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# Language of Elementary School Children in Learning: A Literature Review of Its Characteristics, Development, and Challenges

**Muhamad Asngad Rudisunhaji[1]*, Kojin[2]**

[1,2] *Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah State Islamic University of Tulungagung, Indonesia.*
email:
*asngadiainta75@gmail.com
kojin@gmail.com

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**ABSTRACT.** Language plays a crucial role in elementary school children's cognitive, social, and academic development. This study aims to examine the characteristics, development, and challenges of children's language in learning contexts through a literature review approach. The study analyzed scholarly publications published between 2019 and 2024 obtained from reputable academic databases. The findings indicate that elementary school children demonstrate distinctive language characteristics, including rapid vocabulary growth, increasing grammatical competence, improved oral communication skills, and developing literacy abilities. Language development is influenced by various factors, such as teacher-student interaction, peer communication, family support, literacy experiences, sociocultural environments, and technological exposure. The review also identifies several challenges affecting language development, including educational inequalities, limited literacy resources, digital communication influences, multilingual learning contexts, and post-pandemic learning gaps. The study concludes that language-rich learning environments, effective literacy instruction, and collaborative support from schools and families are essential for fostering children's language development and improving educational outcomes.

**Keywords**: *Children's Language Development, Elementary Education, Language Learning Environment.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Language plays a fundamental role in the cognitive, social, and academic development of elementary school children. Through language, children communicate ideas, construct knowledge, and interact with their learning environment(Taylor et al., 2021). The quality of language development significantly influences students' ability to understand learning materials and participate in classroom activities. In elementary education, language functions not only as a communication tool but also as a medium for thinking and problem-solving. Therefore, understanding the characteristics of children's language is essential for developing effective learning practices (Hoff et al., 2021).Elementary school years represent a critical period for language acquisition and development. During this stage, children experience rapid growth in

vocabulary, grammar, discourse skills, and pragmatic competence. Their language abilities become increasingly complex as they encounter diverse academic and social contexts. Educational experiences contribute significantly to shaping linguistic competence and communication skills. Consequently, teachers need to recognize developmental patterns in children's language to support meaningful learning experiences (Rowe & Weisleder, 2020).

Research has shown that language development is closely linked to academic achievement across various subjects. Students with strong language skills tend to demonstrate better reading comprehension, writing performance, and critical thinking abilities. Conversely, language difficulties may hinder academic progress and classroom participation. The relationship between language proficiency and educational outcomes highlights the importance of creating language-rich learning environments. Such environments encourage students to engage actively in communication and knowledge construction processes (Lurie et al., 2021).The characteristics of elementary school children's language differ from those of adolescents and adults. Children at this age often exhibit concrete thinking patterns that influence their language use and comprehension. Their vocabulary development is strongly connected to direct experiences, social interactions, and exposure to educational materials. Furthermore, language expression tends to evolve gradually from simple sentence structures toward more sophisticated forms of communication. Understanding these unique characteristics can help educators design developmentally appropriate instructional strategies (Goldfeld et al., 2022).

Language development in elementary school children is influenced by multiple factors, including family environment, school context, peer interactions, and technological exposure. The increasing use of digital media has transformed how children communicate and acquire language. Digital technologies provide opportunities for language enrichment while simultaneously presenting challenges related to communication quality and literacy development. Consequently, educators and parents must balance the benefits and risks associated with technology-mediated communication. This issue has become increasingly relevant in contemporary educational settings (Bonacina-Pugh et al., 2021).The growing diversity of student populations has also expanded discussions regarding language development in educational contexts. Many elementary school students learn within multilingual and multicultural environments that shape their linguistic experiences. Exposure to multiple languages can enhance cognitive flexibility and communication competence when supported appropriately. However, language diversity may also create instructional challenges for teachers who must accommodate varying levels of language proficiency. Therefore, educational approaches need to be responsive to students' linguistic backgrounds and learning needs (Wei & García, 2022).

