

Abstract :

Previous research suggests that the processing of text, especially at the inferential level, is less efficient in readers with high-functioning autism spectrum disorder (ASD) than in readers with typical development (Sansosti et al., 2009). However, the time course of such differences has been scarcely explored (e.g. Au-Yeung et al., 2015; Howard, Liversedge & Benson, 2016). We present the preliminary results of an ongoing study aimed to explore the time course of anaphor resolution, a common inferential activity during reading, in youth ages 9–17 years with ASD (n=8) by means of eye tracking methodology. Following Joseph et al. (2015), participants were asked to read short paragraphs in which (1) the semantic typicality of an antecedent and (2) its distance in relation to an anaphor were manipulated. The results were analyzed combining earlier and later eye-tracking measures in critical regions in order to capture the time course of anaphoric processing. They will be discussed regarding the Theory of Complex Information Processing in ASD (Minshew, Williams & McFadden, 2008).