

## CHILDREN'S FIRST FIVE YEARS GAMES IN RESPONSE TO LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

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### Abstract

This study aims to determine the implementation of children's first five-year games in the family environment, the pattern of children's first five years of games, and the effect of children's first five years games. This study used a descriptive quantitative method. Respondents in this study were 28 parents in rural areas. The results of the study concluded that the main effects of mentoring when children played and provided simple educational games were the creation of self-confidence, good trust in parents, and good communication. The results of the study concluded that assistance to children while playing and providing simple educational games, 35.7% of the 28 respondents stated that their children had confidence when meeting new people. Then 71.4% of respondents indicated that their children have an active type when communicating, and 96.4% of respondents stated that their children are very enthusiastic about learning new things.

**Keywords:** children's games, children's language development, language development

### Introduction

The early years are a golden age when the brain develops at a breakneck pace. As a result, giving stimulation during that period requires parents to maximize their children's development. Parents, especially mothers, need to provide a stimulus for children starting from pregnancy (Ardhyantama & Apriyanti, 2021). Another research explains that parental involvement is required during children's development (Mahmood, 2013). However, Parents are the first teachers of children admitted true. This is unfortunate, considering mothers have three leading roles for children: meeting physical and spiritual needs, being role models, and stimulating child development (Apriyanti, 2021).

Furthermore, children in their early years have the habit of instinctively asking, paying attention, and commenting about what they see, hear, and feel in their environment. Children spontaneously ask when they see something that catches their attention. Words, or what is known as speaking, will reflect the child's curiosity and love for everything that is seen, heard, and felt. Children who can speak have shown maturity and readiness to learn because speaking allows them to express their desires, interests, feelings, and thoughts verbally to those around them. The existence of the family is needed as a partner in communication. A better

understanding of conversational dynamics may deepen our understanding of social roles, speech and language development, and individual language variability (Van Dam et al., 2022).

As babies and children grow, abilities to form secure relationships, explore environments, and express emotions in a healthy way develop, which impacts their future behavior and relationships. According to Lev S. Vygotsky (1896–1934), the highest levels of abstract thinking and self-regulation in preschool development are established in pretend play using object substitutions (Smolucha & Smolucha, 2022). On the other hand, language development is an essential part of child development. It supports the child's ability to communicate. It also supports a child's ability to express and understand feelings, think and learn, solve problems, and develop relationships. Results indicated that infant attention and maternal education were predictors of receptive vocabulary initial status, with no differences as a function of child sex (Bruce et al., 2022).

Playing is a natural and enjoyable way for children to keep active, stay well, and be happy. Freely chosen play helps children and young people's healthy development. Children need various unstructured play opportunities from birth until their teenagers to have good physical and mental health and learn life skills. Play is an essential part of early childhood education. Parents play a critical factor in this. Responding to children's play and providing an appropriate education is necessary. Because children early years can learn to channel and hold their emotions by playing. Children are also taught to manage their feelings, resist their urges, and use them as a source of relaxation. Children pick up a lot of information when playing, including concepts, colors, shapes, sizes, and amounts, among other things. However, parents were doubtful to permit their children to play without adult supervision in green spaces, except parks; this was contrary to the freedom they were given in their childhood. This is probably due to parents' heightened concerns about incidents, even though actual incident rates have been reduced (Truong et al., 2022). This condition makes children feel unsecured.

However, the transition from physical playing to "more secure" is happening. Interactive, intelligent, and connected toys are expected to increase rapidly, with many claiming new ways to play and educational benefits (Hall et al., 2022). Some traditional games shift to technological playing, such as online games. The COVID pandemic also forces children to play at home. This leads to children's preference for playing inside the house. Undeniably, this condition shifts the existence of transitional physical playing.

Since the existence of online games cannot be easily eliminated from children, parental involvement in accompanying children during playing is needed. Some adolescents admitted to the child and adolescent psychiatry outpatient clinic experience dissociative symptoms, such as hearing strange sounds, temporary blackouts, seeing images, changes in body parts, and looking at themselves from the outside. Some also experience sleep disturbance after spending a long time on the internet (Gundogdu & Eroglu, 2022). However, parents are still the "measurement scale" for managing children's time. Parents must limit the screen time for children and move it to more productive games for their development and language development. Wittgenstein (Philosophical investigations, Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1958) used the notion of a language game to illustrate how language is interwoven with action (Barrett & VanDrunen, 2022). Therefore, the parent's choice

in designing children (in the preschool age) will develop children's language. But, still, many parents do not know the best and suit games for their children. They just focus on "playing" with children without using the playing time to develop and stimulate children's development. Much research is similar to this research, but this research focuses on parents with low economic and educational backgrounds. They also live in rural areas where there are limited facilities.

