Teaching a novel word: Bilingual parent-child dyads' novel word and gesture use
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INTRODUCTION

- Parents may use a variety of strategies to teach their children new words, such as naming new objects or pointing to word-referent pairings (Tan & Schafer, 2005; Yow & Markman, 2011).
- Bilingual parents may also adjust their language choice.
- We examine how bilingual Spanish-English parents teach their children novel words focusing on parent behaviors in a semi-naturalistic parent-mediated word learning activity.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do parents modulate their language use, pointing, and labeling in parent-mediated word learning interactions?
- Do parents modulate their language use, pointing, and/or labeling depending on their own language dominance, the language dominance of their child, and/or their child’s language ability?

RESULTS

- We regressed parent pointing and parent token use on children’s language ability and the interaction between parent language dominance and proportion of English (vs. Spanish) used within the interaction.
- The interaction between parent dominance and proportion of parent English use significantly predicted parent pointing ($p = 0.01$).
- The interaction between parent dominance and proportion of parent English use did not significantly predict parent token use ($p = 0.27$).

SUMMARY & DISCUSSION

- Parent dominance and proportion of English use predicted parent’s use of pointing when teaching their children novel English-like words.
- Spanish-dominant parents pointed more when they used more English.
- Future analyses will focus on examining these predictors at the trial level to gain a more complete understanding of their effects.
- When paired with language learning outcome measures, this information may be useful in identifying effective word learning strategies for bilingual children.

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