The picture-naming task in normal children
Towards a developmental model of word retrieval

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Frequently used in both research and clinical practice, the picture-naming task is an experimental situation which allows characterizing the cognitive processes involved in the word retrieval and their time course.

The aim of our study is to create a dynamical model of word retrieval centered on the child development. The model will consider both visual and psycholinguistic variables that influence this process as well as linguistic and pre-linguistic developments that characterize the child.

Current adults’ models are not adapted to correctly understand the word retrieval in children nor to define the origin of word-finding difficulties children have their linguistic abilities in constant evolution, but this dynamical process is currently not considered.

252 children ranging from 5 years old to 11 years old. Children are divided up in 10 age classes. They were recruited from schools in the French-speaking part of Belgium.

Methodology

- Creation of a new picture-naming task composed of 110 items. This battery, constructed from the Snodgrass and Vanderwart (1980) and Bonin (2003) items, contains updated and colored photographs.
- Creation of specific tasks that evaluate each cognitive process implied during the word retrieval.

Results

Data are still collecting on the remaining sample. Final results are not yet known.

Relevance

- From a fundamental point of view, our study will make possible to lead to a model of word retrieval specifically adapted for children, currently nonexistent.
- From a clinical point of view, the creation of this model will allow to conceive more pertinent and updated diagnostic tests.