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Authors

Wang, Ying-Chien
CHEN, SSU-YU
Liu, Shin Yu
[et al.](#)

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Implicit Causality in Chinese Verbs: The Correlations between Bilingualism and Theory of Mind

Ying-Chien Wang

National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan

SSU-YU CHEN

National Cheng Kung University, Tainan City, Taiwan

Shin Yu Liu

National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, East Dist, Taiwan

I CHENG WU

National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan

Shu-Ling Peng

National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan

Po-Sheng Huang

National Taiwan University of Science and Technology, Taipei, Taiwan

Jon-Fan Hu

National Cheng Kung University, Tainan City, Taiwan

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine Theory of Mind (ToM) in processing the Chinese implicit causality verbs. The Experiment identified the Chinese causal verbs of high tendency by using a bias decision task to the ToM paradigms (Reading the Mind in the Eyes test revised and YONI task) to explore the relationship among English proficiency, Theory of Mind, and causal verb processing. The main results are: Proficiency in both English and Chinese can affect one's interpretation of the Chinese implicit causality/consequentiality. On the other hand, the affective ability of ToM is enhanced as the English proficiency increases due to the understanding of the implicit causes/effects of the same concept under the context of the different languages. The study suggests that Chinese-English have different processing mechanisms from the monolinguals for the judgment of the implicit causality verbs.