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# Television's Effects on Speech and Language: The Parent's Perspective

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The University of Southern Mississippi

Television's Effects on Speech and Language:  
The Parent's Perspective

by

Hillary Fortenberry

A Thesis

Submitted to the Honors College  
of The University of Southern Mississippi  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Bachelor of Arts  
in the Department of Speech-Language Pathology

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## **Abstract**

*Purpose:* This study focuses on an area seldom studied, the parent's perception of television's influence on their speech and language disordered child's receptive and expressive skills. Understanding the parent's perspective on specific effects television has on speech and language development can be valuable by providing educators and child caretakers with answers as to why parents allow their children to watch television. With this knowledge, parents can be educated as to what type of programming and to what extent viewing should be allowed for children to gain positive speech and language outcomes from their television viewing experience.

*Method:* This study gathered data through surveys completed by parents of children with speech and language disorders. Descriptive statistics with all dependent and independent variables along with a series of MANOVAs and ANOVAs were conducted.

*Results:* Results indicated significantly favorable perceptions of television's impact on expressive and receptive speech and language skills found with parents who: possessed a high school level education, allowed their children to watch more than two hours of unsupervised television, and reported their speech and language disordered child as the youngest in the family.

*Conclusions:* Parents tend to have more positive perceptions of television's influence on expressive and receptive skills for their younger children. Parents who possess positive perceptions of television tend to allow their children to watch more television unsupervised than parents who do not share these positive perceptions.

**Keywords:** television, speech, language, parents, perceptions, expressive, receptive

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Television continues to be a leading source of information in today's society for all age groups of people. While television used to be, and perhaps still is by some, viewed as a taboo method for learning, it has stood the test of time and proven itself as here to stay. Whether thoughts on this subject are good, bad, or indifferent, it is nevertheless a topic one is bound to come across as television use becomes more prevalent in today's world.

One evolution of the television, besides going from black and white to color screens, is the type of programming being produced and the age groups which these programs are targeting. One of the primary concerns is the effect television has on children, as shows are being geared toward children of younger and younger ages. Christakis (2009) did a review article about the effects of television on language development and reported that in 1971, the age that children started watching television was around four years old. Today that number has dropped significantly to five months of age; this number raises quite a concern given that the American Academy of Pediatrics discourages any television use for those younger than two years (Anderson & Pempek, 2005).

Television is present in nearly all aspects of children's lives, ranging from entertainment in the home to education in the classroom; and while some research has been conducted to determine its various effects on children, little research has been done to determine how parents view television in terms of their child's development. Because parents are the primary caretakers of their children and control most of their environment,

it is crucial to learn how parents manage their children's television viewing habits and their reasons for doing so.

In one study it was determined that if no interactive play was present during television viewing, onset of viewing was younger than twelve months of age, viewing time was greater than two hours, and the majority of the content was considered adult programming, chances were significantly increased for the child to have a language delay (Chonchaiya & Pruksananonda, 2008) . However, a separate study by Kendeou, Lynch, van den Broek, Espin, White, & Kremer (2005) suggested that comprehension skills could be learned from television viewing before being able to read. What are parents believing and enforcing for their children as far as watching television?

Gaining insight into the parent's way of thinking will be important for guiding future research. New knowledge can also help improve educational information for parents regarding television use along with age appropriate viewing time and the type of programming proven effective for learning.

This study will focus on surveying parents of children with speech and language disorders, a population rarely studied in the realm of television research. In addition to guiding research and educating parents, some information generated with this study could be utilized to compliment past research related to television's influence on language development.

Learning specific effects of television on language development can be beneficial for many reasons. One reason is to provide educators and parents with knowledge of what type of programming and to what extent viewing should be allowed for children to



gain positive language outcomes from their television viewing experience. Conducting this study with parents of children with speech and language disorders will be advantageous for a future comparison with parents of children without speech and language disorders.

Results of this study will be obtained through a survey that primarily focuses on the parents' perceptions about television and how it directly affects their child's speech and language development. Additional demographic questions are included on the survey to gain background information about the children and their viewing habits. Descriptive statistics with all dependent and independent variables along with a series of Multivariate and Univariate analysis were conducted.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite controversial debate and varied opinions on the matter, television use is a growing trend in today's society. From adult viewing in the home all the way down to child viewing in daycare centers, television is a rapidly growing source of information and entertainment for society today. The question remains, does television viewing bring about positive or negative effects? Much research has been conducted in hopes of answering this question, especially in terms of the effects it has on children. However, little research has been done on *why* television use has been on the rise, particularly with preschool, school-aged, and speech-language disordered populations. The current study seeks to answer the question of whether television has a positive or negative impact on child speech and language development by gaining insight from parents on how they utilize television and how that use may affect their children. Being that parents are the primary caregivers for their children, it is crucial to determine their views and opinions on this matter to gain a better understanding of television's influence on children.

In addition, this study yields new information to the field of television research by focusing on the rarely studied speech and language disordered population. One of the major topics in the television debate is its effects on language development. This study will add a unique perspective to the research world by focusing on how the parents of this specific group perceive television use as a whole, and by learning how they believe it

affects their children in terms of learning and using language. This will serve to guide future research and aid in better education to the parents and other caretakers of children.

### **Television Viewing at a Young Age**

One of the most controversial topics regarding television is the amount of programming that is now being targeted to infants and toddlers who are under two years of age. In 1999 the American Academy of Pediatrics released a statement discouraging the use of television with children who are under two years of age, and yet programming is continually being produced and targeted for infants and toddlers (Anderson & Pempek, 2005). While it does seem that children younger than two years attend to television (Krcmar, Grela, & Lin, 2007), the influence and to what extent children learn from viewing television are still debated among scholars today. Since the 1990s, when infant and toddler media first emerged (Anderson & Pempek, 2005), this issue has seen more research.

Most findings have supported the proclamation that television viewing at a young age results in negative effects on children. Programs such as *Sesame Street* have been shown to have positive influences on older children aged three to five; however, this program has also been shown to have the opposite effect on children younger than two (Linebarger & Walker, 2005). An additional study conducted in Thailand by Chonchaiya and Pruksananonda (2008) revealed that when viewing time was more than two hours per day before twelve months of age, the child had a six times greater chance of having a language delay.

While most scholars agree that television viewing before two years of age produces negative outcomes, young viewing is still prevalent in today's society as evident by the large popularity of infant shows and DVDs. In addition, the American Academy of Pediatrics also discourages television viewing among children younger than two years of age (Anderson & Pempek, 2005). Certain and Kahn (2002) reported that the following percentages of age groups were found to watch television: 17% of birth to 11 month-olds, 48% of 12 to 23 month-olds, and 41% of 24-35 month-olds. These findings indicate that the recommendation from the American Academy of Pediatrics is not being completely followed by parents. It may also suggest that there is a need for better education concerning the influences of television provided to parents and caregivers.

Why do parents continue to expose infants to television, as indicated by the existing market of television entertainment available for infants? Perhaps this is because discouraging television exposure to infants below two years of age is one of the "least likely" recommendations to be made by pediatricians regarding the American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines. Although few pediatricians disagreed with this particular recommendation, it was viewed as unrealistic due to lack of parental involvement or support and a sense of uselessness in modifying the patient's viewing habits (Gentile, Oberg, Sherwood, Story, Walsh, & Hogan, 2004).

### **Television and Education**

Infants and toddlers aren't the only ones receiving attention in the realm of television viewing outcomes. The idea of utilizing television as a resource for learning is being examined for school-aged children as well, with the debate being just as

controversial. The positions on television use for educational purposes vary greatly with many factors contributing to its effectiveness. For instance, findings suggest that comprehension skills can be developed before a child can read through non-reading contexts, such as television. This early learned skill of comprehension through a non-reading medium was found to support later reading comprehension (Kendeou, Lynch, Van den Broek, Espin, White, & Kremer, 2005). However, opposite views of television are also expressed by some with reports of television viewing contributing to less reading activity and to behavioral problems (Hess & Goldman, 1962).

