

# The Psychological Development Of The Early Childhood Language In Sultanate Of Oman

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## Abstract

The current study dealt with the linguistic development of children, as linguistic development is one of the very important aspects throughout the different stages of human life, because of its effects on various aspects of development such as social, psychological, physical and other developmental aspects.

The current research targeted children in kindergarten, where the total of the targeted children reached 50 children, 12 males and 32 females, and in order to know the extent of their linguistic development, the tool of kindergarten teachers who teach children was applied and 8 hold a diploma certification, meanwhile 4 of them are holding Bachelor certification.

The study objectives were to investigate measuring the linguistic development of children; therefore, the research asked several questions which are related to the objective of the research: What is the level of peer influence on children's language development? What are the influences of interaction between teachers and children on their language development? Is there a difference between urban and rural children in terms of vocabulary and correct or proper pronunciation?

The findings of current research concluded that amid preschool for a long time, sentence designs ended up progressively complex and the lexicon expands to incorporate social terms that express ideas of the estimate, area, amount and time. moreover, the investigation discoveries have concluded that by the age of preschool, most children have obtained the fundamental linguistic use of the sentence and the preschool arrangement encompasses a critical part in creating and progressing the dialect of the children through children connected and interacting with their colleagues and instructors in addition to the positive impact of the environment in which the child grows up, play a tangible and effective role in language development. The results of the study concluded that there are no statistically significant differences with regard to the teacher's years of experience while teaching and following-up children in kindergarten.

**Key words:** Language development, preschool teachers and biological maturity.

## Introduction

The Language considered one of the most vital aspects of human development, and language is

used systematically and imitating sounds or signs to express what is going on in the mind or imagination of a human being. <sup>(1)</sup>. This definition

is considered correct, and developmental psychologists consider it a correct definition, but it is insufficient and considered a deficient definition.

Language is a complex structure and carries with multifaceted. According to the foregoing, this definition is considered short, as the human language is characterized by intricate in terms of vocabulary, structure, composition and finally the language implications, therefor, "the child who learns a language achieves the ability to recognize and produce a set of sounds and learns how these sounds can and cannot be combined into possible words" <sup>(2)</sup>.

There are many purposes why we should highlight and concentrate on verbal language in pre-school as well as school stage, According to Cregan (1998):

"Oral language is the child's first, most important, and most frequently used structured medium of communication. It is the primary means through which each individual child will be enabled to structure, to evaluate, to describe and to control his/her experience. In addition, and most significantly, oral language is the primary mediator of culture, the way in which children locate themselves in the world and define themselves with it and within it" <sup>(3)</sup>.

In addition to being important in its own right, verbal and oral language is significant because of its correlation with reading and writing. Verbal language beside oral language and reading, furthermore, writing language draw greatly on each other, and on a prevalent combination of phonological, meaning, and grammatical formations, as well as on prevalent processes or objectives. <sup>(4)</sup>

## The origin and definition of the language

### Definition

There are many definitions of language because all humans have different languages, so researchers have not agreed on a specific definition, for example, Ibn Jinni define the language as "sounds by which all people express their purposes, meanwhile, Ibn Manzur in his lexicon "Lesan al-Arab" indicates that language is unsteady and develops according to the change of peoples and the stereotype of their living conditions and that the provenance of the word "language" is "rhetoric" which is mean "the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, especially the use of figures of speech and other compositional techniques", It is what was not contracted from speech, and it is also what is not reliable from speech because it fluctuates from one situation to another<sup>(5)</sup>. Language is a set of conventions or written symbols that represent ideas about the world through an idiomatic system and are used to communicate between people <sup>(6)</sup>.

Dr. Hassan has defined "The language" in his textbook "The language between normative and descriptive" as the considerable social organization can only perform its function It can only perform its function unless its systems are integrated and the formal separation between each unit and the other of its constituent units <sup>(7)</sup>. A Language is a wondrous instrument in which thoughts and feelings are expressed in the form of symbols so that these symbols can convey meaning to others, which is a feelings and emotions, and writing is sometimes unable to do so; That is why a group of natural scientists turned to the sound aspect, as Ibn Jinni defines it

as “the sounds with which every people express their purposes.”<sup>(8)</sup>

The definition includes three things:

- The language has sounds.
- The Language is a means of communication.
- The Languages vary according to races and ethnicities.

