

STORY GRAMMAR: EVIDENCE FROM BILINGUAL CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to examine if there is a bilingual advantage in the measure of story grammar. Studies so far have shown that bilingual children perform similarly in their L2 compared to monolingual children in a number of measures including story grammar. This study consists of 50 Greek-Albanian children and 50 Greek monolinguals which were between the ages of 8 and 12, with Greece as their area of residence. The story grammar was measured in the context of a narrative elicitation task, while at the same time a number of screening tasks were taken into account such as home language history and current language use via questionnaires, proficiency and updating skills. The results revealed an advantage of bilingual children compared to their monolingual peers on the measure of story grammar. It was also found that updating skills were the most significant predictor of the story grammar. This leads to the conclusion that story grammar is not language specific. This finding suggests that when bilingual children deal with discourse representation without focusing on linguistics features of the context they demonstrate better performance than monolinguals. It is also an indicator that bilinguals are better at capturing the global meaning of the story and at considering the listener's perspective than their monolingual peers.

Keywords: Bilingualism, narratives, story grammar, updating.