

A STUDY ON EFFICACIOUS USAGE OF TEACHING AIDS IN CHINESE GRAMMAR TEACHING IN SRI LANKA: WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO SABARAGAMUWA UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA

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Abstract

Teaching aids engage in a salient part in the teaching-learning process. It presents information in a latest and helpful manner so that students get a better understanding of what they are taught. In regard to Chinese language learning in Sri Lanka, teaching aids found to be much effective since Chinese is taught as a foreign language. Particularly, Chinese grammar can be found as the most demanding area that students always get the influence of mother tongue and English. The main purpose of this study is to apprehend the most efficacious teaching aids that can be used to teach Chinese grammar in Sri Lankan classrooms. The literature study method has used to analyze the influence of different teaching aids while questionnaire analysis method has used to examine the manipulation of teaching aids in Chinese grammar teaching at Sabaragamuwa University in Sri Lanka. It illustrates that, along with multimedia, computer, mobile applications and organizing flashcard games were found as effective teaching aids for Chinese grammar teaching in Sri Lanka while depressing the usage of blackboard or whiteboard throughout the whole lesson. Further, it encourages teachers to utilize Adobe Flash or Adobe Animate to make video tutorials, make an effort on online digital content creation tools such as Edpuzzle, Kaltura and digital applications such as Kahoot to conduct audio-visual games in order to ensure interactivity and stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning Chinese grammar.

Keywords: *Acquisition, Chinese grammar, Effective teaching aids, Influence, Teaching Chinese as a foreign language*

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Introduction

The use of teaching aids can be traced back to ancient times in Sri Lanka. When it comes to kindergarten education, we can clearly remember one of the most popular teaching aids in the history of Sri Lanka, "the welipilla". Later on, it transformed into the blackboard. Then, there were many teaching aids, such as multimedia, computer and mobile phone applications, smart whiteboards, which can smoothly carry out the teaching process. In addition, they have also introduced into relevant disciplines. Recently there are special teaching aids for language, history, mathematics and science. Teaching aids can be helpful in teaching and learning process to break the boring routines and add a healthy life to the classes, to retain the information longer, to convey concepts in a better manner, to a better learning experience and to increase conceptual thinking.

As Chinese belongs to the Sino Tibetan language family and Sinhala and English belongs to the Indo European language family, there are some major difficulties in acquisition a foreign language like Chinese to Sri Lankan students. In terms of sentence structure, both Chinese and English have the sentence structure of "subject + verb + object" while the sentence structure of Sinhala is composed of "subject + object + verb". Therefore, Sri Lankan students experience more difficulties in absorbing Chinese grammar patterns. Further, students strive to compare the Chinese grammatical patterns with their mother tongue. Therefore, it is very important to have proper teaching methods and teaching aids when teaching Chinese grammar.

Teaching aids are materials used by teachers to supplement classroom teaching or stimulate students' interests (www.dictionary.com). Kumar (2017) put forward his own definition of teaching aids, that is tools and equipment used as auxiliary means to improve students' learning interest in classroom teaching. Zheng Lihue pointed out that if you use too much class time, compensatory teaching method is the most effective method. In addition, he said that changing teaching aids in the classroom can avoid students' weakness and boredom. Mwamwenda. T (1990) proposed that the teaching aids used in the classroom should be convenient and easy to transfer. The use of teaching aids is a whole process. Therefore, it can be adjusted according to the situation. Aloraini (2012) and Yangyuan (2015) also proposed multimedia assisted teaching through research. They have discussed several aspects of multimedia in grammar teaching such as plain text, text with pictures and text with videos. Li Jing and Kang Muyun (2014) believed that using multimedia is the best way to improve the efficiency of Chinese classroom teaching. Therefore, researchers generally believe that multimedia assisted instruction is a huge task in any type of classroom teaching. On the other hand, Li Chunling (2000)

mentioned that "expression teaching" is very important in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. Basic learners know only a few words. Therefore, he said, "sign language"+"expression"+"visual aids" play a huge role in basic Chinese teaching. It points out that teachers should keep both intuitiveness and abstractness when using teaching aids. Recently, Li Yifei (2019) and Qi Xiaoling (2011) talked about games as a method of Chinese teaching. However, the scope of effective teaching aids in teaching grammar to foreigners has not been clearly studied. The scope of this study will make up for the lack of effective teaching methods in basic grammar teaching in Sri Lanka.

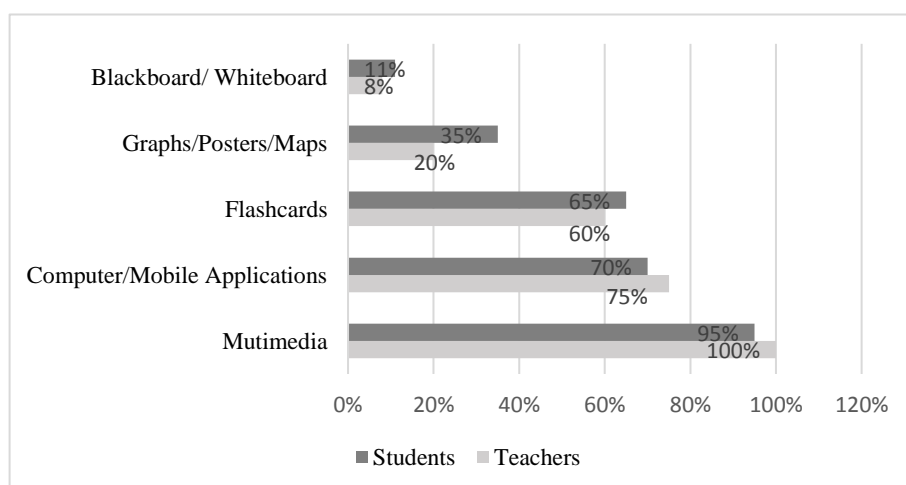
Material and Methods

Questionnaire analysis method has used to examine the manipulation of teaching aids in Chinese grammar teaching in Sabaragamuwa University in Sri Lanka. This study randomly selected 50 students those who learn Chinese and 10 Chinese teachers who engage in teaching currently and who engaged in teaching previously in Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. The main data were collected through a questionnaire and conducted short interviews through mobile applications: WeChat and WhatsApp. The collected data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively by mixed method while Microsoft Excel has used as the data analysis tool. In addition, literature research method was used to analyze relevant literature review by browsing relevant papers, articles, periodicals, books to analyze the influence of different teaching aids in Chinese grammar learning and teaching.