Therefore, language is one of the phenomena of mental and social life that represents its people and society. Here “Firth” says that the social function of language is its most important feature<sup>(9)</sup>.

Language includes several and diversified forms of communication such as writing, speech, signs, facial expressions and gestures, in addition to all forms of artistic expression such as music, singing, drawing, formation, theatre, cinema, poetry and literature, and dreaming and silence are both languages<sup>(10)</sup>.

### **The Genesis of language**

It is very difficult to determine the genesis of the humans being language, there are many theories that converse about this emergence, including:

- (A) **The theory of imitation** (that is, simulating the sounds of nature): This theory sees that words arise as an imitation of the sounds of nature, for example, the rustle of a snake or rustle of the tree’s leaves ... etc.; Any process of imitating sounds found in nature constitutes or represents the main beginnings of the emergence of language.
- (B) **The theory of the natural expression of effervescence**: The proponents of this theory believe that the origin of the language is due to a special instinct that

was originally provided to all members of the human species.

- (C) **Natural Resonance Theory**: Its proponents believe that man has an innate ability to make every external sound or impression an internal acoustic expression caused by a predetermined resonance.
- (D) **Manual Sign Language**: This theory indicates that the primary language of humans was a language of manual signs, but the necessity of working and exchanging information in the dark led to the use of voice instead. There is no doubt that the sign language of the hands can reach a high degree of complexity, as evidenced by the sign language used by the dumb and deaf.
- (E) **The Inspirational Theory**: It believes that the origin of language is due to an inspiration that descended on man and taught him to enunciate the names of various things.
- (F) **The theory of agreement**: the owners of this theory believe that the language was invented and created by agreement or improvisation of words.

From the foregoing, and through these theories, we can say that human language arose from natural sounds, animal sounds, and voices expressing emotions, then the language proceeded according to the rise of the human mentality and the multiplicity of human needs<sup>(11)</sup>.

### **The individual differences between children in developing language**

The differences that affect language acquisition can be grouped into two main groups: as the following:

1. A set of personal sources stemming from the child's self.
2. A social group that stems from arousing other individuals around the child to converse or communicate by spoken words.

### **1. Personal sources:**

**Biological maturity:** Language depends on biological maturity; It requires the appropriate development of the brain regions of speech, which are in the frontal lobes and the temporal lobes, are primarily involved in speech formation and understanding which involves exchanging symbols that represent ideas while talking about anything requires remembering symbols and planning what to say. Language is not well developed at birth; As the child grows older, he/she develops critical areas of the brain that function as speech.

**Intelligence:** Children with high IQs outperform children of the same age but are less intelligent in their linguistic development.

**Health:** Children who are in good health outperform children of the same age and poor health in their linguistic development; This is because healthy people have a motive; That is, their motivation is stronger than others.

**The desire to communicate:** the child has a strong desire to communicate with others, and thus his/her motivation to learn the language and the effort he/she makes to learn it increases, to a greater extent than those who do not have this desire from other children.

**Personality:** A child who has an adapted personality to the environment around him/her tends to communicate and converse with others better than does not have a convenient psychological one who is not psychologically well adapted

**Child Gender:** Several studies conducted on gender differences in language development

showed that females outperform males in the number of vocabularies, clarity of pronunciation, sentence length and complexity and grammatical accuracy, in the age period up to about ten years. There are other recent studies that showed that this superiority is not correct. It revealed that most studies of gender differences in language development were conducted for females; Therefore, many of the studies that determined that differences in favour of females in early childhood language development may be due to the fact that most of the tests applied in these studies were applied by females.

### **2. Social Resources**

**Arousing of a child to speaking:** The more a child is enthusiastic to talk, the more his/her language development will improve to a large extent in relation to the linguistic development of a child of similar age.

