

# *The Production of L2 Vowels by Chinese EFL Learners: An Acoustic Perspective on Pre-fortis Clipping\**

Weijing ZHOU

*Jiangsu University of Science and Technology (JUST), PRC*

*This study examines the acquisition of pre-fortis clipping by eight Chinese EFL learners (CEFLs). The data were collected in the phonetics laboratory at Cambridge University and analyzed with reference to eight British Received Pronunciation speakers (BRPs). Three results were found: (1) there are significant differences between the average vowel duration in pre-stop contexts by CEFLs and BRPs; (2) CEFLs' greatest difficulties lie in the production of /ɪ:/ and /ɜ:/ before the bilabial stops, /ɔ:/ and /ɜ:/ before velar stops, /u:/ before both the bilabial and velar stops, /ɒ/ before bilabial stops, /æ/ before both bilabial and velar stops and /ɪ/ in all the pre-stop contexts; and /ɪ/ pre-fortis clipping is the most problematic for CEFLs in the pre-bilabial stop context. These findings have significant implications for the teaching of EFL phonetics in China.*