

Abstract

This study investigated the relevance of the deficits of naming speed and phonological memory for Chinese primary school dyslexic children. Both continuous and discrete formats of naming familiarized visual materials, discrete Chinese character naming, phonological memory span test and Chinese word reading test were undertaken by three groups of children: Chinese dyslexic children, chronological age matched control and reading age matched control with 20 children each. Results showed that the Chinese dyslexic children had significantly lower naming speed in naming familiarized visual materials presented in a discrete or continuous format than CA control group. Chinese dyslexics also had a longer latency in naming all high frequency characters than CA control group, but not for low frequency characters. The dyslexic children had more errors in naming all Chinese characters than CA control but with same accuracy rate as RA control. There also showed no difference in naming speed between dyslexic children and RA control in all naming tasks. For phonological memory span test, dyslexics performed poorer than both CA and RA control groups. Besides, significant correlation of naming speed tests and phonological memory tests were found. A developmental lag for naming speed and deficit in phonological memory for Chinese dyslexic children were suggested. Furthermore, this study also supports the review by Wagner and Torgesen (1987) that phonetic recoding in working memory and phonological recoding in lexical access are components of phonological process which contribute to reading.