One element most scholars agree on, regarding the use of television for educational purposes, is that the type of programming is essential in terms of positive or negative outcomes. A recent study by Okuma & Tanimura (2009) determined that preference for “realistic short animation,” “realistic feature-length animation,” and “baby education” videos were related to delayed language development. The “realistic short animation” is classified as having realistic and detailed animation with video length being less than ninety minutes, such as *Bambi*. The “realistic feature-length animation” includes realistic and detailed animation with video length being ninety or more minutes, such as *My Neighbor Totoro*. Finally, the “baby education” category includes videos to educate children in foreign language and/or figures starting at zero years of age; no example was given. These types of programs all demonstrated fewer scenes with characters directly facing viewers and continual changing images. These tend to be negative attributes because the lack of interaction in these types of programs might lead to passive viewing, and the continual changing images might lead to continuous viewing for longer periods of time (Okuma & Tanimura, 2009).

Another study by Jennings, Hooker, and Linebarger (2009) investigated positive outcomes from television focusing on a specific program titled, *Between the Lions*. With this program's use of word play, manipulation of word parts, segmenting, and blending of individual words, all children involved in the study improved both their oral language and code-related skills. This was even true for a child with delayed speech and language skills who drastically improved skills over the four week study period (Jennings et al., 2009). Considering that most children enjoy watching television, this is promising in showing that when used correctly, television can hold an educational experience for children.

More positive aspects of television include that it is highly motivating for children and can be used with a large group in the classroom or also in the home environment. The utilization of a learning medium such as television may also be beneficial to children in providing an alternative way of learning that does not rely solely on verbal skills but on visual abilities as well (Kendeou, Lynch, Van den Broek, Espin, White, & Kremer, 2005).

In a recent study by Zimmerman, Gilkerson, Richards, Christakis, Dongxin, Gray and Yapanel (2009), it was suggested that adult-child conversation plays a significant role in the positive or negative language development of a child. It was found that turn-taking with adult-child conversations can either be inhibited or facilitated by television viewing. If the television programming restricts parent-child conversation then it is thought to have an adverse effect on language development (Zimmerman et al., 2009). Therefore it stands to reason that if the television content elicits rather than inhibits parent-child conversation, it would not have this adverse effect on language.

Another study conducted by Krcmar, Grela, and Lin (2007) investigated if young children learned better from an adult speaker on television, a television program targeting toddlers, an adult in vivo (live presentation), or an adult in vivo with a distraction present. Results were based on the child's ability to name a novel word after the teaching period of each group. Results did not support the original hypothesis predicting that children would pay more attention to children's programming rather than an adult on screen; instead it showed that children were more likely to attend to an on-screen adult speaker rather than children's programming. Furthermore, the child was less likely to learn from children's programming if he or she was very young and had a small vocabulary. In short, it was concluded that all children learn better from an adult whom they are attending, and to a certain extent it makes no difference if the adult is in vivo or on television.

All of these findings stand to suggest that television can be used to constitute to learning if certain elements are present to facilitate learning. For instance, in a study conducted by Linebarger and Walker (2005), it was suggested that programs containing characters that speak directly to the audience (child), enthusiastically promote participation, label objects, and provide possibilities for response positively associates with production of expressive language and vocabulary. Examples of this type of programming include *Blue's Clues* and *Dora the Explorer*. Other characteristics that tend to lead to positive language outcomes are programs with strong narratives that are visually engaging and provide vocabulary words with their definitions. Examples of this type of programming are *Arthur*, *Clifford*, and *Dragon Tales*. (Linebarger & Walker

2005). Thus, parents should be educated on these facts and encouraged to promote this type of programming to their children.

### **Television: The Parent's View**

Despite all of the controversy over television being good or bad, one thing remains the same; children and parents alike still spend a considerable amount of time watching it. This raises the question of how do parents feel television influences their child. Do they believe it brings mostly negative effects or is watching television perceived as fun and educational for their child to partake in? This is a topic that is not often focused on, especially in the speech and language disordered population. However, this information is vital in understanding deeply how television is affecting young people.

An interesting study conducted by Hess and Goldman in 1962 was one of the first of its kind in exploring a “relatively unexamined” topic of the time. The primary focus was on mothers and their impression of television’s influence on their children and how this impression affected their tendency to monitor and control their child’s viewing. This study discovered that the image of television was seen as a source that ranged from educational to causing nightmares. It is interesting to note that the thought of educational television was even considered in those days when practically no programs watched by the children were considered educational. Some parental thoughts related to television also included the fear of addiction as demonstrated from taking time away from activities which were perceived as more productive (e.g., reading, outdoor related



pastimes). Another interesting finding was the use of television as a babysitter. This was found to be an especially important factor by the mothers of young children.

A second note from Hess and Goldman was the reading of the mother's views on television as related to the amount of time their children watched television. Mothers reported that children who watched television "a great deal" were thought of in the most negative terms with characteristics such as "lonely," "shy," and "listless." The child who watched television "frequently" was shadowed in less negative terms such as "active" and "has friends," but yet also shadowed as "irritable" and "unable to concentrate." The child who watched television "seldom" was cast in the most positive terms, such as "happy," "obedient," and "healthy" (Hess & Goldman, 1962; p.415)

Another aspect examined in this study was whether mothers regulated and monitored their child's viewing habits in terms of time and content. The data collected suggested that, for the most part, children controlled the amount of time they watched television with the exception of parents establishing bedtime which coincided with turning off the television. And although the mothers usually said they were informed on the programs and content of what their children watched, seldom did they actually choose or prohibit certain programs.

Another interesting aspect of how mothers viewed television was concentrated on who was most qualified to determine the effects of television and its content on children. The general consensus was that the mothers themselves were best qualified to determine what was in the best interest of their children. Some comments made regarding this issue were paraphrased as follows:

As a mother I know my own child better than anybody else and know what is best for him; his father knows him but not as well as I do because he doesn't spend as much time with him,..., the psychiatrist knows about a small group of deviant children but knows little more than the layman about typical children, the college professor is in his ivory tower and knows nothing about children,..., children are too young to know what is best for them. (Hess & Goldman, 1962; p.421)

This information raises the question, how do parents view television today? Has their view changed at all or is it still relatively similar to the 1960s? Knowing how their view has changed over the years would be useful for many reasons. For example, knowing parental perceptions on how television viewing has evolved would be beneficial to learning how the education of parents on the use of television has adjusted with new findings over the years. If parents, mothers in particular, in the present day still feel that they know best for their child (and not a scholarly researcher) then that is a possible reason for the proven disregard of no television use for children under two years of age (Christakis, 2009), which is a concept that was established by researchers.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to determine how parents of speech and language disordered children view television in terms of the educational impact on their child, particularly examining speech and language use and understanding. This is a population that is rarely studied. This study also seeks to gain perspective of how parents view television and its general impact on their child. It is crucial to determine how parents perceive television in order to further explain increased utilization of television both at home and for learning purposes. Researching parental views might guide future research and provide improved education to other parents and professionals. Focusing on the

seldom researched speech and language disordered population will provide greater insight to how television affects language development.

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### **METHODS**

This study targeted parents of children with speech and language disorders as the participants. The Children's Center for Communication and Development and the DuBard School for Language Disorders, both located on the University of Southern Mississippi's campus, were chosen as locations to collect data from parents. These facilities were chosen because they specifically focus on serving children with speech and language deficits.

Parents were given an informed consent form, along with surveys, through teacher agents. See Appendix A for complete version of the consent form. Parents were asked to return the completed survey if they wished to participate. Questions on the survey vary in format including multiple choice, open-ended, and rankings. Some demographic information about the parents was asked such as education level, age, and occupation. Background information on the child was collected such as age, birth order, and number of siblings. Basic information concerning the child's specific disorder and therapy goals were also asked. The remainder and largest part of the survey inquires about television use.

Open-ended questions regarding television were asked to inquire about how much television the child watches with and without parents present and at what age the child began watching television. The survey also asks for a list of the child's favorite programs.

