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Implementing Kagan's Structures in Teaching Pronunciation to Young EFL Learners

Summary: *The aim of the present paper is to explore the benefits or shortcomings of the incorporation of Kagan's cooperative structures in teaching basic English pronunciation skills to young Serbian EFL learners. Seeking to test the applicability of Kagan's structures on teaching pronunciation at an elementary level of EFL learning, we conducted an experiment consisting of two parts. The total of 24 participants (mean age = 10.5) attending a private school English lessons for three years were divided into an experimental and a control group. The experiment comprised a pre-test before and a post-test after a one month long implementation of Kagan's structures for teaching pronunciation during the 60-minute classes two times a week with the experimental group only. The control group received traditional group work pronunciation training. To measure whether the implementation of Kagan's approach had any influence on perception and production accuracy, both groups were tested for phoneme discrimination and pronunciation of the target language sounds. The results demonstrated significant benefits of Kagan's structures application.*

Key words: *EFL, Kagan's structures, Cooperative Learning, pronunciation.*

Introduction

Even though cooperation in its narrowest sense as working together is fundamental to human experience, Cooperative Language Learning (CLL) has yet to receive recognition amongst EFL teachers (Kutnick, 1994), especially in Serbian EFL context. Although the popularity of the approach in question is indeed increasing, which can be seen by the studies conducted to explore the effect of CLL on SLA, as well as the maintenance of the first language, the integration of language and content and second lan-

guage learners' perceptions (Xiaoping et al., 1998), teachers still need to become more familiarized with crucial notions and start applying CLL to various aspects of EFL teaching. Without viewing the teacher as the sole source of knowledge and skill, CLL relies on the value of interpersonal relationship and problem solving throughout the course of comprehension and knowledge development. Two theoretical standpoints lie in the core of CLL, the *developmentalist* approach, stemming from cognitive psychology thus focusing on what happens inside an individual as a result of socialization, and the rather opposite *motivational* theory, derived from sociology

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(Bennett, 1994), which views cooperation as possible only among individuals, not within them.

Furthermore, pronunciation teaching remains slightly disregarded and unrecognized part of EFL teaching (Greenwood, 2002), probably due to divergent views on the necessity of the target language sounds pronunciation accuracy by different teaching approaches. The Audiolingual Method and other behaviourist teaching approaches from 1950s and 1960s endeavoured to correct pronunciation errors at all costs with immediate corrective responses (Russell, 2009) and pronunciation instruction consisted of discrimination and articulation of sounds as a means of improving perception as well as production towards achieving native-like performance in the target language. However, in 1970s and 1980s scholars commenced questioning those views and believed that special emphasis on production accuracy was unnecessary. Among the proponents of the notions in question was Stephen Krashen, whose five renown hypotheses (Affective Filter, Monitor, Natural Order, Language Learning vs. Acquisition and Input Hypothesis) inspired the creation of the Natural Approach (Terrell, 1977) that underscored the development of communicative competence in the target language and disparaged grammatical perfection. Students' errors were never corrected in order to preserve low affective filter. Moreover, it was proclaimed impossible for adults to acquire native-like fluency which diminished attention paid to pronunciation practice even more. Correspondingly, in Communicative Language Teaching that has been in widespread use since 1980s the focus is on fluency and acceptable communicative competence and correction of errors is not of primary significance (Russell, 2009). The conviction that pronunciation is the most difficult segment to improve further justifies the neglect of explicit pronunciation instruction.

Nevertheless, in 1990s some researchers started promoting explicit pronunciation instruction and concentration on form anew, since they alleg-

edly enhance SLA and are thus essential in language curriculum (Ellis, 1994; Long, 1996). It is generally believed that pronunciation training should be included in language teaching methods since intelligible production of FL sounds increases learners' self-confidence and represents an incentive for involving in social interactions in actual everyday contexts.

Having the previously stated in mind, the aim of the present paper is to investigate the effects of the implementation of Kagan's structures, as an innovative approach within the general framework of Cooperative Learning, on Serbian EFL learners' perception and production accuracy. Thus, we sought to determine whether a different teaching approach can be useful in pronunciation teaching by helping students to overcome certain difficulties and even increase their current motivation level. After a brief presentation of the theoretical background including the benefits of CLL and the fundamentals underlying Kagan's approach as well as the current state of affairs in pronunciation teaching, the results of the conducted research are introduced and discussed in further detail.

