

The Role of Parental Communication in Improving The Language Intelligence of 4-5 Year Old Children

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Abstract

The development of language intelligence in early childhood is a crucial foundation for their future communication skills. This research is important because many young children do not receive consistent language stimulation at home, while studies on the synergy of parent-teacher communication in the PAUD context—especially in local settings like BA Aisyiyah G—are still limited. This descriptive qualitative research was conducted over three months, from March to May 2025. Data sources included observations of communication practices, parent-teacher interviews, documentation, and school literature and documents. The research instruments consisted of observation guidelines, interview guides, and documentation formats. Data analysis followed the stages of reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing according to Miles & Huberman. The results indicate that parental communication through consistent verbal stimulation at home plays a significant role in improving children's language intelligence. Teachers also reinforced this stimulation through storytelling and role-play activities, resulting in synergy between stimulation at home and at school resulting in improvements in children's ability to express ideas, enrich vocabulary, and construct sentences effectively. The findings emphasize the importance of simultaneous involvement between parents and teachers to optimize the language development of children aged 4-5 years.

Keywords: *Early Childhood, Language Intelligence, Parental Communication, Ages 4-5 Years*

Introduction

The development of early childhood language intelligence is strongly influenced by the quality of communication established between parents and children in everyday life. Warm, responsive, and consistent communication provides rich language stimulation through dialogue, storytelling, and natural interactions at home. Previous research has shown that parental involvement in daily conversation and simple literacy activities contributes significantly to children's receptive and expressive language skills (Zahra, 2025; Prabowo, 2022; Amiruddin, 2022). These findings confirm that parental communication is a crucial factor in optimizing early childhood language development. However, initial observations at a private Islamic preschool in Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java, showed that some children aged 4-5 years had not yet demonstrated optimal language development. Some children still lacked the courage to speak, had difficulty expressing ideas fluently, and had limited vocabulary. These findings align with research showing that inconsistent communication patterns at home influence delays in early childhood language development (Tanjung et al., 2020; Yuswati & Setiawati, 2022). The mismatch between children's language stimulation needs and family communication patterns at home creates gaps in language development.

Structured and sensitive communication is a crucial foundation for socio-emotional and language development in early life. Research by Munna et al. (2022) confirms that effective parental communication patterns can foster emotional regulation and a sense of security in children, especially in challenging situations such as the new normal, making it easier for children to express themselves effectively. Consistent with these findings, research by Nasafitri et al. (2024) shows that intense, dialogic parental communication, which provides examples of diverse language use, directly contributes to strengthening early childhood language skills. Both studies suggest that quality verbal interactions at home are a strong foundation for early language development. Therefore, when parental communication aligns with a child's developmental needs, the child's ability to understand, process, and convey information will significantly improve.

Regular and quality parental communication can improve children's ability to understand vocabulary, form sentences, and express ideas more effectively. Based on this background, this study is directed to answer three main questions: (1) what form of parental communication takes place in children's daily lives, (2) what is the condition of language intelligence of children aged 4-5 years in the institution, and (3) what is the role of parental communication in improving language intelligence of children aged 4-5 years (Parapat et al., 2023) Overall, the purpose of this study is to describe the pattern of parental communication in improving children's language intelligence in the institution, as well as explain how the role of

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parental communication in improving children's language intelligence, thereby providing a comprehensive picture of the role of family communication patterns on children's language development.

Although various studies have highlighted the importance of parental communication for children's language development, there remains a research gap regarding how these communication patterns are applied in the family context of children aged 4-5 years in private Islamic early childhood education (PAUD), particularly in the Sukoharjo area. Furthermore, there is limited research that has detailed the most effective forms of parental communication in improving children's language intelligence in this age range. This gap indicates the need for more contextual and comprehensive research. Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the role of parental communication in improving the language intelligence of children aged 4-5 years in a private Islamic early childhood education (PAUD) in Sukoharjo Regency. This study seeks to identify the communication patterns used by parents, examine their influence on children's language development, and provide practical recommendations for improving the quality of language stimulation in the family environment.

