

Abstract

The present correlational study aimed to investigate possible factors explaining Chinese vocabulary acquisition in children. Aspects of Chinese morphological awareness, phonological awareness at onset phoneme and syllable levels, rapid automatized naming (RAN), phonological short-term memory and word reading were considered. Ninety-five native-Chinese first to fourth graders studying in Hong Kong were participated. Results demonstrated a ceiling effect in syllable awareness. Onset phoneme awareness, word reading skill and morphological awareness were significantly associated with Chinese vocabulary knowledge when age was statistically controlled. Yet, weak correlations of syllable awareness, RAN and phonological short-term memory with Chinese vocabulary knowledge were found respectively. Besides, hierarchical regression analysis showed that morphological awareness explained a unique 2.4% of variance in Chinese vocabulary knowledge beyond that contributed by all other significant correlates. Results highlighted the significant correlates of Chinese vocabulary knowledge and the unique value of morphological awareness in vocabulary acquisition. The findings may be useful for research and educational purpose in the future.