

## **Information sheet**

**Project Title:** Children discover communication

**Investigators:** Tamara Schmidt (PhD student)

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Professor Ludovica Serratrice

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Dear Parent/Carer,

We are inviting you to take part in a project looking at how young children between the ages of 2 and 3 learn to communicate with adults. This study is part of a PhD dissertation supervised in the School of Psychology and Clinical Language Sciences at the University of Reading and in collaboration with the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany. This research study will be undertaken by Tamara Schmidt who is a visiting PhD student from Germany. The data collected as part of this study will be collected by the University of Reading and will also be made available to researchers at the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany.

### **Why has my child been invited to take part?**

We are inviting families with children between the ages 24 and 36 months who only speak English at home, with typical vision and hearing, and with no known developmental difficulties to take part in a study from their homes.

### **What is the study about?**

The study is looking at how children between the ages of 2 and 3 communicate with an adult (either parent/carer) in a series of games that require collaboration. Successful communication relies on the ability to understand someone else's point of view, share attention, and ultimately use language effectively. These are all complex skills that take time to develop. In our study we are focusing on the emergence of these skills in toddlers in the context of collaborative games. In addition, we will ask you to fill in some questionnaires and checklists about your child's language, social-emotional and communicative state of development.

### **What does the study involve?**

If you would like to take part in the study, you can fill in the digital informed consent form via the link provided at the bottom of this information sheet. Giving informed consent is important as you will provide us with personal data through taking part in the study (for example name, age, vocabulary your child speaks and understands, and video footage).

Taking part in the study then involves filling in questionnaires and checklists, and you and your child will video record yourselves engaging in up to five play scenarios. The tasks are in the form of games that children typically find engaging. The games will be presented in digital books, they can be done individually and will take a maximum of 10-15 minutes per game. These digital books will lead you through the games in a step-by-step manner. You will use your personal devices to make the video recordings and to go through the digital materials of the study. You will receive the study material by email and post after giving your informed consent.

The timeframe of the study is very flexible, and participation can be stretched over two weeks. If you cannot do all recordings in one go, it would be good to take the next recordings at a similar time on another day, if possible. This is important as children develop quickly at this age. The questionnaires and checklists can also be filled in within the course of two weeks, and you may of course take breaks between the forms.

The study will take place between January 2021 and December 2021. If you would like to take part, you will consent to taking part in the study digitally through a secure Microsoft Form, a copy of which you can see attached to this information sheet. If you have any questions at any point before or during the study, please feel free to e-mail them to Tamara at [t.schmidt@pgr.reading.ac.uk](mailto:t.schmidt@pgr.reading.ac.uk).

### **What are the risks of taking part?**

Risks associated with this research project are minimum due to the nature of the study. Children typically find the sort of tasks we will use fun, but they might of course be unwilling to cooperate or they might become tired. You may introduce breaks whenever necessary or even come back to the recording later. You will be supervising your child and only use the materials that you feel happy to use for the study.

You will be taking the video recordings yourself and hence have full control over what you will submit to this study. If you are not happy with a recording, you are free to decide against uploading it. However, any recording you upload must show the first time you and your child play the game.

If the video recordings you take show someone else apart from you or your child, we must also ask them to provide informed consent (if they are an adult), or ask you to provide informed consent for them (if it is your own child), or the child's legal parent/guardian (if it is not your own child). In this case, we will provide you an additional informed consent form.

### **What happens to the information we collect from you and your child?**

We will only collect the data that is important to the research questions (only the minimum data we require for the study). Your data will be kept confidential and securely stored, with only a coded number identifying it. Information linking that number to your name will be stored securely and separately from the data you provide us. Participants will be assigned a number and will be referred to by this number in all records. All personal data will be held securely in confidence behind password protections, separate from anonymised study data. No identifiers linking you or your child to the study will be included in any kind of report. Personal data, which will be held in confidence, will be safely destroyed once no longer required. Your research data will be kept

securely after publication and will be reviewed regularly to decide whether the data will be kept or can be safely destroyed once no longer required.

