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35 Abstract

Test-retest reliability – establishing that measurements remain consistent across multiple testing sessions – is critical to measuring, understanding, and predicting individual 37 differences in infant language development. However, previous attempts to establish 38 measurement reliability in infant speech perception tasks are limited, and reliability of frequently-used infant measures is largely unknown. The current study investigated the test-retest reliability infant speech preference in a large sample (N=158) in the context of the ManyBabies1 collaborative research project (hereafter, MB1; Frank et al., 2017; ManyBabies Consortium, 2020) of infant-directed speech preference (hereafter, IDS) over adult-directed speech (hereafter, ADS; Cooper & Aslin, 1990). Labs of the original MB1 study were asked to bring in participating infants for a second appointment retesting infants on their IDS preference. This approach allows us to estimate test-retest reliability for the three different methods used to investigate preferential listening in infancy: the head-turn preference procedure, central fixation, and eye-tracking. Overall, we find no consistent evidence of test-retest reliability in measures of infants' speech preference 49 (overall r = .09, 95% CI [-.06,.25]). While increasing the number of trials that infants 50 needed to contribute for inclusion in the analysis revealed a numeric growth in test-retest 51 reliability, it also considerably reduced the study's effective sample size. Therefore, future research on infant development should take into account that not all experimental 53 measures might be appropriate to assess individual differences between infants, and hence, the interpretation of findings needs to be treated with caution. 55

Keywords: language acquisition; speech perception; infant-directed speech; adult-directed speech, test-retest reliability

58 Word count: 4506

Limited evidence of test-retest reliability in infant-directed speech preference in a large

pre-registered infant sample

Obtaining a quantitative measure of infants' cognitive abilities is an extraordinarily difficult endeavor. The most frequent way to assess what infants know or prefer is to track overt behavior. However, measuring overt behavior at early ages presents many challenges: participants' attention span is short, they do not follow instructions, their mood can change instantly and their behavior can often be described as unstable and volatile. Therefore, most measurements are noisy and the typical sample size of an infant study is small (around 20 infants per group), resulting in low power (Oakes, 2017). In addition, there is individual and environmental variation that may add even more noise to the data (e.g., Johnson & Zamuner, 2010). Despite these demanding conditions, reliable and robust methods for assessing infants' behavior are critical to understanding infant development.

In order to address these challenges, the ManyBabies collaborative research 71 consortium was formed to conduct large-scale conceptual, consensus-based replications of 72 seminal findings to identify sources of variability and establish best practices for 73 experimental studies in infancy (Frank et al., 2017). The first ManyBabies collaborative research project (hereafter, MB1, ManyBabies Consortium, 2020) explored the reproducibility of the well-studied phenomenon that infants prefer infant-directed speech 76 (hereafter, IDS) over adult-directed speech (hereafter, ADS, Cooper & Aslin, 1990). Across 77 many different cultures, infants are commonly addressed in IDS, which typically is characterized by higher pitch, greater pitch range, and shorter utterances, compared to the language used between interacting adults (Fernald et al., 1989). A large body of behavioral studies finds that infants show increased looking times when hearing IDS compared to ADS stimuli across ages and methods (Cooper & Aslin, 1990; see Dunst, Gorman, & Hamby, 2012 for a meta-analysis). This attentional enhancement is also documented in neurophysiological studies showing increased neural activation during IDS compared to

ADS exposure (Naoi et al., 2012; Zangl & Mills, 2007). IDS has also been identified as facilitating early word learning. In particular, infants' word segmentation abilities
Thiessen, Hill, & Saffran (2005) and their learning of word-object associations (Graf Estes & Hurley, 2013; Ma, Golinkoff, Houston, & Hirsh-Pasek, 2011) seems to be enhanced in the context of IDS. In sum, IDS seems to be beneficial for early language development.

