

# The getting of child's attention to the act of naming as referential cue and as joint experience information

Tatyana N. Kotova<sup>1</sup>, Alexey A. Kotov<sup>2</sup>  
Research Group for Concept and Cognitive Development



## Introduction

In the natural circumstances the word learning imply the new object demonstration, the new word pronunciation and the getting of child's attention to the act of naming (GAN) simultaneously (Baldwin, 1991).

The GAN was shown as important support for even infant word learning (Fennell, Waxman, 2010). But the special role of the GAN was not explored, because GAN is usually associated the new object demonstration and the new word pronunciation together.

Such procedures don't allow to understand, if :

- GAN is "label cue", and its function is to attract child attention to the label, or
- GAN is an invitation to the convention about an object, shared between child and adult.

That's why the goal of our experiment was to define the function of GAN by the dissociation the new object demonstration and the new word pronunciation.

## Method

**Subjects:**  
76 children  
36 - 48 months  
(M=42 months)

**Design**  
Between-subject  
experimental  
design (4 groups)

### EXPERIMENTAL CONDITIONS

#### GAN+O+N

We noticed the further naming in play beginning and uttered the artificial label within the naming phrase (GAN accompanied new object demonstration and naming).

#### GAN+O/N

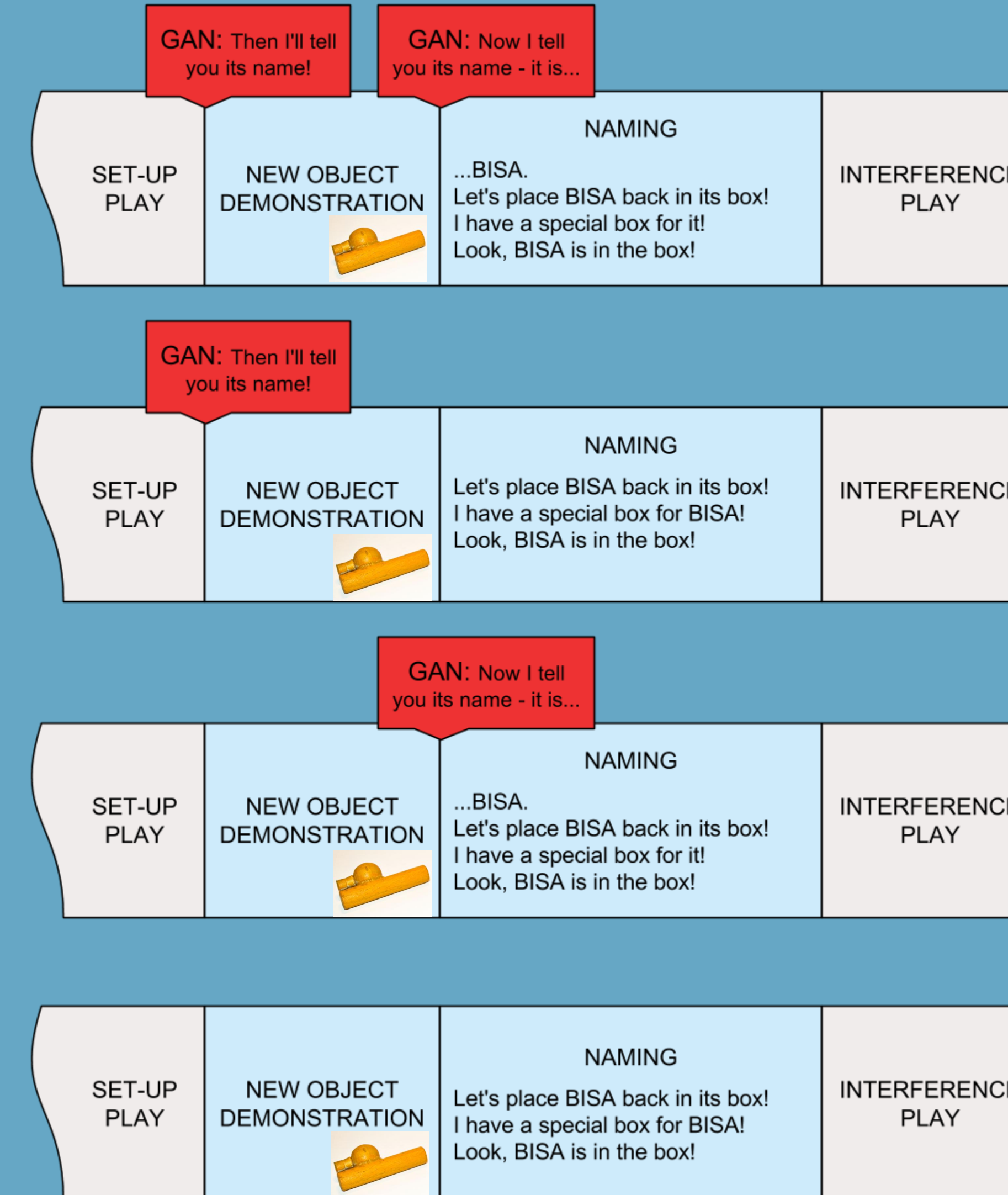
We said: "Then I'll tell you its name!" and after 2-minutes-play we pronounced the artificial label (GAN accompanied the demonstration of the new object).

