Factors of Language Development Among Kindergartners: Its Relationship on Speech and Social Behaviors

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ABSTRACT

This study was intended to identify the relationship between the factors of a child's language development on their speech and social behaviors. It aimed to enrich the perception of the parents and the teachers on the factors of language development so that they can supplement the developmental needs of the child as it will benefit and prepare them as they immerse them-selves in manifold activities when they grow up. This research used a descriptive quantitative design utilizing a survey questionnaire responded by 20 parents and two (2) teachers of kindergarten pupils of Cavite Bible Baptist Church and Schools. The results showed that the language development of the pupils considering the factors, intelligence and cognition, learning environment, teaching and learning materials, parent-child relationship, and bilingualism, are highly developed which positively affects their speech and social behavior. The study revealed that there was a significant difference between the responses of the respondents which implies that teachers and parents have varied perceptions of a child's language development as to their speech and social behavior. It was also seen in the findings that speech and social behavior do not go hand in hand as kindergarten pupils' speech and social behavior had a weak correlation, and learners may have better skills in speaking but behave timidly. Some are active and extroverted but can hardly express themselves in words. Inasmuch, children must be communicated in English or Cebuano in total words rather than baby talks as this strengthens their oral language skills.

Keywords : language development, factors of language development, speech behavior, social behavior, Cavite Bible Baptist Church and Schools.

1.   INTRODUCTION

Language is crucial for communication (Hartanto et al., 2016), but some kindergartners learning a second language may struggle with socializing. Behavioral problems and language delays are common in children, with long-term effects (Church, 2003; Sunderajan & Kanhere, 2019). Delayed language development can impact social skills. This study aimed to identify factors influencing language development and their impact on social and speech behaviors. Understanding these factors helps parents and teachers provide appropriate support. The findings inform stakeholders about language development in kindergartners, addressing related issues and trends for children's well-being and success.

2.   METHODOLOGY

The study employed quantitative research methods and descriptive techniques to gather data from respondents, who were parents and teachers of kindergartners at Cavite Bible Baptist Church and Schools.

The researchers aimed to assess the language development of kindergartners in various aspects and establish relationships between different variables.

The study was conducted at Cavite Bible Baptist Church and Schools in Maganay, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay, where the majority of the community uses Cebuano as their mother tongue. The school follows the School of Tomorrow system (ACE), an American curriculum emphasizing skill building and character development.

The respondents consisted of 20 parents and 2 teachers. The researchers chose them because of their firsthand experience with the development of the kindergartners. The data collection involved a modified standardized survey questionnaire, and the researchers followed a series of procedures to gather and analyze the data.

Statistical tools, such as SPSS, were used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics, including percentages and weighted mean, were employed to describe the profiles of the respondents and assess the level of language development. Inferential statistics, such as t-tests and Pearson correlation, were used to examine relationships between responses and variables.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following dealt with the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data gathered from the respondents of the study.

Table 1. Languages Used at Home by the Kindergarten Pupils

Language Use	Frequency	Percentage
1. Cebuano, English	17	85%
2. Cebuano, Tagalog	1	5%
3. Cebuano, English, Tagalog	1	5%
4. Cebuano, English, Subanen	1	5%
Total	20	100%

Table 1 presents the languages spoken at home by kindergarten pupils. Out of the 20 pupils, 17 (85%) use both Cebuano and English, one (5%) speaks Cebuano and Tagalog, another one (5%) speaks Cebuano, Tagalog, and English, and one (5%) speaks Cebuano, English, and Subanen.

Language plays a crucial role in developing cultural identity and overall learning. Dual language learners bring diverse backgrounds and abilities to early childhood settings, requiring tailored approaches to maximize their potential and English proficiency. Research suggests that specific teaching strategies, individualized interactions, and enriched environments are vital for the long-term success of non-native English speakers. Moreover, children raised in multilingual households demonstrate better self-control, which is an important predictor of academic achievement (Esquivel, 2020; Kovács and Mehler, 2009).

