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Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed our manuscript “*Analysing the effect of sibling number on input and output in the first 18 months*”*,* submitted for consideration in *Infancy*. Drawing on >300 hours of naturalistic home-recorded data combined with monthly vocabulary checklists from an English learning sample in North America, we report an important advance in our knowledge of how siblings effect language input and knowledge in infancy in this context. Previous research has typically observed the effect of siblings on language development by comparing first-borns with later-borns as a single group, or first- versus second-borns only, with mixed results. We show, for the first time, that **the *number* of** **siblings an infant has plays a crucial role in predicting variability in both infant vocabulary size and caregiver input across the first 18 months of life**. By considering the effect of more versus fewer siblings, we show that the very fact of having a sibling does not affect vocabulary size, and has less of an effect on input than has been reported in the literature (e.g. Oshima-Takane & Robbins, 2003); only when an infant has two or more siblings do we begin to see variability in input and output measures.

Taking into account our work with the prior literature, the emerging narrative suggests that **infants with one sibling may benefit from observing or overhearing interactions between siblings and caregivers, which in turn may outweigh the potential reduction in certain aspects of language input that comes with having siblings otherwise. In contrast, having more than one sibling appears to throw this off-balance, leading to less input and smaller vocabulary in infants with 2+ siblings**.

Corresponding author Dr. Catherine Laing would be happy to field any queries about our submission. We can confirm that this study complies with all ethical standards required for publication in *Infancy*, and both authors have approved the manuscript and agree with its submission to this journal. We further confirm that this manuscript has not been published elsewhere and is not under consideration by another journal. The manuscript provides links to all the code that generated this manuscript on github, creating an important resource for the community to extend this work.

We believe this paper will be of great interest to Infancy’s readership, as it spans cognitive psychology and developmental linguistics, and makes both empirical and theoretical contributions to these domains.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Laing & Elika Bergelson