
Chinese Initial Teaching Scheme Designed for Indonesian Beginners

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Abstract – As a part of the primary stage of Chinese phonetic teaching, the importance of Chinese initial teaching is self-evident, as initial pronunciation errors can affect the results of communication. Therefore, when Indonesian students begin to learn Chinese phonetics, they should first master the pronunciation characteristics of Chinese initials. This study has made a deeper exploration based on previous studies. This study aims to propose an initial teaching scheme for Indonesian beginners built on sorting out. Through comparison between the consonant systems in Chinese and Indonesian languages, analysis of the difficulties of Indonesian students' acquisition of Chinese initials, and investigation of the arrangement of initials in the “Scheme of the Chinese Phonetic Alphabet”, this study has designed a Chinese initial teaching scheme for Indonesian Chinese beginners with the purpose of improving the quality of Chinese initial teaching in Indonesia. Literature integration analysis and a qualitative research method were adopted in this study. By integrating existing literature and combining them with the authors' own research findings, the design of the initial teaching scheme is optimized. The design features of this scheme are mainly reflected in the following aspects: first, arranging Chinese initials from easy to difficult to learn; second, strengthening the teaching and practice of Chinese initials which are different from Indonesian initials and simplifying those of Chinese initials which are identical to Indonesian initials; third, using the Indonesian alphabet or syllables as a guide to bring out Chinese initials. All of these can be regarded as the main results of this study and can be used as reference for further studies.

Keywords: Acquisition, chines Initials, comparison, teaching scheme

I. INTRODUCTION

To learn any language, anyone must master three essential elements, which are pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. Among them, “pronunciation is the sound of human speech, is the semantic expression form, and also is the material shell of language.” (Huang & Liao, 2017). The first function of language is to communicate, to express a specific meaning through a specific sound. “In the process of people's communication, whether a word is used to represent a certain concept, or a grammatical

rule is used to organize a statement, it must be expressed in a voice form.” (Zhang, 2006). From this point of view, the importance of pronunciation can be seen in all languages.

The study and teaching of Chinese are inseparable from phonetics. Usually, whether a person has learned Chinese well or not is judged from his or her oral language. Each word in Chinese is composed of a combination of two or more syllables. A syllable consists of consonant initials and vowel finals according to certain rules. Compared with those of the Indonesian language, Chinese language vowel finals are dominant, while consonant initials

are not as developed as those of Indonesian. As a result, many Indonesian Chinese teachers lack concern about the teaching of Chinese initials. They mistakenly believe that students can learn Chinese initials just by imitating their pronunciation. In fact, the pronunciation of Chinese initials is very different from that of Indonesian, and pronunciation mistakes can affect communication. For example, (Wang, 2008) pointed out that many Indonesian Chinese beginners often say “tùzi pǎo le” (the rabbit ran away) as “dùzi bǎo le” (the stomach is full), the meaning of which is totally different. For another example, Indonesian students often fail to distinguish the difference in pronunciation between “zhīdao” (know) and “chí dào” (late), which is caused by the lack of mastery of the pronunciation of Chinese initials.

By fully realizing the important role of Chinese initials in Chinese phonetic teaching, the author has designed an initial teaching scheme for Indonesian Chinese beginners on the basis of previous research, which embodies the initial teaching ideology of the most optimized, simplified and pertinent. One famous Chinese linguist once expressed, “The general guidance for teaching Chinese as a foreign language is how to enable a foreign student who has never studied Chinese to learn and master Chinese as quickly and best as possible in the shortest time.” (Lu, 2016). With this ideology as guidance, the author has composed the initial teaching scheme with the purpose of improving the quality of Chinese phonetic teaching in Indonesia, especially that of Chinese initials.

There have been a number of studies on Indonesian learners' acquisition of Chinese initials and corresponding teaching strategies. Among them, (Y. T. Lin, 2006) and Tang (2012) pointed out the similarities and differences between Chinese and Indonesian initials and proposed the difficulties and solutions in acquiring Chinese initials for Indonesian learners through comparative analysis. (Ji & Cai, 2013) and (X. Y. Lin, 2010) summarized the difficulties of Indonesian learners in acquiring Chinese initials and put forward teaching strategies. Existing research shows that there are various opinions in regard to the classification of Indonesian consonant initials. For instance, research results of (Ji & Cai, 2013) and (X. Y. Lin, 2010) denote that there are in total 23 consonant initials in the Indonesian language, while (Y. T. Lin, 2006) insisted that the

