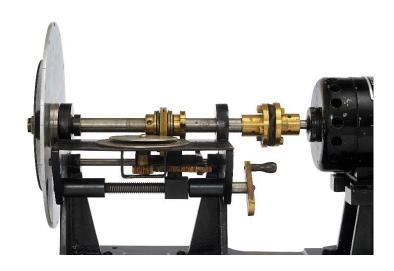
XXVI SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

EMPIRICAL STUDIES IN PSYCHOLOGY

 $15-18^{TH}$ OCTOBER, 2020. FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY, UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE



INSTITUTE OF PSYCHOLOGY LABORATORY FOR EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY, UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE

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LABORATORY FOR EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY, UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE

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EXPLORING LINGUISTIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TYPICALLY DEVELOPING AND CHILDREN WITH SLI: EVIDENCE FROM A NONWORD REPETITION TASK IN SERBIAN

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One of the main questions in the research of specific language impairment (SLI) is whether the language characteristics of children with SLI are similar to those of younger typically developing (TD) children (quantitative difference), or do they differ entirely and are never observed in typical development (qualitative difference). The aim of this study was to investigate this question in the phonological domain, by comparing the repetitions of SLI children with those of younger TD children, obtained with a nonword repetition task (NRT) in Serbian. The study included 75 TD children aged 3 to 7 (15 per one-year age group) and 50 children with SLI aged 4 to 8 (8-11 per one-year age group). The used NRT consisted of 48 nonwords with varying prosodic complexity, constructed according to the characteristics of the Serbian language. The prerecorded nonwords were presented to the children in two randomized orders, and their task was to repeat each nonword after hearing it. The repetitions were recorded, transcribed, and coded for accuracy and 16 types of errors on the word, syllable and phoneme level. Four one-way MANOVAs were performed for SLI children of different ages and younger TD children (SLI 5 - TD 3, SLI 6 - TD 3, SLI 7 - TD 4, SLI 8 -TD 5), from whom they did not differ significantly on the overall accuracy on the task (number of incorrect repetitions). These analyses, performed on the number of repetitions containing each of the 16 errors, showed no significant main effect of group for any of the compared ages. There were, however, significant group differences for some errors at different ages (F(1,24)>4.45, p<.05, for 8 errors), e.g., SLI children age 7 had significantly more syllable omissions and consonant metatheses than TD children age 4; SLI age 8 had significantly more coda consonant additions than TD age 5. We may conclude that Serbian children with SLI generally make the same types and number of errors in repetitions as younger TD children, indicating a developmental delay, and a quantitative difference in language characteristics between the two groups. The observed differences in the number of some specific errors, however, may indicate an asynchronous delay in the acquisition of some phonological parameters in SLI. This may lead to slightly atypical patterns, and qualitative differences in language characteristics of SLI and TD children. Further analyses of the error patterns occurring in nonword repetitions are required to confirm this.

Keywords: Phonological development, Specific Language Impairment (SLI), Nonword Repetition Task, Language characteristics, Serbian

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