#### GAN+N/O

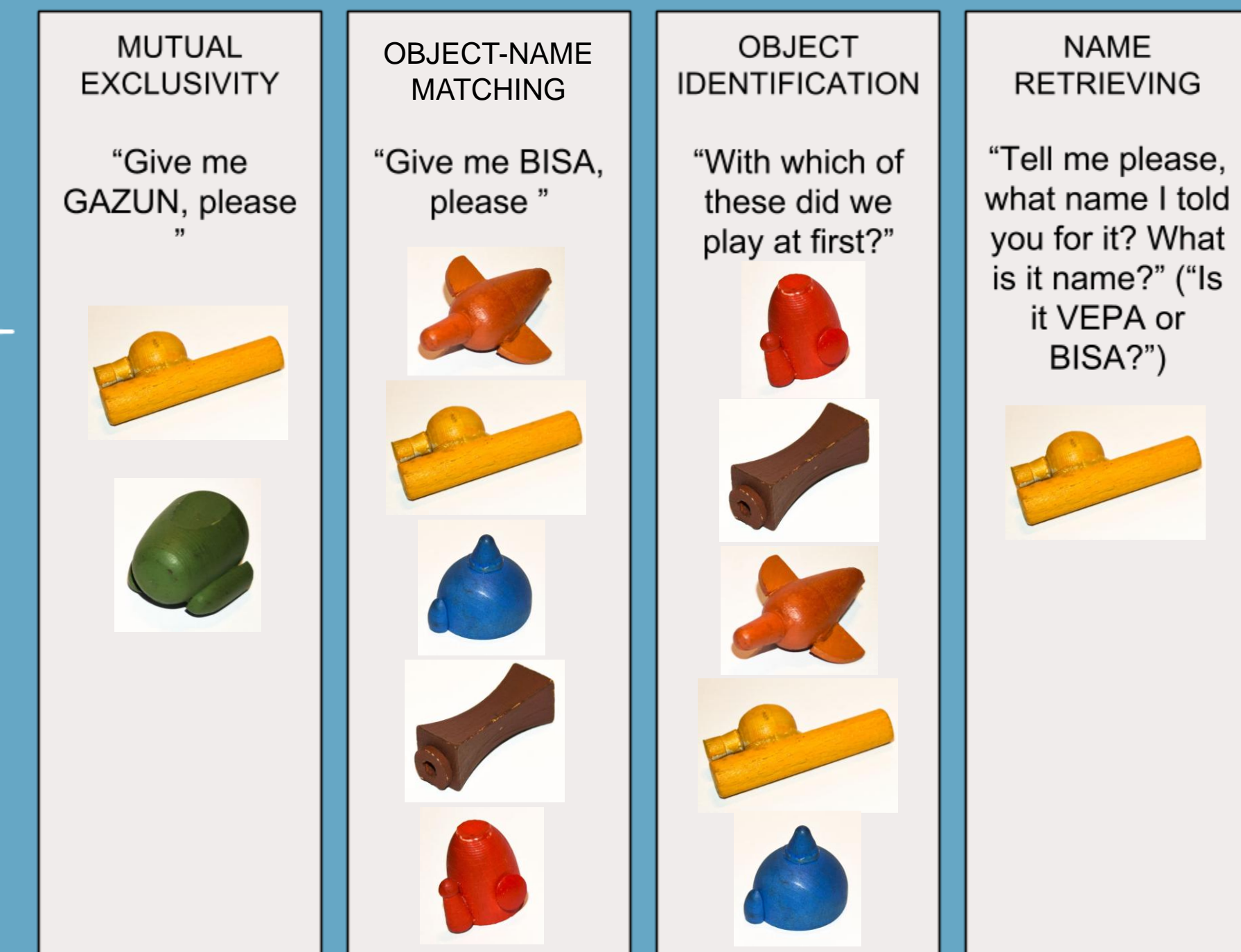
We didn't give any notification about further naming during the object demonstration. After the same play we pronounced the artificial label within phrase: "Now I tell you its name! It is bisa!" (GAN accompanied the naming)

