

Naturally occurring communication opportunities: how do activity contexts affect the language that parents and children use?

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Introduction

- ❑ Intervention for late talkers often focusses on how parents can support their child's communication within their everyday interactions and activities¹
- ❑ Ideas about how parents can foster child language are based on observations of interaction between parents and typically developing children²
- ❑ Historically many studies took place in research laboratories³ and did not consider how the setting or activity might influence interaction⁴
- ❑ In recent years naturalistic recording methods have improved ecological validity, however studies lack contextual detail⁵
- ❑ This scoping review aimed to explore methodologies used to study parent-child language across activity contexts

Methods

This scoping review followed Joanna Briggs Institute Methodology⁶

Eligibility criteria for inclusion was:

- Parent & pre-school child (age 1;0-5;11)
- Recording of parent/child language
- Comparison of 2+ activity contexts

- ❑ 5 databases were searched
- ❑ 16,718 records were retrieved
- ❑ 59 articles included in final review

Results

Activity Contexts Compared

	Play	Book reading	Structured task	Mealtime	Outdoor play	Transport	Media	Personal care	Other
Play	10								
Book reading	17	6							
Structured task	4	4	3						
Mealtime	10	8	4	0					
Outdoor play	1	1	2	1	0				
Transport	2	2	1	2	1	1			
Media	3	5	1	1	1	1	1		
Personal care	6	4	1	4	1	2	1	0	
Other	2	3	1	1	1	1	3	1	1

Methodology used

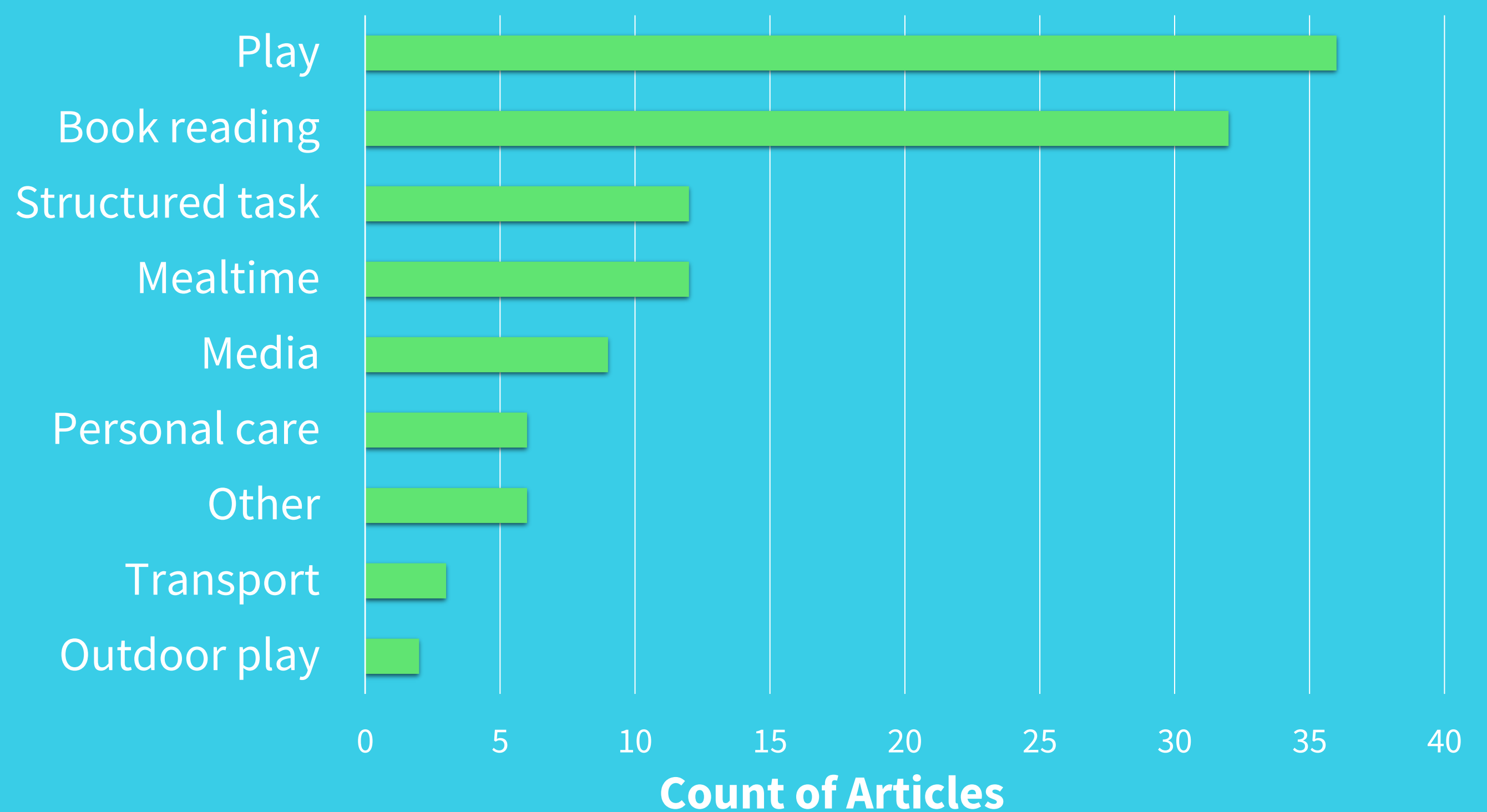
STUDY DESIGN	
Structured	34 (56.7%)
Semi-naturalistic	17 (28.3%)
Naturalistic	6 (10.0%)
Comparison study	3 (5.0%)
LOCATION	
Child's home	29 (48.3%)
Laboratory	18 (30.0%)
Other	8 (13.3%)
No information	5 (8.3%)
RECORDING METHOD	
Video or audiotape	56 (93.3%)
Remote recording device (e.g. LENA)	4 (6.7%)



Key message

Future studies of parent-child language could impact intervention through methodologies that better capture naturally occurring activities and interactions

Frequency of Activities Studied



Discussion

- ❑ Most studies were based on structured, researcher-directed designs, rather than naturalistic activity contexts.
- ❑ Most studies used play or book-reading contexts, however these were also the activities least frequently engaged in during naturalistic routines.⁷
- ❑ Quantity and type of interaction fluctuate across the day and across activities⁸ Interactions also depend on the meaning and structure of activities for different parents⁹
- ❑ A more culturally competent approach to research and intervention might be consultation with individual families to consider how their daily activities and routines present naturally occurring communication opportunities.

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