Table 2.1. Language Development of Pupils in terms of Intelligence and Cognition as a Factor as Perceived by the Respondents

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. The child understands simple instructions through oral language	2.6	Highly Developed
2. The child thinks and perceives things by processing simple information.	2.567	Highly Developed
3. The child interacts with other children.	2.717	Highly Developed
4. The child demonstrates through the use of symbols, language, memory development, and imagination.	2.45	Highly Developed
5. The child shows egocentric characteristics.	2.67	Highly Developed
General Weighted Mean	**2.52**	**Highly Developed**

Numerical Scale	Description	Interpretation
2.34 - 3.00	Always	Highly Developed
1.67 - 2.33	Sometimes	Moderately Developed
1.00 - 1.66	Never	Less Developed

Table 2.1 presents the level of pupils' language development in terms of intelligence and cognition. The table includes five statements related to intelligence and awareness, indicating highly developed language skills. The statements cover understanding instructions, processing information, interacting with others, using symbols and language, and displaying egocentric characteristics. The overall weighted mean of 2.52 further supports the highly developed interpretation. Andrea (2012) supports these findings, emphasizing the role of interactions in language acquisition and the importance of learning categories, identification, sorting, and memory for language development. Early childhood is a critical period for overall development, including language, physical, psychosocial, and cognitive aspects (Esquivel, Elam, Paris, & Tafoya, 2020).

Table 2.2. Level of the Pupils' Language Development in Terms of Learning Environment as a Factor as Perceived by the Respondents

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. The child learns to negotiate his/her thoughts with other children and adults.	2.5	Highly Developed
2. The child adapts to the changes of his environment and maintains his interactional behavior.	2.533	Highly Developed
3. The child behaves appropriately in public places.	2.45	Highly Developed
4. The child communicates his/her thoughts in places he/she is not familiar with.	2.483	Highly Developed
5. The child observes other people and responds to stimuli appropriately.	2.5	Highly Developed
General Weighted Mean	**2.493**	**Highly Developed**

Numerical Scale	Description	Interpretation
2.34 - 3.00	Always	Highly Developed
1.67 - 2.33	Sometimes	Moderately Developed
1.00 - 1.66	Never	Less Developed

Table 2.2 presents the level of pupils' language development in terms of the learning environment factor. The table includes five statements related to the learning environment, indicating highly developed language skills. The statements cover negotiating thoughts, adapting to changes, behaving appropriately in public, communicating in unfamiliar places, and observing and responding to stimuli. The overall weighted mean of 2.493 further supports the highly developed interpretation. Bradley et al. (2001)

supports these findings, highlighting the positive impact of a stimulating learning environment on children's achievement and language development.

Table 2.3. Level of the Pupils' Language Development in terms of Teaching and Learning Materials as a Factor as Perceived by the Respondents

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. The child recognizes words and other symbols appropriate for his/her age.	2.5333	Highly Developed
2. The child recognizes changes in things such as height, weight, color, and others.	2.3833	Highly Developed
3. The child uses materials as a learning opportunity.	2.3833	Highly Developed
4. The child understands how to use the coloring book	2.8667	Highly Developed
5. The child knows the use of learning materials for his/her age level.	2.55	Highly Developed
General Weighted Mean	**2.52**	
		Highly Developed

Numerical Scale	Description	Interpretation
2.34 - 3.00	Always	Highly Developed
1.67 - 2.33	Sometimes	Moderately Developed
1.00 - 1.66	Never	Less Developed

Table 2.3 displays the pupils' language development level regarding teaching and learning materials as a factor. The table includes five statements related to this factor, indicating highly developed language skills. The statements cover recognizing words and symbols, identifying changes, utilizing materials for learning, understanding the use of coloring books, and knowing age-appropriate learning materials. The overall weighted mean of 2.543 further supports the interpretation of highly developed language skills. Brian Tomlinson's book on Materials Development for Language Learning and Teaching supports these findings, emphasizing the role of materials in facilitating language learning and providing various functions, such as instructional, experiential, eliciting, and exploratory roles. Materials development involves processes like evaluation, adaptation, design, exploitation, and research in language learning.

Table 2.4. Level of the Pupils' Language Development in terms of Parent-Child Relationship as a Factor as Perceived by the Respondents

Statement	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. The child calls his/her parents with respect.	2.7333	Highly Developed
2. The child knows that his/her behavior is being regulated.	2.5167	Highly Developed
3. The child exhibits optimistic and emotional development whenever he/she communicates his/her needs to his/her parent/s.	2.5167	Highly Developed
4. The child involves himself/herself in day-to-day activities with his/her parents.	2.6333	Highly Developed
5. The child expresses his/her thoughts clearly to his/her parents.	2.5333	Highly Developed
General Weighted Mean	**2.5867**	
		Highly Developed

Numerical Scale	Description	Interpretation
2.34 - 3.00	Always	Highly Developed
1.67 - 2.33	Sometimes	Moderately Developed
1.00 - 1.66	Never	Less Developed

Table 2.4 presents the pupils' language development level in terms of Parent-Child Relationship as a factor. The table includes five statements related to this factor, indicating highly developed language skills. These statements cover respectful communication with parents, awareness of behavior regulation, optimistic emotional development during communication, engagement in day-to-day activities with parents, and clear expression of thoughts to parents. The overall weighted mean of 2.5867 supports the interpretation of highly developed language skills. This finding aligns with the research of Hart & Risley (1995) and Hoff (2003), emphasizing the significance of parent-child relationships in a child's intellectual growth. It is observed that children's language development is influenced by frequent exposure to high-quality spoken language in the home environment, with greater parent-child interactions contributing to better vocabulary growth.