Another important aspect of children's language development concerns oral communication skills. Classroom discussions, collaborative learning activities, and interactive teaching methods provide opportunities for students to strengthen speaking and listening abilities. Effective oral language skills contribute to social participation, academic engagement, and self-confidence. Students who can express their thoughts clearly are more likely to participate actively in learning activities. Consequently, oral language development remains a central concern within elementary education research and practice.Reading and writing abilities represent additional dimensions of language development that are critical for academic success. Literacy skills enable students to access information, interpret texts, and communicate ideas effectively. Early literacy experiences establish the foundation for later academic achievement and lifelong learning(Hamilton & HayiouThomas, 2022). Researchers emphasize that literacy instruction should be integrated with broader language development efforts. Such integration supports students in becoming competent and independent learners (Duke et al., 2021).

Despite significant advances in educational research, various challenges continue to affect language development among elementary school children. Learning disruptions, socioeconomic inequalities, and limited access to educational resources may influence language acquisition processes. These challenges became particularly visible following the COVID-19 pandemic, which altered learning experiences worldwide. Educational stakeholders have increasingly recognized the need to address language learning gaps through targeted interventions and supportive learning environments. Such efforts are necessary to promote equitable educational outcomes for all students (Hammerstein et al., 2021).In addition, contemporary classrooms often face challenges related to students' declining attention spans and changing communication habits. The prevalence of digital communication may affect children's use of formal language structures and academic vocabulary. While technology offers valuable educational opportunities, excessive reliance on abbreviated communication forms can influence language quality. Teachers must therefore adopt instructional approaches that strengthen both digital literacy and academic language proficiency. These considerations highlight the complexity of language development in modern educational contexts (OECD, 2021).

Recent studies have increasingly emphasized the importance of social-emotional factors in language learning. Positive teacher-student relationships, supportive classroom climates, and collaborative interactions contribute significantly to language development. Children learn language most effectively when they feel psychologically safe and encouraged to express themselves. Social and emotional competencies also facilitate meaningful communication and peer engagement. As a result, language development should be viewed as both a cognitive and social process (Kalland & Linnavalli, 2023).Given the central role of language in learning and development, a comprehensive understanding of elementary school children's language characteristics is essential. Existing literature provides valuable insights into linguistic development patterns, influencing factors, and educational implications. However, findings are often dispersed across different fields, including linguistics, psychology, literacy studies, and education. A literature review is therefore necessary to synthesize current knowledge and identify emerging issues related to children's language development. Such synthesis can provide a stronger theoretical foundation for educational practice and future research(Wirth et al., 2022).

This literature review aims to examine the characteristics, developmental processes, and challenges of elementary school children's language in learning contexts. Specifically, the review explores key linguistic features, factors influencing language development, and contemporary issues affecting language learning. By synthesizing recent scholarly literature, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of children's language in elementary education. Furthermore, the findings are expected to inform educators, researchers, and policymakers regarding effective strategies for supporting language development. Ultimately, strengthening language competence can enhance students' academic success and overall educational experiences.

## METHOD

This study employed a literature review approach to examine the characteristics, development, and challenges of elementary school children's language in learning contexts. A literature review was selected because it enables researchers to synthesize existing knowledge, identify research trends, and provide a comprehensive understanding of a particular topic based on previous scholarly works(Barry et al., 2022; Snyder, 2019). The review focused on studies related to language development, linguistic characteristics, literacy skills, communication competence, and educational challenges experienced by elementary school children(Oshchepkova et al., 2023).The data sources consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles, books, conference

proceedings, and scholarly reports published between 2019 and 2024. Relevant literature was retrieved from several academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, ERIC, ScienceDirect, and SpringerLink. The search process utilized keywords such as "elementary school children language," "language development," "children's linguistic characteristics," "language learning in primary education," "literacy development," and "language challenges in education." These keywords were combined using Boolean operators to obtain comprehensive and relevant sources.

