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Discriminability of picture book typeface in children

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Abstract

Humans are surrounded by various typefaces, and the preliminary corpus analysis suggests that typefaces commonly used in picture books differ from others, which implies that familiar typefaces differ between children and adults. Thus, this study investigated whether children can easily recognize fonts considered familiar to them. Japanese-speaking children (aged 7–8 years) performed a hiragana-character discrimination task, which includes different (e.g., ㇰ-ㇱ) and same (e.g., ㇰ-ㇰ) character-pair conditions. It involves various typefaces familiar to children (i.e., picture book typefaces) or adults; the study indexed discriminability using averaged reaction times to the character-pair conditions. Accuracy was sufficiently high for all typefaces (>90%), and no significant difference existed in response times between any typeface. The results suggested that children can stably discriminate characters regardless of whether or not a font is commonly used in picture books.