Within MB1, altogether 67 labs contributed data of 2,329 infants showing that babies 90 generally prefer to listen to IDS over ADS. Nevertheless, the overall effect size d=0.35 was 91 much smaller than the meta-analytic effect size of d = 0.67 reported by Dunst et al. (2012). 92 The results revealed a number of additional factors that influenced the effect size. First. older infants showed a larger preference of IDS over ADS. Second, the stimulus language was linked to IDS preference, with North American English learning infants showing a larger IDS preference than infants learning other languages. Third, comparing the different methods employed, the head-turn preference procedure yielded the highest effect size, while the central fixation paradigm and eye-tracking methods revealed smaller effects. Finally, exploratory analyses assessed the effect of different inclusion criteria. Across methods, using stricter inclusion criteria led to an increase in effect sizes despite the larger 100 proportion of excluded participants (see also Byers-Heinlein, Bergmann, & Savalei, 2021). 101

However, there is a difference between a result being reliable in a large sample of 102 infants and the individual measure of an individual infant being reliable. In studies 103 tracking individual differences, the measured behavior during an experimental setting is 104 often used to predict a cognitive function or specific skill later in life. Individual differences 105 research of this kind often has substantial implications for theoretical and applied work. For example, research showing that infants' behavior in speech perception tasks can be 107 linked to later language development (see Cristia, Seidl, Junge, Soderstrom, & Hagoort, 2014 for a meta-analysis) has the potential to identify infants at risk for later language 109 delays or disorders. However, a necessary precondition for this link to be observable is that 110 individual differences between infants can be measured with high reliability at these earlier 111

stages, in order to ensure that measured inter-individual variation mainly reflects
differences in children's abilities rather than measurement error. How reliable are the
measures used in infancy research?

Previous attempts to address the reliability of measurements are either limited to 115 adult populations (Hedge, Powell, & Sumner, 2018), or have been conducted with small 116 sample sizes (e.g., Houston, Horn, Qi, Ting, & Gao, 2007). For example, Colombo, 117 Mitchell, and Horowitz (1988) used a paired comparison task, in which infants were 118 familiarized with a stimulus and for the test trials presented with the familiarized and a novel stimulus side-by-side. Results indicated that infants' novelty preference was extremely variable from task to task. Assessing infants' performance from one week to 121 another revealed that infants' attention measures were moderately reliable. However, 122 reliability seemed to increase with the number of tasks infants were able to complete in the 123 younger age group, suggesting that reliability is influenced by the number of assessments. 124 In addition, infants' performance from 4 to 7 months was longitudinally stable but 125 somewhat smaller than the week-to-week reliability. Cristia, Seidl, Singh, and Houston 126 (2016) also retested infant populations by independently conducting 12 different 127 experiments on infant speech perception at three different labs with different 128 implementations of the individual studies. Hence, it was only after completed data 120 collection that the data was pooled together by the different labs revealing potential 130 confounds. Nevertheless, the results showed that reliability was extremely variable across 131 the different experiments and labs and overall low (meta-analytic r = .07). 132

Against this background, the current study investigates test-retest reliability of infants' performance in a speech preference task. Within MB1, a multi-lab collaboration, we examine whether infants' preferential listening behavior to IDS and ADS is reliable across two different test sessions. We also aim to address whether time between test and retest or infants' language background influences the reliability of the preference measure.

Our study was faced with a critical design choice: what stimulus to use to assess 138 test-retest reliability. A first constraint of our study was that, since it was a follow-on to 139 MB1, any stimulus we used would always be presented after the MB1 stimuli. One option 140 would be simply to bring back infants and have them hear exactly the same stimulus 141 materials. A weakness of this design would be the potential for stimulus familiarity effects, 142 however, since infants would have heard the materials before. Further complicating 143 matters, infants might show a preference for or against a familiar stimulus depending on 144 their age (Hunter & Ames, 1988). The ideal solution then would be to create a brand new 145 stimulus set with the same characteristics. Unfortunately, because of the process how MB1 146 stimuli were created, we did not have enough normed raw recordings available to make 147 brand new stimulus items that conformed to the same standards as the MB1 stimuli. 148

