer the research question and divided into the levels of phrases and sentences.

## **4. Findings**

To begin with, here is the excerpt of a poem taken from the participant's writing.

Knives  
Knives are unpleasant  
Knives are:  
Good for cutting ropes  
Good for your friend if he/she is a pshycopath  
Good for self-defence  
Good for helping your mum  
Good for cutting your shirt (if you want)  
As sharp as a sword  
As small as a carrot  
(T2-04-1-10)

This current research aims at describing the levels of morpho-syntactic development of second language acquisition on an eight-year old Indonesian L1-English L2 child learner particularly on her writing products. Those levels are grammatical morphemes and phrasal and sentential units of analysis. After collecting and analyzing the data, from 38 source documents, the number of sentences or phrases or expressions has gained 431 units. In detail, 123 units were from term one; meanwhile, the sentences or phrases or expressions have reached 308 units.

#### 4.1. The Acquired Grammatical Morphemes

The main development on the morphology area are the use of inflection and verb change. The L2 child learner developed her L2 acquisition when she could construct and demonstrate the proper inflection. The most frequent inflection is inflectional suffixes; -s/-es in Noun, -d/-ed and -s in verb respectively. For example, inflectional suffixes were in the words, *hands, activities, kids, ingredients, and sprinkles*; while, some words were not inflected, such as *the snake, and the bread*. The use of -d/-ed was mostly for narrative writing and they were varied to show verb changing into past form, such as *lived, screamed, and defeated*; on the other hand, there was also derivational suffix -d/-ed from verb to be adjective form, such as *curse* in *the cursed child, the resumed map, and this old haunted house*. Moreover, the number of inflectional and derivational suffixes on the participant's writing was getting higher from term one to two (table 3).

Table 3. Suffixes on Participant's Writing

Term	Inflectional and Derivational Suffixes		
	suffix -s/-es in Noun	suffix -s in Verb	suffix -d/-ed
1	35	1	11
2	59	6	51

Beside the development of suffixes, she showed her emergence on the verb changes. She changed the verbs extensively from present to past or present to progressive. The form of irregular verb was also appeared on her writing, such as *did*. In addition, the number of its use was also higher; 18 changes on the first term, then 107 changes on term two. For example, verbs *left, made, felt, and had* were emerged on term 1 documents, while; *ran, told, found* were from her writing on term 2. To be more specific on -ing form, it was as both auxiliary form of *be* and gerund, such as *was walking, were climbing, was shivering, my reading goal*.

Even though only on the small amount of emergence, another morphological development was the various inflection either prefixes or suffixes. For instance, the prefix -un and -dis was found on *uncomfortable* and *disappeared*. Similarly, the words *slowly* and *suddenly* were as suffix -ly. However, not all inflectional and derivational morphemes applied by the participants were fully appropriate. She made some errors sometimes. For example, *drawed* and *opend* should be *drew* and *opened*.

#### 4.2. The Acquired Phrasal Level

In the level of phrases, it is divided into 2 types: noun phrases and verb phrases. Meanwhile, the prepositional phrase is included on the noun phrases as post-noun prepositional phrase.

It gained 15 unit on the first term, then it became almost to triple on the second term, 43 units. They function mostly to show time and places, such as *for a long time, on the holiday, in the zip lock bag, in the universe, on your left hand, on the bus, in the forest.*

Table 4. The Emergence of Noun Phrases

Terms	Noun Phrases					
	Article + Noun	Article + Adjective + Noun	Pronoun + Noun	Quantifier + (adjective) + Noun	Noun + Noun	Demonstrative Pronoun + Noun
1	28	27	27	13	5	3
2	80	53	50	22	7	8

The entire types of noun phrases found on the data were increasing in number. And the most significant increase was noun phrases with article + noun. They were, for example, *a/the snake, the plate, the kid, the door, the biscuits, a bat.* Then, noun phrases with adjective, noun or pronoun could be seen on the samples, such as *my eyes/name, her family, this story, that person, this movie, your hand, butter knife* and *the murder boy.*

Noun phrases completed by article and adjective were appeared on *a warm water, the only person, the first sentence, the first reason, the same group* and *the good thing.* Then, more complex noun phrases by changing verb into adjective were also shown on *chopping board* and *condensed milk.* For noun phrases using quantifier and adjective, the constructions on term 2 became more complex, such as from *lots of things* into *An 8 feet tall lady.* Despite the above-mentioned, another types of noun phrases emerged on the writing, such as *the physco little girl* and *a brown coloured box.*

Concerning to the verb phrases, the formulations were mostly the verb completed by preposition and modal auxiliary verb. The number of verb phrases and modal auxiliary verb was increasing from term one to two, 5 to 21 and 15 to 29 respectively. The child participant has shown to use verb phrases on the sentence, such as *pull up, turn off, ran to, put on,* and *sucked up.* On the other side, *could, have to, can,* and *should* were the most frequent modal verb used on writing.