The inclusion criteria comprised publications written in English, studies focusing on elementary or primary school-aged children, and literature discussing language characteristics, language development, communication skills, literacy, or learning-related language issues. Meanwhile, studies that focused exclusively on preschool children, adolescents, or adult learners were excluded from the review. Duplicate publications and sources lacking academic credibility were also omitted to ensure the quality and reliability of the findings.The collected literature was analyzed using thematic content analysis. Initially, the selected studies were read thoroughly to identify recurring concepts, patterns, and findings. Subsequently, the literature was categorized into three major themes: language characteristics of elementary school children, language development processes, and challenges affecting language learning. Similar findings were synthesized, compared, and interpreted to generate a coherent understanding of the topic.To enhance the trustworthiness of the review, the researchers conducted source triangulation by comparing findings from different studies, educational contexts, and theoretical perspectives. The synthesis process emphasized consistency, relevance, and recent developments in the field(Carter et al., 2014). The results of the analysis were then presented descriptively to provide a comprehensive overview of current knowledge regarding the language of elementary school children in learning environments and its implications for educational practice and future research.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

The language of elementary school children demonstrates unique characteristics that distinguish it from the language of adolescents and adults. At this stage, children increasingly use language as a tool for communication, learning, and social interaction. Their vocabulary grows rapidly as they encounter new experiences in school and everyday life. Language production becomes more organized, allowing them to express opinions, explain events, and participate in discussions. Although grammatical accuracy improves significantly, occasional errors in sentence structure and word choice remain common. These characteristics indicate that language development during elementary school years is dynamic and closely connected to educational experiences.Elementary school students generally rely on concrete language that reflects their developmental stage. They understand concepts more effectively when language is linked to familiar situations and observable phenomena. Abstract vocabulary is gradually acquired through exposure to academic content and teacher explanations. Students often use examples from daily life to support their communication and comprehension. Their responses tend to be influenced by personal experiences, making contextual learning particularly effective. Consequently, instructional approaches that connect language with real-life situations can facilitate meaningful learning.

Vocabulary expansion is one of the most visible aspects of language development among elementary school children. Students continuously acquire new words from classroom instruction, reading activities, peer interactions, and digital media. The increasing breadth of

vocabulary enables them to understand more complex texts and express ideas with greater precision. Students who possess extensive vocabularies often demonstrate stronger communication and literacy skills. In contrast, limited vocabulary may restrict participation in classroom discussions and academic tasks. Therefore, vocabulary enrichment remains an essential component of elementary education.

Oral communication skills also develop significantly during the elementary school years. Students become more capable of initiating conversations, responding appropriately, and maintaining interactions with others. They gradually learn how to adjust language according to different audiences and situations. Classroom discussions provide opportunities to practice speaking and listening skills in structured environments. As confidence increases, students are more willing to share ideas and engage in collaborative learning activities. These developments contribute to both academic achievement and social competence.Another notable characteristic is the growing ability to use language for reasoning and problem-solving. Students begin to explain their thinking processes, justify answers, and ask questions that reflect deeper understanding. Language becomes an important medium for organizing thoughts and constructing knowledge. Through verbal and written communication, students demonstrate their comprehension of academic concepts. This development supports critical thinking and active engagement in learning activities. As a result, language proficiency becomes increasingly connected to overall educational success.

The language of elementary school children is also influenced by social and cultural environments. Family communication patterns, community interactions, and cultural values shape language use and expression. Students often bring linguistic habits from home into classroom settings. These differences contribute to the diversity of language experiences observed among learners. Teachers must recognize and appreciate such diversity to create inclusive learning environments. Understanding cultural influences can improve communication between educators and students.

**Table 1.** Major Characteristics of Elementary School Children's Language Development

| Aspect of Language Development | Characteristics | Educational Implications |
|---|---|---|
| Vocabulary Development | Rapid growth of vocabulary through school experiences, reading, peer interaction, and digital media | Teachers should provide rich language exposure and vocabulary enrichment activities |
| Language Comprehension | Better understanding of concrete concepts than abstract ideas | Learning materials should connect concepts to real-life contexts |
| Oral Communication Skills | Improved ability to initiate conversations, respond appropriately, and participate in discussions | Classroom discussions and collaborative learning should be encouraged |
| Grammatical Development | Increasing grammatical accuracy despite occasional errors | Corrective feedback and language modeling remain important |
| Reasoning and Problem-Solving Language | Ability to explain ideas, justify answers, and ask reflective questions | Teachers should use inquiry-based and discussion-oriented instruction |
| Social and Cultural Language Use | Language influenced by family, community, and cultural background | Inclusive and culturally responsive teaching practices are needed |