Two questions regarding reading between the parent and child were asked for a simple comparison to determine if there is any correlation between watching television and reading with their child.

The main portion of the survey required parents to rank from one to ten how much they believe television influences specific receptive and expressive speech and language skills. For example, one of the questions pertaining to receptive speech and language skills was, “How much do you think television influences the UNDERSTANDING OF the following parts of your child’s language?” followed by “understanding stories” and other skills. The expressive speech and language skills question was “How much do you think television influences the USE OF the following parts of your child’s language?” followed by “telling stories” and other skills. The same type of 10 point scale was used for the following speech and language elements for both receptive (understanding) and expressive (producing) skills: stories, jokes, abstract language, syntax, new vocabulary words, sound production, and wh- questions.

The final portion of the survey was an attempt to gain parental perceptions related to television’s influence on their family and as an education tool. Questions were taken from two separate studies (Hes & Goldman 1962; Zimmerman, Christakis & Meltzoff, 2007). See Appendix B for the full version of the survey.

Descriptive statistics were conducted with demographics and all scaled items. A series of Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVAs) were conducted with independent variables from the demographic information reported and dependent

variables (scaled questions). Follow up Univariate analysis of variance (ANOVAs) and Tukey HSD Post Hoc were conducted following MANOVAs when necessary.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### Demographic Results

##### *Exclusionary Factors*

Of the 56 returned surveys, 13 surveys were excluded due to missing information such as parent's perceptions of television's influence on any of the questions pertaining to the use and understanding of speech and language skills on their child. Data was also excluded if participants did not include demographic information regarding education and employment for both parents. This left a total of 43 (77%) completed surveys that were analyzed for the current study.

##### *Parents*

Demographic questions for the mother participants in this study yielded a mean age of 37.19 (standard deviation was 6.537 years of age). Thirty-seven percent of mothers reported their highest level of education was high school, 51.2% furthered their education at the undergraduate level, while 11.6% attended graduate school (i.e., a masters degree or higher). For mothers, the most frequently reported occupation was a homemaker (23%). The fathers of this study possessed a mean age of 39.12 (standard deviation was 6.262 years of age). Sixty-two percent of fathers reported their highest level of education as high school, 26% attained an undergraduate level of education, while 12% attended graduate school. The most frequently reported occupations for fathers were construction (14%), police (7%), sales (7%), and doctor (5%).

### ***Children***

Parents were asked the age of their speech and language disordered child. The most frequently reported age group was six to nine years old (41.9%), followed closely by ages ten years and older (39.5%), ages zero to three years of age (11.6%), and finally ages four to five years old (7.0%). Of these children most were reported as the youngest in their family (39.0%), followed by the oldest (34.1%), and a middle child (26.8%). The mean number of siblings reported was 1.79. Primary disorders reported ranged from Learning Disability (59.5%), Autism (10.8%), Hearing Impaired (10.8%), and Other (18.9%). The leading secondary disorders reported were Speech and Language (75.8%), Articulation (15.2%), Stuttering (3.0%), and Other (6%).

### ***Television***

There were several demographic questions that parents were asked to report regarding television usage and history concerning their child. The ages that parents reported their children first watched television varied from birth to 6 months (22%), 7 to 12 months (34.1%), 13 to 18 months (14.6%), 19 to 24 months (17.1%), and 25 months or older (12.2%).

Parents further reported the amount of television their children watch each day without them present. The data showed 69.8% of the children watched an hour or less of television per day without the parent present, 20.9% watched one to two hours without parents, and 9.3% of children watched television for more than two hours per day without parental supervision. During the work week (i.e., Monday through Friday), parents

reported watching television with their child with the following frequencies of times: 53.5% watched for 0 to 1 hour, 30.2% watched for 1.1 to 2 hours, and 16.3% of parents watched television with their children for more than two hours during the work week. Finally, parents reported the amount of time they spent watching television with their children on the weekend. Parents reported the following number of hours: 62.8% watched for 0 to 2 hours, 25.6% watched for 2.1 to 4 hours, and 11.6% watched for more than 4 hours.

### ***Reading***

Parents reported reading daily with their child for 0 to 59 minutes (86%), 60 to 119 minutes (7%), and 120 minutes or more (7%). Parents also reported reading with their child 0 to 119 minutes (39.5%) per week, 120 to 239 minutes (41.9%) per week, and 240 minutes or more (18.6%) per week.

### ***Favorite Shows***

The favorite television programs reported in this study consisted mostly of animated series, with the most popular being Nickelodeon's *SpongeBob Square Pants*, followed by the Disney channel's animated series *Phineas and Ferb*. There was also great interest shown in various cartoons featured on the Public Broadcasting Station such as *World World*, *Super Why*, and *Dinosaur Train*. Interest was also shown in sitcoms with the most popular being Nickelodeon's *I Carly*, followed by Disney's *Good Luck Charlie*. Finally, adult programming was the least reported (e.g., animal documentaries).



The reported programming regarding television shows parents and children enjoyed watching together showed a significant decrease in children and teen programs. It tended to be in favor of more movies, including family movies and Disney movies. There was an increase in reality programming when families watched television together, specifically *America's Funniest Videos*. The genre of sports also showed an increase during family time including football and baseball compared to only wrestling reported as a child's favorite program. Of the small amount of cartoons reported *SpongeBob Square Pants* was still the most popular, along with *I Carly* and *Good Luck Charlie* still reported as the most watched sitcoms.

### **Effects of Demographic Variables on Perceived Receptive Speech and Language Variables**

Several Multivariate Analysis of Variances (MANOVAS) were conducted with selected demographic independent variables such as mother and father education levels, birth order, the amount of television watched with and without parents, and the amount of reading children performed with their parents. These independent variables were used with the following dependent variables pertaining to perceived impact of television on speech and language skills understood (receptive speech and language skills) by participant's children: the understanding of stories, the understanding of jokes, the understanding of abstract concepts, the understanding of syntax, the understanding of new vocabulary, the understanding of sound production, and the understanding of wh-questions.

The first Multivariate Analysis of Variances (MANOVA) was performed examining the effects parental education levels have on parents' perceptions of television's impact on receptive speech and language skills. MANOVA results revealed no significant effects of the mother's education (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .579$ ,  $F(14, 68)=1.524$ ,  $p=.126$ ,  $\eta^2=.239$ , observed power = .794) and father's education (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .713$ ,  $F(14, 64)=.870$ ,  $p=.594$ ,  $\eta^2=.156$ , observed power = .488). Follow up Univariate ANOVAs found no significant main effects of either parents' education levels on individual receptive speech and language skills.

Another MANOVA was conducted examining the effects of birth order on the perceived impact television has on all receptive speech and language skills. The results yielded no significant effects (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .571$ ,  $F(14, 64)=1.478$ ,  $p=.145$ ,  $\eta^2=.244$ ). However, effects sizes were low so follow up ANOVAs and Post Hocs were conducted with each receptive speech and language skill. This revealed the following between subject significant effects of birth order: understanding stories ( $F(2, 43)=4.210$ ,  $p=.022$ ,  $\eta^2=.182$ , observed power = .705), understanding syntax ( $F(2, 43)=3.592$ ,  $p=.037$ ,  $\eta^2=.159$ , observed power = .630), understanding new vocabulary ( $F(2, 43)=6.353$ ,  $p=.004$ ,  $\eta^2=.251$ , observed power = .875), and understanding sound production ( $F(2, 43)= 3.791$ ,  $p=.032$ ,  $\eta^2=.166$ , observed power = .656). See Table 1 for means and standard deviations. Post Hoc analysis revealed significant differences between the middle and youngest birth ordered child and the impact television has on understanding stories, understanding syntax, understanding new vocabulary, and understanding sound production.