#### 4.3. The Acquired Sentential Level

On the sentential level of acquisition, the child participant’s writing showed various and rich use of sentence types. Based on its function and structure, simple active, declarative sentences are in the large amount of emergence, followed by interrogative sentence and imperative with 112, 10, and 9 appearances respectively. The excerpt below is the samples of simple active, declarative sentences.

Her name is Cellie Cizzy.  
 She lived in a small house with her family.  
 An evil witch was furious about Cellie.  
 She made a snake to curse Cellie.  
 At home Cellie was getting ready for camping in the forest with the school.  
 (T1-03-4-8)



On the other hand, the passive sentence was only a few throughout the collected data, such as *my opinions are convinced by me* and *are you convinced by me?* Another sentence used *get* to express passive meaning, such as *the lady will get distracted by the noises*. Related to the imperative construction, it is commonly used to express the procedural text type that was being learned and practiced at her class. The sample application of imperative form is displayed on the excerpt below.

First, get one plates and put a bread on the plate.

Next get your butter knife and get your butter.

last of all get your sprinkles and spread the sprinkles gently over the bread. (T1-08-6-9)

Not only the function and structure of sentences, the sentences made by the child participants were also analyzed based on its relation and the use of conjunctions. They were then divided into several conjoining. Those relations were marked by the use of conjunctions either coordinating or sub-ordinating, such as causal (because, so), temporal (when), Disjunctive (but), conditional (if), additional (and), chronological (then, next). From the data, conjoining with the word *and* was the most frequently appeared on the first term; then sub-ordinating conjunction *because* and *so* to express causal relation between the clauses became more dominant. Several types of conjoining have increased in number, except additional and chronological conjoining. And then causal conjoining became the most frequently used on the sentences (table 5). It indicates that the child participant mostly used *because* and *so* on her sentences.

Table 5. The Use of Conjoined Sentences

Terms	Causal Conjoining	Temporal Conjoining	Disjunctive Conjoining	Conditional Conjoining	additional conjoining	chronological conjoining
1	16	9	4	4	20	10
2	36	23	16	16	13	8

Moreover, relative clauses and the use of direct speech were also emerged on the data. She wrote sentences using relative pronoun *who*, *where*, or *that*; for instance, *I teleported to a pin place that I called Dream Universe, the kid dragged me to one room where I seek an 8 feet tall lady with black hair*. In addition, the direct speech was also used to express direct expression on the sentence on narrative writing, such as *"my parents left me here because I'm weird" the girl said*.

It seems that the child's L2 is still developing. She made some errors and inconsistency in applying structures. In one piece of writing, she writes sentences with accurate rules, but the same rules are mistakenly constructed on other writing. Take this as an example, at a glance, she is fairly competent in verb changes, but it is then revealed that some past verbs are wrongly structured, such as *cutted*, *drawed*, *raind*, *opend*. The most salient phenomenon was when she writes some words just as same as they are pronounced on the spoken utterances. Therefore, they become mistyping on English writing system (table 6).

Table 6. Some Errors and Inconsistency

Errors and Inconsistency	Examples
<b>Mistyping</b>	Bolw, allwais, wan, ekejmet, besor, shool/skool, difernt, unkle, paket, smahs, cryzy, beautyfull/beutifull, readying, wolvs, treture, triangle, appired, picnik, choise, screlely, uncomterble, forck, troble, defeted, revengd, clarious, opend, sleved, boffollow, worl, wich, wacthing, recomend, fealings, sarving, kichen, apartman, yelow, creacoure, remmembered, physco, chould, thoso, wispered, sckuicky, thouhgt, mystirious, stomacht, sudenly, favevourite, fried, evel
<b>Mis-formation (verb form, mis-punctuation, mis-ordering, omission, null subject, zero be, etc.)</b>	She drawed, she opend, A 14 year old girl, wont, it make, it getting, kids is so, she see, he rule the worl, me and my friend/ me and my bros, 3 AM still walking through the forest, this creatures is, she cutted, if your waering a hat, your cool when your wareing a hat, He has been witness, The earth has rained, her father go to the bar,

From her writing on term one, it seemingly appears that she struggles to accurately write the word *because* and *activity* though she seems appropriate in using them on the contexts. She wrongly wrote *activity* several times into *activetys* or *activeteis*. Then the word *because* comes into *beacous*, *beacause*, *becouse* or *beacouse* on her sentences. It appears that she tries the language on her writing expression. As seen on the excerpt below, it shows how she writes *school* into *shool*, until finally she does it correctly.

Shool is important!

I agree you need to go to shool so you can make friend

You should go too school so you can learn and you can be smart

I thick you have too go to school because you'll eat lunch. (T1-07-1-4)

## 5. Discussion

The development of child language is rapidly growing during the school year. Having school environment as second home, a child comprehends, produces, uses, experiments and interacts with the language through interaction with teacher and schoolmates. Beside parents, his language source, partner and exposure become more plentiful and adequate. Therefore, a child's sentence competence and production continuously expand and develop during this period (Owens, 2012).

