

Natina Maria, Expert in Pre-school Education, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Bulgaria. "Developing metalinguistic abilities and early introduction to reading", Language and Education Section

When reading children have to rely upon their knowledge of spoken language which can be transferred to written language. This calls for ability to make explicit use of structural elements of spoken language. The metalinguistic ability to reason upon language is an important prerequisite for learning reading because without it children would be unable to discover the properties of spoken language which are crucial for the relationship between written and oral language. The study is based upon introducing different activities for pre-school children at the age range 4-6 which are preparatory for learning reading.

The learning situations, which children in kindergarten encounter, aim at developing skills of orientation in language, observation of language and self-improvement of spoken language. The suggested types of activities included: discriminating separate sounds in words; syllables in words, words in sentences; proper word articulation; concentration on sounds and words; sound analysis at level of thinking; discrimination between vowel and consonant phonemes and their graphemes, etc.

Most children showed rapid progress in managing the primary school curriculum which confirms the importance of pre-school guidance in accordance with the aims of school instruction.

Oliveira, Ana Maria, Prof. Coordenadora, Escola Superior de Educação - Instituto Superior Politécnico de Viseu; de Sousa, Liliana, Prof. Auxiliar, Instituto de Ciências Biomédicas Abel Salazar - Universidade do Porto; Castro, São Luís, Prof. Associada, Faculdade de Psicologia e Ciências da Educação - Universidade do Porto, Verbal Encoding in Portuguese/French Bilinguals: A Word Fluency Task (Bilingualism)

It has been argued that the processing of verbal information in tasks that involve encoding (as opposed to decoding) is slower in bilinguals than in monolinguals. This study aims to find out if Portuguese, as well as French, monolinguals, and Portuguese/French bilinguals show differences in a word fluency task. Monolingual participants were asked to say as many words as possible during three minutes, in their native languages. Bilinguals performed these two tasks and an additional one, where they were asked to use both languages.

Results will be presented and discussed in terms of a quantitative (number of words, ratio words/time) as well as a qualitative analysis of productions in the monolingual and the bilingual groups. Particular attention will be given to the ratio word/time in the preferred versus non-preferred language in the bilingual group.