

Abstract

The development of unitizational awareness in learning to read Chinese was investigated. A set of word and character tests was administered to 128 Hong Kong students in first, second and third grades. Results indicated that the second and third graders have developed the unitizational awareness at the character level while the first graders have not. However, all students have not yet developed the unitizational awareness at the word level. Moreover, the unitizational awareness at the character level was found to correlate significantly with the comprehension and word recognition performances. An unitizational model with two stages was proposed to account for the results.