

# The effects of intervention on the comprehension of irony and on hemispheric processing of irony in adults with ASD

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Individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) experience difficulty in comprehending figurative language in general and irony in particular. The current study measured the effectiveness of a short-term intervention in enhancing the comprehension of irony. Twenty-nine adults with ASD and twenty two typically developing (TD) adults participated in the study. Participants with ASD were randomly assigned to a study (intervention) or control (passive intervention) group. TD participants were also assigned to a passive intervention control group. The intervention improved comprehension of irony in the ASD group. Furthermore, responses to ironic and literal targets were similar within each hemisphere prior to the intervention within the ASD study group, but after the intervention responses lateralized to the right. Thus, following the intervention, participants with ASD demonstrated a pattern of hemispheric processing of ironic target words that resembled the pattern seen in the TD group prior to the intervention. Our findings suggest that an intervention that focuses on comprehension of irony improves performance of adults with ASD and affects the pattern of hemispheric processing of irony.

1. Saban-Bezalel, R., & Mashal, N. (2015). The effects of intervention on the comprehension of irony and on hemispheric processing of irony in adults with ASD. *Neuropsychologia*, 77, 233- 241.