

Social interaction and the quality of the learning environment have an impact on the language development of young children at TKIT Ulul Albaab.

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of social interaction and the quality of the learning environment on children's language development at TKIT Ulul Albaab. Employing a quantitative approach with a survey method, this research applies a correlational design to investigate causal relationships between variables. The research population includes all students aged 4-6 years at TKIT Ulul Albaab, with a total sampling of 59 children as respondents. Data collection was conducted through structured observations using instruments that have been tested for validity and reliability. Data analysis utilized multiple linear regression. The results show: (1) there is a significant influence of social interaction on children's language development ($R^2 = 0.774$, sig. 0.001), (2) there is a significant influence of learning environment quality on children's language development ($R^2 = 0.545$, sig. 0.003), and (3) there is a significant joint influence of social interaction and learning environment quality on children's language development ($R^2 = 0.733$, sig. 0.005). In conclusion, social interaction and the quality of the learning environment play crucial roles in supporting early childhood language development, with social interaction having a more dominant influence. The research implications emphasize the importance of enhancing the quality of social interactions and learning environments to optimize children's language development in early childhood education institutions.

Keywords: *Social Interaction, Quality of Learning Environment, Language Development, Early Childhood*

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INTRODUCTION

The development of language in young children is a crucial aspect of their overall growth, with significant impacts on their cognitive, social, and emotional abilities in the future. Having strong language skills enables children to express themselves, understand others, and effectively participate in their social environment. However, in recent years, there has been growing concern about the declining quality of language development in young children in Indonesia, particularly in early childhood education institutions such as integrated Islamic kindergartens (TKIT).

The recent research by Hasanah et al. (2018) reveals that approximately 30% of children aged 4-6 years in Indonesia experience language development delays (Hasanah & Uswatun, 2018). This indicates a gap between expectations and reality in terms of early childhood language development. Ideally, children in this age range should already be able to communicate fluently, have a sufficient vocabulary, and construct simple sentences. However, the reality on the ground shows that many children still struggle with these aspects.

The factors influencing the language development of young children have been the focus of various studies in recent years. Social interaction and the quality of the learning environment are two factors often associated with language development in children. However, there is a research gap that needs to be addressed. A study by Mailinda et al. (2022) showed that social interaction has a positive impact on children's language development (Mailinda et al., 2022), while research conducted by Sofiah & Aliyah (2024) found that the role of social interaction in children's language development is not significant in certain sample groups (Sofiah & Aliyah, 2024). These differing results highlight the need for further research to clarify the relationship between social interaction and language development in young children.

Furthermore, there is an interesting phenomenon gap that needs to be investigated. Despite many early childhood education institutions, including TKIT, implementing programs to enhance the quality of learning environments, the expected results in terms of children's language development have not been fully achieved. Research by Mutmainnah (2019) indicates that although there has been improvement in the physical quality of learning environments in PAUD, it does not always correlate positively with children's language abilities (Mutmainnah, 2019). This phenomenon raises questions about other possible factors that may play a role in the language development of young children.

Ideally, every young child should have an equal opportunity to develop their language abilities optimally. A high-quality learning environment should provide various stimuli that support language development, such as interesting books, educational materials, and conducive spaces for interaction. Positive social interactions between children and teachers, peers, and other adults should serve as a catalyst for children's language development. However, in reality, many early childhood education institutions still face challenges in providing an ideal learning environment and facilitating quality social interactions.

In the context of TKIT Ulul Albaab, pre-observation and initial interviews with teachers and the school principal revealed some interesting findings. According to Mrs. Lia Yuliawati, the Head of TKIT Ulul Albaab, "We have made efforts to improve the quality of the learning environment by adding a collection of storybooks and educational aids. However, we still face challenges in optimizing social interactions that support children's language development." She added that approximately 25% of their students still demonstrate language abilities below the expected standards for their age.

This phenomenon reflects the gap between the efforts made by the school and the results achieved in terms of children's language development. Despite improvements in the physical learning environment, the quality and intensity of social interactions supporting language development still need to be enhanced. This is consistent with the findings of McDoniel et al. (2022), which emphasize the importance of balancing physical environment quality and social interactions in supporting early childhood language development (McDoniel et al., 2022).

