

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL AND COGNITIVE SKILLS IN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOME AND PRESCHOOL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS WITH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT OF 5 AND 6 YEAR-OLD CHILDREN

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Abstract: The present study was carried out with the aim of studying the mediating role of Social-Emotional and cognitive skills in relationship between home and preschool learning environments with language development of children. In this study, 15 children of 5 and 6 years old were selected from Region 1 in Tehran through convenience sampling method. Then, the quality of kindergartens and preschool centers was evaluated by early childhood environment rating scale (ECERS) and the social-emotional disorders screening questionnaire was completed by parents and teachers. The instrument of home learning environment (HLE) was completed by parents in order to study the quality of home learning environment. Also, the TOLD language development questionnaire was used to study the language development of children. Raven colored test and verbal fluency test were used to measure the cognitive skills of these children. In this study, the structural equations were used to provide a model in which the social-emotional and cognitive skills have a mediating role in relationship between home and preschool learning environments with language development of children. The results of statistical analyses showed that in relative intermediary model, the indirect effect of home and preschool learning environments on language development of children through social-emotional skills of children was statistically significant ($p < 0/05$). Also, the results of correlation matrices showed the positive and significant relationship between learning environments with social-emotional skills, learning environments with cognitive skills, social-emotional skills with language development and cognitive skills with language development in 5 and 6-year-old children.

Keywords: Language development, home learning environment, preschool learning environment, social-emotional and cognitive skill.

INTRODUCTION***

Language is an optional system of symbols that has discipline and rule and provides communication. Helping the richness and development of children language has a great importance in all aspects of life especially in their intellectual development. One of the fundamental features of human thought is his relationship with language. Language is the mediator between human thought and action (Lotfabadi 2012: 193).

Language is the most accurate tool of understanding in the past and present and is a key by which the treasure of human knowledge can be found over the history. Language is a tool to transfer experiences from one person to another and from

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one generation to another generation. The social development of human is done through the culture of that society and the identity of any society is made through the efforts of its people during the history and is transferred to others. If such a transfer was not performed, the human would give up immediately and would not look for development. In this regard, Pascal believes that human generations are like a human being who is always searching over time and has activities beyond the framework of time and place. It should be said that such a unity and transfer could not be possible except through language (Naemi 2013: 9-15).

Language learning is a continuous process and children learn language and its most levels until the elementary school and the experiences and teachings of preschool can provide the maximum development conditions for children. Thus, the need to recognize the factor affecting their language development in a better and more accurate way and providing appropriate facilities and conditions in these years is an essential and certain issue. Preschool education has a very valuable and sensitive place in the education structure of most developed countries. One of the programs related to preschool period is language learning and language development of children. Language is one of the fundamental activities of human mind and is a very important communication tool for human and his growth. It should be noted that recognizing and teaching preschool children in a more appropriate way is one of the signs of the rich and strong culture and education system in any society (Lotfabadi 1986: 3).

Many different theories have been raised in the field of language development. Each theory has discussed the issue from a particular point of view that shows the complexity of language learning process. Behaviorists consider the environmental factors, rewards, strengths (reinforcements), observation and modeling effective in language development. Intellectualists like Chomsky believe that language is inherent and structuralists like Piaget, Loria and Bruner consider language as the result of interaction between environment and heredity. Among the theorists of language field, Vygotsky emphasizes the social factors and their effect on language development more than others. He considers communication as the first role of language and introduces social relationships as the origin of language indication in children. In general, according to the multiple theories in the field of language development, it seems that some of the aspects of language learning may require the process of conditioning; some of them require the targeted cognitive process and some other aspects may depend on social interactions of language learners.

Some of the very important factors in language development are physical health, genetic, intelligence, gender, family relationships, social-economic conditions, being bilingual and social relationships of children in learning environments (Ahadi and Bani Jamali 2006: 183-187).

Since language learning is a very critical issue for preschool children, because it provides a basis for all other learning (Cole 2014: 139), thus among the above

effective factors according to the possibility of manipulation, access and degree of importance, the foundation basis of language skills must be reinforced in home and preschool learning environments.

The controlled environments in which learning fields are provided in the person through trial and error or the processes created by special facilities and equipment are called learning environment (Slavin 2006:409). Bullard and Allying (2010) consider learning environments effective in this period of life due to two reasons. Firstly, in this period, the rapid development of brain occurs. At this time, synapses have their maximum advancement. For this purpose, a stimulant and rich learning environment is needed (Strong and Ellis 2007) Stimulant and rich learning environment causes the development of social-emotional and cognitive skills in children. Secondly, children at this age spend a lot of time in early learning environments. Every child can be a miracle according to whatever the early learning environments provide for learning and fostering the children. Social-emotional skill means that children dominate the behaviors that form social interactions between them and the external world (like beginning and keeping friendly relationships with peers and adults, cooperative behaviors and cooperation), and also the management of their emotions and feelings (like aggression management and regulation) (Squires 2003, cited in Dadsetan et. al., 2010).

Cognitive development refers to those basic skills that help us recognize our surrounding environment. The children between 3 to 6-year old are at the stage of cognitive development when their thoughts are guided by their perceptions. They are not ready yet for abstract reasoning and thinking, but they learn through objective experiences. Thus, play games and activity are keywords in their learning. Since the range of experiences determines their understanding, the various and rich experiences are needed to flourish learning in them (Mofidi 2014: 188-189).

The cognitive development and his language development that include the development of intelligence, thinking, imagination, reasoning, creativity, knowledge and understanding change a disabled infant into a conscious human (Lotfabadi 1986:124).

