

The Role of Family Background in English Language Proficiency: A Case Study of Students from Different Socioeconomic Statuses

Marina Lidya¹, Nanda Kristia Santoso², Risgar Friassantano³, Leona Patria Devi⁴

^{1,2,3}Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Pembangunan Tanjungpinang, Indonesia

⁴Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia

E-mail: marinalidya20@gmail.com¹, Nandamasda@gmail.com², Risgarfriassantano@gmail.com³, leonapatriadevi@uny.ac.id⁴

Article History:

Received: 21 April 2026

Revised: 02 Mei 2026

Accepted: 06 Mei 2026

Keywords: *socioeconomic status, parental education, language proficiency*

Abstract: *This study looked into how Tanjungpinang students' socioeconomic status (SES) and family background affected their ability to communicate in English. Twenty students from various socioeconomic backgrounds participated in the study, which used a mixed-methods approach at the Flink Course. Standardized English tests, interviews, and surveys were used to gather data. The results showed that students from higher SES families had better English proficiency, which was bolstered by easier access to educational materials, more educated parents, and more comfortable living conditions. Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, on the other hand, had to deal with a number of difficulties, such as poor study environments at home and little support for their education. The study emphasized how important home learning environments and parental education are in influencing language development. These findings highlight how urgently fair educational policies that give students from underprivileged backgrounds targeted help to close the language proficiency disparity.*

INTRODUCTION

English language competency is becoming more and more acknowledged as a vital ability for social, professional, and academic success in today's globalized society. Learning English gives you access to a wide range of opportunities, including social networking, career advancement, and higher education. But not every student has the same chance to become highly proficient in English. Family background is crucial in determining language acquisition results, and socioeconomic status (SES) has been found to be a significant determinant of students' English proficiency.

Linguistic specialists point out that early language development is promoted by the increased exposure to English that children from higher-SES families frequently receive from books, educational resources, and interactions with fluent speakers (Hoff, 2013). The "word gap" phenomenon is further supported by research by (Hart & Risley, 1995), which shows that children from wealthy families are exposed to a notably greater number of words and sophisticated linguistic structures than their peers from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Disparities in language skills, academic performance, and long-term educational success may result from this discrepancy. Thus, addressing SES-related language gaps through targeted educational interventions is critical to

ensuring more equitable language learning opportunities for all students (Snow, 2020). Furthermore, a parent's educational background has a significant impact on how their child learns to speak. (Fan & Chen, 2001) assert that "Parental involvement is a significant predictor of children's academic achievement." They may actively look for opportunities for their kids to interact with the language because they are frequently more conscious of how important it is to speak English. Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, on the other hand, might experience difficulties like restricted access to learning resources, a lack of parental support for their academic endeavours, and fewer chances for extracurricular language practice.

Previous studies have established a correlation between SES and academic achievement, particularly in language acquisition. For instance, research by (Hart & Risley, 1995) demonstrated that children from lower SES backgrounds are exposed to fewer words and less complex language structures, which can hinder their language development. Similarly, a study by (Sirin, 2005) found that SES significantly impacts academic performance across various subjects, including language proficiency. However, there remains a gap in the literature regarding the specific mechanisms through which family background influences English language proficiency, particularly in diverse cultural contexts.

SES includes a variety of factors such as family income, parental education, occupational status, and access to resources. Students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds are frequently exposed to a plethora of educational resources that can significantly improve their language learning outcomes. These resources may include private tutoring, language immersion programs, and a linguistically diverse home environment in which English is frequently spoken or used in a variety of contexts. According to (Bourdieu, 1986) "cultural capital" in the form of educational resources and linguistic exposure is critical for academic success, particularly language acquisition. Furthermore, (Putnam, 2000) argues that social capital, which includes networks and relationships that facilitate access to resources, has a significant impact on educational outcomes.

Language proficiency and its relationship with socioeconomic status is a global concern that has an impact on educational systems around the world. In many countries, the digital divide exacerbates these disparities because lower-income families often have limited access to technology and online learning resources. According to (Warschauer, 2003), access to technology is increasingly important in achieving educational equity. Furthermore, the popularity of English as a global language has increased demand for English proficiency. However, this situation raises serious concerns about educational equity and access, particularly among Tanjungpinang's students, as well as the long-term consequences for social mobility and economic development.