## **Method**

A quantitative descriptive research design is used in this study. Data were collected from 28 mothers with children five years of age. Some of the information was gathered from direct interviews with parents. Researchers used the Google Form platform to collect data for this study, which included questions about respondents' age, occupation, place of residence, activities that are frequently done in free time, child's age, amount of time spent with children, kinds of simple games given to children, people's reactions to a child's progress during the last year, as well as communication barriers with children. Respondents were taken randoml. The researcher performed in-depth interviews with the respondents to further refine the data analysis. The researcher then analyzed data, including data selection, presentation, and conclusion.

Before conducting the study, the researchers created a questionnaire that would be delivered to mothers of children. From June 10, 2022, through June 30, 2022, questionnaires were distributed to collect data. According to the required number of respondents for this study, up to 28 questionnaires were delivered. The researcher encountered several challenges throughout the distribution of the questionnaires, including diverse attitudes and even some resistance from some of the target respondents when asked to complete the questionnaire because some of the topics were sensitive.

The researcher assisted the respondents in answering all their questions about concepts they might not have fully grasped or comprehended when completing the questionnaire. The researchers gathered the information for this research through the provided questionnaires. This is because the questionnaire includes questions about how parents react to straightforward games that impact young children's mental health and language development.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***The implementation of children's first five-year games in family environment*** *Free time allocation*

Based on the data in the questionnaire, it is known that most parents have free time to be with their children. 57.1% of parents use this free time to play with their children. Various games were also carried out between parents and children, such as playing with children's favorite toys, doing educational broadcast television, or playing with other family members. The rest parents choose to combine activities between playing and learning with their children. In addition to playing and learning, from pictures, it can also be seen that 3.6% of parents chose to emphasize their children's learning. Parents will ask about their children's activities and school assignments. So that parents will help children in doing these tasks. Besides linking to play and learning activities with children, parents also use their rest time to do or try other work, exercise, sell something, or make creations.

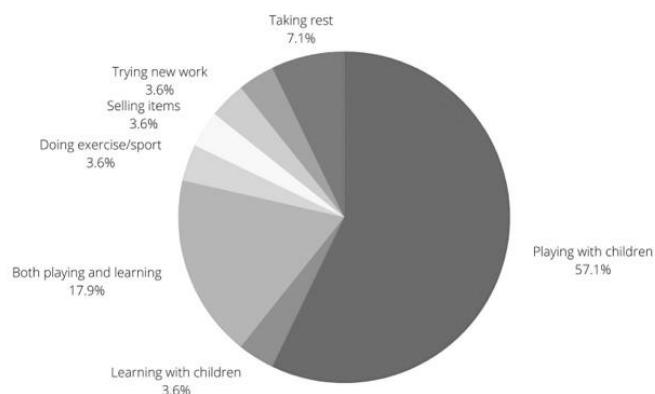


Figure 1. Time allocation

### *Duration of spending time together*

It is undeniable that most mothers today are working. Although they do not work in the formal sector, where the company determines their working hours, they also work in the informal sector. Mothers in rural areas also work in agriculture or daily grind in trade. This causes they cannot accompany the children all the time.

From the questionnaire, it was stated that most mothers had three to five hours per day. 35.7% of mothers have this time to spend with their children. In the second order, 21.4% of mothers recognized having six to eight hours a day to be with their children. Third, less than two hours are spent with the child by the mother. In the fourth order, 10.7% of mothers claimed to have 12 hours more daily to play with their children. In the fifth order, 7.1% of mothers have nine to 11 hours a day to play with their children. In the figures, it is also known that there are 7.1% of mothers did not answer. This is because they do not have a definite time to be together with children. Their work has an uncertain time.