The basis of communicative, cognitive and emotional skills is formed in the first years of life. Children spend most of their rime at home and in relationship with their parents in these years. Home environment is a term that refers to the structure of early environment of children and whatever happens there. Many studies have referred to the importance of home environment and this importance is due to the fact that the early experiences of children in preschool years play an important role in cognitive abilities and language formation (Rodriguez and Lemonda 2011).

The early years of childhood are considered as a very rich period for social and emotional learning. This period forms many types of learning that must be acquired

in the path of fostering social skills and communications. Although at this level of skills, home and family are deeply effective, the preschool teachers can also help the social development of children at this period (Mofidi 2014:150).

Kindergartens and preschool environments provide the first contact with peers for children. At these environments, children use a method that is different from their method at home. In kindergartens, the behavioral patterns of children are adjusted and they learn new compatibility methods (ShoariNejad2002:341).

Although it was imagined earlier that intelligence is an unchangeable inherited ability and teaching does not affect it, the new theorists of intelligence do not insist on its immutability and consider the educational measures and providing learning experiences effective in the increase of intelligence. Eggen and Kauchak (2001), Sternberg (2004) and Slavin (2006) believe that the efforts that have been made to increase the level of intelligence were effective. In general, it seems that teachings were effective in the increase of performance in intelligence tests and academic advancements (Saif 2012:350).

Vygotsky believes that the cognitive development of children is mainly dependent on the people living in their lives. Knowledge, attitude and values of the person are developed through interaction with others. The theory of Vygotsky is based on interaction between thought and language and is the product of his observations from the primary and early speech of children (Saif 2012:102).

Family life environment and rich and motivating teaching during the childhood are very favorable fields for the expression of special abilities of students. As educational society and environments provide more appropriate conditions for different students, the development of their intelligence capacities will increase (Lotfabadi 2012:191). In most previous studies, mainly the direct and linear relationship between the research variables has been studied. According to what was said, one of the very effective factors in language development is social-emotional and cognitive skills development and a major part of this development is gained in early learning environments of children (home and preschool centers) and on the other hand, the development of language is totally affected by learning environments of children. However, a question is raised here: how is the process of these effects? According to the documentary and available relationships between learning environments with social-emotional and cognitive skills with language development of children on the other hand, a question arises that: can the social-emotional and cognitive skills have a mediating role between the two concepts of learning environments (independent variable) and language development (dependent variable). The development of this mode makes it possible to obtain the relationships between variables simultaneously from their interactive relationships and also identify the mechanism of the effect of learning environments on language

development through social-emotional and cognitive skills. The recognition of mechanism and process of the effect of variables on each other, the discovery of the relationships between phenomena and providing a model is one of the research necessities and objectives that increase human knowledge. Thus, the explanation and development of a mode based on coherent theoretical foundations that include social-emotional and cognitive skills seems necessary in order to increase language development in children. The practical necessity of this study can be discussed from three perspectives: First, the prevention of language development problems, the early recognition and finally the possibility of appropriate interventions at a shorter time.

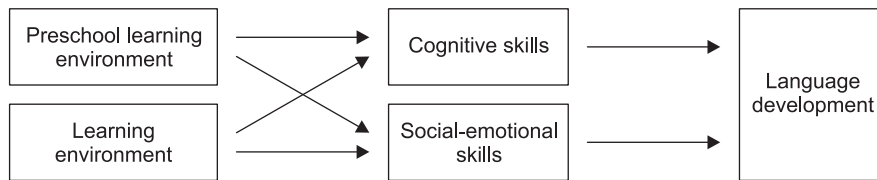


Figure 1: The conceptual mode of the explanation of the relationship between language development and learning environments with the mediating role of social-emotional and cognitive skills

The main purpose of this study is to test the causal relationship between learning environments and language development of children with the mediating role of social-emotional and cognitive skills in 5 and 6-year-old children. The sub-objectives of this study are determining the relationships between learning environments and social-emotional skills, learning environments and cognitive skills, social-emotional skills and language development, and finally determining the relationship between cognitive skills and language development.

In this study, Hamill and Newcomer language development test was used to study language development in children. It was normalized by Hassan Zadeh and Minayi (2001) for 4 to 8-year-old children in Iran. This test is a two-dimensional mode that includes linguistic systems and coordinates which contains 9 sub scales (6 main sub scales and 3 subsidiary sub scales) and 210 questions. This 6 sub scales include picture words, conjunctions, oral words, grammar understanding, sentence imitation, and grammar completion. According to the two-dimensional model, this test studies 6 sub scales of listening, organizing, speaking, semantics, grammar and spoken language. The reliability of this test was obtained by test-retest method. The correlation coefficients for each of the main subscales that was said above were calculated as 0/77, 0/84, 0/87, 0/78, 0/88 and 0/83. In relation to the validity of this test, the correlation coefficients were obtained among the several sub scales of this test and criterion tests such as 0/57, 0/71, 0/42, 0/70 (Hassan Zadeh and Minayi 2001:15-27). To evaluate the social-emotional skills, the social-emotional disorders

screening questionnaire that was developed by Miller et. al., in 1997 and was then normalized by Dadsetan et. al., in 2010 was used. In the Persian version, 6 factors of maladaptive behavior – hyperactivity, social skills and communication skills, daily life skills, feeding behavior and separation anxiety symptoms are available. The total internal consistency of the test was equal to 0/81 and for subscales was from 0/61 (separation anxiety symptoms) to 0/77 (maladaptive behavior – hyperactivity). In addition to the scores of this questionnaire with a system based on Achenbach system of empirically based assessment (ASEBA) scores show the convergent validity of the questionnaire in Iranian children (Dadsetan et. al., 2010:27).

