

Abstract

This study investigated the relative contributions of general language and a specific aspect of syntax in Cantonese, namely quotative structure of particle wo5, in theory of mind development. Sixty-eight Cantonese-speaking 3- to 4-year-olds were given a battery of tasks to assess their language abilities and theory of mind development. Results showed that the mastery of quotative structure of particle wo5 per se does not uniquely predict theory of mind development. On the other hand, general language ability was found to be a significant predictor of theory of mind. These results led to a conclusion that language correlates with theory of mind at a more general, conceptual level, rather than a pure syntactic level.