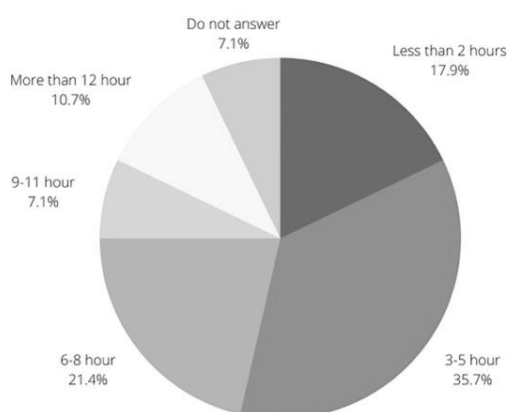


Figure 2. Duration of spending time together

### *Parents' understanding about the importance of accompanying children to play*

As seen in figure 2, there are three categories of respondents' answers regarding whether accompanying children while playing can affect children's language. The three categories are yes, no, and maybe. 86% stated that attending to children while

playing can affect children's cognitive and language development, and 11% expressed doubts by answering "maybe." One respondent said that accompanying children while playing did not affect language competence. This demonstrates that most respondents know how accompanying children's play can affect their language development.

The most crucial aspect of life is the bond between parents and children. In the theory of psychosocial development, it is stated that in the early stages of a child's life, it is necessary to develop a sense of trust (Cottingham & Erickson, 2020). The feeling in the child will be quickly created when there is a good attachment relationship between parents and children. Children will more easily trust their environment (parents). Children whose attachment needs are not met will tend to be more passive towards the environment and take a long time to adjust to the new environment. This is related to the data results, which state that most respondents said that accompanying children while playing is essential. This indicates that most respondents know the importance of children's mental and language development.

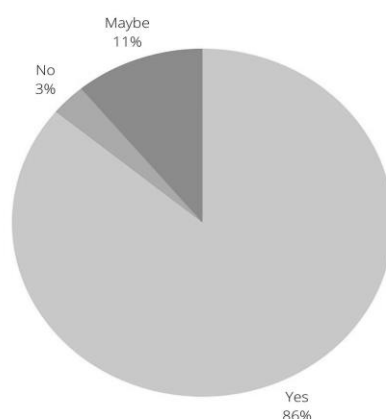


Figure 3. Parents' understanding about the importance of accompanying children to play

#### *The pattern of children's first five years games*

Parents also mention there are two types of games to play with children. Based on the questionnaire, most parents do not introduce games that can stimulate children's language development. 55.6% of parents still use games that do not encourage children's language development. They play games like cars, robots, card games, and more. From the questionnaire also, 44.4% of parents claimed to be able to provide games that can stimulate children's language development. Parents of this group believe that ages one to five years are in dire need of language stimulation. Games such as puzzles, telling stories together, guessing words, and playing flash cards are alternatives for introducing language to children.

Although digital games are associated with many negative stereotypes for gamers' physical and mental health, there is a growing interest among teachers in using digital games in their lessons and learning how to use them as educational and motivational resources (Papanastasiou et al., 2022). However, still, parents are the decision maker. The parents can combine how much time children spend online and how much time for children in playing traditional and physical games. The

focus is on implementing parental involvement in playing with children, whatever the kind of playing is.

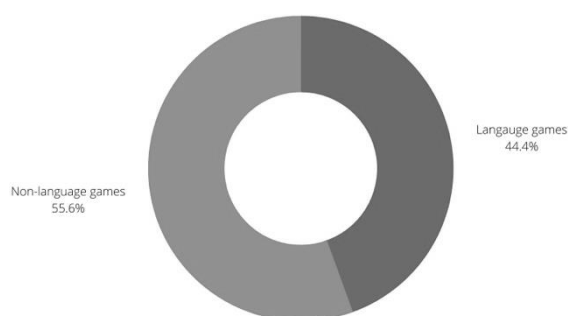


Figure 4. Types of children's games

### ***The pattern of children's first five years games***

#### ***Children's communication skills***

From the picture, there are 57.1% of children can communicate actively. This positively correlates with games used to stimulate children's language skills by parents. Parents who apply games with a focus on improving children's abilities will help children to be able to communicate actively. This can be seen in children's communication level with parents and other people, such as peers and other families. At the age of three, children will quickly meet new people because children begin to study outside the home. This causes children to be able to get to know new people, both friends, and neighbours. At this age, children have gone to non-formal schools such as PAUD or preschool, which causes children to communicate well with other people. It can also be seen that those who are very active in communicating have an extensive vocabulary. The questionnaire also showed that those who were very busy sharing with others had excellent language stimulation when they were babies.

The problem is that 42.9% of children have not been able to communicate actively, especially with those they do not meet every day. The level of communication with parents influences this. Parents who tend to be inactive in inviting children to communicate will cause children not to have good communication skills. Children also do not have a large vocabulary. Therefore, parents need to share with their children from the time they are in the womb. Those who have difficulties communicating, especially with foreigners, are caused by low self-confidence. This has to do with confidence and communication skills. In addition, children who are less active in communicating are more likely to be quiet and not fussy.