#### ON

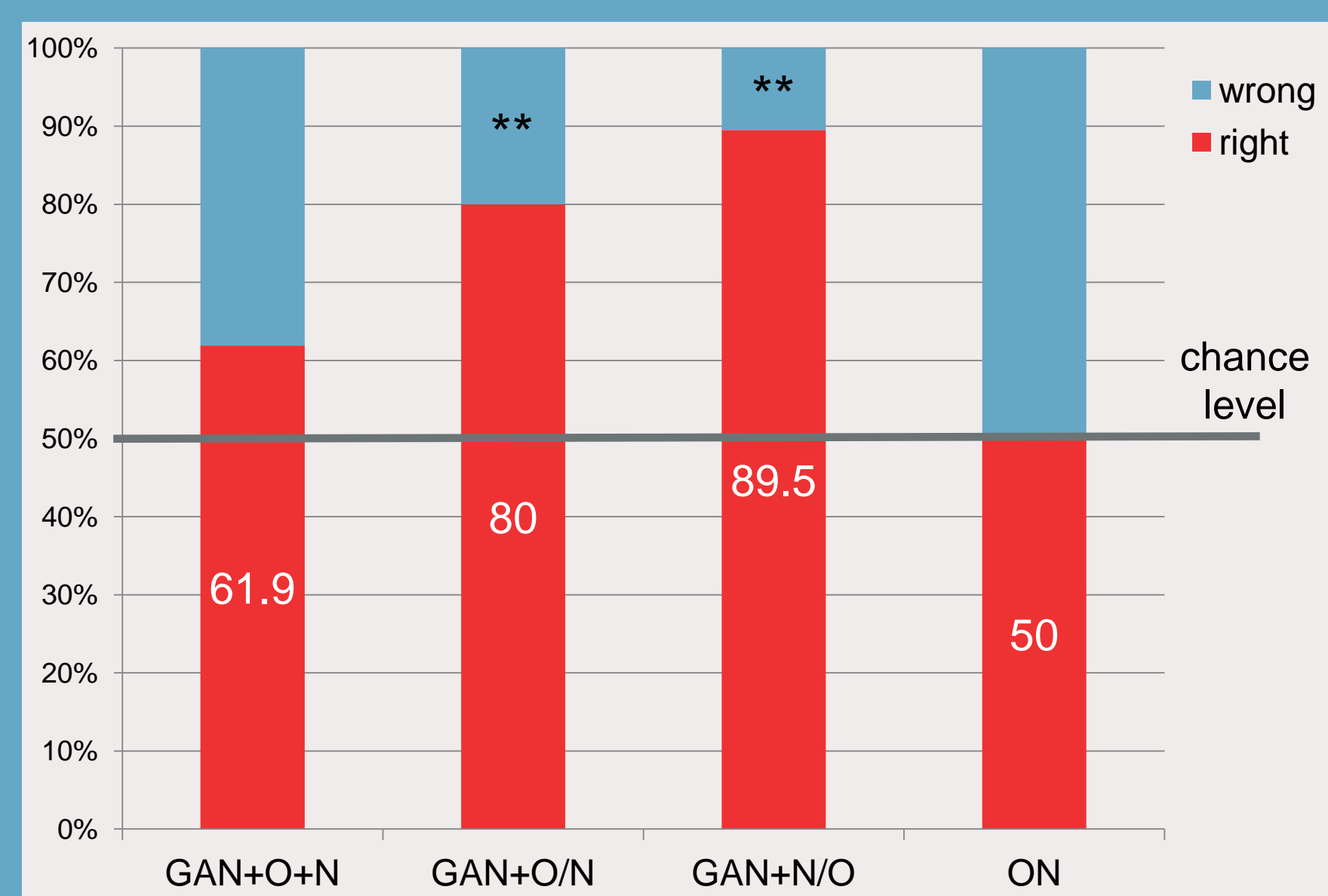
In the control condition we have not attracted child's attention to the act of naming.



