

## Word Frequency, not Age of Acquisition, Affects Word Naming: The Role of Childhood Frequency

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Two experiments were conducted to assess the importance of age-of-acquisition (AoA) and frequency in a word naming task. In addition to adulthood-frequency, childhood-frequency calculated from elementary textbooks of participants was used. A real age-of-acquisition was taken to be the age at which the word was first read on the textbook. In Experiment 1, the traditional adulthood-frequency was used for grouping and matching and two different word sets of early-acquired, low-frequency was chosen by their childhood-frequency to be low (CL) or high (CH). With CL words, both AoA and frequency effects had independent effects but no effect of interaction. With CH words, both AoA and frequency effects had independent effects and a signifi-

cant interaction effect was also found. The AoA effect in low frequency was actually larger for CH words than for CL words (36 vs. 19 ms). In Experiment 2, the sum of childhood-frequency and adulthood-frequency was used for grouping and matching. A significant frequency effect was found but no AoA effect on either mixed or pure word sets once the total frequency was controlled. These results implicated that previous reports of effect of AoA on word-naming speed might be artifactual, being due to a confounding of AoA with childhood-frequency.

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