According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, children's language acquisition develops through meaningful social interactions, where adults act as more knowledgeable others who provide support in the form of scaffolding. Through this guidance, children can expand their language skills optimally. Etnawati (2021) explains that language is not only a means of communication, but also a means of thinking that develops through directed dialogue between children and parents. In this context, family communication is a major factor in improving children's language competence. Afriliani et al. (2021) emphasized that communicative interactions within the family, both verbal and nonverbal, directly contribute to children's speaking skills, especially when parents actively provide explanations, questions, and responses to children's utterances. The development of early childhood language intelligence is highly determined by the family environment, especially the communication patterns established by parents. A literature review conducted by Fitriana et al. ((2024) showed that consistent verbal stimulation, warm emotional interactions, and opportunities for children to express themselves are important elements in developing language skills. A vocabulary-rich home environment, two-way conversations, and appropriate parental responses have been shown to accelerate children's language acquisition. This aligns with the findings of Kholilullah et al. (2020) who stated that language development is not only influenced by internal factors such as age or cognitive readiness, but is also greatly determined by the intensity of parental communication in everyday life.

Communication between parents and children is an important foundation for developing language skills during early development. Munz (2015) emphasized that parent-child communication serves not only as a means of exchanging information but also as an emotional and social medium that helps children understand the meaning and patterns of language interaction. Parents who provide consistent verbal responses, use clear language, and open up two-way dialogue are able to create a communicative environment that encourages faster language development. Indrayani (2016) added that early childhood is a critical period for language acquisition, so stimulation through conversation, reading stories, and daily interactions greatly determines the quality of a child's language development. Therefore, the principles of warm, responsive, and stimulating communication are an important foundation for improving the language intelligence of early childhood through direct interaction experiences within the family environment..

Storytelling is an important strategy for early childhood language development because it can develop vocabulary, expressive skills, language comprehension, and creative thinking. Katoningsih (2021) explains that storytelling skills include story planning, engaging storytelling, and active verbal interaction between parents and children. Thus, storytelling serves not only as entertainment but also as an effective language learning medium. Similarly, Putri et al. (2020) found that language stimulation through storytelling can improve children's understanding of new vocabulary, express ideas, and strengthen everyday verbal communication skills. Both sources emphasize that focused and consistent storytelling practices, both at home and in early childhood education institutions, provide a strong foundation for the development of children's language intelligence.

Numerous studies have shown that language stimulation through storytelling, social interaction, and targeted learning strategies have a positive impact on early childhood language development. However, there is still limited research specifically addressing the role of parental communication in enhancing children's language intelligence in the home environment. Many previous studies have focused more on interactions at school or formal learning strategies, leaving parents' communication practices at home underexplored. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by providing a holistic overview of effective parental communication strategies in supporting the language development of children aged 4-5 years. Research by Wahidah & Latipah (2021) emphasizes that understanding early childhood language development is crucial to ensure that adult stimulation is tailored to the child's developmental stage. The study demonstrates that language development is optimal when children receive consistent verbal stimulation, such as conversation, storytelling, and prompt responses to their utterances. Furthermore, Ardiana (2021) found that the use of appropriate learning media in early childhood education can enhance children's linguistic intelligence through engaging and interactive activities. A variety of media helps children understand vocabulary, connect meanings, and express language with greater confidence.

International research by Ford et al. (2020) confirms that children's language development in the early years is influenced not only by biological factors but also by the consistent quality of interactions between the child and their immediate environment. Their ecobehavioral approach suggests that parents' frequency of speech, responsiveness, and use of meaningful language contribute significantly to the acceleration of children's language skills. Similarly, Al Harbi (2020) adds that early language acquisition is largely determined by verbal experiences from childhood, particularly through two-

way dialogue, warm verbal stimulation, and exposure to a diverse vocabulary. Furthermore, Nurhabibah et al. (2024) state that a linguistic environment built through verbal interaction, the use of learning media, and quality time can enhance children's language intelligence, including in children with special needs. Similarly, Sholichah (2022) emphasizes that daily literacy stimulation from parents and teachers significantly contributes to the development of language and reading skills in early childhood. Both studies confirmed that active communication and literacy stimulation from parents are the main foundations in developing children's language intelligence, which is the basis for the relevance of this study.

