

Is not losing winning?

On the narrative abilities of monolingual and bilingual speakers with Prader-Willi Syndrome

The study of the narrative abilities of monolingual and bilingual typically developing (TD) individuals has been a fruitful field of research. However, the analysis of narrative abilities among non-TD individuals has been scarce and, in the case of individuals with genetic disorders (Garcia-Alcaraz 2021), practically non-existent. While narrative abilities have been analyzed from different perspectives and theories, in this paper we address the analysis of both the macrostructure (coherence and organization) and the microstructure (linguistic form and content) abilities displayed in the narratives of individuals with Prader-Willi Syndrome (PWS). PWS is a neurodevelopmental genetic disorder that entails mild to moderate intellectual disability (Cassidy et al. 2012) and that is not related to sex, gender or race (Alexander et al. 1995). Previous research, for both the TD (Andreou 2015) and the non-TD population (Tsimpli et al. 2016), has defended a potential bilingual advantage at the macrostructural level but not necessarily at the microstructural level. It is our intention to contribute to this line of research by analyzing how bilingual individuals with PWS compare to monolingual speakers with the same syndrome with respect to these two narrative dimensions. We recruited 8 Spanish-Catalan bilinguals and 7 Spanish monolinguals with PWS. Both groups were comparable in terms of non-verbal IQ, receptive vocabulary and sentence recall abilities in Spanish. Participants were presented with the picture book *A boy, a dog and a frog* (Mayer, 1967) and were asked to narrate it in Spanish. The participants' macrostructure abilities were evaluated by two independent raters according to the *Narrative Scoring Scheme* (Heilmann et al. 2010) and their microstructure abilities by means of the Mean Length of Utterance and the Type-Token Ratio. Regression analyses performed on the results showed similar narrative abilities for both groups at both dimensions. Consequently, our results did not reveal a bilingual advantage at the macrostructural level but neither a bilingual disadvantage at the microstructural level in spite of the fact that the bilingual speakers were mainly Catalan dominant. These results are in line with previous research showing no detrimental effects of bilingualism among non-TD individuals (Kay-Raining Bird et al. 2016), which, in our opinion, should encourage schools and society to facilitate and promote bilingualism among non-TD individuals in general and non-TD individuals with genetic disorders in particular.