Three further MANOVAS were conducted examining the effects of parents watching and not watching television with their child on the influence television has on their child's receptive (understanding) speech and language skills. The first MANOVA performed investigated the effects of the amount of television children watched without their parent per day on the perceived impact television has on all of their child's receptive language skills. Results yielded no significance (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .665$ ,  $F(14, 70)=1.107$ ,  $p=.367$ ,  $\eta^2=.184$ , observed power=.614). However, due to low effect sizes, follow up ANOVAS and Post Hocs were conducted with each individual skill. These ANOVAs yielded one significant result between subject effect related to television's impact on children's receptive speech and language skills pertaining to understanding of syntax ( $F(2, 43)= 3.845$   $p=.030$ ,  $\eta^2=.161$ , observed power = .664). Post hoc analysis showed significant differences being between parents who watched one to two hours and more than two hours of television per day. The second MANOVA conducted investigated the effects of the amount of time parents watched television with their children Monday through Friday on the perceived impact television has on all the receptive speech and language skills. No significant findings were found with this MANOVA (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .712$ ,  $F(14, 68)=.898$ ,  $p=.564$ ,  $\eta^2=.156$ , observed power=.507). The final MANOVA conducted, with respect to television viewing, examined the amount of television parents watched with their children on weekends (i.e. Saturday and Sunday) on the perceived impact television has on receptive speech and language skills of their child. Results yielded no significant effects (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .547$ ,  $F(14, 66)=1.707$ ,  $p=.074$ ,  $\eta^2=.260$ , observed power=.848).

Finally, two more MANOVAs were conducted with amount of time parents spent reading with their child per day and the amount of time parents spent reading per week on the perceived impact television has on all receptive speech and language skills. The first MANOVA pertained to the amount of time parents read with their child per day. This MANOVA yielded no significant results (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .799$ ,  $F(14,68)=.577$ ,  $p=.874$ ,  $\eta^2=.106$ , observed power=.318). However, due to low effects sizes, follow up ANOVAs were conducted. These ANOVAs yielded no significant results for each receptive language skill. The second MANOVA conducted investigated the effects of the amount of time parents spent reading with their child per week on the impact television has on their child's receptive speech and language skills. No significant results were found (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .653$ ,  $F(14, 68)=1.151$ ,  $p=.332$ ,  $\eta^2=.192$ , observed power=.641).

### **Effects of Demographic Variables on Perceived Expressive Speech and Language Variables**

Several Multivariate Analysis of Variances (MANOVAS) were conducted with selected demographic independent variables such as mother and father education levels, birth order, the amount of television watched with and without parents, and the amount of reading children performed with their parents. These independent variables were used with the following dependent variables pertaining to perceived impact of television on speech and language skills used (expressive language skills) by participant's children: the use of stories, the use of jokes, the use of abstract language, the use of syntax, the use of new vocabulary, the use of sound production, and the use of wh-questions.

The first two Multivariate Analysis of Variances (MANOVAS) were performed examining the effects of each parents' education level on their perceptions of television's impact on expressive speech and language skills of their child. Both MANOVAs revealed no significant effects of the mother's education (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .612$ ,  $F(14, 66)=1.354$ ,  $p=.201$ ,  $\eta^2= .218$ , observed power=.731) and no significant effects of the father's education (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .779$ ,  $F(14,66)= .629$ ,  $p=.832$ ,  $\eta^2=.118$ , observed power=.347). Follow up Univariate ANOVAs found significant effects of mother's education on perceptions of television's impact on the expressive language skills of using jokes ( $F(2, 43)= 5.196$ ,  $p=.010$ ,  $\eta^2=.206$ , observed power = .800) and using abstract language ( $F(2, 43)= 4.446$ ,  $p=.018$ ,  $\eta^2=.182$ , observed power = .731 ). Tukey HSD Post Hoc revealed significant differences with undergraduate only educated mothers and high school and graduate educated mothers with respect to expressive language skills pertaining to the use of jokes. Further Tukey HSD Post Hoc found significant differences between high school only educated mothers and undergraduate educated mothers with respect to their perceived impact television had on abstract language skills with their speech and language disordered child. It should be noted that follow up ANOVAs found no significant differences with any expressive speech and language skill related to fathers' education levels.

Another MANOVA was conducted to investigate the effects of the independent variable of birth order on the perceived impact television has on all expressive speech and language skills. The results of this MANOVA yielded significant effects (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .466$ ,  $F(14, 64) =2.123$ ,  $p=.022$ ,  $\eta^2= .317$ , observed power=.927). Follow up ANOVAs were conducted with each expressive speech and language skill. These ANOVAs

revealed the following significant effects of birth order on the perceived impact of television on each expressive speech and language skills: usage of new vocabulary ( $F(2, 43)= 5.589, p=.007, \eta^2=.227$ , observed power = .828), the use of sound production skills ( $F(2, 43)=4.229, p=.022, \eta^2=.182$ , observed power = .706), and using wh- questions ( $F(2, 43)=4.035, p=.026, \eta^2=.175$ , observed power = .685). Tukey HSD Post Hoc revealed significant differences between the middle and youngest child for the use of new vocabulary, use of sound production skills, and the use of wh-questions.

Three further MANOVAs were conducted examining the effects of parents watching and not watching television with their child. The first MANOVA looked at the effects of the amount of television parents watched without their child per day on the perceived impact television has on all expressive speech and language skills. Results yielded no significant differences (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .718, F(14, 68)=.873, p=.590, \eta^2= .152$ , observed power=.492). However, follow up ANOVAs conducted with each individual expressive speech and language skill yielded significant effects television has on their child's use of sound production skills ( $F(2, 43)= 3.810 p=.031, \eta^2=.160$ , observed power = .660). Tukey HSD Post Hoc found significant differences between children who watched less than one hour of television and more than 2.1 hours without parental supervision. The second MANOVA conducted investigated the effects of the amount of time parents watch television with their child Monday through Friday on the perceived impact television has on all expressive speech and language skills. No significant findings were found with this MANOVA (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .555, F(14, 68)=1.661, p=.085, \eta^2= .255$ , observed power=.836). The final MANOVA conducted examined the amount of television parents watched with their children on weekends (i.e. Saturday and Sunday)

on the perceived impact television has on all expressive speech and language skills. Results yielded no significant effects (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .801$ ,  $F(48, 34) = .571$ ,  $p = .878$ ,  $\eta^2 = .105$ , observed power = .315).

Finally, two MANOVAS were conducted in order to examine the effects of the amount of time parents spent reading with their child per day and the amount of time parents spent reading with their child per week on the perceived impact television has on all expressive speech and language skills. The first MANOVA investigated the amount of time parents read with their child per day on the perceived impact television has on all expressive speech and language skills. This MANOVA yielded no significant results (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .555$ ,  $F(14, 68) = 1.661$ ,  $p = .085$ ,  $\eta^2 = .255$ , observed power = .836). However, follow up ANOVAs were conducted and yielded a significant effect on the perceived impact television has on their child's use of wh- questions ( $F(2, 43) = 4.196$ ,  $p = .022$ ,  $\eta^2 = .173$ , observed power = .705). Tukey Post Hoc analysis found significant differences between parents who read less than one hour with their child and parents who read between one and two hours with their child per day. The second MANOVA conducted examined the effects of the amount of time parents spent reading with their child per week on perceived impact of television on expressive language skills. This MANOVA found no significant results (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .801$ ,  $F(14, 68) = .571$ ,  $p = .878$ ,  $\eta^2 = .105$ , observed power = .315).

### **Effects of Demographic Variables on Perceived Use: Effect of Television Upon Children**

A final set of MANOVAs and follow up ANOVAs were conducted with the following selected demographic independent variables: mother and father education levels, birth order, and the amount of television watched with and without parents. These independent variables were examined with questions pertaining to parental perceptions related to television characteristics and impact on family dynamics (Effect of Television Upon Children, Hess & Goldman 1962; Reasons Parents Gave as Being the Most Important for Their Children Watching Television or DVDs/Videos, Zimmerman, Christakis & Meltzoff, 2007).

