

Variables influencing conversational interchanges during group interactions in nursery-schools.

Marta Casla¹, Florencia Alam², Ana Moreno-Núñez¹, Silvia Cruz-Gómez¹, María Fernández-Arroyo¹ & Gelin Du¹

¹Universidad Autónoma de Madrid; ²CIIPME, CONICET, Argentina.

This study aims at characterizing multimodal conversational interchanges that take place in group activities. While children's active participation in back-and-forth conversations could promote their linguistic development (Justice et al., 2018; Kidd & Rowland, 2021), their linguistic experiences differ quantitatively and qualitatively according to children's exposure to teachers' verbal utterances, even within the same group (Chaparro-Moreno et al., 2019; Perry, 2018). Additionally, most studies have been conducted with middle-SES English-speaking populations (Degotardi, 2021), while more diverse samples have been underexplored on this topic. In this study we examined the interactions between 19 teachers and their group of two-year-old children in Spanish nursery-schools (the children from 7 classrooms were from low SES backgrounds). Children's linguistic level was measured with the Spanish version of the MacArthur CDI (López-Ornat et al., 2005). We explored the frequency of conversational interchanges considering the focus of each utterance produced by the teacher (group or single child) and children's participation (number of utterances that each child produces). Preliminary analyses showed that children's frequency of participation in conversational interchanges could be explained by teacher-related variables (number of utterances directed to each child), child-related variables (their linguistic level), structural variables (classroom ratios) and SES. We discuss the need to analyze group interaction and the possibility to promote active participation in group-directed activities.