## Language Development in Learning Contexts

Language development during elementary school occurs through continuous interaction between cognitive growth and educational experiences. Students refine their language abilities as they engage with academic content and social activities. Learning environments provide opportunities to practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in meaningful contexts. Regular exposure to language-rich experiences strengthens comprehension and communication abilities. The interaction between instruction and practice plays a crucial role in shaping linguistic competence. Therefore, schools serve as important settings for language development.Reading activities contribute substantially to children's language growth. Through reading, students encounter new vocabulary, sentence structures, and ideas that expand their linguistic knowledge. Reading also exposes learners to different genres and communication styles. As comprehension skills improve, students become more capable of interpreting information and making connections between concepts. Frequent reading experiences encourage language acquisition beyond direct classroom instruction. Consequently, literacy development supports broader language competence.

Writing activities provide another pathway for language development. Writing requires students to organize ideas, select appropriate vocabulary, and apply grammatical knowledge. Through repeated practice, learners improve their ability to communicate clearly and effectively. Writing tasks encourage reflection and critical thinking while reinforcing language structures. Students gradually progress from producing simple sentences to composing more complex texts. This progression strengthens both language proficiency and academic performance.Teacher-student interaction represents a significant factor in language learning. Effective teachers create opportunities for dialogue, questioning, and collaborative discussion. Such interactions expose students to accurate language models and encourage active participation. Feedback from teachers helps learners refine pronunciation, vocabulary usage, and sentence construction. Positive communication also increases students' confidence in expressing ideas. As a result, instructional interactions contribute directly to language development.

Peer interaction further enhances language learning by providing authentic communication opportunities. Group discussions, cooperative projects, and social exchanges encourage students to use language in practical situations. Through interaction with classmates, learners encounter different perspectives and communication styles. These experiences help them develop conversational skills and social awareness. Peer collaboration also promotes the negotiation of meaning and the clarification of misunderstandings. Consequently, social interaction becomes an essential component of language growth.The integration of language across subjects supports comprehensive development. Language is not confined to language arts instruction but is used in mathematics, science, social studies, and other disciplines. Students learn subject-specific vocabulary and communication strategies while engaging with academic content. Cross-curricular language use reinforces understanding and application of knowledge. It also demonstrates the functional role of language in diverse contexts. Therefore, language development should be considered a shared responsibility across all areas of learning.

**Table 2.** Factors Supporting Language Development in Elementary School Children

| Factor | Contribution to Language Development | Expected Outcomes |
|---|---|---|
| Reading Activities | Exposes students to new vocabulary, sentence structures, and diverse genres | Improved vocabulary, comprehension, and literacy skills |
| Writing Activities | Encourages organization of ideas, vocabulary selection, and grammar application | Enhanced written communication and critical thinking |
| Teacher Student Interaction | Provides language models, feedback, and opportunities for discussion | Better pronunciation, vocabulary usage, and confidence |
| Peer Interaction | Facilitates authentic communication and collaborative learning | Development of conversational and social communication skills |
| Cross-Curricular Language Use | Integrates language learning across academic subjects | Broader academic vocabulary and functional language competence |
| Language-Rich Learning Environment | Offers meaningful opportunities for listening, speaking, reading, and writing | Overall improvement in linguistic competence |

## Challenges in Children's Language Development

Despite significant progress in language learning, elementary school children encounter various challenges that may affect development. Differences in background knowledge, learning opportunities, and communication experiences contribute to varying language abilities. Some students enter school with strong linguistic foundations, while others require additional support. These disparities may influence academic participation and achievement. Teachers often face the challenge of addressing diverse language needs within a single classroom. Effective instructional strategies are therefore necessary to support all learners.Limited exposure to literacy resources can hinder language growth. Students who have restricted access to books, educational materials, or enriching language experiences may struggle to develop vocabulary and comprehension skills. Such limitations can affect reading achievement and overall academic performance. The availability of supportive learning environments plays a critical role in addressing these challenges. Schools and families must collaborate to provide opportunities for language enrichment. Strengthening access to literacy resources can promote more equitable outcomes.

