

Abstract

This study investigated the subtypes of Chinese dyslexia and the transfer of deficits from Chinese to English in Hong Kong bilingual children. 47 children with Chinese dyslexia and 30 typically developing primary school students from grades 4 to 6 were tested on Chinese and English cognitive-linguistic skills and literacy tasks. Cluster analysis yielded the General Deficit (GD) and the RAN-only Deficit (RD) groups. The GD group showed deficits in Chinese phonological awareness, Chinese orthographic awareness, Chinese rapid naming, and Chinese morphological awareness while the RD group had impairments in Chinese rapid naming only. Results also illustrated the cross-language transfer of phonological and orthographic deficits. In addition, Chinese dyslexics in the study were more impaired in Chinese than in English. The findings suggest that rapid naming may be the major underlying deficit of Chinese dyslexia in Hong Kong and impairments of two languages in bilingual children were manifested differently.

Keywords: Dyslexia, Chinese, subtypes, cross-language transfer, bilingual