

The Role Of Parents In Early Childhood Language Development: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Language development is a critical element for children, serving as a medium for communicating thoughts and social interaction. However, global data indicates that approximately 10-15% of toddlers experience developmental delays, including speech and language disorders. Objective: This study aims to deeply examine the role of parents in children's language development in the digital age. Method: A systematic literature review was conducted using 10 research articles 5 national and 5 international published between 2021 and 2026 from PubMed and Google Scholar databases. Results: The analysis shows a significant positive correlation between parental communication quality and children's language skills; effective two-way interaction and balanced family functions are associated with higher language scores. Parental literacy regarding developmental stages determines the effectiveness of the stimulation provided. Conversely, excessive and unmonitored screen time acts as a major inhibitor, significantly increasing the risk of articulation disorders and language delays. Conclusion: Active parental involvement and consistent interactive dialogue are essential to optimize linguistic abilities and mitigate the negative impacts of technology-driven passive communication.

Keywords: Parental role, Language development, Early childhood, Language stimulation, Screen time.

INTRODUCTION

Language development plays a crucial role in children, as it serves as a medium for conveying thoughts, desires, and opinions, as well as a means of understanding the intentions of others. In this regard, language not only serves as a means of communication but also as a result of social interaction. (Depalina, 2025) Globally, WHO and UNICEF report that approximately 10–15% of children under five experience developmental delays, with language and communication disorders being a key component. The 2023 WHO–UNICEF report also states that approximately 317 million

children and adolescents worldwide (GBD 2019 data) live with conditions that contribute to developmental disabilities, including speech and language disorders.(WHO. UNICEF, 2023).

Children's language abilities do not just grow, but are the result of the quality of continuous stimulation provided by parents as the child's first environment.(Depalina, 2025)The role of parents in the stages of language development greatly determines the quality of stimulation provided. Parents with a high level of knowledge tend to be able to provide more effective stimulation that is tailored to their child's needs.(Bhilbina et al., 2025)The main inhibiting factors frequently encountered today are the lack of time parents have to communicate with their children, low awareness of the importance of verbal stimulation, and high intensity of unsupervised screen time, which creates a one-way and passive communication pattern.(Russiska, 2025).On the other hand, the challenges of the digital era not only bring negative impacts, but also opportunities if managed with proper media literacy by parents. The use of educational and interactive apps and active guidance during children's exposure to digital devices has been shown to stimulate new vocabulary, as long as it doesn't replace primary social interactions within the family.(Anggraini et al., 2025). The active role of parents is very important in creating a comfortable environment and having two-way interactive dialogue.(Ningtyas, 2025).

The impact of a lack of parental involvement in language stimulation in children can be permanent if not intervened early. Psychosocially, children who experience language barriers often experience frustration, which leads to excessive temper tantrums.(Chandrawijaya & Natalia, 2024)The Indonesian government has promoted the Early Growth and Development Stimulation, Detection, and Intervention (SDIDTK) program through community health center services to monitor children's language achievement.(Khairunnisa, 2022).In addition, collaborative approaches such as the Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) model involving health workers (midwives), educators, and parents are starting to be developed to detect language delays more effectively.(Aprilia & Thaib, 2023)

Although many studies discuss language development, this study discusses the effectiveness of collaboration between fathers and mothers in managing stimulation amidst the dominance of digital media.(Ningtyas, 2025)Most previous research has

focused solely on the role of mothers as primary caregivers, but has not explored how modern families with working parents face the challenges of speech delays caused by technology.(Rahmawati, 2025).

This Literature Review aims to fill this gap by examining interactive parenting patterns that are relevant to today's challenges.

The purpose of this literature review is to examine in depth the role of parents in children's language development. It is hoped that this review will provide theoretical and practical contributions for educators and parents in developing effective communication strategies for early childhood.