This study aims to investigate the role of family background in influencing English language proficiency among students from different SES backgrounds in the Flink course Tanjungpinang. Specifically, the research seeks to examine the relationship between parental education, income level, and students' performance in standardized English language tests. By analysing these factors, the research aims to shed light on the underlying mechanisms that contribute to disparities in language proficiency and to highlight the importance of addressing these inequalities in educational policy and practice. To guide this investigation, the following research questions will be addressed:

1. How does family socioeconomic status influence students' English language proficiency?
2. What role does parental education play in shaping students' language learning outcomes?

Understanding the impact of family background, particularly socioeconomic status, on English language proficiency is essential to foster an inclusive educational environment. By addressing the disparities that exist in language acquisition opportunities, we can help ensure that

all students, regardless of their background, have the chance to succeed in an increasingly interconnected world. This research not only contributes to the academic discourse on language learning but also serves as a call to action for stakeholders at all levels to prioritize equity in education and support the development of English language skills among all students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The link between family background, socioeconomic status (SES), and academic success has been widely studied, revealing a complex interplay of factors that influence students' educational outcomes. Many research studies have emphasized the substantial impact of family factors on students' performance across different academic areas, such as language development, mathematics, and science. For instance, children from higher SES families often benefit from greater access to educational resources, such as books, tutoring, and technology, which can enhance their learning experiences. Additionally, these families tend to provide a more stimulating home environment, characterized by rich verbal interactions and parental involvement in school-related activities, which fosters cognitive and linguistic development. Conversely, students from lower SES backgrounds may face challenges such as limited access to educational materials, unstable home environments, and fewer opportunities for extracurricular enrichment, all of which can hinder academic progress. Furthermore, parental education levels, which are closely tied to SES, play a critical role in shaping children's attitudes toward learning and their ability to navigate the educational system. Despite these disparities, interventions such as targeted educational programs, community support, and policy initiatives aimed at reducing socioeconomic inequalities have shown promise in mitigating the impact of family background on academic achievement. Thus, while family background and SES are significant predictors of academic success, they are not insurmountable barriers, and a combination of individual, familial, and societal efforts can help bridge the gap.

Socioeconomic Status and Academic Achievement

The impact of socioeconomic status (SES) on academic performance is well-established and has been extensively explored in educational research. Studies, such as those by Duncan and (Duncan & Murnane, 2011) highlight that children from higher-SES families generally perform better academically due to a combination of factors, including better access to educational resources, a more supportive home environment, and higher parental expectations. These families often have the financial means to provide their children with books, technology, tutoring, and enrichment activities, all of which contribute to enhanced learning opportunities. Additionally, higher-SES households tend to create environments that encourage intellectual curiosity and academic engagement, such as regular discussions about schoolwork, visits to museums, and participation in extracurricular programs. In contrast, children from lower-SES families often face significant barriers to academic success. These challenges include limited access to books, computers, and other learning tools, as well as fewer opportunities for extracurricular activities that foster skills like teamwork, creativity, and critical thinking. Moreover, lower-SES families may struggle with economic instability, which can lead to stress and reduced parental availability to support their children's education.

Bourdieu (1986) further contextualized these disparities through the concept of cultural capital, which refers to the non-financial assets such as knowledge, skills, and educational resources that families pass on to their children. Higher-SES families typically possess greater cultural capital, which manifests in ways that directly support academic achievement. For example, these families are more likely to expose their children to rich language environments, such as

regular reading sessions, engaging conversations, and exposure to diverse vocabulary, all of which are critical for language development. This early exposure to language and literacy not only enhances communication skills but also lays a strong foundation for success in other academic areas, such as reading comprehension and writing. In contrast, children from lower-SES families may have fewer opportunities to develop such skills, placing them at a disadvantage from an early age.

However, it is important to note that while SES and cultural capital play significant roles in shaping academic outcomes, they are not deterministic. Schools, communities, and policymakers can implement targeted interventions to address these disparities. For instance, providing access to free educational resources, offering after-school programs, and training teachers to recognize and support students from diverse backgrounds can help level the playing field. Furthermore, fostering partnerships between schools and families, regardless of SES, can create a more inclusive and supportive educational environment. By addressing the systemic inequities associated with SES and cultural capital, society can work toward ensuring that all children, regardless of their family background, have the opportunity to achieve academic success.

