

## Later language development: syntactic packaging in written and spoken French

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Producing a text requires planning at a number of different levels, among them being the choice of syntactic packaging for combining propositions. In this work we will examine the syntactic links (juxtaposition, coordination and subordination) used by French-speaking children and adolescents in written and spoken texts. Our goal is to show how syntactic connectivity is affected by text genre (narrative and expository discourse), order of production (written first, spoken second and spoken first, written second), modality (written and spoken) and age.

Previous studies have shown that middle-class children, adolescents and adults employ different forms of syntactic connectivity depending on the text type and on the modality of production (Jisa et Strömquist, 2002; Jisa et Viguié, 2005; Ravid et Tolchinsky, 2002). Our study extends on this earlier work by 1) including low SES subjects; 2) systematically examining the effect of order of production; and 3) controlling the level of performance in school.

Narrative and expository texts were collected in both written and spoken modalities from three age groups (10-, 13- and 15-year-olds), each group including 40 low SES subjects attending priority education schools. 20 subjects in each age group were diagnosed as having difficulty in school; the other 20 subjects in each age group were experiencing no difficulty in school. Half of the subjects in each group produced the spoken text before the written text, the other half producing first the written text and subsequently the spoken text. In the study to be presented we will examine the written and the spoken texts.

All of the propositions in the texts were coded for type of syntactic connectivity: juxtaposition, coordination, and finite and non-finite subordination. The results highlight the particular role of text type in determining choices of syntactic forms. We relate the observed differences as reflecting a knowledge-telling versus a knowledge-transforming type of planification (Bereiter & Scardamalia (1987). Our results also reveal the importance of sampling children's language production in a variety of text genres.

### References

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