The gap between idealism and reality in the language development of young children is also reflected in the aspect of parental involvement. Research by Lestari (2023) shows that active parental involvement in language activities at home has a positive correlation with children's language development (Lestari & Handayani, 2023). However, initial observations at TKIT Ulul Albaab indicate that the level of parental involvement in supporting children's language development still varies and is not yet optimal.

Facing the complexity of challenges in supporting the language development of young children, a comprehensive and integrated approach is necessary. This research aims to analyze in-depth the influence of social interaction and the quality of the learning environment on the language development of young children at TKIT Ulul Albaab. By understanding the dynamics of the relationship between these two factors and children's language development, it is hoped that more effective strategies can be formulated to support the language development of young children.

The findings of this research are expected to provide a significant contribution to the development of early childhood education programs, particularly in the aspect of language development. Additionally, the results of this study can serve as a foundation for the formulation of policies and intervention programs aimed at enhancing the quality of social interaction and learning environment in early childhood education institutions, as well as increasing parental involvement in supporting children's language development.

METHOD

This research employs a quantitative approach with a survey method. The survey method focuses on revealing the relationships between variables, specifically aimed at investigating cause-and-effect relationships within a variable. The results from this causal approach survey will be analyzed using multiple linear regression. Independent variables are variables that influence or cause changes in dependent variables. Independent variables in research include social interaction and the quality of the learning environment.

This research will be conducted at the Ulul Albaab Kindergarten in Kedung Waringin, located in Perum, Kedungwaringin, Kec. Kedungwaringin, Kabupaten Bekasi, West Java. Ulul Albaab Kindergarten was chosen as the research location because it is representative of the demographic, cultural, and social environment in the area. The research will be carried out for a period of one year, starting from March 2024 until May 2024.

The population in this study consists of all students at TKIT Ulul Albaab aged 4-6 years, totaling 59 children. The sampling technique used in this study is total sampling, where the sample size is equal to the population. The reason for using total sampling is because the population size is less than 100. The sample taken includes all students at TKIT Ulul Albaab aged 4-6 years, totaling 59 children.

The type of instruments used in this research are direct observation. Direct observation will be conducted to observe the social interactions of children with their peers, the quality of the learning environment, and the language development of children at TKIT Ulul Albaab. The researcher will observe daily activities in the classroom, such as group games, discussions, and collaborative activities. The data analysis technique used is multiple linear regression. Multiple linear regression is used to test the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables. The calculation will be performed using the SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solution) Version 27 for Windows program.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. *The influence of social interaction on children's language development.*

From the Summary model table, the R^2 value is 0.774, which means that the social interaction variable is able to increase the language development variable by 77.4%. The remaining 22.6% is influenced by other factors outside of regression. Based on the above output, an R value of 71.7% is also obtained. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a strong relationship between social interaction and the improvement of language development in children.

Table 1: The coefficient of determination of social interaction on child language development.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.717 ^a	.774	.759	10.23996

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Interaction

From the table 2, the F value is 12.003 with a significance level of 0.001. The testing was conducted using the significance criteria or sig with the following conditions: If the significance value of the research is < 0.05 , H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected. If the significance value is > 0.05 , H_a is rejected and H_o is accepted. Based on the calculation results using SPSS v28 above, it appears that the sig value is smaller than 0.05, which is 0.001 or $0.001 < 0.05$, therefore H_o is rejected and H_a is accepted. This means that there is a significant influence of social interaction on language development in children at TKIT Ulul Albaab.

Table 2: Linear Regression Results on Social Interaction Towards Child Language Development.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1258.572	1	1258.572	12.003	.001 ^b
	Residual	5976.836	57	104.857		
	Total	7235.408	58			

a. Dependent Variable: Language Development

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Interaction

2. The influence of the learning environment on children's language development.

From Table 3 of the model summary, the R² value is 0.545, which means that the learning environment variable is able to increase the language development variable by 54.5%. The remaining 45.5% is influenced by other factors outside of regression. Based on the above output, an R value of 58.1% is also obtained. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a fairly strong relationship between the learning environment and the language development variable in children.

