

# Acquiring bimodal bilingualism differently: a hearing and a deaf twin mediated in a deaf family

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## Abstract

The aim of this longitudinal case study was to describe critical changes in processes of mediated, bilingual, bimodal acquisition within an interactional frame, Naturalistic interchanges between the Deaf parents and their fraternal twins, with different hearing statuses, were studied from the twins' age of 10 months until they were 8 years old. The hearing twin acquired Swedish Sign Language (SSL) and spoken Swedish from birth in a parallel process whereas the deaf twin first acquired SSL. At the age of 35 months she received a cochlear implant (CI) and eventually acquired spoken Swedish, thus in a sequential process.

The participating hearing twin, here called Hugo, and the deaf twin, called Diana, grew up with a deaf older sibling. Their Father got his education in a special school for the deaf and the Mother in a special school for the hard-of-hearing.

Both twins, attended pre-school for the full day from the age of one and a half. Diana went to a special pre-school for deaf children with an SSL-approach. Hugo attended the local preschool where he communicated in spoken Swedish.

Data was triangulated through video-observations, brief field notes and an interview with the parents, and for Diana also information from the CI records. Interactions in the family were video-observed in their home. The focus in the study is on data

from 18 storytime and playtime sessions. In order to find patterns of critical changes in the data, two types of analyses were used.

In the first, which inductively explored the data, possible moments of critical changes were noted in the transcriptions. Interchanging episodes were in-depth analyzed (Creswell, 2007), compared between participants and in-detail described (Yin, 2009). In the second step, the material was compared in an abductive process with information from the CI records and with literature within the field.

The findings illuminate parallel and sequential language acquisition and elucidate parental bimodal and bilingual mediation over time.

On this particular occasion I will focus on two areas. Firstly, scaffolding bimodal bilingual acquisition with Hugo, which unlike previous studies, was performed by single, simultaneous, bimodal insertions, and with Diana by continuous tactile-visual signing, thus revealing *simultaneous-tactile-looking* (Cramér-Wolrath, 2013). Secondly, simultaneous self-scaffolded bilingual utterances, including private speech (Bodrova & Leong, 2003), were inserted into a model inspired by *Mediated activity* (Vygotsky, 1987).

The content of the processes should have implications for professionals concerned with information, educational contexts and bilingualism.

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