
Articulation Timing and Orthographical Representation of Consonant Gemination in Sinhala

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Abstract

Consonant gemination, in general, has two major aspects: a. lengthening b. doubling. This study focuses on articulation and orthography in Sinhala, the two parts of the language where consonant gemination occurs. It examines the pronunciation time ratios of the 16 pairs of singleton and geminated Sinhala consonants in order to analyze the relationship that exists between their articulation and orthography. This study focuses on the problem of whether there is a relationship between orthography and the articulation time ratios of geminated and singleton consonants in Sinhala. Two research questions are posed in order to examine this research problem: 1) What are the articulation time ratios between the geminated and non-geminated consonants in Sinhala? and 2) What relationships exist between orthographic symbolization and those ratios? A group of ten adult participants contributed to the data: five males and five females. Praat.exe was the main technical instrument used to measure pronunciation timings. The data revealed that the ratios lie between a minimum of 1:1.6 and a maximum of 1:2.4 times. Therefore, consonant gemination in Sinhala is a lengthening process. It further exhibits that the alpha-syllabic writing system in Sinhala ignores the length ratios of the geminated consonants.

Keywords: *Consonant gemination, Pronunciation timing, Singleton, Sinhala*

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