number of consonant initials in Indonesian is 22, and Tang (2012) claimed that there are 34 consonant initials in the language. In addition, the places of articulation and methods of pronouncing consonant initials in Indonesian differ from one researcher to another, raising the need to sort out these discrepancies. Research on the difficulties in the acquisition of Chinese initials by Indonesian beginners was also done by (Wang, 2008) as well as (Y. G. Lin & Wang, 2005). Specifically, Chinese initial perception experiments were conducted by (Wang, 2008) on junior Indonesian students before teaching countermeasures of Chinese initials were introduced. Furthermore, when (Y. G. Lin & Wang, 2005) investigated Indonesian students' acquisition of stop and affricate consonants in Standard Chinese, they discovered errors made in pronouncing aspirated and unaspirated Chinese sounds. Numerous research results have shown a relatively complex phenomenon, in that various researchers have drawn different conclusions according to their diverse methods. Nevertheless, it is certain that there has not been a single study which has designed a teaching scheme according to Indonesian students' learning psychology. Many studies simply offer teaching suggestions without further exploration, and thus cannot meet actual teaching needs. On this basis, the researcher has proposed an initial teaching scheme for Indonesian beginners built on sorting out and analyzing previous research which reflects the value of this study.

II. METHODS

In this study, with the final objective of designing a Chinese initial teaching scheme (here in after referred to as “the scheme”) for Indonesian beginners, literature integration analysis and a qualitative research method were adopted. Before setting the teaching scheme, the author first compared the Chinese consonants with the Indonesian consonants, then analyzed the similarities and differences between the two sets of language initials based on the comparison results. In particular, the similarities can be regarded as an advantage of Indonesian students in acquiring Chinese initials, whereas the differences represent their difficulties. During this process, the author properly classified the pronunciation of Indonesian consonants in order to improve from past research.

Meanwhile, the teaching focus and sequence of initials in the scheme were

determined through comparisons between Chinese and Indonesian consonant initials, prior analysis of the difficulties of Indonesian students in acquiring Chinese initials, and investigation of the arrangement of Chinese initials in the “Scheme of the Chinese Phonetic Alphabet”. The scheme divides Chinese initial teaching content into two lessons, each for 45 minutes. If there are two lessons in a week, the content of the scheme can be fully taught in one week. The teaching and practice of Chinese initials and the design of exercises in this scheme follow the most optimized, simplified and pertinent teaching principles, which advocate teaching before practice and combination of teaching and practicing. In other words, this scheme does not only attach importance to theoretical guidance, but also focuses on practical values.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Standard Chinese Consonant Features

Huang & Liao (2017) stated that there are 22 consonants in Standard Chinese, which are divided into 21 consonants and one consonant syllable coda, -ng. The pronunciation of consonants in Standard Chinese can be classified by two aspects: the place of articulation and pronunciation method. The articulation places of Standard Chinese consonants can be divided into seven types: bilabial, labiodental, dental, alveolar, retroflex, alveolopalatal and velar.

In terms of pronunciation methods, Standard Chinese consonants can be classified

into five categories: stop, affricate, fricative, nasal and lateral. There are several characteristics of the consonant system of Standard Chinese: First, according to the division of the pronunciation method, there is a contradiction between aspirated and unaspirated sounds in the consonants. Second, there are a large number of voiceless sounds and a small number of voiced sounds, resulting in no opposition between voiceless and voiced sounds. There are only five voiced sounds in the consonant system of Standard Chinese, namely m [m], n [n], l [l], r [ʐ], -ng [ŋ], while the others are voiceless sounds. Third, among Chinese consonants, -ng [ŋ] is a rather unique one, in that it can only serve as tail vowel and not act as an initial, accounting for its designation as a consonant syllable coda. Fourth, some syllables in Standard Chinese have no consonant initials, called zero initial syllables. For instance, 烟 (yān), 温 (wēn) and 冤 (yuān) are all zero initial syllables. In order to make the syllable boundaries clear, the “Scheme of the Chinese Phonetic Alphabet” regulates that the initial sounds of syllables beginning with ‘i, u, ü’ should be rewritten as ‘y, w, yu’ respectively. Thus, 烟, 温, 冤 are re-transliterated from the original ‘iān’, ‘uēn’, ‘üān’ to ‘yān’, ‘wēn’ and ‘yuān’. The purpose of rewriting is solely for sound insulation, not to represent the actual pronunciation. Therefore, “y, w” are not included in the Standard Chinese consonant system. The specific pronunciation of Standard Chinese consonant initials is shown in Table 1.

