Pedagogical Achievements and Challenges towards Effective Teaching: Focusing on the Case of Japanese Language Acquisition

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This study examines Japanese language education in Sri Lanka, the JFL, Japanese as a Foreign Language. This study examines the acquisition difficulties and pedagogical strategies for learning one of the alphabets in the Japanese language. The Japanese language consists of three alphabets: Hiragana, Katakana, and Kanji. To succeed in Japanese language acquisition, one must master these three alphabets with their different usages. There is a lack of previous studies mainly focusing on Sri Lankan students in the JFL situation. In addition, the second alphabet, Katakana, involves complicated usage compared to the other two alphabets, Hiragana and Kanji. Therefore, this study focuses on the Katakana alphabet to unveil hidden factors related to learners and teachers. The research methodology included a comprehensive literature review focusing on the current situation of Japanese language education, with particular emphasis on the experiences and challenges of Sri Lankan learners. The research question is to find out what the current achievements and challenges are in learning and teaching the Katakana alphabet in the Japanese language. Through qualitative research analysis, this study identified both achievements and challenges related to learning and teaching perspectives. One of the major concerns regarding Katakana acquisition among Japanese language learners and teachers is the similarities and differences between the English language and the Katakana alphabet. In conclusion, this study states that learning and teaching the Katakana alphabet are largely affected by three aspects: linguistic, social, and cultural. The research intends to enhance Japanese language acquisition in Sri Lanka and generate ideas for specific teaching strategies to help Japanese Language learners overcome the difficulties they encounter when learning Katakana.

Keywords: Japanese language, Katakana, Pedagogy, Teaching and learning