Importance of Using Tongue Twisters as a Teaching Method to Improve Pronunciation of First-Year Chinese Learning Students of the University of Kelaniya

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Although Chinese is a widely spoken language, pronouncing Chinese the same as the native is hard because Chinese is a tonal language and is spoken fast. Mandarin Chinese operates with four different tones, meaning that how you say a word can give it four different meanings. When pronouncing Chinese language, the leaner also has to be careful because they require a tongue position. So, tongue twisters will be effective for Chinese learners to improve both tone pronunciation and tongue position. The main purpose of this research is to understand the importance of teaching Chinese tongue twisters as a teaching method for Chinese learning students to improve their pronunciation. This paper seeks answers to whether the Chinese tongue twisters are useful for Chinese learning beginners to improve their pronunciation. The target group of the research is 50 Chinese learning undergraduates in the General 1st year. These students are divided into two groups. One group will be practiced 10 Chinese tongue twisters by giving them chance to listen to audios and YouTube videos of thoseand the other group will not be. After teaching for 2 months, their pronunciation will be checked by the "Praat" voice analysis software. The results of the study will be shown a clear difference in pronunciation between the two groups and pronunciation errors that are common with students who did not teach tongue twisters. The conclusion will suggest a clear understanding of practicing Chinese tongue twisters to improve the pronunciation. Moreover, the university lectures can have depth understanding of practicing Chinese tongue twisters is a more effective teaching method to improve the pronunciation of Chinese learners to have a better outcome.

Keywords: Chinese, Improve, Pronunciation, Teaching method, Tongue Twisters