Table 1.
General Table of Standard Chinese Consonants

Place of articulation			Bilabial		Labio-dental		Dental		Alveolar		Retroflex		Alveolo-palatal		Velar	
			Upper lip	Lower lip	Upper teeth	Lower lip	Tip of tongue	Back of tooth	Tip of tongue	Upper gum	Tip of tongue	Fore-side of hard palate	Tip of tongue	Fore-side of laminal	Fore-side of hard palate	Backside of laminal
Pronunciation Method	Stop	Unaspi-rated	b[p]						d[t]						g[k]	
		Aspi-rated	p[p ^h]						t[t ^h]						k[k ^h]	
Pronunciation Method	Affricate	Unaspi-rated					z[ts]				zh[tʂ]		j[te]			
		Aspi-rated					c[ts ^h]				ch[tʂ ^h]		q[te ^h]			
Pronunciation Method	Fricative	Voiceless			f[f]		s[s]				sh[ʂ]		x[x]		h[x]	
		Voiced									r[ʐ]					
Pronunciation Method	Nasal	Voiced	m[m]						n[n]						ng[ŋ]	
		Voiced							l[l]							

Standard Indonesian Consonant Features

(Wounde, Mularsih, & Simanjuntak, 1999) and (Chaer, 2013) asserted that the Indonesian language has 25 consonants, which can be divided into 21 single consonants and four consonant clusters. Initials composed of consonant clusters are a major feature of Indonesian. The four consonant clusters are kh [x], sy[ʃ], ny[n̩], and ng[ŋ]. Similar to that of Chinese, the pronunciation of Standard Indonesian consonants can be classified by two aspects: the place of articulation and pronunciation method. Based on place of articulation, Standard Indonesian consonants can be divided into six types: bilabial, labiodental, alveolar, palatal, velar and glottal, while according to pronunciation method, the consonants of Standard Indonesian are divisible into seven categories: stop, affricate, fricative, nasal, lateral, trill and semi-vowel. There are several characteristics in the consonant system of Standard Indonesian: First, Indonesian consonants are basically pronounced as unaspirated sounds. In spite of numerous consonants from foreign words containing aspirated components, they are pronounced weakly and do not affect the meaning, and therefore many people still pronounce them as unaspirated sounds. As a result, there is no opposition between aspirated and unaspirated sounds in the Indonesian consonant system. Second, a small number of initials from foreign

languages are not included in the Standard Indonesian consonant system, such as dh[d^h], gh[g^h], th[t^h], ph[p^h], etc. Such initials maintain the original pronunciation and alphabet of foreign words. Meanwhile, other foreign words have been standardized and become part of Indonesian initials using the Indonesian alphabet. In the actual course of use, sometimes it is difficult to judge whether the spelling is correct. For example, the word “Filipina” (Philippines) can sometimes be written as “Philipina”. Another example is the word “teologi” (theology), which can also be written as “theologi”. Third, there are oppositions between voiceless and voiced sounds in Indonesian consonants, while the number of voiced consonants is greater than that of voiceless ones. Fourth, consonant ng[ŋ] can serve as an initial, such as in the word “ngobrol” (chat), and can also function as a consonant syllable coda, such as in the word “tulang” (bone). Fifth, the usage rates of consonant x[ʃ] and q[k^hi] are quite low. Generally, consonant x[ʃ] is only used in chemical terms, while q[k^hi] is only used in the word “Quran” (The Koran) or in academic terms. Sixth, there are actual semi-vowel pronunciations of the consonant w[w] and y[j], which is the main reason for their inclusion in the Standard Indonesian consonant system. The specific pronunciation of Standard Indonesian consonant initials is shown in Table 2.

Table 2.
General Table of Standard Indonesian Consonants

Place of articulation / Pronunciation method		Bilabial		Labiodental		Alveolar		Palatal		Velar		Glottal
		Upper lip	Lower lip	Upper teeth	Lower lip	Tip of tongue	Upper gum	Blade of tongue	Middle hard palate	Backside of laminal	Soft palate	
Stop	Voiceless	p[p]				t[t]				k[k]		x[ʃ]
	Voiced	b[b]				d[d]				g[g]		
Affricate	Voiceless							c[tʃ]				
	Voiced							j[dʒ]				
Fricative	Voiceless			f[f]		s[s]				kh[x]		h[h]
	Voiced			v[v]		z[z]		sy[ʃ]				
Nasal	Voiced	m[m]				n[n]		ny[n̩]		ng[ŋ]		
Lateral	Voiced					l[l]						
Trill	Voiced					r[r]						
Semi-vowel	Voiced	w[w]						y[j]				