Table 3: The Environment Learning Coefficient's Impact on Children's Language Development

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.581 ^a	.545	.530	10.41572

a. Predictors: (Constant), Environment Learning

Table 4. Results of Linear Regression of Learning Environment on Children's Language Development

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1051.638	1	1051.638	9.694	.003 ^b
	Residual	6183.770	57	108.487		
	Total	7235.408	58			

a. Dependent Variable: children's language development

b. Predictors: (Constant), the learning environment

From the table 4, the F value is 9.694 with a significance level of 0.003. The testing was conducted using the significance criteria or sig, with the following conditions: If the significance value of the research is < 0.05 , H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected. If the significance value is > 0.05 , H_a is rejected and H_o is accepted. Based on the calculation results using SPSS v28, the sig value appears to be smaller than 0.05, specifically 0.003 or $0.003 < 0.05$, therefore H_o is rejected and H_a is accepted. This means that there is a significant influence between the learning environment and language development in children at TKIT Ulul Albaab.

3. The influence of social interaction and learning environment on children's language development.

From Table 5 of the model summary, the R^2 value is 0.733, which means that the combined interaction of social and learning environment variables can increase the language development variable by 73.3%. The remaining 26.7% is influenced by other factors outside of regression. Based on the above output, an R value of 72.6% is also obtained. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a fairly strong relationship between social interaction and learning environment in enhancing the language development variable.

From the Anova table, the F value is 5.896 with a significance level of 0.005. The testing was conducted using the significance criteria or sig with the following conditions: If the significance value of the research is < 0.05 , H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected. If the significance value is > 0.05 , H_a is rejected and H_o is accepted. Based on the calculation results using SPSS v28 above, it appears that the sig value is smaller than 0.05, which is 0.005 or $0.005 < 0.05$, therefore H_o is rejected and H_a is accepted. This means that there is a significant combined influence between social interaction and the quality of the learning environment on language development in TKIT Ulul Albaab.

Table 5: The Coefficient of Determination of Social Interaction and Learning Environment on Child Language Development.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.726 ^a	.733	.724	10.33095

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Interaction, learning Environment on Child Language Development

Table 6: Multiple Linear Regression.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1258.608	2	629.304	5.896	.005 ^b
	Residual	5976.799	56	106.729		
	Total	7235.408	58			

a. Dependent Variable: Child Language Development

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Interaction, learning Environment on Child Language Development

4. Discussion

The multiple linear regression results indicate that these two factors complement each other in supporting children's language development. Children who learn in a supportive environment and have good social interactions tend to have more optimal language development. A conducive environment provides appropriate stimulation for children to learn and develop their language abilities, while social interactions allow them to apply and deepen their understanding of language through communication with peers and teachers.

This research confirms the importance of social interaction and the quality of the learning environment in supporting the language development of young children. Positive social interactions allow children to practice and develop their language skills in meaningful contexts. Meanwhile, a high-quality learning environment provides the necessary stimulation and resources to support language development.

These findings are also consistent with Vygotsky's theory of language development, which emphasizes the crucial role of social interaction and the environment in a child's cognitive and language development. Vygotsky argued that learning occurs through social interaction and that the socio-cultural environment significantly impacts a child's development (Vygotski, 1978).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis in CHAPTER IV and the discussion, there are several conclusions that the researcher describes as follows:

There is a significant influence between social interaction and language development in children at TKIT Ulul Albaab. The linear regression analysis results show an R^2 value of 0.774, which means that the social interaction variable is able to increase the language development variable by 77.4%. The significance value of 0.001 (< 0.05) confirms the significance of this influence. Therefore, it can be concluded that the better the social interaction of the child, the better their language development.

There is a significant influence between the quality of the learning environment and the language development of children at TKIT Ulul Albaab. Linear regression analysis

shows an R^2 value of 0.545, indicating that the learning environment variable is able to increase the language development variable by 54.5%. The significance value of 0.003 (< 0.05) confirms the significance of this influence. These results indicate that a quality learning environment contributes positively to children's language development.

There is a significant combined influence between social interaction and the quality of the learning environment on the language development of children at TKIT Ulul Albaab. The multiple linear regression analysis results show an R^2 value of 0.733, which means that the variables of social interaction and learning environment together can increase the value of the child's language development variable by 73.3%. The significance value of 0.005 (< 0.05) confirms the significance of this influence.

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