The Benefits of Cooperative Language Learning

Language proficiency doubtlessly comprises the use of language in authentic communicative situations requiring thus the possession of linguistic and pragmatic competence, hence a successful instructional method needs to incorporate creative stereotype-free learning environment in which students would be able to interact independently and negotiate meaning (Omaggio-Hadley, 2001). Cooperative Learning is said to be one of the most desirable frameworks including all of the above and significantly more. Numerous studies reported beneficial effects of CLL in diverse segments of foreign language learning and teaching which is why this approach is increasingly being applied at all levels of education including colleges and universities (Kessler, 1992). The approach in question empha-

sizes active interaction and engagement by students of different abilities, cultural and educational background, and it also results in positive outcomes regarding the very academic success as well as, perhaps even more importantly, social and self-development (Tsai, 1998; Wei, 1997). The positive result of students of mixed abilities cooperating is the improvement in the academic attainment of less-proficient students, yet the success of higher-level students is by no means negligible (Cohen, Kulik, 1981). Students instructed according to CLL principles receive sufficient comprehensible input, since all the members within the groups adjust their utterances in order to be understood by the peers, without making more grammatical mistakes than in a traditional classroom (Long, Porter, 1985).

CLL likewise provides a non-aggressive, relaxed and reliable atmosphere, increasing thus learners' level of motivation, both the intrinsic and extrinsic (Ushioda 1996), and engagement (Crandall, 1999; Hedge, 2000). Furthermore, the approach in question increases learners' responsibility as well as solidarity (Nichols, Miller, 1994) and provides opportunities for the expression of novel ideas and practice of critical thinking and higher-level reasoning (Johnson, Johnson, 2000). In order to accomplish a certain task, students must make suggestions, disagree, clarify etc. which enables the enhancement of social skills (Lightbown, Spada, 1999). Brain research on which CLL relies enabled teachers to realize the capabilities of students and stimulate the most suitable learning modality by means of appropriate activities for each hemispheric preference. To summarize, CLL is reported to have successfully benefited learners both educationally and psychologically.

Due to its multidimensional nature, judging merely by the apparently diverging previously mentioned theories that lie in its core, Cooperative Language Learning engendered various models, all of which, of course, focus on organising mixed-ability group work to improve the learning process, cre-

ate the atmosphere of achievement and develop social skills (Olsen, Kagan, 1992). Some of popular and widespread CLL models are Learning Together (Johnson, Johnson, 1975/1999), Constructive Controversy (Johnson, Johnson, 1979), Jigsaw (Aronson et al., 1978) Team Accelerated Instruction (Slavin et al., 1986) etc. The present paper concentrates on one of the CLL models Cooperative Structures (Kagan, 1985), which will be presented in brief in the following section.

The Essentials of Kagan's Structural Approach

In his famous work on Cooperative Learning, Spencer Kagan (1994) presented four basic principles of his Structural approach, better known as PIES principles: positive interdependence, individual accountability, equal participation and simultaneous interaction. All the principles are closely intertwined and for their successful implementation one needs to take team building into consideration, as well. Kagan designed a set of structures for effective team building, so that students can work on trust-building, leadership skills and decision making.

Positive interdependence is essential since a team cannot succeed without the members depending and relying on each other while individual accountability is especially significant because all the members of the group are responsible for their part in the learning process. The characteristics that differentiates CLL from traditional group work, among other features of course, is certainly equal participation which ensures that all the students equally contribute to the task assigned, and finally simultaneous interaction is precious for it encourages interaction face-to-face and self-confidence boosting by actions such as helping, sharing, supporting and praising the work of others.

Kagan devised a diverse set of structures to be incorporated in lessons, which we carefully studied and chose the most suitable ones for the purpose of our research and they were consistently applied

throughout the experimental period. We found that the most applicable structures for pronunciation teaching having our participants' level of knowledge and age in mind were: *Mix Pair Share*, *One Stray*, *Rally Robin*, *Pairs Check*, *Popcorn Share*, *Elbow Buddies*, *Learning Buddies*, *Learning Logs* and *Peer Tutoring*².

