

Background

- The field of positive psychology is growing in global prevalence
- Positive psychology language can be an important lens through which to analyze parental conversation and corresponding associations with children's language and literacy development
- Scaffolding parent's nurturing, prosocial, positive language perhaps holds the potential to improve outcomes for children, especially relevant for families of low SES
- This study explores the most prevalent types of positive psychology language used in parent-child dyads, how positive psychology language changes over time and children's development, and the correlation between prosocial language and child vocabulary abilities

Methods

- This study was comprised of 47 transcripts from typically-developing infants and their parents across three time points (visits 1,3,5): 10m, 14m, and 18m
- Transcripts were analyzed using LIWC Software:
- We explored potential correlations between positive psychology language and literacy/language outcomes
- We investigated the prevalence of positive psychology language in 8 categories:

Category	Example words/phrases
Prosocial	Care, help, thank
Tone Positive	Well, new, love
Emotion Positive	Good, happy, hope
Wellness	Health, support
Addressing [Child] Needs*	Think, hug, ready
Transparent Communication*	Can-you, trying, let's, want-to
Warmth/Comfort Language*	Love, joy
Open Expression of Concern/Validation of Emotions *	Proud, strong

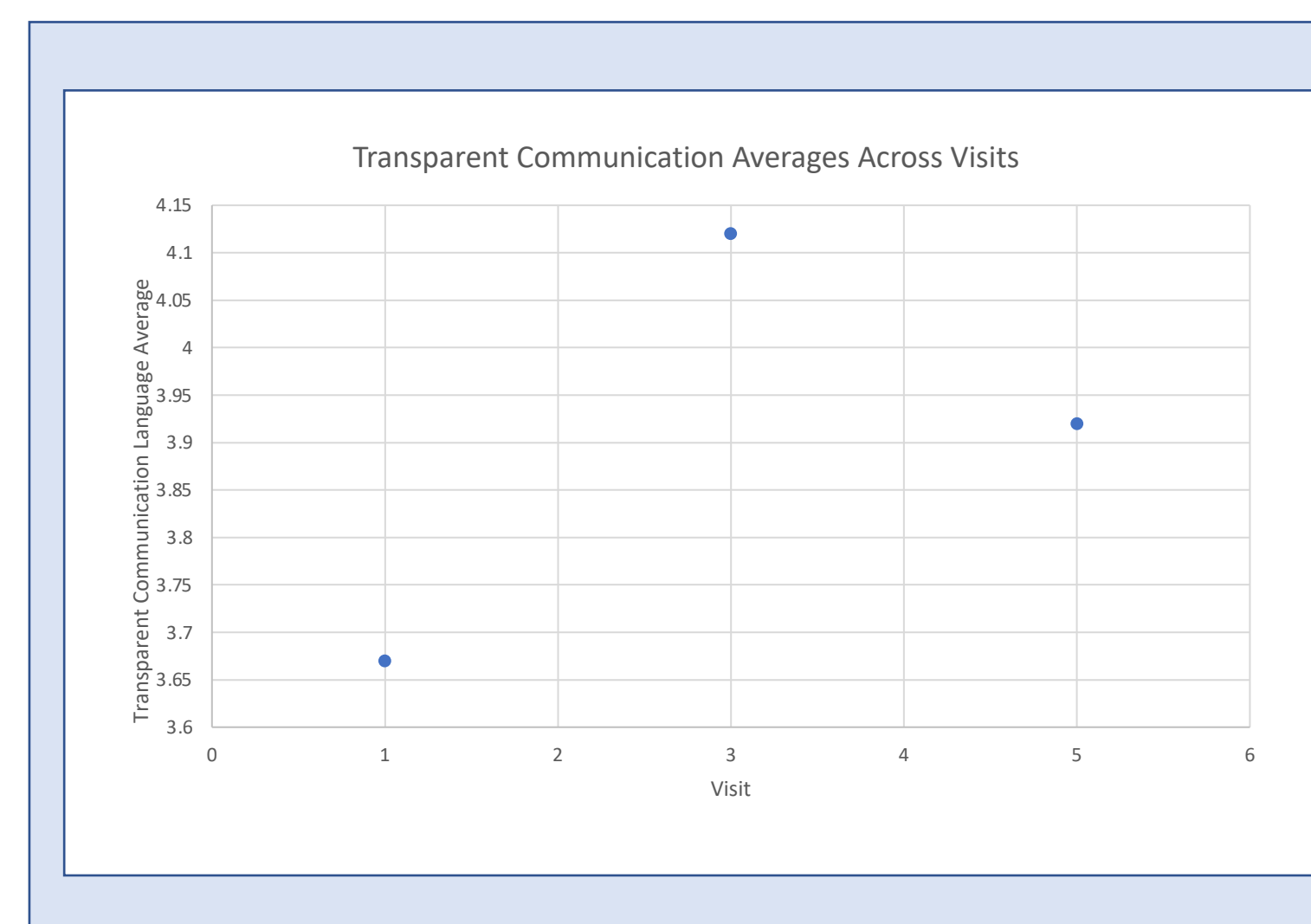
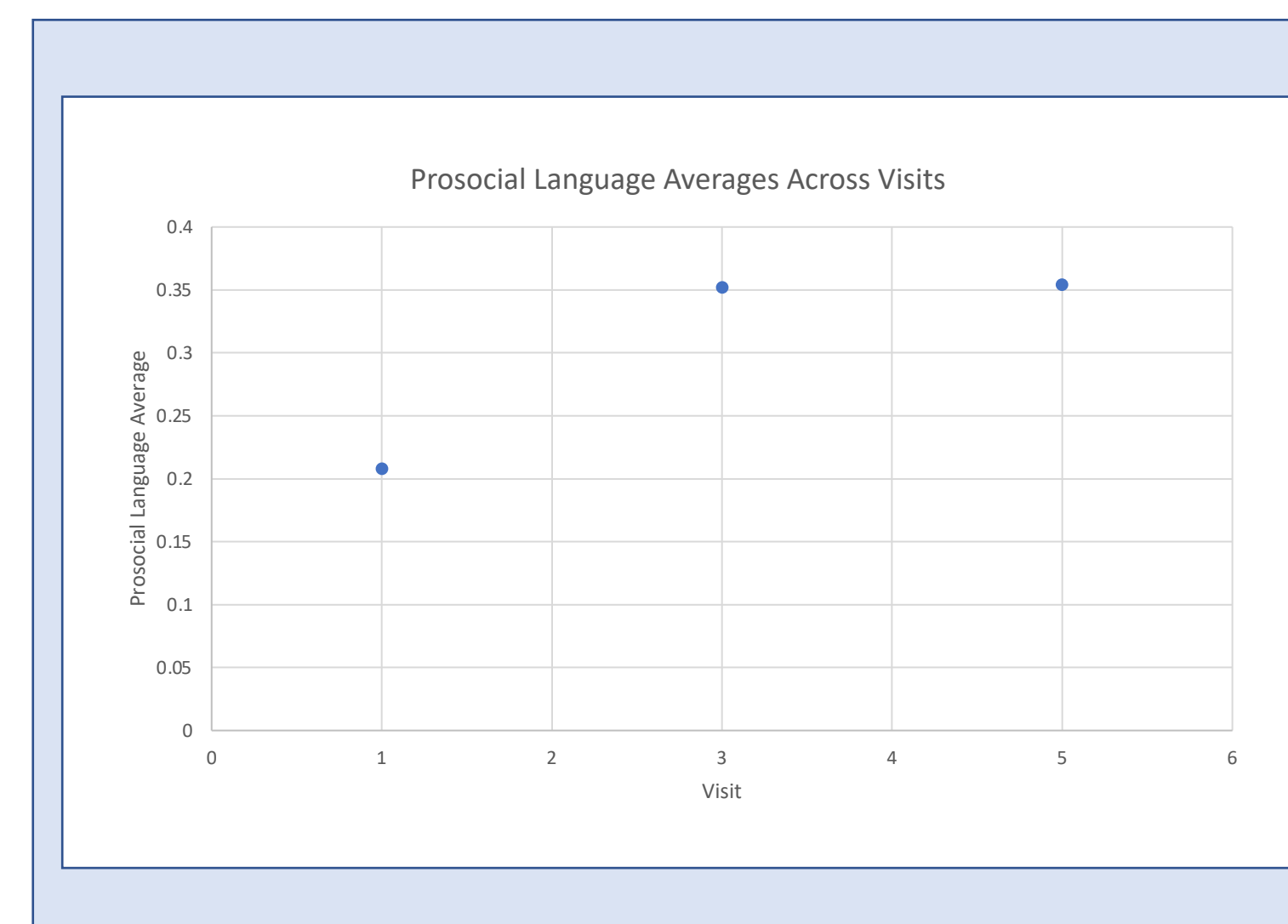
- * = indicates the dictionary was researcher generated rather than LIWC generated

