

**"The second discovery was how tightly linked were the large differences in the amount of children's language experience and the large differences in child outcomes. With few exceptions, the more parents talked to their children, the faster the children's vocabularies were growing and the higher the children's IQ test scores at age 3 and later. Amount of parent talk accounted for all the correlation between socioeconomic status (and/or race) and the verbal intellectual accomplishments of the children in the study. "**

*Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children*

Betty Hart and Todd R. Risley, June, 2002

**"The third discovery was of environmental links between amount of parent talk and differences in child performance. Similar across parents was the amount of talk related to the necessary business of caring for and socializing little children. All the parents used a similar number and imperatives ("Come here"), prohibitions ("Stop that"), and questions ("What are you doing?"). But the data showed that when parents engaged children in more talk than was needed to take care of business, the content changed automatically. When parents began to discuss feelings, plans, present activities, and past events, the vocabulary become more varied and the descriptions richer in nuances. Their talk also became more positive and responsive to their children's talk."**

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**"There is more need for programs to help parents learn to talk more to their children. The most important aspect to evaluate in child care settings for very young children is the amount of talk actually going on, moment by moment, between children and their caregivers."**

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**"Incidental teaching focused teachers' attention during free play on active listening preparatory to selecting responses that would both appreciate what a child said and show enthusiastic interest in hearing still more. Every time a child initiated talk to a teacher, the teacher confirmed the child's topic and asked the child to elaborate, if necessary, the teacher modeled an elaboration, asked the child to imitate, and then confirmed the child's response."**

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**"The difference was in how much talking went on; they talked about aspects of what they were doing; they asked more questions about how things worked and why."**

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