The ’Goldilocks Effect’ in Preschoolers’ Attention to Spoken Language

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Abstract

How do children decide what language input to learn from? Here, we extend the idea that infants attend to stimuli at an intermediate level of complexity to the rich, naturalistic domain of spoken language. In our study, 2.5 to 6.5-year-old children watched two speakers alternate narrating pages of a textless picture book, before selecting which speaker they wanted to continue listening to. We manipulated the complexity of the speech, such that the Simple speaker used earlier-acquired words than the Complex speaker, but both introduced a rare target word each turn. We tested children’s learning of the target words, tracked their attention via eyetracking, and measured their vocabulary via the PPVT. Children learned more words from the Simple speaker overall, and were more likely to select the Simple speaker with greater age and vocabulary, suggesting they discriminated between levels of speech complexity, and selected the more learnable level.
In Michaela’s preschool classroom, the girls spend more time in the housekeeping and art centers, while the boys play with blocks and Legos. This is an example of gender typing. During early childhood, children’s gender-stereotyped beliefs strengthen so much that many children apply them as blanket rules that should not be violated. Which of the following preschoolers is most likely to be shunned by agemates? a boy who wears nail polish.

In-group favoritism. Mark rates his personality as ambitious, competitive, affectionate, cheerful, and soft-spoken. Marks responses indicate a(n) androgynous gender identity. Research on gender identity demonstrates that masculine and androgynous children have a higher self-esteem than those with a feminine identity. Unconventional language hacking tips from Benny the Irish polyglot; travelling the world to learn languages to fluency and beyond! Start Here! About.

Back to Goldilocks, I’ve found that 3 months is in the zone of being not too little, so that I get a genuinely good idea of that culture and can make a couple of friends, but not too much, so that I could still explore several places. So I’d still spend 3 months in some countries even if tourist visa limits weren’t effective (like in the European Union, since I’m an Irish citizen). Benny believes the best approach to language learning is to speak from day one. View all posts by Benny Lewis. Click here to see the comments! The effects of age of acquisition and bilingualism on verbal working memory. International Journal of Bilingualism, 21(5), 600–16. Dell, G. S., Chang, F., & Griffin, Z. M. (1999). Consonant age of acquisition effects are robust in children’s nonword repetition performance. Applied Psycholinguistics, 39, 933–59. Morgan, A. (2013). Assessment of working memory capacity in preschool children using the missing scan task. Infant and Child Development, 23(6), 575–87. Stackhouse, J., & Wells, B. (1997).