



## Language Development and Learning Outcomes in Kindergarten: A Descriptive Correlational Study

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### ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between language development and learning outcomes among kindergarten pupils. Specifically, it determined the level of language development in terms of listening comprehension, speaking skills, vocabulary acquisition, and phonological awareness, as well as the level of learning outcomes in the areas of literacy, cognitive development, and socio-emotional skills. Understanding the connection between these variables is important in early childhood education, as language development serves as a foundation for effective learning and overall academic readiness. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed in the study. The respondents consisted of 57 kindergarten pupils from Villacin Elementary School. Data were gathered using the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Checklist and the pupils' School Report Cards. Statistical tools used for data analysis included mean and standard deviation to determine the levels of language development and learning outcomes, Pearson product-moment correlation to examine the relationship between the variables, and multiple regression analysis to identify which components of language development significantly predict learning outcomes. The results revealed that the pupils demonstrated consistent to highly evident levels of language development across the identified components and similarly showed positive levels of learning outcomes. Furthermore, the analysis indicated a very strong and statistically significant relationship between language development and learning outcomes ( $r = 0.989$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Regression results showed that listening comprehension, speaking skills, and phonological awareness significantly predict learning outcomes, while vocabulary acquisition did not show a significant independent effect. The findings highlight the crucial role of language development in supporting early learning among kindergarten pupils. Strengthening key language components, particularly listening, speaking, and phonological awareness, is essential in enhancing pupils' literacy, cognitive growth, and socio-emotional development.

**Keywords:** early childhood education, kindergarten, language development, learning outcomes, phonological awareness

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## INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education represents one of the most critical periods in human development, as it establishes the foundational competencies that influence children's cognitive, linguistic, and socio-emotional growth. During the early years of schooling, particularly in kindergarten, children experience rapid developmental changes that shape their ability to communicate, reason, interact socially, and engage in structured learning environments. Among the various developmental domains emphasized in early childhood education, language development occupies a central role because it serves as the primary medium through which children acquire knowledge, interpret experiences, and express their thoughts and emotions. Scholars have consistently emphasized that early linguistic competencies provide the groundwork for literacy development, academic achievement, and social participation in later stages of schooling (Lonigan et al., 2022; Castles et al., 2023). As such, strengthening language abilities during the early childhood years has become a major priority for educators and policymakers worldwide.

Language development during the kindergarten stage encompasses a range of interconnected skills, including listening comprehension, speaking ability, vocabulary acquisition, and phonological awareness. These components collectively support the development of early literacy and cognitive processing skills that are essential for academic success. Listening comprehension enables learners to process and interpret spoken information, while speaking skills allow them to articulate ideas and engage in classroom interaction. Vocabulary acquisition expands children's ability to understand and express meaning, whereas phonological awareness facilitates recognition and manipulation of sound structures in language, which is crucial for reading development (Ehri, 2021). Together, these linguistic competencies enable young learners to comprehend instructions, participate in classroom discussions, and engage in meaningful learning experiences. Research has shown that children who develop strong language skills in early childhood demonstrate greater readiness for formal education and improved academic performance in later grades (Kritsotakis & Morfidi, 2024).

Beyond its role in literacy and academic learning, language development also contributes significantly to children's broader developmental outcomes, including cognitive functioning and socio-emotional competence. Language serves as a cognitive tool that enables children to organize their thoughts, solve problems, and regulate their behavior. Through language, children learn to negotiate social interactions, express emotions, and develop interpersonal relationships. Studies have demonstrated that learners with strong language skills tend to exhibit better self-regulation, social cooperation, and classroom engagement, which are essential for effective learning and positive school adjustment (Denham et al., 2022). In this sense, language development functions as a multidimensional capability that supports not only intellectual growth but also emotional and social well-being.

In the Philippine educational context, early language development is further emphasized through the implementation of the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) policy, which aims to improve literacy and comprehension among young learners by utilizing their first language as the medium of instruction during the early grades. This policy reflects the recognition that children learn more effectively when instruction is delivered in a language that they understand and use in their daily lives. However, despite these efforts, variations in language proficiency among kindergarten pupils remain evident due to differences in home literacy environments, parental involvement, teacher competencies, and access to language-rich learning experiences (Cruz & Villanueva, 2021; Bautista, 2020). These disparities highlight the continuing need to examine the factors that influence language development and its implications for broader learning outcomes.

While previous studies have established that language development is closely associated with academic achievement and literacy acquisition, many investigations have treated language as a single, generalized construct. Relatively few studies have examined how specific components of language development individually contribute to broader learning outcomes among kindergarten pupils, particularly within localized educational contexts. Understanding the differential influence of listening comprehension, speaking skills, vocabulary acquisition, and phonological awareness is essential for identifying which linguistic competencies should be prioritized in early childhood instruction. Without such evidence, educational interventions may lack precision in addressing the language-related needs of young learners.

