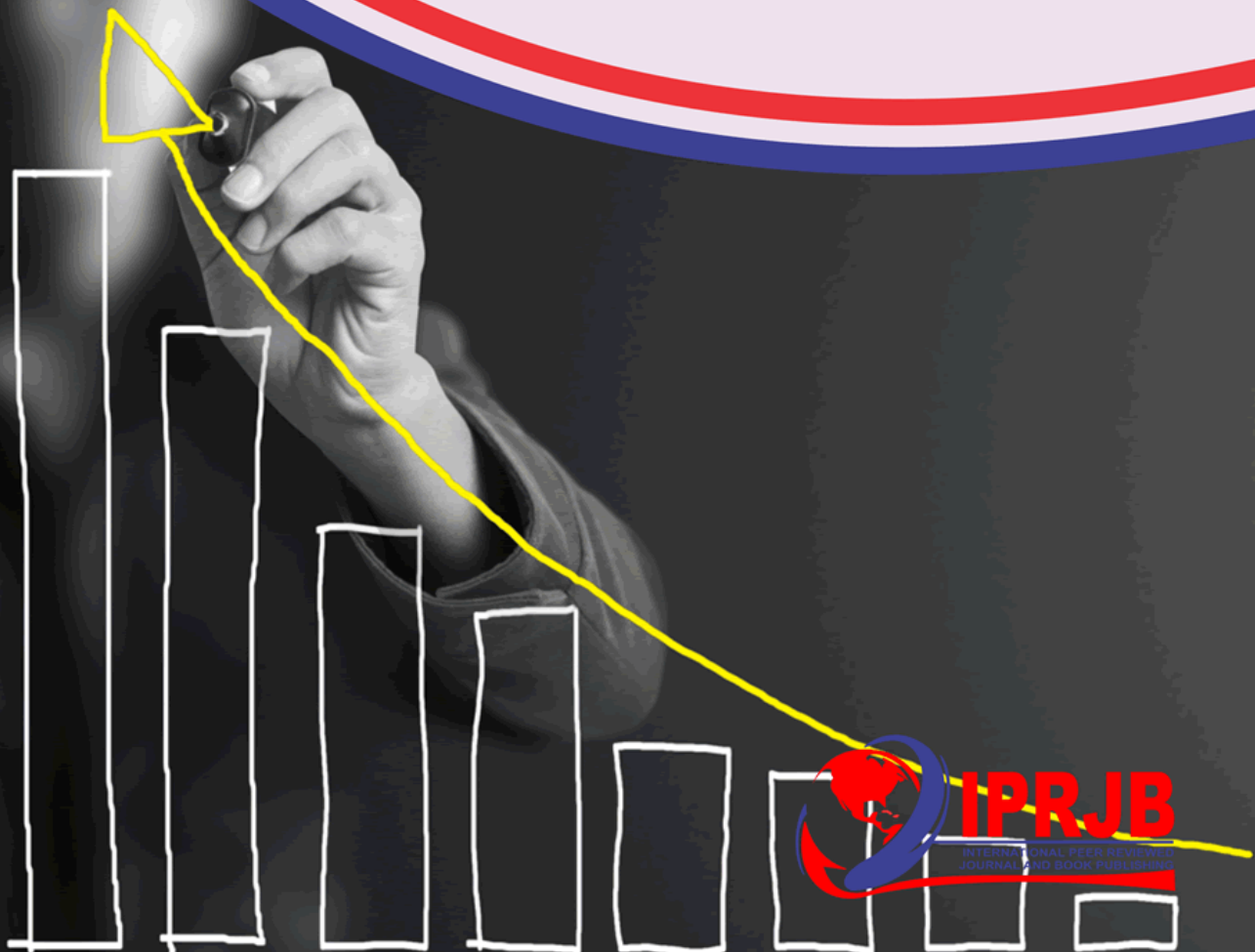


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## THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN CHILD OVERALL DEVELOPMENT

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### Abstract

The paper x-rayed the significance of language in the overall development of a child. Typical classroom situations were examined and experts' opinions were also reviewed. Language was found to be central to human life. The various segments of the lives of a human being were examined to point out the contributions that language makes. Recommendations were made appropriately.

