

VIEW COMMENTS FROM PANEL

Project Number : 25606117

Project Title : Mental representations of Chinese tones: abstract vs. episodic accounts

PI Name : Dr POLITZER-AHLES Stephen

Overall Comments:

This is a well-argued proposal from a young investigator who has the track record to conduct the proposed studies. The research is grounded on the abstraction vs. episodic memory debate of spoken language processing. From one experiment to another, the applicant very clearly spelled out how critical issues concerning this debate can be addressed.

Strengths:

- Clear theoretical framework and hypotheses.
- Track record in conducting similar kinds of experiments.
- Detailed methods outlined.

Weaknesses:

- The approach is not entirely innovative but nonetheless appropriate in addressing the questions concerned.

This project proposal consists of three sets of ERP experiments that are well-suited to test the stated hypotheses about lexical representations at the neural level. The PI has extensive experience with MMN applied to research questions that are closely related to listed objectives of current proposal. Pilot work using the MMN lexicality paradigm offers promise of success for the proposed research, and the PI has even completed analysis of pilot data that permits him to provide a reasonable estimate of sample size required to satisfy 80% power.

MMN amplitudes across conditions may not be good enough to address the project objectives, so time-frequency analysis and brain source localization may be needed. Previous research has shown the age- and gender-related MMN, and these factors should be taken seriously in subject selection. Care must be taken in selecting the research assistance.

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