Abstract

People with Williams syndrome are characterized by linguistic abilities that are higher than their level of intelligence. There is controversy concerning their reading level because there are few studies. The aim of this work was to test reading abilities in a group of school-age children with Williams syndrome. Their performance was contrasted with a control group of the same mental age. Three kinds of tasks were used: word and pseudoword reading, phonological awareness, and naming speed. Results show that the Williams syndrome children performed similarly to control children in reading accuracy but were slower in reading words and pseudowords. They were also slower in the naming speed tasks. These results suggest that Williams syndrome children do not have difficulties in developing grapheme-phoneme decoding but do present some difficulties in developing lexical reading.