ABSTRACT

RESEARCH PAPER: Influence of L1 Phonological and Orthographic Systems on L2 Spelling

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This study uses both qualitative and quantitative approaches to examine L2 spelling between Arab and Chinese ELLs as influenced by their respective L1 phonological and orthographic systems. The purposes of the study were to determine whether Arab ELLs relied more on phonological processing skills while spelling words in English and whether Chinese ELLs relied more on orthographic processing skill while spelling words in English. Thirty-eight English language learners (Chinese =20, and Arabic=18) were drawn from an intensive English program in a middle level college in the US as participants. Participants were involved in two spelling tasks, which included pseudo spelling task, and error correction task. Their spelling performance was measured using an independence sample t-test and qualitative analysis. The highly correlated variables were pseudo spellings, error identification rate, error correction rate and L1 groups. The result found a statistically significant correlation between L1 phonological and orthographic processing and L2 spelling performance. The findings of this study support the alternative hypothesis that, different L1 groups may use different linguistic
routes while processing spelling and these routes are highly associated with their L1 language system.