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Gender and prematurity

Male gender (yes, no), part of multiple births (yes, no), gestation indicated by number of weeks of pregnancy and birth weight in relation to gestation classified as normal, small for gestational age (<2500 g) and very small for gestational age (<1500 g).

Childhood illness

Parental judgment of children's general health (very good, good, fair/bad), length of any hospital stay (never, 1, 2-7, 8-14, 15 days), occurrence of seizures (never, once, more than once), seizures with fever (yes, no), cold lasting more than 3 days (never, 1-3 times, 4-6 times, >6 times), ear ache (never, 1-3 times, 4-6 times, >6 times), glue ear 4.1 (es), g)-6.9(l)11.9(es, 4-6 t-C /1(t)-6(h (v)0)T->>BDC BT/T11_1 Tf6 tEMC /Span <</M

on any of the language outcomes. Variables that were moderately predictive for favourable language performance at age 2 were high birth order, large family size, early age of first walking, often singing and often reading with the child. These variables were also moderately predictive for receptive language skills at age 3. For this outcome, maternal and paternal education and often playing with toys together with the child were moderately predictive as well. The only moderately predictive variables for expressive language at age 3 were singing and often reading with the child and the child's having ear tubes. A priori selected USPSPF risk factors were included in multivariable regression

analysis. From the remaining variables all those statistically significant in the univariable regression analysis were included as well (Tables 2-5). In the logistic regression analysis, we included gender, birth order, age of first walking, singing with the child and reading with the child, as these were the most predictive variables (moderate effect size) for at least two of the three outcomes in the univariable regression analysis.

At age 2, the total set of predictors explained 25% of the total variance in language scores ($\eta^2 = .248$, $F(1, 81) = 6.21$; $p < .001$). Moderately predictive for better language were low birth order,

How often playing games with child ^b			

Prevocational secondary education	-0.04	-0.54 / 0.45	
Senior secondary vocational education	0.04	-0.37 / 0.44	
General secondary education	0.30	-0.17 / 0.78	
Higher professional education	0.26	-0.13 / 0.66	
Neurobiological development			
Hand preference ^b (no preference yet = reference)			0.054
Right	0.26	0.02 / 0.50	
Left	-0.01	-0.38 / 0.37	
CE*^A[-A, !•cā, æ \i} *Ĥ ^b	-0.14*	-0.19 / -0.10	<0.001
Social environment			
How often singing with child ^b (6-7 days p week = reference)			0.003
0-1 day p. week	-0.39	-0.86 / 0.08	
2-3 days p. week	-0.58	-0.89 / -0.27	
4-5 days p. week	-0.11	-0.37 / 0.16	
How often reading with child ^b (6-7 days p week = reference)			<0.001
0-1 day p. week	-0.93	-1.34 / -0.51	
2-3 days p. week	-0.47	-0.75 / -0.19	
4-5 days p. week	-0.07	-0.32 / 0.19	
How often playing with toys together with child ^b (6-7 days p week = reference)			0.477
0-1 day p. week	-0.41	-1.04 / 0.22	
2-3 days p. week	-0.17	-0.48 / 0.14	
4-5 days p. week	-0.10	-0.35 / 0.14	
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high education of the mother and often singing with the child (Table 3). We found that gender, length of hospital stay, age of first walking, mother's profession and reading with the child were predictive as well, although the effect sizes were small.

At age 3, the total set of variables explained 13% of the total variance in receptive language scores (eta-squared = .128, $F(1, 47) = 5.40$; $p < .001$). Like at age 2, low birth order was moderately predictive for better receptive language skills (Table 4). Again, small positive effects were found for high education of the mother, early age of first walking and often reading with the child. Small family size was predictive as well.

The total variance explained in expressive language scores at age 3 was 14% (eta-squared=.137, $F(1, 61) = 4.64$; $p < .001$). A large family and a stammering mother were moderate predictors for worse expressive language at this age (Table 5).

more parental involvement in language stimulation activities. Parental education level and/or profession did not significantly contribute to language performance at these ages. However, singing and reading with the child on a daily basis as compared to no more than once a week appeared to improve the child's language performance significantly. This may indicate that these language stimulation activities are probably more or less equally distributed among socioeconomic classes