Introduction

Children show knowledge of Principle C at 30 months
- Vocabulary size indexes success [1]
- Lexical access speed does not [2]

Q1: Does Vocabulary index grammatical knowledge?
A: No; with a finer-grained measure, all children show adult-like interpretation

Q2: By what mechanism are children arriving at the correct interpretation?
A: Via syntactic processing. Variability in speed of response is predicted by speed of processing syntactic information (and not by other speed measures)

Experiment 3: Principle C Task

Familiarization: reflexive event (Katie patting herself) and non-reflexive event (Anna patting Katie) individually, with neutral audio (Oh look! Somebody’s getting patted!)

Principle C condition: She’s patting Katie!
Reflexive condition: She’s patting herself!

Experiments 1 & 2: Processing Speed Tasks

Processing at the lexical level
Processing at the syntactic level

Coarse-grained Results

Not shown: No overall (accuracy) differences between any median split groups (all p>.05)

Fine-grained Results: Growth Curve Analysis

Vocabulary Size
Lexical Access Speed
PS Integration Speed (biggest train)
PS Integration Speed (biggest red train)

Interpretation

Because efficiency of response is predicted by speed of syntactic processing, 30 month-olds’ adult-like interpretations are indicative of adult-like grammatical knowledge.

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