

Autistic traits, working memory, and L2 prosodic boundary detection

[自閉特質、工作記憶與第二語言韻律邊界感知]

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This study aims to examine the roles of second language (L2) learners' autistic traits and working memory capacity in detecting prosodic boundaries. Forty-six learners of English with Mandarin as their native language completed questionnaires on personality and cognitive assessment – an Autism-Spectrum Quotient questionnaire (AQ) and a Working Memory questionnaire (WM). They also completed a Rapid Prosody Transcription (RPT) task in which they were asked to mark prosodic boundaries produced by Barack Obama in recordings of his Weekly Address. The results revealed that autistic traits and working memory capacity were positively correlated with each other, and attention to detail was the primary predictor for the detection of boundary tones. These findings provide insight into L2 learners' detection of prosodic boundaries along the autistic traits and working memory capacity continuum and further indicate that EFL instructions should take individual differences into consideration when assessing L2 learners' performance in listening or comprehension tasks.

Keywords: autistic traits, working memory, second language, prosodic boundary detection

關鍵詞：自閉特質、工作記憶、第二語言、韻律邊界感知

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