The first MANOVA conducted investigated maternal education level on all questions related to television characteristics and impact on the family. This MANOVA yielded significant effects (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .350$ ,  $F(20, 62) = 2.140$ ,  $p = .012$ ,  $\eta^2 = .408$ , observed power = .970). Follow up ANOVAs found significance between subject differences with mother's education on their perceptions television has on "being family time" ( $F(2, 43) = 2.760$ ,  $p = .028$ ,  $\eta^2 = .163$ , observed power = .670). Tukey HSD Post hoc analysis revealed significant differences between mothers with only a high school education as compared to undergraduate educated mothers.

The next MANOVA investigated the effects of paternal education levels on all questions related to television characteristics and impact on their family. MANOVA results yielded no significant effects (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .500$ ,  $F(20, 60) = 1.243$ ,  $p = .254$ ,  $\eta^2 = .293$ , observed power = .765). Follow up ANOVAs found significance between subject differences with father's education with their perceptions that "television is something their child really enjoys" ( $F(2, 43) = 3.262$ ,  $p = .049$ ,  $\eta^2 = .143$ , observed power = .587) and "television leads to less outdoor activity by their child" ( $F(2, 43) = 4.088$ ,  $p = .024$ ,



$\eta^2=.173$ , observed power = .692) Tukey HSD Post hoc analysis revealed significant differences between fathers with a high school education as compared to undergraduate education levels with perceptions toward their “child enjoying television” and “television leading to less outdoor activity.”

A third MANOVA investigated the effects of birth order on all questions related to television characteristics and impact on the family. MANOVA results yielded no significant effects (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .536$ ,  $F(20, 58)= 1.076$ ,  $p=.398$ ,  $\eta^2= .271$ , observed power=.680). Follow up ANOVAs found no significance between subject differences with individual characteristics and television impacts on the family.

Three MANOVAs were conducted examining the effects of parents watching and not watching television with their child on all of the questions related to television characteristics and impact on the family. The first MANOVA investigated the effects of the amount of time parents do not watch television with their child on all of the questions related to television's characteristics and impact on the family. These results revealed no significant results (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .671$ ,  $F(20, 62)= .684$ ,  $p=.827$ ,  $\eta^2= .181$ , observed power=.482). The second MANOVA examined the effects related to the amount of television parents watched with their child during the work week (i.e., Monday through Friday) on all of the questions related to television's characteristics and impact on the family. Results from this MANOVA revealed no significant findings (Wilks'  $\Lambda = .602$ ,  $F(20, 62)= .896$ ,  $p=.592$ ,  $\eta^2= .224$ , observed power=.584). The last MANOVA investigated the effects related to the amount of time parents watched television with their child on weekends on all of the questions related to television's characteristics and impact on the family. Results from this MANOVA revealed no significant findings

(Wilks'  $\Lambda = .502$ ,  $F(20, 62) = 1.276$ ,  $p = .229$ ,  $\eta^2 = .292$ , observed power = .783). Follow up ANOVAs revealed significance between subject effects with the question pertaining to the impact of "television being family bonding time." Tukey HSD Post hoc analysis revealed a significant difference between parents who watched less than one hour as compared to parents who watched more than four hours of television with their child on weekends.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

#### **The Impact of Television on Receptive Speech and Language Skills**

There are many findings from this study related to the potential impact parents believe television may have on their child's receptive speech and language skills. The first interesting finding was that parents of children who were categorized as the youngest in their family believed television had a positive influence on helping their child's understanding of the following receptive skills more so than parents of children who were classified as the oldest or middle child: understanding stories, syntax, new vocabulary, and sound production. This may result from younger children in the family having older siblings that watch television. While it is unknown if the older siblings of these children are speech and language disordered, television may be viewed as a positive source in helping their child understand these receptive skills if the older sibling watched television and had no detrimental effects on their speech and language skills. Further, these parents may not be aware that educational programming proven effective for older children have detrimental effects on children under two years of age, such as *Sesame Street* which is proven effective for ages three to five (Linebarger & Walker 2005). Finally, television

patterns for older children as compared to the younger children are unknown; however, it could be speculated that younger children are exposed to more television at a younger age than older siblings. This increase in television viewing may contribute to parents' favorable impact that television has on receptive speech and language skills.

This study also found if children watched television for more than two hours without parental supervision, parents reported a significantly more positive impact on their children's receptive syntax skills compared to children who watched less than two hours of parent free television. These parents may view television as a positive educational influence on their child; therefore, these parents are allowing their children to watch television for longer periods of time than parents who rated television as having a lower influence on understanding syntax.

### **The Impact of Television on Expressive Speech and Language Skills**

There were several interesting significant findings pertaining to the impact television may have on children's expressive speech and language skills. This study found mothers with a graduate level education reported a significantly more positive influence television has on their child's use of jokes as compared to mothers with an undergraduate education. Also, mothers with only a high school education perceived television to have a significantly more positive influence on their child's use of jokes than mothers with an undergraduate level of education. However, the opposite occurred with the expressive speech and language skills related to abstract language. It was found that mothers with a high school education only, significantly felt that their child's expressive abstract language skills were favorably improved by television, as compared to mothers

with an undergraduate education. In both cases, mothers with an undergraduate level of education ranked television's influence on the use of jokes and abstract language significantly lower. This could imply that mothers with an undergraduate education may have been taught various adverse effects of television on language development, but were not taught the specifics of how television could be used as a positive educational influence. Further, it seems as though mothers with only a high school education put more value in television for learning purposes whereas mothers with a graduate level education may view television as more of a form of entertainment (i.e. a source for their child to learn jokes).

This study found that parents who indicated their speech and language impaired child was the youngest felt television was significantly more of a positive influence on expressive new vocabulary skills, sound production, and the use of wh- questions than if the child was in the middle of the birth order. As previously mentioned, these parents may view television as a positive source of information for their child if older siblings exhibit no detrimental effects from television exposure.

This study further found that parents who allowed their children to watch more than two hours of television a day without parental supervision thought television had a significantly more positive impact on the expressive skill related to sound production as compared to parents who allowed their children to watch television for less than an hour. Considering these are parents of speech and language disordered children who ranked articulation as a leading secondary disorder, it may be speculated that these parents trust television is helping their child produce sounds more accurately and thus allow their child to watch television two or more hours a day without them present. More research with

parents of speech and language disordered children is needed to address parent's specific beliefs of television as a positive influence on their child's sound production.

### **The Impact of Television on Family Dynamics: Effect of Television Upon Children**

Mothers with a high school level of education agreed that "television is family time, bonding time or quality time" more so than mothers with a higher level of education who ranked this statement as neutral. This could imply that mothers with a lower education rely on television as a family activity more than mothers with a higher education who possibly do other family activities that do not involve watching television.

Fathers with an education level beyond high school agreed more with the statement "television leads to less outdoor activity that my child participates in," while fathers with only a high school education felt more neutral. This statement portrays a more negative outlook on television from fathers with higher education levels, suggesting that parents with more education believe television leads to less outdoor activity. This finding may imply that with more parental education, parents become aware of the importance and value of exercise, while knowing that watching television generates minimal physical activity.

Fathers with a graduate and undergraduate education level strongly agreed that "television is something my child really enjoys doing," followed by fathers with a high school education who agreed with this statement. The agreement of this general statement implies that fathers across all education levels believed their child enjoyed watching television. This perception of television may indicate parents believe their child enjoys television whether parents own connotations towards television are positive or negative,

or whether parents think television could be used as a successful learning tool that holds the child's interest. This finding may indicate more education is required to teach parents appropriate types of programming fit for their child's age, along with the amount of time children should be allowed to watch television in order to facilitate learning.

### **Limitations and future research**

This study consisted of a limited demographic pool of participants. All participants were from one of two speech and language centers at the University of Southern Mississippi. The participants were from a large age range which could have a significant impact on how television use has evolved over generations. There was no personal contact with participants. Agents were relied on to distribute and collect the surveys secondhand. This method of data collection can be seen as a limitation because researchers did not have direct contact with the participants, and it could be seen as a positive for participants because it increased anonymity. Some survey questions (excluding the section generated from previous studies) were generated by the researchers of this study and went through no pilot study analysis.