Results

What was the most prevalent type of positive psychology language?

- The most frequent type of positive psychology language in the transcripts overall, and at each time point (visit) specifically, was **“transparent communication”** language, with a mean of 3.81
- The LIWC generated type of positive psychology language used the most was **“tone positive”** language
- The least used type of positive psychology language fell under the “wellness” language category

How does positively psychology language change over time?



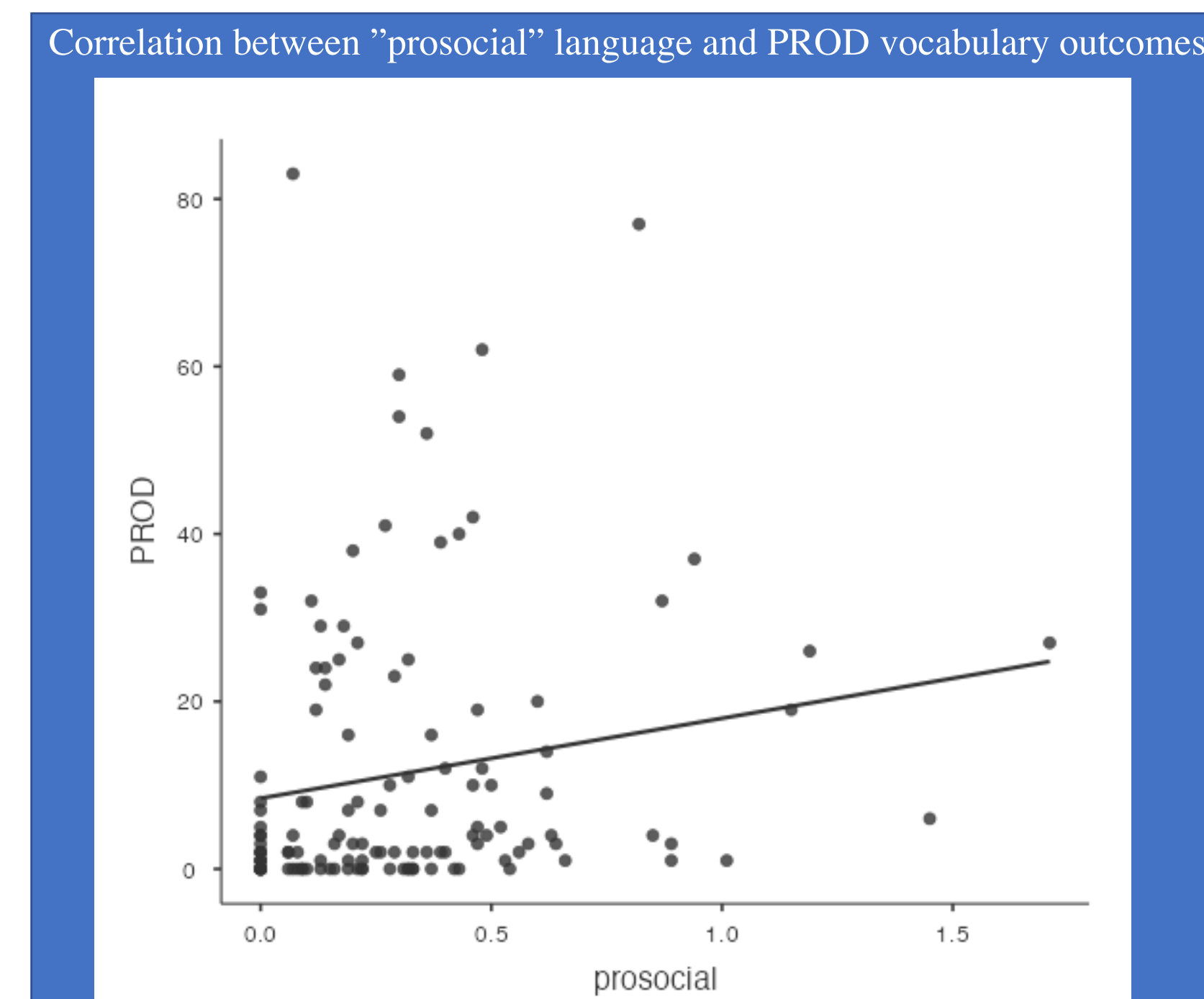
- Across the visits, ranging from 10-18months old, “prosocial” language used by parents increased
- “Transparent communication” remained relatively stable across the visits
- The differences across visits through all language categories were relatively minimal, with a few positive outliers in both “prosocial” and “transparent communication” language categories