On the morphologic process, the inflectional and derivational morphemes have been emerged both in prefixes/suffixes and verb changes. Her writing results in a large quantity of suffixes *-s/-es* (for noun and verb) and verb changes either present-progressive-past verb changes or gerund. These findings supports what Dulay, Burt and Krashen found that order sequence of morpheme acquisition is similar to that found in L1 English: for example, early-acquired morphemes in English L2 are progressive [-ing] and plural [-s]; late-acquired morphemes are past tense [-ed] and third person singular [-s] (Paradis, 2008). The prefix (-un and -dis) and suffix (-ly, -ive, -al) are also emerged on the data. Meanwhile, the overgeneralization on verb form occurs on suffix *-ed*, such as *drawed* and *cutted*.

For the level phrases, the entire noun phrases and its types found on the data are mostly in correct orders in which a noun is preceded by an article, an adjective, pronoun or another noun as modifier. This result differs from the developmental error on Spanish and Chinese children who learnt English as L2 and made mis-ordering of *the skinny man* into *the man*

*skinny* (Paradis, 2008). While, the verb phrases and the use of modal auxiliary verb have already emerged and are generally used in appropriate form.

On the sentential level, she starts to develop in constructing various types of sentences. Active, declarative type of sentences are the most frequently used on her writing. Joining two clauses together using conjunctions are appeared with *and* and *because* as the most frequent used on the sentences. This support what was reported by Steffani (2007). She wrote that one of the first complex sentence structure emerges on children is coordination of clauses using *and*; then they continue to develop embedded clauses using infinitives and relatives clauses (Steffani, 2007). The latter is also found on the data. The child participant has written some complex sentences using noun clauses, relative clauses, and direct speech. It is also similar to the research by Yamaguchi & Kawaguchi (2016). They conclude that infinitival and participial relative clauses constructions emerged at early stages in the child's English L2 acquisition. Meanwhile, a quite different result has been reported by Mobaraki & Saed (2016) who summarize that the functional category, such as questions and embedded clauses, is not present at the initial stages of L2 acquisition and emerges after the learners have mastered inflectional phrases (IP) in their grammars.

Based on the child participant's data, it is clearly seen that she has awareness that the language (English) she uses and learns has rules and system. Not only having awareness, she seems doing experiment on it through trial and error on her writing. It can be seen on some errors and inconsistent structures she made. Though she demonstrates rich thought, complex ideas and various relations on her language, the application of structures and rules on the sentences looks unstable. It depicts that her language acquisition is a systematic process that requires several stages. This is consistent with the ideas of sequential learning that the learner starts with sentences without movement and learns how to move the various parts of the sentence around to get the final form (Cook, 2008) and the progression of learners' linguistic development begins with pre-systematic, emergent, systematic into stabilization stage of learner language (Brown, 2000).

Furthermore, that the child participant shows her emergence of acquired morphemes, phrases, and sentences and their quantity indicates her development of second language. Some are early acquired, yet some others are late. It thus supports the view that the L1 and L2 acquisition are highly similar in patterns and rates, such as the area of the difficult and late acquired morphosyntax (Paradis, 2008) and from formulaic expression into complex construction (Cook, 2008). It can be stated that the child participant has been developing early stage of her second language acquisition. With sufficient exposure/input and other attributes affecting language development, she will continue on internalizing and acquiring her second language.

## **6. Conclusion**

This current study addresses to describe the syntactical development of second language writing from an eight-year old child L2-English and L1-Indonesian who has experienced living in L2-speaking country. The main focuses of investigation are morphologic development and the acquired phrases and sentences made by the child participant on her writing during the school year.

The study confirms that the child participant has acquired some morphemes; for example, the suffix -s/-es (noun and verb), suffix -d/-ed, and the changing of verb (present-past-progressive), the -ing form, and other prefixes and suffixes. Moreover, noun phrases have also emerged on her writing using post-noun prepositional phrases and other formula with article, adjective, pronoun, quantifier and another noun. In addition, though with only small in number, the verb phrases can also be used on her sentences. Concerning to the level of sentence, she expresses various types of sentences. Active, declarative sentences are the most frequently appeared on the data. Not only that, she also shows her development in building complex sentence constructions. Some conjoined sentences are emerged with *and* and *because* as the most salient conjunctions as well as the use of relative clauses, noun clauses and direct speech. However, though her second language seems rapidly growing with various use of words, phrases and sentences, some errors and inconsistency occurs on her language writing. It indicates that she is still developing the language and is in the process to internalize and acquire it on her system.

Moreover, the entire data on this current research are collected through documentations. Therefore, for further research, investigation of spoken/oral utterances is needed to get fuller understanding of child SLA particularly for syntactical development. Not only that, to achieve more comprehensive information and understanding, selecting the specific linguistic item, such as article, to investigate is highly advisable.

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