



# Linguistic Differences are Influenced by Socioeconomic Position and Cultural Norms.

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## Abstract

Two studies examine the relationship between socioeconomic position and culture and the “qualities of the interactions children have and the pace of their language development.” In the first research, “a nationwide sample of 3-year-olds was examined to determine the relationship between family SES, features of mother child-directed speech, and the increase of children’s vocabulary.” Study two examines the relationship between mother’s education, mother’s “language teaching techniques, and the development of children’s vocabulary and grammar in a sample of 3–5-year-olds in the nation.” To put it another way, these studies show how children’s social and cultural environments might influence their language development over time.

**Key Words:** “Cultural Impact, Language acquisition, language learning experiences, and development.”

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## 1. Introduction

Social and cultural factors influence how adults communicate with children and the content of their speech. Children use their brain processes to analyze the information they get from listening to others speak to learn a new language. Children’s language development and more significant social and cultural factors have been studied in two separate research published in this journal article (Kroskrity, 2018). There is an initial inquiry of the relationship between family socioeconomic position, mother-child-directed speech features, and child vocabulary development among 3-year-olds in the country (Huang, 2019). Second, a sample of 3–to 5-year-olds in Countries was studied to see if their vocabulary and grammatical development were related to their mothers’ educational attainment and their “language teaching strategies” (Matthews and López, 2019).

## 2. SES, maternal speech, and language development in children in this nation were all examined.

### 2.1 Background

This inquiry is based on three separate studies. For starters, “a substantial body of research has shown that the socioeconomic status of a child’s household influences their language development” (Mariani et al., 2019). Within the first two years of life, children from lower socioeconomic status exhibit slower growth rates than children from higher socioeconomic status, and this trend continues throughout the school years (Dou et al., 2018). As a group, children from lower socioeconomic classes are more likely to have poor communication skills (Presbitero, 2020). “The second aspect of the context for this research is the literature that demonstrates the link between SES and the character of mothers’ conversations with their children.” “SES women have been observed to communicate less, have a smaller vocabulary, be more directive, and ask fewer questions of their children than SES mothers of higher socioeconomic status” (SES) (Ho, 2020). This study’s third piece of background material is the research on the relationship between a mother’s speech characteristics and the pace at which her kid develops language (Brooks et al., 2019).

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“Several studies have indicated that the volume of speech directed towards children, the breadth of vocabulary used, the frequency with which questions are posed, and the length of utterances are all good indicators of language development” (Tolosa et al., 2018). In the context of these three studies, the concept that mother speech is how SES influences children's language development is supported. This theory was tested in the following research.

## 2.2 Method

Sixty-five children, “ranging in age from 17 to 31 months with a mean of 24 months,” and their mothers participated. The youngsters were chosen to be as similar in language development as feasible. Every single one of them was only learning how to string two words together at the time. Naturalistic videotaping of mother-child interactions was done at the children's residences (Chen et al., 2019). The experimenter gave the children's toys, and the mother prepared the kid for the day, all of which were recorded on camera. The three settings lasted an average of 45 minutes each. After the initial recording, a follow-up session was scheduled for 12 weeks later.

Family members who met one of two criteria were chosen for inclusion in the study. Both parents in “high-SES households had college degrees and worked in jobs that matched their education level” (Ares, 2018). Both parents in families “in the mid-SES range had little more than a high school diploma and a few years of technical training,” and they were employed in jobs that matched their educational background. “It was determined how many different kinds of words and the average length of utterances (MLU) mothers used in spontaneous speaking during the first encounter.” In a preliminary analysis of this data, these two measures were predictive of child vocabulary development (Petek and Bedir, 2018). A child's vocabulary was assessed by counting how many words they used in 95 different sentences throughout their Time 3 interactions. “Data analysis techniques were developed to fulfill the standards for showing mediation” (Unsworth and Mills, 2020).

## 2.3 Results

“In samples of spontaneous speech of comparable size, children” from higher socioeconomic status created considerably more word types than children from mid-socioeconomic level. Following “a series of

hierarchical regression analysis, the following” findings were made clear:

“SES explained 6% of the variation in the size of the children's vocabularies. This had a statistically significant impact.”

“Maternal speech was a major predictor of SES. When it came to talking to their children, high-SES women employed a more sophisticated vocabulary and lengthier utterances than mid-SES parents.”

“Child vocabulary usage was positively correlated with the richness and length of the mother vocabulary.”

“By statistically reducing the variation in child speech that could be explained in terms of maternal speech and then asking whether SES had any influence, we tested the hypothesis that mother's speech mediated the relationship between mother's SES and kid vocabulary.” The results showed that SES was no longer having any discernible effects. Using hierarchical regressions, “only a non-significant 2% of the variation in child vocabulary was related with SES when the variance attributed to mother speech was eliminated” (MacIntyre, 2020).

## 2.4 Conclusions

“High-SES children had larger productive vocabularies than middle-SES children.” In its search for an answer, “it discovered that the children's language learning experiences were vastly different.” When it comes to language acquisition, inequalities across groups might arise because of variations in the availability of information rather than because of differences in the ability of individuals to learn languages. So, with that in mind, let's look at how youngsters in China, a society that is very different from ours yet supposedly more homogeneous, go about learning a language and what it means for their future language development.

