



Penn Arts & Sciences

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Dear Parent,

Right now your child is solving one of the most complex puzzles he or she will ever encounter – the puzzle of language. Considering how difficult it is for an adult to learn a foreign language, we might think it would be difficult indeed for a three to five-year-old to learn all the detailed facts about language. However, nearly all children by the age of four have learned their native tongue without requiring explicit formal instruction and with very little apparent effort. At the Language and Cognition Laboratory at the University of Pennsylvania, we study how children manage to use and apply so much so quickly.

We have studies underway now in which your child is being asked to participate. These studies ask how children between the ages of 3 and 11 acquire and use information to reason about language use. Previous research indicates that children in this age range differ from adults and children of other ages in their ability to reason about language use. Our research objective is to determine exactly what the nature of their ability is and what might cause differences and development in that area.

Participation in these studies involves your child hearing information and answering questions about pictures. Children often find participation to be fun and treat it as a new game. The teacher will select appropriate times when the children can play the game in a small room nearby the classroom, given that you agree to allow your child to participate, and he or she is willing.

If you do not wish your child to participate, please indicate so in the form below and return to the school. **If you would be willing to have your child participate, please fill out the attached consent form.** If you would like to hear about the results of the study, you may indicate this below as well and return the form to the school.

If either now or at some later time you have any questions about the studies or your child's participation, please feel free to call us at (215) 746-8384 or email us at langcoglabweb@gmail.com.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Anna Papafragou, PhD
Professor
Department of Linguistics

I do NOT want my child to participate in the study.

I would like to hear about the results of the study.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Language Learning and Language Use
Informed consent to participate in research study

Primary Investigator: Anna Papafragou, anna4@sas.upenn.edu

Your child is invited to take part in a research study conducted by Anna Papafragou in the Linguistics Department at the University of Pennsylvania. This consent form explains what we are studying and what you will be invited to do if you choose to consent. Please read and sign this form to confirm that you have been informed about the study and that you want to take part.

What we are studying: We are studying how people learn and use language and the ways in which language might influence thought.

What you will do: Participation in this study may consist of one to six 10 to 30-minute sessions with our research team. We will ask your child to play a simple computer game in which they will see a story or a scene through video or still images. During and/ or after the game, they will be asked to respond (by pointing or speaking) to simple questions about what they have seen. We may use an eyetracker to track your child's eye movements on a screen and/ or an audio recording device to record verbal responses.

Risks: No known risks are associated with this study. If your child does not wish to participate in the procedure, we will stop the study.

Benefits: Participating in this study will not benefit you or your child directly. You may enjoy contributing to the study of language and cognitive science.

Ending your participation: You can choose whether or not to allow your child to participate in this study. If you decide they may participate now but change your mind later, you may withdraw your child from the study at any time without any negative consequences. If you choose to withdraw your child from this study, previously provided information may be retained for our records, but any data your child may have provided will not be included in the study.

Your rights: Participation in this study is entirely **voluntary**. You or your child may decline to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

Confidentiality: In order to keep your and your child's information safe, the data that we collect is separated from your and their names and coded with an index number. The mapping between this index number and your and their names will be stored separately from the data in a password-protected encrypted database. Identifiable information is never shared with anyone outside our research team.

Data use: We may share anonymized data with approved members of our research team, but your and your child's names and date of birth will never be associated with any data that is shared. The overall results of this study may be published in scientific journals or discussed at academic conferences, but will never include names, dates of birth, or any other personal identifying information. De-identified data may be stored for use in future research studies without additional informed consent.

Compensation: At the end of each session, your child will receive a small age appropriate token such as a sticker, certificate, or piece of candy for their participation.

Questions? If you have questions about the study, please contact Anna Papafragou at 215-746-8384. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may also contact the Office of Regulatory Affairs at the University of Pennsylvania at 215-898-2614.

Authorization: By granting your permission, you are indicating that you understand the information in this consent form, including: the risks and benefits, that being in this study is voluntary, that you choose to allow your child to be in this study, and that you or your child can withdraw at any time.

IRB Approved:

Your Child's Name **[print]**

Your Child's Date of Birth

Parent Name **[print]**

Parent Signature

Today's Date

The following section is to be completed by a member of our research team:

Researcher's Name **[print]**

Researcher's Signature

Today's Date

IRB Approved:

Child Demographics and Language Survey

This is a voluntary demographic form. Completion of this form is completely up to you, and any information you provide will not be associated with your name or data in any way. Our funding agency asks that we obtain the following demographic information from each participant, so that they can monitor gender and minority inclusion in research studies. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask the study coordinator.

Our research team is interested in your language experience, since we study language use and development. The language experience information will be kept separate from the demographic information, in accordance with our privacy regulations.

Please circle one or more of each of the following for your child:

GENDER

(Circle one.)

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

ETHNIC CATEGORY

(Circle one.)

- Hispanic or Latino
- Not Hispanic or Latino
- Prefer not to say

RACIAL CATEGORY

(Circle one, or more if you are more than one race.)

- American Indian / Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Black / African American
- Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander
- White / Caucasian
- Prefer not to say
- Unknown
- Other _____

LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE

Is English the only language your child knows? Yes No

Please list all additional languages your child has had significant exposure to (e.g., other languages spoken by parents, grandparents, caregivers), at what age they first heard them, and an estimate of the percentage of time your child uses or hears each language in an average week.

Language	Age of first exposure	% per week
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Child's Birthdate _____

Does your child have any known visual, auditory, language, or cognitive impairments? If so please, describe: _____

