Situational Language Teaching Approach to Oral the English Teaching in Primary Schools

Zhang Junying

School of Foreign Language, China West Normal University, Nanchong, China Correspondence: China West Normal University, Shida Road #1, Shunqing District, Nanchong, Sichuan Province, China. Tel: 13551917204. E-mail: 33169210@qq.com

Abstract

This paper aims at analyzing some applications of Situational Language teaching to the oral English learning in primary schools. Through this study, teachers could get some advice and improve their oral English teaching efficiency.

Key words: Situational Language Teaching, oral English teaching, primary school students

I Introduction

1.1 Oral Englsih teaching

Oral English competence is an essential part of English teaching and is also one of the important goals of English learning. In traditional English teaching, the teaching of reading and translation has been emphasized, while the cultivation of communicative competence has been neglected. The students who are cultivated by the traditional English teaching methods with strong reading ability and writing ability, while their listening and speaking ability are not very good. "Dumb English" is used to refer to these students. Therefore, oral English teaching has been placed in a more prominent position. It has been a relative difficult thing for most Chinese people to learn English well. Apart from the difference in language family, we are also affected by the language environment, teacher education, college entrance examination, the preparation of teaching materials and other factors. Then, the actual development of students cannot keep up with the needs of the current situation.

1.2 Situational language teaching

The emergence of situational language teaching method has a great relationship with sociology, psychology and linguistics. Since mid-nineteenth century, sociology, psychology, and linguistics have been greatly developed, especially the rise and development of structuralism and behaviorism, which plays a significant role in the emergence of situational teaching method. And situational teaching method is mainly inspired by structural linguistics and behavioral psychology.

On the one hand, the situational teaching method is influenced by the structural linguistics. Structural linguistics was proposed by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. He thought that language is a system

of signs for expressing ideas and these linguistic signs have two major characteristics. First, linguistic signs are arbitrary. Second, signs are with lines. The arbitrary nature of language signs is the value of the unit in the system and the value and the unit depends on the position and relationship of the system in the whole structure. While, line means that signs can only be launched in time, one after another, and constitute the chain. In any given situation, the essence of a factor is not significant in terms of itself. In fact, its meaning is determined by the relationship between it and other factors in the given context. To understand the whole, it is necessary to cut off the elements from the whole, and these elements are connected with each other. To be short, structural linguistics mainly consists of two aspects. One is to analysis language elements. Another is to analyze the arrangement of these elements. Situational teaching method is influenced by the structural linguistics, which takes the language as a structure. It is a regular system. Therefore, in the course of language teaching, we should pay more attention to the syntactic structure. Meanwhile, according to the sentences, we choose the right words. Moreover, the choice of the words must serve the needs of the sentence patterns.

On the other hand, situational teaching method is not only affected by the structural linguistics, but also is influenced by behaviorism. Based on Pavlov's classical conditioned reflex theory, American psychologist Watson found the behaviorism. He believes that human behavior is acquired after birth and environment plays a decisive role in a person's behavior. What's more, behavior can be modified, added or eliminated by learning. Skinner developed the theory of reinforcement which is also called the ope rant conditioning theory or the correction theory on the basis of behaviorism. This theory is also the core of the new behavioral learning theory. And Skinner thought that the behavior can be divided into responsive behavior and ope-rant behavior. The latter is more significant than the former in the learning process and all the behavior of people is almost the effect of operational reinforcement. We can change the reaction of people through intensive operation. According to behaviorism, that people learn a king of language is stimulated first, and then they react and strengthen .Under the influence of his thought, the acquisition of language is a kind of behavior reinforcement learning and when in practice, people need to repeat, imitate and transform the information of language habits. Moreover, external environment plays a significant role in the process.

Under the impact of the thought of structuralism linguistics and behavioral learning theory, situational teaching method emerged and thrived in England in 1930s, and it was introduced into China in the late 1970s. Generally speaking, situational teaching method is a kind of pattern in which teachers create some real or stimulation scenarios and cases through all kinds of aids and information technology to reappear the content of teaching. Ultimately, students can link the knowledge and life together.

1.2 The goal of the paper

With the rapid development of society and economy, we are entering to an era full of intercultural communication and globalization. There is no doubt that we do require a new demand of English. That is to say, our society is in urgent need of the talents who are proficient in business and can convey their thoughts and feelings in fluent English. Furthermore, no matter the outline requirements and social needs, it is definitely a vital and severe task to strengthen the oral English teaching through some efficient ways

as English is the most widely used language.

