Abstract:

This study investigates the learning and retention of the Indirect Object Relative Clause (IORC) in Cantonese-speaking children with and without DLD using a syntactic priming task administered in two sessions one week apart. Twenty children with DLD and twenty typically developing (TD) age-matched peers aged 7 to 9 participated. The study applied Bayesian linear mixed effects modeling to analyze the data, controlling for age, working memory, and general grammatical knowledge. Results indicated that children with DLD learned and retained IORC less effectively than TD children. Prior knowledge significantly influenced learning and retention for both groups, with more prior knowledge leading to better outcomes. However, no significant interaction effects were found between group and cycle or group and prior knowledge, suggesting similar effects on learning and retention across both groups. The findings contribute to the understanding of language learning difficulties in children with DLD and have implications for educational interventions.