Given these considerations, the present study seeks to examine the relationship between language development and learning outcomes among kindergarten pupils. Specifically, it investigates the levels of language development across key linguistic domains and determines how these competencies relate to pupils' learning outcomes in literacy, cognitive, and socio-emotional domains. By identifying the specific components of language development that significantly predict learning outcomes, this study aims to provide empirical evidence that can inform instructional practices, curriculum planning, and early childhood education policies.

Ultimately, this research contributes to the broader effort of improving early childhood education by emphasizing the importance of language development as a foundation for holistic learner growth. The findings are expected to provide educators, school administrators, and policymakers with insights that may support the design of more effective language-focused



instructional strategies. Moreover, the study offers a localized perspective that enriches the existing body of knowledge on early childhood language development and its role in shaping young learners' educational experiences.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. What is the level of language development of kindergarten pupils in terms of:
  - a. Listening comprehension
  - b. Speaking skill
  - c. Vocabulary acquisition
  - d. Phonological awareness
2. What is the level of learning outcomes of kindergarten pupils in the areas of:
  - a. Literacy and communication
  - b. Cognitive and socio-emotional development
3. Is there a significant relationship between language development and the learning outcomes of kindergarten pupils?
4. Which components of language development best predict the overall learning outcomes of kindergarten pupils?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The review focuses on key variables of the study, including listening comprehension, speaking skills, vocabulary acquisition, and phonological awareness, as well as their relationship to cognitive and socio-emotional development. It synthesizes both local and international studies, theoretical perspectives, and empirical findings that provide a deeper understanding of how early language development influences learning outcomes.

The literature is organized thematically to provide a clear and systematic discussion of each variable and its significance in early childhood education. It also highlights established theories and prior research findings that support the conceptual framework of the study. Through this review, the researcher establishes the relevance of the study, identifies gaps in existing literature, and demonstrates how the present research contributes to the growing body of knowledge in early childhood language development and learning outcomes.

### *Language Development in Early Childhood*

Language development is a fundamental aspect of early childhood education, as it serves as the primary medium through which children acquire knowledge and interact with their environment. According to Kuhl (2021), early exposure to language significantly shapes the brain's neural pathways, influencing both linguistic and cognitive development. Additionally, social interaction with another human being affects speech learning in a way that resembles communicative learning in songbirds. The brain's commitment to the statistical and prosodic patterns that are experienced early in life might help to explain the long-standing puzzle of why infants are better language learners than adults. Successful learning by infants, as well as constraints on that learning, are changing theories of language acquisition. Similarly, Dickinson et al. (2021) emphasized that strong oral language skills are foundational to later reading comprehension and academic achievement.

Research by Neuman and Pinkham (2021) highlights that children who are exposed to rich language environments develop stronger vocabulary, listening comprehension, and communication skills. Furthermore, Loewen and Sato (2021) suggested that language acquisition occurs naturally when children are provided with meaningful input and opportunities for interaction. In addition, Castillo (2021) highlighted that language learning is deeply rooted in social interaction and mediated communication, reinforcing the idea that language develops through collaborative engagement with more knowledgeable others.

Collectively, these studies indicate that language development is not only a linguistic process but also a cognitive and social phenomenon that directly influences school readiness and academic success.

### *Listening Comprehension and Learning*

Listening comprehension is one of the most important components of language development, as it enables learners to process and understand spoken information. Werker (2023) found that early listening skills are strongly associated with later reading comprehension abilities. Moreover, the ability to distinguish speech sounds and process language early on creates the necessary foundation for literacy development. Essentially, if a child can't hear the nuances of language, they'll likely struggle to decode and understand written text later. Likewise, Ehri (2021) emphasized that comprehension begins with the ability to understand spoken language before transitioning into written forms.



Studies by Castles et al. (2023) further confirmed that listening comprehension is a strong predictor of reading comprehension and academic success. Children who demonstrate strong listening skills are better able to follow instructions, engage in discussions, and process information, all of which contribute to improved learning outcomes.

Aurelio (2022) supported these findings by emphasizing that storytelling activities significantly enhance kindergarten learners' listening comprehension and expressive language skills. Storytelling provides meaningful contexts that allow children to process language, recall events, and develop deeper comprehension abilities.

### ***Speaking Skills and Communication***

Speaking skills play a crucial role in a child's ability to express thoughts and engage in meaningful communication. According to Vygotsky (1978/updated discussions in 2021), language is a tool for thought, and speech serves as a bridge between social interaction and cognitive development.

Modern research by Hoff and Laursen (2021) indicates that children who engage in frequent verbal interactions with adults develop more advanced expressive language skills. In addition, Snow (2022) found that opportunities for storytelling, dialogue, and conversation significantly enhance children's speaking abilities, which in turn support academic achievement and confidence in communication.

