
Developing irony: Dissociative attitude and epistemic vigilance

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Abstract

This study aims to provide further insights into the developmental puzzle of irony: irony develops later than other figurative uses of language, but its age of acquisition varies considerably across studies. We experimentally investigate the role of second-order epistemic vigilance on irony comprehension by examining the effect of directly manipulating the reliability of the ironical source on irony understanding. Furthermore, we control that irony understanding cannot be reduced to mere sensitivity to the mismatch between expectations and context. We expect a clear improvement in irony understanding with age and an effect of epistemic vigilance in buttressing irony comprehension in children.

Keywords: epistemic vigilance, irony, dissociative attitude

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