

Joint Attention and Circle of Communication in Mother –Child Dyads of Language Disordered- A Case Series Study

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Introduction: Joint Attention (JA) behaviors embrace sharing attention, following and directing the attention of another. Joint Attention is an early-developmental socio-communication skill in which two people use gestures and/or gaze to share attention. Research reveals that Joint Attention and Circle of Communication ability as an important factor for early-emerging linguistic and social-communication skills development during infancy. Children whose mother maintain positive interaction and relationship tends to display good Joint Attention skill and increased number of Circle of Communication. Studies have found to distinguish Autism Spectrum Disorder, Developmental Language Delay and typically developing children using Joint Attention skills. However, in Indian population, there is dearth of research addressing Joint Attention and Circle of Communication among children with language disorder.

Aim of the study: The current study investigated Joint Attention skill and Circle of Communication during Mother Child Dyads in children with language delay.

Method: The study was conducted in department of Audiology and Speech Language Pathology, SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Center, Kattankulathur, Tamil Nadu. Five children who were diagnosed with language delay in the age range of 1.5 years to 3.5 years, attending speech and language therapy (less than 6 months) were considered for the study. Parent-Child Interactions were assessed using Parent-Child Interactions scale Infant and Toddler (Brigance III) during play activity. Mother-Child Dyads were observed during free play activity for 20 minutes. The interactions were also videotaped for further analysis. Joint Attention and Circle of Communication (opening, closing and frequency) were analyzed using a Likert rating scale and questionnaire during the Mother-Child interaction.

Results & Conclusion: The systematic analysis of the data revealed that children with language delay had significantly poor Joint Attention behavior, reduced amount of circle of communication, with inappropriate opening and or closing the communication. The children with language delay were more likely to have turn taking and get involved in Circle of Communication when demonstrated with Joint Attention behavior. Mother-child interactive style was also found to influence the learning environment, thereby altering the JA skill and Circle of Communication. Thus, the results provide evidence that JA act as a significant marker for Social interaction development. The research also highlights the key factors of intervention strategies during therapeutic intervention.

Reference:

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