

The effect of traumatic experiences on identity among people with expressive language disorders

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Background

- Identity (ID) refers to a person's roles, goals, values, and beliefs
- Trauma impacts identity development and life plans (Berman, 2016)
- Identity puts trauma into perspective (Berman et al., 2020)
 - Post-traumatic growth
 - Post-traumatic stress

Objective

To examine the impact of TBIs resulting in a language disorder on identity functioning & identity distress

Method

- $N = 15$, $M_{age} = 52.67$
- 8 females, 53.3% Caucasian
- Range of time since TBI: 2 – 21 years ($M = 7.33$ years)
- 93% with aphasia
- 2 clinical interviews
- Identity Distress Survey
- Trauma Impacts on Identity Functioning Scales

Table 1: Insignificant Gender Differences

		Time 1	Time 2
Religion	Male	3.57	3.71
	Female	4.00	3.38
Philosophy of Life	Male	3.86	4.29
	Female	4.50	3.50
Physical Health	Male	3.86	4.29
	Female	3.88	3.50
Mental Health	Male	3.86	4.14
	Female	4.38	4.13

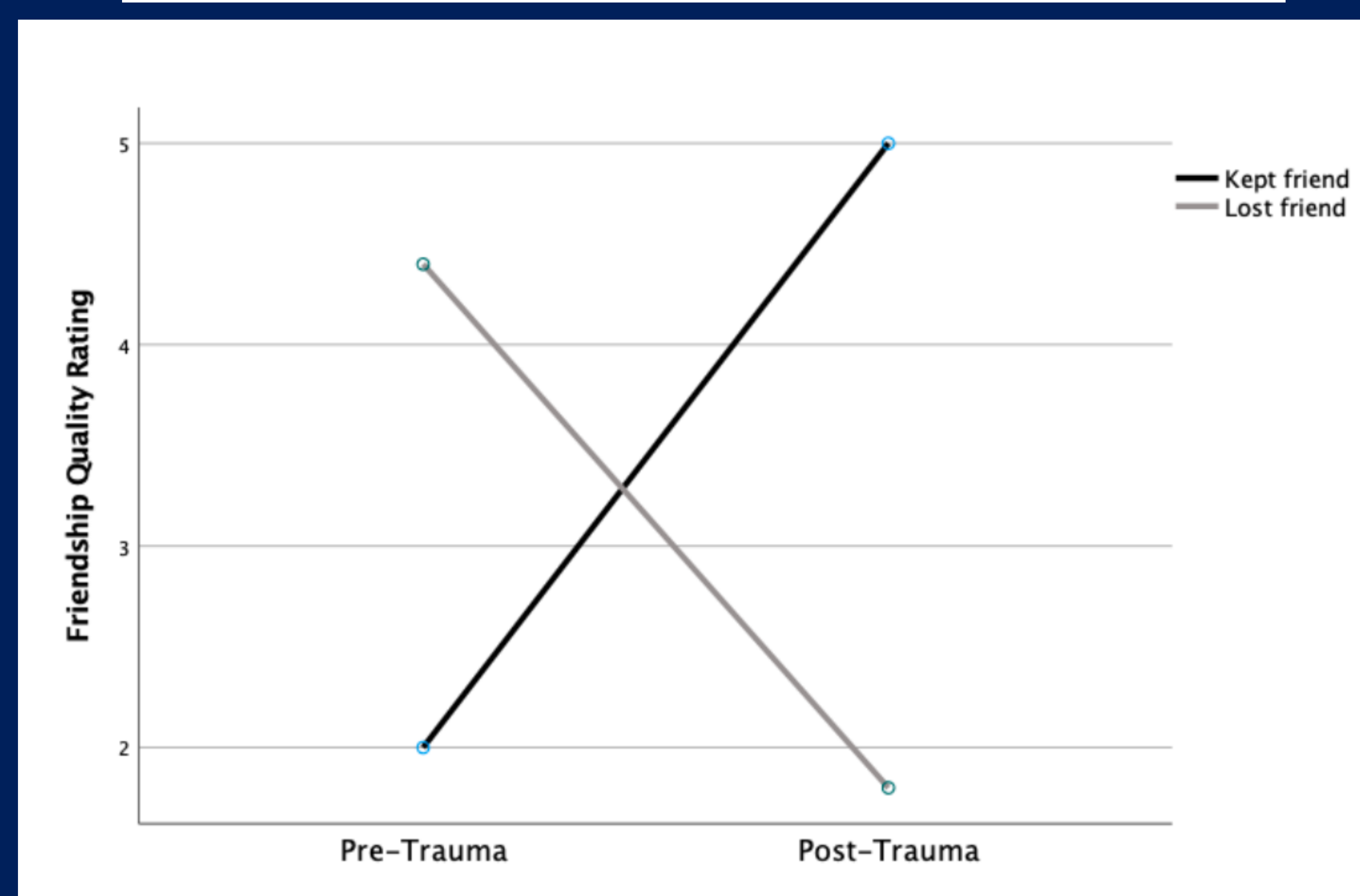


Figure 1

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References available upon request

Survey
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Results

- Identity distress increased ($t(14) = -3.11$, $p = .008$)
- Identity functioning decreased, but not significantly ($M_1 = 4.41$, $M_2 = 3.93$)
- Time since TBI did not correlate with identity functioning nor identity distress
- Interaction between friendship status and quality of relationship (See Figure 1)
- Identity functioning:
 - 33.3% ID development delay (but forward movement)
 - 26.7% trauma-centered ID
 - 13.3% ID loss, but trying to restore it
 - 13.3% questioning ID and exploring new directions
 - 6.7% questioned ID post-TBI, but ID did not change
 - 6.7% ID affirmation (ID strengthened post-TBI)