**Key words:** *Language, child overall development, education*

### Introduction

Thinking originates in a child's concrete activity, which, thanks to verbalization through social intervention, becomes internalized. The child himself tests the truth of his thinking through this concrete activity. This is ultimately the only way, since the thoughts of adults themselves embody millennia of human accomplishment, itself a product of concrete activity.

In the fairly recent explosion of interest in the role of language in learning, this need for constant checking with practical activity has often been overlooked. Naive notions that building vocabulary would help thinking were augmented by ideas about the power of syntax or the importance of semantics. It would be no exaggeration to say that many people seemed to hold the view that the thing to do was to spray children with language and then ideas would grow where one had grown before. More likely to be effective is the involving of children in actively exploring the effects and power of language in connection with practical activities and interactions with other people. Discussion, explanation and argument all demand difficult cognitive activity. They are all intended to influence other people in some way so that the speaker can see the effect of his activity. The rate that children acquire language is quite varied in the normal range of development. Just as some children crawl or stand earlier than others, some children gain control over language earlier than others. Within the normal range there appear to be some shared steps to language learning regardless of the child's culture or native language. The communication process begins with what works-eye contact, looking at a desired object, reaching, and vocalizing.

In early life children have little control over their activities. They learn to sit up, stand and feed themselves, mainly with the help of adults. At first the adults' help involves physical assistance, standing, sitting and feeding. Later, assistance takes the form of guidance by the speech of adults, telling and encouraging the child in its actions. All this is obvious. But what

is not so obvious are the processes whereby a helpless child whose activity is controlled physically by adults in his early life develops into a person able to control his own behaviour through complex thought processes. The two crucial aspects of this development are the transformation of speech from a set of signals to a system of symbols and the gradual internalization of this symbol system as a mechanism of self-regulation.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Language is an important skill. It gives room for opportunities to allow a person to communicate. The process of language development in children begins even before they can use words. For example a child cries when in need even before he/she begins to develop language to express his/her mind. A delay in language skills can cause frustration for a child as well as miscommunication about what she may be trying to convey. Language development is important to a child in order to adequately exchange information with others in a meaningful way. In ordinary speech the speaker has to make explicit the subject of his statements; when one is thinking or talking to oneself there is no need to do this. One's speech can be completely predicative, that is, the subject need not be stated. Abbreviated, predicative speech is speech on the way to becoming internalized. Later, egocentric speech disappears to be replaced by inner speech and eventually by thought.

### **Procedure of gathering Information**

Pupils were observed in the class for the purpose of collecting information to substantiate the thesis of the paper. A typical example is hereby presented.

Pupils are asked to experiment an object in the class

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Hold a pen  | Teaching manipulating skills  |
| 2. Write your name with the pen                              | This involves thought and action: Thinking the spelling of your name and writing it |
| 3. Pronounce what you have written                           |   |
| 4. Getting the satisfaction of carrying out the three stages |   |

In stage 1, two approaches are possible. In the first the teacher explains the operation to the child and then allows him to make himself familiar with it under the teacher's directions. In second method the teacher carries out the operation while 1 child watches and 'helps' by prompting. Galperin found second method was superior to the first, a discovery that seemed to him surprising since the first method seems more active, does, however, tie up with the work of Luria, who found that, certain stages of learning, the task of acting and speaking - as the pressing experiment - seemed to be too much for the child. Galperin suggests, in line with this view, that freeing the child be denied, however from the concrete activity enables him to concentrate on the problem more effectively. Again, this is entirely consistent with aspects of the experiments reported above and the suggestion made in relation to them.