Comparison of Chinese and Indonesian Consonants

Chinese and Indonesian consonants have similarities and differences. The purpose of comparative analysis is to figure out which groups of consonants are common to both languages, and which are unique to Standard Chinese. Those unique to Standard Chinese can

be regarded as difficulties of Indonesian students in acquiring Chinese consonants. Based on the comparison of Chinese and Indonesian consonants, the following conclusions are drawn:

- (1) From the perspective of the place of articulation, the Chinese consonant system has groups of consonants which do not exist in

Indonesian, such as dental, retroflex and alveolopalatal.

(2) From the perspective of the pronunciation method, there are oppositions between aspirated and unaspirated sounds in the Chinese consonant system, such as p[p^h], t[t^h], k[k^h] and b[p], d[t], g[k] in the stop consonant group, and j[te], q[te^h], zh[tʂ], ch[tʂ^h] z[ts], c[ts^h] in the affricate consonant group. On the contrary, there is no opposition between aspirated and unaspirated sounds in the Standard Indonesian consonant system, but there are oppositions only between voiceless and voiced sounds. Examples are p[p], t[t], k[k] and b[b], d[d], g[g] in the stop consonant group, and f[f], v[v], s[s], z[z] in the fricative consonant group.

(3) Consonant r[z] in Chinese is a retroflex fricative sound, which is different from consonant r[r] in the Indonesian language. Each of them has a different place of articulation and pronunciation method. Meanwhile, y and w in Chinese represent zero initials which only play a role of sound insulation with no actual pronunciation, while y [j] and w[w] in Indonesian are semi-vowel consonants with actual pronunciation.

(4) In the Chinese and Indonesian consonant systems, m[m], n[n], f[f], l[l], ng[ŋ] are completely identical consonants in phoneme and written form. The difference is that -ng[ŋ] can only serve as a consonant syllable coda in Chinese, whereas in Indonesian language ng[ŋ] can not only be used as a consonant syllable coda, but also as an initial.

(5) In the Chinese and Indonesian consonant systems, consonants “h” and “s” are similar in phoneme and identical in written form. Consonant h[x] is a velar sound in Chinese, while consonant h[h] is a glottal sound in Indonesian. Because the pronunciation method is the same and the place of articulation is similar, there is only little difference between them. Similarly, consonant s[s] is a dental sound in Chinese but an alveolar sound in Indonesian, also a little difference occurring for the same reason.

(6) In the Chinese and Indonesian consonant systems, b[p] and p[p], d[t] and t[t], and g[k] and k[k] are a group of consonants identical in phoneme, but different in written form. Consonant b[p] in Chinese is equivalent to consonant p[p] in Indonesian, and so on.

(7) In the Chinese and Indonesian consonant systems, j[te] and c[tʃ], x[ç] and s

[s], z[ts] and c[tʃ] are a group of consonants which are rather similar in phoneme, but completely different in written form.

(8) In the Chinese consonant system, p [p^h], t[t^h], k[k^h], j[te], q[te^h], x[ç], z[ts], c[ts^h], zh[tʂ], ch[tʂ^h], sh[ʃ] and r[z] are all characteristic of Chinese itself, since they have no counterparts among Indonesian consonants.

Determination of Chinese Initial Teaching Focus and Sequence of Chinese Initials

Comparison between Chinese and Indonesian consonants revealed a set of initials which are characteristically Chinese and cannot be found in the Indonesian language, namely p [p^h], t[t^h], k[k^h], j[te], q[te^h], x[ç], z[ts], c[ts^h], zh[tʂ], ch[tʂ^h], sh[ʃ] and r[z]. (Ellis, 1985) stated that differences in language cause learning difficulties and lead to errors. Normally, if there is a language item that does not exist in one's mother tongue but exists in the target language, the acquisition difficulty will be very high. From the comparative analysis results obtained, the difficulties of pronunciation relating to the place of articulation are mainly reflected in dental, retroflex and alveolopalatal sounds, while difficulties in the pronunciation method mostly occur in aspirated and unaspirated sounds. This conclusion is consistent with research results obtained by predecessors such as (Y. T. Lin, 2006) and Tang (2012), who believe that the difficulties of Indonesian students in acquiring Chinese initials largely transpire in a set of retroflex and also aspirated and unaspirated sounds, while (X. Y. Lin, 2010) and (Ji & Cai, 2013) maintain that the difficulties of Indonesian students' acquisition of Chinese initials do not only manifest in a set of retroflex, aspirated and unaspirated sounds, but also include dental and alveolopalatal sounds. By summarizing these research results and conclusions drawn by the authors from the comparative analysis of Chinese and Indonesian consonants, the teaching focus of Chinese initials in “the scheme” lies on distinguishing between aspirated and unaspirated sounds, and between dental, retroflex and alveolopalatal sounds.

