

論文報告 Paper Presentation

繁、簡體字讀者漢字認知技巧的遷移

Transfer of analytic character processing skills in simplified and traditional Chinese readers

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There are currently two Chinese writing systems in use in Chinese speaking regions, namely simplified and traditional Chinese, and the effects of simplifying the script have aroused some discussion over last two decades. Recent research suggested that analytic/reduced holistic processing (i.e., identifying individual components of an object rather than gluing features together into a gestalt) is an expertise marker in Chinese character recognition (Hsiao & Cottrell, 2009), which depends mainly on readers' writing rather than reading experience (Tso, Au, & Hsiao, 2011).

Based on these findings, the current study took a cognitive perspective and examined whether and how simplified and traditional Chinese readers perceive simplified and traditional Chinese characters in terms of holistic processing. Results showed that when processing characters that are shared between the two Chinese scripts, both simplified and traditional Chinese readers demonstrated a similar level of reading and writing abilities, as well as holistic processing. When processing characters that are distinctive in the two scripts, simplified Chinese readers were more analytic than traditional Chinese readers in perceiving simplified characters; this effect depended on their writing rather than reading/copying performance. On the contrary, the two groups of readers did not differ in holistic processing of traditional characters, regardless of their performance difference in writing/copying of traditional characters. In sum, these results indicate that both simplified and traditional Chinese expert readers have developed analytic processing skills in the scripts they are familiar with; nevertheless, whereas simplified Chinese readers could transfer this skill to the processing of traditional characters, traditional Chinese readers could not in the processing of simplified characters. The better generalization ability in simplified Chinese readers may be due to a larger variance in visual form of simplified characters as compared with that of traditional counterparts.

Keywords: Simplified and traditional Chinese, Chinese character recognition, holistic processing, reading, writing