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## Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology

Volume 36, January–February 2015, Pages 53-59

# Fathers' language input during shared book activities: Links to children's kindergarten achievement

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2014.11.009>

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### Highlights

- African American and Caucasian families were the focus of the study.
- We examine relations between paternal language input and child outcomes.
- Paternal language input predicted child outcomes in this study.

Abstract

The present study used data from the Family Life Project (FLP) to examine predictive relations between fathers' and mothers' language input during a wordless picture book task in the home just before kindergarten entry and children's letterâ€“word identification, picture vocabulary, and applied problems scores at the end of kindergarten. Fathers' and mothers' language input was defined as the number of different words and mean length of utterance and was measured using Systematic Analysis of Language Transcripts (SALT). Hierarchical regression analyses with demographic controls revealed that mothers' mean length of utterance predicted children's applied problems scores. More importantly, fathers' mean length of utterance predicted children's vocabulary and applied problems scores above and beyond mothers' language. Findings highlight the unique contribution of fathers to children's early academic achievement. Implications for future research, practice, and policy are discussed.



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## Keywords

Fathersâ€“child interactions; Motherâ€“child interactions; Language input; Kindergarten

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