RESEARCH METHODS

A literature review method uses a systematic approach to analyze the role of parents in children's language development. A literature review is a research method that collects, analyzes, and synthesizes previously published research results to answer specific research questions in depth and comprehensively.

A systematic literature search was conducted using computerized electronic databases, namely PubMed and Google Scholar. The publication period used was the last 5 years (2021-2026) to ensure the relevance and freshness of information in the field of education and child language development psychology. Keywords used in the search included: "The role of parents," "Language development," "Early childhood," "Language stimulation," "Parental involvement," "Language development," "Early childhood," and "Speech skills." The search was conducted using Boolean operators (AND, OR) to combine keywords and obtain comprehensive results.

RESULTS

N o	Title	Author, Year	Country	Journals and volumes	Method	Results
1.	The relationshi	Harnina Samantha	Indonesi a	Scientific Journal of	Design: cross- sectional.	As many as 73.5% of

	p between parental communication and language development delays in children aged 4-6 years	Aisyah, Sylvi Harmiardilah		Nursing. Vol. 11, No. 3	Population: all parents and children aged 4-6 years at RA Muslimat Nurul Hidayah Sidorejo. Sample: 34 parents and children aged 4-6 years using the Sample Random Sampling technique. Research instruments: Parental Communication Questionnaire and Language Development Instrument using Denver II.	parents have good communication and 73.5% of children have normal language development and there is a significant relationship between parental communication and language development of children aged 4-6 years ($r_s = 0.579$; $p = 0.000$) with a strong correlation strength.
2.	The Relationship Between Mother	Pearl Juliana Putri, Indah Wigati,	Indonesia	Journal of Education and Counseling	Design: Quantitative, Product Moment	The analysis shows that the

	and Child Interpersonal Communication and the Language Development of 5-6 Year Old Children at Marfuah Kindergarten, Palembang	Muhtarom		g: Vol. 5, No. 2.	Correlation. All children aged 5-6 years at Marfuah Kindergarten, Palembang. 20 children (11 boys, 9 girls). With Total Sampling sampling technique and Observation and questionnaire instruments (Likert scale).	t_{count} value (4.148) > t_{table} (1.734). This means that there is a significant and positive relationship between mother-child interpersonal communication and the child's language development. The more effective the mother's communication, the better the child's language skills.
3.	Parenting Patterns	Noor Baiti	Indonesia	Journal of Early	Design: Descriptive	Parenting patterns

	and Parental Communication on Children's Language Development			Childhood Education. Vol. 4, No. 1.	Quantitative with Path Analysis. 300 children at Anjir Muara Kindergarten, District. Covering 173 respondents. Using random sampling technique. Instruments: Questionnaire and observation sheet.	have a significant relationship with parental communication (Sig. 0.00). Parenting patterns are significantly related to language skills (Sig. 0.00).
4.	The Relationship Between Parental Communication Patterns and Language Skills of 4-5 Year Old Children	Ninda Rulinting, Intan Puspitasari	Indonesia	Journal Of Early Childhood Education Vol 2 No 1.	Design: Quantitative Correlational. Population: Parents with children aged 4-5 years in 14 sub-districts of Yogyakarta City. Sample: 135 respondents.	The value of $r_{\text{count}} = 0.515$ was found with a Sig. of 0.00. This indicates a positive relationship. Parents who use two-way

					Sampling Technique: Incidental Sampling (through the distribution of digital questionnaires in open WhatsApp groups). Instrument: Digital questionnaire (Google Form).	communication patterns tend to have children with more complex spoken language skills than parents whose communication is one-way (authoritarian).
5.	The Relationship between Parental Interpersonal Communication and Early Childhood Language Development in PAUD (Early	Lailatul Farikha Ramadhani, Soedjarwo	Indonesia	Student Journal of Non-Formal Education Vol. 11, No. 2	Quantitative Correlational. Population: All parents at PAUD Tunas Cendekia UPT SKB Gresik. Sample: Parents of PAUD students. Sampling Technique: Total Sampling or	Research concludes that parental interpersonal communication has a significant impact on linguistic development. If parents provide age-appropriate

