

'I'm Sorry, Could You Please Repeat That?': A Research Proposal on Bilingual Children's Ability to Process and Repeat Mixed Sentence Repetition (MSR) Tasks

Written by Fatma Nur Öztürk

Abstract

This research proposal aims to investigate the code-switching behavior of bilingual children within the context of mixed sentence repetition (MSR) tasks, focusing on the role of language dominance, exposure levels, and sentence complexity. Drawing upon theoretical frameworks by Hofweber and Marinis (2023), Soesman and Walters (2021) and Soesman et al. (2022), the study seeks to deepen our understanding of how bilingual individuals navigate between languages and linguistic structures. The proposed study will involve 20 bilingual Turkish-Dutch children aged 3-6, who will participate in both Cross-Language Naming and Comprehension Task (CLT) and MSR Task. Data collected from these tasks will be analyzed to explore patterns of code-switching at phrase boundaries and the impact of language proficiency, exposure, and sentence complexity on code-switching behavior. Anticipated results hold implications for language education strategies, assessment practices, and theoretical advancements in the study of bilingual language processing. Through rigorous methodology and comprehensive analysis, this research aims to contribute to the promotion of linguistic diversity and multilingualism in society.

Research Question(s)

Why do bilingual children tend to code mix more at the switch point (the boundary between Dutch-Turkish/Turkish-Dutch) in mixed sentence repetition (MSR) tasks?

- a) Are certain sentence structures more prone to code-switching at language boundaries? If so which ones?
- b) To what extent does the type of code-switching in the MSR tasks impact the likelihood of code-mixing?
- c) How does the complexity of the sentence impact the likelihood of code-switching?
- d) What is the relationship between language proficiency, exposure to L1/L2 and the frequency of code-switching at language boundaries among bilingual children, and how does this relationship manifest?

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