HLE tool was developed by Cole et. al., (1975) in a longitudinal study to study home learning environment and evaluate the relationship between home learning environment and children development. This questionnaire with 91 items is completed by parents. Cadwell and Bradley (2001) obtained the split half reliability from 0/53 to 0/83 for subscales and 0/3 for the total scale. Retest reliability is an 18-month period was obtained from 0/15 to 0/7 for the total scale and subscales. The agreement among evaluators was obtained as 0/9. In validation of this tool, the content validity and convergent validity of the test was reported from 0/58 to 0/80. To evaluate the quality of preschool centers, the early childhood environment rating scale (ECERS) was used that includes 43 items and 7 subscales including the routines of personal care, space and furniture, reasoning, activities, interaction, structure of period, parents and teachers. The total internal consistency of the test is equal to 0/92 and for its 7 subscales was 0/71 (parents and teachers) to 0/88 (activities) (Clifford et. al., 2005). In its Persian version, the reliability of this scale was done through Rasch model analysis and it was found that the range of biserial correlation coefficient for all questions is from 0/44 to 0/75 (Asgari et. al., 2015).

The Raven colored progressive matrices test is a non verbal reasoning test and was designed as an index of intellectual development level for 5-11 year old children and includes 36 geometric shapes (Rion and Samers 1986). The reliability of split half test was reported as 0/46 to 0/92. Also, Rion (1986) reported the retest coefficients of revised Raven test as 0/60 and 0/80 for 6/5-9/5 year old children in one year. In Iran, Rajabi (1385) reported the reliability coefficients of re-test and convergent validity respectively as 0/62 and 0/41 (Ghalamzan et. al., 2014).

Also, the verbal fluency test was used with Raven colored test to study the cognitive skill of children. This test was introduced by Toreston (1983). In a study, the internal consistency of two parts of this test with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0/81 was recognized as appropriate. With a retest after one year, repeatability for phonetic verbal fluency test was obtained as 0/77 and semantics as 0/87. Also, a significant correlation was obtained between this test, Strooptest and sentence recall test for the validity of this test (Nejati and Izadi Najaf Abadi 2012)

METHOD

The statistical population of this study includes 5 and 6 year of children in Tehran and the sample subjects were selected by convenience sampling method among this population. According to Hoyle (1995) and Loehlin (2004), the sample size of 100-200 subjects is optimum for using the structural equations. In this study, 150 samples were studied. The present study is of correlational type in terms of data collection method. To evaluate the relationships between latent variables and measured variables in the proposed conceptual model, the structural equation modeling was used. Structural equation modeling is a powerful multivariate analysis method through which the hypotheses about the causal relationships between latent variables can be tested. (Sarmad, Bazargan and Hejazi2004). The correlation matrix of research variables was given in Table 6 below.

TABLE 1: THE CORRELATION MATRIX OF HOME ENVIRONMENT WITH SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS OF TEACHERS AND MOTHERS

	<i>Education reinforcement</i>	<i>Spending time with the child</i>	<i>Autonomy</i>	<i>Not punishing the child</i>	<i>Positive behavior of parents</i>
Social skills (mother form)	0/14*	0/17*	0/19**	0/14*	0/24**
Communication skills (mother form)	0/15*	0/15*	0/24**	0/18*	0/21**
Daily life skills (mother form)	0/12*	0/14*	0/16*	0/14*	0/25**
Feeding behavior (mother form)	0/13*	0/15*	0/13*	0/14*	0/15*
Social skills (teacher form)	0/15*	0/13*	0/21**	0/13*	0/20**
Communication skills (teacher form)	0/13*	0/13*	0/20**	0/13*	0/22**
Daily life skills (teacher form)	0/14*	0/14*	0/16*	0/17*	0/20**
Feeding behavior (teacher form)	0/13*	0/16*	0/15*	0/14*	0/16*

The results of Table 1 show that therelationship between home environment and social-emotional skills of children was positive and significant.

TABLE 2: THE CORRELATION MATRIX OF HOME ENVIRONMENT WITH COGNITIVESKILLS OF TEACHERS AND MOTHERS

	<i>Education reinforcement</i>	<i>Spending time with the child</i>	<i>Autonomy</i>	<i>Not punishing the child</i>	<i>Positive behavior of parents</i>
Cognitive skill	0/17*	0/15*	0/16*	0/13*	0/20**
Verbal fluency	0/15*	0/19**	0/18**	0/14*	0/23**

In Table 2, the relationship between home environment and cognitive skills of children including cognitive intelligence and verbal fluency was positive and significant.

TABLE 3: THE CORRELATION MATRIX OF PRESCHOOL ENVIRONMENT WITH SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS OF TEACHERS AND MOTHERS

	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Interaction</i>	<i>Teachers and parents</i>
Social skills (mother form)	0/24 **	0/17*	0/15*
Communication skills (mother form)	0/20**	0/15*	0/15*
Daily life skills (mother form)	0/25**	0/14*	0/15*
Feeding behavior (mother form)	0/10*	0/15*	0/09
Social skills (teacher form)	0/17*	0/13*	0/20**
Communication skills (teacher form)	0/14*	0/13*	0/18**
Daily life skills (teacher form)	0/21**	0/14*	0/17*
Feeding behavior (teacher form)	0/09*	0/16*	0/08

In Table 3, the relationship between preschool environment and social-emotional skills of children in all subscales except feeding behavior was positive and significant.

TABLE 4: THE CORRELATION MATRIX OF PRESCHOOL ENVIRONMENT WITH COGNITIVE SKILLS OF TEACHERS AND MOTHERS

	<i>Education reinforcement</i>	<i>Spending time with the child</i>	<i>Autonomy</i>
Cognitive skill	0/15*	0/13*	0/13*
Verbal fluency	0/18**	0/21**	0/17*

The results of Table 4 show that the relationship between preschool environment and all cognitive aspects was positive and significant.