Parental Education and Language Proficiency

Parental education plays a crucial role in shaping children's language development, serving as a foundational element in their academic and cognitive growth. A landmark study by (Hart & Risley, 1995) demonstrated a clear link between parents' education levels and their children's vocabulary growth, highlighting the profound impact of early language exposure. Their findings revealed that children from highly educated families were exposed to a significantly richer vocabulary, with these children hearing millions more words by the age of three compared to their peers from less educated families. This early advantage in language exposure translates into stronger language skills, including better vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension, which are critical for academic success. Furthermore, highly educated parents are more likely to engage in complex and varied conversations with their children, fostering not only linguistic skills but also critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

In addition to verbal interactions, research suggests that parents with higher education levels are more likely to participate in educational activities with their children, such as reading together, discussing academic subjects, and assisting with homework (Snow, 2010). These activities create a stimulating learning environment that extends beyond the classroom, reinforcing the skills and knowledge children acquire at school. For example, shared reading sessions not only enhance literacy skills but also encourage a love for learning and curiosity about the world. Similarly, discussions about academic topics or current events help children develop academic language proficiency, which is characterized by the ability to understand and use formal, complex language structures. This proficiency is vital for success in school, as it enables children to comprehend textbooks, participate in classroom discussions, and excel in written assignments.

Moreover, highly educated parents often serve as role models for their children, demonstrating the value of education and lifelong learning. They are more likely to set high academic expectations and provide the necessary support to help their children meet these goals. This support can include creating a structured home environment, monitoring academic progress, and advocating for their children's needs within the school system. In contrast, children whose parents have lower levels of education may miss out on these opportunities, potentially leading to gaps in language development and academic readiness.

However, it is important to recognize that while parental education is a significant factor,

it is not the sole determinant of a child's language development. Schools, communities, and policymakers can play a pivotal role in bridging these gaps by providing resources and programs that support language development for all children, regardless of their family background. Initiatives such as early childhood education programs, literacy campaigns, and parent workshops can empower families to create language-rich environments at home. By addressing these disparities and fostering collaboration between families and educators, society can ensure that all children have the opportunity to develop the language skills necessary for academic and lifelong success.

Access to Resources and English Language Acquisition

Access to resources plays a crucial role in language development, as it significantly influences the quality and quantity of language exposure children receive. Children from higher socioeconomic status (SES) families often benefit from a greater variety of educational materials, such as books, computers, private tutors, and extracurricular programs that enhance language skills. For instance, those who enroll in language immersion programs, join after-school English clubs, or receive private tutoring tend to develop stronger language abilities. These resources not only provide structured learning environments but also expose children to rich vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and diverse cultural contexts, which are essential for advanced language acquisition. Additionally, higher SES families are more likely to engage in activities that promote language development, such as frequent reading sessions, educational travel, and participation in cultural events, further enriching their children's linguistic experiences.

In contrast, children from lower SES backgrounds may have fewer opportunities to access such resources. They might have limited access to books, technology, and extracurricular activities that support language learning, which can hinder their language proficiency (Reardon, 2011). For example, schools in low-income areas often lack well-stocked libraries, up-to-date technology, and specialized language programs. Moreover, parents in these households may have less time or fewer resources to invest in educational activities due to demanding work schedules or financial constraints. This disparity in resource availability can lead to a significant gap in language skills between children from different socioeconomic backgrounds, often referred to as the "language gap." Over time, this gap can affect academic performance, social interactions, and future career opportunities, perpetuating cycles of inequality. Addressing these disparities through targeted interventions, such as providing free access to books, technology, and language enrichment programs, is essential to ensure equitable language development for all children, regardless of their socioeconomic status.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study included 20 students from Flink Course in Tanjungpinang, ranging in age from 10 to 16 years old. The participants came from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds (Faiza,2023). They were categorized into three socioeconomic status (SES) groups based on their family income: low SES (annual income below Rp. 2,000,000), middle SES (annual income between Rp. 2,000,000 and Rp. 4,000,000), and high SES (annual income above Rp. 4,000,000).

A mixed-methods approach was employed to comprehensively gather both quantitative and qualitative data, ensuring a holistic understanding of the factors influencing students' English language learning. This approach allowed for the triangulation of data, enhancing the reliability and depth of the findings (Singh, 2017).