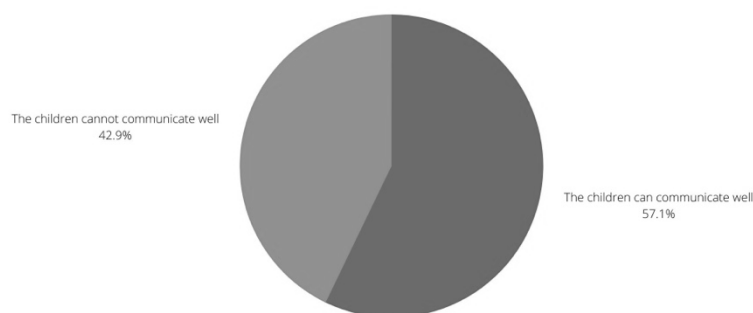


Figure 5. Children's communication skill level

In addition to communicating actively, children also show different expressions when they meet strangers. Most children, as much as 35.7%, have high confidence when meeting strangers. This self-confidence requires children to be able to communicate actively with others. This can be seen when children get acquainted with other people when they first meet. In the second place, 32.1% of children admitted to being afraid of meeting strangers for the first time. They feel they don't have high self-confidence when they meet people they don't know well. This causes them to be unable to get acquainted or have open communication. In third place, children also feel strange when meeting new people. There 21.4% of children admitted to being awkward when meeting new people. This is also related to the ability of children to communicate with their peers at school. They need more time to speak or start sharing with new friends. In fourth place, 10.7% of children feel very happy to meet new people. The new person in question can be a friend at school or the playground. This group shows very happy emotions and can communicate well when meeting new friends.

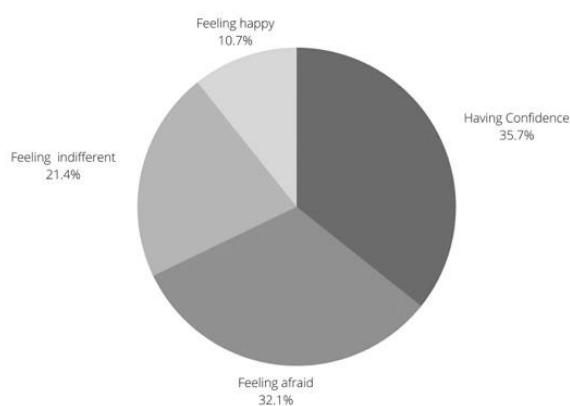


Figure 6. Children's feeling during meetings with new people

#### *Children's ability to express their emotions and feeling*

Children's communication skills are also closely related to their ability to express feelings. Children who have good communication will be able to express their feelings. This will cause and make it easier for parents to see the feelings and opinions of their children. 57.1% of children are very good at expressing their

feelings and what they feel. However, 28.6% of children said their feelings by crying and being moody. This is related to the child's communication skills. Crying is a way for children to express their feelings. However, parents need to train children to be able to communicate and teach children to speak. There 14.3% of children do Tantrums when asking for something. This indicates that the child is unable to express and unable to express his feelings. It is miserable when a child has a tantrum, and the parents immediately obey the child's request. Children can use it as a weapon. So that in the future, the child will experience tantrums repeatedly to achieve his wishes.

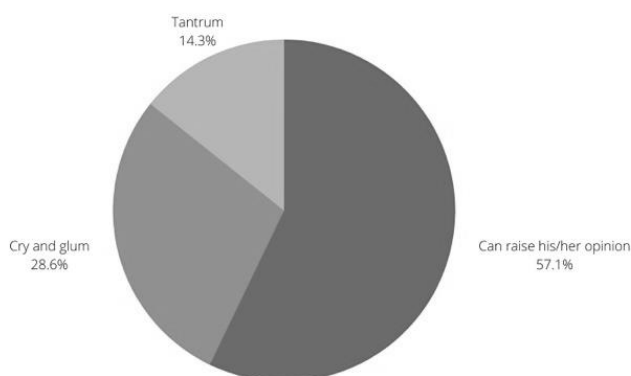


Figure 7. Children's ability to expressing feelings and emotions

## Conclusion

Therefore, based on this justification, it can be inferred that the ideal amount of time and type of simple game, such as traditional educational games that parents give to their kids, can have an impact on their mental health, manifested in high levels of self-assurance and curiosity, as well as on the growth of their language skills, which encourages active communication.

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