Results and Discussion

Figure 1:

The Perception of Teachers and Students on Efficacious Teaching Aids



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According to the data analysis, it is clear that most of the teachers and students are more positive with the modern digital teaching aids such as multimedia, computer and other mobile applications, flashcards while depressing the usage of traditional teaching aids such as blackboard, whiteboard, graphs, posters, maps etc. While using these modern digital teaching aids, teachers can switch between teaching aids, instead of relying on one teaching aid all the time, and students can also use computers or mobile applications for self-study. In the whole classroom teaching process, use of whiteboard is very inappropriate. Therefore, teachers can use different teaching aids throughout the classroom. In this way, it can not only save time, but also improve the enthusiasm of students. The use of multimedia can also be distinguished by using PowerPoint presentations and video tutorials, and exercises can be realized as small games. Teachers can introduce flashcard games for the classroom where students often have confusion in language. Especially in teaching, such as measuring words, location words, telling time or numbers, teachers can organize effective flashcard games or computer games as aids. It is not only helpful to improve students' fast learning ability, but also helpful to improve students' memory. Teachers should be encouraged to use smart whiteboards instead of traditional whiteboards. At the same time, teachers can also divide teaching aids according to class hours and allocated time periods. It is the teacher's responsibility to manage the teaching plan between teaching aids. For example, to introduce new words, teachers can use picture cards. In order to explain the grammatical structure, teachers can use multimedia with visual effects. In order to practice grammar lessons in class, teachers can use flashcard games. Finally, for the practice part, teachers can upload the exercise form to a blog maintained by themselves or a digital learning management system like Google Classroom.

Using a variety of teaching aids can avoid students' boredom. In addition, we can use separate teaching aids to compare and contrast grammar lessons between different languages. It will enable students to have a clear concept of what they have learned, and help students identify differences between languages. For example, if this is a grammar lesson that can be seen in both mother tongue and Sinhalese, it may first use PowerPoint and blackboard to give a brief explanation in mother tongue. Then, through picture cards and video tutorials, we can explain the differences or similarities between the two languages. After explaining the whole lesson, it may encourage students to conduct a self-survey of the lesson and find more similarities and differences through language. Therefore, the diversity of teaching aids will enable students to participate in classroom teaching effectively.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In order to ensure a better acquisition of Chinese grammar in the classroom by using effective teaching aids, teachers can switch between teaching aids instead of relying on one teaching aid all the time. Students can also use computers or mobile applications for self-study. During the whole lecture, the use of whiteboards was very inappropriate. Therefore, teachers can use different teaching aids throughout the class. In this way, it can not only save time, but also improve students' enthusiasm for learning.

The contemporary student is always familiar with new technology, and it is difficult to advance without new technology. Compared with other countries, Sri Lankan classrooms are inadequate in the use of technology. The more they get used to this technology, the easier it is to advance with the progress of knowledge. As they always find updated information, which enables them to learn more about what they have learned in the classroom. At the same time, it can also save teachers' extra energy and time. The teaching aids used in the Chinese grammar class must avoid boredom and increase efficiency, and more students should be allowed to carry with the progress of new technology. In modern classrooms, both teachers and students are interested in using interactive teaching methods. It attaches great importance to students' self-discovery of knowledge instead of relying on teachers. Only using visual aids or audio aids in the classroom will make the lesson too monotonous. Therefore, teaching aids must be equipped with a mix usage of audio-visual aids to avoid the boredom in the classroom. It is required not only play slides, but also develop multimedia teaching by adding educational video clips and so on. The audio-visual teaching method is more effective in grammar teaching. Therefore, teachers can continue to take lessons at the same time with the video tutorials. Adding the native Chinese phonetics to the video tutorials will help improve students' oral and listening ability. It can ensure the improvement of all four skills of a language: reading, writing, listening, speaking. Teachers can make an effort to use Adobe Flash or Adobe Animate to make video tutorials, or try online digital content creation tools such as Edpuzzle, Kaltura. Using these online digital applications such as Kahoot also can conduct audio-visual games to make the course more interactive. The usage of more interactive teaching aids can stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning and will not easily give up grammar lessons.

The teaching aids must be accompanied by exercises and review tests before and after class. Teachers can update classroom exercises and additional exercises through digital spaces such as blogs or Google groups. Students are encouraged to exercise themselves and participate in online tutoring. Students can complete the exercises within a period of time and submit answers in time

after each class. The submission date can also be arranged in advance. This can reduce the maintenance of exercise books, and it is also convenient for teachers to take time for corrections. To review the previous lesson before the beginning of the new lesson, it may use simple flash cards to remember the new vocabulary and may consider about some quick games. Then, students are used to observe more and actively participate in grammar classes. As they can get their corrections quickly by using digital platforms, so that they can review their answers and study their mistakes by themselves. At the same time, it may drive the grammar lessons more student centered rather than the traditional teacher centered classrooms.

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