

Analysis and Countermeasures for Fossilization of Interlanguage

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Abstract. The fossilization of interlanguage is an unavoidable phenomenon in the process of learning foreign language, which is formed by difference between culture modes, communication feedback and many other factors. Based upon analysis on factors forming interlanguage, countermeasures for language fossilization was analyzed and a novel teaching mode for foreign language was explored in this paper.

Introduction

In the teaching and learning of foreign language, it often occurs that, the achievement will not be further improved like at preliminary stage when the learning progresses to a certain extent. Instead, it remains a stagnant state and even tends to backslide. The foreign language is always applied not as smooth as native language. Even through many years of learning, some unchangeable and permanent errors still appear in reading, speaking and writing. That is called the fossilization of interlanguage in learning a second language[1-4].

Learner's Cultural Conservation of Target Language

Language is closely related to the culture. The language bears culture. One must learn the culture before learning a second language. The cultural difference has a great influence on learning target language. According to the cultural advancement mode, cultural advancement depends on the social and psychical distance of learner towards the culture of target language. The learner's acceptance level to the culture of target language decides the success of learning. If a learner has conflicted emotions with lower level of cultural transfer and conservation, he or she will neither incorporate the language into internalization nor surpass existing language level. The fossilization forms if such case exists for a long time.

Communication Feedback

Vigil and Oller argue that, the nature of feedback got by the learner by using a second language also has something with the fossilization. Positive feedback will cause fossilization, and negative feedback helps to avoid the occurrence of fossilization. In communicating with a native speaker, through the feedback, a second language learner is aware that, the meaning of his expression is understood and the error of application does not affect communication. As a result, the learner will not bother to improve the interlanguage, resulting in the interlanguage stagnant. This temporary fossilization is caused by the learner using actual strategy on the basis of communication feedback. Meanwhile, the learner will have affective disorder when subjected to negative evaluation or criticism, resulting in fossilization. For example, some foreign language teachers correct a student's pronunciation by saying "Why are you always speaking a wrong voice", which can hit the student's confidence to make him give up the effort to approach the target language. As a result, the student will keep the incorrect pronunciation in his interlanguage.

Teaching and Evaluation for Learner

A foreign language teacher plays an important role in the learning of second language. The

teacher's teaching mode directly or indirectly affects the development of learners. If some non-authentic language forms are taught by a teacher, they will root in the mind of learners and cause fossilization. Moreover, another important process in learning a second language is the evaluation, which is mainly represented by language testing. If the testing is emphasized more, all teaching and learning processes are making preparations for the testing, and learners only learn for passing the testing. Such system undermines the confidence of foreign language learners and hinders the advancement of learning, which further causes the fossilization.

In summary, the formation of language fossilization involves many factors. The interaction of these factors in learning leads to the formation of interlanguage fossilization.

Countermeasures for Language Fossilization

Along with the popularization and need of foreign language education, the team of foreign language teachers is growing rapidly in China. It is especially important to improve the quality of teachers. On the one hand, teachers should be trained for good foreign language ability. On the other hand, it is necessary for teachers to learn some foreign language teaching methods and educational psychology knowledge. Krashen has pointed out that, the main role of foreign language teachers lies in two points, one is to explain the grammar and vocabulary knowledge, and the other is to provide students with adequate optimum inputs. The teacher should provide optimum inputs to students when they enter the temporary fossilization to help them to make a breakthrough and progress to the next stage. In addition, fully grasping the emotional factors of students, teachers should give affirmation to the progress of students in a timely manner to enhance their confidence and interest in foreign language learning; encourage and help the students in frustration to help them rebuild their confidence and resolve to overcome difficulties. All as above can avoid the occurrence of temporary fossilization. Teachers should guide students to overcome their own emotional barriers, stimulate their interest in learning, and help them realize the existence of self-worth, and enhance self-confidence in learning.

Improved teaching method also helps to avoid the occurrence of temporary fossilization. A single teaching method, boring teaching, low-level repetitive practice, and heavy homework will greatly dampen the enthusiasm of the learners, reducing their interest and motivation of learning, which is easily cause the temporary fossilization. Therefore, directed against students' receptive ability, teachers should flexible apply and timely adjust teaching methods, make full use of all kinds of teaching equipment to enhance the freshness and fun of foreign language teaching, so as to mobilize the enthusiasm of students. Moreover, a variety of teaching methods is applied in teaching to encourage and maintain a high degree of enthusiasm of learners. Teachers should increase the intensity and difficulty of the target language input before the arrival of the students' psychological plateau, promoting a new leap forward.

Foreign language testing is an important step in foreign language teaching. In order to overcome the fossilization, it is imperative to reform the foreign language testing. The reform of foreign language teaching evaluation should include two aspects: content and method. The content reform is the change from emphasis on result to emphasis on achievement. The reform of method is mainly to change the status that testing is the main and even only approach for foreign language teaching evaluation. Various modes of testing can fully evaluate the ability of the learners, avoiding ossification in one aspect and promoting foreign language teaching.

Because of the limitation of specialty, there are not many English courses for public foreign language students, which may result in insufficient input. Therefore, the curriculum should be arranged mainly to improve the efficiency of classroom teaching, and encourage students to study in their spare time. It also provides students with English extracurricular counseling and coaching, and properly organizes English learning activities, creating a good and abundant learning atmosphere for students as far as possible.

Conclusion

Fossilization is inevitable in learning a second language. Therefore, against the cause of temporary fossilization, teachers should find specific ways to avoid the fossilization of interlanguage as possible, or to promote the formation of the next peak after the fossilization; apply error analysis to understand the progress of learning, and then determine corresponding teaching method, so as to improve the quality of foreign language teaching and help learners to acquire a second language.

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