

Abstract

This dissertation deals with the acquisition of French voiceless stops /p t k/ and voiced stops /b d g/ by 11 Taiwanese intermediate or advanced learners of L2 French. The linguistic situation in Taiwan is described as diglossia. Most speakers speak two languages, mainly Mandarin Chinese and Taiwanese. Mandarin Chinese has plosives /p t k p^h t^h k^h/ while Taiwanese has /b g p t k p^h t^h k^h/. An acoustic analysis of CVCVCVC logatoms where C = /b d g p t k/ and V = /a i u/ shows important heterogeneity among speakers. The cues used by French native speakers to oppose voiceless and voiced stops are irregularly used by non-native speakers. The influence of Mandarin Chinese is noted. A perception test shows poorer discrimination among pairs of consonants (/b p/, /d t/ and /g k/) in CV syllable when V = /a/, as compared to /i u/. The results show that non-native listeners tend to, firstly, better discriminate the voiceless plosives of French when the VOT is longer and secondly, ignore the negative VOT of voiced stops. As regards perception, the cues used in Mandarin Chinese to discriminate between aspirated and non-aspirated stops consonants seem to be used in French too. No clue to the influence of Taiwanese has been found, although the opposition of voicing exists.

Keywords: *phonetics, acoustics, perception, pronunciation, voicing, stop consonant, VOT, v-ratio, French, Mandarin Chinese, Taiwanese, French as a Foreign Language (FLE)*