Surveys: To collect quantitative data, surveys were distributed to students and their parents.

These surveys were designed to capture detailed demographic information, including family income, parental education levels, and the availability of resources at home that could support English language learning. Specifically, the surveys inquired about access to English books, internet connectivity, and other educational materials. This data provided a foundational understanding of the socioeconomic and environmental contexts in which the students were learning English (Akol, 2024). To complement the survey data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of 20 students and 20 parents. These interviews were aimed at gaining deeper insights into the participants' personal experiences with learning English. The interviews explored how family background, including parental involvement and the home learning environment, influenced the students' language development. The qualitative data from these interviews offered rich, nuanced perspectives that helped to contextualize the quantitative findings, revealing the complexities and individual variations in the language learning process (Erdem & Kaya, 2020). Standardized English Proficiency Tests: To objectively assess the students' language abilities, standardized English proficiency tests were administered. These tests evaluated key language skills, including reading comprehension, writing, speaking, and grammar. The test scores served as the primary quantitative measure of language proficiency, providing a standardized metric to compare students' performance. This data was crucial for identifying patterns and correlations between students' language proficiency and the demographic and environmental factors captured in the surveys and interviews (Liang, 2022).

By integrating these diverse data collection methods, the study was able to provide a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing English language learning, offering both statistical insights and personal narratives that together painted a detailed picture of the students' experiences (Smith & Johnson, 2025).

The data collected in this study were analyzed using descriptive statistics to provide a general overview of the characteristics of the dataset. Descriptive statistical techniques were employed to measure central tendency and data dispersion through the calculation of mean, median, mode, range, and standard deviation. This analysis was conducted to categorize the data based on specific groupings, in this case, the socioeconomic status (SES) of students' parents.

The use of the descriptive statistics in the context of educational research aims to present general patterns in the student data prior to any further interpretation or inferential analysis. The data were organized in frequency distribution tables and supported with visual representations such as charts or graphs to facilitate clearer understanding of value distribution across SES categories.

For the qualitative data, thematic analysis was employed to analyse interview responses from participants (Smith & Johnson, 2025). This method involved a systematic process of coding and categorizing the data to identify recurring patterns and themes. The analysis focused on key areas such as family background, parental involvement in education, and access to educational resources. By examining these themes, the study aimed to uncover the underlying factors that might influence English language proficiency among students from different SES groups. The integration of both quantitative and qualitative data provided a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between socioeconomic status and language learning outcomes, highlighting not only statistical differences but also the contextual and experiential factors that contribute to these disparities (Smith & Johnson, 2025). This mixed-methods approach enriched the study's findings, offering a nuanced perspective on the complex interplay between SES and educational achievement.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION.**Influence of Parental Education**

Parental education was also closely tied to SES:

1. In the high SES group, most parents had a bachelor's or master's degree (30% of all parents).
2. In the middle SES group, parents mostly completed high school or held a diploma.
3. In the low SES group, most parents had only elementary or junior high education, and some had not finished primary school (40% of all parents).

This shows that higher parental education levels are more common in wealthier families and may lead to better academic outcomes for children. The result from interview said that students from well-educated families often benefit from a rich learning environment at home. These parents are more likely to:

1. Read with their children
2. Discuss books and ideas
3. Provide extra learning resources like tutoring or language classes

For example, one high SES student shared that their parents regularly discussed books with them, helping them think critically about stories and language.

On the other hand, students from low-income families often lack access to books and learning support. Some parents are too busy with work or lack the education to help with schoolwork. One student said their parents worked multiple jobs and had little time to assist with homework. Another mentioned that, while supportive, their parents didn't feel confident helping with English. These differences highlight how family background and home environment affect students' English skills.

In brief, Parental involvement and educational background play a big role in students' language learning. To close the gap, schools and communities need to support students from lower SES backgrounds by giving them more access to resources and learning opportunities. This ensures that every student has a fair chance to succeed.

Influence of Socioeconomic Status

the socioeconomic status (SES) of students' families was classified into three main categories based on monthly income, parents' occupations, and educational backgrounds. Families with a monthly income of Rp 4,000,000 or more were grouped under high SES. Those earning between Rp 2,000,000 and Rp 4,000,000 were categorized as middle SES, while families with an income of Rp 2,000,000 or less fell into the low SES category.