Future studies should be directed towards a non-speech and language disordered population in order to compare parental perceptions of television on receptive and expressive speech and language skills between the two groups. Also, future studies could be directed towards television and educational benefits and detriments. This type of research could be performed doing qualitative interviews with parents or focus groups. Finally, knowing how parents and caretakers can be educated on the details and types of

programming needed to facilitate learning through a television medium is important to how the next generation of adults (their kids) will perceive the impact of television.

### **Conclusion**

This study was an initial investigation to explore the perceptions of television from parents of speech and language disordered children. It is important to note how parents utilize television as an educational experience or as bonding time with their children rather than a source to keep their child quiet for long periods of time. This study suggests that research on television related to its effects on children's speech and language skills are of great importance. Along with warranting more research, this study verifies that parents need to be educated on types of programming best fit to have positive speech and language outcomes for their children.

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## Appendix A

### *Consent form*



Dear Parents:

My name is Hillary Fortenberry, and I am a senior at USM. I am working with Dr. Scott Palasik to conduct a research project to fulfill a requirement for my honors college thesis.

**Procedures:** An anonymous survey is attached to this consent form. The survey attempts to gain insight as to how you, as parents, view television's impact on your child, specifically your child's understanding and use of speech and language development and skills. The survey also includes some demographic information and some general questions regarding your child's television use. The entire survey should take no more than 15 minutes to complete.

**Risks and Benefits:** There are no known risks.

**Questions:** If you have questions you may contact:  
Hillary Fortenberry at [hillary.fortenberry@eagles.usm.edu](mailto:hillary.fortenberry@eagles.usm.edu)  
Dr. Scott Palasik at [scott.palasik@usm.edu](mailto:scott.palasik@usm.edu) or by phone at 601-266-5257.  
The Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences can be reached at:

Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
118 College Dr. #5092  
Hattiesburg MS 39406-0001  
601.266.5216

The international review board can be reached for any questions at [research@usm.edu](mailto:research@usm.edu)

**Consent:** This is an anonymous, voluntary survey that was distributed to you by your child's teacher. If you wish to participate please return the survey to your child's teacher. At your completion of this survey and by returning it you are giving permission of participation in this study. No identifiable information is being taken (name, address, telephone number, etc.) to ensure anonymity.

**Confidentiality:** All records related to this research will be kept confidential and will be available only to those assisting with the project. All data will be stored in a locked research cabinet in a research office space.

Thank you for adding to the research of how television can effect children's use and understanding of speech and language development. We appreciate you taking the time to share information which can be vital to how we educate teachers, parents, and children.

Sincerely,  
Hillary Fortenberry

Dr. Scott Palasik

Appendix B

Survey for Parents of Speech and Language Disordered Children



**Parent Information:**

<b>Mother</b>	<b>Father</b>
<b>Education Level</b> <b>(Please circle the highest degree acquired)</b>	<b>Education Level</b> <b>(Please circle the highest degree acquired)</b>
A. High School Degree	A. High School Degree
B. Associates Degree	B. Associates Degree
C. Bachelors Degree	C. Bachelors Degree
D. Masters Degree	D. Master's Degree
E. Other: _____	E. Other: _____
Age: _____	Age: _____
Occupation: _____	Occupation: _____

**Your Child Information (at DuBard, Children's Center, etc):**

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Order among your children: \_\_\_\_\_      Number of Siblings: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (i.e. oldest, middle, youngest)

Disorder (Circle all that apply):

Primary: Autism	Secondary: Speech-Language
Cleft Palate	Articulation
Learning Disability	Stuttering
Mentally Impaired	Other: _____
Hearing Impaired	
Other: _____	

Goals in Therapy:

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On average, how much time a day does your child watch television *without* a parent present?

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What age, in months and/or years, did your child start watching television? \_\_\_\_\_

What are your child's favorite television programs? \_\_\_\_\_

On average, how much time a day (Monday through Friday) do you spend watching television *with* your child?

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On average, how much time a day (Saturday and Sunday) do you spend watching television *with* your child?

---

What programs do you and your child enjoy watching *together*?

---

---

How much time do you read *with* your child per day? \_\_\_\_\_

How much time do you read *with* your child per week? \_\_\_\_\_

**(Please circle the number that represents the most appropriate answer for you pertaining to each questions below)**

How much do you think television influences the UNDERSTANDING of the following parts of your child's language?

1. UNDERSTANDING stories

None  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very much

2. UNDERSTANDING jokes

None  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very much

3. UNDERSTANDING Abstract language (e.g., "Raining cats and dogs" doesn't actually mean that outside cats and dogs are falling from the sky)

None  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very much

4. UNDERSTANDING Syntax (sentence structure skills)

None  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very much

5. UNDERSTANDING new vocabulary words

None  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very much

6. UNDERSTANDING how sounds are produced

None  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very much

7. UNDERSTANDING wh-questions (what, where, why, who, how, when)

None  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very much

**(Please circle the number that represents the most appropriate answer for you pertaining to each questions below)**

How much do you think television influences the USE OF the following parts of your child's language?

1. TELLING stories

None  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very much

2. TELLING jokes

None  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very much

3. USING Abstract language (e.g., "Raining cats and dogs" doesn't actually mean that outside cats and dogs are falling from the sky)

None  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very much

4. USING Syntax (sentence structure skills)

None  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very much

5. USING new vocabulary words

None  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very much

6. USING speech sounds

None  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very much

7. USING wh-questions (what, where, why, who, how, when)

None  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very much

**Television Use and Your Child**  
**(Please circle the most appropriate answer for you**  
**pertaining to each questions below)**

