

## Abstract

To investigate how factors like first languages, environment, and number of acquired languages could affect acquisition of English as a second language, five groups of bilinguals and trilinguals were compared via three tasks: reading comprehension, semantic categorization, and picture naming. We compared Malaysian Malay bilinguals with Hong Kong bilinguals to see the effect of first language on second language acquisition. By comparing Mainland students who came to Hong Kong for college education and those who studied in Mainland China, we would like to see how environment could influence language proficiency. Finally, by comparing Malaysian Chinese trilinguals with Hong Kong bilinguals, we wanted to know whether the number of languages to be mastered could affect language learning.