Table 2.5. Level of the Pupils' Language Development in terms of Bilingualism/Multilingualism as Factor as Perceived by the Respondents

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. The child uses L1 and L2 to establish interaction/communication.	2.4	Highly Developed
2. The child expresses his/her thoughts in L1 and L2 without confusion.	2.25	Highly Developed
3. The child responds to questions and ideas from adults using L1 and L2 with clear understanding.	2.417	Highly Developed
4. The child responds to children using L1 and L2.	2.5	Highly Developed
5. The child processes information correctly with the use of L1 and L2.	2.4	Highly Developed
General Weighted Mean	**2.393**	**Highly Developed**

Numerical Scale	Description	Interpretation
2.34 - 3.00	Always	Highly Developed
1.67 - 2.33	Sometimes	Moderately Developed
1.00 - 1.66	Never	Less Developed

Table 2.5 presents the pupils' language development level in terms of Bilingualism/Multilingualism as a factor. Five statements are utilized to assess language skills in this context. The statements cover aspects such as using multiple languages for interaction, expressing thoughts without confusion, understanding and responding to questions and ideas in different languages, interacting with other bilingual children, and processing information accurately in multiple languages. Most of these statements were interpreted as highly developed, except for statement two, which was moderately developed. The overall weighted mean of 2.393 indicates highly developed language skills in bilingualism/multilingualism. The table highlights that children can effectively use more than one language in communication, especially when their parents are bilingual themselves. Code mixing, the use of elements from different languages in the same sentence or conversation, is a common phenomenon among bilingual individuals and occurs naturally in interactions with other bilingual speakers.

Table 3. Level of Pupils' Speech Behavior Perceived by the Respondents

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Displays oral language and recognizes words and phrase patterns.	2.23	Moderately Developed
2. Establishes interactions using recognizable words and expressions.	2.4	Highly Developed
3. Uses words and phrases to express ideas and concepts.	2.283	Moderately Developed
4. Says words well and is able to put four (4) or more words together.	2.433	Highly Developed
5. Communicates using words, gestures, and tone.	2.783	Highly Developed
6. I Enjoy saying the same word over and over.	2.65	Highly Developed
7. Follow simple directions.	2.717	Highly Developed
8. Can say the ABCs, numbers, or words to TV jingles.	2.817	Highly Developed
9. Answer simple "Who?" "What?" "Where?" and "Why?" questions.	2.417	Highly Developed
10. Pays attention to a story and answers questions about it.	2.383	Highly Developed
General Weighted Mean	**2.512**	**Highly Developed**

Numerical Scale	Description	Interpretation
2.34 - 3.00	Always	Highly Developed
1.67 - 2.33	Sometimes	Moderately Developed
1.00 - 1.66	Never	Less Developed

Table 3 presents the level of pupils' speech behavior, assessing various aspects of their speech development. Out of the ten statements used, the top three indicate highly developed speech behavior, including the ability to say the ABCs, numbers, or words to jingles, effective communication using words, gestures, and tone, and following simple directions. On the other hand, the bottom three statements suggest moderately developed speech behavior in terms of displaying oral language and recognizing patterns, using words and phrases to express ideas, and paying attention to a story and answering questions about it. However, even the bottom statement is still interpreted as highly developed. Overall, the table indicates a highly developed level of speech behavior with a weighted mean of 2.512. This aligns with B.F. Skinner's learning theory, which

suggests that language develops through reinforcement and positive feedback. Children learn language more quickly when their parents frequently engage them in conversation and provide reinforcement through attention, praise, or other rewards.

Table 4. Level of Pupils' Social Behavior Perceived by the Respondents
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Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Aware and sensitive to the feelings and actions of others.	2.3333	Moderately Behaved
2. Generally, well-behaved, and usually does what adults request.	2.383	Well-Behaved
3. Good attention span, sees work through to the end.	2.483	Well-Behaved
4. Shares readily with other children, for example, toys, treats, and pencils.	2.717	Well-Behaved
5. Offers to help others (parents, teachers, other children).	2.65	Well-Behaved
6. Do not fight with other children or bullies them.	2.433	Well-Behaved
7. Confident and excited when faced with new situations.	2.483	Well-Behaved
8. Fearless and not easily scared.	2.383	Well-Behaved
9. Calm, collected, and can stay still for long.	2.417	Well-Behaved
10. Displays cheerfulness and gladness.	2.667	Well-Behaved
General Weighted Mean	**2.495**	**Well-Behaved**