TABLE 5: THE CORRELATION MATRIX OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS OF CHILDREN WITH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

	<i>Spoken language</i>	<i>Listening</i>	<i>Organizing</i>	<i>Speaking</i>	<i>Semantics</i>	<i>Grammar</i>
Social skills (mother form)	0/11	0/08	0/13	0/06	0/15	0/07
Communication skills (mother form)	0/15	0/08	0/14	0/12	0/14	0/18*
Daily life skills (mother form)	0/02	0/13	0/005	0/000	0/003	0/008

	<i>Spoken language</i>	<i>Listening</i>	<i>Organizing</i>	<i>Speaking</i>	<i>Semantics</i>	<i>Grammar</i>
Feeding behavior (mother form)	-0/09	0/02	-0/06	-0/006	-0/07	-0/06
Social skills (teacher form)	0/10	0/13	0/08*	0/08	0/13	0/04
Communication skills (teacher form)	0/23**	0/13	0/18*	0/28**	0/21**	0/22**
Daily life skills (teacher form)	0/23**	0/21**	0/18	0/18*	0/19*	0/15
Feeding behavior (teacher form)	0/07	0/11	0/06	0/15	0/10	0/08

The results of Table 5 show that among the components of social –emotional skills of children and language development, the relationship between communication skills (mother form) with grammar was positive and significant. The relationship between communication skills (teacher form) with spoken language, organizing, speaking, semantics and grammar was positive and significant and the relationship between daily life skills (teacher form) with spoken language, listening, organizing, speaking and semantics was positive and significant. The relationship of other components was insignificant.

TABLE 6: THE CORRELATION MATRIX OF COGNITIVE SKILL WITH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN

	<i>Cognitive intelligence</i>	<i>Verbal fluency</i>
Spoken language	0/36**	0/45**
Listening	0/37**	0/23**
Organizing	0/24**	0/39*
Speaking	0/12	0/41**
Semantics	0/26**	0/42***
Grammar	0/34**	0/40**

Finally, the results of Table 6 showed that the relationship between cognitive intelligence with spoken language, listening, organizing, semantics, and grammar was positive and significant and the relationship between verbal fluency and all components of language development was positive and significant.

Testing the Structural Relationships in the Hypothesized Model

In this section, the structural equation modeling as used to explain the dispersion of language development scores in the sample of selected children through home environment and preschool environment with the mediating role of social-emotional and cognitive skills of children (Figure 1). Klain (2005) emphasizes

that in using the structural equations modeling, the ratio of lost data to complete data in each variable was studied separately and it was found that the lost data per each variable is less than 5%. The researcher used the expectation maximization imputation (EM) to cope with the lost values. One of the common criteria in the study of the hypothesis is its normality and the skewness and kurtosis values of data were obtained from -2 and $+2$. The other hypothesis of the study is that there are linear relationships between the indicator and latent variables and between latent variables. In the present study, the use of dispersion graphs confirmed the hypothesis of linearity. Multicollinearity hypothesis occurs when a researcher uses two overlapping variables that in fact measure one single variable in his/her study. Multicollinearity is identified through tolerance and variable inflation factor (VIF). Tolerance value shows a ratio of the total standardized variance that is equal to $1-R^2$. The ratio of total standardized variance to specific variance is called (VIF) that is equal to $1/(1-R^2)$. The tolerance value less than $0/10$ or VIF more than 10 shows multicollinearity. In this analysis, there was no multicollinearity in any of the values of tolerance statistics and calculated VIF for research variables. The results related to the model fitness indices for each index proposed by Hu and Bentler (1999) including chi-square index χ^2 , chi-square index per degree of freedom χ^2/df , comparative fit index (CFI), goodness of fit index (GFI), adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) were respectively obtained as $551/15$, $2/28$, $0/87$, $0/84$, $0/80$, and $0/080$.

According to the proposed logic of Hu and Bentler (1999) to determine the fitness of the proposed mode with data according s , the numerical value more than 2 for chi-square index per degree of freedom χ^2/df , the numerical value more than $0/06$ for root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and numerical value less than $0/90$ for comparative fit index (CFI), goodness of fit index (AGFI) and adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) emphasizes the necessity of selecting the model correction step with the aim of helping the improvement of its fitness with the observed data.

The fitting test of the hypothesized model with data with the use of model correction step selection showed that in latent factor of home environment through the creation of covariance among the residual error for “positive behavior of parents and not punishing the child” and “positive behavior of parents and spending time for child” and in latent factor of preschool behavior through the creation of covariance between residual error for “social skills and communication skills”, “social skills and daily life skills” and “communication skills and daily life skills”, in latent factor of cognitive skills through the creation of covariance between residual error for “cognitive intelligence and verbal fluency: and finally in latent factor of language development through the creation of covariance between residual error for “spoken language and speaking”, the value of $272/44$ unit was reduced from the numerical value of chi-square in this model after reducing 14 units in the degree of freedom of the corrected model.

