

Editor's overview

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

I encountered an appreciable number of problems in measurement and statistics this year in the manuscripts submitted to the journal. They included the following items:

1. failure to take into account in decisions concerning inferential statistics how one's dependent variables are distributed;
2. violation of the assumption of independence in the use of chi-square statistics;
3. use of univariate analysis of variance with repeated measures designs where multivariate analysis of variance is required;
4. failure to use multivariate analyses in many cases of multiple dependent variables;
5. failure to establish the reliability of a subjective scale or to test (where appropriate) the significance of percent judgmental agreement across subjective categories (Cohen, 1960); and
6. use of inappropriate multiple comparisons after analysis of variance.

The reader interested in additional information on the sorts of problems I have noted may wish to consult a recent methodological chapter by Huesmann (1982) on research in psychopathology that is also appropriate for applied psycholinguistics.

THE PRESENT VOLUME

Volume 3 encompasses a broad range of topics in applied psycholinguistics, as indicated below.

1. Second language learning and bilingualism: Bruck, 3(1); Favreau and Segalowitz, 3(4); Hecht and Mulford, 3(4); Sheldon and Strange, 3(3); Vihman, 3(2); Wesche, Edwards, and Wells, 3(2).
2. The assessment of linguistic and communicative development and maturity: Baker and Derwing, 3(3); Corrigan and Di Paul, 3(3); Zukow, 3(1).
3. Reading processes: Perin, 3(1); Tunmer and Nesdale, 3(4).
4. Text processes: Stanners, Price, and Painton, 3(2).
5. Problems in communication: Leonard, Camarata, Rowan, and Chapman, 3(2); Wilcox and Howse, 3(1).
6. The language of the deaf: Hanson, 3(4).
7. Articulatory disorders: Maxwell and Weismer, 3(1).
8. Adult aphasia: Berndt and Caramazza, 3(3); Gainotti, 3(3).

A noteworthy feature of the studies that appear under the topic of second language learning and bilingualism is that they address (either directly or by implication) issues that extend beyond this topic; specifically, (1) the curricular capabilities of language impaired children (Bruck), (2) the relationship between listening and reading skills in a given language (Favreau & Segalowitz), (3) how the structure of a language influences the order of acquisition of its elements (Hecht & Mulford), (4) the issue of whether the acquisition of perceptual skills precedes the acquisition of production skills in a language (Sheldon & Strange), (5) general strategies of language acquisition (Vihman), and (6) the correlates of intellectual development (Wesche, Edwards, & Wells). The reader will not fail to recognize here issues that are of interest to both applied and basic psycholinguists.

The articles listed above under assessment suggest ways in which the measurement of language and communication can be enhanced in work on both normal and language-disordered individuals, although only normal children were observed in the articles in question. Baker and Derwing demonstrate how certain of the sophisticated analytic procedures of measurement theory can be applied to data to reveal the process by which a linguistic system is acquired; Corrigan and Di Paul show how the assessment of language production capabilities in young children can be enhanced through the addition of an imitation task; while Zukow makes us aware of recent advances in transcription procedures for interaction data.

Although I have listed the contribution by Stanners, Price, and Painton under text processes, it could just as easily have been included among the assessment articles, for in it we have an example of the application of another analytic procedure of measurement theory, multidimensional scaling. Multidimensional scaling, it should be pointed out, is also available as a possible alternative to the analytic procedures described by Baker and Derwing, as these authors indicate, although they clearly prefer the procedures they adopted.

Three articles in the present volume are concerned either directly or indirectly with spelling (Hanson; Perin; Tunmer & Nesdale). Perin and Tunmer and Nesdale address issues of considerable importance in the field of reading in hearing subjects, whereas the focus of Hanson's article is the use of orthographic structure by deaf adults.

Early deafness seriously affects the development of both a first language and literacy (Quigley & King, 1982), therefore it is encouraging to view the achievements of the small group of deaf adults Hanson studied, not only within the context of her experiment, but apparently earlier as well (see Hanson's description of the educational levels of her subjects).

Subtle differences between normal and language-impaired children are evident in the study of the communicative functions of lexical items by Leonard, Camarata, Rowan, and Chapman, though this investigation will be of interest for its communicative assessment procedure as well as its findings. Wilcox and Howse were concerned with a problem that some might feel is on the borderline between applied and basic psycholinguistics, namely that of the dynamics of the verbal and gestural responses of young normal children in the presence of evidence of prior communication failure. We can hope, however, that eventually, such re-

search will contribute to our understanding of some of the miscommunication problems that can develop in older children and in adults, for example, between a minority-language school-age child and a majority-language teacher (Freedle & Fine, 1982).

The remaining papers in the present volume all deal with aspects of language disability. There are a study of Maxwell and Weismer of a misarticulating child that demonstrates the contribution analytic laboratory procedures can make to the assessment of language delay; an investigation by Berndt and Caramazza of language comprehension difficulties in certain left-hemisphere damaged aphasic patients and in a right-hemisphere damaged group that contributes importantly to our understanding of semantic aphasia (and related information-processing deficits) and possible right-hemisphere linguistic and other cognitive contributions to language comprehension; and a theoretical article by Gainotti that concludes "that semantic-lexical disorders of aphasic patients are mostly due to a central breakdown of the semantic system and not a disturbance of the peripheral mechanisms linking the central semantic structure with the cortical structures subsuming perceptual and motor operations." Such disorders, I might add, are considered to be, on the basis of the available evidence, "a major feature of aphasia."

GUEST REFEREES

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