

# THE EFFECT OF SCHOOLING ON CHINESE READING AND WRITING IN NORMALLY READING PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

## Abstract

The current study investigates the effect of schooling on Chinese reading and writing in normally reading primary school children. The influence of age on the consistency effects in Chinese reading and writing were examined and discussed. Specifically, the consistency effect in Chinese writing is the focus of this study due to the less research attention received.

A total of 35 children participated in this study. Three tasks, namely a delayed copying, dictation and Chinese single character reading tasks were used to assess the visual-orthographic knowledge, consistency effects in writing and reading respectively, of groups of grade two and grade four primary school children. Children's writing duration in the delayed copying and dictation tasks were recorded with the use of a digital tablet. The number of correctly pronounced characters within one minute in the Chinese single character reading test was also assessed.

A significant grade difference was found in the delayed copying task, demonstrating that older children have better visual-orthographic processing skills. The results of both dictation task and Chinese single character reading test showed a significant main effect of grade, which older children performed better in both tasks, and a significant main effect of consistency. Nevertheless, the consistency effects in writing and reading identified in the dictation task and Chinese single character reading test respectively were in opposite directions. Both groups demonstrated shorter writing duration when writing inconsistent characters, while more consistent characters than inconsistent characters were pronounced correctly within one minute. The results indicate that there is an approaching significant developmental difference in the consistency effect in reading, while more research is needed to investigate the influence of age on the consistency effect in writing.