In addition, based on the “Scheme of the Chinese Phonetic Alphabet” as an internationally used Standard Chinese phonetic spelling scheme, Chinese initials are set in the following order: b-p-m-f, d-t-n-l, g-k-h, j-q-x, zh-ch-sh-r, z-c-s. With this, it is believed that the teaching sequence of Chinese initials for Indonesian beginners can refer to the order of the “Scheme of Chinese Phonetic Alphabet”.

Chinese initials can be taught to students in groups, but the order of each group of initials should be rearranged from the easiest to the most difficult to learn, where easy-to-learn initials should appear first and more difficult-to-learn initials later. The final order is denoted as follows: m-f-b-p, n-l-d-t, h-g-k, x-j-q, sh-r-zh-ch, s-z-c. Meanwhile, in the aspect of pronunciation method, the teaching and practice of aspirated and unaspirated initials should be strengthened, whereas in regard to place of articulation, the teaching and practice of dental, retroflex and alveolopalatal initials should be emphasized.

Chinese Initial Teaching Scheme Designed for Indonesian Beginners

After the teaching focus and sequence of Chinese initials had been determined, the next step was to design the teaching scheme. The content of the scheme can be completed in two lessons. The first lesson is the Chinese initial teaching and practice part. In this part, Chinese initials are rearranged according to the principle of easy to difficult to learn, yielding the following order: m-f-b-p, n-l-d-t, h-g-k, x-j-q, sh-r-zh-ch and s-z-c. In the teaching progression, a language comparison method can be adopted, in which Chinese initials are brought out using the Indonesian alphabet or even Indonesian syllables. The second lesson is the part of Chinese initial exercises. The design of the exercises uses many cartoon images to link the sounds to meanings in Chinese, so that students are able to better grasp the pronunciation characteristics of Chinese initials through meaningful practices. Either in the teaching and practice or exercise part, the scheme strengthens the contents of aspirated and unaspirated and dental, retroflex and alveolopalatal initials. At the same time, it simplifies the teaching content of Chinese initials which are identical to Indonesian initials. The design of the scheme is as follows.

First lesson plan

Teaching content: Teaching and practice of Chinese initials

Teaching target: Indonesian Chinese beginners

Teaching time: 45 minutes

Teaching focus: Aspirated and unaspirated initials, dental, retroflex and alveolopalatal initials

Teaching steps:

(1) Teaching and practicing bilabial, labiodental, alveolar and velar initials: 15

minutes

First of all, Chinese initials are displayed from the easiest to the most difficult to learn: m-f-b-p, n-l-d-t, h-g-k, and then taught one by one to the students. In the process, the teaching of “m, f, n, l, h” can be simplified. The teacher can give an example of how to pronounce those sounds first and ask the students to repeat them several times. The teaching should focus on a group of aspirated and unaspirated initials, such as b-p, d-t and g-k. At this point, the teaching and practice of Chinese initials can be delivered by means of the Indonesian alphabet, where Chinese initials are arranged vertically on the left and their Indonesian counterparts on the right, as shown below.

Chinese Initials		Indonesian Initials
b	←————→	p
p	←————→	ph
d	←————→	t
t	←————→	th
g	←————→	k
k	←————→	kh

Pronunciations of b, d, and g in Chinese can be replaced with those of p, t, and k in Indonesian. These two groups of initials only differ in written, but the places of articulation and pronunciation methods are exactly the same. When teaching the Chinese initials b, d, g, the teacher simply needs to emphasize the difference in the form of writing in Indonesian, and then just give an example of how to pronounce them several times. Conversely, when teaching the initials p, t, k, the teacher should use a combination of comparison and demonstration methods. The Indonesian language also has aspirated initials, for example ph, th, kh, which mostly come from foreign languages, but they are different from the initials p, t, k in Chinese. The initials ph, th, kh in Indonesian can also be pronounced as unaspirated sounds which do not cause any difference in meaning. Therefore, only using comparison in the teaching of these initials will be less effective. The teacher can combine it with a slightly excessive demonstration method, such as holding a piece of paper in front of the mouth. When pronouncing the initials p, t, k, the air is exhaled towards the paper, causing it to shake. Using this method can leave a deep impression on the students. After the teaching and practicing part is finished, the teacher should guide the students to repeat the pronunciation numerous times in order to completely master it.