We therefore chose an intermediate path: we reversed the ordering of MB1 stimuli. 149 Average looking times in MB1 were always lower than 9s per trial, even for the youngest 150 children on the earliest trials (the group who looked the longest on average), so most 151 children in MB1 did not hear the second half of most trials. Thus, by reversing the order, 152 we had a perfectly matched stimulus set that was relatively unfamiliar to most infants. 153 The disadvantage of this design was that infants who looked longer might be more likely to hear a familiar clip that they had heard in the previous study. If infants then showed a 155 familiarity preference – an assumption which might not be true – the end result could be to inflate our estimates of test-retest reliability slightly, since longer lookers would on average 157 look longer at retest due to their familiarity preference. We view this risk as relatively low, 158 but do note that it is a limitation of our design. 159

The current study also explores whether there are any differences in test-retest reliability between the three widely used methods: central fixation (hereafter, CF), eye-tracking, and the head-turn preference procedure (hereafter, HPP). Exploring differences in CF, eye-tracking, and HPP, Junge et al. (2020) provide experimental and meta-analytic evidence in favor of using the HPP in speech segmentation tasks. Similarly,

the MB1 project reported an increase in the effect size for HPP compared to CF and 165 eye-tracking (ManyBabies Consortium, 2020). HPP requires gross motor movements 166 relative to other methods, such as CF and eye-tracking paradigms, for which subtle eye 167 movements towards a monitor located in front of the child are sufficient. One possible 168 explanation for the stronger effects with HPP may be a higher sensitivity to the 169 contingency of the presentation of auditory stimuli and infants' head turns away from the 170 typical forward-facing position. While these findings suggest that HPP may be a more 171 sensitive index of infant preference, they do not necessarily imply higher reliability for 172 individual infants' performance using the different methods. Hence, it remains an open 173 question whether the same measures that produce larger effect sizes at the group-level also 174 have higher test-retest reliability for individual infants (Byers-Heinlein, Bergmann, et al., 175 2021). Therefore, assessing the test-retest reliability of the different preference measures is crucial, so that researchers can make informed decisions about the appropriate methods for their particular research question. Critically, only measures with high test-retest reliability should be used for studies of individual differences.

180 Method

### 181 Preregistration

Prior to the start of data collection, we preregistered the current study on the Open Science Framework (https://osf.io/v5f8t; see S1 in the Supplementary Materials for further details).

## Data Collection

A call was issued to all labs participating in the original MB1 study on January 24th,
2018 (ManyBabies Consortium, 2020). The collection of retest session data was initially set
to end on May 31st, 2018, one month after the end date of the original MB1 project. Due

to the fact that the original MB1 project extended the time frame for data collection and the late start of data collection for the MB1 test-retest study, we also allowed participating labs to continue data collection past the scheduled end date.

## 192 Participants

Contributing labs were asked to re-recruit their monolingual participants between the 193 ages of 6 to 12 months who had already participated in the MB1 project. If participating 194 labs had not committed to testing either of these age groups, they were also allowed to 195 re-recruit participants from the youngest age group of 3- to 6-month-olds and/or the oldest 196 age group of 12- to 15-month-olds. Labs were asked to contribute half (n=16) or full 197 samples (n=32); however, a lab's data was included in the study regardless of the number 198 of included infants. The study was approved by each lab's respective ethics committee and 199 parental consent was obtained for each infant prior to participation in the study. 200

Our final sample consisted of 158 monolingual infants from 7 different labs (Table 1).

In order to be included in the study, infants needed a minimum of 90% first language

exposure, to be born full term with no known developmental disorders, and normal hearing

and vision. We excluded 11 participants due to session errors and 11 participants who did

not have at least one valid trial per condition (IDS and ADS) at their first or second

session. The mean age of infants included in the study was 245 days (range: 108 – 373

days).

#### 208 Materials

Visual stimuli. The visual stimuli were identical to MB1. For the central fixation
paradigm and eye-tracking, labs were asked to use a multicolored static checkerboard as
the fixation stimulus as well as a multicolored moving circle with a ringing sound as an
attention getter to reorient infants toward the screen in between trials. Labs using the

HPP method were instructed to use their lab's standard procedure, as in MB1.

Speech stimuli. We used the identical training stimuli of piano music from MB1.

A second set of naturalistic IDS and ADS recordings of mothers either talking to their infant or to an experimenter was created for the retest session by reversing the order of clips within each sequence of the original study. This resulted in eight new sequences of natural IDS and eight new sequences of natural ADS with a length of 18 seconds each.

