

A Linguistic Study on the Pronunciation Errors Done by Selected Sri Lankan Students Who Study Chinese as a Foreign Language

ABSTRACT

Pronunciation plays a vital role in the use of a language. One cannot master a language only by teaching grammar. The pronunciation of a language should be accurate in order to make the communication process a success. As a result of the social, economic and cultural bond between Sri Lanka and China at present, many focus their attention on studying the Chinese language. Therefore, it is timely to conduct a research on the topic “The Pronunciation Errors done by Selected Sri Lankan Students Who study Chinese as a foreign language”. The dissertation consists of 5 chapters with the first chapter highlighting the background, aim, significance, data collection and analysis. The research problem posed the question “what are the pronunciation errors of Sri Lankan students studying Chinese as a Foreign Language?”. The facts were analyzed on the problems caused in learning word final position, vowel ends and vowel sound. In order to find solutions, the pronunciations of students who study Chinese as a subject for the degree at the University of Kelaniya were recorded and compared with native speakers, and thus, errors were identified. In the second chapter, the central concepts and a review of literature is presented. The importance of pronunciation in Chinese, previous literature, and the basic facts regarding Chinese were discussed. It was identified that errors occur in word final position, combination errors, sound mixing errors, sound mixing errors related to the tongue and mother tongue influence in errors. Errors in allophonic changing occurred as vowel end and combination errors. At the same time, pronunciation errors of the ü vowel and nasal sounds were identified. It was identified that, errors occur in the 1st 2nd 3rd and 4th vowel sounds. Moreover, neglecting rules also cause errors in vowel sounds. In the fourth chapter, the causes and strategies to reduce them are suggested. It was noted that the said errors occurred due to mother tongue influence, miscomprehension and negligence. It was revealed that, errors can be reduced by listening to a native’s pronunciation, together with engaging in pronunciation exercises and practical sessions. The collected factors were summarized in the fifth chapter. The researcher expects that this study would shed light to identify pronunciation errors and to know the accurate use of the Chinese language, for those who are engaged in learning the Chinese language as well as for the teachers who are teaching the Chinese language.

Keywords: Chinese Language, Errors, Mother tongue influence, Pronunciation