In stage 2 the child manipulates the material himself; teacher guides, explains and corrects. The teacher's speech directs the child's activities to the manipulation of the material singling out objects, the goals of the activity, and the methods of achieving the goals. At this stage the child is working things out in the concrete and not abstracting or working things out in his imagination. At stage 3 the child has mastered the activity using objects. he now moves to the stage where he can *represent* the activity by audible speech, and can now explain or give an account of the activity is carried out. What was formerly a practical activity is now a

theoretical one. It is still, however, reinforced by the child's own speech. At stage 4 the child is encouraged to whisper to himself instead of speaking out loud. He is still using language. However, as the activity becomes more habitual it becomes more and more compressed and abbreviated. At stage 5 the action is completely internalized. It is now extremely compressed and elliptical. The flow of speech of stage 2 has now become a flow of concepts, and the child has transformed what was initially a concrete object action into a mental phenomenon. Galperin stresses that, if the pupil does go wrong and fails to learn, it is essential to return to an earlier stage and start again. Giving the child practice at the stage where he fails merely reinforces his error. It is more difficult to reply to the further charge that, by teaching them *how* to think, teachers teach learners *what* to think, since the one affects the other; for so little is known about the actual processes of thinking. Whether in language and thinking

A child of about eighteen months will usually have made some progress towards responding to the meaning rather than to the physical properties of speech. However, at about this age the physical property is still a powerful influence and tends still to be attached to the stimulus situation. Thus Luria found that if a child of this age is told to take his stockings *off* when he is in the process of putting them *on*, he will be unable to do so. This is because the motor activity of putting on his stockings is a more powerful influence than the significance of the words 'take off'. Similarly, although it is possible to cause a child of about eighteen months to press a bulb on a recording apparatus by telling him, verbal instructions cannot stop him. On the other hand a signal can stop him. If he is told to press when a light appears and action of pressing puts out the light, he will stop pressing. If the feedback system of the light's going out when the bulb is pressed is disconnected, the earlier lack of clear-cut responses recurs and he presses when he should not. At this stage, although the child is responding to the meaning of the words, the physical stimulus of the light is more powerful than the words telling him not to press.

## **Analysis**

### **Role of speech in the life of a Child**

Language has crucial role in the life of every individual. Language performs different functions in the lives of individuals. It is a means of communicating one's thoughts and ideas to the rest, as well as a tool for forging friendships, cultural ties as well as all forms of relationships. Several studies have been directed at explaining the importance of language in people's lives. Language is used in interacting with the people fellow humans around. It is also used to let others know how one feels, what is needed, and to ask questions. Language can also be modified to suit situations. This happens in several ways. In talking to different categories of people using different words and tone as compared to when conducting other affairs. To communicate effectively, messages are communicated with words, gestures, or actions, which somebody else receives. Language has also been described as the vehicle of our thought and the thinking process is disturbed if the individual has deficiency in language.

Language is the medium of expression of feelings and experiences. In other words feelings and experiences are also expressed through language. Just as communications are done with one another through language understanding of a common language has helped people to communicate, despite being from varied parts of the world. Language has become a major tool of communication between countries, cultural groups, various companies and organizations, communities and friends. Language is also connected to the moral development

in a child. The process begins when the child is about 18 months old. The child learns the right and wrong by listening to what his parents or other adult authorities tell him. Imagine teaching the child the difference of right or wrong without the tool of language! Language is the code of consciousness and helps to see what we may be agreeing to and creating in our world.

Furthermore, language aids in developing and grooming one's personality as a whole. Since learning a language is part of knowledge, it becomes one of the key factors in competitiveness. In the advanced industrial society of today, the basic knowledge of a single or more language has become indispensable. Language is one of the key factors of human developmental process, which sets people apart from the rest of the animal kingdom and knits a strong feeling of kinship amongst them. A baby is born without language, but even without formal training, by the age of five, the child knows several hundred words and grammar of a particular language. This is an inherent human tendency, which is extremely important for further growth. Any discrepancy seen in learning a language at such early stage might indicate certain illness in a child. In the developmental trajectory of a child, language plays an important role since it is connected with various aspects of a child's growth. Learning a language is directly related to emotional development. For instance, a baby gazing at his parent's face is responded by cooing and few words of love by his parents. This retains in the baby's mind and when he is a little older, he begins using language to express his emotions as well. Language is the bases of all education. School education is predominately language oriented. Reading, writing and arithmetic are all based on language proficiency. It is therefore clear that language and its development is important in the development of a child.

### **Conclusion**

Language aids in developing and grooming one's personality as a whole. Since learning a language is part of knowledge, it becomes one of the key factors in upbringing and development.

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