Results

- A mixed effects linear model indicated that there was a significant, positive effect of Time on parents' “prosocial” language, $B = .04$ ($SE = .01$), $t = 2.65$.
- Although parents' “transparent communication” increased from 10 to 14 months, the effect Time was not statistically significant, $B = .08$ ($SE = .06$), $t = 1.43$.
- The slope remained significant after controlling for parental education level and child sex.

What associations exist between parental positive psychology language usage and children's language development?

- When reviewing the correlations between LIWC dictionary analyses of the prevalence of various types of positive psychology language used in dyad conversations across the three visits, we found a statistically significant ($p < .05$), positive correlation between increased “prosocial” language used by parents and PROD scores when using Pearson's r.
- The PROD was a measurement of the number of developmentally-appropriate vocabulary words the child used on a regular basis
- This suggests that perhaps “prosocial” language from parents benefits their children's socialization, expanding their conversational vocabulary abilities and skill set



- PROD was significantly correlated with “prosocial” language usage even when controlling for parental education level, sex, and income
- Despite being the most prevalent type of positive psychology language, the category of “transparent communication” was not statistically significantly related to PROD outcomes

Conclusions

- The findings of this study indicate that parents tend to use “transparent communication” language the most with their 10-month to 18-month year old children, perhaps suggesting that conversation providing direct instruction to child based on what is behaviorally expected of them dominates conversations between parent-child dyads
- “Prosocial” language increases over time and this potentially connects to children's emerging socialization abilities
- As children grow and develop, interacting with peers at an increased rate by the third visit time period (18 months), “prosocial” language becomes more valuable in providing them with conversational tools and skills to use beyond the parent-child dyad conversations
- “Prosocial” language by parents was found to be statistically significantly correlated with improved vocabulary scores, indicating the benefits of nurturing language encouraging positive socialization to scaffold their child's language abilities

Limitations and Future Directions

Limitations

- A relatively small sample size was used
- We can only view associations between parental language and child outcomes; we are unable to make any causal conclusions, thus it is possible children may be eliciting particular types of language from parents (which we did not capture in this current set of analyses).
- Future studies should examine the potential effectiveness of specific “prosocial” language-promoting workshops or parental interventions on children's language abilities and levels of positive peer socialization
- The findings of this study and future research can provide parents the tools to best support their children's language competencies and long-term socialization abilities

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