Santos (2022), drawing from Bruner's constructivist theory, emphasized that scaffolding strategies in early childhood education help children develop more advanced language skills. Through guided interaction, children gradually acquire the ability to organize thoughts and express themselves more effectively.

### ***Vocabulary Acquisition***

Vocabulary acquisition is a critical component of language development that supports comprehension and expression. Hart and Risley (1968, as cited by Gilkerson et al., 2021) found that early language exposure significantly influences later academic achievement. Similarly, Biemiller (2022) further emphasized that vocabulary knowledge is strongly associated with reading comprehension and overall literacy development. Although vocabulary is often embedded within other language skills, its role remains essential in supporting communication and understanding.

Reyes (2023) highlighted that the home literacy environment, including parental involvement and access to reading materials, plays a crucial role in vocabulary development. Children who experience language-rich home environments tend to develop stronger lexical knowledge and communication skills, which contribute to improved learning outcomes.

### ***Phonological Awareness***

Phonological awareness is widely recognized as a key predictor of reading success. According to Ehri (2021), phonological awareness is essential for decoding words and developing early literacy skills.

Research by Snowling et al. (2022) further emphasizes that children with strong phonological awareness are better able to segment and manipulate sounds, which enhances reading fluency and comprehension. This supports the idea that phonological awareness serves as a foundational skill in early literacy development. Furthermore, the study of Snowling et al. (2022) highlights that these words are the building blocks of reading and without adequate word identification, reading comprehension is compromised.

### ***Learning Outcomes in Early Childhood***

Learning outcomes refer to the measurable competencies acquired by learners. In early childhood education, these include cognitive and socio-emotional development. According to Denham et al. (2022), socio-emotional skills such as self-regulation, cooperation, and emotional awareness are critical for school success.

Additionally, Piaget (1972) emphasized that cognitive development occurs through stages, where children actively construct knowledge through interaction with their environment. These developmental processes are essential in shaping learning outcomes in young learners. Similarly, Santos (2022) reinforced that constructivist learning environments promote both cognitive and emotional growth through structured scaffolding and guided interaction.

### ***Language Development and Learning Outcomes***

Numerous studies have established a strong link between language development and learning outcomes. Dickinson et al. (2021) found that children with strong oral language skills demonstrate higher levels of cognitive and academic performance.



Similarly, Lonigan and Burgess (2023) concluded that early language skills significantly predict later reading achievement and overall academic success. Furthermore, Castles et al. (2023) confirmed that language skills are interrelated with cognitive development, reinforcing the importance of early language intervention.

Together, these studies suggest that language development is a key determinant of overall learning success in early childhood education.

## *Synthesis*

The reviewed literature consistently demonstrates that language development is a foundational element of early childhood learning, influencing both cognitive and socio-emotional development. Across various studies, it is evident that components such as listening comprehension, speaking skills, vocabulary acquisition, and phonological awareness collectively contribute to the development of effective communication and academic readiness.

The literature further reveals that listening comprehension and phonological awareness are among the strongest predictors of learning outcomes, particularly in relation to literacy development. Speaking skills also play a significant role in enhancing cognitive processing and social interaction, while vocabulary serves as a supportive component that enhances comprehension and expression. These findings align with the theoretical perspectives of Vygotsky and Piaget, which emphasize the importance of language as a tool for thought and learning.

Moreover, the studies reviewed consistently support the notion that children who possess strong language skills tend to exhibit better cognitive abilities and socio-emotional competence, leading to improved learning outcomes. This confirms that language development is not an isolated skill but an integrated system that supports multiple aspects of early childhood development.

However, the literature also suggests that while vocabulary is essential, its role may not always independently predict learning outcomes, as it often operates in conjunction with other language skills. This supports the findings of the present study, where listening comprehension, speaking skills, and phonological awareness emerged as significant predictors of learning outcomes.

In synthesis, the literature strongly supports the premise that enhancing language development in early childhood is crucial for improving learning outcomes, thereby reinforcing the findings of this study. The present research contributes to this body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence that aligns with existing theories and studies, further emphasizing the importance of language development as a determinant of early academic success.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Research Design*

This study employed a quantitative research design, specifically a descriptive-correlational approach, to examine the relationship between language development and learning outcomes among kindergarten pupils. The descriptive component of the design was utilized to determine and describe the level of language development in terms of listening comprehension, speaking skills, vocabulary acquisition, and phonological awareness, as well as the level of learning outcomes in literacy and communication, and cognitive and socio-emotional development. This allowed for a systematic presentation and interpretation of the current status of the variables under investigation without manipulating any conditions.