**Authoritarian treatment methods:** Style plays a major role in dealing with children; Treating children in an authoritarian manner deprives them of excitement to speak, and thus hinders them from acquiring language, unlike children who are treated in ways that allow them to express whatever they want to express at any time they want. They excel in their linguistic development over children who do not have opportunities to stimulate speech and freedom of expression.

**Family size and composition:** the lonesome child in the family outperforms children who live with other children in the family in all forms of language development; Because parents give more time to his/her excitement to learn the language. It is clear that the more the child communicates with adults, the more they excite him/her to speak, and at the same time, the number of words he/she is exposed to and which he/she may learn. Also, the arrangement of the child in the family has an impact on his/her learning of the language; The firstborn child in the family is superior in his/her linguistic

development to the children who follow him/her in the order of birth; This is because the parents can spend time provoking him/her to talk and encouraging him/her to do so, and as for the twin children, they are later in their linguistic development than the children who live with children of different ages.<sup>(12)</sup>

**The Role of Cultural diversity in promoting children's language:** The concept of “cultural diversity” is one of the important concepts in society, which in turn includes culturally diverse groups. It seeks to build and develop it through the relationship of individuals with each other; Each member of the community has a certain peculiarity that distinguishes him/her from the other in his/her acquisition of culture. This is due to several factors, such as Religious, economic, social, and environmental factors.

Cultural diversity, as a common heritage of humanity, is manifested in multiple forms of the identity of the community. It is a source of creativity by individuals, and from here it must be emphasized, Support for future generations.

Before discussing cultural diversity and clarifying the role in promoting the language of the child, it must be remembered that language, as mentioned above, is the voice with which each people express their purposes; Man by his/her nature integrates into human society, and his/her inability to speak isolate him/her, and there is great difficulty in sorting out what falls within the scope of the soul. This is due to the distinction between knowledge and ability <sup>(13)</sup>

A child increases his general growth rate if he acquires a second language at an early age, and this is an important indicator to emphasize the education process at this stage; Early education is most effective in directing children's abilities to interact and communicate with their surroundings. The first five years bear special

importance in terms of children's learning ability, but there are individual differences that affect language acquisition among them, which can be divided into two main groups: They:

- A set of personal sources stemming from the child; These are represented in the biological maturity, intelligence, health, gender of the child (being male or female), personality, and the desire to communicate.
- A social group that stems from arousing other individuals around the child to talk; It is represented in arousing the child in speech, authoritarian treatment methods, and the size and composition of the family.

Children vary in the process of acquiring language; Some of them acquire only one language, and some of them acquire two or more languages during a certain period. In this, polylingualism is apparent to a certain group of children only; This is due to the presence of language ability in humans, which is a group of neurons contained in his brain on the left side in the regions of Broca's and Fornicki area; Where sounds are found in the region of Broca, and meanings are in the region of Fornicki. Therefore, linguistic abilities are a characteristic of human language perception; He/she can produce many sentences that he/she had not heard before.

The notion or connotation of the scientist “Gardner can be mentioned in this field, in which he discussed the talent concept; he believed that every human being is born with the potential and energies of talents that make him/her capable of realizing any talent, and he lists a number of talents that are described as innate in humans, especially the logical talent, the poetic talent, the mathematical talent, the cognitive talent, the linguistic talent and the musical talent”.

Discussing developing language with children has now become remarkable, why not? It urges to strengthen the child's language. Everyone is responsible for supporting this kind of reinforcement; it falls within the framework of studies concerned with cultural pluralism, and therefore efforts must be made for it, through the development of a specific linguistic plan. Here we note that linguistic incentives must be found to support the possibility of multilingual development in children.

The multiculturalism of any society will benefit everyone, especially the children, to a great extent. Because they are exposed to more than one language at an early age, and this, by their nature, positively affects their formation, creative performance, cognitive processes, and their ability to learn other languages, and subsequently their impact on the development and development of society.

Based on the foregoing, we may conclude that focusing on a child's language is a complete strategic project aimed at fostering a cohesive and sustainable society, which can only be accomplished through the diversity of culture attained through multilingualism. As a result, it is necessary to emphasize culture as the sum total of the distinctive features that characterize society, such as etiquette, values, goals, customs, traditions, and so on, as well as emphasizing an important point, namely the importance of multilingualism for children, so that this does not have the unintended consequence of children losing their native language (mother).