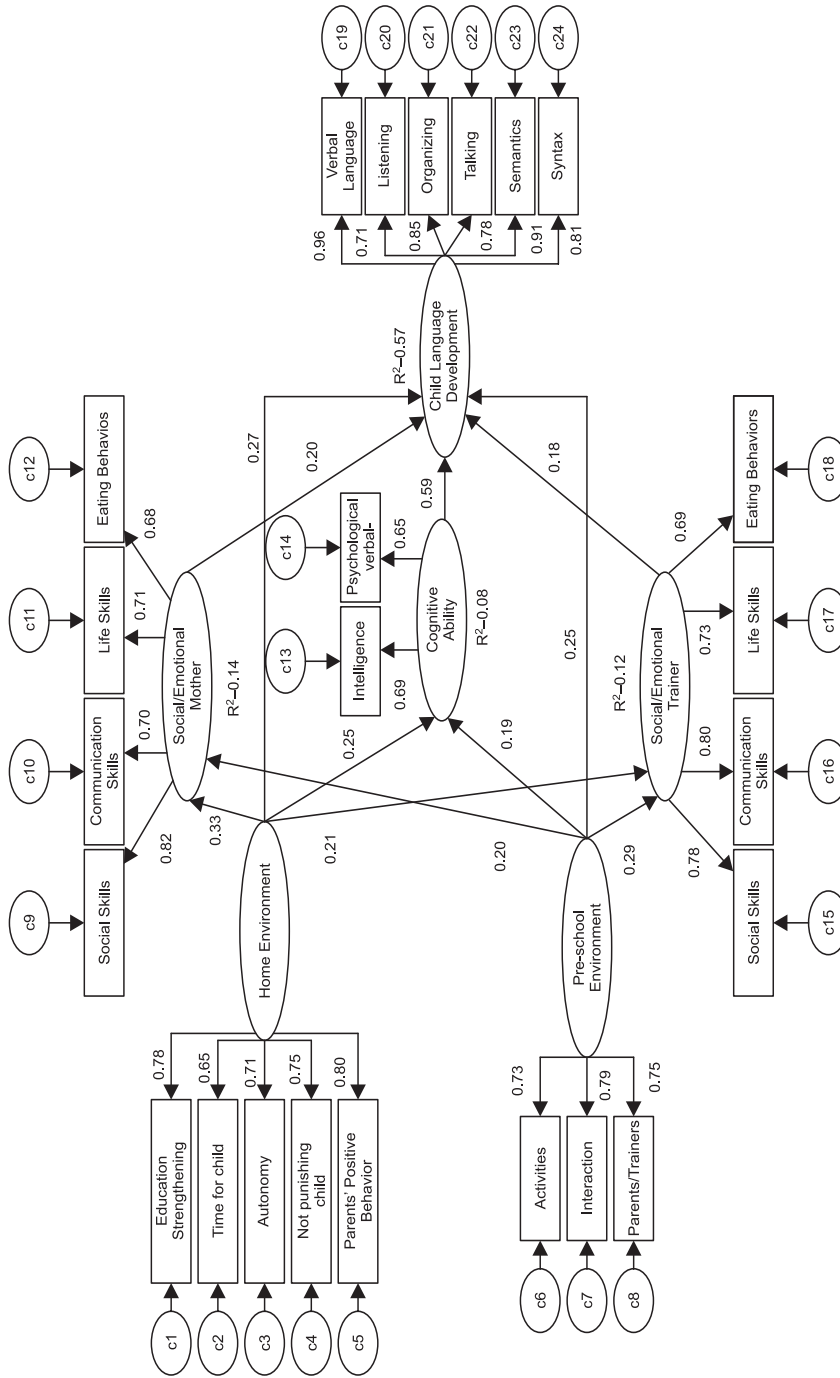


Figure 2: The relative intermediary model of social-emotional and cognitive skills in relationship between learning environments and language development of children after correction

