

Analysis of Pronunciation and Intonation Consciousness Cultivation Strategies in College English Teaching under the Context of International Communication

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Abstract: For a long time, in English teaching, the cultivation of pronunciation and intonation consciousness has not been paid enough attention in our country, which results in many patterns affecting the learners' understanding of English pronunciation and intonation. Starting from the analysis of the function of English pronunciation and intonation, and the present situation of college pronunciation and intonation teaching, this paper puts forward the strategies of training college students' awareness of pronunciation and intonation through the innovation of knowledge system and classroom teaching methods of pronunciation and intonation.

1. Introduction

Pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar are the three elements of language. Pronunciation and intonation are primary and indispensable foundation of all language teaching. For a long time, in English teaching, the cultivation of pronunciation and intonation consciousness has not been paid enough attention in our country, which results in many patterns affecting the learners' understanding of English pronunciation and intonation. At present, there are few researches on the training of Non-English Majors' English language through the training of pronunciation and intonation. Therefore, it is of great practical significance to explore how to train and improve the group's listening, speaking, reading and writing ability through pronunciation and intonation.

2. The Function of English Pronunciation and Intonation under the Context of International Communication

Nowadays, English has become the most widely used language in the world due to its many functions in international communication. With the development of the world economy and the advancement of the global integration process, English, as a world language, has been applied to all aspects of social life by non-native English users. With the change of its role as a world language and the establishment of its status, English has begun to show some of its linguistic features, especially its phonetic features. Many famous linguists have summed up some core and non-core phonetic features of common language.

Under the context of international communication, understanding and mastering the core phonetic features can ensure the mutual understanding of cross-cultural communication. English pronunciation and intonation play a very important role in international communication. Different pronunciation and intonation can produce different functions and functions. If it is not handled well, it will easily lead to misunderstanding or even communication failure. Therefore, it is very important to accurately express or understand the meaning of the speaker. English pronunciation and intonation include the following eight aspects: phoneme; combination of sounds; linking; word stress; sentence stress; discourse rhythm; strong and weak reading; intonation. Among them, word stress, sentence stress, discourse rhythm and intonation are particularly prominent in language communication.

The smallest unit of pronunciation is sound, but from the perspective of the social function of pronunciation, the smallest unit that can distinguish meaning in people's communication is phoneme, including segmental phoneme and supra-segmental phoneme. Segmental phonemes include vowels and consonants; supra-segmental phonemes mainly refer to stress, length, tone and intonation. Segmental phonemes determine the word meaning, if vowels or consonants are changed, the meaning

of the word will change. While supra-segmental phonemes usually shows the cadence of voice in the speech flow, so it is also called prosodic features, which convey more information than the meaning of words.

In language communication, different speakers may use different intonation, to reflect their different thoughts, attitudes, and emotions. Intonation can express certain information and increase the appeal of language. The change of intonation does not affect nor change the meaning of the vocabulary itself, but wrong intonation can cause misunderstanding and affect language communication. Therefore, mastering the correct intonation and understanding the function of intonation are extremely important. Intonation function mainly includes information function, expression function, emphasis function, grammar function and so on.

2.1. Information Function

In the same sentence, the stress of the sentence falling on different words will produce different focus of information and convey a certain implication. For example, the following sentence can have three different sentence stresses:

Mary didn't poison the child.

(a) *MARY didn't poison the child.*

(b) *Mary didn't POISON the child.*

(c) *Mary didn't poison the CHILD.*

In sentence (a), the stress is on the subject, emphasizing that “Mary” did not poison the child. The implication is: someone poisoned the child, but not Mary. In sentence (b), the stress is on the predicate, emphasizing that Mary did not “poison” the child. The implication is: Mary did something to the child, but not a poison. In sentence (c), the stress is on the object, emphasizing that Mary did not poison the “child”. The implication is: Mary poisoned someone, but not the child.

Sometimes, a sentence may be ambiguous when expressed in written language, but when it is spoken, it can be disambiguated by using a different intonation. Some other sentences are very clear in written form, and there will be no ambiguity, but if you cannot master the tone of the sentence when speaking, it will cause misunderstanding. For example:

(c) *I didn't wash the dish, because I worried about my mother's health.*

(d) *I didn't wash the dish because I worried about my mother's health.*

The comma distinguishes these two sentences, and their scope of denial is different. Sentence (c) expresses “I didn't wash the dishes because I was worried about my mother's body”; sentence (d) expresses “I did the dishes, but not because I was worried about my mother's body”. But in spoken language, the comma cannot be reflected, and the difference between these two sentences needs to be expressed in different tones. When expressing the meaning of sentence (c), use normal intonation, that is, use the rising tone at the end of the main sentence, and use the falling tone at the end of the following clause. The main and subordinate clauses use their own intonation units and put the causative adverbial clauses outside the negative scope. The master-slave expression of sentence (d) uses a unit of intonation, focusing the negative focus on the clause. The word “health” can be expressed in descending or rising tone.