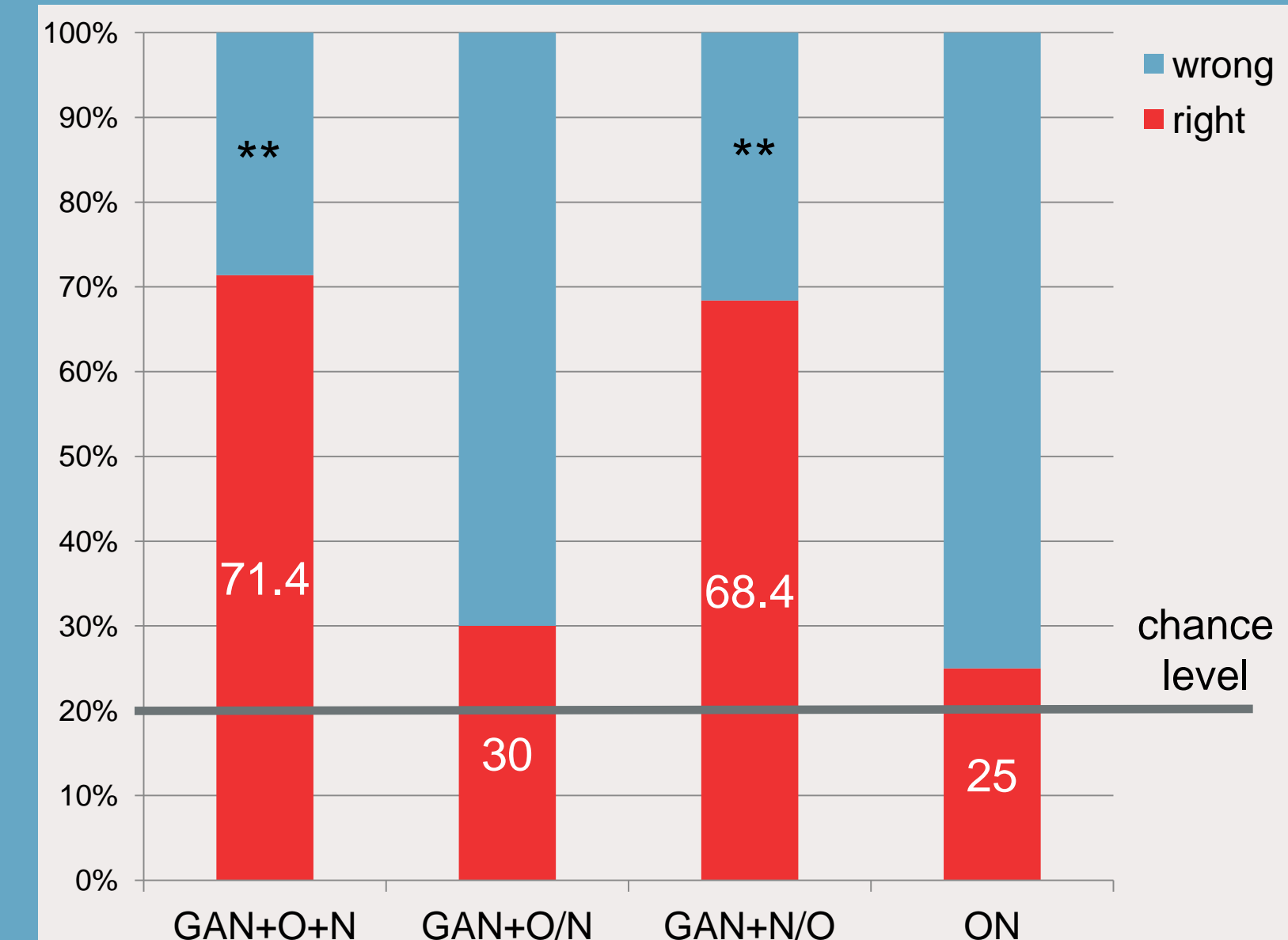
### TEST



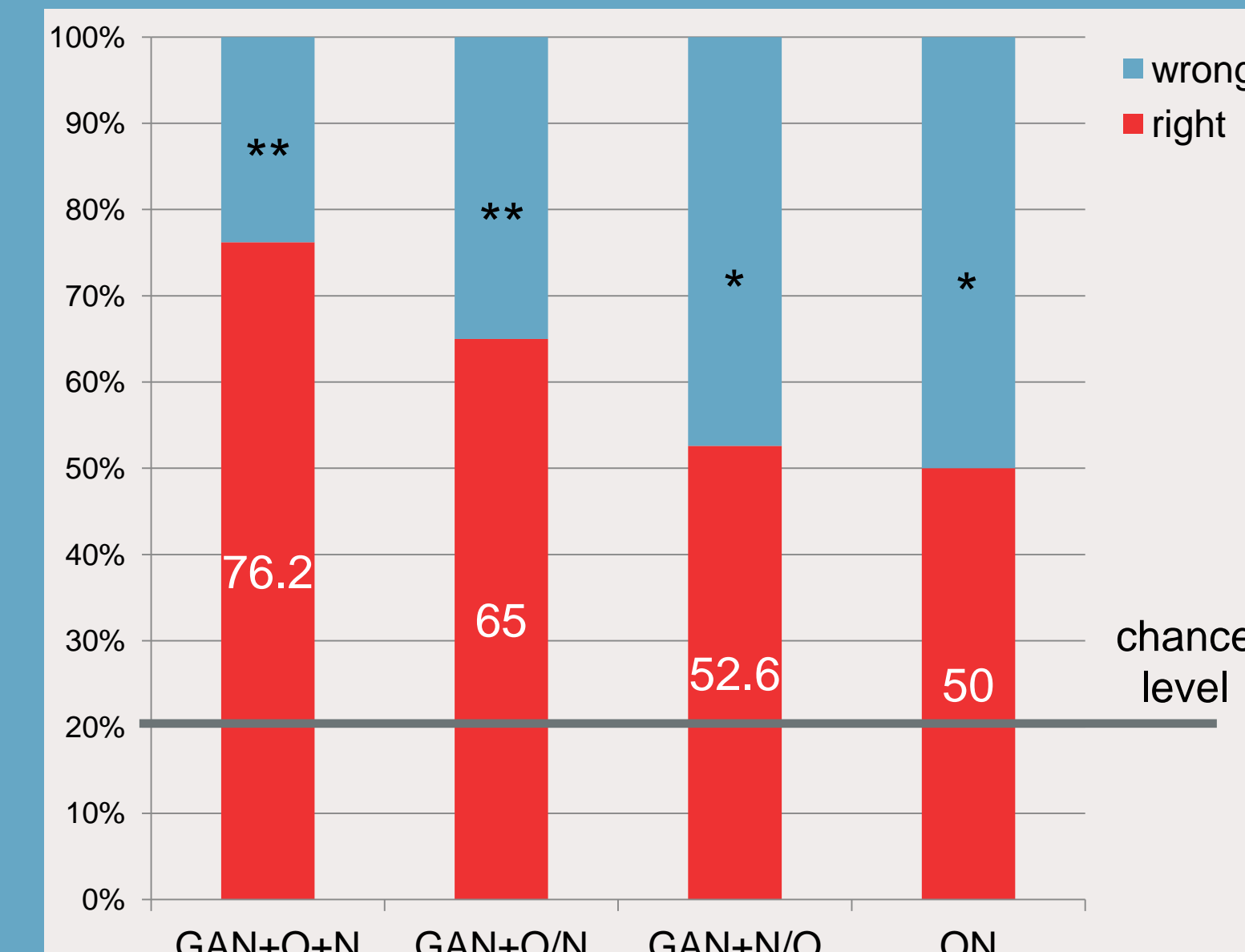
## Results



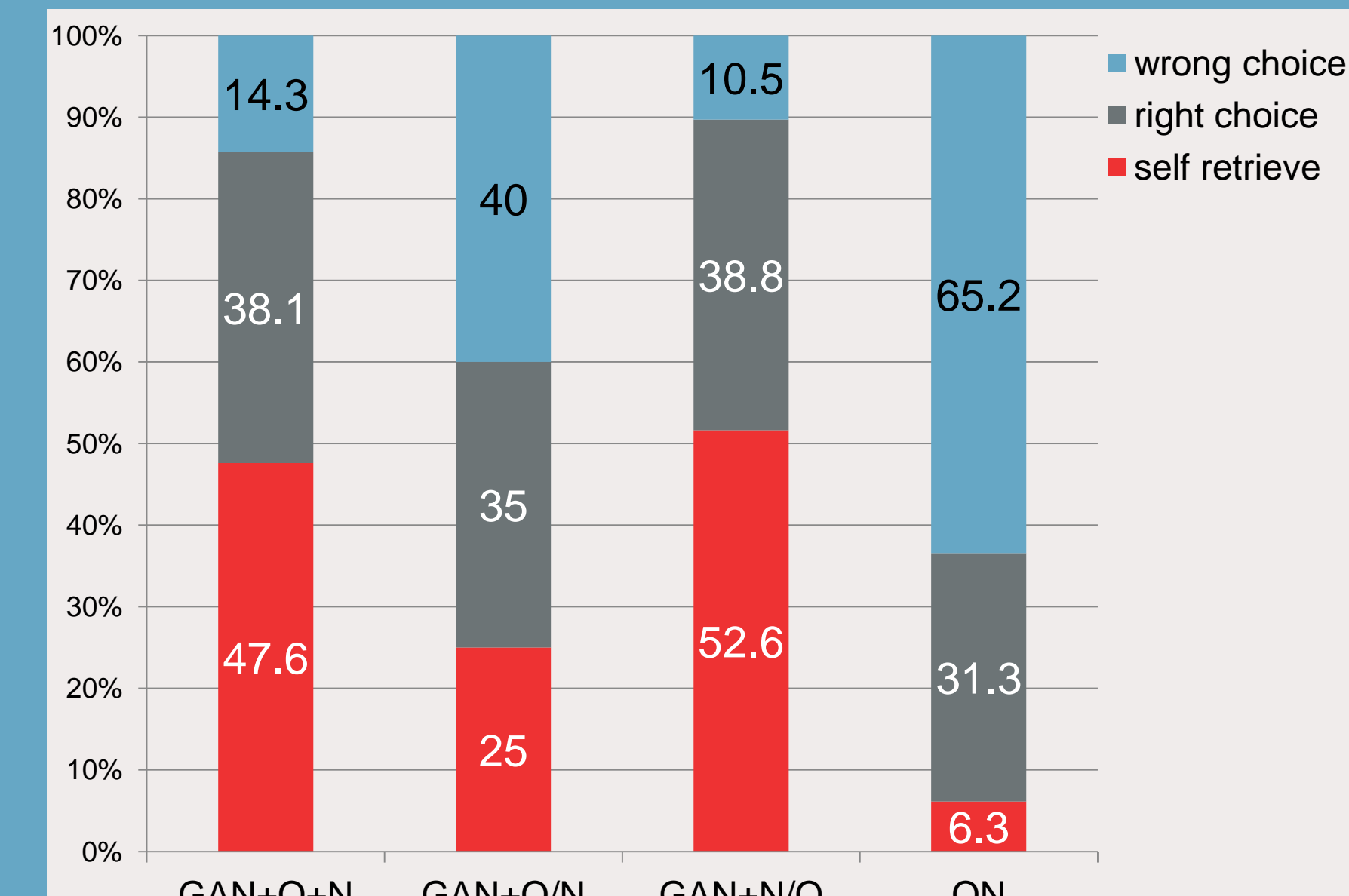
Mutual Exclusivity Test



Object-Name Matching Test



Object Identification Test



Name Retrieving Test

## Discussion

The GAN presence have helped children to perform tests more successfully even when it wasn't associated with the naming. But its influence was preferential: GAN+O/N increase mutual exclusivity performance, and did not affect object-name matching.

These data allow us to suppose that the function of GAN is not related only to the label, that explicit referential signs is an invitation to the convention about an object, shared between child and adult.

Consequently, there are difficulties with mutual exclusivity test for subjects in GAN+O+N condition: they had to make two conventions about one object.

## References

- Baldwin, D. A. (1991). Infants' contribution to the achievement of joint reference. *Child Development*, 62, 875-890.  
Fennell, C. & Waxman, S.R. (2010). What paradox? Referential cues allow for infant use of phonetic detail in word learning. *Child Development*. 81(5), 1376-1383.

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## Contacts

1. Tatyana Kotova, Cognitive Research Centre, Russian Academy for National Economy and Public Administration, tkotova@gmail.com
  2. Alexey Kotov, Laboratory for cognitive research, National Research University "Higher School of Economics", al.kotov@gmail.com
- Research Group for Concept and Cognitive Development [www.cogdevelopment.com](http://www.cogdevelopment.com)