Technological developments have introduced both opportunities and challenges for language learning. Digital tools offer access to information, interactive content, and communication platforms that support language development. However, excessive reliance on informal digital communication may influence language accuracy and academic vocabulary usage. Shortened expressions and limited attention to grammar are sometimes transferred into academic contexts. Students may also spend less time engaging in sustained reading activities. These trends highlight the need for balanced and purposeful technology integration.Multilingual learning environments present additional complexities. Students who use different languages at home and school may experience challenges related to vocabulary acquisition and language transfer. While multilingualism offers cognitive and cultural benefits, it may require specialized instructional support. Teachers must address varying levels of language proficiency while maintaining inclusive learning environments. Effective strategies should recognize linguistic diversity as a resource rather than a limitation. Such approaches can enhance both language development and educational equity.

Socioeconomic factors also influence children's language experiences and opportunities. Variations in parental education, access to educational resources, and home learning environments can affect language growth. Students from resource-rich environments often receive greater exposure to vocabulary and literacy activities. Conversely, those with limited support may face additional barriers to language development. These differences can become visible in classroom communication and academic performance. Addressing such disparities requires coordinated efforts from educators, families, and policymakers.Motivation and self-confidence represent important psychological factors affecting language use. Some students hesitate to participate in discussions due to fear of making mistakes or being judged by peers. Limited confidence can reduce opportunities for practice and language improvement. Encouraging classroom climates help students feel comfortable expressing ideas and asking questions. Positive reinforcement and supportive feedback can strengthen learners' willingness to communicate. Therefore, emotional well-being should be considered an important aspect of language education.

**Tabel 1.** Major Challenges Affecting Elementary School Children's Language Development

| Challenge Category | Description | Potential Impact on Learning | Recommended Educational Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| Linguistic Diversity | Differences in language background, vocabulary knowledge, and communication experiences among students | Unequal participation and academic achievement | Differentiated instruction and language scaffolding |
| Limited Literacy Resources | Restricted access to books, reading materials, and literacy-rich environments | Reduced vocabulary growth and reading comprehension | Increased access to literacy materials and reading programs |
| Technology-Related Issues | Excessive use of informal digital communication and reduced sustained reading activities | Weak academic vocabulary and grammatical accuracy | Balanced integration of educational technology and literacy activities |
| Multilingual Learning Contexts | Use of different languages at home and school | Language transfer difficulties and vocabulary gaps | Multilingual-sensitive teaching strategies |
| Socioeconomic Disparities | Differences in parental education, home learning support, and educational resources | Variations in language proficiency and academic performance | School-family partnerships and equitable resource distribution |
| Psychological Factors | Low motivation, anxiety, and lack of self-confidence in communication | Reduced classroom participation and language practice | Supportive classroom climate and positive feedback |

## Educational Implications

The findings indicate that language development should be integrated into all aspects of elementary education. Teachers need to recognize language as both a learning objective and a learning tool. Instructional strategies should encourage active communication, critical thinking, and collaborative engagement. Opportunities for meaningful language use should be embedded across subjects and learning activities. Such approaches can strengthen both linguistic competence and academic achievement. Language-rich classrooms provide an effective

foundation for comprehensive student development.Educators should implement teaching methods that promote active participation and interaction. Discussion-based learning, cooperative activities, and project-based instruction encourage students to use language in authentic contexts. These methods support vocabulary growth, communication skills, and conceptual understanding. Students benefit when they are given opportunities to explain ideas and engage in dialogue. Active learning environments also increase motivation and confidence. Consequently, instructional practices should prioritize communication and collaboration.