Studies likewise empirically demonstrated the beneficial effects of Kagan's approach by proving that it provides a multitude of opportunities for students to produce language while decreasing the level of anxiety (Kagan, 1994). Not only does the mentioned CLL model decrease anxiety at various educational levels, but it improves overall language proficiency, as well (Nakahashi, 2007), and creates a non-threatening and self-confidence boosting learning environment (Lapsopa, 2005). Judging by the previously presented results, numerous studies reported benefits of CLL on various aspects of foreign language teaching in general as well as teaching skills, such as reading, writing and speaking (Kessler, 1992; Kagan, High, 2002), however, a considerably smaller number of studies focused on the effects of CLL on pronunciation teaching which is why we decided to conduct the present research and investigate the possible efficacy of the approach in question in this area of EFL teaching and learning. One of the rare studies dealing with CLL and pronunciation teaching by Goswami and Chen (2011) demonstrated highly beneficial influence of CLL on pronunciation enhancement among Spanish EFL learners, which served as an inspiration for the research to be presented in the ensuing sections of the paper.

Teaching Foreign Language Pronunciation

In the last couple of decades the interest of scholars in pronunciation teaching has significantly increased, yet the deficiency of studies reporting the success and preponderance of a particular approach

over another is still evident and alarming (Derwing et al., 1998). Accurate production of sounds not only contributes to successful interaction, but it participates in the development of reading and writing skills (Badian, 1998). Achieving near native-like pronunciation is of course not the sole aim of EFL teaching, however it may decrease the chances for miscommunication and certainly boost learners' self-awareness and confidence. Nevertheless, pronunciation teaching remains a matter of instructors' personal choice, since there are few studies based on empirical research in favour of a particular approach. Usually, pronunciation teaching represents a five-minute activity concentrating on the production, rarely perception, of target language segments, seldom on rhythm and intonational patterns, especially concerning young learners. The drills are often automatic and non-creative, even monotonous for learners (Jenkins, 2004). Furthermore, repetitions and typical production activities may not engage students and even result in rejection and resistance (Castiglioni-Spalten, Ehri, 2003).

Hence, the current study, although preliminary in nature, aims to contribute to the research in the field of pronunciation teaching particularly regarding the possible choice of an appropriate teaching approach and introducing innovative activities in teaching both perception and production of sounds.

Methodology

Aim

The aim of the present paper is to investigate the impact of the implementation of Kagan's Structural approach to Cooperative Learning on Serbian EFL learners' perception and production accuracy of certain, carefully chosen English sounds at the elementary level of learning. If we endorse the assumption that production and perception are interrelated, meaning that advancement in perceptual accuracy leads to production improvement (Flege,

² The descriptions for the strategies can be found on <http://www.kaganonline.com>.

1995), any kind of phonetic training should focus both on the discrimination and identification as well as eventual production of target language sounds.

Research Questions

In order to conduct the current research we proposed the following research questions:

1. Can the application of Kagan Structures influence EFL learners' perception improvement?
2. Can the application of Kagan Structures influence EFL learners' production improvement?
3. If there is any, in which of the two is the influence more beneficial?

Hypotheses

Taking the previously described studies into consideration and the suggested research questions, we formulated the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The implementation of Kagan's Structures positively affects the perception of English sounds.

Hypothesis 2: The implementation of Kagan's Structures positively affects the production of English sounds.

Participants

The total of 24 participants (mean age = 10.5) attending private school English lessons for three years were divided into an experimental (= 12) and a control group (= 12). The participants were chosen because they are learning English in an optimal learning environment (considering the number of students and the setting) and their age is quite favourable for beginning to pay attention to the pronunciation of sounds if their aspirations reach as high as the attainment of native-like production. Furthermore, their level of motivation is high and the affective filter is low, since they are attending stress-free private school lessons with children ap-

pealing rewards for knowledge and no rigid evaluation in terms of school marks.