## 3. A study of mother education, linguistic patterns, and the development of a child's language

### 3.1 Background

Reports indicate that Chinese parents distinctly speak to their children from the way youngsters in Europe and North America are taught to speak (Moser et al., 2021). For example, when talking to youngsters, Chinese adults prefer to engage in a lot of question-and-answer discourse. It is common for adults to keep asking questions until the kid



responds in a certain way (Tauová et al., 2019). Another aspect of speaking to youngsters is to ask for a lot of mimics. To add to the burden, young children are required by their parents to learn and recount lengthy narratives. But there is a wide variation in the Chinese way of speaking to youngsters. In addition, "it has been shown that parents who are more educated, referred to as intellectuals, communicate differently with their children than parents who are less educated, referred to as laborers." Chinese parents who are more educated than their counterparts in the U.S. tend to be less directive, communicate more, and use a more expansive language while conversing with their children, much like those in the U.S. (Jin and Dewaele, 2018).

The results of recent research in China (Arrosagaray et al., 2019) "on predictors of children's language development is comparable to those of a prior study in the United States Language Experience and Language Development in the United States." Among the questions that were examined in the present study:

Is there a correlation between the kind of language experiences caregivers provide and the pace at which their children learn?

To what extent do caregivers' language experiences impact children's ability to communicate in their native tongue?

Is the pace at which a child's linguistic skills grow linked to the mother's education?

### 3.2 Method

The volunteers cared for three hundred and sixty-two boys and thirty-two girls from two Shanghai neighborhoods. All of the youngsters were between the ages of 23 and 46 months. No one had any hearing or neurological issues at birth.

"Using a version of the MacArthur Inventory for Mandarin, caregivers commented on their children's productive vocabulary and grammatical features of their speech in one-on-one interviews with an investigator." The demographics of their family members were also revealed (Larson et al., 2020). The inventory's vocabulary checklist comprised 255 terms often heard in children's speech divided into 15 categories. The grammar section included 15 grammatical structures and the eight most often used auxiliary verbs. There were two outcomes from this language inventory: vocabulary and grammatical characteristics counts.

"A questionnaire developed by Chinese researchers in China also asked caregivers if they used the

following language teaching practices with their children, (1) eliciting conversation, (2) repeating and expanding the child's language, (3) teaching by picture cards, (4) telling stories, (5) encouraging the child to mimic words, or, (6) rarely teaching the child how to speak." "Coded as (yes or no)." "Based on maternal education, participants were separated into two groups: those with a high school education or less (n = 455) and those with a higher education (n = 229)."

### 3.3 "Results"

The conclusions of this research are relevant to the current debates in the scientific community:

Children's language development was a critical factor in the instructional strategies that caregivers reported utilizing. Children's language development was shown to be favorably correlated with prompting dialogue, teaching using image cards, and narrating tales. "Language development was adversely correlated with the reported use of teaching language by eliciting imitation and the reported rare use of any teaching method."

We found a strong link between the self-described instructional approaches and maternal schooling. There was a significant difference in the frequency of discussion elicitation and storytelling in households with more educated moms vs. those with less-educated mothers.

The development of a child's linguistic skills was strongly linked to the mother's education. The vocabularies of children whose moms were more educated were greater than those of children whose mothers had less education. The level of schooling did not affect her child's grammatical development.

### 3.4 Conclusions

These teaching approaches, which are not included in "American and European literature on environmental support for language development, show that China does vary from the West when it comes to its ideas and practices when it comes to talking to children." "However, the investigations of the relationships between maternal education, teaching methods, and children's language development found that some of the elements impacting language experience and development may function in comparable ways in both cultures" (Liu et al., 2018). An essential factor in children's language development was their mothers' educational attainment, as shown in both studies. "More educated women were also shown to have a



greater tendency to communicate with their children in ways that were connected with better language development.” According to the results from the U.S. sample, the influence of SES on a child's vocabulary is most clearly mediated by their mother's language. “It will need more study to confirm this correlation in Chinese samples, but the current statistics are promising.”

#### 4. Conclusions and recommendations in general

The ability to learn a language quickly has been well-documented. Although children in various countries acquire languages differently, youngsters in both cultures can communicate. However, “the process of learning a new language is not unaffected by changes in the surroundings. There was evidence in both types of research that children's rates of language development are linked to their learning experiences when it comes to language.” The intricacies of these relationships “reveal the nature of the language learning process and how it utilizes the information it receives” (Miller and Gkonou, 2018). “There are several studies linking maternal education to children's early language development, and these results show that disparities in children's language outcomes may be connected to socioeconomic status” (SES). There are substantial implications for the diagnosis of language disability from these studies: This does not necessarily imply “that children who are slower than average to learn the language have an issue” with their ability to learn it. They may just have had less-encouraging encounters with language acquisition. Because of this, a problem with the internal systems responsible for language development must be diagnosed, children and the circumstances in which they grow must be examined.

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