Numerical Scale	Description	Interpretation
2.34 - 3.00	Always	Well-Behaved
1.67 - 2.33	Sometimes	Moderately Behaved
1.00 - 1.66	Never	Less Behaved

Table 4 presents the level of pupils' social behavior, assessing various aspects of their social development. Among the ten statements used, the top three indicate well-behaved social behavior, including sharing with others, displaying cheerfulness and gladness, and offering help to others. Conversely, the bottom three statements suggest moderately behaved or well-behaved social behavior in terms of awareness and sensitivity to others' feelings and actions, general compliance with adult requests, and fearlessness. Overall, the table indicates a highly developed level of social behavior with a weighted mean of 2.495. This analysis aligns with Bandura's social learning theory, which suggests that social behavior is learned through observation and imitation of others, including family members, friends, and media figures. When children perceive rewards or positive outcomes associated with certain behaviors, they are more likely to engage in them.

Table 5. Test of Significant Difference between the Respondents' Responses on Pupils' Language Development and Its Relationship to their Speech and Social Behaviors in terms of the Used Indicators

Indicators	Statistical Results	Interpretation
1. Intelligence and Cognition	f-value is 7.22594 P-value is 0.001636 (lesser at 0.05)	Highly Significant
2. Learning Environment	f-value is 9.25795 P-value is 0.000336 (lesser at 0.05)	Highly Significant
3. Teaching-Learning Materials	f-value is 7.39087 P-value is 0.0014 (lesser at 0.05)	Highly Significant
4. The Parent-child Relationship	f-value is 13.5274 P-value is 0.000017 (lesser at 0.05)	Highly Significant
5. The Bilingualism	f-value is 7.36826 P-value is 0.001425 (lesser at 0.05)	Highly Significant

Table 5 presents the test of significant differences in respondents' responses regarding language development across various indicators. The statistical analysis indicates that indicators such as intelligence and cognition, learning environment, teaching-learning materials, parent-child relationship, and bilingualism all demonstrate highly significant differences in the respondents' perceptions, as evidenced by p-values below 0.05. This suggests that teachers and parents have varying perspectives on a child's language development. It is important to recognize that adults, particularly parents, possess valuable insights into children's lives and are often considered the primary authority on their experiences. Hayes (2002) supports the notion that parents hold a significant role in understanding and assessing their child's development.

Table 6. Test of Significant Correlation between Kindergarten Pupils' Speech Behavior and Social Behavior

Statistical Results	Finding/s	Interpretation
R-value is 0.2721	Positive Correlation	Weak
P-value is 0.245814	Greater at 0.05	Not Significant

Table 6 revealed that the correlation between kindergarten pupils' speech and social behavior is not significant. The R-value of .2721 and a P-value of .245814, greater than the .05 level, indicate a lack of correlation between speech and social behavior. It can be said that speech and social behavior do not go hand in hand. This finding aligns with Emily Barber's study, which also found a weak correlation between vocabulary development and social development in children aged five to seven years. The study suggests that vocabulary and social development may be influenced by separate factors during the early years, indicating that these aspects of child development are initially independent and driven by different variables.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:
Firstly, the exposure of children, especially the kindergarten learning Cebuano and English, is affected by the language used at home and children's exposure to mass media.
Secondly, the pupils can use L1 and L2 comfortably and interchangeably; language learning can be interactive and exciting by introducing appropriate vocabulary exercises.
Thirdly, pupils' speech and social behavior show a high level of language development. They interchange, making language acquisition effective when a particular word is learned based on several aspects.
Next, the indicators such as intelligence and cognition, teaching environment, teaching-learning materials, the parent-child relationship, and bilingualism could increase children's language development. There is an interplay among these factors. Although there is no surefire remedy or method to enhance vocabulary in a day or two, vocabulary activities can be integrated into learners' ability, level of understanding, and interest.
Lastly, kindergarten pupils' speech and social behavior have a weak correlation, and learners may have better skills in speaking but behave timidly. Some are active and extroverted but can hardly express themselves in words.

IMPLICATIONS

This study implies that factors of language development such as intelligence and cognition, learning environment, teaching and learning materials, parent-child relationship, and bilingualism greatly affect the language development of children. Further, if the language development of the child is highly honed, it will positively affect their social and speech behavior. However, even though the language development of a child helps develop his social and speech behavior, these two variables do not go hand in hand as a child can fully develop his speech behavior but neglects his ability to socialize and vice versa but note that a child can develop both at the same time too.

Acknowledgments

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