Rhythmic abilities in prereaders predict future reading skills
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Background
• Rhythmic abilities have been related to speech segmentation and phonological processing. As a consequence, they may also support early reading skills.
• In young children, rhythmic abilities can be measured as auditory-motor synchronization (AMS) in a tapping to a beat task.
• It is currently unclear how the rhythm-reading relation develops and whether it is universal or language-specific.

Goals:
• Assess the contribution of rhythmic abilities for future reading acquisition
• Investigate the role of phonological processing in the rhythm-reading relation
• Contribute to establishing the universality of the rhythm-reading relation by studying it in Spanish, a transparent, syllable-timed language

Conclusions and discussion
• Rhythmic abilities assessed before reading onset predict future reading skills
• The rhythm-reading relation:
  • is mediated by phonological processing abilities
  • goes beyond phonological processing abilities
  • becomes less relevant through time
• Different tapping frequencies show distinct behaviours, should therefore be studied independently
• In Spanish, rhythm may play a role in lexical stress assignment and, through it, to reading, beyond phonological processing

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