2.2. Expression Function

Pronunciation and intonation can express the speaker's attitude towards the content or show the attitude towards the listener. Expressed in different tones, speaker can reveal the differences in mentality, emotions and subjective attitudes. Generally speaking, a high turn intonation unit sounds happier than a low turn. Lowering the tone means the speaker's attitude is positive, and raising the tone means uncertainty or doubt.

E.g. *But I TOLD you that.*

In this sentence, the stress is on “told”, and the whole sentence is said in lowering tone, expressing “told indeed”, with blame and impatience attitude.

2.3. Emphasis Function

Through the adjustment of intonation, the speaker can focus the other party's attention on important content. Proper use of rising and falling tone can produce comparative effect and highlight the content emphasized by the speaker. For example:

You can come on Monday. ↗

But not on Tuesday. ↘

Monday uses a rising tone while Tuesday uses falling tone, which emphasizes the difference in dates and makes it easier for listeners to remember.

2.4. Grammar Function

Tone mode has grammatical function. For example in the sentence “*Did you finish your homework?*”, the rising tone indicates that this sentence is an interrogative sentence rather than a statement, and a rising tone can change a declarative sentence into an interrogative sentence. According to the different answers, interrogative sentences are mainly divided into three types: general interrogative sentences, special interrogative sentences and selective interrogative sentences. General interrogative sentences usually use ascending tone; special interrogative sentences use ascending tone; selective interrogative sentences use ascending and descending tone. If you ignore the correct use of its intonation, it will cause misunderstandings. For example:

(e) - Would you like some TEA or COFFEE?

- TEA

(f) - Would you like some tea or COFFEE?

- No, I'd like some MILK.

In sentence (e), the tone of the option rises first and then falls, and ask the responder to choose one directly when answering, indicating the sentence is a selective interrogative sentence. In sentence (f), the end of the option uses ascending tone, expressing “want tea, coffee (or else)”, and it means there are many options, so the sentence belongs to general interrogative sentence.

3. Common Problems in the Teaching of College English Pronunciation and Intonation

3.1. From the Perspective of Students

Due to the regional differences of students, the unbalanced development of English teaching among regions leads to the unbalanced development of students' English pronunciation. Some students have confidence in English learning at the beginning of university. However, with the passage of time, the English phonetic ability has not been improved for a long time for various reasons. Over time, the words will not be spelled correctly, and the text will not be read accurately and fluently, which will ruin their self-confidence. In order to protect self-esteem from harm, many students will be afraid to speak English, thus forming a strong emotional disorder, and thus inhibiting their enthusiasm for learning.

Another issue worth paying attention to is that students do not pay enough attention to the study of English pronunciation and intonation. After listening to the teacher's pronunciation, most students only imitate it roughly, neither take notes nor review after class. Therefore, the teacher corrected the pronunciation of some students in the classroom or after class and asked to imitate the correct pronunciation, but in the next or usual oral practice, the pronunciation error will often occur again. This is because the practice is not enough in normal learning, and there is no real imitation, and the relevant pronunciation points that the teacher said are not recorded.

3.2. From the Perspective of Teachers

Although students are the main body of learning, teachers have a great influence on students, so the teacher's own pronunciation and intonation should not be ignored. Students will consciously or unconsciously imitate their pronunciation and intonation when giving lectures or taking readings. Therefore, teachers should also strengthen systematic pronunciation and intonation knowledge learning to improve their professional quality. Only in this way can they help students master the

correct pronunciation and intonation to achieve the purpose of smooth communication. In addition, some teachers still adopt a more traditional single teaching method in English pronunciation and intonation teaching, and the teaching content is generally limited to the scope of pure speech system. The teaching focus is on the teaching of phonetic theory and phonetic knowledge, and the teaching form is often based on mechanical forms such as reading and following. Over time, students tend to feel monotonous and boring, so students often get distracted when they are in class, and they may even lose their interest in learning.

3.3. From the Perspective of Teaching Infrastructure

Due to the limited funding of the school, some schools cannot purchase advanced equipment. Some schools do not even have voice classrooms, and some schools do not provide network connections or cannot play video materials. The teaching of English pronunciation and intonation is very dependent on multimedia facilities. However, the lack of teaching infrastructure is not conducive to the development of pronunciation and intonation teaching activities, thus affecting the realization of teaching goals.

4. Cultivation Strategies of College Students' Awareness of English Pronunciation and Intonation

Most of the students have mastered some knowledge of pronunciation and intonation in the junior and senior high school, but they are still not comprehensive enough, and many students still have many problems in pronunciation. Most of their mastery of pronunciation and intonation is in a state of half understanding. Therefore, if the teacher gives a profound, thorough and comprehensive explanation, it will arouse students' interest in this part of knowledge, and it is good for motivating their learning motivation and motivating them to devote more time and energy to English learning.

This paper holds that it is necessary to innovate the knowledge system of pronunciation and intonation, as well as the operation of classroom teaching of pronunciation and intonation. Through the use of innovative means, students can truly understand the knowledge of pronunciation and intonation comprehensively and thoroughly, and master the necessary theoretical knowledge to guide the improvement process.