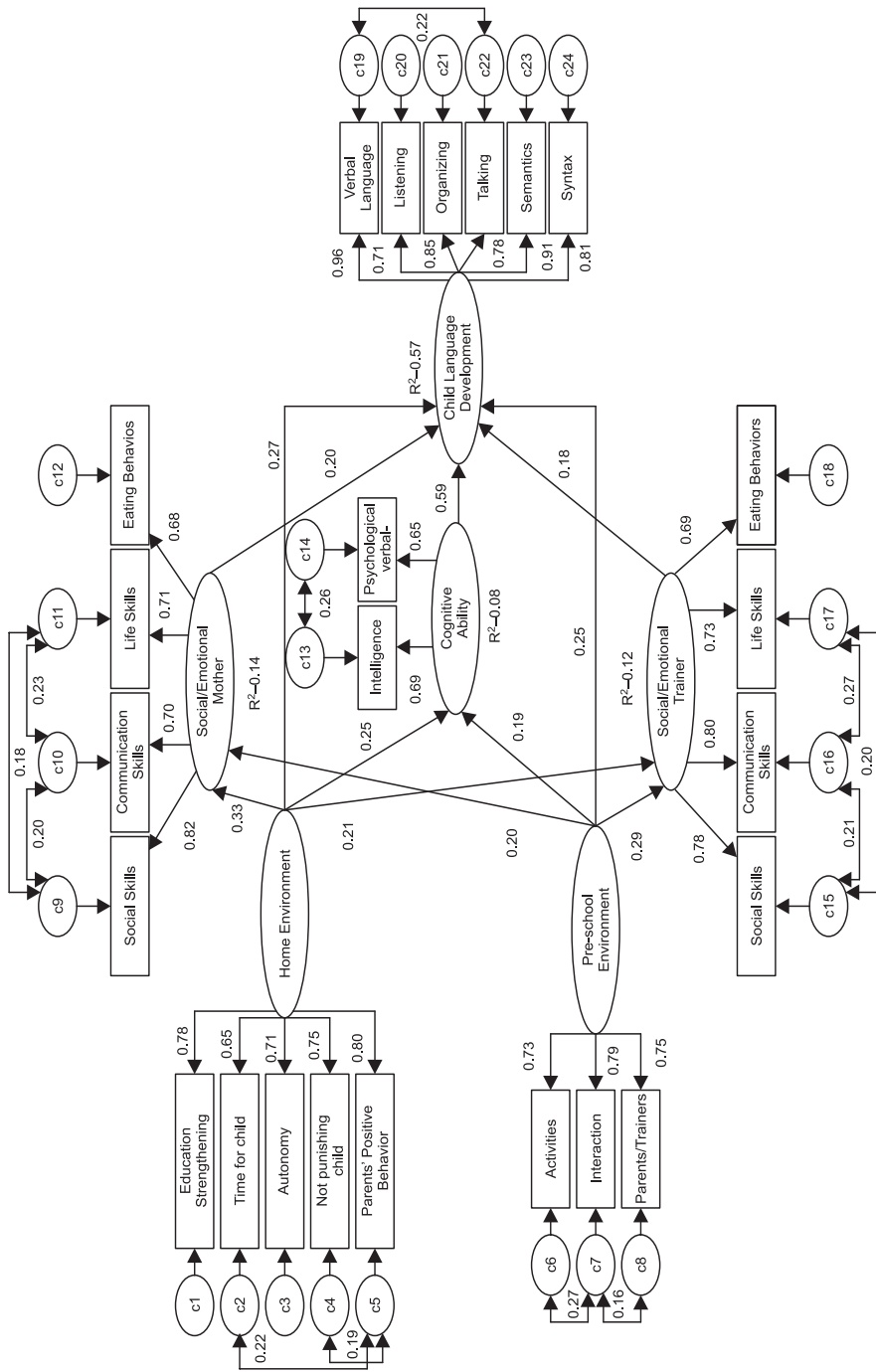


Figure 3: The relative intermediary model after correction

Social-emotional skills scores of children based on mothers report, 12% dispersion in social-emotional skills scores of children based on teacher report and 8% dispersion in cognitive skills scores of children through home and preschool environments were explained. Also, in this model, 57% of dispersion in language development scores was predicted through latent variables of home environment, preschool environment, social-emotional skills of children according to, mother and teacher forms and cognitive skills of children. In the relative intermediary model, all path coefficients between latent variables were statistically significant (Figures 2 and 3). In this model, the relationship between home environment and preschool environment with social-emotional skills of children according to mother and teacher forms, the cognitive relationship between social-emotional skills of children according to mother and teacher forms and cognitive skills of children with their language development was positive and significant (Figures 2 and 3). In this study, the Butasutra method was used to test the indirect effects between variables in the hypothesized model. In this section, the results showed that in the relative intermediary model, the indirect effect of home environment on language development of children through social-emotional skills of children according to mothers form, the social-emotional skills of children were obtained respectively as 0/07, 0/05 and 0/15 that was statistically significant ($p < 0/05$). Also, the indirect effect of preschool environment on social-emotional skills of children according to teachers form and cognitive skill of children were obtained respectively as 0/06, 0/04 and 0/12 that was statistically significant ($p < 0/05$).

In general, the results of the present study show that the relative intermediary model of social-emotional skills of children according to mothers and teachers form and the size of cognitive skill in children in relationship between learning environments and language development of children has a good fitness with data. In other words, the results of the present study put an emphasis on interpretative potential of interpersonal and intrapersonal resources in the context of predicting language development in children in order to experimentally support the selection of hybrid models in this field of study.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study in table 1 showed that the relationship between home environment and social-emotional skills of children (mother and teacher forms) was positive and significant. In other words, with the increase of the quality of home learning environment, the social-emotional skills of children increase. The results of this study are in line with the findings of many other researchers like Roopnarine et. al., (2006), Pianta et. al., (2009), Gormly (2011), Okumura and Usui (2014), Ghanbadri Hashim Abadi (2011), Mohebi Nuroddin Vand (2011), Sadegh Zadeh (2012), and Dehghani (2013) that have emphasized the importance and role of home learning environment in growth and development of social-emotional

skills in children. Also, the results of table 3 show that the relationship between the components of school environment including activities, interaction, teachers, and parents with social-emotional skills of children (teacher and mother forms) including social skills, communication skills and daily life skills was positive and significant and it was also positive and insignificant with feeding behavior.

Taggart (2005), Pianta et. al., (2009), Jennings and Diprete (2010), Gormley (2011), Degotardi et. al., (2015), Hedayati (1390), Safari (2011), Soodi (2013), Jelvegar (2012), Osareh et. al., (2013), and Nasri (2014) all have emphasized the importance and role of preschool learning environment in development of social-emotional skills of children.

The prevention of some problems in the field of social-emotional skills is not only the task of adults (like parents, other adult caregivers, preschool teachers) that have the highest effect on social-emotional development of children, but also the high quality of preschool education system can support the early development and guarantee the long term social-emotional efficiency to a high degree (Dadsetan et. al., 2010).

In preschool learning environments, children find an opportunity to have interaction with peers, use their capacities while playing with them, talk about their discoveries about the environment and share their learning. The experience of environments richer than home in terms of educational materials and content and social relationships makes children face more opportunities for learning and development. Play, social interactions, exploration, informal learning and etc. are all effective in better social development of children. Peers can transfer social values to each other through modeling and equal balance to each other and can also create a mainstay for finding independence and remove egocentricity. Meanwhile, teachers and parents must facilitate the relationships between peers and provide appropriate conditions for communication of their children with peers. In addition to the natural processes of play and daily interactions with peers that enrich the children environment, the educational experiences that are guided by preschool centers through performing the educational programs is another probable reason for social-emotional development of preschool children. In preschool environments, children learn social behaviors and educational contents through observation and this is an appropriate opportunity to understand the concepts and learn the required daily skills like wearing clothes, interpersonal cooperation, communication with others and etc. In general, the above factors affect children by providing an enriched educational environment and make them have a social-emotional development in preschool centers (Abri et. al., 2011).

To explain the lack of significant correlation between feeding behavior of children and preschool learning environments, it can be noted that in preschool environments, children may pour food on the floor or their clothes or eat by hand,

but these behaviors are considered as a part of their natural development. At this age, children pay less attention to food but their attention to the surrounding environment increases. At this age, children focus on playing with peers and pay less attention to eating (Bahrami 2011).

