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Working Memory and lexical ambiguity resolution in Chinese

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Abstract: Two cross-modal priming experiments were conducted to examine the underlying mechanism of lexical disambiguation process was in activational nature or in inhibitory approach. In experiment one, forty native Cantonese listeners were recruited to participate in two tasks (1) a Chinese version reading span task (Daneman & Carpenter, 1980) to measure their WM capacity and (2) a cross-modal priming task (Yip, 2015). In experiment two, another group of native Mandarin listeners were recruited to participate in the same two tasks in Mandarin. The results revealed that sentence context had an early effect on the disambiguation processes for both high- and low-WM span groups and the underlying mechanism of the disambiguation process for the high-WM span group seemed to be in an inhibitory nature.