	Childhood Education) Tunas Cendekia Gresik				Census. Instrument: Questionnaire.	communication stimulation for their children, language barriers (such as slurred speech) can be significantly minimized.
6.	Relationship Between Parent-Child Interaction and Language Development in Children	Muhammad Farooq, Muhammad Ahmad.	Pakistan	Journal Of Speech, language and audiology. Vol.2,No.2	Design: Longitudinal Observational Study. Population: French-speaking families in Canada. Sample: 10 biological children and 8 internationally adopted children from China. Sampling	Mothers interact more (focus together) than fathers. In families, fathers and mothers work together more intensively to catch up on their children's language development.

					Technique: Volunteer Sampling Instruments: 30-minute video recording of free interaction and language transcript.	
7.	A Comparative Study of Communication Profile of Typically Developing Children and Children with Receptive-Expressive Language Disorders: Parental Perceptive.	Aiswarya L. Varghese, Chinnu Thomas.	India	Clinical Practice & Epidemiology in mental health.Vol. 17.	Design: Comparative Cross-sectional Study. Population: Parents with children aged 3.7 - 6.6 years in India. Sample: 102 parents (51 normal children, 51 children with language disorders). Sampling	There are significant differences in parents' perceptions of their children's communication skills. Parents of children with language disorders report higher levels of anxiety, indicating that their

					Technique: Convenience Sampling Instrument: Communication Profile Questionnaire	children's language barriers directly impact their parents' communication patterns at home.
8.	Utilização de dispositivos digitais, funcionamento familiar e desenvolvimento da linguagem em crianças de idade pré-escolar: um estudo transversal	Maria Inês Figueiras Gomes, Marisa Lobo Lousada, and Daniela Maria Pias de Figueiredo 2024	Portugal	CoDAS (Combinative Distance-based Assessment) Vol 36, No 3	Design: (cross-sectional), observational, and descriptive-correlational. Population: Preschool-aged children (3 – 5 years) and their parents in Portugal. Sample: 93 parent-child dyads selected through non-probability and convenience	Most of the participating families had a balanced type of family functioning and most of the children showed normal language development. There is a tendency for children to use smartphones, tablets and

					sampling. Instrument: Questionnaire on digital device usage. Family Flexibility and Cohesion Evaluation Scale version IV (FACES-IV) to assess family functioning. Preschool Language Test (TL-ALPE) to evaluate children's listening comprehension and oral verbal expression.	television between 0-3 hours per day. A statistically significant relationship was found between family functioning (FACES-IV), digital device use, and language development (TL-ALPE). Children from families with more balanced functioning scored higher on language tests.
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9.	The Causal Effect of Parent–Child Interactions on Child Language Development at 3 and 4 Years	Mary E. Brushe et al.	Australia	International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders, Vol 60.2025	Design: Longitudinal quantitative study Population: Children aged 0–4 years and parents in Australia without language impairment Sample: 296 parent–child pairs. Sampling Techniques: Cohort sampling Instrument (Language Environment Analysis) to measure the amount of parent–child interaction (Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals	There is a positive causal effect between increased parent-child interaction from an early age and children's language development at the ages of 3 and 4 years, although the effect is relatively small but significant in terms of population.
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					Preschool-2) to assess children's language development	
1 0.	The Role of Parents in the Developm ent of Language and Speech in Children.	Shukrije Baruti	Kosovo	Youth Voice Journal (YVJ™), Volume III.2023	Quantitative research with correlational cross-sectional design Population Preschool children (>5.5 years) and their parents in the Republic of Kosovo Sample: 115 children aged >5.5 years and 115 parents (n = 115) Sampling Techniques Purposive sampling, Research Instruments: Parent-child interaction	The results of the study showed a significant relationship between parent-child interaction, parental knowledge, family environmen t, and smartphone use with children's language and articulation developmen t. Uncontrolle d digital device use was strongly

					questionnaire and socioeconomic status Additional questionnaire on smartphone/tablet use in children. Articulation Test to assess children's articulation abilities	associated with increased articulation disorders ($r = 0.852$; $p < 0.05$). Family socioeconomic status did not show a significant relationship.
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DISCUSSION