Instruments

To measure the participants' perception improvement we employed the phoneme discrimination test. The words containing target phonemes for discrimination were recorded by a native American English speaker and played to participants before and after the experimental period. To measure production accuracy, the participants were required to read a pre-planned wordlist before and after the experiment. The participants reading the wordlist were recorded and the words were later transcribed for further analysis. The American English speaker judged the production accuracy using the audio method. Wordlists containing target language sounds were carefully prepared in advance, considering the level of vocabulary and the words mentioned in the textbooks and stories the learners were using during their English lessons. For the purpose of the present experiment we focused on the consonantal "new" sounds, non-existent in Serbian phonetic inventory and the "similar" sounds, existent in Serbian inventory yet systematically distinct from the L2 counterpart, as well (Flege, 1986), since we assumed that this type of consonantal sounds might pose the greatest problems in pronunciation. The vowel sounds were omitted from the study because we thought they exceeded the scope of our research due to time limitation. The target sounds were thus /θ, ð, w/ as "new" and /ŋ, v/ as similar sounds, and the examples provided the following phonetic contexts: CCV, VCV, and VCC. The phoneme discrimination test contained 30 words (ten for each phonemic contrast /θ-ð/, /v-w/, /n-ŋ/), and the production wordlist comprised 50 words in total (ten for each phoneme in all the mentioned contexts). So as not to exceed the scope and research questions of the present study, the analysis of data focused on production accuracy in general, without specific attention to particular contexts, however, a more in-depth analysis of factors and phonetic environments will be presented in one of the ensuing studies by the author.

Procedure

The participants underwent a one-month long instruction that included the perception and production training by means of carefully selected Kagan's Cooperative Structures suitable both for pronunciation teaching and the age of participants. As previously mentioned, the chosen structures were *Mix Pair Share*, *One Stray*, *Rally Robin*, *Pairs Check*, *Popcorn Share*, *Elbow Buddies*, *Learning Buddies*, *Learning Logs* and *Peer Tutoring*. The experiment comprised pre-test before and a post-test after a one month long implementation of Kagan's structures for teaching pronunciation during the 60-minute classes two times a week with the experimental group only. The control group received traditional group work pronunciation training.

Statistical Data Processing

Percentage counts were calculated both for the perception and production accuracy and the unpaired *t-test* was performed to compare the mean values of the pre-test and post test in perception and production.

Results and Discussion

Results of the Perception Pre-test

Before the experimental period began, all the participants took a pre-test to ensure validity, i.e. that both groups were on equal terms, and to later measure their potential progress. The results for both groups are presented in the following table (Experimental [E.], Control [C.]).

Since the results of perception pre-test demonstrated no statistically significant differences between the two groups in any of the contrasts, the groups were prepared for the experimental period since they had similar results. Judging by the pre-test in perception, the participants in both groups had greatest problems with discriminating /n/ and /ŋ/ as well as interdental fricatives. The contrast /v/ and /w/ was not at an admirable level either, however, it was slightly more accurate than the previously mentioned ones. The poor results in perception show that learners never practised pronunciation or at least never spent significant period doing phonetic practice in class, which confirms our previously stated assumptions that pronunciation teaching is

Table 1: Perception Pre-test

Target	v-w contrast		θ-ð contrast		n-ŋ contrast	
Group	E.	C.	E.	C.	E.	C.
Mean	3.83	3.27	1.92	2.25	1.58	1.83
SD	1.90	1.49	1.00	1.06	1.73	1.27
SEM	0.55	0.45	0.29	0.30	0.50	0.37
N	12	12	12	12	12	12
t-test results	P = 0.4426 t = 0.7826 df = 21 standard error of difference = 0.716		P = 0.4347 t = 0.7957 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.419		P = 0.6902 t = 0.4039 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.619	

v-w contrast The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals 0.56. The two-tailed P value equals 0.4426, this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

θ-ð contrast The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals -0.33. The two-tailed P value equals 0.4347, this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

n-ŋ contrast The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals -0.25. The two-tailed P value equals 0.6902, this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

regarded as five-minute or end-of-the-day activity if applied at all.

6.2 Results of the Perception Post-Test

After the experimental period, both groups underwent another testing and the results for both groups are presented in Table 2 (Experimental [E.], Control [C.]).