Only the research teams and research assistants, involved in this study, will have access to the data for the duration of the study. The research team includes the PhD student Tamara Schmidt and both her supervisors Professor Ludovica Serratrice (University of Reading) and Professor Dr. Stephan Sallat (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany). Tamara Schmidt is a visiting PhD student at the University of Reading, and her PhD is being supervised by both Ludovica Serratrice and Prof. Dr. Stephan Sallat. The data collected in this study may be discussed between Tamara Schmidt and her supervisors.

Data collected from this study, with the exception of images/video footage, will be preserved and made available in anonymised form, so that they can be consulted and re-used by others. The results of the study may be presented at national and international conferences, in written reports and articles, and the PhD dissertation. Video footage will not be anonymised and only the research team has access to them. Only if you give your consent will we have the option to share your non-anonymised video data with other researchers, such as future PhD students.

You will be asked for your consent to take part in this study at two stages, before the footage is recorded, and again afterwards. This is to ensure you are still happy to take part in the study once you know what the content of the footage will include.

The data will be stored on a password-protected file on the University of Reading OneDrive. A OneDrive folder will be shared with you for uploading your video recordings. Only you and the PhD student Tamara have access to this folder. Once uploaded, your data will be moved to the password-protected file on the University of Reading OneDrive that only the research team has access to, and the folder shared with you will be deleted.

Your personal data will be held securely by the University of Reading, and the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany for the duration of the project study.

Beyond the study, anonymised data, that does not identify you or your child may be used for ongoing research purposes and may be shared with other researchers or made available in research publications. This data will not identify you or your child.

You will also be asked separately if you are happy for images and footage, that will identify you and your child (by showing your faces), to be shared with others for ongoing research purposes, for example to other researchers and students studying at either of the Universities involved in the study. This may mean that the footage could be published and made publicly available. This will not involve the disclosure of any other data, such as your names, and is entirely voluntary.

### **Data protection**

The organisations responsible for protection of your personal information are:

The University of Reading (the Data Controller for data that is held by The University of Reading)  
and

The Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg (the Data Controller for data that is held by The Martin Luther Halle University)

Queries regarding data protection and your rights for data held by the University of Reading should be directed to the University Data Protection Officer at [imps@reading.ac.uk](mailto:imps@reading.ac.uk), or in writing to: Information Management & Policy Services, University of Reading, Whiteknights, P O Box 217, Reading, RG6 6AH.

Queries regarding data protection and your rights for data held by the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg should be directed to Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Datenschutzbeauftragte, Universitätsplatz 10, 06108 Halle, Germany. The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at Email: [datenschutzbeauftragte@verwaltung.uni-halle.de](mailto:datenschutzbeauftragte@verwaltung.uni-halle.de)

The University of Reading and the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg collect, analyse, use, share and retain personal data for the purposes of research in the public interest. Under data protection law we are required to inform you that this use of the personal data we may hold about you is on the lawful basis of being a public task in the public interest and where it is necessary for scientific or historical research purposes. If you withdraw from a research study, which processes your personal data, dependent on the stage of withdrawal, we may still rely on this lawful basis to continue using your data if your withdrawal would be of significant detriment to the research study aims. We will always have in place appropriate safeguards to protect your personal data.

If we have included any additional requests for use of your data, for example adding you to a registration list for the purposes of inviting you to take part in future studies, this will be done only with your consent where you have provided it to us and should you wish to be removed from the register at a later date, you should contact Professor Ludovica Serratrice at [lserratrice@reading.ac.uk](mailto:lserratrice@reading.ac.uk). Professor Ludovica Serratrice will advise Professor Dr. Stephan Sallat if you wish to withdraw your consent.

You have certain rights under data protection law which are:

- Withdraw your consent, for example if you opted in to be added to a participant register
- Access your personal data or ask for a copy
- Rectify inaccuracies in personal data that we hold about you
- Be forgotten, that is your details to be removed from systems that we use to process your personal data
- Restrict uses of your data
- Object to uses of your data, for example retention after you have withdrawn from a study

You also have a right to complain the UK and Germany Data Protection Authorities if you are unhappy with how your data has been handled. Please contact the respective University Data Protection Officers in the first instance.

### **Do I have to take part?**

Taking part in the study is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time without having to give a reason.



### **Will I be paid to take part?**

To say thank you, your child will receive an age-appropriate gift after participation. Unfortunately, we cannot offer any cash compensation for taking part in the study.

