Title

Lexical iconicity facilitates word learning in situated and displaced learningcontexts

Permalink

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9hz8x1m6

Journal

Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, 41(0)

Authors

Motamedi, Yasamin
Wonnacott, Elizabeth
Marshall, Chloe
et al.

Publication Date

2019

Peer reviewed

Lexical iconicity facilitates word learning in situated and displaced learning contexts

Yasamin Motamedi
University College London, London, United Kingdom

Elizabeth Wonnacott
University College London, London, London, United Kingdom

Chloe Marshall
University College London, London, London, United Kingdom

Pamela Perniss
University of Cologne, Cologne, Germany

Gabriella Vigliocco
University College London, London, United Kingdom

Abstract

We present an experimental study that examines how lexical iconicity (i.e. onomatopoeia) affects early word learning, across learning contexts. Children aged 24-36 months (N=37) were first trained on labels that are either iconic or neutral with respect to the referent event, and then tested using a forced-choice task to select the correct referent given a label. We assessed learning across two contexts: situated, where label and referent co-occur, and displaced, where children learn the label following the referent event. We predicted that iconicity would aid word learning, and would have a more facilitatory effect in the displaced condition, helping the child to associate label and referent. Our findings demonstrate that children learn iconic labels in the experiment better than they do neutral labels. However, we find no difference across learning contextsiconicity facilitates word learning in both situated and displaced learning scenarios.