Out of the 20 students involved in the study, 5 students (25%) came from high SES families, 7 students (35%) from middle SES backgrounds, and 8 students (40%) from low SES households.

The results revealed a clear pattern: students from high SES families consistently outperformed their peers across all components of the English proficiency test, including grammar, reading comprehension, writing, and speaking. This performance advantage can be linked to the greater access these students have to educational resources. Many of them benefit from a rich learning environment that includes books, computers, internet access, and online learning tools. They are also more likely to receive support from private tutors, use language-learning apps, and join extracurricular activities such as debate clubs or writing workshops. Some students even attend international schools or go on educational trips abroad, which further enhance their English skills and broaden their cultural understanding.

In contrast, students from low SES families often face significant challenges that affect

their learning. Many reported having limited or no access to basic study materials such as books or computers. Quiet study spaces at home were rare, with some students sharing one textbook with siblings or studying in noisy and crowded environments. These conditions made it difficult to complete homework or prepare for tests. Additionally, many parents in low SES households work long hours or multiple jobs, leaving little time or energy to support their children's education. One student shared that their mother, a single parent working night shifts, was rarely available to help with homework or attend school events. The lack of academic support at home, combined with fewer extracurricular opportunities, often results in lower English proficiency among these students.

This contrast between high and low SES groups highlights the powerful influence of family background on educational outcomes. While high SES students benefit from supportive, resource-rich environments, low SES students face obstacles that can limit their potential.

To bridge this gap, it is essential to implement targeted support programs. These might include providing free or subsidized educational materials, setting up community learning centers, and offering mentorship or after-school programs for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. By ensuring that all students have access to the tools and support they need, regardless of their economic status, we can work towards creating a more equitable education system—one where every child has the opportunity to succeed and reach their full potential in English learning and beyond.

Influence of Home Environment

The home environment is an important factor that influences a student's academic performance. In this study, aspects such as learning facilities at home, parental involvement, and access to educational resources were observed and categorized based on the students' socio-economic status (SES)

1. High SES (5 students)
 - a. All students had access to quiet study space at home
 - b. Each had a personal desk, books, stable electric, and internet connection
 - c. Parents were actively involved in academic supervision (e.g. checking homework, communicating with teachers).
 - d. Students had access to additional learning support, such as private tutoring.

This condition showed that the home environments were well-equipped and conducive to learning, with high levels of parental support.

2. Middle SES (7 students)
 - a. Most student has a shared study space with siblings or in common areas.
 - b. Basic learning tools such as notebooks and textbooks were available, but fewer had access to laptops or stable internet
 - c. Parental involvement was present but varied: some parents were supportive, others were limited by work commitments
 - d. Only 2 students received external tutoring

This condition showed that learning conditions were moderately supportive, but access to learning technology was limited.

3. Low SES (8 students)
 - a. Students often lacked a dedicated study space and shared small, noisy living areas
 - b. Limited access to textbooks, no laptops or internet connection at home
 - c. Parents showed low involvement in learning activities, often due to limited education or

work-related exhaustion

d. None of the students received private tutoring or learning support outside school.

This condition showed that the home environments in this group were generally less conducive to effective learning, with limited resources and low parental academic engagement. The data show a clear relationship between SES and the quality of the home learning environment. Students from high SES backgrounds benefited from better facilities and more academic support, while those from low SES backgrounds faced various barriers that could negatively impact academic achievement. These findings highlight the importance of addressing educational inequality beyond the classroom.

The home environment played a crucial role in students' language development, with significant differences observed between high- and low-socioeconomic status (SES) families. Students from high-SES families often benefited from a structured and supportive setting that fostered academic achievement. These households typically provided quiet, dedicated study spaces, access to educational resources such as books and computers, and consistent parental involvement in their children's education. Parents in high-SES families were more likely to engage in activities like reading together, discussing academic topics, and encouraging critical thinking, all of which contributed to their children's language proficiency. Additionally, high-SES families often prioritized extracurricular activities, such as language classes or cultural events, which further enriched their children's exposure to English (Dailey & Bergelson, 2021).