Language development in early childhood is the result of synergy between biological factors and environmental stimulation provided by parents. Findings from (S. Harmiardi, 2025) shows a significant relationship between parental communication and children's language skills. This is in line with the findings (Alfira, 2024) in his journal which states that parental interaction has a significant impact on the development of children's character and views on school life.

Study (M. Putri, 2023) found a positive correlation between mother-child communication and language skills at school. This finding is strongly supported by the results of other studies. (Yudha & et.al, 2024) which confirms that parenting patterns for children are very important in language development and speech delays. (Brushe et al., 2024) Finding out the frequency and quality of conversations at home should be a top priority for every parenting pair.

Appropriate parenting patterns play a major role in creating healthy and supportive communication in the family environment. (N. Baiti, 2020) concluded that proper

parenting will trigger good communication which will improve language skills. This theory is supported by research.(Ananda & Maharani, 2025)which emphasizes the importance of appropriate parenting patterns, full of support and without pressure, is very important for children to develop optimally and feel appreciated.

Study(Rulinting & Puspitasari, 2025)revealed that two-way communication patterns resulted in significantly better oral language skills. This finding is in line with the findings(Brantasari, 2022)which shows that children who are fluent in using language will find it easy to communicate and socialize with their peers.(M. Farooq, 2024)Children who are used to being invited to discussions will have the ability to reason and construct sentences that are more structured and logical.

On the other hand, parental neglect or lack of involvement can have a negative impact on a child's linguistic development.(Damanik et al., 2024)highlighted that permissive parenting styles affect children's language development through a lack of positive role models, adequate stimulation, and guidance. This is closely related to the conclusion(Ramadhani, 2022)that failure of stimulation at the golden age causes language barriers.

The challenges of language development in the modern era are becoming increasingly complex with the powerful influence of digital devices.(Baruti, 2023)found a strong correlation between uncontrolled gadget use and increased articulation disorders. This fact is supported by the findings(Amirudin, 2022)which states that factors that can hinder children's language development include lack of parental guidance and inappropriate use of gadgets.

(Inês et al., 2024)found that prolonged screen time correlated with lower language development scores. This finding is in line with research(Brushe et al., 2024)which emphasizes that human interaction cannot be replaced by technology. Children who spend too much time with gadgets miss out on valuable opportunities to practice their speech motor skills through direct communication.

(Oktaviani, 2021)suggests that a child's growth and development will depend on the stimulation provided by his environment.

(Wardani.ET, 2025)shows that the strategies and roles of parents in language acquisition require an adaptive approach in the community. This is related to

research(L.Varghese.Thomas, 2021)which states that language success in this condition is very dependent on the consistency of parents in applying therapy methods at home. (Lamadang et al., 2024)emphasizes that families play a crucial role in optimizing language literacy in early childhood through intensive support. Children who receive appropriate language stimulation will grow into communicative, self-confident, and responsible individuals.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the Literature Review, it can be concluded that the active involvement of parents as the first environment has a crucial and significant impact in determining the success of children's language development. There is a strong positive correlation between interactive two-way communication patterns and increased vocabulary mastery and speaking skills, where parental literacy regarding developmental stages is key to the effectiveness of the stimulation provided. On the other hand, excessive and uncontrolled screen time without supervision has been shown to be a major inhibiting factor that increases the risk of speech delays and articulation disorders in early childhood. Therefore, collaboration between fathers and mothers in managing verbal stimulation and creating a balanced family environment is essential to minimize language barriers and support children's communication independence in the digital age.

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