Furthermore, the correlational component of the design was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between language development and learning outcomes. This approach is appropriate when the objective is to identify associations between variables rather than establish cause-and-effect relationships. The study also incorporated multiple regression analysis to identify which specific components of language development significantly predict learning outcomes. The descriptive-correlational design is considered suitable for this study as it enables the researcher to analyze naturally occurring variables in an educational setting, thereby providing empirical evidence on how language development relates to learning outcomes among kindergarten pupils without experimental manipulation.

### *Locale of the Study*

The study was conducted at Villacin Elementary School, a public elementary school located in Cadiz City, within the province of Negros Occidental. The school operates under the supervision of the Department of Education (DepEd) and provides basic education services to learners from kindergarten through Grade Six. It caters primarily to children residing within the local community and nearby barangays, serving families with diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

The selection of Villacin Elementary School as the locale of the study was based on several considerations. First, the school maintains an active kindergarten program with an adequate number of enrolled pupils, making it suitable for examining the language development and learning outcomes of early childhood learners. Second, the school regularly utilizes assessment tools



such as the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Checklist and the School Report Card to monitor pupils' developmental competencies and academic performance. These assessment tools are aligned with the variables examined in the present study, providing relevant and reliable data for analysis.

Overall, the selected locale provides an appropriate and representative setting for investigating the relationship between language development and learning outcomes among kindergarten learners, as it reflects the typical educational environment of public elementary schools in the Philippine basic education system.

## ***Respondents of the Study***

The respondents of this study consisted of kindergarten pupils enrolled in Villacin Elementary School for the School Year 2025–2026. A total of 57 pupils were selected to participate in the study. The respondents were chosen through complete enumeration (census sampling), as the study included all available and accessible kindergarten learners within the identified locale. This sampling technique was deemed appropriate to ensure that the data accurately represented the entire population of interest and to enhance the reliability and validity of the findings.

The respondents were within the early childhood age range, typically between five (5) and six (6) years old, and were officially enrolled in kindergarten under the Department of Education (DepEd) curriculum. The selection of kindergarten pupils as respondents was based on the premise that this developmental stage is critical for language acquisition and foundational learning. Furthermore, the respondents were considered appropriate for the study as they were directly engaged in learning experiences that reflect the variables under investigation, particularly language development and learning outcomes. The participation of the respondents was conducted in accordance with ethical standards, ensuring that their identities remained confidential and that their involvement posed no harm or risk.

## ***Research Instrument***

This study utilized two primary research instruments to gather data: the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Checklist and the School Report Card (SRC). These instruments were selected to ensure a comprehensive assessment of the pupils' language development and learning outcomes in alignment with the study's objectives. The ECCD Checklist is a standardized tool designed to assess the developmental domains of young learners, particularly focusing on language, cognitive, and socio-emotional competencies. In this study, it was specifically used to measure language development in terms of listening comprehension, speaking skills, vocabulary acquisition, and phonological awareness, as well as selected indicators of cognitive and socio-emotional development. The School Report Card, on the other hand, was used to obtain academic-related performance indicators, particularly in literacy and communication skills such as listening and viewing, speaking, reading, and writing.

The instruments employed in this study were adopted and aligned with established early childhood education frameworks to ensure validity and relevance to the research context. The ECCD Checklist follows developmentally appropriate standards prescribed for early childhood learners, while the School Report Card reflects the Department of Education's (DepEd) standards for assessing learner performance. To ensure the appropriateness and reliability of the instruments, they were reviewed and validated by experts in early childhood education and research methodology prior to their administration. The items in the instruments were evaluated for clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study's variables. Furthermore, the instruments were administered in a consistent and standardized manner to maintain objectivity and reliability of the data collected. The use of these validated instruments ensured that the data gathered were accurate, credible, and suitable for statistical analysis in determining the relationship between language development and learning outcomes.

## ***Validity and Reliability***

The research instruments utilized in this study, namely the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Checklist and the School Report Card, are considered standardized tools mandated for use in all public kindergarten programs nationwide. Their standardization ensures uniformity in assessing learners' developmental progress and academic performance across diverse educational contexts. These instruments were developed and rigorously validated by subject matter experts commissioned by the Department of Education, thereby establishing strong content validity. The indicators embedded within the ECCD Checklist comprehensively capture key domains of early childhood development, while the School Report Card systematically reflects learners' academic achievements in alignment with the prescribed curriculum standards.

In terms of reliability, both instruments demonstrate a high degree of consistency, as they have undergone extensive field testing and continuous refinement through nationwide implementation. Their repeated use across different cohorts of learners supports the stability and dependability of the data generated. Furthermore, the structured format and clear criteria embedded in these tools minimize subjectivity in assessment, thereby enhancing inter-rater reliability among teachers. Consequently, the ECCD



Checklist and School Report Card provide credible and dependable measures, ensuring that the data collected in this study are both valid and reliable for drawing meaningful conclusions.