Literacy instruction remains essential for supporting language development. Schools should provide diverse reading materials that match students' interests and developmental levels. Regular reading and writing activities strengthen vocabulary, comprehension, and expressive abilities. Literacy programs should encourage both academic and recreational engagement with texts. Such experiences contribute to lifelong learning habits and educational success. Comprehensive literacy support therefore remains a priority in elementary education.Family involvement also plays an important role in fostering language growth. Parents and caregivers can support development through conversations, shared reading activities, and positive communication practices. Home environments that encourage language use provide valuable reinforcement for school learning. Collaboration between schools and families can create consistent support systems for students. Educational initiatives should therefore include strategies for family engagement. Strong partnerships contribute to more effective language development outcomes.

Finally, addressing contemporary challenges requires adaptive and inclusive educational approaches. Teachers must respond to linguistic diversity, technological change, and varying student needs. Professional development programs can help educators implement evidence-based language instruction strategies. Schools should also promote equitable access to literacy resources and supportive learning environments. By addressing both opportunities and challenges, educators can enhance children's language development effectively. Such efforts will contribute to stronger academic achievement, communication competence, and lifelong learning success.

## Discussion

The findings of this review indicate that language development plays a central role in the learning experiences of elementary school children. Language functions not only as a communication tool but also as a medium through which children construct knowledge and develop cognitive abilities. During elementary school years, students experience substantial growth in vocabulary, sentence structure, comprehension, and expressive communication skills. These developments enable children to participate more actively in academic activities and social interactions. Language competence also contributes to students' ability to understand instructions, engage in discussions, and solve problems effectively. This finding supports previous studies emphasizing that language development is closely connected to academic achievement and educational success(Page et al., 2021).The review demonstrates that elementary school children exhibit language characteristics that reflect their developmental stage. Their communication patterns tend to move gradually from concrete and experience-based expressions toward more abstract forms of language use. Students increasingly develop the ability to explain ideas, describe events, and justify opinions through spoken and written language. This progression reflects the interaction between cognitive maturation and educational experiences. Language growth becomes particularly visible when children engage in classroom discussions, collaborative learning, and literacy activities. Similar findings have been highlighted in studies discussing the developmental progression of language abilities among school-aged children (Vasil et al., 2023).

Vocabulary development emerged as one of the most significant indicators of language growth. Children continuously expand their vocabulary through interactions with teachers, peers, family members, books, and digital resources. A rich vocabulary supports reading comprehension, writing ability, and oral communication competence. Students with stronger vocabularies often demonstrate greater confidence in expressing ideas and participating in classroom activities. Conversely, limited vocabulary knowledge may restrict communication effectiveness and academic engagement. These findings reinforce previous research emphasizing the importance of vocabulary acquisition in supporting literacy and educational achievement (Duke & Cartwright, 2021).The results further reveal that oral language development remains an essential foundation for learning. Oral communication skills allow children to engage in classroom interactions, ask questions, express opinions, and collaborate with others. Effective speaking and listening abilities facilitate social participation and support academic understanding. Children who frequently engage in meaningful conversations tend to develop stronger linguistic competence. Classroom environments that encourage dialogue and interaction provide valuable opportunities for oral language growth. These findings align with studies highlighting oral language as a critical predictor of literacy development and educational success (Rautakoski et al., 2021).

Reading activities were found to play a major role in children's language development. Reading exposes students to diverse vocabulary, grammatical structures, and forms of discourse that may not appear in everyday conversations. Through reading, children gain access to broader knowledge and develop deeper comprehension abilities. Frequent reading experiences contribute to language enrichment and strengthen academic language skills. Students who regularly engage with texts often demonstrate improved communication and critical thinking abilities. Previous literature similarly emphasizes the strong relationship between reading engagement and language growth among elementary school learners (Hidayat & Fitria, 2021)(Snowling et al., 2022).Writing activities also contribute significantly to language development by requiring students to organize ideas and communicate them effectively. Writing encourages learners to apply vocabulary knowledge, sentence structures, and grammatical rules in meaningful contexts. Through writing, children learn how to express thoughts systematically and reflect on their understanding of various topics. The process of composing texts strengthens both linguistic and cognitive skills. Students gradually progress from producing simple sentences toward creating more complex written expressions. This finding supports studies suggesting that writing serves as an important mechanism for language learning and academic development (Stavans & Tolchinsky, 2021).