Komariah et al. (2025) emphasized that active social interactions between children and adults in educational settings contribute significantly to development, in line with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory perspective. Furthermore, Khotimah & Katoningsih (2023) demonstrated that systematic learning strategies, including the use of digital media and consistent stimulation, can improve children's basic skills and impact overall cognitive development. Research by Brantasari (2022) and Alfira & Siregar (2024) also confirmed that responsive and targeted parental communication patterns significantly influence children's language development, both in the home context and in early social interactions. Overall, these findings emphasize that structured parental communication practices are a key factor relevant to supporting early childhood language skills and provide an important basis for this research in the context of early childhood education. Based on the literature review, many studies emphasize the importance of language stimulation through parenting styles, parental communication, and active social interaction in early childhood. However, most previous research is still limited to general analysis or school contexts, so the direct role of parental communication in improving children's language skills in early childhood education (ECE) has not been widely studied empirically. This limitation indicates a research gap regarding how parental communication strategies can be implemented effectively at home and in the ECE environment. This study aims to fill this gap by examining parental communication practices in depth to provide empirical evidence regarding their influence on early childhood language skills.

Research methods

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method, which aims to describe in depth the role of parental communication in improving the language intelligence of children aged 4-5 years at BA Aisyiyah G. The qualitative descriptive approach was chosen because it is able to describe social phenomena in their entirety and understand verbal interactions between parents and children in a natural context. This method allows researchers to interpret data based on the context and experiences of the subjects, thus providing a deeper understanding of parental communication practices and their impact on children's language development (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Moleong, 2014). This study was conducted at BA Aisyiyah G, an early childhood education institution where daily learning activities are carried out. This location was chosen because the practice of active interaction between parents and children allows for direct observation of communication. The study was conducted for three months, from early March to the end of May 2025, to allow for comprehensive observation and data collection.

The object of the study was the language intelligence of early childhood, which includes the ability to tell stories, expand vocabulary, and express ideas verbally, as well as the role of parental communication in supporting these abilities. The research subjects included: (1) children aged 4-5 years at BA Aisyiyah G as the main focus of observation; (2) parents as parties who provide language stimulation at home through storytelling and daily verbal interactions; and (3) PAUD teachers, as parties who guide language activities in the classroom through storytelling, role-play, and group interactions. Data sources consisted of primary data, in the form of observations of children's activities and parental interactions, in-depth interviews with parents and teachers, and documentation of activities. In addition, secondary sources were obtained from supporting documents, activity notes, and relevant related literature (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Moleong, 2014). Data collection techniques included observation to assess direct communication practices, interviews to obtain in-depth information and support understanding of the context, and documentation, in the form of photos and notes of children's activities as supporting evidence (Sugiyono, 2020; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The research instruments consisted of observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were used to assess children's behavior during storytelling, role-play, and verbal communication activities in the classroom and at home, focusing on behavioral indicators such as sentence structure, idea expression, vocabulary expansion, and interaction with peers and teachers. Observation notes served as the basis for the analysis of the findings, although a complete list of behavioral indicators is not included in the article. Interviews were conducted with parents and teachers to obtain in-depth information regarding language stimulation practices at home and at school, systematically organized according to the research objectives. Documentation in the form of photographs of children's activities in the classroom and at home served as visual evidence of the observed interactions and verbal communication practices, thus supporting the validity of the data and strengthening the research findings. Data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation first underwent data reduction, a process of simplifying, categorizing, and highlighting information relevant to the research objectives, facilitating analysis without drawing premature conclusions. Next, the data were presented systematically through narratives, tables, and photo illustrations to illustrate children's activities in communication and language stimulation practices, allowing readers to clearly understand the context of the findings.