### **Where can I get more information?**

If you have any questions about the study, this research or would like to know the results of the study, you can contact Tamara by email at [t.schmidt@pgr.reading.ac.uk](mailto:t.schmidt@pgr.reading.ac.uk) at any point over the course of the project, or Prof. Ludovica Serratrice at [l.serratrice@reading.ac.uk](mailto:l.serratrice@reading.ac.uk).

If you are happy to take part, please provide consent through the secure Microsoft Form, a copy of which is attached to this information sheet. Upon receipt of your completed consent form, Tamara will contact you within a week and provide you with materials for the study.

If your child does not fit in the age range of 24, 30 or 36 months yet but you would like to take part once your child is old enough, you may also contact Tamara and she will provide you with details on the procedure from there.

We very much appreciate you taking the time to read the above information.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Tamara Schmidt

Professor Ludovica Serratrice

If you have any questions regarding the above information, please speak to Tamara Schmidt. If you have read and understood this information, please proceed to the consent to participate form using the below link.

[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=xDv6T\\_zswEiQgPXkP\\_kOX7La0I55TuRPkoYDhDU0KtUNUkxUUg4TU4xQ09OQiI3R0tLMIFMUEpDVS4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=xDv6T_zswEiQgPXkP_kOX7La0I55TuRPkoYDhDU0KtUNUkxUUg4TU4xQ09OQiI3R0tLMIFMUEpDVS4u)



This is a copy of the Informed Consent form for your retention.

### CONSENT FORM

**Study Title:** Children Discover Communication

**Name of principal investigator:** Ludovica Serratrice

**Name of research student** Tamara Schmidt

The cancellation of consent can be directed in writing to: Professor Ludovica Serratrice  
[l.serratrice@reading.ac.uk](mailto:l.serratrice@reading.ac.uk).

The head of the ethics committee Professor Andrew Glennerster (or their successor from time to time) can be contacted through [urec@reading.ac.uk](mailto:urec@reading.ac.uk) if you have any concerns about the study or one of the investigators that you would not like to discuss with them directly.

This project has been reviewed by the University Research Ethics Committee and National Research Ethics committee where relevant, and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. Tamara Schmidt, who will analyse the recordings and questionnaires and checklists, has had a criminal records check and has been approved to work with children.

There will be two steps to the consent process. This consent form asks for initial agreement to participate in the study as described in the Information Sheet.

You will be sent a second consent form once you have provided the videos, asking you if you are still happy to participate in the study.

In order to participate in this study, I confirm and consent to the following:

1. My child's name \_\_\_\_\_
2. My child's date of birth \_\_\_\_\_
3. My Address \_\_\_\_\_
4. My Email Address \_\_\_\_\_
5. I hereby confirm that I am the child's (name above) legal parent/guardian  
 yes       no
6. Name of parent/legal guardian \_\_\_\_\_
7. I have received a copy of this Consent Form and the Information Sheet about the study Children Discover Communication, and carefully read and understood them.  
 yes       no

8. I have had explained to me the purposes of the project and what will be required of me and my child. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to the arrangements described in the Information Sheet in so far as they relate to my participation.
- yes       no
9. I am aware of what information will be collected about me and my child, what it will be used for, who it may be shared with, how it will be kept safe, and my rights in relation to my data, and for which purposes the data collected from me may be used beyond this PhD project.
- yes       no
10. I understand that participation is entirely voluntary and that my child and I have the right to withdraw from the project any time, and that this will be without detriment.
- yes       no
11. I understand that, with the exception of images/video footage the data collected from me in this study will be preserved and made available in anonymised form, so that they can be consulted and re-used by other researchers. This includes the possibility of results of the study being presented at national and international conferences, and in written reports and articles and the PhD dissertation.
- yes       no
12. I agree to the images/footage (which will identify me by including my face and the face of my child) to be retained beyond the project and made available to other researchers and students for ongoing research purposes (this is entirely optional and you can still take part in the study if you select no).
- yes       no
13. I understand that I will receive some of the study material and questionnaires, and a small thank you gift by post, to the addresses provided above.
- yes       no
14. Today's date \_\_\_\_\_