In the "Basic Requirements of Primary School English Teaching", the Chinese Ministry of Education said that the teaching of English should pay close attention to cultivate students' communicative competence and interests in English. Therefore, it has become a common task for teachers to improve the ability of pupils' oral English. Obviously, about the English teaching in primary schools, our teachers should focus on all kinds of ways to teach oral English. Situational language teaching approach conform the mental characteristics and cognitive law of primary school students. It is a new theoretical and practical method which is aimed to improve the efficiency of teaching. Different from the traditional teaching method, it is more suitable for the regularity of language education. In addition to, it has a great effect on promoting integrated development of students and improving the efficiency of teaching. Situational language teaching method not only energizes the atmosphere, but also makes students be in a learning environment full of imagination.

While, under situational language teaching method, students can exert their initiative and creativeness in a better way. On account of fewer theses in this aspect, it is valuable to explore how to take advantage of situational teaching method in oral English teaching to primary school students.

Ⅱ　Theoretical Base

2.1 Psychological characteristics of primary school students

Situational language teaching method is suitable for the psychological characteristics of primary school students. Because primary students are young, animated, and imaginative and they are good at imitating. What's more, for them, it is so easy to remember some visual and vivid images. However, the time of their attention is relatively short. The traditional teaching method of explaining through translation enables students feel tired and fainthearted. Therefore, we should notice this psychological characteristic of primary school students and manipulated situational language teaching method during the teaching of English.

2.2 The situation of Chinese students learning English

Situational language teaching method is propitious to the situation of Chinese students learning English. The ultimate goal of learning language is to use it in real communication context, so it is so necessary to enable students surrounded by the target language. Nevertheless, our Chinese students lack the atmosphere of learning English. Under this circumstance, English teachers should create as many as possible communicative scenes for students in the class.

Furthermore, the desire to show off of primary school students is strong. If students can speak English fluently and appropriately in the simulated scene during the class, they will naturally utilize what they have acquired in class in the real communicative context. Consequently, by this way, the efficiency of leaning English is improved.

2.3 Cognitive law of primary school students

Situational language teaching method is fit for the cognitive law of primary school students. The

representative of social interaction studies—Bruner stressed that interaction plays a decisive role in the process of acquiring a language. Meanwhile, he pointed out that the practice of language communication is a decisive factor in children's acquisition of language. The new behaviorist Skinner pointed out that memorizing mechanically has less benefit to students. Only in the concert context can they acquire a language well.

Ⅲ The specific application of SLT(Situational Language Teaching)

3.1 Multimedia technology

To begin with, teachers can take advantage of multimedia technology to create circumstance. Nowadays, most of the students have more access to the internet as they are curious about the online world. If English teachers manipulate multimedia technology during the process of teaching, they can enable the abstract things be more intuitive and make the boring teaching material be more vivid. Then, through this method, students will develop a strong interest and this way also makes a deep impression on them. For example, we can by means of multimedia courseware and animation clips to stimulate primary school students' attention. Then, the listening and speaking of students will be improved relatively. Furthermore, the stimulation of visual images can improve students' initiative and creativeness.

In addition to, in order to enrich the content of the class, teachers can add some pictures, animation, as well as some other factors. In this way, these approaches can arouse students' curiosity and interest. Naturally, according to the guidance of teachers, students will learn consciously and achieve the goal of high efficiency. But, we must pay attention to the added content which must be appropriate. Meanwhile, the added content cannot be out of the teaching objectives which enables students learn some helpful knowledge.

3.2 Visual teaching aids

From the aspect of psychology of primary school students, it is an easier issue for them to accept visual things as this kind of method can mobilize their enthusiasm. Pictures, models and some other visual things are good inducement for primary school students. If teachers can cooperate with students through taking advantage of those visual teaching aids during the process of teaching English, the efficiency of teaching will be striking and remarkable.

For example, in the process of teaching English words—"run" and "dance", teachers can make use of some pictures to motivate students' imagination. Then they may think about the meaning of the words. Teachers ask students, "can you dance?" and students will answer "Yes, I can. I can dance." After all, using pictures to teaching English, teachers can create active atmosphere of the class. Ultimately, students will be more interested in English and learn English consciously. It is said that interest is the best teacher.

3.3 Role-play

It is no doubt that role play is a way to render the atmosphere of the class. As primary school students are born to love performance and imitation. So teachers can take advantage of this feature to create the

atmosphere of role play. Consequently, students can deepen the impression of the specific knowledge through their preparation of the performance. Besides, role play is also a good way to motivate their desire and enthusiasm of learning English.