The implementation of Kagan's structures proved quite successful regarding n-ŋ and θ-ð contrast, since the difference in accuracy between the two groups was statistically significant, which means that the improvement in perception accuracy was not due to chance but to beneficial impact of the applied approach during the experimental period. Thus, we may conclude that the first hypothesis of the paper is confirmed, even though there was no significant difference for the v-w contrast. The possible reasons for this may be that the experimental period was too short or that the particular contrast is more difficult to acquire since there is a "similar" sound /v/, which is usually regarded as the same so no special attention is paid to its perception. Never-

theless, although the difference in perception of the contrast in question was not statistically significant, the improvement in accuracy as still greater within the experimental group, which points to the benefits of the applied approach. The greatest improvement was noticed in perception of interdental fricatives, which confirms the assumptions that "new" sounds are perhaps easier to acquire than the similar ones. Even though the study showed statistical significance in n-ŋ contrast differentiation, the overall enhancement was relatively negligible, probably because the experimental period was not long enough.

Additionally, the improvement in perception was noticed within both groups, although the experimental group had more favourable results, which draws attention to the fact that even traditional group work pronunciation training can positively affect perception of target sounds and that any kind of pronunciation training is better than no training at all.

Table 2: Perception Post-test

Target	v-w contrast		θ-ð contrast		n-ŋ contrast	
Group	E.	C.	E.	C.	E.	C.
Mean	5.67	4.00	5.33	2.75	3.33	2.08
SD	2.42	1.81	1.44	1.14	1.30	1.16
SEM	0.70	0.52	0.41	0.33	0.38	0.34
N	12	12	12	12	12	12
t-test results	P = 0.0695 t = 1.9085 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.873		P = 0.0001 t = 4.8849 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.529		P = 0.0214 t = 2.4782 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.504	

v-w contrast The mean of Experimental minus Control Group 1.67. The two-tailed P value equals 0.0695, this difference is considered to be not quite statistically significant.

θ-ð contrast The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals 2.58. The two-tailed P value is less than 0.0001, this difference is considered to be extremely statistically significant.

n-ŋ contrast The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals 1.25. The two-tailed P value equals 0.0214, this difference is considered to be statistically significant.

Results of the Production Pre-test

Similarly to perception measurement, the participants were tested for production accuracy before the experimental period. Table 3 represents the results for both groups (Experimental [E.], Control [C.]

The results of production pre-test demonstrated that there was no statistically significant difference in the production of the target sounds be-

tween the experimental and control group before the beginning of the experiment, which enabled the commencement of the one-month instruction with validly distributed groups.

The previously presented poor results in perception pre-test go in line with the results in production pre-test, which once again confirms the interrelatedness between perception and production in interlanguage phonology. Inaccurate discrimina-

Table 3: Production Pre-test

Target	v		w		ŋ	
Group	E.	C.	E.	C.	E.	C.
Mean	2.92	2.83	3.50	3.58	4.08	4.17
SD	1.24	1.27	1.45	0.90	0.79	1.95
SEM	0.36	0.37	0.42	0.26	0.23	0.56
N	12	12	12	12	12	12
t-test results	P=0.8722 t = 0.1628 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.512		P=0.8670 t = 0.1695 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.492		P= 0.8920 t = 0.1374 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.607	
Target	θ		ð			
Group	E.	C.	E.	C.		
Mean	1.42	2.00	2.67	2.17		
SD	0.51	1.04	0.89	0.83		
SEM	0.15	0.30	0.26	0.24		
N	12	12	12	12		
t-test results	P= 0.0967 t = 1.7353 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.336		P= 0.1692 t = 1.4214 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.352			

/v/ The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals 0.08, the two-tailed P value equals 0.8722, this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

/w/ The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals -0.08, the two-tailed P value equals 0.8670, this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

/ŋ/ The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals -0.08. The two-tailed P value equals 0.8920. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

/θ/ The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals -0.58. The two-tailed P value equals 0.0967. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

/ð/ The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals 0.50. The two-tailed P value equals 0.8920. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

tion of contrast resulted in incorrect pronunciation of the sounds in question, which again underscores the deficiency of adequate pronunciation training.

