

Biography:

Katie Gervais is from Timmins, Ontario. She graduated from Laurentian University in 2018 with a bachelor's degree in Speech-Language Pathology. She is now a second year Speech-Language Pathology Masters' student at Laurentian University. Her research interests include bilingualism, developmental language disorder and languages in a minority context.

Research:

The correlation between parental report and formal assessment of vocabulary in preschool children living in Northeastern Ontario

Early vocabulary development is a good indicator of the shape and growth of future language skills. A reduced vocabulary at age two is often an indication that a language impairment will persist at school age (Dale, Price, Bishop, and Plomin 2003, Rescorla 2005). Parent Questionnaires are a simple tool that could be filled in accurately since the parents know their child in a variety of natural settings. However, vocabulary is strongly influenced by exposure to languages, a phenomenon that is accentuated when the language in question is a minority. The objective of this study was to determine if there is a relationship between parents' perception of their child's vocabulary and their child's performance on a formal assessment of vocabulary. We also wanted to determine if there is a relationship between the amount of exposure to language reported by parents and the performance of children on a formal assessment of vocabulary. This study will look at data for monolingual (n = 24) and bilingual (n = 16) children aged 36 months living in northeastern Ontario. Parents' answers to questions from the Language Use Inventory will be compared to their children's findings on the formal assessment of the Montgomery Assessment of Vocabulary Acquisition (MAVA). The results will help better understand the link between language exposure and vocabulary development in monolingual and bilingual children living in a linguistic minority community. The combination of these tools could potentially be used as a screening method for speech language pathologists and will benefit children requiring early intervention.