The next stage is data analysis, which is conducted by linking the results of observations, interviews, and documentation with behavioral indicators, theoretical foundations, and previous research findings. In this process, all

collected data is not only presented as is but also examined in more depth to determine the correspondence between child behavior, parental communication patterns, and responses that emerge in real situations. This analysis allows researchers to identify patterns, relationships, and meanings of parent-child communication activities, thereby concluding how parental communication contributes to improving language intelligence in early childhood. Through this systematic review process, researchers can map the relationship between empirical facts and the theories used, while also understanding the dynamics of interactions that occur in children's daily lives. With this procedure, the research ensures that the conclusions drawn are valid, objective, and based on triangulated evidence from various sources and data collection techniques (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Sugiyono, 2020; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Moleong, 2020). This triangulation approach also provides assurance that the data produced has been tested through comparisons between methods, so that the interpretations obtained truly reflect the actual conditions in the field and are not simply based on one type of information alone.

Research Results and Discussion

Research result

This study shows that parental communication plays a significant role in improving the language intelligence of 4-5 year old children at BA Aisyiyah G. Based on observations and documentation, children showed improvements in storytelling skills, vocabulary, and verbal skills when interacting with parents and teachers. One of the activities observed was children sitting with the teacher in class during storytelling activities, where the teacher asked open-ended questions and children were given the opportunity to share personal experiences. This activity was seen to increase children's courage in expressing language and expanding vocabulary. In addition, children's interactions with friends during role-play in class also became important moments to practice social communication and language use in the context of play. Children were able to convey ideas and express stories sequentially, demonstrating positive language development.

At home, children tell stories to their parents while using storybooks as a medium for language stimulation. Parents can respond to their children's stories with additional questions that can expand vocabulary and consistently encourage children's language skills. These findings indicate that language stimulation occurs both at school and at home, in line with the research objectives (Putri et al., 2020; Katoningsih, 2021). Storytelling activities provide early language stimulation through verbal interaction, vocabulary modeling, and simple explanations that help children understand the context of the story. Block-based role-play activities demonstrate children's ability to use imagination and symbolism through building block structures. In this role-play, children pretend to be architects designing simple buildings.



Figure 1. Children sitting with the teacher during storytelling activities in class.



Figure 2. Children playing with blocks in a role-play activity pretending to be architects.



Figure 3. Children and parents doing storytelling activities at home

Storytelling at home provides opportunities for children to develop language skills more naturally through everyday interactions. In a familiar and comfortable setting, storytelling occurs spontaneously, allowing children to express ideas, feelings, and experiences without pressure. Parents act as primary facilitators, providing new vocabulary, expanding their understanding of context, and practicing their ability to construct sentences and express experiences. Parents' role in this process extends beyond responding to their children's stories to creating a conversational atmosphere that encourages children to continue exploring language. This activity also strengthens emotional closeness and increases children's confidence in verbal communication, as they feel valued and listened to by those closest to them. Interviews with teachers and parents at BA Aisyiyah G in April 2025 revealed information regarding children's language stimulation at home and in the classroom, demonstrating a continuity between storytelling within the family environment and strengthening language skills through learning activities at school.

Question 1: How are children's storytelling skills developing in class?

"The children seem more confident when telling stories, are able to construct simple sentences, and express ideas with peers." (Teacher A)

Question 2: Does the role-play method help children communicate?

"The role-play method helps children understand language structure and improves social interaction with classmates." (Teacher B)

Question 3: How is language stimulation implemented at home?

"I regularly encourage my children to talk about their daily activities or favorite toys, which helps them expand their vocabulary." (Parent A)

Question 4: What are the challenges in guiding children to tell stories?

