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The magic of the shadowing method in the field of foreign language education

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the information about the Shadowing in the field of foreign language method which helps to upgrade pronunciation. The article contains guidance on what Shadowing is and how to use techniques of this new method. It seems that you have learned the pronunciation rules, and you can easily support a conversation with a native speaker, but the accent is no good? Good news: it's a matter of training. One of the most popular techniques that correct pronunciation is called shadowing.

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The technique of shadow repetition (Shadowing) is one of the most powerful tools for working with pronunciation and training of merged speech. The shadowing method was invented by the American linguist and polyglot Alexander Arguelles. The essence is simple: you need to listen to audio with a foreign speech and repeat it aloud – as close as possible to the original. Thus, you follow the carrier like a shadow. Then it all depends on the time you devote to practice. Regularity first of all: at least half an hour of daily classes – and soon even in London no one will guess that you are Kazakh.

What is Shadowing? The main aim of the shadowing technique is to mimic one hundred percent all the sounds and/or intonation elements behind the speaker. You repeat a speech after the speaker like a shadow that follows its owner. This is why this technique is called Shadowing.

The shadow repetition technique was originally used in experimental psychology to analyse speech processes in the

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middle of the last century. As one of the techniques in foreign language teaching, Shadowing gained popularity in the early 1990s. Shadowing is usually associated with the name of Alexander Arguelles. It was he who turned a simple imitation into one of the most effective methods of learning a foreign language. At the same time, auditory perception, reading, spelling, pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar are trained at the same time. According to Arguelles, his ability to master so many languages stems from his passion to learn and his willingness to put in the effort to study.[1]

Why is the shadow repetition technique useful when training phonetic skills? The speaking skill is not a single skill, but is a system of complex and interconnected elements. Speech reproduction is, in fact, a path from point A (the thought or concept that we want to express) to point B (the verbal expression of thought), during which we must select the necessary vocabulary, syntactic constructions, and the necessary phonological and phonetic form. That is why it can be difficult for students of a foreign language, especially at the initial level, to express their thoughts fully, accurately, quickly and correctly from a linguistic point of view. It is not surprising that the question of the correct pronunciation is often not so important, because our goal is to achieve understanding.

The technique of shadow repetition is an effective tool to reduce the cognitive load on our brain and focus on honing pronunciation skills. Since during the repetition of phrases we do not think about their lexical and grammatical content, we can fully concentrate on practicing the reproduction of sounds and intonation patterns.

Among other reasons to have correct pronunciation V.V. Perlova states that poorly developed pronunciation skills are impossible to disguise even in well-prepared speech, as it can be done with grammatical and lexical aspects of a language.[2] As I. Yu. Pavlovska rightly noticed oral communication starts to prevail over the written one in the modern era of quickly developing information technologies: the accuracy of information exchange by means of video calls and chat voice messages depend on correct and comprehensible articulation and intonation of a speaker.[3]

Linguistically, it has been proven that during the application of the shadow repetition technique, students quickly transfer their honed phonetic skills into everyday speech, and significant improvements in pronunciation are

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noticeable after three months of regular training. To do this, however, one important condition is required, which is very often ignored by language learners - you should already have a basic understanding of the pronunciation of sounds.

Without having a clear idea of the formation of sound, its qualitative indicators, without having worked it out in advance, and trying to imitate sounds only on the basis of an auditory input, it will be difficult for you to achieve a high-quality one hundred percent phonetic imitation. In this case, the very essence of the shadow repetition technique is lost.

How to work effectively with the shadow repetition technique

The idea of the Shadowing technique is very simple, but the absolute majority of students perform it incorrectly: without sufficient preparation, phonetic goal-setting, script development and intonation markup, and, most importantly, without feedback! Simply speaking behind the speaker without analyzing what exactly and how well you are doing will not give absolutely no results.

Therefore, it is very important to follow the Shadowing algorithm, receive and analyze feedback. Below are a few steps that you will be able to effectively use the shadow repetition technique in your regular language routine.