In contrast, students from low-SES backgrounds frequently faced numerous distractions at home, including noise, limited space, and minimal parental involvement in their education. Many of these students lacked access to basic resources like books, computers, or even a quiet place to study, which are essential for effective learning. One student from a low-SES family shared that they struggled to concentrate on homework due to constant noise from younger siblings and the absence of a dedicated study area. This student also mentioned that their parents, who worked long hours to support the family, were often too exhausted to provide academic guidance or attend school meetings. Another student recounted how they had to share a single textbook with siblings, making it difficult to complete assignments on time. These challenges created an environment that was not conducive to learning, making it more difficult for low-SES students to develop proficiency in English.

The stark contrast between the home environments of high- and low-SES students underscores the profound impact of socioeconomic factors on language development (Hill & Tyson, 2009). While high-SES students thrived in resource-rich and supportive settings, low-SES students often struggled with systemic barriers that hindered their academic progress. Addressing these disparities requires targeted interventions, such as providing free or subsidized educational resources, creating community learning centres, and offering mentorship programs to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Dailey & Bergelson, 2021). By addressing these challenges, educators and policymakers can help level the playing field and ensure that all students, regardless of their socioeconomic status, have the opportunity to achieve their full potential in English proficiency and beyond (OECD, 2023).

Students Test Scores

Descriptive statistics were calculated based on students' English proficiency scores, grouped by parental socioeconomic status (SES): High, Middle, and Low. Each group's mean, median, mode, range, and standard deviation were analysed:

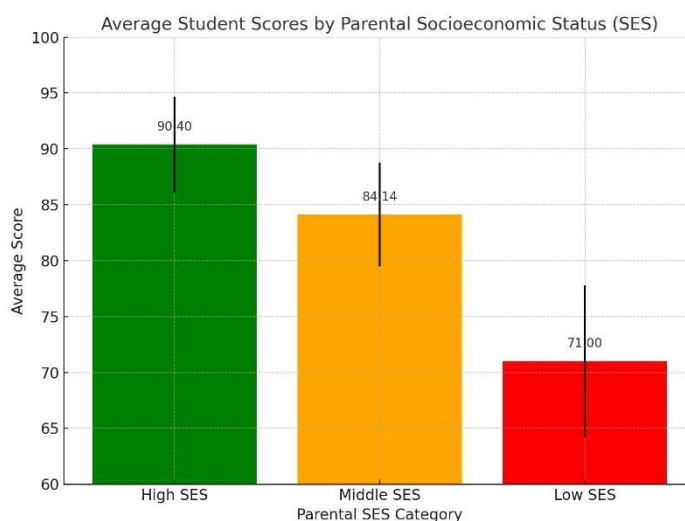


Figure 1. Average Students Scores

This figure clearly shows a clear link between students' socioeconomic status (SES), their parents' education levels, and their English proficiency scores.

1. High SES students had the highest average score (90.4) and the least score variation (SD = 4.27).
 2. Middle SES students had a lower average (84.14) and slightly more variation (SD = 4.65).
 3. Low SES students had the lowest average score (71) and the highest variation (SD = 6.77).
- The results show a clear pattern: students from higher SES backgrounds had higher average scores and less variation, while those from lower SES groups had lower average scores and more variation.

In the High SES group, 60% scored 90–100 and 40% scored 80–89, with no scores below 80. In the Middle SES group, 14.3% scored 90+, 57.1% scored 80–89, and 28.6% scored 70–79. In the Low SES group, 12.5% scored 80–89, 37.5% scored 70–79, and 50% scored below 70. No students scored above 90. Overall, the data suggest that higher SES is associated with better academic performance, while lower SES students are more likely to face academic challenges.

The results of this study emphasize the important impact of family background, particularly socioeconomic status (SES), on students' English language proficiency. Students from higher socioeconomic status (SES) families benefited from greater access to educational resources, stronger parental support, and a more supportive home environment for learning, all of which contributed to their higher English proficiency. The findings also emphasize the unequal access to resources and the difficulties encountered by students from low-SES backgrounds. These students frequently face challenges in building strong language skills due to insufficient resources and limited support at home. This highlights the need for targeted interventions to reduce the disparity between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Education policies designed to close the achievement gap should prioritize increasing access to educational resources such as books, technology, and language support programs for students from low-SES families. Schools can also be instrumental in providing after-school tutoring programs and additional resources to support students in enhancing their English proficiency.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significant influence of family background, particularly socioeconomic status (SES), on students' English language proficiency. Research consistently indicates that students from higher SES families have greater access to educational resources, extracurricular activities, and parental support, all of which contribute to their stronger language skills. Children from affluent backgrounds often grow up in language-rich environments where they are exposed to a higher quantity and quality of language input, which enhances their vocabulary, syntax, and overall communication abilities.

