Author’s response to reviews

Title: How many words are Australian children hearing in the first year of life?

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We would like to thank the Editor and Reviewers for providing thoughtful and valuable feedback on our manuscript. We have revised the manuscript accordingly and changes have been highlighted using track changes. We describe how we have addressed each of the comments below.

Reviewer 1

1. In spite of this, the discussion section is lacking highlights regarding the variability of the verbal family environment in the intragroup analysis. It is worth noting that the high range of variability in the groups, either regarding the number of emissions or the number of conversation shifts between adults and children throughout the day, may have other explanations besides maternal education. It is necessary to consider that factors related to economic, educational, community, emotional and cultural aspects might influence communicative profiles. For this reason, I suggest that the authors may consider pointing out these aspects by showing advances and limitations of the present study.

We have added an extra sentence within the discussion to address this as a limitation of the current work (see p13, para 2):

“It is also important to note that while this study focuses on examining the differences in education groups, the high range of variability in talk could be due to other factors related to cultural, emotional or economic factors occurring in the family home that are out of scope for consideration within this paper.”
Reviewer 2

1. What does "162 mother's education excluded" mean? (see flow chart, Figure 1)

Families were deemed ineligible if the mother’s highest level of education was not either secondary school only or university degree. This meant there were a group of families where the mother had completed a certificate or diploma and were not deemed eligible for the study. As we acknowledge this is not clear on the flow chart we have changed it to read “Mother’s Highest Level of Completed Education is Certificate/Diploma (n=162)”

2. In the statistical approach, what inferential statistical analysis was used for between-group comparison?

The paper provides a descriptive analysis of the initial results for the Language in Little Ones study. We did not undertake any between-group analysis as the descriptive statistics in Table 2 and the box and whisker plots presented in Figure 2, 3 and 4 clearly demonstrate a lack of meaningful differences between the two groups and large variation within data for the two education groups.

Please note minor additional changes were made within Table 1 and Table 2 and in the results section of the manuscript. Upon reanalysis of the sample, it was discovered that one participant was left out of the sample that in fact should have been included in the original analysis. All analysis has been rerun including the additional participant and while some means and standard deviations have changed very slightly (e.g. Mean Adult Word Count in Wave 2 went from 14,906.89 to 14,888.66) the meaning and discussion of the results has remained the same.