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THE BENEFITS OF “MIRROR-IMAGE LEARNING” IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract. The article explores how the “mirror-image learning” is utilized during teaching process and benefits of this method in order to improve students’ oral English. At the same time, it motivates students are quite interested in their recording which they produced. In addition, this approach offers teachers an effective way to supervise students’ learning after class.

Key words: *survey, mirror-image, cooperation, self-efficacy, autonomous learning.*

Teaching foreign languages, especially English has become an important part of education and is being taught in a number of educational organizations. Nowadays, it is clear that teachers are likely to use traditional and modern methods in their educating process. According to the latest surveys, the whole world teachers tend to use modern methodology all the time. During teaching process, lesson usually requires both methods in our point of view. The main aim of every class is that what teachers and learners want to achieve in a lesson or a course so different classroom activities are planned in order to achieve these aims. To put it another way, the aims of lesson usually show what teachers and learners want to be able to do by the end of a lesson, or what they will have done during it.

Definitely, one of the aims of any methodology in foreign language teaching is to improve the foreign language ability of the student.

According to Jim Scrivener, the teachers’ main role is to help learning to happen” which includes “involving” students in what is going on “by enabling them to work at their own speed, by not giving long explanations by encouraging them to participate talk, interact, do things, etc. [1]

Teaching should be student-centered, motivation springs from within, it can be sparked, but not imposed from without, language learning and teaching are successful when they meet student's needs in particular circumstances, the acquired language skills must serve the students in everyday life. In our point of view, teaching language and learning process are successful if they look like a cooperation process when one's feelings, values and aspirations are revealed either at a very deep level or in surface activities such as games, simulation, dramatizations.

In the following article, we are going to focus on one of the modern methods, which is "Mirror-image approach". Li. Lin provides information about "Mirror-image approach" in her scientific article. According to her view point, this approach includes four steps. Firstly, teachers audio tape students' spoken English in class, individual or paired. That may include student's question-answering, conversations and discussions. Secondly, teachers listen to them carefully and mark those mistakes and mispronunciations. Thirdly, teachers send those audio materials back to the students involved and ask the students to listen to them carefully and correct mistakes, try to avoid them and improve fluency. Last, teachers select the audio materials of high quality to send them to students in class and ask the students to learn. The main advantages of the approach are self-evident. Students can get to know exactly their mistakes and correct them. Data shows it is more effective than teacher's correction in face. At the same time, students are quite interested to listen to such listening materials since they are produced either by themselves or by their friends. At last, the approach offers teachers an effective way to supervise students' learning after class.

In terms of theoretical point, "Mirror-image learning", was initially put forward by Professor Yang Yonglin from Foreign Language department in Tsinghua University as a teaching model of writing [2]

Self-efficacy theory is the kernel of the motivation theory, which is put forward by Albert Bandura in his social learning theory research. It has been defined

as the belief that one is capable of performing in a certain manner to attain a certain set of goals [3].

Self-efficacy is an active judgment of one's ability and self-awareness comes from the experience or information generated by interaction between the individual and the environment. According to the social learning theories, there are mainly four ways of the self-efficacy formation: the experience of success or failure, the experience of replacement, speech persuasion, and emotional reaction [4]. Through this method, learners can take more advantage of the experience or information obtained in the previously mentioned four ways to improve their oral English self-efficacy, adjust their study habits and methods.

It is clear that self-monitoring plays a decisive role in learning process. It can definitely stimulate and promote attention in students, while maintaining a good mood and a high motivation level.

According to Li Lin's investigation, some students were made inquiry into their attitudes about habits in class and out of class. After recording students' speeches or dialogues in class, teachers first analyzed them and then gave them back to students, encouraging them to correct mistakes on their own and then point out their weakness in order to reach an objective evaluation of "mirror-image language learning approach". [5]

After this practice they have proven some benefits of this method:

- promotes interactions between students and teachers;
- shortens the distance between them;
- improves both interest and efficiency of autonomous learning;
- develops learners' oral expression from the experience or information reflected from the "mirror";
- helps students to change in their mental status and attitude;
- widens students' channels of obtaining knowledge and information, develop their practice consciousness and perseverant learning habit, and inspire their spirit of exploration, innovation and independence.

This learning method requires students a lot of patients and working hard. By recording their voice, then listening to their English speaking in such an awkward way and correlating mistakes, make them have a clear awareness of their oral English and they start to improve it.

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