

**Abstract**

Languages utilize numerous prosodic features for contrasts in meaning. Despite the differences between Chinese and English, previous studies have shown that Cantonese tone sensitivity contributes to English reading abilities in children. The current study investigated the associations of Cantonese tone sensitivity, English stress sensitivity and English segmental phonological awareness to English word reading in 29 Cantonese-English bilingual undergraduate students in Hong Kong. Correlation analyses showed that there were significant positive relationships among tone sensitivity, phonological awareness and word reading. In hierarchical regression, segmental phonological awareness played a mediating role between the relationship of Cantonese tone sensitivity and English word reading. The present results gave support to the cross-language transfer and highlighted the interaction between suprasegmental and segmental processing in understanding adult reading. The study also discussed possibilities of testing prosodic and segmental sensitivities specific to the adult population. This study offered new evidence for future researchers to extend prosodic research from monolinguals to bilinguals, and from young children to adults.