1. Television is something my child really enjoys doing.

**Strongly Agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly Disagree**

2. I let my child watch Television because I need some time to get things done on my own.

**Strongly Agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly Disagree**

3. Television is family time, bonding time, or quality time.

**Strongly Agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly Disagree**

4. The more my child watches, the less they read.

**Strongly Agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly Disagree**

5. Television leads to less outdoor activity that my child participates in.

**Strongly Agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly Disagree**

6. Television opens the world to the child.

**Strongly Agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly Disagree**

7. Television keeps my child quiet.

**Strongly Agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly Disagree**

8. Television is a great educational influence on my child.

**Strongly Agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly Disagree**

9. Television is responsible for any behavior problems my child may display.

**Strongly Agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly Disagree**

10. Television is too violent for my child.

**Strongly Agree      Agree      Neutral      Disagree      Strongly Disagree**

Table 1

## The Impact of Television on Receptive Language Skills

Variable	N	Stories		Jokes		Abstract Language		Syntax	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Mom's Level of Education									
High School	16	5.56	2.632	5.63	2.527	5.25	2.696	5.00	2.191
Undergraduate	22	6.00	2.600	4.32	2.124	3.55	1.896	3.95	2.572
Graduate	5	6.40	1.342	6.60	.894	5.00	2.000	5.20	1.095
<i>Total</i>	43	5.88	2.471	5.07	2.303	4.35	2.339	4.49	2.334
Dad's Level of Education									
High School	26	5.73	2.779	4.88	2.628	4.54	2.642	4.58	2.580
Undergraduate	11	6.64	1.804	5.36	1.433	3.73	1.679	4.27	2.149
Graduate	5	5.60	1.949	6.20	1.095	5.20	1.789	4.80	1.789
<i>Total</i>	42	5.95	2.459	5.17	2.241	4.40	2.338	4.52	2.350
Birth Order									
Oldest	14	6.00	2.148	5.14	1.748	3.57	2.209	4.57	2.174
Middle	11	4.45	2.770	4.64	2.541	3.91	2.386	3.09	2.023
Youngest	16	7.06	2.048	5.63	2.500	5.50	2.191	5.44	2.421
<i>Total</i>	41	6.00	2.470	5.20	2.261	4.41	2.366	4.51	2.378
TV Without Parents Per Day									
0- 1 hour	30	5.40	2.207	4.77	2.402	4.27	2.243	3.97	2.042
1.1- 2 hours	9	6.67	2.915	5.89	2.088	4.00	2.121	5.11	2.804
2.1 + hours	4	7.75	2.630	5.50	1.915	5.75	3.594	7.00	1.633
<i>Total</i>	43	5.88	2.471	5.07	2.303	4.35	2.339	4.49	2.334
TV With Parents Monday - Friday									
0- 1 hour	23	5.13	2.418	4.87	2.262	4.30	2.141	4.13	2.201
1.1- 2 hours	13	6.69	2.394	5.23	2.619	4.00	2.708	4.62	2.663
2.1 + hours	7	6.86	2.268	5.43	2.070	5.14	2.410	5.43	2.149
<i>Total</i>	43	5.88	2.471	5.07	2.303	4.35	2.339	4.49	2.334
TV With Parents Weekends									
0- 1 hour	27	5.37	2.388	4.63	2.151	4.26	2.330	4.41	2.500
2.1- 4 hours	11	6.64	2.111	5.64	2.292	3.73	1.902	4.55	2.115
4.1 + hours	5	7.00	3.317	6.20	2.950	6.20	2.775	4.80	2.280
<i>Total</i>	43	5.88	2.471	5.07	2.303	4.35	2.339	4.49	2.334
Reading With Parent Per									



Day									
0 to 59 Mins	37	5.81	2.602	4.89	2.331	4.14	2.287	4.30	2.355
60 to 119 Mins	3	6.67	1.528	7.00	1.000	6.00	3.606	6.00	2.000
120 + Mins	3	6.00	1.732	5.33	2.517	5.33	1.155	5.33	2.309
<i>Total</i>	43	5.88	2.471	5.07	2.303	4.35	2.339	4.49	2.334
Reading with Parent Per Week									
0 to 119 Mins	17	5.53	2.348	4.41	2.181	4.06	2.106	4.41	2.347
120 to 239 Mins	18	6.28	2.906	5.39	2.547	4.33	2.497	4.44	2.406
240 + Mins	8	5.75	1.669	5.75	1.832	5.00	2.619	4.75	2.435
<i>Total</i>	43	5.88	2.471	5.07	2.303	4.35	2.339	4.49	2.334

Table 1(continued)

Variable	N	New Vocabulary		Sound Production		Wh-questions	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Mom's Level of Education							
High School	16	5.00	2.251	4.88	2.918	6.50	2.733
Undergraduate	22	5.41	2.576	5.05	2.663	5.64	2.036
Graduate	5	6.60	.894	4.60	2.408	6.40	.894
<i>Total</i>	43	5.40	2.331	4.93	2.676	6.05	2.236
Dad's Level of Education							
High School	26	5.46	2.453	4.88	2.776	6.08	2.432
Undergraduate	11	5.36	2.501	5.27	2.760	6.27	2.195
Graduate	5	5.60	1.517	4.40	2.702	5.60	1.673
<i>Total</i>	42	5.45	2.329	4.93	2.709	6.07	2.257
Birth Order							
Oldest	14	5.79	2.424	4.71	2.813	6.00	2.038
Middle	11	3.55	1.864	3.45	2.207	5.09	2.587
Youngest	16	6.38	1.893	6.19	2.562	6.75	2.145
<i>Total</i>	41	5.41	2.345	4.95	2.738	6.05	2.280
TV Without Parents Per Day							
0- 1 hour	30	5.33	2.218	4.67	2.482	5.77	2.300
1.1- 2 hours	9	5.00	2.784	4.67	3.082	6.22	1.922
2.1 + hours	4	6.75	2.217	7.50	2.380	7.75	2.062
<i>Total</i>	43	5.40	2.331	4.93	2.676	6.05	2.236
TV With Parents Monday - Friday							
0- 1 hour	23	4.83	2.188	5.04	2.688	5.57	2.063
1.1- 2 hours	13	5.85	2.734	4.62	2.844	6.54	2.332
2.1 + hours	7	6.43	1.618	5.14	2.673	6.71	2.563
<i>Total</i>	43	5.40	2.331	4.93	2.676	6.05	2.236
TV With Parents Weekends							
0- 1 hour	27	5.56	2.326	5.56	2.577	5.81	2.131
2.1- 4 hours	11	5.18	2.639	3.55	2.339	5.91	1.868
4.1 + hours	5	5.00	2.000	4.60	3.209	7.60	3.286
<i>Total</i>	43	5.40	2.331	4.93	2.676	6.05	2.236

Reading With Parent Per Day							
0 to 59 Mins	37	5.16	2.398	4.68	2.604	5.89	2.233
60 to 119 Mins	3	7.00	1.000	6.67	4.163	8.33	1.528
120 + Mins	3	6.67	1.528	6.33	1.528	5.67	2.082
<i>Total</i>	43	5.40	2.331	4.93	2.676	6.05	2.236
Reading with Parent Per Week							
0 to 119 Mins	17	5.82	2.186	4.18	2.099	5.88	1.576
120 to 239 Mins	18	4.78	2.533	5.11	3.104	6.06	2.817
240 + Mins	8	5.88	2.100	6.13	2.532	6.38	2.200
<i>Total</i>	43	5.40	2.331	4.93	2.676	6.05	2.236

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Table 2

## The Impact of Television on Expressive Language Skills

Variable	N	Stories		Jokes		Abstract Language		Syntax	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Mom's Level of Education									
High School	16	5.75	2.646	5.44	2.632	5.13	2.579	5.31	2.152
Undergraduate	22	5.05	2.786	3.50	2.041	2.95	1.914	3.68	2.317
Graduate	5	7.00	1.225	6.20	.837	4.40	2.510	4.40	1.949
<i>Total</i>	43	5.53	2.631	4.53	2.414	3.93	2.424	4.37	2.299
Dad's Level of Education									
High School	26	5.15	2.694	4.31	2.494	3.92	2.432	4.38	2.174
Undergraduate	11	6.55	2.339	4.82	2.359	3.82	2.676	4.45	2.945
Graduate	5	6.00	2.550	5.80	1.643	4.60	2.302	4.40	1.949
<i>Total</i>	42	5.62	2.603	4.62	2.378	3.98	2.434	4.40	2.317
Birth Order									
Oldest	14	5.79	2.966	4.57	2.709	3.93	2.999	4.00	2.717
Middle	11	4.64	2.976	4.45	2.697	3.27	2.102	3.45	1.968
Youngest	16	6.19	1.974	4.69	2.024	4.50	2.191	5.44	1.931
<i>Total</i>	41	5.63	2.634	4.59	2.398	3.98	2.465	4.41	2.345
TV Without Parents Per Day									
0- 1 hour	30	5.27	2.677	4.27	2.504	3.63	2.312	4.03	2.141
1.1- 2 hours	9	6.44	2.351	5.22	1.922	4.11	2.369	4.56	2.789
2.1 + hours	4	5.50	3.109	5.00	2.944	5.75	3.202	6.50	1.291
<i>Total</i>	43	5.53	2.631	4.53	2.414	3.93	2.424	4.37	2.299
TV With Parents Monday - Friday									
0- 1 hour	23	5.35	2.622	4.17	2.534	3.70	2.324	4.30	2.305
1.1- 2 hours	13	5.62	3.015	4.77	2.619	3.46	2.634	4.00	2.483
2.1 + hours	7	6.00	2.160	5.29	1.496	5.57	1.902	5.29	1.976
<i>Total</i>	43	5.53	2.631	4.53	2.414	3.93	2.424	4.37	2.299
TV With Parents Weekends									
0- 1 hour	27	5.15	2.755	4.19	2.481	3.74	2.363	4.33	2.418
2.1- 4 hours	11	6.00	2.145	4.55	1.864	3.55	2.252	4.00	2.145
4.1 + hours	5	6.60	2.966	6.40	2.702	5.80	2.775	5.40	2.074
<i>Total</i>	43	5.53	2.631	4.53	2.414	3.93	2.424	4.37	2.299
Reading With Parent Per Day									
0 to 59 Mins	37	5.30	2.644	4.24	2.338	3.59	2.229	4.14	2.149
60 to 119 Mins	3	8.33	1.528	7.67	2.517	6.67	4.163	6.67	4.163
120 + Mins	3	5.67	2.082	5.00	1.000	5.33	.577	5.00	1.000
<i>Total</i>	43	5.53	2.631	4.53	2.414	3.93	2.424	4.37	2.299

