

## **Effects of a phonological awareness training on English word reading among Japanese EFL learners**

藤幸千賀 Chika Fujiyuki(1), 山田玲子 Reiko Akahane-Yamada(1,2)

(1) 神戸大学大学院国際文化学研究科 Graduate School of Intercultural Studies, Kobe University

(2) 国際電気通信基礎技術研究所 Advanced Telecommunications Research Institute International (ATR)  
141c306c@stu.kobe-u.ac.jp, [yamada@atr-lt.jp](mailto:yamada@atr-lt.jp)

Mastering native-like pronunciation and rhythm is considered to be unrealistic goal for learners of English as a second language. Having a good command on segmental and prosodic features, however, will encourage learners to speak up and speak out. Eliminating the first language influence on second language listening and speaking is not easy, yet laboratory training studies in the past decades have demonstrated that it is attainable through intensive training or training on a daily basis. It is also widely known that phonological awareness training is beneficial to English-speaking children who has reading problems or dyslexic children. Several studies also indicate that phonological awareness instruction is successfully adaptable in second language learning domain. This study developed a computer-based phonological awareness training for Japanese learners of English and examined training effects on their English word reading. To reduce the word knowledge gap among learners only unfamiliar English words were used in the training. A session of the training consisted of eight tasks (initial phoneme identification, final phoneme identification, initial phoneme deletion, second phoneme deletion, second syllable deletion, rhyme detection, phoneme counting and syllable counting), and there were five training items for each task. Participants were twenty adult native speakers of Japanese who had no experience of being abroad more than six months. All participants took the same phonological awareness test and the same word-reading test twice, leaving at least one week between the tests. Ten participants were randomly chosen to undergo 16-20 sessions of the phonological awareness training (ca. 6 hours) between the tests, and the others received no training. The test results indicated that participants who underwent the phonological training performed significantly better than the non-training participants on English word reading: The accuracy in primary stress, rhythm, and over all goodness have been significantly improved. The finding suggests that a phonological awareness training might be beneficial to Japanese learners of English as a second language.