(2) Teaching and practice of alveopalatal initials: 10 minutes

At first, alveopalatal initials can be displayed in order from the easiest to the most difficult to learn as follows: x, j, q. When teaching initial “x”, the teacher can use Indonesian syllables as a guidance. For example, the teacher can say that initial “x” in Chinese is pronounced just like the first syllable of the word “sinar” (ray) in Indonesian. However, the teacher must highlight a slight difference in the place of articulation of both initials. The teaching focus must be put on teaching and practicing initials “j” and “q”. In teaching initial “j”, the teacher can state that the pronunciation of “j” in Chinese is closely similar to the second syllable of the word “laci” (drawer) in Indonesian, but slightly different in its place of articulation. Furthermore, to pronounce “q” in Chinese is essentially the same as to pronounce initials “c” and “h” plus a final “i” in Indonesian simultaneously, but in the process, aspirated sounds must be emphasized. In addition, the teaching of initials j, q, x must be accompanied by an explanation of the appropriate final pair. Initials j, q, x can only be paired with finals that begin with the sounds i[i] or ü[y]. When paired with finals that begin with the sound ü [y], the two dots above the final ü must be removed, so that when the initials j, q, x are paired with a final ü, they are written as ju, qu, xu respectively. After the teaching and practicing part is finished, the teacher can give examples of the pronunciation, then ask the students to pronounce them together. In the end, the teacher can also ask several students to pronounce those sounds without guidance.

Teaching and practice of retroflex initials: 12 minutes

The sequence of retroflex initials is displayed as follows: sh, r, zh, ch. When teaching this group of initials, it would be better to display pictures of the tongue’s position, along with an example of how to pronounce the initials successfully. Images of the tongue’s position are shown below.

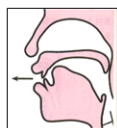


Figure 1.
The Pronunciation of “sh” and “r” in Chinese



Figure 2.
The Pronunciation of “zh” and “ch” in Chinese

Initials “sh” and “r” in Chinese are both fricative sounds. When they are pronounced, the tip of the tongue should be raised close to the foreside of the hard palate, so that the flow of air goes through the narrow slit between the tip of the tongue and the foreside of the hard palate, finally forming a sound (See Figure 1). When teaching initial “sh”, the teacher may say that its sound is slightly akin to the sound of “s” in Indonesian. One distinction is that when initial “sh” in Chinese is pronounced, the tip of the tongue must be raised, while pronouncing initial “s” in Indonesian, does not require the tip of the tongue to be raised. The differences in place of articulation can be clarified using pictures that indicate the position of the tongue in the oral cavity. The teacher can give an example first, and then ask the students to repeat the pronunciation several times. The teaching of initial “r” in Chinese is more or less the same as that of initial “sh”. The teacher needs to make an explanation of how to pronounce it first. For instance, the teacher can say that when “r” is pronounced, the tip of the tongue should be placed near the foreside of the hard palate, and the vocal cords should vibrate instead of the tongue in the mouth cavity. After giving examples, the teacher can ask students to practice it together. Initials “zh” and “ch” can be taught and practiced at the same time. The way to pronounce these two initials are somewhat similar to that of “c” in Indonesian, except that the tip of the tongue should be lifted until it touches the foreside of the hard palate, and then air is exhaled through the narrow slit in between, shaping the sound (See Figure 2). The pronunciation methods of both initials are almost identical with just one difference, in that when initial “ch” is pronounced, the aspirated sound must be emphasized. In the process of teaching, the teacher could also use illustrations indicating the position of the tongue in the mouth which can strengthen the teaching effect. Following examples, the teacher can ask students to do more practice. It is necessary to specify that initials sh, r, zh, and ch cannot be combined with finals i[i] and ü[y]. When sh, r, zh, and ch form a syllable independently, they must be written as shi, ri, zhi and chi. The letter “i” that appears behind them is not the same as final “i [i]”, as the “i” here is just a written form and does not need to be sounded.

