

Abstract

The current study revealed the relations among phonological awareness, rapid automatized naming, morphological awareness, vocabulary knowledge, and word reading, along with the possibility of mediation effect by vocabulary knowledge between morphological awareness and word reading, and also cross-language transfer effect on Chinese and English word reading in one setting. A group of 368 students from Grade 1 to 3 of local primary schools in Hong Kong were assessed using the corresponding language measures plus the nonverbal reasoning test. All language variables were found correlated to both Chinese and English word reading, except between English vocabulary knowledge and Chinese word reading. The path models verified the similar association and showed morphological awareness was relatively more important than phonological awareness for both languages. The effect of phonological awareness on Chinese word reading became much less influential when other variables were considered. Vocabulary knowledge was identified as a mediator for Chinese and English. There was a cross-language transfer effect from English morphological awareness to Chinese word reading but not likely from Chinese morphological awareness to English word reading though negative regression coefficient. Despite the mediation effect by vocabulary knowledge between morphological awareness and word reading of the corresponding language, and the cross-language transfer effect on Chinese word reading, English vocabulary knowledge was not serving as a mediator between English morphological awareness and Chinese word reading. The results suggest a new direction for the curriculum of language learning.

Keywords: phonological awareness, RAN, morphological awareness, vocabulary, word reading