Teacher-student interaction was identified as a crucial factor influencing language growth. Teachers serve as language models who demonstrate appropriate vocabulary usage, communication patterns, and academic discourse. Through questioning, explanation, feedback, and discussion, teachers help students refine their language abilities. Positive instructional interactions encourage children to participate actively and develop confidence in communication. Supportive teaching practices also create opportunities for language practice across different learning situations. These observations are consistent with previous findings emphasizing the role of instructional communication in promoting language development (Rowe & Snow, 2020).Peer interaction also emerged as an important contributor to language acquisition. Collaborative learning activities provide opportunities for children to negotiate meaning, exchange ideas, and practice communication skills. Through interaction with classmates, students encounter diverse perspectives and linguistic expressions. Such experiences help improve conversational competence and social communication abilities. Peer engagement additionally encourages the development of pragmatic language skills necessary for effective social interaction. Similar conclusions have been reported in research highlighting the relationship between social participation and language growth among school-aged children (Bonacina-Pugh et al., 2021)

Another significant finding concerns the influence of family environments on language development. Children who experience frequent communication, storytelling, and literacy activities at home tend to demonstrate stronger language abilities. Family interactions provide early opportunities for vocabulary acquisition and communication practice. Supportive home environments reinforce language learning experiences obtained at school. Conversely, limited linguistic stimulation may reduce opportunities for language enrichment and literacy development. These findings correspond with previous studies emphasizing the importance of parental involvement in supporting children's language growth (Feldman, 2019; OECD, 2021).The review further highlights the growing influence of digital technology on children's language experiences. Digital tools provide access to educational content, communication platforms, and interactive learning resources that may enhance language development. Technology enables children to encounter diverse linguistic inputs beyond traditional classroom environments. However, excessive dependence on informal digital communication can affect language accuracy and academic vocabulary use. Shortened expressions and simplified language structures may influence formal communication practices. Therefore, educational stakeholders must ensure that technology is used in ways that support rather than hinder language development (Neumann, 2022; OECD, 2021).

Multilingual and multicultural learning contexts also shape children's language development. Many elementary school students learn and communicate across multiple languages and cultural settings. Such experiences can enhance cognitive flexibility, communication skills, and cultural awareness. However, multilingual learners may require additional instructional support to navigate different linguistic systems. Teachers need to adopt inclusive approaches that recognize linguistic diversity as an educational resource. This perspective is supported by research demonstrating the benefits of culturally responsive language instruction in diverse educational settings (Permana & Rohmah, 2024).The findings additionally suggest that language development is closely related to social-emotional well-being. Children who feel safe, respected, and supported are more likely to participate actively in communication activities. Positive classroom relationships encourage learners to express opinions and engage in discussions without fear of judgment. Emotional security creates conditions that facilitate language practice and confidence building. Students who experience supportive interactions often demonstrate stronger communication competence. These results reinforce the view that language learning is both a cognitive and social process (Zubaedah et al., 2024).

Despite the positive trends identified in the literature, numerous challenges continue to affect children's language development in elementary education. Educational inequalities, limited literacy resources, and differences in learning opportunities contribute significantly to variations in students' language competence. Children from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds often have fewer opportunities to access books, literacy-rich environments, and educational support systems that facilitate language growth. These limitations may affect vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, oral communication skills, and overall academic achievement. Furthermore, unequal educational conditions can create persistent gaps in language proficiency among learners from different social and economic contexts. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated efforts involving schools, families, communities, and policymakers to ensure equitable access to language-learning opportunities. Recent educational research has consistently emphasized that language and literacy disparities remain a major concern in achieving inclusive and quality education for all children (UNESCO, 2022; Mendieta-Vera & Reyes-Meza, 2022; OECD, 2021).