4.1. Innovation of Pronunciation and Intonation Knowledge

The knowledge of pronunciation and intonation, from pronunciation part to phonetic skill to intonation knowledge, is complex and changeable, which makes it difficult to systematically study the knowledge of pronunciation and intonation in a limited class plan. This paper concludes a set of innovative methods of general syllabic pronunciation and intonation knowledge of “weaken the consonants and emphasize the vowels”.

(1) Weaken the consonants

There are a lot of pronunciation skills in standard and authentic English pronunciation. For example, when consonants are connected, the previous consonant is lightened, such as “scale”, “skate”, “play”, etc. When the blasting sound is adjacent to other consonants, the blasting sound is lightened and the sound is not completely lost, such as “best man”, “good friend”, etc. In addition, there are consonant changes. For example, turn consonants of large airflow into opposite small airflow consonants, e.g. /p/ turn to /b/, /t/ turn to /g/, /k/ turn to /g/, /tr/ turn to /dr/, etc. Obviously, with these skills, the pronunciation of consonants consumes less energy than without skills. These pronunciation skills are ultimately to save energy on consonants, that is, weakening the consonants. It can be said that, weakening the consonants is one criterion and measure of standard English.

(2) Emphasize the vowels

English is a language with intonation, although it doesn't fix the intonation of every word like Pinyin. Once intonation appears, it must be completed on syllables. However, in the process of self-study and actual teaching, we finds that when syllable, as a whole concept composed of consonant and vowel, undertakes intonation change in most cases, it can be regarded as intonation change in vowels and a few consonants, such as /m/, /n/, /l/, etc. The reason is that consonants are not

loud, and they are not the main sounds of syllables. While the vowel is characterized by loud pronunciation and is the main sound of the syllable.

This paper holds that we can use the method of Chinese pinyin to mark intonation above vowels and a few consonants. The method is to use intonation symbols with higher relative position and longer relative length to express higher and longer intonation, and use intonation symbols with lower relative position and shorter relative length to express lower and shorter intonation. That is right the method of emphasizing the vowels.

This method has its own advantages: on the one hand, it is simple, intuitive, and similar to the Chinese Pinyin marking method, so students can quickly get familiar with it; on the other hand, it can reflect the change of English rhythm, the change of stress of words and sentences.

4.2. Innovation of Classroom Teaching Methods

In addition to the innovation in the knowledge system of pronunciation and intonation, more importantly, teachers should be good at innovation in classroom teaching methods. Classroom teaching operation should consider the actual level of teachers, the actual needs of students, the arrangement of teaching hours, curriculum progress and other related factors. It should not only reflect the overall forerunner of the theoretical knowledge of pronunciation and intonation, but also pay attention to the overall sustainability of the actual training of pronunciation and intonation.

(1) The whole teaching of correct pronunciation and intonation

The whole teaching of correct pronunciation and intonation is to pass on the correct knowledge of pronunciation and intonation to all students through "classroom teaching method". Considering that the students already have a certain knowledge of pronunciation and intonation, at this stage, teachers mainly explain the overall concept and corresponding skills of "weaken the consonants and emphasize the vowels" mentioned above to the students. The purpose is to make students establish the whole concept, understand and be familiar with the knowledge system of phonetics and intonation.

(2) Classroom verification of correct pronunciation and intonation knowledge

Although teachers have taught various kinds of knowledge in the previous stage, in order to prevent some students from having doubts or mistrust, it is necessary to verify the knowledge of pronunciation and intonation in class. Specifically, it is to play standard and authentic English through a tape recorder or computer, and display, contrast and compare all kinds of skills one by one, to dispel students' doubts, enhance students' trust, and enable them to imitate and study at ease.

(3) Continuous improvement of pronunciation and intonation training

The above steps teach and verify the correct pronunciation and intonation knowledge, but if these processes are not further trained, they will remain on the surface and will not improve students' pronunciation. Therefore, teachers must carry on the continuous training to the students in the ordinary teaching process. Specifically, teachers can combine the intensive reading course and listening and speaking course of College English, through modern scientific and technological means, give full play to the guiding role of teachers, and carry out various listening and speaking activities, such as listening training, reading, group discussion, speech, singing, storytelling, picture description, debate, etc. On the basis of training students' listening and oral expression ability, remind students to keep improving their pronunciation and intonation.

5. Conclusion

Starting from the analysis of the function of English pronunciation and intonation, and the present situation of college pronunciation and intonation teaching, this paper puts forward the strategies of training college students' awareness of pronunciation and intonation through the innovation of knowledge system and classroom teaching methods of pronunciation and intonation. Combined with practical teaching experience, in order to improve the efficiency and quality of English teaching, as well as improve students' awareness of pronunciation and intonation, we strive to use practical methods in limited class hours, stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning English, and enhance the feelings between teachers and students, and hope to provide some reference for College English teaching.

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