Reading with Parent Per Week									
0 to 119 Mins	17	4.76	2.278	4.00	2.208	3.35	1.967	3.76	1.985
120 to 239 Mins	18	5.61	3.013	4.39	2.593	3.94	2.508	4.56	2.229
240 + Mins	8	7.00	1.927	6.00	2.070	5.13	2.949	5.25	2.964
<i>Total</i>	43	5.53	2.631	4.53	2.414	3.93	2.424	4.37	2.299

Table 2 (continued)

Variable	N	New Vocabulary		Sound Production		Wh-questions	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Mom's Level of Education							
High School	16	5.75	2.266	5.50	2.530	5.69	2.549
Undergraduate	22	4.91	2.653	4.55	2.703	4.41	2.443
Graduate	5	6.20	.837	4.40	1.517	5.60	1.342
<i>Total</i>	43	5.37	2.381	4.88	2.528	5.02	2.425
Dad's Level of Education							
High School	26	5.38	2.334	5.00	2.608	4.85	2.634
Undergraduate	11	5.64	2.838	5.18	2.676	5.73	2.284
Graduate	5	5.20	1.924	3.80	2.168	4.60	1.817
<i>Total</i>	42	5.43	2.380	4.90	2.555	5.05	2.449
Birth Order							
Oldest	14	5.71	2.585	4.86	2.685	4.57	2.563
Middle	11	3.64	2.292	3.27	1.849	3.82	1.940
Youngest	16	6.44	1.632	6.00	2.449	6.25	2.295
<i>Total</i>	41	5.44	2.409	4.88	2.581	5.02	2.475
TV Without Parents Per Day							
0- 1 hour	30	5.33	2.309	4.53	2.300	4.77	2.359
1.1- 2 hours	9	4.56	2.603	4.67	2.872	5.22	2.224
2.1 + hours	4	7.50	1.291	8.00	1.414	6.50	3.416
<i>Total</i>	43	5.37	2.381	4.88	2.528	5.02	2.425
TV With Parents Monday - Friday							
0- 1 hour	23	4.61	2.463	4.70	2.636	5.00	2.449
1.1- 2 hours	13	6.08	2.326	4.85	2.609	4.46	2.295
2.1 + hours	7	6.57	1.272	5.57	2.225	6.14	2.545
<i>Total</i>	43	5.37	2.381	4.88	2.528	5.02	2.425
TV With Parents Weekends							
0- 1 hour	27	5.22	2.532	4.93	2.615	4.89	2.547
2.1- 4 hours	11	5.27	2.195	4.55	2.067	5.00	1.732
4.1 + hours	5	6.40	2.074	5.40	3.362	5.80	3.347
<i>Total</i>	43	5.37	2.381	4.88	2.528	5.02	2.425
Reading With Parent Per Day							
0 to 59 Mins	37	5.14	2.406	4.70	2.504	4.76	2.326
60 to 119 Mins	3	8.00	1.732	7.33	3.055	8.67	1.528
120 + Mins	3	5.67	.577	4.67	1.528	4.67	1.528
<i>Total</i>	43	5.37	2.381	4.88	2.528	5.02	2.425
Reading with Parent Per Week							

0 to 119 Mins	17	5.06	2.249	4.06	1.983	4.53	1.875
120 to 239 Mins	18	5.39	2.615	5.28	2.967	5.00	2.828
240 + Mins	8	6.00	2.268	5.75	2.252	6.13	2.416
<i>Total</i>	43	5.37	2.381	4.88	2.528	5.02	2.425

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Table 3

The Amount of Television Supervised by Parents and its Effects on the Child's and Family's Experience related to Television

Variable		TV Without Parent Per Day				TV With Parents Monday - Friday			
		0-1 Hour	1.1-2 Hours	2.1 + Hours	<i>Total</i>	0-1 Hour	1.1-2 Hours	2.1 + Hours	<i>Total</i>
	N	30	9	4	43	23	13	7	43
Television is something my child really enjoys doing	Mean	2.37	1.78	1.25	2.14	2.39	1.77	2.00	2.14
	SD	1.217	.833	.500	1.146	1.340	.725	1.000	1.146
I let my child watch Television because I need some time to get things done on my own.	Mean	3.30	2.89	2.75	3.16	3.17	3.00	3.43	3.16
	SD	1.264	1.054	1.708	1.252	1.337	1.225	1.134	1.252
Television is family time, bonding time, or quality time	Mean	2.87	2.89	2.50	2.84	3.09	2.62	2.43	2.84
	SD	.860	1.054	1.000	.898	.900	.870	.787	.898
The more my child watches, the less they read.	Mean	2.57	3.00	3.50	2.74	2.83	2.38	3.14	2.74
	SD	1.194	1.225	1.291	1.217	1.154	1.325	1.215	1.217
Television leads to less outdoor activity that my child participates in.	Mean	2.67	2.44	3.25	2.67	2.70	2.38	3.14	2.67
	SD	1.184	1.333	.957	1.190	1.146	1.387	.900	1.190
Television opens the world to the child.	Mean	3.10	3.22	2.75	3.09	3.17	3.08	2.86	3.09
	SD	.885	.667	.957	.840	.717	1.115	.690	.840
Television keeps my child quiet.	Mean	3.53	3.33	3.00	3.44	3.52	3.38	3.29	3.44
	SD	.819	1.000	.000	.825	.898	.870	.488	.825
Television is a great educational influence on my child.	Mean	3.23	3.11	2.75	3.16	3.39	2.92	2.86	3.16
	SD	.971	.601	.957	.898	.941	.862	.690	.898
Television is responsible for any behavior problems my child may display.	Mean	3.93	3.89	4.25	3.95	4.09	3.54	4.29	3.95
	SD	.785	1.167	.957	.872	.668	.967	1.113	.872
Television is too violent for my child.	Mean	3.07	3.56	4.00	3.26	3.39	3.00	3.29	3.26
	SD	.868	.726	1.155	.902	.941	.913	.756	.902



Table 3(continued)

Variable		TV With Parents Weekends			<i>Total</i>
		0- 1 hour	2.1- 4 hours	4.1 + hours	
	N	27	11	5	43
Television is something my child really enjoys doing	Mean	2.37	1.91	1.40	2.14
	SD	1.275	.831	.548	1.146
I let my child watch Television because I need som time to get things done on my own.	Mean	3.33	2.91	2.80	3.16
	SD	1.301	1.136	1.304	1.252
Television is family time, bonding time, or quality time	Mean	3.11	2.55	2.00	2.84
	SD	.892	.522	1.000	.898
The more my child watches, the less they read.	Mean	2.74	2.36	3.60	2.74
	SD	1.130	1.362	1.140	1.217
Television leads to less outdoor activity that my child participates in.	Mean	2.67	2.36	3.40	2.67
	SD	1.240	1.120	.894	1.190
Television opens the world to the child.	Mean	3.30	2.91	2.40	3.09
	SD	.775	.701	1.140	.840
Television keeps my child quiet.	Mean	3.59	3.18	3.20	3.44
	SD	.888	.751	.447	.825
Television is a great educational influence on my child.	Mean	3.41	2.82	2.60	3.16
	SD	.931	.603	.894	.898
Television is responsible for any behavior problems my child may display.	Mean	4.00	3.55	4.60	3.95
	SD	.784	1.036	.548	.872
Television is too violent for my child.	Mean	3.26	3.00	3.80	3.26
	SD	.944	.632	1.095	.902