Step 1: Conscious selection of a suitable sample. The most inefficient thing you can do is to take the first video or audio that comes to your hand and go straight to the training! Be sure to consider the following parameters:

- Choose "live" dialogues or monologues, especially when training intonation. In the news or any academic speeches, the speakers' speech is prepared in advance. Moreover, such conditions do not provide for a wide emotional range, which means that the sample of intonation patterns for training will be very scarce;

- The objectives of your training are: training of individual sounds, a special syntactic construction (for example, a general or special question, indirect word order), coherence of speech (for example, the case chain mit meinen Eltern), emotion and pragmatics (for example, neutral utterance, skepticism, doubt);

- Suitable length: a segment of 10-15 seconds is already a long common phrase. It is best to start with individual words, then monosyllabic and two-syllable phrases, and then move on to short simple sentences and gradually reach the

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level of complex sentences with subordinate and infinitive constructions. The optimal length of an audio sample at the very beginning of the training is 2-7 seconds!;

- Another interesting point that should be taken into account at the stage of working with longer samples.

Remember that when training intonation, we are interested in quality, not quantity! It is much more productive to devote 5-10 minutes to training 1 phrase and understand all the details of the intonation of such an intonation pattern than to run through 10 phrases at a gallop without intensive study!

Step 2: Sample, script preparation and intonation markup.

Most of the audio and video that you will find and choose for your work will be longer than the length of the audio sample you need for training. Therefore, in most cases, you first need to technically prepare a working audio file, namely:

- Conversion to a suitable format transcription of text (not necessarily phonetic). We strongly recommend that you have a ready-made script in printed form at hand or at least use video samples with embedded subtitles;

- Transcribed text not only facilitates your training, but also involves the multimodality of skills - in the brain there is a correlation of what is written with what is heard (spelling and phonetics);

- If you are working on intonation, be sure to make intonation markup: mark pauses, main and secondary accents and the melody of speech.

Step 3: Training

- Carefully listen to the audio sample several times;

- Check and correct your markup;

- Mark your mistakes, repeat all important and non-obvious intonation elements;

- After the speaker 5-10 times until you completely "hit" the intonation pattern of the original according to your subjective feelings;

- When repeating a video sample, connect the body and gestures. Connect the body during the training of individual words and mini-phrases, imitating the gestures and facial expressions of the speakers. Thus, you will be able to imperceptibly adopt gestures and facial expressions of native speakers and develop intercultural communicative skills;

- Record your final version on a voice recorder or in the PRAAT app;

- Compare your intonation pattern with the native one: differences in pauses, duration, pitch increases and

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decreases, pitch on individual sounds and volume;

- Repeat the recording until the intonation pattern completely matches;

- Say it simultaneously with the speaker, trying to be his "shadow" and matching 100% in all intonation elements;

Remember that actors have to shoot a lot of takes of small episodes, so do not hesitate to work out the same passage several times. Turn a boring pronunciation practice workout into an exciting game in which you are the main star with clear diction and recognizable intonations. There are many techniques and techniques for learning foreign languages. Among them, there is no single correct method to master a new language. One thing suits some people, another suits others. You can learn a language using one specially selected technique, you can combine and change them for yourself. And it is always useful to learn new techniques in order to try them in practice and increase the effectiveness of your training.

Conclusion

The present work reviewed the theoretical and practical evidence available to date that shadowing can enhance language acquisition. However, our understanding of the role of shadowing and related tasks is still far from complete. We hope that researching more about shadowing or even simple repetition techniques of teaching words to learners – should help us improve what we do in the classes in near future. As reviewed above, shadowing as a teaching method has been gradually explored. Many studies have shown that shadowing has positive effects on English skills, especially on listening skills. After several studies, we have come to the conclusion that shadowing is one of the effective and modern methods of improving pronunciation as a speaking and listening skills. In general, shadowing is copying foreign speech: you need to listen to the voiced text and repeat after the speaker word for word everything that you heard. You need to repeat it almost immediately, simultaneously with listening. There is no need to stop, think over what you have heard, rehearse your speech, correct mistakes. Remember how you try to sing along to a song in a foreign language, where half or even all of the words are unfamiliar to you. You just copy what you hear without thinking about how it turns out. If desired, you can adapt movies, cartoons or podcasts to the shadowing technique. If there is not enough time, you can delete written work from the schedule. This technique justifies itself one

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hundred percent. It helps me to dive much deeper into the language environment.

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