(4) Teaching and practicing of dental initials: 8 minutes

The sequence of dental initials is displayed as follows: s, z, c. The teaching and

practice of initial “s” can be simplified using the Indonesian initial “s” as guidance, as pronouncing it several times would be enough. The teacher should put much more attention on teaching and practicing initials “z” and “c”, underlining the opposition of aspirated and unaspirated sounds between them. The pronunciation of initial “z” is not unlike that of the first letter of word “cari” (look for) in Indonesian, while the pronunciation of “c” is akin to pronouncing the combination of initials “c” and “h” in Indonesian simultaneously. Nevertheless, emphasis must be given to its aspirated sound. After providing examples, the teacher may ask students to practice more, then choose a few students to try to pronounce it. At the end, it is important to specify that initials s, z and c cannot be combined with finals i[i] and ü[y]. When s, z, and c form a syllable independently, they must be written as si, zi and ci in that order. As in the preceding case, the letter “i” that follows them is not the same

as final “i[i]”, as the letter here is simply written without having to be voiced.

Second lesson plan

Teaching content: Chinese initial exercises

Teaching target: Indonesian Chinese beginners

Teaching time: 45 minutes

Teaching focus: Aspirated and unaspirated initials, dental, retroflex and alveolopalatal initials

Teaching steps:

(1) Reading exercise (15 minutes)

The purpose of this exercise is to help students establish a complete initial concept. The teacher can give examples first and ask the students to read aloud together. As the last part, the teacher can assign some students to read per line and correct the errors that occur.

Table 3.
Simple Initial-Final Combinations in Standard Chinese

	m	f	b	p	n	l	d	t	h	g	k
a	ma	fa	ba	pa	na	la	da	ta	ha	ga	ka
o	mo	fo	bo	po	-	-	de	te	he	ge	ke
e	me	-	-	-	ne	le	-	-	-	-	-
i	mi	-	bi	pi	ni	li	di	ti	-	-	-
u	mu	fu	bu	pu	nu	lu	du	tu	hu	gu	ku
ü	-	-	-	-	nü	lǜ	-	-	-	-	-

	x	j	q	sh	r	zh	ch	s	z	c
a	-	-	-	sha	ra	zha	cha	sa	za	ca
o	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
e	-	-	-	she	re	zhe	che	se	ze	ce
i	xi	ji	qi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
u	-	-	-	shu	ru	zhu	chu	su	zu	cu
ü	xu	ju	qu	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

(2) Listening exercise (10 minutes)

The aim of this exercise is to train students to distinguish Chinese initials that are difficult to learn through listening. After the teacher reads them out twice, students circle the answers. In the end, the teacher gives the correct answers. Such exercise is shown below.

(3) Filling in the blanks after listening (10 minutes)

This exercise’s purpose is to train students to distinguish Chinese initials that are difficult to learn through listening. The teacher

reads twice, and the students fill in the blanks with the proper initials. Afterwards, the teacher reveals the correct answers. A pertinent exercise is depicted as follows.

(4) Reading and comparing (10 minutes)

This exercise compares the initials that are easily confused in Chinese, with the aim of training students to pronounce Chinese initials that are difficult to learn well. The teacher can give an example first, then ask the students to read aloud while paying attention to initials. A relevant exercise is presented below.