This was in order to prevent infants who still remembered the stimuli from their first test session from easily getting bored.

Procedure. Infants were retested using the identical procedure as during the first testing day: central fixation, HPP, or eye-tracking. Participating labs were asked to ideally schedule test and retest session 7 days apart with a minimum number of 1 day and a maximum number of 31 days. Three infants whose time between test and retest exceeded 31 days were also included in the analyses. The mean number of days between test and retest was 10 (range: 1 to 49 days).

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A total of 18 trials, including two training, eight IDS, and eight ADS trials, were presented in one of four pseudo-randomized orders. Trial length was either infant-controlled or fixed depending on the lab's standard procedure, that is a trial stopped either if the infant looked away for 2 seconds or after the total trial duration of 18 seconds. The online coding experimenter and the parent listened to music masked with the stimuli of the study via noise-cancelling headphones. If the experimenter was in an adjacent room separate from the testing location, listening to masking music was optional for the experimenter.

Data exclusion. A child was excluded if they had a session error, i.e., an
experimenter error (e.g., inaccurate coding, or presentation of retest stimuli on the first
test session), or equipment failure (visual stimuli continued to play after the end of a trial).
Trials were excluded if they were marked as trial errors, i.e., if the infant was reported as
fussy, an experimental or equipment error occurred, or there was parental interference

Table 1
Statistics of the included labs. n refers to the number of infants included in the final analysis.

Lab	Method	Language	Mean age (days)	N
babylab-potsdam	HPP	German	227	22
babyling-oslo	Eyetracking	Norwegian	249	10
brookes-babylab	central fixation	English	267	18
InfantCog-UBC	central fixation	English	147	7
infantll-madison	HPP	English	230	30
lancslab	Eyetracking	English	236	16
wsi-goettingen	central fixation	German	280	39
wsi-goettingen	НРР	German	242	16

during the task (e.g., if the parent spoke with the infant during the trial). Trials were also excluded if the minimum looking time of 2 s was not met. If a participant was unable to contribute at least one IDS and one ADS trial for either test or retest, all data of that participant was excluded from the test-retest analyses.

Results

## 1DS preference

First, we examined infants' preferences for IDS in both sessions. Two two-samples t-tests revealed that the children in Session 1, t(157) = 6.47, p < .001, and in Session 2, t(157) = 4.19, p < .001, showed a preference of IDS over ADS (see Table 2 for the looking times in each session). In the first session, 68.35 percent of the children showed a preference for IDS, and in the second session, 63.29 percent of the children showed a

Trial type	Session 1 Mean	Session 1 SD	Session 2 Mean	Session 2 SD
ADS	7.72	2.77	6.96	2.92
IDS	8.76	2.85	7.75	2.75

Table 2

Looking times in s for each session and condition

numerical preference for IDS. In other words, we replicated the previous finding from the main MB1 study. There was no difference in the strength of the preference effect, as a multilevel analysis with a random slope and random intercept for session on the lab level revealed no significant impact of session on infants' preference, with an estimate of zero and very small variance,  $\beta$ =-0.26, SE=0.31, p=.424.

## 255 Reliability

We assessed test-retest reliability in two ways. First, we conducted a multilevel 256 analysis, with Lab as random intercept, predicting the IDS preference in Session 2 based on 257 the IDS preference in Session 1. The results revealed that we could not predict the 258 preference score in Session 2 based on Session 1 (see Table 2). Second, we calculated the 259 Pearson correlation coefficient. While a simple correlation coefficient might overestimate 260 the test-retest reliability in our sample because it does not control for the differences 261 between different labs and methods (HPP, CF, and eye-tracking), we felt it was important 262 to also conduct a Pearson correlation as it is commonly used to assess reliability. Again, the size of the correlation coefficient was not statistically different from zero and the estimate was, in fact, approaching nil, r = .09, 95% CI [-.06, .25], t(156) = 1.19, p = .237. 265 Furthermore, we calculated the percentage of preference reversal between test and retest 266 counting the number of participants for whom the preference changed between test and 267 retest, and dividing it by the number of all participants. The results revealed that 41.77 268

Table 3

Coefficient estimates from a linear mixed effects

model predicting IDS preference in Session 2.

