

Catchers of the Lies:

「わたしたち」にまつわる利他的/利己的な嘘のニュアンスが TD/ASD 児者による資源分配に及ぼす影響

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Catchers of the Lies: Their Effects on the Resource Distribution Task in Children With/Without ASD

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Purpose

The tendency to shift easily from “I” mode to “We” mode seems to be a significant trait in humans (Tuomera,2007). Psychological bonding or unity between self and the other, “We”ness, is important basis that enables human cooperation (Tomasello, 2009). Virtually all human languages have a word representing “we”, however, in the sense of “first person plural” this word sounds in a way illogical. Though some language groups such as Austronesian and Tungus have different words to represent for Inclusive and for Exclusive “We”s, in other languages like English and Japanese, this contrast is included within a word and each meaning is delivered based on the utterance context. Not only in this case, combinations of social contexts seem to yield multiple nuances of “We” in our daily communication. Specifically, the word “we” may sound selfish in some situations, whereas it may sound altruistic in other situations. The current study focused on the response of the nuances of “We”, together with other subject words of “I” and “He/She (Other)”, in an experimental setting.

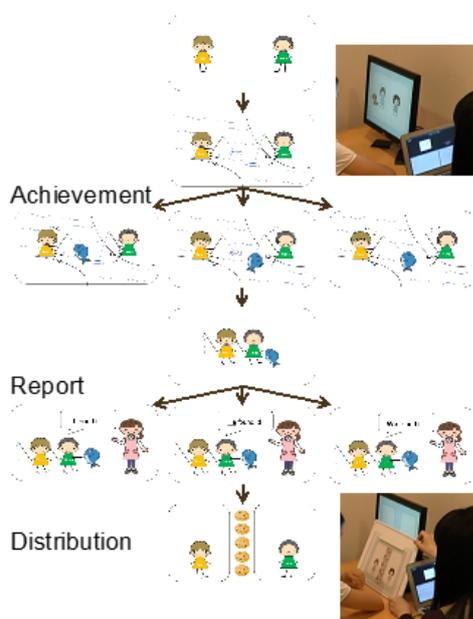
Method

Participants

TD: N = 47 (34 males), Avg.:13.1 years old (6.6–22.2)

ASD: N = 40 (31 males), Avg.:14.4 years old (6.7-23.1)

All were raised in Japanese language environment



Procedure

Each participant was tested with 9 stories presented in slide show (the combination of stories and conditions was counter-balanced between participants). Each story has 2 phases followed by the distribution task:

(1) Achievement: 2 children (Reporter and Partner) work on a task together; either (1-a) Reporter, (1-b) Partner, or (1-c) Both Reporter and Partner succeed(s) in it.

(2) Report: Both children come back to an adult and Reporter says either (2-a) "I did it!", (2-b) "He/She did it!", or (2-c) "We did it!"

(3) Distribution: The participant was then requested to distribute 5 pieces of resource between Reporter and Partner. The memory about the achiever (Who did it?) was also asked after the distribution.

Results

The current analysis focused on the participants who answered correctly in more than 6 out of 9 trials.

Thirty-nine TD participants and 16 ASD participants passed this criterion, so that 16 TD participants were selected to match Age, and IQ of the ASD participants group; another criterion for this was to maintain response tendency of the original group of TDs. The results showed as follow:

■ Me, the Achiever Condition: TDs distributed more to “Me-Other” reporter, compared to ASDs.

■ Other, the Achiever Condition: Main effect of Report was found. Distribution was smaller in Other-Me” reporter compared to the other 2 reports.

■ We, the Achievers Condition: Main effect of Report was found. Distribution was smaller in “We-Me” reporter compared to the other 2 reports. Interactions were also found: (1)Only in TDs, distribution was smaller in “We-Me” reporter compared to the other 2 reports. (2) TDs distributed more to “We-Other” reporter, compared to ASDs.

Discussion

■ “Selfish” lies were weighed in the distribution both in TDs and ASDs.

■ “Altruistic” lies weighed in the distribution in TDs, but not in ASDs.

■ Nuances in the “We” Report was not sensitively reflected in the distribution.

■ However, in “We, the Achiever” condition, the altruistic nuance of the Report was weighed in the distribution in TDs, but not in ASDs.

■ The results may reflect the possibility of limited sensitivity to altruistic nuances in children with ASDs.