

## A STUDY ON TONAL VARIATION DIFFICULTIES FACED BY STUDENTS WHO LEARN CHINESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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At present, the interest towards learning Chinese Language is showing a dramatic increase. As a result of that, many students have started learning Chinese Language as a foreign language. Chinese Language is a tonal language which is made up with four main tones. Meanings of all the words are changing according to the pronunciation variation of tones. The same sound can have many meanings when the tones are changed and used in different ways. Most of students believe Chinese tones are the one of the most difficult parts of learning Chinese, especially in spoken language. But without learning appropriate tonal variation, it is difficult to understand the meaning of the word. The main objective of this study is to identify the common errors of identify and pronunciation appropriate tones done by the Chinese learning students in Sri Lanka. The experiences had in Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka have given a greater influence in selecting this topic area. To collect data for the research many methods were used. A questionnaire along with the worksheet and an oral test were used as gather primary data. The questionnaire was distributed among second year Chinese Language Specialized students of Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. The oral test was done with the same students. Secondary data were collected by reading and studying relevant research papers, books, journals and various website published in China. Sinhala Language does not exit any tones, but Chinese Language is totally different. According to the results of the research, many students make mistakes of pronunciation and identifying correct tones. The main reason why Sri Lankan students make mistakes regarding this topic is mother tongue does not have any tone. So they have less practice about tones. This study helps students to make more confident and encouragement to pronounce correct tone in appropriate word. Finally, the researcher has explained suggestions and recommendations to reduce tonal difficulties made by students.

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