In Tables 2 and 4, the relationship between preschool environment and home learning environment with the aspects of cognitive skill like cognitive intelligence and verbal fluency was positive and significant. these findings are in line with the research results of Nir-Gal (2004), Burger (2010), Camilli et. al., (2010), Biedinger (2011), Ghanbari Hashim Abedi (2011), Arefi (2012), and Fathollah (2013) that mentioned the relationship between early learning environments of children (home and preschool) and development of cognitive skills.

Many studies show that intelligence in human that was considered inherent in old beliefs, is affected by environmental conditions and thus the richer, healthier and more conscious is the home environment of children, the higher will be their intelligence. Today, it is believed that preschool centers must be public and used to enrich the intelligence of children and develop their cognitive skills. Life and education environments of children must associate the context of comprehensive education. It shows the importance of paying attention to the quality of children learning environments that are home at the beginning and works in an effective and stable way to develop the cognitive skills of children and then preschool learning environments that will be responsible in completing home learning environments.

Enriched and motivating life and education environments during the childhood provide a very appropriate context to reveal the specific abilities of students. As the society and educational environments provide better conditions for different students, the development of their intelligence will increase (Lotfabadi 2012:191).

The results of table 5 show that the subtest of daily life skills and communication skills with most subscales of language development in children in questionnaires related to teacher shows a positive and significant relationship. And the sub tests of feeding and social skills (teacher form) in all sub tests of language development showed a positive and insignificant relationship. But in the form related to mothers, almost all relationships were insignificant. This difference shows the difference between the attitude and criteria of mothers and teachers in terms of studying these skills.

Also, Figures 5 and 6 show a significant relationship between social-emotional skills of children (according to mother and teacher forms) with language development.

The studies of Thompson and Raikes (2006), Mckown et. al., (2009), Nelson et. al., (2011), Kingston and Monopoli (2014), Yonggang et. al., (2015) Hatfield et. al., (2016), AkhavanTafti and Mousavi (2010), Mofrad (2011), Rostami (2011)

and Vahhab et. al., (2011) are all in line with the findings of the present study and showed the positive and significant relationship between social-emotional skills and language. As children gain some skills in the field of social-emotional skills, they also develop their language skills, problem solving, creative thinking, memory and abstract thinking (Burrington, Terri and Sliwowski 2001, cited in Nelson 2009).

Lieberman (1989) divided social interaction into a step process that each step needs a set of different skills. The first step of communication needs receptive skill that includes some skills for paying attention and understanding appropriate social information that exist in situations because the appropriate interpersonal behavior depends on situations, the appropriate social behavior depends so much on the appropriate recognition of interpersonal and environmental signs that guide us toward effective responses. The examples of receptive skills include the appropriate recognition of those who we interact with the appropriate recognition of feelings expressed by others. In fact, listening appropriately and understanding the personal objectives of the person who interacts with us. In the next step, we need processing skills. To be successful in interpersonal confrontation, we need to know what we want to gain and how we can gain it in the best possible way. The selection of some skills that are more effective in gaining close objectives needs the ability of problem solving in a regular and organized way. After the appropriate understanding of social information in relationship with situation (receptive skills) and identifying the necessary skills for interaction (processing skills), the skills must be used in a competent way to complete interpersonal exchanges successfully. The third step of communication needs the transmissive skills of real behaviors that are involved in social exchange. Transmissive skills include verbal content or whatever is expressed. A good communication needs appropriate social understanding (receptive skills) and the ability of cognitive planning (processing skills) before giving a response (effective behavior of transmissive skill). In general, one of the features of social-emotional skills is that people have a cognitive control on these skills. Thus, someone who has social skill shortage may have acquired the main elements of social skills but does not have the necessary intellectual processes to use these elements in his interactions (Harji et. al., 1994, cited in Migna). Thus, in explanation of the findings of the present study, it can be claimed that the sub test of social skill in the study of its questions can be considered as receptive skills that occur before the daily skills and communication skills and is not much dependent on language. In fact, it includes the main elements of social skills but they are not able yet to use these elements in their interactions in terms of cognitive and verbal ability.

On the other hand, in the explanation of the difference between the attitude of teachers and parents toward the status of social-emotional skills in children, the inappropriate expectations of parents from children, inappropriate definition of this skill and low information on social-emotional skills of children can be mentioned. Sometimes parents do not pay attention to these skills in children in a targeted

and conscious way or perhaps they do not find enough opportunity or necessary conditions to study these skills in different situations. On the other hand, the study of children's behavior in organized games is an appropriate method to find their social skills. The opportunity of this study can be found more in interaction outside the house in some environments like preschool centers and kindergartens next to other peers by educated and targeted teachers.

Many researchers like Thompson and Raikes (2006) consider social-emotional skill with cognitive and language skills as important conditions to enter the elementary school that are directly related to the success of children at school. Social-emotional skills will be very effective in communicative relationships with teachers and peers, self-regulation, and academic advancement in children in the future.

The studies have shown that the ability of children in recognizing emotional signs can help them with learning language especially extending and developing their words. In addition to the symbolic function of language, the interactive and communicative role of language helps with the verbal expression of feelings. Speaking about different emotions, causes, results and their sequences is effective in the assessment of the feelings of oneself and other (Boiger and Mesquita 2011).

Ruffman et. al., (2003) in a study showed a close relationship between the ability of language grammar in preschool and elementary school children and their emotional understanding. Language development and emotional competencies development are not independent from each other and have a close positive relationship with each other. Also, the degree of complexity in conversation of mother with her child has a positive relationship with knowledge development and emotional awareness of the child. In general, there is a complex relationship between language skills and social-emotional and cognitive development of children (Klann-Delius and Eid 2013:35).

