The verbotonal method: its development and application in enhancing English fluency among Sri Lankan secondary students

Abstract

This presentation introduces the Verbotonal (VT) method, an innovative, student-centred approach to enhancing language fluency and intonation, which has shown promising results in improving English pronunciation and fluency skills among learners in China. Rooted in the understanding of auditory perception and the concept of the divided brain, the VT method leverages each hemisphere's distinct functions respectively—utilizing the left hemisphere's analytical abilities alongside the right hemisphere's holistic processing—to facilitate more effective language acquisition through auditory cues. Given the challenges faced by Sri Lankan secondary students in mastering English fluency due to native language interference, this study aims to explore the application of the VT method within the Sri Lankan context. The approach emphasizes active student engagement and perceptual training to improve pronunciation accuracy, rhythm, and stress patterns, addressing key difficulties in English language acquisition. By sharing the theoretical foundations of the VT method and its demonstrated outcomes abroad, this presentation sets the stage for a proposed study to evaluate its effectiveness in Sri Lanka. This foundational work hopes to inspire further research and innovative language teaching practices tailored to the needs of non-tonal language learners.

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