

## **SOP1-1**

### **The Bilingual Home Language Boost through the Lens of the COVID-19 Pandemic**

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For bilinguals who speak a minority language at home, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to unprecedented modifications in their language learning environment. This study aims to examine how these modifications affect language use and proficiency of bilingual children.

We analyzed existing data of two matched groups of Mandarin-English bilingual children, one tested before (pre-COVID group) and the other during (COVID group) the pandemic.

The dataset comprises responses to a language environment questionnaire and scores on a comprehension and a production task in both languages. We found that the COVID group had richer Mandarin input and performed better on both the Mandarin comprehension and production tasks than the pre-COVID group. On the other hand, the pre-COVID group performed better on the English production task than the COVID group. In addition, language use variables were correlated with production performance in both languages. These patterns illustrate the intimate relationships between language use and bilingual language proficiency. This project was supported by a Spencer Foundation grant (201900085) and a University of Delaware faculty startup fund provided to the first author.