

## BACKGROUND

Studies on child metacognition have recently focus on how **expectations about memory functioning** can influence memory decisions through the use of **metacognitive rules** (Geurten, Willems, & Meulemans, 2015).

The memorability-based heuristic is demonstrated when people implement a more conservative response criterion for a class of stimuli that is anticipated to be **highly memorable** compared to a class of stimuli that is anticipated to be **less memorable** (Dobbins & Kroll, 2005; Ghetti, 2003).

The purpose of this study was to examine whether children are able to use the expected memorability of information to guide their **recognition decisions**.

## AIMS

(1) to determine whether children are able to employ a **metacognitive heuristic** based on memorability to guide their recognition decisions **before the age of 9 years**.

(2) to explore whether the **context** in which an item is presented can influence its **expected memorability**.

## METHOD

**Participants:** 72 children aged 4, 6, and 9 years

### Materials

High-memorability list

22 high- + 10 medium

Low-memorability list

22 low + 10 medium

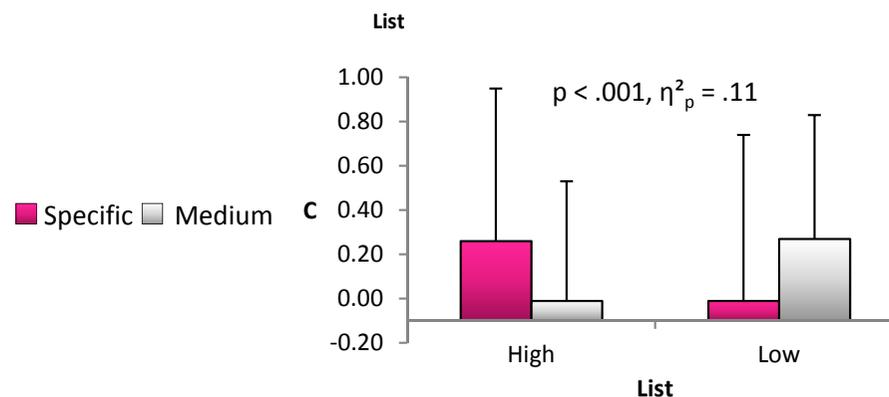
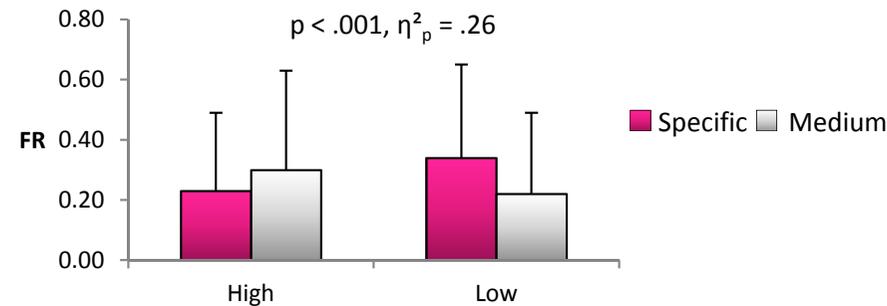
**Procédure:** Two recognition tests (16 study words + 16 distractors)

## DISCUSSION

The ability of young children to employ the **memorability-based heuristic** to reduce their false recognition rate was demonstrated.

Furthermore, our results also suggest that **context may have an influence** on the formation of **metacognitive expectations in children**. This could have important implications concerning methods of assessing memory in children. In situations where children have to answer to multiple memory questions, the likelihood that they will claim to remember something from the past will depend on how well they remember the answers to the other memory questions.

## RESULTS



Dobbins, I. G., & Kroll, N. E. A. (2005). Distinctiveness and the recognition mirror effect: Evidence for an item-based criterion placement heuristic. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 31, 1186-1198

Geurten, M., Willems, S., & Meulemans, T. (2015). Are children conservative, liberal, or metacognitive? Preliminary evidence for the involvement of the distinctiveness heuristic in decision making. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 132, 230-239.

Ghetti, S. (2003). Memory for nonoccurrences: The role of metacognition. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 48, 722-739.