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Effects of articulatory suppression on the homophone judgments of Chinese-character words

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Abstract

This study examined the nature of phonological processing in Chinese-character word recognition. Chinese and Japanese use similar linguistic notations. Previous studies have suggested that Japanese readers use abstract, non-articulatory phonology when they read two-character Japanese kanji words. We examined whether Chinese readers use the same process. In Experiment 1, 25 native Chinese speakers performed a homophone judgment task using two-character Chinese words. The participants made more errors in the articulatory suppression condition than in the control condition. This suggests that the phonological information used during the task was speech-like, articulatory phonology. In Experiment 2, 24 native Chinese speakers performed a homophone judgment task using one-character Chinese words. Articulatory suppression did not disrupt the performance. Chinese speakers should use non-articulatory phonology when they read one-character Chinese words. The results of two experiments indicate that phonological processing used by Chinese and Japanese readers are not the same.