The production accuracy was at the lowest level for /v/ and /θ/, the possible reasons being the fact that /v/ is a “similar” sound and teachers often omit to stress the differences in phonetic features of Serbian and English labiodental /v/. Furthermore, /θ/ is a “new” sound category and learners possibly mispronounce it because of the deficiency of pho-

netic instruction and the unfamiliarity with the sound.

Results of the Production Post-test

Following the experimental period, the test on the participants’ production accuracy was repeated and the results are presented in the following table (Experimental [E.], Control [C.]).

The production post-test roughly corresponds to the perception post-test results, which once again underlines the interrelatedness of the

Table 4: Production Post-test

Target	v		w		ŋ	
Group	E.	C.	E.	C.	E.	C.
Mean	4.67	3.92	5.17	4.58	5.25	4.83
SD	1.67	1.78	2.12	0.67	1.71	1.85
SEM	0.48	0.51	0.61	0.19	0.49	0.53
N	12	12	12	12	12	12
t-test results	P= 0.2989 t = 1.0640 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.705		P=0.3742 t = 0.9071 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.643		P=0.5728 t = 0.5725 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.728	
Target	θ		ð			
Group	E.	C.	E.	C.		
Mean	3.67	2.42	5.08	2.83		
SD	1.15	0.67	1.31	0.83		
SEM	0.33	0.19	0.38	0.24		
N	12	12	12	12		
t-test results	P=0.0037 t = 3.2453 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.385		P<0.0001 t = 5.0138 df = 22 standard error of difference = 0.449			

/v/ The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals 0.75, the two-tailed P value equals 0.2989, this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

/w/ The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals 0.58, the two-tailed P value equals 0.3742, , this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

/ŋ/ The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals 0.42. The two-tailed P value equals 0.5728. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

/θ/ The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals 1.25. The two-tailed P value equals 0.0037. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be very statistically significant.

/ð/ The mean of Experimental minus Control Group equals 2.25. The two-tailed P value is less than 0.0001. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be extremely statistically significant.

two segments of FL pronunciation acquisition. Namely, the difference in the performance of both groups was statistically insignificant for the production of /v/ and /w/ which goes in line with the results in perception. Furthermore, the production of interdental fricatives both the voiced and voiceless one proved to be statistically significant when it comes to the difference between the experimental and the control group. Such results suggest that the difference in the production of interdental fricatives was not due to chance, but to the employment of Kagan's structures during the experimental period. Interestingly enough, even though the perception test showed statistically significant improvement within the experimental group for /n/ and /ŋ/, the production of /ŋ/ was not significantly different, probably because the participants did not have enough time to connect the perception awareness with correct production. Consequently, we may conclude that the production results partially confirmed the second hypothesis, because the implementation of Kagan's structures was not equally beneficial for all the target sounds. However, the improvement in production was evident even though it was not statistically significant.

Regardless, it seems important to note that the enhancement of production was noticed within the control group, as well, that received traditional group work pronunciation training, which is why any kind of pronunciation instruction should be considered as an integral part of everyday lessons if one wishes to increase learners' chances towards native-like production.

Conclusion

After the presentation of the theoretical background of the present paper, the results of the conducted research were presented and discussed. The fundamental idea and aim of the paper was to investigate the effects of an innovative and different approach to pronunciation teaching, i.e. the impact of

Kagan's Structural approach to Cooperative Learning on Serbian EFL learners' perception and production accuracy.

The research successfully answered the proposed research questions and partially confirmed both hypotheses, thus the paper demonstrated the beneficial effects of the implementation of Kagan structures to pronunciation practice. However, not all the target sounds examined were equally influenced by the mentioned approach both in the perception and production, which is why further and more exhaustive research is necessary to establish the benefits of CLL structures with more certainty. Moreover, the study once again demonstrated the interdependence of perception and production, and confirmed that "similar" sounds are equally difficult to acquire as the "new" ones. Additionally, the study pointed to the fact that any kind of pronunciation training is beneficial as opposed to the absolute lack of pronunciation practice, since it improves learners' pronunciation awareness and decreases the chances for strong foreign accent.

