

Chapter

Literature Review

Studies of TL's pronunciation problems

As for TL's pronunciation problems, there are four previous studies done by various researchers: that is to say, Suzuki (1963), Onishi (1976), Sirilak (1987a, 1987b) and Sukegawa

The following seven pronunciation problems were pointed out in all of these studies:

- 1) to pronounce [ç] for [tç] ,or vice versa
- 2) to substitute [s] for [ts]
- 3) to pronounce [k] for [g]
- 4) to pronounce [s] for [dz] and [z]
the moraic nasals /n/ [m] [n], [ɲ] [ŋ] and [ŋ]) are not pronounced as one mora
to confuse whether there is *sokuon* or not
to confuse between long vowels and short vowels

It seems however, that these studies are still not sufficient, because of the following two reasons. Firstly, it was not clear on what ground these pronunciation problems were drawn For instance, Suzuki (1963) and Sirilak (1987a, 1987b) did not refer the evidence that they relied on. Secondly, sample size of the participants in these studies was very small. For instance, Onishi (1976) audio recorded TL's speech and analyzed it, but the number of the participants in his study was only two. Sukegawa (1993) conducted a detailed questionnaire survey with JT but the number of the JT was only three.

Therefore, it is obvious that an empirical (i.e., based on the data) survey with a larger sample size of the participants will be necessary.

Studies of teachers' teaching practice of pronunciation

Regarding ESL/EFL teachers' teaching practice of pronunciation Dewing Munro (2005) stated that:

The consequences of inadequate teacher preparation are many. In some instances, students simply do not receive any instruction, or they are directed to focus on the most salient characteristics of their accent, regardless of their influence on intelligibility (p.389).

Likewise, it seems that JSL teachers (i.e., teachers in Japan) do not teach pronunciation much.Okubo () examined JSL teachers' teaching practice in a private Japanese school. According to her, the amount of time devoted to pronunciation was small (p.29) Also, these JSL teachers' focus was on teaching consonants and vowels and "special mora" rather than suprasegmental elements (e.g. pitch accent and sentence final intonation). Furthermore she reported that the variations of the methods which these JSL teachers employed were very limited (p.29). Most of them employed repetition practice (i.e., the practice in which learners

The detail of Japanese phonologic system will be described in Chapter 4

The same as

It includes "long vowels", "sokuon" and "moraic nasals".

listen to the model sounds and pronounce target words or sentences without any instruction by the teacher), which some studies have revealed as a method of little use (e.g., Kawano Matsuzaki 1998; Chiba Sato, 2005)

As for TL's teaching practice of pronunciation, although there are two relevant studies regarding it (Chiba, 2000; Ogawara & Kawano , these two studies did not investigate this issue in detail Chiba (2000) asked 37 JT about their teaching practice, but not all the participants answered the question because of an open ended question style. Although Ogawara & Kawano (2002 interviewed 12 JT about their teaching practice as well as their views on pronunciation teaching, problems in teaching pronunciation, the results of the teaching practice was not reported in detail due to a limitation of the space.

To sum up it is necessary to examine JT's teaching practice of pronunciation in more detail.

Studies of teachers' problems and difficulties in teaching pronunciation

In the area of ESL/EFL teaching, studies such as MacDonald (200) and Derwing & Munro (2005 listed the following as problems and difficulties of ESL/EFL teachers

Teachers' lack of knowledge, which includes both that of phonetics/phonology and that of methods

Insufficient teaching/learning materials

The absence of pronunciation curriculum

The situation in JSL seems almost the same as that of ESL/EFL. According to Okubo), 19 JSL teachers in a private Japanese school answered that they:

1) lacked knowledge of adequate teaching methods;

2) felt that appropriate teaching/ learning materials were insufficient; and

3) felt that their learners could pronounce correctly only when they received correction.

As for JT, Ogawara & Kawano (2002 found that the 12 JT had the following problems and difficulties:

Lack of confidence both in teaching pronunciation and in their own pronunciation itself

Lack of knowledge of adequate and effective teaching methods

The absence of pronunciation teaching/learning materials

It can be summarized that pronunciation teaching/learning has been marginalized due to teachers' lack of knowledge of both phonetics/phonology and teaching methods, the absence of teaching/ learning materials and curriculum

Thus, it is useful and necessary to re examine whether present JT have similar problems and difficulties.

Japanese language has no provided standard language. Instead, Tokyo dialect is considered to be standard in general and is taught in most, if not all, of the Japanese courses both inside and outside Japan. Some teachers from the districts other than Tokyo who were not trained in phonetics formally may lack confidence in their pronunciation