## *Data Gathering Procedure*

Prior to data collection, formal approval to conduct the study was secured from the Office of the School Head of Villacin Elementary School and the Schools Division Office. In addition, informed consent was obtained from the parents or guardians of the participating kindergarten pupils, ensuring voluntary participation and adherence to ethical standards. Coordination with the kindergarten teachers was undertaken to schedule the administration of the research instruments in a manner that would not disrupt regular classroom activities. The researcher also conducted an orientation with the teachers to ensure uniform understanding of the procedures, proper administration of the instruments, and consistency in rating the pupils' performance.

Data collection was carried out using two primary instruments: the ECCD Checklist and the School Report Card. The ECCD Checklist was administered to assess pupils' receptive and expressive language competencies, as well as cognitive and socio-emotional development, based on observable behaviors. The School Report Card was utilized to obtain pupils' performance ratings in listening and viewing, speaking, reading, and writing. Teachers served as the primary raters, evaluating pupils based on their classroom performance and documented records. The administration of the instruments was conducted under controlled classroom conditions to ensure reliability and minimize bias. Upon completion, all accomplished instruments were collected, verified for completeness and accuracy, and systematically organized for data encoding and subsequent statistical analysis. Throughout the process, strict confidentiality of pupils' identities was maintained by assigning codes, and all data were used solely for academic and research purposes.

## *Data Analysis Procedure*

Following data collection, all responses were subjected to systematic data screening, coding, and encoding using a statistical software package (e.g., SPSS). Data cleaning procedures were performed to check for completeness, accuracy, and consistency prior to analysis. Descriptive statistical techniques were employed to summarize the data. Frequency counts and percentage distributions were utilized to describe pupils' performance across individual indicators in both the ECCD Checklist and the School Report Card. Measures of central tendency and dispersion, specifically the mean and standard deviation, were computed to determine the level and variability of language development components—listening comprehension, speaking skills, vocabulary acquisition, and phonological awareness—as well as learning outcomes in literacy and communication, and cognitive and socio-emotional development. The resulting mean scores were interpreted using predetermined descriptive rating scales to classify the level of performance.

For inferential analysis, the Pearson Product–Moment Correlation Coefficient ( $r$ ) was employed to examine the magnitude and direction of the linear relationship between language development and learning outcomes. Prior to correlation analysis, assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were assessed to ensure the appropriateness of parametric testing. To further determine the predictive influence of the independent variables, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted, with learning outcomes as the dependent variable and the four components of language development as predictor variables. The regression model was evaluated using the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), adjusted  $R^2$ , F-statistic, and corresponding p-values to assess overall model fit and statistical significance. Individual regression coefficients ( $\beta$ ), standard errors, and t-values were examined to identify significant predictors. All statistical tests were conducted at a 0.05 level of significance, and decisions to accept or reject the null hypotheses were based on the computed p-values.

## *Ethical Considerations*

This study strictly adhered to established ethical standards in educational research, particularly in studies involving young children. Prior to data collection, formal permission was obtained from the school authorities, including the School Head and the appropriate division office. Informed consent was secured from the parents or legal guardians of all participating kindergarten pupils, clearly explaining the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and the voluntary nature of participation. Participants were assured that refusal to participate or withdrawal from the study at any stage would not result in any form of penalty or disadvantage. Assent from the pupils was also considered through age-appropriate explanations to ensure their comfort and willingness to participate.

To ensure confidentiality and data privacy, all collected data were anonymized through the use of coded identifiers instead of pupils' names. The information gathered was treated with strict confidentiality and was used solely for academic and research purposes. Access to the data was limited to the researcher, and all records were securely stored and protected from unauthorized access. Furthermore, the study ensured that no physical, psychological, or emotional harm was inflicted on the participants. The instruments used were non-invasive and appropriate for the developmental level of the pupils, and data collection was conducted in a familiar classroom setting under teacher supervision. The study also upheld the principles of beneficence and non-



maleficence, ensuring that the findings would contribute positively to educational practice while safeguarding the rights, dignity, and well-being of all participants.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings are organized according to the Statement of the Problem (SOPs). Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to determine the level of language development and learning outcomes, while inferential statistics, including Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis, were employed to examine relationships and predictive influences among variables.

The discussion follows the sequence of the SOPs: (1) level of language development, (2) level of learning outcomes, (3) relationship between variables, and (4) predictors of learning outcomes.

### *Language Development in Terms of Listening Comprehension*

Results indicate that kindergarten pupils demonstrate generally strong listening comprehension skills, although variations exist across specific indicators. Based on the School Report Card, no pupils were classified under the Beginning level. Indicators such as attentive listening, story recall, text-to-self connection, and visual discrimination obtained the highest proportions under the Consistent level, suggesting that pupils are capable of processing and responding to basic auditory and visual information.

