Communication between parents and their children is an important element supporting a child's social, cognitive, and language development. This is especially true for children with specific language impairment (SLI).

Previous research related to children with SLI suggests that although book reading is an excellent way to understand language in parent-child dyads, these children may resist book reading (Kaderavek & Sulzby, 1998). Other research identifies differences in language use during book reading and play activities with mothers and typically developing children (Yont, Snow, and Vernon-Feagans, 2002). Therefore, this study focuses on language use between parents and children with SLI during both book reading and play.

### Research Questions

1. How can the pragmatic features of language be captured for mothers and their children with SLI?
2. How does parent and child pragmatic language differ across scenarios?

### Data Collection

Fifty-six children with SLI between 48 and 60 months and their mothers participated in this study. A semi-structured scenario was used where children and parents had 10 minutes to interact with four different sets of items.

### Research Plan

The Inventory for Communicative Acts Abridged (INCA-A; Ninio, Snow, Pan, and Rollins, 1994) will be used because it is applicable to all types of individuals, regardless of their age or language capabilities. We will use existing transcripts of these semi-structured scenarios by transferring them into the Child Data Language Exchange System (CHILDES) software for language analysis, where INCA-A coding can then be completed in order to analyze and answer the research questions stated above.

### Preliminary Results

#### Most Common Child Pragmatic Intentions Expressed

![Graph showing the most common child pragmatic intentions expressed during book reading and playing with cars.]

#### Children's Pragmatic Language Use During Book Reading

- **Book**:
  - c_DCC: 9.84%
  - c_DHA: 60.66%
  - c_DRP: 18.03%
  - c_DSS: 8.20%
  - c_MRK: 3.28%

- **Cars**:
  - c_DCC: 5.56%
  - c_DHA: 27.84%
  - c_DRP: 38.43%
  - c_DSS: 1.01%

#### Children's Pragmatic Language Use While Playing with Cars

- **Book**:
  - c_DCC: 1.85%
  - c_DHA: 4.48%
  - c_DRP: 25.93%
  - c_DSS: 3.56%

- **Cars**:
  - c_DCC: 0.93%
  - c_DHA: 14.20%
  - c_DRP: 5.56%
  - c_DSS: 1.39%

### Discussion

- **When in the car scenario, children with SLI not only talked more, but also negotiated the interaction more often than in the book scenario. This is in stark contrast to the book scenario, where children with SLI asked and answered questions about the subject at hand more often.**

### Future Research:

We will finish coding all the videos of children with SLI during the semi-structured activity. We would also like to compare the pragmatic language of children with SLI across all scenarios.

### References

