

Analogical Reasoning on Preschoolers' Linguistic Performance

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Abstract : Analogical reasoning is a cognitive process that consists of structured comparisons of mental representations and scheme construction. Because of its heuristic function, it is ubiquitous in cognition and could play an important role in language development. The use of analogies is expressed early in children and this behavior is also reflected in language, suggesting a possible way to understand the complex links between thought and language. The current research examines factors of verbal and non-verbal reasoning that should be taken into consideration in the study of language development for their relations and predictive value. The study was conducted with 48 Chilean preschoolers (Spanish speakers) from 4 to 6-year-old. We assessed children's verbal analogical reasoning, non-verbal analogical reasoning and linguistics skills (Listening Comprehension, Phonemic awareness, Alphabetic principle, Syllabification, Lexical repetition and Lexical decision). The results evidenced significant correlations between analogical reasoning factors and linguistic skills and they can predict linguistic performance mainly on oral comprehension, lexical decision and phonological skills. These findings suggest a fundamental interrelationship between analogical reasoning and linguistic performance on children's and points to the need to consider this cognitive process in comprehensive theories of children's language development.

Keywords : verbal analogical reasoning, non-verbal analogical reasoning, linguistic skills, language development

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