

Prockshat Leangruksa 2012: A Study of Thai Initial Consonant Clusters Pronunciation and Spelling in Children with Difficulties in Reading and Writing. Master of Arts (Applied Linguistics), Major Field: Applied Linguistics, Department of Linguistics. Thesis Advisor: Assistant Professor Puttachart Potibal, Ph.D. 212 pages.

This study aims to examine how children with reading and writing difficulties pronounce and spell Thai initial consonant clusters and to compare their patterns with those of children without reading and writing difficulties. Data were collected from 20 samples of the third grade elementary (Prathom Sueksa 3) students who were studying in the second semester of the academic year 2009, Piboonprachasan School, Bangkok. 10 samples were randomly selected from children diagnosed with reading and writing difficulties and the other 10 samples were randomly selected from children without reading and writing difficulties. Four reading and spelling tests of Thai initial consonant clusters were used in data collection, comprising of 76 words in total. These words were divided into three groups, namely, words with true consonant clusters, words with pseudo consonant clusters and words with leading consonant clusters. The spelling patterns and pronunciation of each word were analyzed in order to find the correlation between these patterns and the students' levels of phonological awareness.

The spelling results of all types of clusters indicate that children without reading and writing difficulties show less than fifty percent of incorrect patterns while children with reading and writing difficulties show more than fifty percent of those. The pronunciation results show that the total number of incorrect cluster sounds pronounced by children without reading and writing difficulties is less than fifty percent. On the other hand, children with reading and writing difficulties show more than fifty percent of incorrect sounds of two types, that is, true consonant clusters and leading consonant clusters. As for the pseudo clusters, they show less than fifty percent of incorrect sounds. It is found, by scoring the correctness of the patterns of true consonant clusters spelled and pronounced by children with reading and writing difficulties, that the scores are related to deficiency in phonological awareness of clusters in Thai.

Student's signature

Thesis Advisor's signature

____ / ____ / ____