For example, when we learn the sentence pattern-"would you like to do sth", we can assume some scenes, such as classrooms, cinemas, supermarket and emporiums. Then teachers ask students to make a decision of the scene they want to perform. Meanwhile, they must use the specific sentence patterns to communicate with their patterns during their practice. Student A can ask student B, then students B should answer the question according to his or her actual situation. Therefore, students can experience the joy of learning English in the immersive atmosphere of the class. In addition to, students can obtain a good opportunity of performing in front of the classmates to achieve their integrated development.

3.4 Games

We cannot deny that it is definitely benefit for primary school students to use all kinds of games to attract primary school students' attention. Based on the age characteristics of primary school students, games can stimulate their interest of learning. Furthermore, only in the relaxed atmosphere can students receive knowledge naturally and unconsciously.

For example, English teachers plan to teach some words of animals in the textbooks. For example, tigers, cats, birds and monkeys. Obviously, English teachers can add some games to increase their interest of English. That the teacher must pay attention to is that words cards should be prepared before the class. Teachers also need divide the whole class into several groups to compete with others. First of all, each group of students must choose a representative to delegate for them in each round. In the specified time, the group who answers the most words is the final winner group. What's more, the winner one can gain some gifts from teachers to encourage them. It can not only enable students learn English harder, but also increase the sense of group honor.

Ⅳ　Conclusion

4.1 Issues that need to be noticed

In the exploration of utilizing situational teaching method, English teachers need to think constantly and overcome the deficiencies. Meanwhile, teachers are also required to improve the teaching mode and accumulate experience of teaching. What's more, it's a final target for teachers to fully tap the great potential of situational teaching method. Ultimately, the effect of oral English will implement a new height. However, considering the current teaching, there are some aspects which we should focus on in the English class of primary school students.

Firstly, teachers should avoid the situation that the form is far away from the teaching content. At present, it has become a universal problem for the English class in primary schools. Furthermore, it is more likely to come to extremes. On the one hand, the teaching content covers too wide knowledge. More scenes will cause more questions. Furthermore, students will relatively lack emotional experience if the rhythm is too nervous. It is difficult for students to discover problems only in ephemeral time. Certainly, they are also no

time for them to think carefully. On the other hand, the form is so cumbersome so that students just pay attention to the process of experiencing. They don't comprehend deeply the knowledge behind the scene. Then, the purpose of the situational teaching method deviates from textbooks. Although the diversity of the teaching patterns enables knowledge understandable for and acceptable for students, the excessive and overmuch presentation can lead the result that students become blundering and thoughtless.

Secondly, teachers should avoid the situation that it is not balanced between creation and presentation of the class. The disorder of creating and presenting mainly refers to the excessive design of teaching. When teachers make use of situational teaching method, the creation of the class is one of the significant links for the whole class. However, in the actual teaching, cumbersome creation will reduce the effect of teaching. Therefore, teachers should focus on clear teaching objectives and teaching ideas before the class. What's more, Teachers should have a macro presupposition of the class.

Thirdly, teachers should avoid the disorder between preparation and reflection of the class. In the teaching of situational language teaching method, the preparation of the class is necessary, which can help students adapt to the scene. What's more, the reflection after the class is very significant, while, the traditional teaching only pay attention to the effect of the class and ignore to summary the whole class. And teaching reflection is the summary of teachers and students.

Fourthly, teachers should avoid the fuzzy relationship between objectives and dominants. Situational language teaching method covers a process of mutual exchange between students and teachers. Hence, the interaction between teachers ad students become particularly important. Nowadays, the teacher-centered class is out of date and useless while the pattern of students centered is priority to the former one. Although it is difficult to achieve this goal, teachers should try their best to finish this task. What's more, the interaction between students is also very significant as peers are more likely to discover problem of each other. That students receive knowledge initiatively will gain a better result.

4.2 Recommendation for further research

All in all, in order to manipulate situational teaching method, various and numerous things must be paid attention to. To begin with, the preparation of teachers before the class must be ample and abundant. That is to say, everything must be ready for transformation of the class. Otherwise, the teaching of the class will become vague and general. This thesis mainly talks about the application of situational language teaching approach in oral English teaching to primary school students. However, there are also other factors which need to be noticed.

For example, which qualities of teachers need to possess when they utilize situational language teaching method? Possibly, teachers are required to be good guides who teach students right pronunciation of English words. Perhaps, they are required to provide the motivation for learning English continually as students will improve themselves quickly during the practice of speaking English. Therefore, how to deeply take advantage of situational language teaching method is considered to make more research on.

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