Finally, we need to outline the problems and limitations of the study and provide suggestions for future research. Namely, the results might have been different, had the experimental period lasted for a longer period of time, thus the benefits of the implemented approach could possibly have been seen in all phonemic contrasts and in the production of all investigated sounds. Furthermore, the number of participants was relatively small and insufficient for drawing more precise and generalized conclusions. Future research may likewise include older learners and adults to investigate whether the effect of the approach in question would be similar.

Nevertheless, we may conclude that, regardless of the limitations and preliminary nature of the study, Kagan's structures may have positive effects on perception and production and should be considered as one of the possible resources in an innovative and successful pronunciation teaching.

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ПРИМЕНА КЕЈГАНОВИХ „СТРУКТУРА“ ПРИ УЧЕЊУ ИЗГОВОРА СТРАНОГ ЈЕЗИКА

Кооперативно учење се наводи као један од најпожељнијих прилику у настави страних језика, јер ученицима омогућава уопште језика у аутистичним комуникацијским ситуацијама и на тај начин постиже њихову драматичку и прагматичку компетенцију (Ottaggio-Hadley, 2001). Бројне студије су показале позитивне ефекте примене поменутог прилику у настави због чега његова популарност непрекинато расте на свим образовним нивоима, укључујући факултете (Kessler, 1992). Такође, учење страног језика кроз кооперативне активности најлакше активира учење ученика различитих нивоа способости, као и различитог степена знања, те им помаже у друштвеној и индивидуалној наградњи (Tsai, 1998; Wei, 1997). Успешности поменутог прилику нарочито се оледа у академским постигнућима ученика са слабијим нивоом знања језика, али се никако не сме занемарити ни успех који постижу одликаши (Cohen, Kulik, 1981).

Треба истакнути да је изговор постао помало занемарен део настави страног језика, највероватније зато што су различите методе и прилику у настави имали одређена стеновишта када је у питању поштеба за прецизношћу и тачношћу при изговору гласова и речи језика који се учи (Greenwood, 2002). Ипак, 90-тих година 20. века лингвисти су поново почели да истражују значај експлицитног подучавања изговора, јер он наводно постиже усвајање групе језика, а тиме је и неопходан елемент настави језика страног језика (Ellis, 1994; Long, 1996). Ово је мишљење да фонетски тренутак поштеба укључујући у наставу, јер добар изговор страног језика повећава ученичко самопоздање и подстирак је за неинхибирано учење у друштвеним интеракцијама у свакодневном животу.

Имајући предходно наведено у виду, циљ нашег рада био је да потврдим ефекат примене Кејгановог структуралног прилику кооперативном учењу на перцепцију и продукцију појединих гласова енглеског језика. Намера нам је била да потврдим да ли један друштво прилику настави изговора може користити ученицима да прецизношћу постиже и повећају ниво мотивације за учење. Основне поставке Кејгановог прилику међусобно су испреплетане и зависе једна од друге, а то су: позитивна међузависност, индивидуална одговорност, подједнако учење и истовремена интеракција (Kagan, 1994), а у раду су подробније објашњени. Како диско одговорили на постављена истраживачка питања сировели смо истраживање које се састојало из два дела. Двадесет и четири испитаника који енглески уче три године у приватној школи (просек година = 10,5) били су подељени у две групе: експерименталну и контролну. Експериментална група је месец дана два пута недељно сати времена вежала перцепцију и продукцију циљних гласова уз примену одговарајућих Кејганових техника, док је контролна гласове вежала на традиционалан начин кроз рад у групи. Испитаници су пре и после експеримента прошли тест перцепције и тест продукције, а резултати су показали позитиван утицај примененог метода на перцепцију и продукцију интерденталних фрикатива /ð, θ/, док је нешто слабији утицај примећен код лабиоденталног сонанта /v/, апроксиманта /w/ и задњонепчаног назала /ŋ/, вероватно због временске ограничености експеримента. Може се закључити да је истраживање, иако привремено, успешно одговорило на истраживачка питања и делимично потврдило постављене хипотезе.

Кључне речи: енглески језик, Кејганове структуре, кооперативно учење, изговор.