### **Research Objectives**

Current research utilizes a qualitative attitude to investigate Kindergarten teachers' attitudes toward the development of the language of the children and investigate the role of their responsibilities of them in this process. besides that, investigate how their language is improving, therefore the study objectives were to

investigating measuring the linguistic development of children.

### **Research Questions**

The study aimed to verify the measurement of the linguistic development of children. In order to verify this, the research asked the following questions:

1. What is the level of peer influence on children's language development?
2. What are the influences of interaction between teachers and children on their language development?
3. Is there a difference between urban and rural children in terms of vocabulary and correct or proper pronunciation?

### **Methods and Materials**

Participants were selected using a stratified, random sampling approach. Then, 10 preschools were randomly selected at the different socioeconomic levels in North Sharqiyah in Sultanate of Oman, respectively, from the list of preschools provided by the National Centre for Statistics and Information in the Sultanate of Oman (NCSI, 2020). Within each preschool, the researchers have selected randomly one K1 classroom (the first year of KG) to be included in the sample. Ultimately, five children in each schoolroom at the selected preschools were unintentionally or randomly selected to contribute to the current study. The total number of children have participated in the current study was 50 students (N=50), The number of female students was 32 (N female=32), while the number of male students was 18 (N male=18). Whereas the number of teachers has been participated was 12, all of them were female teachers (N female=12) Those female teachers have an average of 2.1 years of experience in teaching kindergarten and pre-school children, knowing that female teachers have a different educational background. As the number of those who hold

diploma certificate is eight female teachers (N Diploma=08), Whereas the number of female teachers who hold a bachelor's certificate degree

is four (N Ba=4), and all of them are Omani teachers (Table -1).

Table – 1 Distribution of Participants

| Variables | Number of Teachers |          | Number of Students |
|-----------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|
|           | Diploma            | Bachelor |                    |
| Male      | -                  | -        | 18                 |
| Female    | 08                 | 04       | 32                 |
| Total     | 12                 |          | 50                 |

The researchers in the current study used the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS pre-K) the objective of using this scale is to determine the teacher with children interaction goodness<sup>(14)</sup>. This instrument has shown excellent consistency and validity in different nations<sup>(15,16)</sup>. Besides that, the instrument measure the child's ability to develop linguistically and emotionally.

Decide that face to face (f2f) interviews were held with the teachers who teach kindergarten and preschool children, and a set of questions prepared by researchers related to the linguistic development of children were asked, using the Internet and social networking sites. The following was the questions (open questions):

1. When is a convenient time to commence speech and language countenance for the children, either male or female?
2. What is the role of the kindergarten teacher in communicating with the family in improving and developing the child's language?
3. Describe how the child's language development will be affected while entering kindergarten?

4. How did the development of language make a difference in the child mutation?
5. What are the most important basic skills that kindergarten teachers lack in following up on the language development of children?
6. As a teacher, do you think that interaction with children can support their language development? kindly clarify your perspective
7. Preverbal children show a predilection for children speak over regular adult speaking. do you believe in this concept?
8. Do you think the child's language is affected by the size of the family? Please explain how.
9. What method can you use to correct words and pronunciations?
10. When is a convenient time to commence speech and language amenities for the children?

## The Results

### First Question: What is the level of peer influence on children's language development?

The results of the first questions showed that the children who enroll in the kindergarten interact with their colleagues or peers, and that this interaction would have a positive impact on their linguistic development, and this affects the sound pronunciation, increasing vocabulary, the ability of linguistic expression and so on.

### **Second Question: What are the influences of interaction between teachers and children on their language development?**

The findings of the second question showed that children who enroll in kindergarten interact with their teachers and that they gradually learn many terms and vocabulary from them, and it does not

stop at this point, but the child begins using new linguistic vocabulary, and the output of arguments becomes correct. This is what teachers have stated, as about 92% of teachers reported that children after joining kindergarten develop their language clearly compared to the early days of their enrollment.

