Implicit Stereotypes Among Latino Children

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Background

Previous studies have shown that Latinos show an in-group preference when compared to other ethnic minorities. It is not clear, however, whether their in-group feelings are positive or negative. Other studies have shown that Latinos view themselves as less intelligent when compared with their white counterparts. In the few developmental studies that have been done, implicit attitudes/stereotypes remained consistent from childhood to adulthood. However, these studies have been limited in that they have predominantly examined ethnic stereotypes among only Whites.

The goal of the current study is to examine the development of Latino children's implicit stereotypes about their ethnicity, in general, and academically.

Research Questions

- What are Latino children's implicit in-group attitudes in general?
- What are Latino children's implicit in-group stereotypes in academics?
- How do these attitudes/stereotypes differ at different ages?

Participants

- 126 Latino children
- 55.6% Female
- M_{age} = 9.39
- Grade Distribution:
    2nd: 48
    4th: 38
    5th: 40
- Participants were recruited from two schools in the Los Angeles area. One of the schools was homogeneously Latino, and the other was ethnically diverse.

Procedure

Following previous researchers, we assessed implicit stereotypes with a reaction time measure. Latino children separated positive and negative words (e.g., *nice, mean, neat, sloppy, friend, enemy*) after being primed with photographs of children of their same ethnicity.
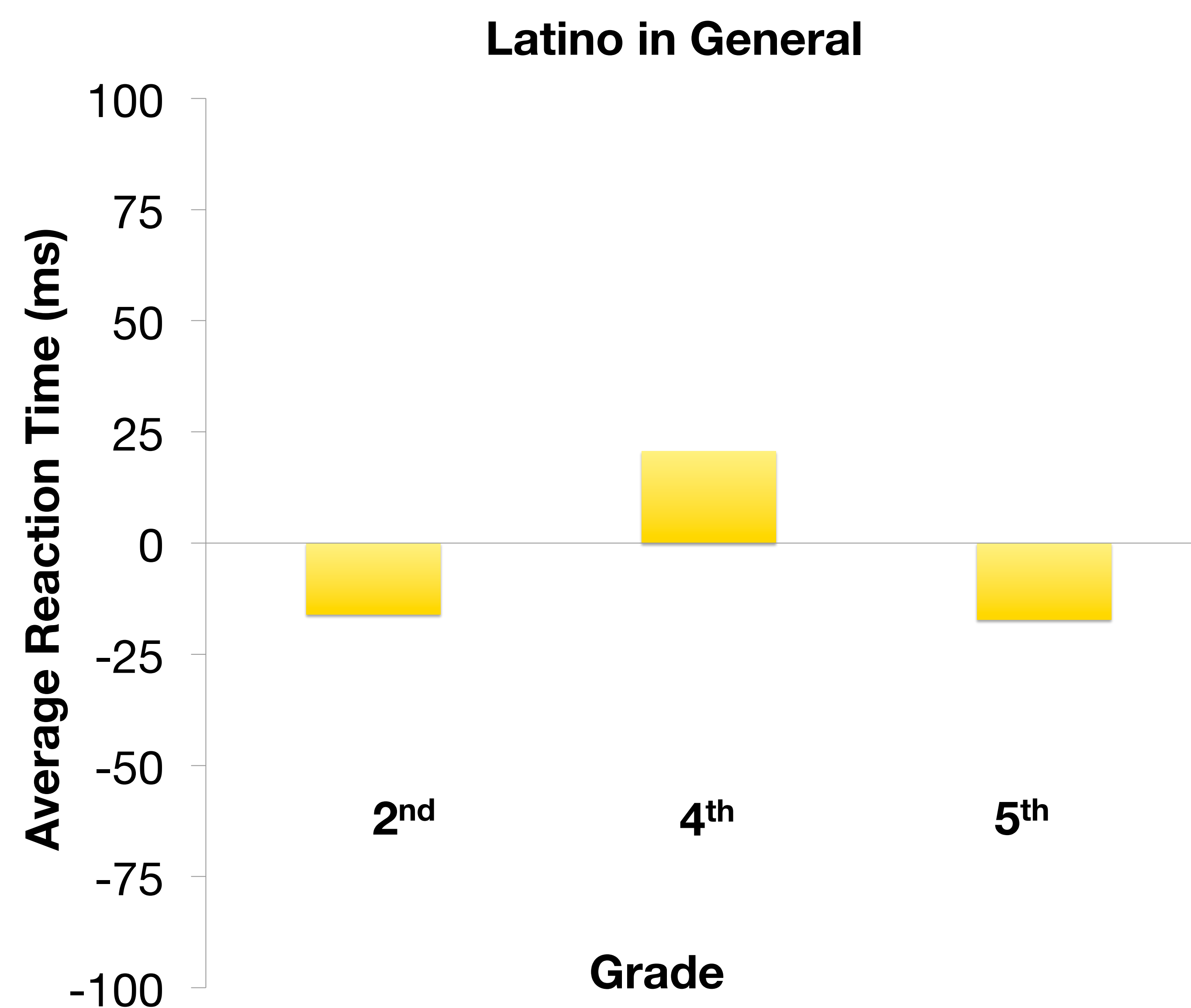
Procedure

