

Abstract

Shyness is an early appearing and enduring personality trait. Previous research showed shy children scored significantly lower in both expressive and receptive in primary language tasks (Spere, 2004). Current study went beyond previous studies by investigating the secondary language ability. Tests for reading in Chinese (Chinese Character Recognition), non-verbal IQ (Raven's Colored Progressive Matrices), vocabulary definition and verbal fluency (Cantonese Vocabulary definition test) and receptive language skills (Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test in primary and secondary language) were administered to 60 Hong Kong Chinese Children ages 5-6. Shyness of children was measured by self-report and rating from their main caregivers. Regression results showed main caregiver rated shyness significantly predicted primary and secondary receptive language skills in a negative way controlling main caregiver's educational level, socioeconomic status (SES) and non-verbal intelligence. Implication of language learning of shy children were discussed.

Keywords: Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test , primary language, secondary language, shyness, Chinese children