

Abstract

The present study investigated the relationship between parents' and children's reading ability in both Chinese (L1) and English (L2), with children's linguistic skills as mediators. Data of 145 Chinese students studying Grade 1 and 2 was chosen from a previous twin study in Hong Kong. Their parents also filled out a questionnaire on their education level and income, then took measurements of their Chinese and English literacy. Result of hierarchy regression analyses showed that parents' reading ability explained unique variance in children's word reading even after age, grade, IQ, vocabulary knowledge, phonological awareness, morphological awareness, rapid automatized naming, and socioeconomic status (SES) were controlled. In addition, language showed a mediating effect on the relationship between parents' and children's reading ability. However, significant effect from parents' reading ability was only found in L2 English but not L1 Chinese. Taken together, these findings complement our understanding of parents' role in children's reading ability across language in Hong Kong.

Keywords: Chinese word reading, English word reading, parent literacy, SES