Abstract

Verbal fluency tests (VFTs) examine the cognitive processes present in retrieving and generating novel words. In developing and adapting VFTs, previous research focused mainly on neurological disorders through patients with SLI (Uysal & Maviş, 2018; Rowley, Mason, Herman, & Morgan, 2013), and Alzheimer's disease (Kalafatoğlu, 2015) and unimodal bilingualism (Malek, Hekmati, Amiri, Pirzadeh, & Gholizadeh, 2013; Escobar, Kalashnikova, & Escudero, 2018; Yılmaz, 2016). Very few studies investigated bimodal bilingualism (Sehyr, Giezen, & Emmorey, 2018; Giezen & Emmorey, 2017). The present study aimed to discover the effects of language modality, age of acquisition and bimodal bilingualism on the semantic and phonological fluency of neurotypical adults in Turkish Sign Language (TİD) and Turkish. A sample of 20 participants was divided into three groups: adult monolingual Turkish speakers (n = 8), deaf monolingual TİD signers (n = 8) and TİD-Turkish bilinguals (n = 4). Two semantic and two phonological fluency tasks were administered. The participants were asked to generate novel words for each domain within 60 seconds. The digitally recorded responses were transcribed and coded manually. *SPSS Statistics Version 25* was used for all analyses. The results of the study revealed that the monolingual Turkish speakers did significantly better than the signers (p < .001). The speakers performed equally on both semantic and phonological tasks, while the signers favored the former (p = .029). Age of acquisition was only considered in the context of TİD, and it was concluded that the native signers (n = 5) performed slightly better in comparison with the late signers (p = .047). Bimodal bilingualism did not have a statistically significant impact on verbal fluency as the bilingual performances were similar to those of monolingual participants in both TİD (p = .55) and Turkish (p = .79). In other words, the present research acts as a proposal in that, with a limited sample, it may provide some insights into the nature of semantic and phonological fluency in TİD and Turkish.

Keywords: Verbal Fluency, Turkish, Turkish Sign Language, Bimodal Bilingualism