Chinese language | Photo source Pixabay

## NEW SPEAKER TO HELP CHINESE LANGUAGE LEARNERS

🇨🇳 🇺🇸 EDUCATION

**A new interactive speaker uses AI to help users practice conversational Chinese.**

In an increasingly globalised world, many people find it important to learn another language. Chinese, in particular, is becoming a popular choice. Yet Chinese is a difficult language to learn, especially because spoken Chinese is tonal, so correct pronunciation is vital to making yourself understood. Now, a US startup has developed a voice-controlled smart speaker called Lily that can interact with users to have real conversations.

Lily is being created by San Francisco-based startup Maybe. The company has worked with professional Chinese tutors and audio companies to develop its product. In addition to having interactive conversations, Lily will provide translations, games for vocabulary training, exam preparation and pronunciation practice. The speaker comes with a mobile app that will show the conversations written in both Pinyin and Chinese characters. They have also developed a training programme that can be used by anyone from beginners to advanced students over a 3, 6 or 12 month-period. The AI learns as users speak and adjusts the teaching level accordingly.

Lily is voice controlled, and has been designed to look attractive and to deliver high-quality sound. The speaker includes a long throw woofer, an edge-driven tweeter and 360-degree directivity. This allows Lily to deliver rich and consistent vocals from anywhere in a room. The company plans to add more languages, starting with French and Spanish, in mid-to-late 2019. All data is encrypted and Maybe promises that it will not monetise users' data. The company expects to ship at the beginning of March. Lily joins a host of innovations that use voice recognition. These include voice recognition-enabled bedtime stories and banking through voice recognition.

22nd January 2019
Website: www.maybe.io
Contact: www.maybe.io

**Takeaway:**

Maybe is currently going through an Indiegogo campaign to raise development money, and has raised more than 9000 percent of its goal. This points to the popularity of a voice-based approach to language learning. What other uses are there for a voice recognition-based learning system?

22nd January 2019
Website: www.maybe.io
Contact: www.maybe.io