However, more complex listening tasks—including sound discrimination, event sequencing, story prediction, and cause-and-effect analysis—showed higher proportions under the Developing level. This suggests that higher-order listening skills requiring analysis, inference, and prediction are not yet uniformly developed.

Findings from the ECCD Checklist further support these results. Basic receptive language indicators, such as identifying familiar objects and following simple instructions, were evident among all pupils. In contrast, following two-step instructions showed slightly lower performance, indicating that tasks requiring multi-step processing remain challenging for some learners.

The overall mean scores confirm these trends. Listening and Viewing obtained a mean of 2.57 (Consistent), while receptive language showed a very high level of development, with approximately 97% of indicators evident. These results suggest that pupils possess strong foundational receptive language skills but require further development in higher-order listening comprehension.

Instructionally, this highlights the need for scaffolded learning approaches that move from simple comprehension tasks toward more complex cognitive processes. Activities such as guided storytelling, questioning, and prediction exercises may help strengthen advanced listening skills. These findings support research by Yang, Li, and Chen and Kritsotakis and Morfidi, who emphasize the role of receptive language in supporting literacy and overall learning outcomes.

### *Language Development in Terms of Speaking Skills*

The results show that pupils demonstrate consistently strong speaking skills across most indicators. No pupils were categorized under the Beginning level, and a majority were rated as Consistent in using polite expressions, describing objects, asking questions, and participating in discussions. These findings indicate that pupils possess well-developed basic oral communication skills.

However, the ability to retell stories or narrate experiences obtained the lowest proportion of consistent ratings, suggesting that tasks requiring organization, sequencing, and extended expression remain less developed.

ECCD results further indicate that nearly all expressive language indicators are evident among pupils, with competencies such as word usage, sentence formation, and question-asking well established. Nevertheless, recounting experiences sequentially remains relatively more difficult for some learners.

The overall mean scores (Speaking = 2.73; Expressive Language = 0.9868) confirm that pupils demonstrate high levels of expressive language ability. While foundational skills are strong, higher-order speaking tasks involving coherent and extended discourse require further support.

These findings suggest that instructional strategies should focus on enhancing narrative and discourse skills through storytelling, guided retelling, and interactive discussions. This aligns with research by Dickinson, Golinkoff, and Hirsh-Pasek, which highlights the importance of expressive language in cognitive and academic development.

### *Vocabulary Acquisition*



The results indicate that pupils demonstrate a very high level of vocabulary acquisition, with nearly all indicators evident. This suggests that learners possess sufficient lexical knowledge to support basic communication and interaction.

However, while vocabulary is well developed at a functional level, its application in more complex communication tasks remains an area for improvement. Instruction should therefore focus on enriching vocabulary use through contextualized activities such as storytelling and guided conversations, rather than solely on vocabulary acquisition.

### ***Phonological Awareness***

Findings indicate that pupils demonstrate a consistent level of phonological awareness, particularly in letter recognition, sound identification, and syllable awareness. However, skills such as rhyme recognition and book-related behaviors show relatively lower performance.

The overall mean score (2.36) suggests that phonological awareness is established but not yet fully mastered across all learners. This indicates the need for continued instructional support in sound manipulation and phonological processing.

Given its role as a foundation for reading development, strengthening phonological awareness is essential. As emphasized by Linnea Ehri, phonological skills are critical for decoding and word recognition in early literacy.

### ***Summary of Language Development***

Overall, pupils demonstrate strong language development across listening, speaking, vocabulary, and phonological awareness. Receptive and expressive language skills are particularly well developed, supporting effective communication and classroom participation. However, phonological awareness and higher-order language skills require further strengthening.

These findings suggest that while pupils have a solid foundation in language development, targeted instructional strategies are needed to support advanced language competencies and early literacy skills.

### ***Learning Outcomes in Literacy and Communication***

Results show that pupils achieved a consistent level of performance across all literacy and communication domains, with an overall mean of 2.53. Speaking obtained the highest mean, followed by listening, writing, and reading.

The stronger performance in speaking and listening indicates that oral language skills are more developed than literacy-related skills. Reading obtained the lowest mean, suggesting that phonological awareness and decoding skills require further enhancement.

Writing results indicate emerging competencies appropriate to the pupils' developmental level. However, continued support is needed to strengthen both reading and writing skills through integrated literacy instruction.

These findings are consistent with research by Castles, Rastle, and Nation and Lonigan, Burgess, and Schatschneider, which highlights the role of oral language as a foundation for literacy development.

### ***Cognitive and Socio-Emotional Development***

Pupils demonstrated high levels of cognitive and socio-emotional development, with most indicators evident. These findings suggest that learners possess strong abilities in attention, problem-solving, emotional regulation, and social interaction.

