Contextualised Language Input during Routine Activities in Multilingual Homes

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Background

• Studying infants’ language environments using **day-long audio recordings** (e.g. Casillas et al., 2020) has revolutionised the field of early language development by allowing us to capture the essence of infants’ experiences at home.

• Day-long recordings can be useful for studying bilingual development: they allow us to estimate exposure to each language (Cychosz et al., 2021) and to test whether those depend on activities and people the infant is engaged with.

• Throughout the day, infants participate in routine activities that provide them with unique opportunities to receive contextualised language input (Nelson, 1985; e.g., at bath time, infants are more likely to hear ‘bubbles’ than ‘spoon’).

• Whilst previous research examined monolingual input during daily activities (Tamis-LeMonda & Custode, 2018), input in multilingual homes has received less attention.

• In multilingual homes, daily activities afford the infant opportunities to hear different languages from various speakers.

• The current study explores language input to multilingual infants using day-long audio recordings to address the following research question:

> **How much input in each family language occurs during daily routine activities and are certain activities more language- and speaker-specific than others?**

Methods

• 17 multilingual families living in London raising infants 6-21 months.

• Day-long audio recordings were gathered over 2 full days at home, families provided an average of 13.26 hours (Range = 6-23 hours, SD = 5 hours).

• An average of 8% of data was annotated per family (Range = 3%-14%, SD = 2.9).

• Utterances were coded for speaker, addressee, language, and activity type.

• We categorised each activity type into the following routine categories; **Hygiene, Mealtime, Play, Reading, and Sleep Routine**.

• This poster will focus on **mealtime** and **play activities** only.

Results

**Mealtime**

- Proportion of Language
- Language

**Play**

- Proportion of Language
- Language

**Mealtime**

- Proportion of Speaker Utterance
- Speaker

**Play**

- Proportion of Speaker Utterance
- Speaker

Background

• Interacting with one speaker does not necessarily mean the input would be in one language overall, as that one speaker can switch between languages.

• There is also variability in the speech that we captured; in some families, it is coming from both caregivers whereas in others it strictly comes from one caregiver.

• It is more likely that when 2 speakers were present, there were 2 languages being spoken. But notice that even when there was 1 speaker present there was a higher likelihood of the speech input being in 2 languages rather than one.

Conclusions

• Interacting with one speaker does not necessarily mean the input would be in one language overall, as that one speaker can switch between languages.

• Certain routines in the day can provide multilingual infants with a chance to learn vocabulary in a variety of languages.

• The variability of languages and the number of speakers seen in our data is the first step into understanding these environments better.

• We aim to examine the frequency and content of words in activities across languages in terms of the types and tokens of words that are produced. As well as the features in the input over more activity categories.