The results of table 6 show that among the components of cognitive skills and language development of children, the relationship between cognitive intelligence and language development components including spoken language, listening, organizing, semantics and grammar was positive and significant and the relationship between verbal fluency and all components of language development was positive and significant. The research results show a significant relationship between the components of cognitive skills and language development of children that is in line with the findings of Genesee et. al., (1976), Bialystok (2008), Gharib (1984), Piruz et. al., (2008), and Razavi (2015) that refer to the relationship between cognitive intelligence and skill with language development.

The big development and evolution that occurs during the age of 5-6 in cognitive capacities of children has an important effect on language development of children. Bruner calls this period as sign step and believes that the unconscious activities of

breast feeding period and conceptual perceptions of pure subjectivism period for oedipal period provide the context for the occurrence of this important language step and children can think with the help of their language signs system.

Language can be considered as an inseparable part of cognition. Most conceptual structures are encoded by language (Evans and Green 2006). Thus, the symbolic function of language provides a close relationship between language and cognition in children (Klann-Delius and Eid 2013:31-45).

The development of thinking and language increases with more development of brain and complexity of brain abilities are extended in relationship with external stimuli and learning. However, if someone is deprived of these effects especially during the critical periods of language development, despite the physiological development of brain, the development of the abilities of brain hemispheres and language centers, their brain cortex will not be the same as normal people who enjoy the appropriate social environment. Different studies show that home, cultural and social environments of the person with this environment has a very important role in development of higher activities of brain and language skills (Lotfabadi 1986:14).

In explanation of the lack of significant relationship between cognitive skill and sub test of speaking, it can be mentioned that preschool children according to Piaget's theory, are usually more egocentric than bigger children, do not speak much related to the subject in their conversations and may provide the information that is not enough and this method of providing information is not much clear to the audience. Because they often think that the audience has no access to similar information as they have.

According to Figures 2 and 3 in relative intermediary model, the indirect effect of home and preschool environments on language development of children through social-emotional and cognitive skills of children was statistically significant ($p < 0/05$). This finding shows that language is dependent on all social factors and intelligence in a complex way. The children with language disorders may have problems in other different aspects. We know that language forms a part of reading, writing, calculating bases and also cognitive methods (Wicks-Nelson and Israel 1994).

Different studies show that different early experiences of children can predict difference in cognitive, social and language development and readiness to enter the school (Rodriguez and Tamis Lemonda 2011). Home environment has an effective role in spoken language development, speaking and listening of children. As caregivers use more words, children learn more. Sometimes parents ignore the grammatical mistakes of children at home and they even speak with the children in the same way. This issue is an encouraging factor to continue this way of speaking in children. In formal educational environments with special educational programs in this context and also during the communication with peers, a significant

improvement is obtained at the level of grammatical skills of children. Specifically the level of grammatical skills including grammatical understanding, sentence imitation, and grammatical completion is promoted. Piaget believed that children deal with language while playing with peers. It means that they learn what to say at different situations. According to him, language as the primary language of playing with peers is the fundamental factor of the formation of mental abilities in children (Muhammad Ismail Zadeh et. al., 2014).

In modern developed countries where the employment of women outside the house has become a social norm, children must be guided toward the centers in which a series of primary teachings must be used in order to develop them in terms of cognition and social behavior and be also an introduction for their better performance in academic affairs. Since the education of children is considered as one of the most important concerns of families, education authorities and even political men and preparing them to start the elementary school seems a very important task (Rouhi and Behnam 2013).

Holistic attitude considers the reinforcement of language and communication skills of children in form of fostering their total personality and is based on fostering all personality aspects of children. According to this principle, there is a strong relationship between the aspects of physical, social, cognitive and language development of children and they cannot be separated. In fact, to provide an optimum educational environment to reinforce the language and communication skills of preschool children, their language development must be considered according to a consecutive and integrated process and in this framework, teaching motor, social, cognitive and language skills must be organized (Zandi 2015:80). Some studies examined the effect of preschool periods on social-emotional and cognitive development and language skills of children for example Bowman, Donovan and Burns (2001), Wolfe and Scrivner (2003), Pakarian (1997), Mofidi and Sabzeh (2009) (cited in Rouhi and Behnam 2013) and according to the findings of the present study, this study emphasizes the necessity of qualitative and quantitative development of these periods.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The development of higher activities of brain, that language development is one of them, is one of the main objectives of education. In general, it should be said that the basic aim of education is fostering the people that have developed comprehensively and all their God-given talents have been flourished. The most important talent is related to higher activities of brain and for the realization of such a superior goal, the appropriate teaching of language abilities are needed. Thus, for achieving such a goal, our children must be equipped with different scientific, industrial, health, social, cultural, artistic and literary facilities (Lotfabadi 1986:71).

The cognitive and language development of children needs a stimulant and motivating environment. Unaware teachers and parents, inappropriate learning environment, lack of effective and useful interaction with children by parents and teachers, and many other factors that were discussed before can prevent the optimum and appropriate development of spoken language, social-emotional and cognitive skills. The results of the present study raise important necessities and requirements for micro and macro planning in the field of teaching different social-emotional skills and helping the development of cognitive and language skills in preschool children both in relationship with parents and home environment and also kindergartens and preschool centers. It is suggested to study the gender and age needs and differences of children in future studies because they may cause some changes in planning for two genders or different ages. However, some of the limitations of this study must be reminded such as: the limitation of the sample group to one city and even one specific region, lack of possibility to control some effective variables like the role of siblings and grandparents and also data collection by using limited tools and etc. perhaps a qualitative study beside these quantitative studies can increase the richness of the results.

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