ABSTRACT

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　　The stress-timed nature of spoken English challenges most Chinese learners as Chinese is a syllable-timed language. However, empirical studies of Chinese college students' pronunciation have mostly focused on segmental aspects such as consonants and vowels, and few studies have examined suprasegmental (prosodic) features such as English stress. The present research seeks to address the issue of insufficient mastering of English stress among freshmen, non-English majors in Guizhou Education University, P. R. China, and contribute to the nascent research of Chinese students' use of MALL, as well as to explore: 1. whether English stress instruction based on song lyrics and MALL is more effective than English stress instruction based on conventional in-classroom learning; 2. whether English stress instruction based on song lyrics and MALL can yield a higher level of learner motivation compared to English stress instruction based on conventional in-classroom learning; 3. the development of integrating MALL, learning motivation and lyric-reading for English stress learning purpose.

　　Two groups of students (N=60) participated in the present research by separately receiving a new type of MALL-based lyric-reading instruction and the conventional in-classroom lyric-reading instruction. The awareness of creating MALL-based

lyric-reading instruction was initiated by several previous studies from three areas: MALL, Learning motivation, and English stress instruction. Instruments used in the research comprise a recruitment script for recruiting participants and collecting their basic information, a reading-aloud test for both pre- and post-test, two applications used for the configuration of the MALL-based lyric-reading instruction, an ARCS survey for the investigation of participants' motivation, an interview for gaining participants' insight towards the instruction, and a software program (Praat) for test recording and analysis. Findings from the reading-aloud tests show that the use of MALL-based lyric-reading instruction can help students improve English stress performance than lyric-reading instruction undertaken in a traditional way. Findings from the ARCS survey indicate that the MALL-based lyric-reading instruction could break through motivational barriers and engage students in English stress learning. This promising evidence also expands the sphere of English stress learning studies, as out-of-classroom learning on MALL may be more effective than in-classroom learning, and song lyrics are worth being considered as valuable reading materials not only to help students gain improvement in the performance of English stress, but also have the potential to expand learners' vocabulary size as claimed by students in the interview. Moreover, based on the findings from the research, discussions about the future development of MALL, the selection of feedback for participants' pronunciation correction, and the use of pseudo-environment for language teaching are offered to provide recommendations for future studies conducted in the similar field.