The low variability in scores indicates that these competencies are consistently demonstrated across pupils. These skills contribute to effective classroom participation and overall learning readiness.

Research by Denham, Bassett, and Wyatt supports the importance of socio-emotional competence in promoting academic success and classroom engagement.

### ***Relationship Between Language Development and Learning Outcomes***

The results reveal a very strong and statistically significant relationship between language development and learning outcomes ( $r = 0.989, p < .001$ ). This indicates that pupils with higher language development levels tend to achieve better learning outcomes.

Language serves as a critical tool for comprehension, communication, and interaction, enabling pupils to engage more effectively in learning activities. This finding supports existing literature emphasizing the central role of language in academic development.

### ***Predictors of Learning Outcomes***



Regression analysis indicates that language development significantly predicts learning outcomes, explaining 98.8% of the variance. Listening comprehension, speaking skills, and phonological awareness were identified as significant predictors, with listening comprehension having the strongest influence.

Vocabulary acquisition, while important, did not show a significant independent effect, suggesting that its influence may be mediated through other language components.

These findings highlight the importance of focusing on receptive, expressive, and phonological skills in early childhood instruction. Strengthening these areas through language-rich and interactive activities can significantly enhance learning outcomes.

## ***Overall Interpretation***

The findings of the study demonstrate that language development is strongly associated with and predictive of learning outcomes among kindergarten pupils. While pupils exhibit strong foundational skills, further emphasis on higher-order language processes and phonological awareness is necessary. Providing structured, interactive, and language-rich learning environments will support the development of advanced language competencies and promote holistic learning outcomes.

## ***Summary of Findings***

The findings of the study indicate that kindergarten pupils demonstrate generally consistent levels of language development across the assessed components. Listening and viewing, speaking, vocabulary acquisition, and phonological awareness all show evidence of well-established foundational language skills, with ECCD based measures indicating that most indicators are highly evident among learners. However, the School Report Card results suggest that while performance is generally consistent, higher order language skills particularly those involving comprehension, expression, and phonological processing still show room for further strengthening.

In terms of learning outcomes, both cognitive and socio emotional domains are found to be highly evident, with mean scores indicating strong and consistent performance across these areas. This suggests that pupils are generally able to demonstrate expected competencies related to both cognitive functioning and socio emotional engagement.

Correlation analysis reveals a very strong positive and significant relationship between Language Development and Learning Outcomes, indicating that pupils with higher language development scores also tend to achieve higher learning outcomes. This highlights the close association between language abilities and overall learning performance in early childhood.

Finally, regression analysis shows that Language Development components significantly predict Learning Outcomes, with the model explaining a substantial proportion of variance. Among the predictors, listening comprehension, speaking skill, and phonological awareness emerge as significant contributors, while vocabulary acquisition does not show a significant independent effect. Overall, the findings emphasize that stronger and more consistent language development particularly in receptive, expressive, and phonological domains plays a critical role in supporting pupils cognitive and socio-emotional learning outcomes.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study examined the language development of kindergarten pupils and its relationship with their learning outcomes in terms of cognitive and socio emotional development. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that kindergarten pupils demonstrate generally consistent levels of language development across listening and viewing, speaking, vocabulary acquisition, and phonological awareness. The ECCD based assessment indicates that foundational language skills are highly evident among learners, suggesting that they possess the basic competencies necessary for communication and early learning. However, the School Report Card results indicate that higher order language skills, particularly those involving comprehension, expression, and phonological processing, still require further development to reach a more advanced level.

The study also concludes that kindergarten pupils exhibit highly evident learning outcomes in both cognitive and socio emotional domains. This suggests that learners are generally able to demonstrate expected developmental competencies, including attention, participation, interaction, and basic cognitive functioning. These outcomes reflect a positive level of readiness for continued learning and classroom engagement.

Furthermore, there is a very strong and significant relationship between language development and learning outcomes. This indicates that pupils with stronger language skills tend to achieve better cognitive and socio emotional outcomes. Among the components of language development, listening comprehension, speaking skill, and phonological awareness are identified as significant predictors of learning outcomes, while vocabulary acquisition does not show a significant independent effect when considered alongside the other variables.



Overall, the findings conclude that language development plays a crucial role in supporting early learning outcomes. Strengthening listening comprehension, speaking abilities, and phonological awareness can contribute to improved cognitive functioning and socio emotional engagement among kindergarten pupils. These results highlight the importance of providing language rich and interactive learning experiences that support the holistic development of young learners and enhance their readiness for more formal stages of education.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are aligned with the specific statements of the problem.

