

A Study on College English Listening Teaching from the Perspective of Adaptive Learning

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Abstract—With the development of the times, the traditional listening teaching model in college has been unable to meet the needs of current English learners. The emergence of adaptive learning provides a new path for college English listening teaching, which can better meet the increasingly diversified needs of learners. By analyzing the application of adaptive learning in college English listening teaching, this study aims to explore the pros and cons of adaptive learning and propose some corresponding solutions to solve the problems existing in this new model, hoping to provide some reference for current college English listening teaching in China.

Keywords—adaptive learning; college English listening teaching; learning mode

I. INTRODUCTION

With the development of the times and the advancement of science and technology, the traditional face-to-face classroom teaching mode with tight teaching hours, heavy tasks and low efficiency has been unable to meet the diverse learning needs of current English learners, which is particularly evident in the teaching of College English listening in China. At present, the widely used online autonomous learning also cannot fully meet the diversified and personalized needs of different learners, and the learning quality and learning effect of online autonomous learning are also difficult to control. Therefore, there is an urgent need to introduce a new learning mode for China's college listening teaching, namely adaptive learning, which can better meet the diversified needs of different learners.

II. AN OVERVIEW OF ADAPTIVE LEARNING

Currently, online learning faces the transition from autonomous learning to adaptive learning. The rapid development of artificial intelligence technology provides strong technical support for this change of learning paradigm. The concept of adaptive learning was first proposed by the famous Chinese cognitive psychologist Zhu Xinming in the 1980s. In 1998, Professor Zhu Xinming published a monograph on adaptive learning. In his monograph entitled *Human Adaptive Learning: Theory and Practice of Example Learning*, he put forward the theory of "condition constructing and elaborating" which describes in detail the psychological mechanics from the perspectives of

knowledge representation, knowledge acquisition and promoting measures. This monograph by Professor Zhu Xinming reveals the basic rules and principles that need to be followed in adaptive learning, laying a solid foundation for further teaching practice concerning adaptive learning. In the 1990s, the United States first attempted to apply the concept of adaptive learning in teaching practice. Although the initial experiment only simply graded students according to their learning level, it still provided appropriate learning content and learning channels for students at different levels. This attempt initiates the application of adaptive learning in practical teaching and provides valuable experience and reference for further adaptive learning practice.

With the development of science and technology, especially the development of computer technology, more and more countries are trying to introduce the adaptive learning model into education. In recent years, breakthroughs in artificial intelligence technology have provided more reliable technical support for the application of adaptive learning concept. The adaptive learning system based on modern artificial intelligence can accurately stratify learners, and even be precise to layer all of the learners at completely different levels. At the same time, it can dynamically adjust learning content and learning paths according to the diverse needs of different learners, thus truly achieving individualized teaching. Up till the present moment, China's adaptive learning technology is still in its infancy, and there is still much room for development and improvement. At present, adaptive learning system is gradually applied to foreign language teaching in China. The adaptive learning platform supported by artificial intelligence technology can accurately perform speech recognition, imitation and correction, provide personalized scene simulation training, create realistic learning scenarios, and also provide a large number of original and individualized learning materials and paths. It can be regarded as an effective learning platform for English learners to practice listening and speaking.

III. PROBLEMS

As mentioned above, adaptive learning technology has been gradually used in college English listening teaching in China. Up until now, the application of adaptive learning has achieved good results, greatly facilitating English listening

teaching in Chinese universities. However, there are still certain problems which cannot be ignored. The main problems that exist in the application of this technology are as follows:

A. The Function of Adaptive Learning Platform Needs to Be Improved

Firstly, the framework of the platform is comparatively simple and the hierarchy is not clear enough, which is not conducive to the accurate matching based on learners' different learning levels. Secondly, the learning support service system of the platform still needs to be optimized. The underperforming learning support service cannot satisfy the individualized needs of learners in the learning process timely and accurately. In the long run, the learners' willingness to use the platform will be gradually reduced and the learners' enthusiasm and interest in English learning will also be further weakened.

B. The Negative Influence on Adaptive Learning from the Network

Adaptive learning is usually carried out in the network environment. The network provides learners with richer learning resources and enables learners to learn anywhere and anytime, which greatly facilitates the listening learning process. However, the network environment is also filled with factors that interfere with adaptive learning. All kinds of online recreational products, such as chat apps, video games, movies and TV plays, are at learners' fingertips, attracting their attention. For those learners who are less self-motivated, the interference from the network mentioned above is especially noticeable.

C. The Lack of Adaptive Ability

In the long-term teacher-centered traditional learning model, learners are accustomed to relying on teachers who are indispensable to every step of learning process, from the setting of learning objectives, learning methods to learning content. Long-term dependence on teachers deprives learners of the willingness and ability to conduct active learning. Without teachers' guidance, learners tend to be at a loss. Although the adaptive learning system plans the main learning paths for learners and replaces part of the teachers' functions in terms of learning objectives, learning levels, learning content and learning plans, it cannot completely substitute teachers, nor can it completely replace learners' subjective adaptation. The lack of adaptive ability among the majority of current Chinese university English learners greatly hinders their listening learning. Therefore, it is crucial for learners to develop their adaptive ability.

