Sessions were recorded and transcribed then coded for JA types and categorical induction performance.

Examine how frequently caregivers produce generics in naturalistic, home situations.

Notable differences in categorical induction performance by early school age category skills show differences.

JA is often restricted in ASD.

Autism Spectrum Disorder and JA

JA: a type of engagement in which the child and caregiver purposefully switch attention between each other and the same object of interest. Reported to impact shape bias, other aspects of language development.

Types of JA

IJA → child initiates, caregiver responds
RJA → caregiver initiates, child responds

US: passive attention (PA) → caregiver and child are focused on the same object, but the child does not look at or respond to the caregiver.

Parent/child interaction style during input rarely examined.

Parents producing at least one generic and overall utterances.

Children with ASD engage in fewer IJA and RJA but more PA episodes than TD peers.

DISCUSSION

When toddlers are matched on receptive language ability and language development, parents of both TD and ASD groups produced similar numbers of generics and overall utterances.

Parents produced more generics when their child was responding to their bid for joint attention.

Toddlers in the TD group engaged in more RJA episodes than toddlers in the ASD group. Overtime this may lead to exposure to more generics in this optimal attentional state.

Parents of the ASD group produced more generics during PA, but not RJA. Parents producing at least one generic and overall utterances.

Limited exposure to generics in RJA may impact how children come to understand and reason about categories.

Future work

Examine impact of generics on categorical induction ability.

References: