

The Development of Word-Object Relations during Infancy

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Ethics Approval Reference: R63335/RE005

Purpose of this Study

This research aims to investigate the mental processes that enable infants to link words to objects (both familiar and novel) by showing them pictures of objects on a touchscreen and monitoring their interest in the objects either in silence or when objects are named. Interest is measured in terms of their engagement with the touchscreen activity and their tapping or pointing at the screen.

Why have we been invited?

You have been invited to take part in this study with your child because they are within the age range that this study is designed for (3-36 months). This is a one-off study that you can run on any smart mobile device.

What would we have to do?

We have developed this study as an interactive game for you to complete with your child. Pairs of pictures of objects and animals will be presented on the screen of your device and your child will be asked to help a fictional character by tapping on the screen to select the picture asked for. Some of the sounds and pictures will be familiar to your child; other sounds and pictures will be new to your child. What your child attends to during the study can tell us a great deal about what they understand and how they learn about new words and objects. The study should take up to 15 minutes and installing the app on your mobile device shouldn't take more than a couple of minutes.

Some young toddlers might not be keen to tap the screen, but instead would point at the picture they select. In that case we would ask you to tap the screen accordingly on their behalf. If you help your child by tapping the screen for them it is very important that you tap the exact picture they point to, even if it is not the picture they were asked for. Not all words and objects may be known to your child and it is expected that some of their answers will be wrong. It is also expected that sometimes your child might not want to select any picture. In that case the app would automatically repeat the question once and then give your child another opportunity to select an answer before moving to the next pair of pictures.

The app has two parts: a practice session and a study session. We would like you to go through the practice part yourself first to familiarise with the game, then play the practice with your child and make sure they understand what the game is about. The practice session can be repeated if necessary. Once your child has done the practice session you can proceed to the study session.

Because we are trying to find out what your child understands or is interested in, we take a few precautions to prevent you accidentally 'cueing' your child to tap on certain pictures. We ask you to hold your child so that they are facing the device and not you and not to repeat the words you hear during the study. We collect data by recording your child's taps on the screen during the study.

The study involves no health risks to your child. We appreciate that they may not always want to do what we want them to! Most children seem to enjoy taking part, though occasionally a child may become grumpy, sleepy, or hungry. In this case, or for any other reason you can stop the session immediately without any penalty. You are free to ask questions about the study or request additional details at any time and we will endeavour to provide satisfactory answers.

One of the BabyLab team members will have contacted you with an ID code which will help tag your child's study session data correctly for us to analyse. You will need to enter the ID code that you were provided with in order to start the study session. Remember to ensure that your device is connected to the Internet during the study session so data automatically upload at its completion. The practice session does not save or upload any data and the data from the study session is deleted from your device after uploading.

If during the study session you decide to withdraw from the study you can do so by tapping the exit button in the top right corner of any of the screens displaying our fun character. You will be then prompted to choose whether you agree for partial data to be uploaded or you would prefer to delete the data entirely.

Prior to taking part in the touchscreen task, we will ask you to complete at home an online vocabulary inventory, indicating what words your child understands and says. This should take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee.

Who will have access to the data?

Only trained BabyLab researchers holding a DBS check will have access to the data obtained from this study, which are stored on secure cloud storage and computers. Your child's data will be publicly reported in an anonymised form and any potentially identifiable data will be deleted at the end of the project.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this project, please speak to the relevant researcher (01865 271 384) [or their supervisor (01865 271398), where applicable,] who will do his/her best to answer your query. The researcher should acknowledge your concern within 10 working days and give you an indication of how he/she intends to deal with it. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the chair of the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Oxford (Chair, Medical Sciences Inter-Divisional Research Ethics Committee; Email: ethics@medsci.ox.ac.uk; Address: Research Services, University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford, OX1 2JD, UK). The chair will seek to resolve the matter in a reasonably expeditious manner.

Data Protection

The University of Oxford is the data controller with respect to your personal data, and as such will determine how your personal data is used in the study.

The University will process your personal data for the purpose of the research outlined above. Research is a task that we perform in the public interest.

Further information about your rights with respect to your personal data is available from <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/compliance/gdpr/individualrights/>.

If you would like to discuss the research with someone beforehand (or if you have questions afterwards), please contact:

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