Example:

+ positive/negative word = Reaction Time
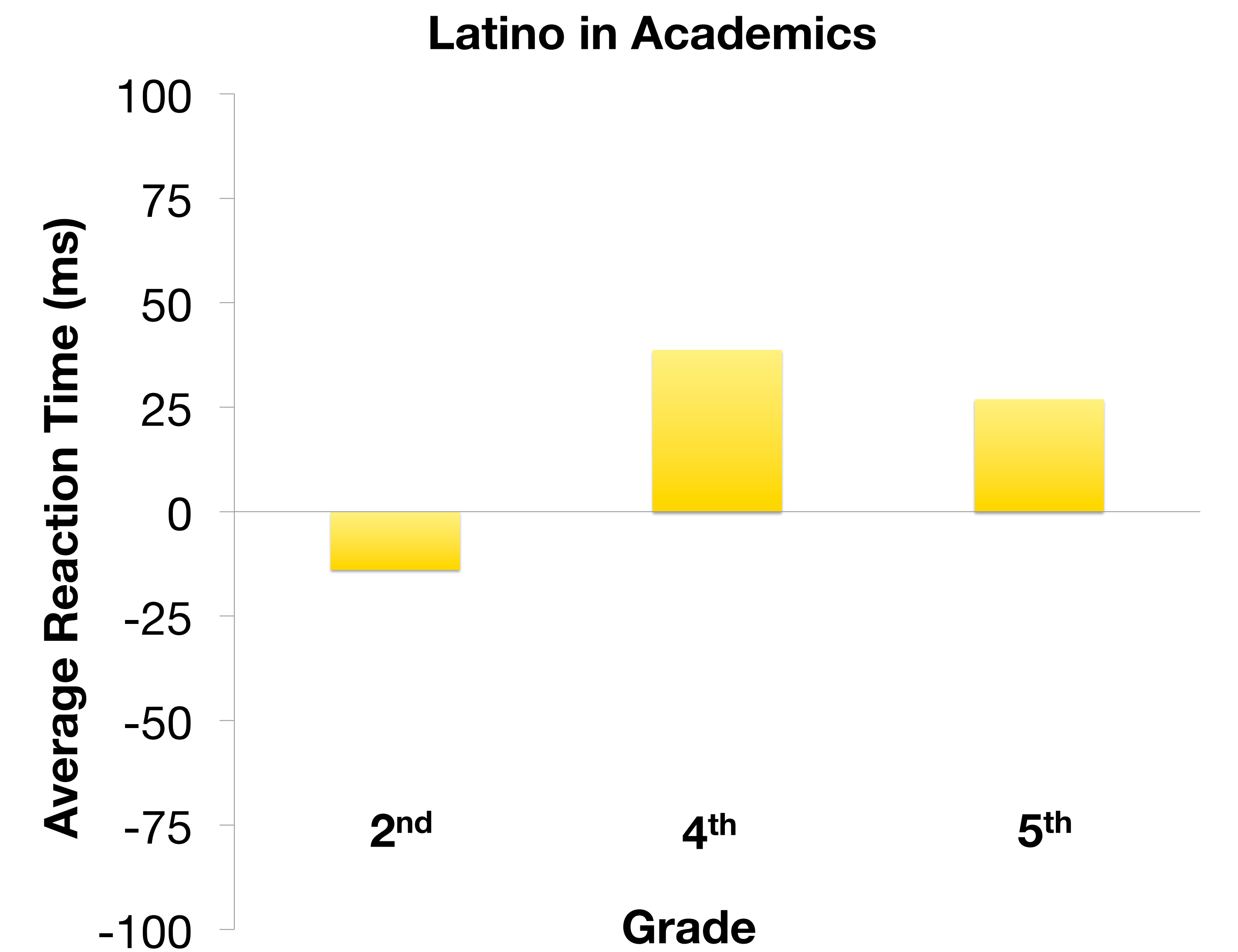
+ positive/negative word = Reaction Time
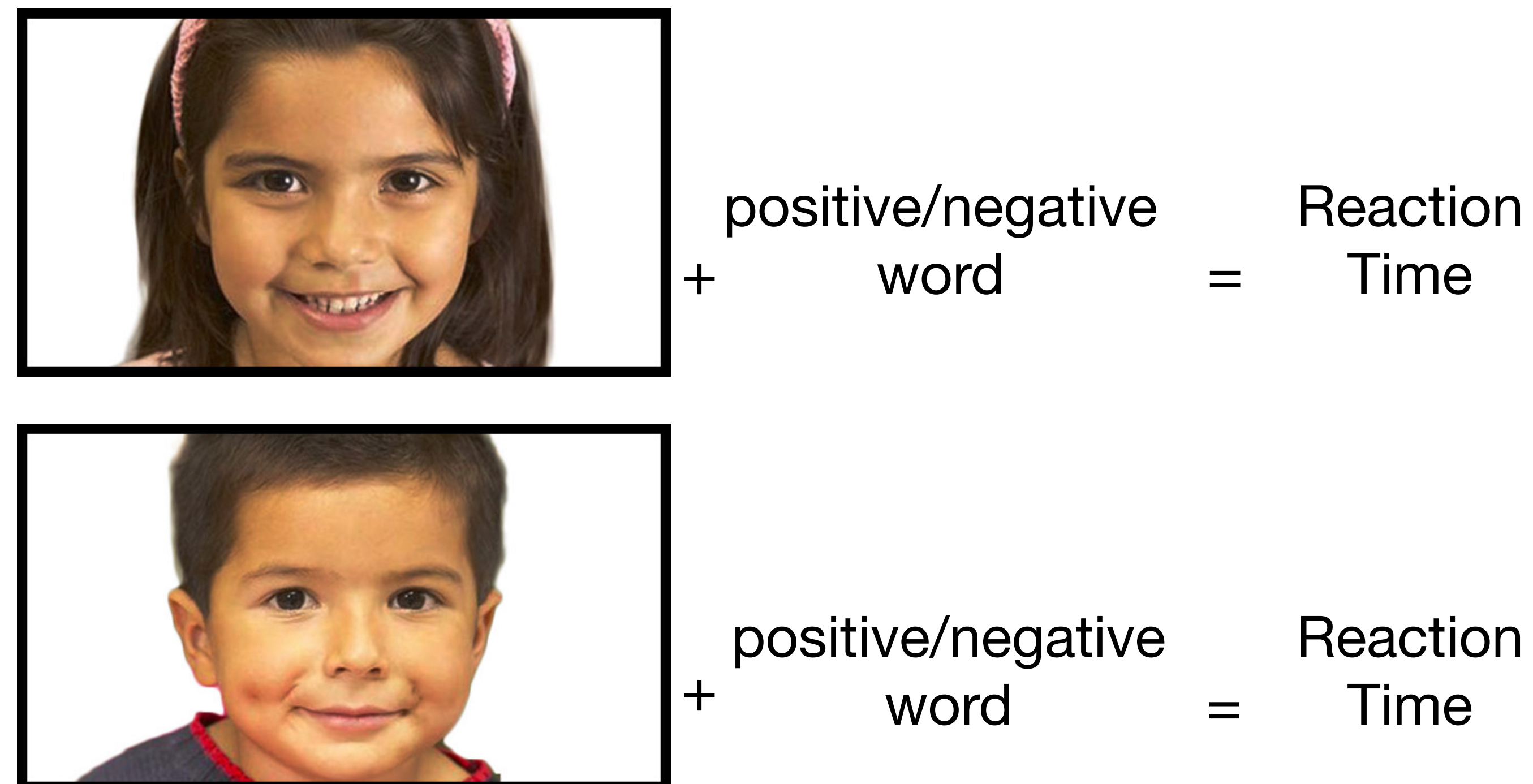
Stereotypes were inferred from differences in speed between children's reactions to the positive words as compared with the negative words.

Results

Latino in General

	M	SD	Significance Test
2nd	-16.06	157.59	$t(47) = -.71, p = .48$
4th	22.94	123.39	$t(37) = 1.05, p = .30$
5th	-17.25	146.06	$t(39) = -.75, p = .46$

Results

Latino in Academics

	M	SD	Significance Test
2nd	-13.90	159.22	$t(47) = -.61, p = .55$
4th	38.68	158.95	$t(37) = 1.50, p = .14$
5th	26.87	114.39	$t(39) = 1.486, p = .15$

Discussion

- For their ethnic group, Latino children demonstrated neither positive nor negative implicit stereotypes in general and in academics

- Although the average implicit attitudes and stereotypes were close to zero, there was a wide range across participants

- The task is reliant on fast reaction times, and therefore may not have been a valid measure for young children

- Further research should consider using a different paradigm to look at the development of Latino children's implicit in-group stereotype

Contact Information

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