Morphosyntactic and discourse processing in Russian-speaking children with developmental language disorder

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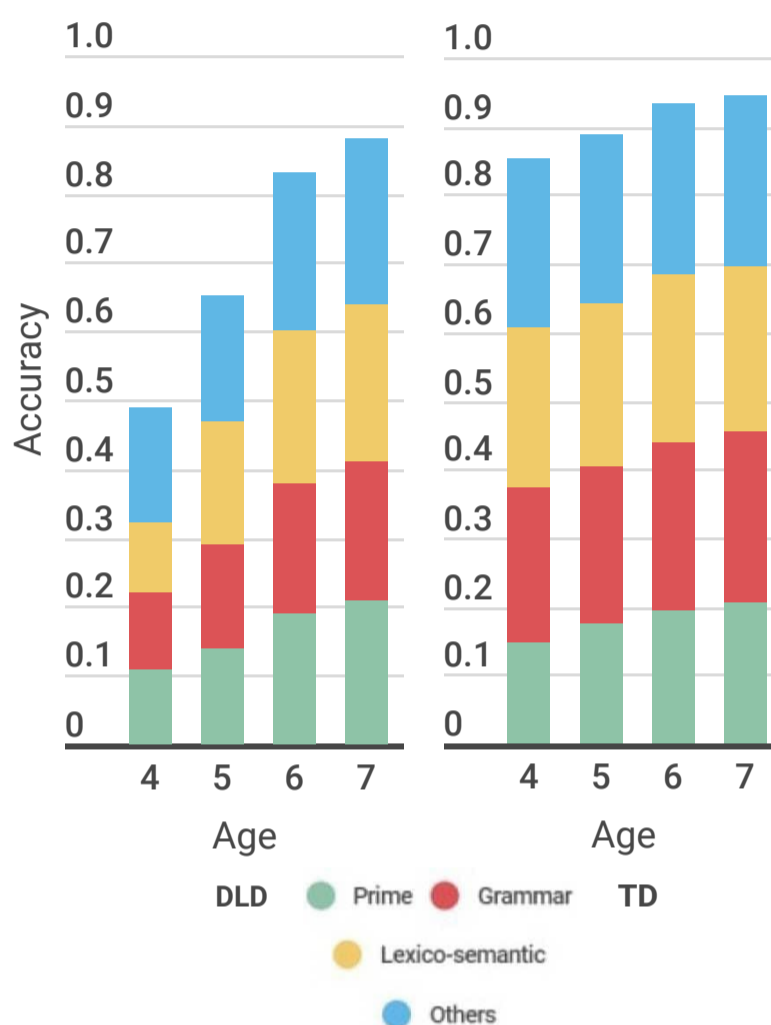
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Introduction

- Children with developmental language disorder (DLD) mostly struggle with morphosyntactic and narrative processing (Acosta Rodríguez et al., 2017; Moscati et al., 2020), specifically in languages with free word order and rich inflectional morphology, like Russian (Dressler, 2012).
- The present study aims to compare morphosyntactic and discourse processing of Russian-speaking 4-to-7-year-old typically developing children (TD) and children with DLD.
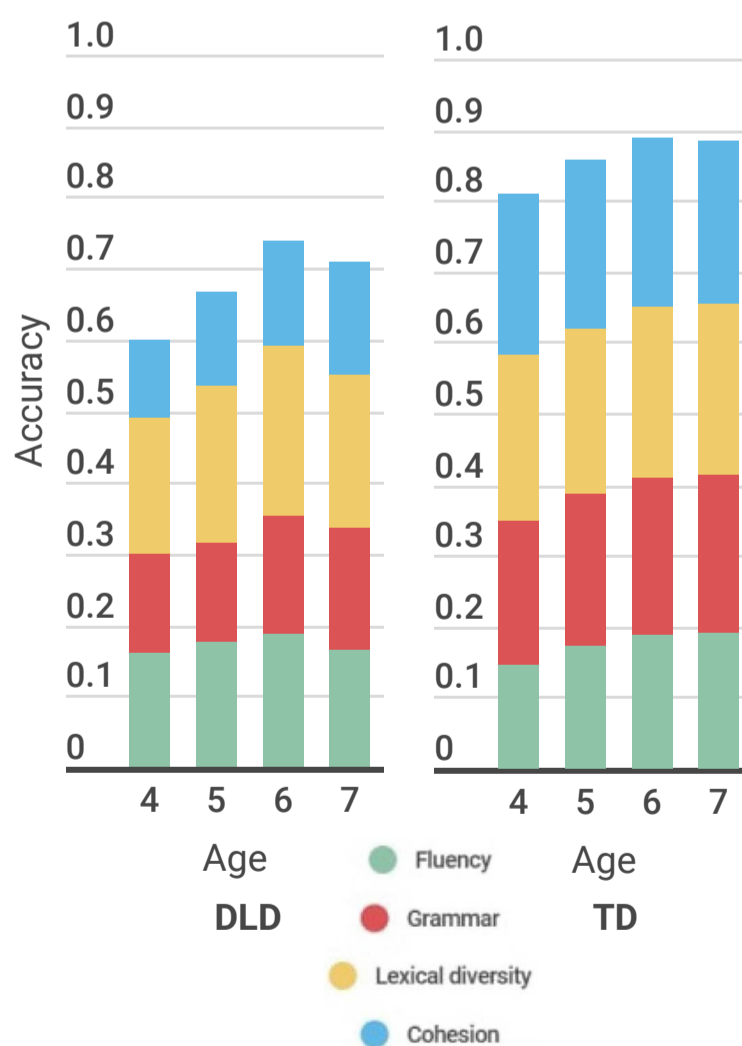
Results and Discussion

- As expected, DLD children were less accurate than TD children in all four tasks
- Children's performance improves with age in all tasks (~1-13%).
- In sentence-picture-matching task, DLD children better processed sentences with locative than with instrumental case, whereas for TD children the pattern was opposite.
- In sentence production task, DLD children mostly struggled with the usage of prime construction and made grammatical errors, which is in line with previous studies (Bedore & Leonard, 1998; Moscati et al., 2020). Moreover, 4 year old DLD children show the lowest lexico-semantic level in comparison with TD children (DLD - 41%, TD - 93%).
- In text comprehension task, DLD children had troubles answering implicit questions, possibly, because of their difficulties understanding contextual information (Bishop & Adams, 1992).
- As expected, the most difficult task for DLD children was narrative production: they had troubles with fluency, grammatical realization, and cohesion.

Sentence production

DLD — Prime · Grammar · Lexico-semantic · Others — TD

Narrative production

DLD — Fluency · Grammar · Lexical diversity · Cohesion — TD

Method

- 175 TD and 63 DLD 4-to-7-year-old children participated in the study.
- Four tasks from the Russian Child Language Assessment Battery: comprehension sentence-picture-matching task, sentence production structural priming task; text comprehension task with two-alternative questions, narrative production task.

Stimuli examples in sentence comprehension task

References

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