Conversely, students from lower SES backgrounds encounter multiple barriers that hinder their language development. These challenges include limited access to books and learning materials, fewer opportunities for stimulating conversations, and reduced exposure to enriching experiences that encourage language use. Studies have shown that children from low-income families hear significantly fewer words from their parents compared to their higher-income peers, leading to what researchers call the "30 million-word gap" by the age of four. This difference in language exposure can have long-term effects on their academic success and language acquisition.

Beyond resource limitations, the effects of low SES also extend to emotional and psychological stressors linked to poverty. Children from disadvantaged families may experience heightened stress and instability at home, negatively impacting their cognitive development and ability to learn languages. According to the family stress model, financial hardship can increase parental stress, leading to less effective parenting and fewer nurturing interactions, both of which are essential for language development.

To promote educational equity, it is crucial to address these disparities and implement targeted interventions that support language development for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Strategies such as improving parental engagement, expanding access to quality early childhood education, and developing community resources that create language-rich environments can be highly beneficial. Additionally, schools can play a key role by offering tailored language support services, including after-school tutoring and specialized intervention programs designed to meet the needs of low-SES students. By taking these measures, we can help close the achievement gap and ensure that all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background, have the opportunity to develop strong language skills.

REFERENCES

- Akol, A.. (2024). Socioeconomic status and its impact on language development in preschool children in South Sudan. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 5(1), 44–55. <https://doi.org/10.47604/ijl.2630>
- Bourdieu, Pierre. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). Greenwood Press.
- Dailey, S., & Bergelson, Erika. (2021). Language input to infants of different socioeconomic statuses: A quantitative meta-analysis. *Developmental Science*, 24(6), Article e13192. <https://doi.org/10.1111/desc.13192>
- Duncan, Greg J., & Murnane, Richard J. (Eds.). (2011). *Whither opportunity? Rising inequality, schools, and children's life chances*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Erdem, C., & Kaya, M. (2020). A meta-analysis of the effect of parental involvement on students' academic achievement. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 20(7), 367–383.
- Fan, X., & Chen, M. (2001). Parental involvement and students' academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 13(1), 1–22.

<https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1009048817385>

- Hart, Betty, & Risley, Todd R. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing.
- Hill, N. E., & Tyson, D. F. (2009). Parental involvement in middle school: A meta-analytic assessment of the strategies that promote achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 101(3), 740–763. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015362>
- Hoff, Erika. (2013). Interpreting the early language trajectories of children from low-SES and language minority homes: Implications for closing achievement gaps. *Developmental Psychology*, 49(1), 4–14. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0027238>
- Liang, D. (2020). *Addressing the gap between standardized tests and language proficiency* (Master's thesis). University of Pittsburgh.
- Munir, J., Faiza, M., Jamal, B., Daud, S., & Iqbal, K. (2023). The impact of socio-economic status on academic achievement. *Journal of Social Sciences Review*, 3(2), 695–705. <https://doi.org/10.54183/jssr.v3i2.308>
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2023). *Equity and inclusion in education*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/e9072e21-en>
- Putnam, Robert D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. Simon & Schuster.
- Reardon, Sean F. (2011). The widening academic achievement gap between the rich and the poor: New evidence and possible explanations. In G. J. Duncan & R. J. Murnane (Eds.), *Whither opportunity? Rising inequality, schools, and children's life chances* (pp. 91–116). Russell Sage Foundation.
- Singh, K. K. (2017). The impact of socioeconomic status on student achievement: A longitudinal study. *International Journal of Innovative Research in Technology*, 3(8), 483–490.
- Sirin, Selcuk R. (2005). Socioeconomic status and academic achievement: A meta-analytic review of research. *Review of Educational Research*, 75(3), 417–453. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543075003417>
- Snow, Catherine E. (2020). *Language and literacy development: What educators need to know*. Harvard Education Press.
- Warschauer, Mark. (2003). *Technology and social inclusion: Rethinking the digital divide*. MIT Press.