Figure 3.
Chinese Initial Listening Exercise Image Design

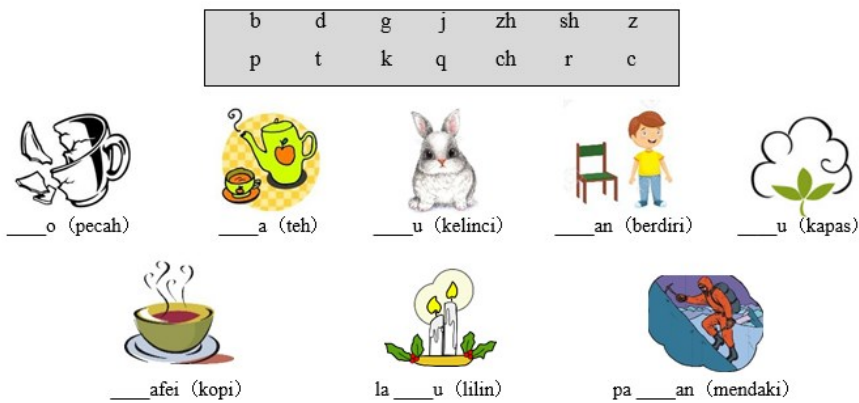


Figure 4.
Fill-in-the-Blank Listening Exercise Image Design

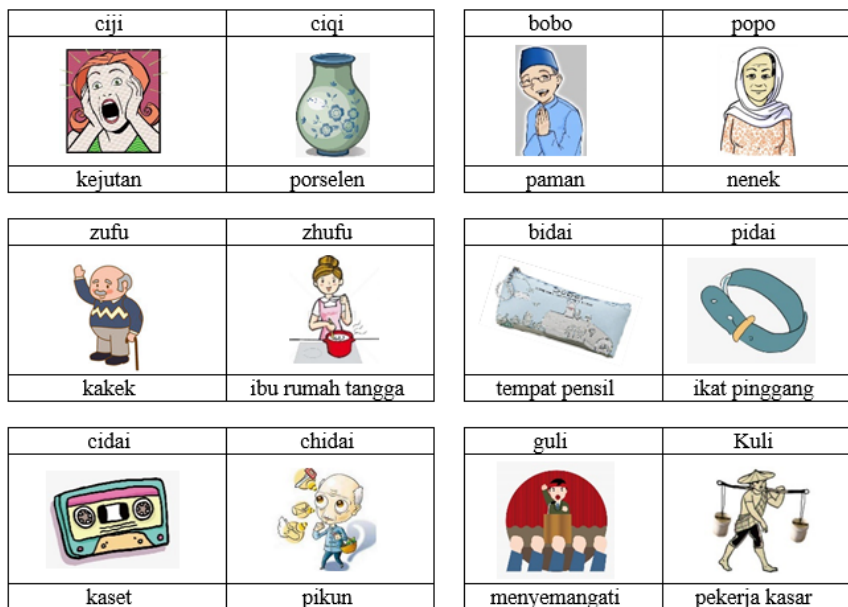


Figure 5.
Read-and-Compare Exercise Image Design

IV. CONCLUSION

This study presents a Chinese initial teaching scheme design for Indonesian beginners based on the results of comparison between the Chinese and Indonesian consonant systems, analysis on the difficulties of Indonesian students in the acquisition of Chinese initials, and investigation on the arrangement of the initials in the “Scheme of the Chinese Phonetic Alphabet”. The novelty of this Chinese initial teaching scheme is reflected in several aspects: First, the scheme strengthens the teaching and practice of Chinese initials which are not found in the Indonesian language and simplifies those of Chinese initials which are identical to their Indonesian counterparts. This point represents “the most simplified” and “the most optimized” teaching concepts within the scheme. The content of the scheme is simple, but rather complete and easy for students to learn. Second, Chinese initials are arranged from easy to difficult to learn, in that easy-to-learn initials appear before difficult-to-learn ones, all with the aim of achieving the best teaching results, which in this case embodies “the most pertinent” teaching concept. Third, Indonesian language is used as a guide in teaching and practicing Chinese initials. In order to help the students to establish a complete concept of Chinese initials as soon as possible, not only does the teaching and practicing part of the scheme use the Indonesian alphabet, but it also uses Indonesian syllables to bring out Chinese initials. Fourth, the design of exercises uses many cartoon images to connect the sounds to their meaning in Chinese, which does not only help students to identify the pronunciation features of Chinese initials, but can also reduce the boredom of doing pronunciation exercises. Fifth, both the initial knowledge explanation and skill training take equal proportions, thus not only attaching importance to initial knowledge transmission, but also to student pronunciation skills; Sixth, each illustration in the exercises is annotated in Indonesian, using popular and standard words to reinforce students’ impression of each sound and avoid meaningless mechanical pronunciation exercises. All of these can be regarded as the main results of this study, which distinguish it from other related studies.

Previous studies on Indonesian students’ acquisition of Chinese initials were limited to analyzing the difficulties of acquisition and providing teaching suggestions, as can be confirmed from many existing research results.

However, such limitations cannot solve the fundamental problems in teaching. How to apply the teaching suggestions in practice and how to design related exercises are not even mentioned in prior research. This study extends from previous research by no longer being satisfied with proposing teaching approaches, but designing a practical initial teaching program with full consideration of Indonesian students’ learning psychology, so as to improve the teaching of Chinese phonetics in Indonesia at the initial stage, especially the teaching of Chinese initials. Further study can be done on other aspects, as it is known that the primary stage of Chinese phonetic teaching includes the teaching of initials, finals and tones. Therefore, future research can focus on the teaching of Chinese finals or tones, instead of being confined to the teaching of Chinese initials.

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