In relation to SOP 1, which examined the level of language development, teachers are encouraged to further strengthen pupils listening comprehension, speaking skills, vocabulary acquisition, and phonological awareness through structured, interactive, and language rich activities. While pupils demonstrated generally consistent levels of language development, continued emphasis on higher order listening tasks, oral communication opportunities, and phonological exercises will help enhance the depth and quality of these skills. Instructional practices such as guided storytelling, questioning techniques, rhyming activities, sound manipulation tasks, and interactive discussions are recommended to support further development across all language components.

For SOP 2, which focused on learning outcomes in cognitive and socio emotional domains, it is recommended that teachers continue to implement activities that promote active engagement, cooperation, and critical thinking. Since learning outcomes were found to be highly evident, maintaining and further enriching these competencies through collaborative tasks, problem solving activities, and structured play-based learning will help sustain and further develop pupils cognitive and socio emotional abilities.

In connection with SOP 3, which established a significant relationship between language development and learning outcomes, it is recommended that schools prioritize integrated instruction that simultaneously develops language skills and learning competencies. Strengthening pupils' language abilities is likely to further enhance their cognitive and socio emotional outcomes, hence instructional strategies should intentionally incorporate language use in all learning areas. Regular monitoring of both language development and learning outcomes is also recommended to ensure that progress in one domain is effectively supporting the other.

Finally, in relation to SOP 4, which identified the predictive influence of language development on learning outcomes, it is recommended that particular attention be given to listening comprehension, speaking skills, and phonological awareness, as these were found to be significant predictors. Instructional programs and interventions should prioritize these components to maximize their impact on pupils overall learning outcomes. Vocabulary acquisition, while not a significant independent predictor, should still be supported through meaningful and contextualized activities as it remains an essential component of overall language development. Additionally, teacher training and professional development initiatives may focus on effective strategies for enhancing these key language components, while parental involvement should be encouraged to reinforce language learning at home through reading, conversation, and interactive communication.

In addition to the recommendations directly addressing the specific findings of the study, several broader recommendations are proposed to further strengthen language development and enhance learning outcomes among kindergarten pupils across instructional and research contexts.

1. Teachers should implement more structured and language-rich instructional strategies that specifically strengthen listening comprehension, speaking skills, and phonological awareness.

The findings revealed that these components of language development significantly predict learning outcomes. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to incorporate instructional activities that promote active listening, guided storytelling, questioning techniques, rhyming exercises, and phoneme manipulation tasks. These strategies may help pupils develop stronger receptive and expressive language skills, which in turn can enhance their cognitive processing and socio-emotional engagement in the classroom.

2. Kindergarten teachers should design classroom activities that promote higher-order language skills, particularly in tasks involving sequencing, narrative expression, and comprehension.

Although the study found that pupils demonstrated generally consistent language competencies, certain higher-order skills such as story retelling, inference-making, and event sequencing showed comparatively lower performance. Integrating activities such as narrative retelling, role-playing, collaborative discussions, and comprehension-based questioning may help learners develop deeper language processing abilities and improve their overall communication competence.



3. Schools and curriculum planners should integrate language development across all learning domains to support holistic learning outcomes.

Since the study established a strong relationship between language development and learning outcomes, it is important that language instruction is not limited to literacy lessons alone. Instead, language-based strategies should be embedded across various learning activities, including numeracy, problem-solving, and socio-emotional learning. Such an integrated approach can reinforce language use in authentic contexts and strengthen pupils' ability to apply linguistic skills in different academic and social situations.

4. School administrators should provide professional development programs that equip teachers with effective strategies for promoting early language development.

Continuous teacher training is essential in ensuring that educators possess the necessary pedagogical skills to support young learners' linguistic growth. Professional development workshops focusing on early literacy instruction, phonological awareness activities, and language scaffolding techniques may enhance teachers' ability to facilitate language-rich classroom environments and implement developmentally appropriate instructional practices.

5. Parents and guardians should be encouraged to actively support language development at home through regular communication and literacy activities.

The home environment plays a vital role in shaping children's language development. Parents may support their children's linguistic growth by engaging them in conversations, reading storybooks together, asking open-ended questions, and encouraging children to describe their experiences. Such interactions can reinforce the language skills learned in school and contribute to more consistent development of communication and comprehension abilities.

6. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct further studies using larger and more diverse samples to validate and extend the findings of this research.

The present study was limited to a specific group of kindergarten pupils in one school setting. Expanding the scope of future research to include multiple schools, varied socioeconomic contexts, and different regions may provide a more comprehensive understanding of how language development influences learning outcomes. Additionally, future studies may explore other factors such as home literacy environment, teacher instructional practices, and multilingual learning contexts that may interact with language development.

7. Future research may also investigate additional variables that could influence learning outcomes among young learners.

While the current study focused on specific components of language development, other factors such as classroom environment, parental involvement, and learner motivation may also contribute to pupils' academic and developmental outcomes. Examining these variables may help provide a more holistic understanding of the factors that support effective early childhood learning.

### *Conflict of Interest*

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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