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## HURDLES TO LANGUAGE GROWTH: STIMULATION OF LANGUAGE LEARNING THROUGH READING IN A SOUTH AFRICAN RURAL PRIMARY SCHOOL

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### ABSTRACT

Early after birth, children begin to learn how to interact with their peers. They advance from a rudimentary understanding of what others are doing to communicate and interact with others in a reciprocal manner that entails both cooperation and conflict. Children begin to build their first friendships and unique peer interactions by the age of three years. According to the theory that the interactions between children and their caregivers establish a foundation for language development, language is an essential social tool. This study explores the impact of reading instruction on language development in a rural primary school in the Eastern Cape. Using a qualitative approach, we examined how structured reading programs stimulate language acquisition among young learners. The study will use 20 practitioners from the rural outskirts of South Africa. This research highlights the challenges and successes experienced by educators and students in this context, emphasizing the role of reading in enhancing vocabulary, comprehension, and overall communication skills. These findings suggest that targeted reading interventions can significantly improve language proficiency and offer valuable insight into educational strategies in similar rural settings. Further findings suggest that while reading instruction contributes positively to language development, significant barriers related to resources, teacher training, and home language diversity complicate its effectiveness. The paper concludes with recommendations for improving literacy education in rural contexts, emphasizing the need for culturally responsive materials, and continuous teacher professional development.

**Keywords:** Simulation, Language acquisition, Learning, Rural, Reading