

Utilizing Digital Media in Teaching Chinese Characters

Wayani Kariyawasam
Visiting Lecturer (Chinese Language)
wayanikariyawasam@gmail.com

Chinese characters known as Hanzi are regarded as one of the earliest forms of written languages in the world, in which learning the characters is considered a fundamental step as Chinese characters are formed as pictograms forming images of animals, persons and objects. Sri Lankan students learning Chinese language at the Department of Modern Languages, University of Kelaniya find it difficult to write the characters properly and also to remember the meanings of the pictograms. The main difficulties for the problems faced by students are the irregular attendance and not regularly practicing writing the characters. In fact, the students do not write the characters repeating them several times till they remember their meanings and patterns. As a result, within a short period of time the students forget the correct stroke order of the Chinese characters. Therefore, with the use of the suggested software, the students have the possibility to practice Chinese characters outside the classrooms. It is also more reliable to learn characters using the software when the students are free. The findings of the research are presented by statistics and the research is mainly based on interviews and opinions of the students using the software to practice Chinese characters and on the evaluation remarks of the written class tests. According to the findings of the research it was evident that students have identified the use of software as an influential motivating factor in learning Chinese characters as it gives them the freedom to learn the characters without the authority of a teacher and to correct and to understand the mistakes that occur when learning Chinese characters.

Keywords: Digital Media, Chinese Characters, Pictograms, Software