TONE DEVELOPMENT OF HONG KONG CANTONESE-SPEAKING TEENAGERS IN LEARNING PUTONGHUA

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Abstract

This dissertation investigates the tone development of Hong Kong Cantonese-speaking teenagers in learning Putonghua. It focuses on the tone developmental process and the patterns of tone errors of ten subjects in five months. The data was collected from the designed tests of the subjects' production of isolated tones and all two-syllable tone combinations. The main findings are: 1) Cantonese teenagers have difficulty in acquiring Putonghua tones though the tonal system of Putonghua is much simpler than that of Cantonese (4 tones in Putonghua versus 6 tones in Cantonese); 2) although they have made a variety of tone errors, there are obvious and systematic patterns in their tone variations, which show a striking contrast between the high level-tone and the falling tone /the rising tone and the dipping tone. Throughout the tone development, the learners tend to substitute the high level tone and the falling tone for each other the one hand and the rising tone and the dipping tone for each other on the other hand. We found that the degree of difficulty and area of difficulty can be predicted by Eckman's Markedness Differential Hypothesis (1977). The stage I (the first three months) exhibits more native language transfer than the stage II (the remaining two months). This corresponds to Major's Ontogeny Model (1986). It is very clear that the error patterns by Hong Kong Cantonese-speaking teenagers reveals L1 transfer, markedness and developmental factors.
摘要

本論文是研究十名香港青少年學習普通話聲調的發展，集中研究香港他們五個月的學習過程和錯誤模式。研究員設計了單音節和雙音節的詞語來測試他們的聲調發展。雖然廣東話的聲調系統比普通話複雜，他們有很多困難，犯了很多毛病，而這些毛病都很有規律。在整個發展中，陰平（T1）和去聲（T4）相互代替，而陽平（T2）和上聲（T3）相互代替。Eckman's Markedness Differential Hypothesis可以預計香港青年人學習普通話聲調的困難處；象Major's Ontogeny Model（1986）所提出的，開始的時候母語的影響比較大。他們的聲調錯誤模式是有三方面的因素：1）母語的影響；2）有標（markedness）；和3）發展因素。
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