	Estimate	SE	t	р
Intercept	0.874	0.456	1.920	0.102
Session One	0.035	0.085	0.414	0.679

percent of the infants had a preference reversal from test to retest session. Taken together, our results lead us to conclude that there is no overall test-retest reliability for the three infant preference measures used within the current study.

To test whether the results were different for a specific method, we calculated the 272 Pearson correlation coefficients and the multilevel analyses for the three different methods, 273 HPP, central fixation and eye-tracking, separately (see Table 4). Splitting the data per 274 method also did not lead to different results. Neither the Pearson correlation coefficients 275 nor the coefficients of the multilevel analysis were significant, all p-values > .286. We also 276 tested for the possibility that the Time between sessions might have an impact on the 277 reliability. The subsequent multilevel analysis, with Lab as random intercept, predicting 278 the IDS preference in Session 2 based on the IDS preference in Session 1, the number of 279 days between Session 1 and Session 2 and the interaction of these two variables, did not 280 indicate that Time between sessions had an effect. Neither the main effect of Time between 281 sessions,  $\beta = 0.00$ , SE = 0.03, p = .916, nor the interaction term,  $\beta = -0.01$ , SE = 0.02, p = .479, showed significant effects. As NAE-learning infants showed greater IDS preferences than 283 their non-NAE counterparts in the original study, we also assessed if test-retest reliability interacted with children's native language. A multilevel analysis with Lab as random 285 intercept, predicting the IDS preference in Session 2 based on the IDS preference in Session 286 1, NAE and the interaction of these two variables, revealed no interaction,  $\beta$ =0.29,

Table 4

Coefficient estimates from a linear mixed effects model predicting IDS preference in Session 2 for each method separately.

Method	estimate	SE	pvalue	cor	pvalue2
НРР	0.151	0.137	0.276	0.134	0.276
Eyetracking	0.034	0.162	0.835	0.021	0.919
central fixation	-0.195	0.125	0.125	0.080	0.530

288 SE=0.18, p=.115 (see Figure 1).

### 289 Results with different inclusion criteria

To this point, all analyses were performed on data with the inclusion criteria from 290 MB1. For this, infants needed only 1 out of 8 valid trial pairs (i.e., any combination of an 291 IDS and ADS trial) to be included in the analyses. Given that the use of more stringent 292 inclusion criteria yielded larger effects sizes within the original MB1 study, we also assessed 293 test-retest reliability by applying stricter inclusion criteria and thereby increasing test length to 2, 4, 6, and 8 included test trial pairs per condition. Applying a stricter criterion 295 - and thereby increasing test length - increased reliability numerically from r = 0.07 to r =296 0.34 (Figure 2). However, in part likely due to the decrease in sample size, only one of 297 these correlations (when requiring a minimum of 6 trial pairs) was statistically significant: 2 valid trial pairs, t(152) = 0.90, p = .367; 4 valid trial pairs, t(143) = 1.03, p = .306; 6 valid trial pairs, t(98) = 2.23, p = .028; 8 valid trial pairs - all trials on both testing days t(22) = 1.68, p = .108. The analyses provide tentative evidence that stricter inclusion 301 criteria might lead to higher test-retest reliability but at the same time comes with 302 tremendous decreases in sample size. 303

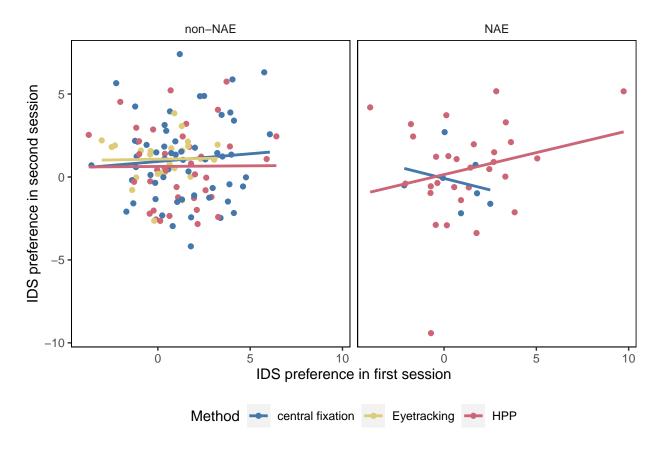


Figure 1. Infants' preference in Session 1 and Session 2 with individual data points and regression lines color-coded by method (central fixation, eye-tracking, or HPP). Results are plotted separately for North American English-learning infants (right panel) and infants learning other languages and dialects (right panel).