Another important challenge involves the influence of technological and digital environments on children's language development. Digital technologies provide access to

information and communication opportunities that may enrich vocabulary and literacy experiences. However, excessive exposure to informal digital communication can affect students' use of academic language, grammatical accuracy, and reading habits. Many children increasingly rely on abbreviated expressions, visual symbols, and short digital messages that may limit opportunities for developing complex language structures. In addition, disparities in access to digital resources may further widen language-learning gaps among students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Educational institutions must therefore promote balanced technology use while strengthening literacy instruction and communication skills. Such efforts are necessary to ensure that technological advancement supports rather than weakens children's language development (Neumann, 2022; García & Wei, 2021; Kim et al., 2021).

The review also indicates that post-pandemic educational conditions have intensified concerns regarding language learning gaps among elementary school children. School closures and remote learning arrangements reduced opportunities for direct interaction, collaborative learning, and structured communication practice. Many students experienced interruptions in literacy activities that are essential for vocabulary growth, reading development, and oral language acquisition. The effects of these disruptions were particularly visible among learners who already faced educational disadvantages before the pandemic. Consequently, educators have reported differences in language proficiency, reading achievement, and classroom participation after students returned to face-to-face learning environments. Learning recovery initiatives have therefore become a central priority in contemporary educational policies and practices (UNESCO, 2022; Dorn et al., 2021; UNICEF, 2022).

Recent international studies further confirm that the impact of pandemic-related learning loss remains evident in educational systems worldwide. Research examining post-pandemic educational outcomes found that prolonged school closures were associated with significant declines in literacy and academic performance, particularly among students from vulnerable populations. Learning losses were often more severe for children with limited access to educational resources and supportive learning environments during remote instruction. In addition, linguistic minority students and learners from economically disadvantaged backgrounds experienced greater challenges in maintaining language development progress. These findings suggest that educational recovery efforts should prioritize targeted interventions, literacy support programs, and inclusive instructional strategies. Without systematic recovery measures, language-learning inequalities may continue to affect students' long-term educational achievement and social participation (Gajderowicz et al., 2025; Hanemann, 2022; Alrouh et al., 2025).

Overall, the literature demonstrates that language development among elementary school children is a multidimensional process influenced by cognitive, social, educational, technological, and environmental factors. Effective language learning occurs when children receive consistent support from teachers, families, peers, and educational institutions. Language-rich learning environments encourage communication, literacy engagement, and academic participation. Educational practices should therefore prioritize meaningful interaction, literacy development, and inclusive instruction. Strengthening children's language competence contributes not only to academic achievement but also to social development and lifelong learning readiness. Consequently, language development should remain a central focus within elementary education research and practice.

## CONCLUSION

This literature review highlights that language development is a fundamental aspect of elementary school children's learning and overall development. The findings indicate that

elementary school students possess distinctive language characteristics, including rapid vocabulary growth, increasing grammatical competence, improved oral communication skills, and the gradual ability to use language for reasoning and academic purposes. These characteristics develop through continuous interactions among cognitive maturation, educational experiences, social environments, and literacy activities. As children progress through elementary education, language becomes an essential tool for communication, knowledge construction, and academic achievement.The review further demonstrates that language development is influenced by multiple factors, including teacher-student interaction, peer communication, family support, literacy experiences, technological exposure, and sociocultural contexts. Reading and writing activities contribute significantly to strengthening linguistic competence, while supportive classroom environments encourage meaningful language use and communication confidence. Moreover, multilingual and multicultural learning settings provide opportunities for linguistic enrichment, although they may also require additional instructional support to accommodate diverse learner needs.

Despite the positive contributions of educational and social environments, several challenges continue to affect children's language development. These challenges include disparities in access to literacy resources, socioeconomic inequalities, technological influences, language learning gaps, and variations in home language environments. Such factors may influence students' communication abilities, literacy achievement, and participation in learning activities. Therefore, effective interventions are necessary to ensure that all children have equitable opportunities to develop strong language skills.Based on these findings, educators should implement language-rich instructional practices that promote active communication, literacy engagement, collaboration, and critical thinking. Schools and families should work together to create supportive environments that encourage language use in both academic and everyday contexts. Future research may explore specific instructional models, digital learning strategies, and culturally responsive approaches that can further support language development among elementary school children. Ultimately, strengthening children's language competence will contribute not only to academic success but also to social participation and lifelong learning readiness.

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