### **Third Question: Is there a difference between urban and rural children in terms of vocabulary and correct or proper pronunciation**

To answer the third question of the current research, the researchers resorted to using t-test and the standard deviation, as Table 2 shows that.

Table – 2 T-Test for the level of urban and rural children in terms of developmental Language

| Scale       | Sex    | N. | Mean   | S       | D. of freedom | T      | Signify. | Signify. Direction |
|-------------|--------|----|--------|---------|---------------|--------|----------|--------------------|
| Urban child | Male   | 10 | 3.6252 | 0.65538 | 974           | 2.9853 | 0.001    | In favor of female |
|             | Female | 14 | 3.7321 | 0.66425 |               |        |          |                    |
| Rural child | Male   | 08 | 3.6715 | 0.76854 | 968           | 3.5621 | 0.001    | In favor of female |
|             | Female | 18 | 3.7768 | 0.79589 |               |        |          |                    |

The previous table (Table No. 2) demonstrates the difference in the levels of urban and rural children in terms of developmental of the language and the differences between genders, males and females, which are statistically significant differences, and these differences came in favor of urban females, as females achieved higher scores than males in development of the language. This can be explained by the fact that urban children have the possibility to outperform rural children in terms of mixing with other children before they join kindergarten, as well as they have greater opportunities to communicate with others, due to the vertical and horizontal expansion in cities in their knowledge and social and recreational

relations, in addition, the urban living environment has diverse demographic characteristics<sup>17</sup>

### **Descriptive Statistics**

SPSS statistical program was used to carry out all statistical procedures. In the beginning, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the descriptive findings of each measurement. The chi-square test was used to look into the differences between the two waves among children from various socioeconomic backgrounds. The researchers included circumstances that were notable in the chi-square test in the subsequent regression model.



The researchers used multilevel analysis due to the hierarchical nature of the data, which included observations of teacher-child interactions inside preschools in various locations, implying that the factors of teacher-child interaction were changeable. Much earlier research has used the multilevel technique based on nested design. (<sup>18</sup>, <sup>19</sup>).

A descriptive analysis was conducted in the first step to summarize the descriptive results of each measurement. Additionally, a chi square test was conducted to examine the differences among children with diverse demographic characteristics, which is embodied in the differences between rural children and urban or city children. The researchers have relied on a multilevel investigation of the various leveled characteristics of the information, where teacher-child intuitive were watched inside preschools in completely different areas.

## DISCUSSION

According to the human improvement and biological frameworks, teacher-child connections play an essential part in children's dialect and progress in their dialect and later on to their language improvement. This contemplation is one of the few to look at the relationships between the quality of teacher-child intuition and the open lexicon improvement of children who are no more than five years old (<sup>20</sup>). This study indicates about shows that children's receptive lexicon improvement within the early a long time is closely related to the quality of teacher-child interaction as well as parent-child interaction. The discoveries back and expand those of past contemplate that have found a tall quality of teacher-child interaction to be an indicator of formative changes in open lexicon advancement in early childhood.

The current study concluded that the significant and vibrant role of parents in their daily relationship with their children, in addition, to the contribution of kindergarten teachers in developing children's linguistic abilities, would contribute to language development, increase vocabulary, and use the correct pronunciation of the letters as well as words, considering the factors of psychological language development. The various characteristics of the child are embodied in the psychological, physical and social development, and all these factors have a significant and strong impact on his/her linguistic development. The result of the current study indicated that continuous follow-up and correction of linguistic vocabulary have positive effects on sound language development, as well as an impact on the future of understanding and willingness for learning, and not face challenges in this aspect.

Despite the limitations of this study, the findings suggest that left-behind Omanis' children and preschool teachers should be given more attention. Preschool teachers need to consider the mental and psychological aspects of left-behind children when promoting their social development skills. For example, they could provide more opportunities for left-behind children to communicate with others.

The results of the study indicated that the children, after their enrollment in kindergarten or school, there is a positive and statistically significant correlation between their language development. besides that, the research results indicated that while child interacting with peers as well as teachers will raise their language

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