## General Discussion

The current study set out to explore the test-retest reliability of the infant speech preference of IDS over ADS. Infants of the original MB1 project were retested on a reversed order of stimuli in order to assess if their listening pattern would be similar to that of their initial assessment. While we replicated the original effect of infants' speech preference for IDS over ADS in the current MB1 follow-up study for both test and retest session on the group-level using the same MB1 protocol, we found that infants' speech preference measures had no test-retest reliability. In other words, we were unable to detect any stable individual differences of infants' speech preference. This finding is in line with

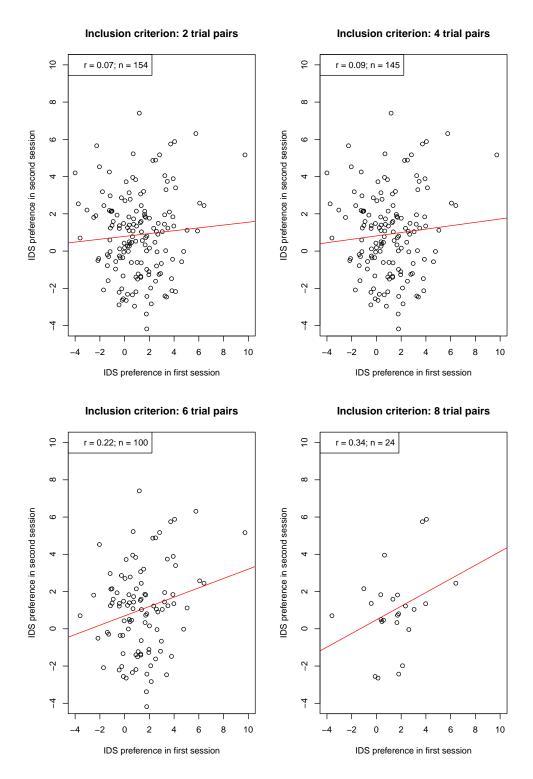


Figure 2. IDS preferences of both sessions plotted against each other for each inclusion criterion. n indicates the number of included infants, r is the Pearson correlation coefficient as the indicator for reliability.

other research indicating a rather low test-reliability for different developmental paradigms 313 (Cristia et al., 2016). Given that most experimental procedures conducted in 314 developmental research are interested in the comparison of groups, individual differences 315 between participants within a specific condition are usually minimized by the experimental 316 procedure while differences between conditions are maximized. Therefore, the infant 317 preference measure may be a good approach to capture universal phenomena but does not 318 seem to be appropriate for examining factors that may lead to individual differences in 319 development. 320

Consistent with general psychometric theory (e.g., DeBolt, Rhemtulla, & Oakes, 2020) a larger number of included test trials was associated with higher reliability. However, in our dataset, this association was based on exploratory analyses and was only found descriptively, hence, a replication is warranted. A similar effect on the group-level was found in the MB1 project, where a stricter inclusion criterion led to bigger effect sizes (ManyBabies Consortium, 2020).

In our study, as in the MB1 original study, higher reliability through strict exclusions 327 came at a high cost. In particular, with the strictest criterion, only a small portion of the 328 original sample size, that is 24 out of 158 infants, could be included in the final sample for 320 this particular analysis. In other words, applying a stricter criterion leads to a higher drop 330 out rate and reduces the actual sample size enormously. In the case of studies in the field 331 of developmental science, where there are many practical restrictions in collecting large 332 samples of infants (e.g., birth rate in the area, restricted lab capacities, budget 333 restrictions), a strict drop out criterion might not be easy - if even possible at all - to implement. Note that studies in developmental science already have above average drop 335 out rates (Miller, 2017). In addition, drop out may not be random, and so having high 336 drop out rates can further limit the generalisability of a study. Particularly in the context 337 of turning individual differences measures into diagnostic tools, high drop-out rates have an 338 additional limitation of not being broadly usable. 339

