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Pictures facilitate recognition and retrieval speeds of associations between words in a second language and referents

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify associative processes for words in a second language and their referents. Thirty Japanese participants learned associative conditions for novel words in Chinese and pictorial referents (CP), as well as novel words in Chinese and words in Japanese (CJ), against a condition of only novel words in Chinese (C). After the learning phase, participants conducted 2 retrieval tasks for word recognition and 3 recognition tasks for source-monitoring of the referents. Correct answers for each recognition task were provided to participants after each trial. Although correct answers in all the conditions gradually increased in both the recognition and retrieval tasks, there were no significant differences among these conditions. In contrast, recognition and retrieval speeds were faster for CP than CJ. These findings suggest that pictures contribute to recognition and retrieval speeds of associations between words in a second language and referents.