

**Project C04: On the role of linguistic creativity in the language use of mono- and multilingual children with vs without developmental language disorders**

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**Project Summary**

Project C04 focuses on individual-level linguistic creativity for word formation processes in communicative settings of children aged 4;0 to 5;11. We take a comparative approach by contrasting the creativity evoked in the course of communicative coping with lexical gaps of typically developing children, children with developmental language disorder as well as multilingual children, with an additional focus on individual differences also within each of the groups due to emotional and situational constraints and individual cognitive abilities. This approach will provide crucial insights into modelling creativity as a part of the individual learning process that needs to be regarded in both second language learning processes and in therapeutic settings.

Thus, the project contributes to the classification of often highly original and creative forms in the context of multilingualism within and across modalities additionally to psycho-cognitive modelling by investigating which different resources lead to different recourse to verbal (and nonverbal) creativity. Project C04 also aims to adopt a more interactive perspective and contribute to the CRC by drawing a clearer line between creative communicative strategies that lead to communicative success in the sense of establishing understanding.

In their attempts to refer to objects and facts or to reproduce a novel linguistic item, children often deviate from the standard use. In our project, this deviation is investigated as creative language production, thereby opening a window that provides insight into the potential to produce complex words in acquisition. We will compare the originality and creativity of monolingual and multilingual speakers with and without developmental language disorders (DLD) in their strategies for coping with lexical gaps and in creative verbal play. Contributing to the general CRC goals, we ask:

**Q1:** Which forms of creative strategy use in coping with lexical gaps and in naming tasks can be observed?

**Q2:** Are there stages in the use of these strategies, especially in communicative settings?

**Q3:** Does the use of these creative forms differ between groups of speakers with different cognitive and emotional resources?

For the complex processes in producing a compound noun, we assume as a starting point that there is a progression from paraphrase to approximation,

from simplex to composite words, and from reduction to the semantic core over semantic similarity and modification of attributes to the target form. We further hypothesise that typically developing children (as a baseline group) will have a more solid basis to use their language(s) with greater proficiency and creativity than children with DLD, if they miss the correct standard term to refer to the target object. Multilingualism, in turn, has been associated with a particularly high verbal creativity, which allows us to compare a group of children with verbal problems to a group of verbal overachievers, both in relation to a baseline group.

To further analyse the role of individual differences in creativity in children's linguistic productions, we will specifically address the role of shyness and mood state as key dimensions of individual differences affecting children's development, interaction behaviour, and cognitive processes.

### **Open Positions**

#### **PhD position 1 (65%, Paderborn University)**

*Profile:* The ideal candidate has a master in psycholinguistics or a closely related field with a special emphasis on gestures and multimodal analysis of communication as well as some experience in working with preschool children.

*Main research focus within the project:* The doctoral researcher will be responsible for recruiting participants, conducting a study with typically developing children, data collection, (comparative) data analysis, and co-writing scientific articles. The focus of the PhD thesis will be on the children's gestures.

#### **PhD position 2 (65%, Bielefeld University)**

*Profile:* The ideal candidate has a master in German as a foreign/second language or a closely related field, including some training in qualitative as well as quantitative empirical methods and a focus on analysing learner language.

*Main research focus within the project:* The doctoral researcher will be responsible for recruiting participants, conducting a study with multilingual children, data collection, (comparative) data analysis, and co-writing scientific articles. The focus of the PhD thesis will be on language contact factors.

### **For further information please contact the project leaders:**

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