Engagement differences for 2-year-olds identified as late talkers

Brianna Hendrickson
*University of Nebraska at Omaha*, bhendrickson@unomaha.edu

Shari L. DeVeney
*University of Nebraska at Omaha*, sdeveney@unomaha.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/spedfacproc

Part of the First and Second Language Acquisition Commons, and the Special Education and Teaching Commons

Please take our feedback survey at: https://unomaha.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8cchtFmpDyGfBLE

**Recommended Citation**


This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders at DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Special Education and Communication Disorders Faculty Proceedings & Presentations by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.
Research Questions
• Receptive language delay & engagement
- Role of comprehension in engagement between TDs, no significant
- When LTs (26 and 36 months) compared with 5-month younger
- Engagement focused on objects rather than people may be

Engagement Differences for 2-year-olds Identified as Late Talkers

Background
Late Talkers (LTs):
• Two to three year olds with < 50 words; no/few 2-word phrases
• Not secondary to other conditions (e.g., Autism Spectrum Disorder)
• Approximately 10-15% of 2-year-olds (Rescorla & Dale, 2013)

Two Subgroups:
• Expressive-only (EO) = Receptively intact
• Expressive-Receptive (ER) = Receptive language delay present

Engagement:
• Role of control attention to explore & interact with social partners; follow attentional state of others; maintain attention to a
• Social context through onlooking, with an interactive partner, or

Late Talkers (LTs):
• Typically developing peers compared with EO LTs:
  - TD toddlers exhibited more engagement than late talkers at 18 months, but not at 30 months
  - Engaged focused on objects rather than people may be
  - Sign of development immaturity (Adamson et al., 2004)
• When LTs (26 and 36 months) compared with 5-month younger
• No significant attentional differences found (Vuksanovic & Bijaek, 2013)

EO LTs compared with ER LTs:
• To date, no researchers have investigated potential differences
• Role of comprehension: Potential association between

Method
Participants (n = 12); Ages 2;0 months to 2;9 months (M: 2;3; SD: 2.906); TD (n = 3); EO LT (n = 5); ER LT (n = 4)
• Combined archival data set (DeVeney, 2012; DeVeney, Cress, & Reid, 2014); engagement
coded in 15-second increments for all experimental sessions including baseline,
• Video-recorded & transcribed independently by faculty advisor, undergraduate student
• Four additional undergraduate student reliability coders

Types of Engagement (adapted from Adamson et al., 2004):
• Unengaged: Uninvolved with specific social partner, object, or activity
• Onlooking: Onlooking or parent activity, but not taking part
• Person Engaged: Involved solely with research/parent as social partner
• Object Engaged: Playing with objects alone (e.g., toys, picture symbols)

Inter-Rater Reliability: M = 88% Agreement; Range = 83%-95% Agreement

Results
• Kruskal-Wallis H test: Nonparametric, selected to compare k independent groups
Engaged vs. Unengaged:
• Not significant, (χ²(2) = 1.450, p = .484).
• However, distributions not similar; increased from EO LTs (mean rank = 7.80), to ER LTs
(mean rank = 6.25), to TD peers (mean rank = 4.67).

Differences in Type of Engagement:
• Not significant, (χ²(2) = 6.28, p = .731); however, decreased from TD group (mean rank =
7.67) to EO LTs (mean rank = 6.60), to ER LTs (mean rank = 5.50).
• Person: (χ²(2) = 4.72, p = .478); however, decreased from TD group (mean rank =
4.33) to ER LT group (mean rank = 7.00), to EO LTs (mean rank = 7.40).
• Object: (χ²(2) = 3.364, p = .186); however, increased from TD group (mean rank = 3.33),
to EO LTs (mean rank = 7.00), to ER LTs (mean rank = 8.25).

Conclusions
Consistent with previous findings for TD & EO LT groups:
• No significant engagement differences
• No significant differences in type of engagement (2-year-olds)

Engagement differences not likely to explain differences across
language ability proficiencies; however, ER LTs demonstrated more
object engagement than other two participant groups

Clinical Significance
• Children with different language proficiencies may present different
• Likely that ER LTs will be less engaged in therapeutic activities
than EO peers, but may pay more attention to objects

Limitations and Future Directions
• Small n; allow results of one participant to potentially skew data;
• Replication of the study with a larger group comparison
• Extend data coding into nuanced Adamson et al. (2004) categories

Selected References

Bakeman, R., & Adamson, L.B. (1994). Coordinating attention to people and objects in

Rescorla, L. & Dale, P. (2013). Late talkers: Language development, interventions, and

Vuksanovic, J., & Bijaek, J. (2013). Developmental relationship between language and joint
attention in late talkers. Research in Developmental Disabilities, 34, 2360-2368.

Acknowledgements
This project was funded through the Fund for Undergraduate Scholarly Experiences (FUSE)
grant awarded to the first author. The authors would like to acknowledge the children and their
families who participated as well as Alison Baum, Sarah Noetzel, Jana Steiner, and Katherine
Witter for their assistance coding the data set with the Toddler Communication Lab.

Home