"Every child develops at a different pace, so patience and guidance are essential for effective language stimulation." (Parent B)

Discussion

Based on observations, documentation, and interviews, it appears that children at BA Aisyiyah G have experienced significant improvements in their language skills. This improvement does not arise from a single source of stimulation, but rather the result of a combination of support provided by parents at home and teachers at school. During teaching and learning activities, particularly storytelling, children sit with their teachers in a relaxed and directed atmosphere. During these sessions, they are encouraged to express their ideas, express them in coherent sentences, and try to explain their experiences in simple yet clear language. This process demonstrates how children learn to structure their stories, choose appropriate vocabulary, and practice speaking confidently in front of their peers. These findings align with the concept of scaffolding proposed by Vygotsky (Etnawati et al., 2021), who explains that support from adults, whether teachers or parents, serves as a temporary support for children. This support helps them achieve skills they initially could not master independently. In the classroom, teachers provide guidance through prompting questions, repetition of words, or the gradual addition of new vocabulary. This approach allows children to develop their language skills gradually but consistently.

Furthermore, these findings are supported by research by Putri et al. (2020) and Katoningsih (2021), which confirmed that regular storytelling can expand children's vocabulary and improve their verbal skills. This is clearly evident when children begin to gain confidence in telling stories and using words they previously rarely used. Beyond storytelling, role-playing activities in the classroom also significantly impact language development. In these activities, children interact directly with their peers in play situations that mimic real-life situations, such as playing as a trader, teacher, or family member. Through these role-plays, children learn to respond to peers' comments, use language appropriately in social contexts, and communicate ideas coherently. These findings align with language stimulation theory (Afriliani et al., 2023), which emphasizes that repeated and consistent verbal communication is a crucial factor in supporting children's language

development. The natural social interactions that occur during play have been shown to enrich their language processing abilities and improve their speaking fluency.

Outside of the school environment, children's interactions with their parents at home also make an equally important contribution. Interviews with parents revealed that many regularly engage their children in conversations about their daily activities, ask them about new vocabulary, and even provide examples of correct word usage in sentences. This form of communication not only makes children feel cared for but also provides opportunities for them to expand their language skills in more personal and emotional situations. This finding aligns with the theory of parent-child communication (Munz, 2015; Indrayani, 2016), which emphasizes that two-way communication between children and parents has a significant influence on shaping children's verbal abilities. When parents respond appropriately—for example, by repeating, correcting, or expanding a child's sentences—children receive a good language model and can imitate it.

This, it is understandable that language stimulation from two primary environments, home and school, complement each other and create a powerful synergistic effect. Children not only learn to construct sentences or expand their vocabulary, but also learn to use language in real social contexts, whether through storytelling, role-playing, or everyday conversations with parents. The results of this study indicate that consistent stimulation from parents and teachers plays a crucial role in developing early childhood language intelligence. Children gain richer language experiences, both in terms of their courage to express ideas, their ability to tell stories coherently, and their habit of using a more diverse vocabulary. This situation emphasizes the crucial role of parents and teachers in creating a conducive and sustainable language environment. Both act as primary facilitators, helping children develop their verbal skills optimally, so that their language development can proceed naturally, enjoyably, and meaningfully.

Conclusion

Based on the results of research on the Role of Parental Communication in Improving the Language Intelligence of 4-5 Year Old Children at BA Aisyiyah G, it can be concluded that parental communication plays a crucial role in the development of children's language intelligence. Forms of communication carried out by parents, such as daily dialogue, reading stories, asking provocative questions, and providing positive verbal responses, have been proven to improve children's ability to construct sentences, expand vocabulary, and express ideas verbally. Consistent verbal interactions between parents and children also encourage children to be more confident in speaking, able to understand instructions, and actively participate in conversations. In addition, teacher support at school through storytelling and role-play activities strengthens the language stimulation received by children at home. Thus, it can be concluded that the role of parental communication, both through daily conversations and literacy activities at home, contributes significantly to improving the language intelligence of early childhood. Collaboration between parents and teachers is key to creating a rich language environment and supporting optimal child development.

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