Himachal Journal of Agricultural Research 34 (1):89-90, 2008

Gender differences in communication skills of preschoolers in relation to home environment

Chander Kala Singh, Bimla Dhanda and Shubhangna Sharma*
Department of Human Development and Family Studies, IC College of Home Science
CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar-125 004, India.

Abstract

The present investigation was carried out in Hisar district of Haryana to assess the language development of preschoolers. Experimental material comprised 60 preschoolers from district Hisar during the age of 2 to 4 years. Results revealed that there was no difference in language development of boys and girls in the age group of 2-3 years but vocabulary development of boys was better than girls during the age of 3-4 years (z=2.16). Overall the boys were better than girls (Z-1.55).Conclusively it may be said that in this study sex differences appeared with respect to language performance on Reynell Language Developmental Scales.

Keywords: Communication skills, preschoolers, environment.

Introduction

Language is the most distinctive characterisitic feature of human species, which has enables him to master the whole environment. Language serves as vital function in the life of human beings. Early years of life are critical periods for language development, because during this period (2-4 years), development is more rapid and vocabulary of the child increases to about 900 words (Carey, 1978).

According to Spieker (1982) language begin for the young children even before they actually begin talking. It is a three-stage process. The child begins with early social exchange, which is non-verbal such as eye-to-eye contact and touching. The vocabulary of child develops due to innate unfolding process of mental maturity (Chomsky, 1965). But it improves through intellectual processes such as sensing, perceiving, recognition, conceiving, judging, reasoning and solving (Flavell, 1985). Although the ability to acquire vocabulary has a biological basis, but upto some extent the vocabulary is also enriched through stimulating environment such as parental involvement and sibling interaction (Metzl, 1990).

Methodology

Hisar city of Haryana state was taken as locale of the present study. A sample of 60 pre-schoolers was selected from different preschools and homes randomly. Reynell Language Developmental Scales (1985) was used to assess the different aspects of language development such as verbal comprehension and expressive language. Home inventory by Bradley and Caldwell (1984) was used to judge the environmental conditions of each child's home for his language stimulation. For the purpose of analysis and interpretation of data statistical tools such as percentage, mean, standard deviation, Z-test were employed.

Results and Discussion

Level of communication skills

Language of boys was at par with the girls in the age group of 2-3 years (Table 1). In the age group of 3-4 years, the development of language of girls was better than that of boys (Z-2.16**). Overall, the girls were better than boys (Z-1.55**). On the basis of this study, clear cut sex differences appeared with respect to language performance. Block (1980) reported that development of girls's behaviour was slightly faster than that of boys. There was a greater verbal fluency in girls than in boys due to early maturity of speech organs in girls.

Association of communication skills with home environment

Language stimulation: It is evident from the table 2 that the language was closely related with

*Department of Human Development, College of Home Science, CSK HPKV, Palampur

Table 1. Mean performance of communication skills of the children during the age of 2-4 years

Gender	2-3 years	3-4 years	Overall mean
Boys	30.75 ± 5.93	40.40 ± 6.50	38.07 ± 6.61
Girls	35.50 ± 6.00	45.13 ± 7.00	35.90 ± 7.00
Overall mean	32.60 ± 7.00	43.00 ± 7.00	40.20 ± 7.00
Z-test (boys vs girls)	0.27	2.16*	1.55*

** Significant at P= 0.01

language stimulation (χ^2=6.20**). Perusal of the results suggested that maximum number of the children had higher language stimulation. Greenwood (1991) had reported that socio-economic status, home and school environment were the main predictors of language and achievement of children.

Physical stimulation: Vocabulary was affected by physical stimulation as shown by frequency distribution, but the differences were non-significant.

Warmth and affection: As evident from table 2 vocabulary was significantly influenced by warmth and affection (χ^2=5.75).

Modeling: Vocabulary of the child was significantly influenced by modeling in Hisar (χ^2 =4.26). Children who have good communication were highly influenced by their family members.

Table 2. Association of communication skills with home environment

Home environment	Communication skills		χ^2 value
	Low	High	
Language stimulation			
Low	40 (66.60)	20 (33.30)	6.20*
High	18 (30.00)	42 (70.00)	
Physical stimulation			
Low	38 (63.30)	24 (40.00)	0.99
High	22 (36.60)	36 (60.00)	
Warmth and affection			
Low	30 (50.00)	28 (46.60)	5.75*
High	30 (50.00)	32 (53.30)	
Modeling			
Low	28 (43.30)	20 (33.3)	4.26*
High	32 (53.30)	40 (66.60)	
Total score			
Low	22 (18.33)	21 (18.35)	9.65*
High	15 (8.33)	43 (53.00)	

* Significant at P=0.01

Overall home environment: In present investigation overall home environment was closely related with the vocabulary of the children in Hisar (χ^2 = 9.65). Swich (1989) had reported that affectionate behaviour of care-giver enhanced the vocabulary of the children.

References

Block JH 1980. The roel of ego control and ego-resiliency in the organization of behaviuor. In: *Development of Cognition, Affect and Social Relations.* ed Collins WA. Hillsdale NJ Erlbaum, pp 39-101.

Bradley RH and Caldwell BM 1984. The home Inventory: a validation of preschool for black children. Child Dev. **52**:708-10.

Carey-Woodfolk E 1978. *Theory, Assessment and Intervention in Language Disorder.* Grue and Stratton, NY.

Chomsky N 1975. *Reflections on Language.* Random House, New York.

Flavell JH 1992. Perspectives on perspective talking. In: *Piaget Theory.* eds Beili H and Putal P. Hillsdale, Erlbaum, NY, USA, pp 107-39.

Greenwood CR 1991. A longitudinal analysis of time to learn, engagement and academic achievement in urban vs suburban schools. Exceptional Children **57**:521-35.

Metzl MN 1990. Teaching parents a strategy for enhancing infant development. Child Dev. **51**:583.

Reynell J 1985. *Reynell Developmental Language Scales Manual.* Neer-Nelson Publishing Company, England.

Spieker L 1992. In: *Child Develeopment.* ed Salkind NJ and Sueann RA, Holt Rinehart and Winston Publishers.

Swich KJ 1989. Home support and vocabulary development in the young child. J. Instruc. Psychol. 6 (2):32-36.