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Effective Teaching Methods in teaching Korean Monophthongs to the Korean Language Learners in Sri Lanka

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This study aims to identify the effective teaching methods in teaching Korean monophthongs to the Sinhala native speakers learning Korean as a foreign language. The learners of Korean Language in the beginner level meet difficulties in writing the Korean monophthongs correctly. This Study aims to investigate teaching methodology to overcome the problems in L2 writing. Originating in two different language families, both Korean and Sinhala languages have differences between each other in terms of the language families as well as the language type. In terms of phonology, Sri Lankan students have difficulty in clearly distinguishing the Korean vowels and other consonants. This Paper aims to investigate the specialties in two languages and to show effective teaching methods. The objectives of this study is to analyze the errors that exist in writing Korean monophthongs and to make the Korean language learner confident in the possibility in finding solutions to overcome the problems in L2 writing. In Addition, this study aims to examine an effective teaching methodology to acquire a better understanding of the Korean monophthongs and improve the writing ability of the students. This Study was conducted on twenty-five students learning Korean in the 1st year, following a general degree program in Korean studies at University of Kelaniya. This sample was chosen to examine the errors they make in learning the Korean monophthongs in the beginner level. All participants were given a vocabulary-writing task of dictation and the errors were analyzed. The result of vocabulary error analysis is summarized as follows. First, with the comparison of the Korean and Sinhala monophthong systems, it is found that there are 10 monophthongs in Korean and 8 in Sinhala. There are no phonemes of ‘—’ and ‘ † ’ (ʌ) in Sinhala. Indeed views vary from scholar to scholar, but according to the generally accepted theory, Sinhala monophthongs can be categorized into three parts, front vowels, middle vowels and back vowels according to the place of the movement of the tongue. The Korean monophthongs can be categorized into two parts, front vowels and back vowels. The Students felt difficulty in recognizing the † (ʌ) and the † (ɔ). The Comparative Study on the Korean – Sinhala vowels for graduates of Korean as a foreign Language has proven to be beneficial to distinguish the differences. Moreover, the teaching methods suggested in the paper will be beneficial for the Korean language facilitators in Sri Lanka.

Key words: Korean and Sinhala Monophthongs, Teaching Korean as a Foreign Language