An alternative approach to increase the number of valid trials might be to also 340 increase the number of collected trials. In this case, a participant can have a high 341 number/proportion of invalid trials and still be included into the final sample as the 342 absolute number of trials is high and thereby decreasing trial-to-trial variability (DeBolt et 343 al., 2020; see Silverstein, Feng, Westermann, Parise, & Twomey, 2021 for an example). 344 While this approach might sound promising, it must be seen if this is realistic, because the 345 attention span of a typical participant of a developmental study is rather short. Therefore, 346 prolonging the experimental procedure to maximize the absolute number of trials might 347 also be practically challenging. Further potential attempts in obtaining higher numbers of 348 valid trials may include changes in the procedure (e.g., Egger, Rowland, & Bergmann, 349 2020) or implementing multi-day test sessions (Fernald & Marchman, 2012). As our results 350 are only based on the particular phenomenon of IDS preference (albeit, with three widely used methods: HPP, central fixation; eye-tracking) it is essential to further assess the 352 underlying reliability of these measures within other areas of speech perception. While 353 most infants prefer IDS over ADS (Dunst et al., 2012), predicting a pattern of preference, 354 for instance, within speech segmentation tasks, i.e. familiar versus novel words, seem not 355 that straightforward (Bergmann & Cristia, 2016). Especially in the context of relating a 356 direction of preference to later language development, there seem to be controversial 357 findings. That is, both familiarity and novelty responses have been suggested to be 358 predictive of infants' later linguistic abilities (DePaolis, Vihman, & Keren-Portnoy, 2014; 359 R. S. Newman, Rowe, & Ratner, 2016; R. Newman, Ratner, Jusczyk, Jusczyk, & Dow, 360 2006). In light of findings from the current study, researchers conducting longitudinal 361 studies with experimental data from young infants predicting future outcomes should be 362 cautious as there may be inter-individual variability affecting their preferences. 363

### 364 Limitations

While we had an above average sample size for a study in developmental research, we 365 were unable to reach the number of participants collected within the original MB1 study. 366 In addition to a delayed call, the extra effort of having to schedule a second lab visit for 367 each participant and the fact that there were already other collaborative studies taking 368 place simultaneously (MB1B, Byers-Heinlein, Tsui, Bergmann, et al., 2021; MB1G, 369 Byers-Heinlein, Tsui, Van Renswoude, et al., 2021), might have contributed to the rather 370 low turnout. A higher sample size and a larger number of participating labs from different 371 countries might have enabled us to test for possible differences of the test-retest reliability 372 of the different methods (HPP, central fixation, eye-tracking) and NAE versus non-NAE 373 language backgrounds. Further, a larger sample size might have enabled us to conduct 374 meaningful tests of moderators such as age of the child on the test-retest reliability. 375

A further limitation concerns the stimuli. While the order of the clips within trials 376 presented to the participating children in the second session was different than in the first 377 session, the exact same stimulus material as in MB1 was used in both sessions. In 378 particular, all children heard the exact same voices in Session 1 and in Session 2. From a 379 practical point of view, it was the easiest solution. However, familiarity effects might have 380 influenced infants' looking behavior. Assuming that only infants with longer looking times in Session 1 might have had the chance to recognize the voices in Session 2 from their session a week ago as familiar clips would only be towards the end of trials, infants with 383 shorter looking times might not have had the opportunity to listen to the voices from their 384 first session. Therefore, for some children, familiarity with the stimulus material might 385 have led to artificially lowering test-retest reliability.

387 Conclusion

Following the MB1 protocol, the current study could not detect test-retest reliability
of infants' preference measures for IDS over ADS. Subsequent analyses showed that a
stricter criterion for the inclusion of data points may enhance the test-retest reliability at
the cost of high drop out rates. Developmental studies which rely on stable individual
differences of their participants need to consider the underlying reliability of their measures,
and we recommend a broader assessment of test-retest reliability in infant research.

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# Data and materials availability statement

The data and materials that support the findings of the current study are openly available on OSF at https://osf.io/ZEQKA/.

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