D. The Weak Awareness of Collaboration

The traditional teacher-centered teaching model neglects the cultivation of learners' cooperative awareness, which is particularly evident in the process of English listening learning. The traditional face-to-face classroom teaching mode often only focuses on the improvement of learners' listening level. Due to tense class hours and heavy teaching tasks, in order to improve the efficiency of classroom

teaching, teachers seldom assign team tasks to learners. The after-class learning tasks are also mainly carried out in the form of individual person, which makes it quite difficult for learners to develop cooperative awareness in the process of listening learning. However, there is no doubt that collaborative competence is an important part of learning ability, which is particularly evident in the online learning process.

E. The Lack of Listening Strategies

The adaptive learning platform provides learners with abundant resources for English listening, but the learning result is not satisfactory. In addition to the reasons mentioned above, another major reason lies in the lack of listening strategies. The traditional education emphasizes achievement, neglects practice and usually ignores the training of learning strategies, especially in English listening learning, which eventually leads to the general lack of listening learning strategies among English learners. Yet a tremendous number of researches have proved that learning strategies are extremely important for English listening study. Therefore, it's quite necessary for English learners to command basic listening strategies.

IV. COUNTERMEASURES

A. Perfecting the Function of Adaptive Learning Platform

Whether the function of the adaptive learning platform is perfect or not greatly affects the learner's learning process, the improvement of learning efficiency and the realization of learning objectives. It is no doubt that the building of the platform is extremely crucial. Therefore, a scientific and reasonable hierarchical division of the framework on the platform is needed. The designers of the platform first need to stratify the platform resources accurately and build learning resource bases of different depths to meet the needs of different learners. In addition, it is essential to enhance the learning support service on the platform to make it more humanized and learner-centered. The timely and accurate solution to the individual needs of the learners can not only strengthen their willingness to learn, but also further enhance their loyalty to the platform.

B. Strengthening Monitoring and Guiding the Learners to Conduct Effective Self-management

As mentioned above, the network environment can easily affect the learners' adaptive learning. Under the colorful context of network, it is not difficult for the learners to deviate from the original learning goals, indulge in various online entertainment activities, and eventually lose their interest to learn. The main reasons for this phenomenon lie in the inadequate monitoring of the platform on the one hand and the lack of self-management of the learners on the other hand. Therefore, the platform needs to strengthen monitoring and shield unfavorable learning factors through advanced technology. Meanwhile, in order to help the learners eliminate the interference of non-learning factors, encourage them to study on schedule and conduct effective self-management, teachers also need to give the learners

necessary and timely guidance through online and offline ways.

C. Improving the Learners' Adaptive Ability

As mentioned above, although the adaptive learning platform can replace part of the teachers' responsibilities, help learners find their own learning content, learning methods and learning paths, and facilitate learners' English listening learning process, it cannot completely replace learners' subjective adaptation. Under the context of adaptive learning, learners need to change their inherent learning habit and abandon the traditional learning mode, which is not an easy task for learners who have got accustomed to the traditional learning mode for a long time. Therefore, teachers need to give timely guidance and encouragement to promote learners to make self-adjustment and self-selection on their own initiative, and gradually improve their adaptive ability of online learning.

D. Enhancing the Awareness of Collaboration

There is no doubt that collaborative competence is particularly important for learners' online learning. On the one hand, without teachers' guidance, learners usually tend to be confused and do not know how to learn. The online team cooperation in a virtual world can not only relieve learners' emotional tension, but also enable them to devote themselves to studying quickly. On the other hand, through studying with learners with similar learning style, same learning level and same hobbies, it's easy for learners to have fair competition and equal communication with each other, which can further facilitate their listening learning. Of course, for those learners who are just starting to use the adaptive learning platform, teachers also need to guide their collaborative behaviors through online monitoring and evaluation so as to enhance their awareness of collaboration gradually.

E. Strengthening the Training of Listening Strategies

A large number of studies have shown that learning strategies are essential variables affecting learners' learning effectiveness. Professor Hua Weifen (Hua 2) believes that learning strategies can effectively plan, monitor and evaluate the whole process of learning, and help learners improve their learning efficiency. According to Professor Wen Qiufang, there is a close relationship between learning strategies and learners' performance. In her view, learning strategies have a decisive influence on performance (Liu 54). Zhu Xiaoshen and Deng Juntao (Zhu 36) pointed out that the English listening learning strategy in the network environment is particularly important and has become a bottleneck for online learning. From this point of view, listening strategy training in adaptive learning environment is an extremely urgent issue that teachers must attach great importance to. Therefore, teachers should introduce frequently-used listening strategies (such as prediction, reasoning, strategies for staying focused and spotting keywords, etc.) through online and offline ways and help learners form their own listening strategies gradually.

V. CONCLUSION

Adaptive learning technology provides a broader space for college English listening teaching in China. It is especially helpful for English learners to improve their English listening ability in the virtual world. Of course, this new type of learning mode also requires the appropriate involvement of teachers who need to guide, monitor and evaluate learners' adaptive learning process reasonably so as to provide necessary guarantee for online learning.

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