



A Discussion on the Application of Second Language Acquisition Theory in College English Teaching

Siwen Yi

School of General Education, Hunan University of Information Technology, Changsha, Hunan, China.

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Corresponding author: Siwen Yi, School of General Education, Hunan University of Information Technology, Changsha, Hunan, China.

Abstract

With the development of globalization, English has been widely used as a communication tool around the world. However, English education for college students faces many challenges due to the different backgrounds and cultural contexts of English teaching in different countries and regions. In order to better meet the needs of students and improve their English proficiency, teachers need to find more scientific and effective teaching methods. In this context, second language acquisition theory, as an important research paradigm, provides an important guiding principle for teaching English at university. Second language acquisition theory is a research and practice in second language acquisition based on the acquisition of children's native language. It is supported by theories from several disciplines, including anthropology, psychology, and linguistics, to conduct in-depth research on the teaching and learning of a second language. Among the theories of second language acquisition, Cruise et al.'s input hypothesis, Stephen Krashen's interactive perspective, and Stephen Glatt's natural fluency hypothesis have an extremely important position, and they provide valuable reference significance for teaching practice. This paper mainly analyzes the application of second language acquisition theory in college English teaching from the perspective of the second language acquisition theory and hopes that this paper can provide a useful reference for improving the quality of college English teaching.

Keywords

University English teaching, Chinese second language, An exploration of applications

1. Introduction

With the development of globalization and the continuous strengthening of international communication, mastering a foreign language has become an indispensable part of modern society. For university students, learning English is an essential skill. Therefore, how to effectively teach English to college students has become a much-discussed issue. In previous research, many scholars have proposed various methods to improve students' English proficiency. One important method is to use the theory of bilingual acquisition. This article aims to explore how to more scientifically and reasonably apply the theory of second language acquisition, so as to provide better guidance and reference for college English teaching.

2. Overview of Second Language Acquisition Theory

2.1 Formation and Development of Language Acquisition Theory

The theory of language acquisition is an important discipline that studies the process of human learning and using language, as well as how to effectively learn language in different contexts. It originated from the field of psychology in the early 20th century and gradually evolved into an independent field over time. Early anthropologists believed that language was a natural phenomenon determined by genetic genes. This view is called "biological evolutionism". However, later research showed that language was not determined by genetic genes but formed through social environment and social interaction. This discovery sparked a rethinking and exploration of the theory of language acquisition. In the 1940s to early 1960s, the theory of language acquisition began to rise. At that time, many scholars proposed new theoretical frameworks such as behaviorism, cognitive psychology, and neuroscience. These theories attempted to explain how language is learned and used. One of the most famous theories is Chomsky's structuralist theory, which emphasizes that language has internal structure and regularity and can be understood and processed through the grammar module in the brain. In recent years, the development of language acquisition theory has focused more on practicality and applicability. For example, some researchers have tried to apply second language acquisition theory to college English teaching to improve students' language proficiency. At the same time, others have proposed new language acquisition models based on computer technology, aiming to better simulate learning in real language environments. In summary, the theory of language acquisition is a constantly developing discipline, and its research achievements are of great significance to our in-depth understanding of human language acquisition mechanisms.

2.2 Basic Ideas of Language Acquisition Theory

In the process of language learning, people often notice certain patterns and phenomena. These patterns and phenomena are studied in the theory of language acquisition, which is one of the disciplines that examine how humans acquire knowledge through experience. It mainly focuses on the study of understanding, using, and creating languages. The theory of language acquisition mainly includes three basic perspectives: natural language, cognitive psychology, and sociocultural factors. Natural language argues that language is a natural phenomenon that arises from a symbol system innate to humans (Wei Cai, 2021). Cognitive psychology emphasizes the importance of human thinking and memory mechanisms in language acquisition. Sociocultural factors refer to the interaction between language and society, which can affect our language acquisition process. In college English teaching, we need to apply the theory of language acquisition to practice. First, we can adopt the perspective of natural language to help students understand the nature and characteristics of language, so as to better understand and use English. Second, we can use the perspective of cognitive psychology to help students establish correct language learning strategies and improve their learning efficiency. Finally, we also need to consider the impact of sociocultural factors and provide students with a diversified learning environment, so that they can experience different cultural backgrounds more deeply. In summary, the theory of language acquisition is a very important field that can have a positive impact on our college English teaching. Only by fully understanding and mastering the basic knowledge of language acquisition theory can we guide students to effective learning.

3. The Current Situation of the Application of Second Language Acquisition Theory in University English Teaching

In college English teaching, the theory of second language acquisition is an important applied method. With the development of globalization and increasing international communication, more and more students need to master a foreign language in order to adapt to future work and social environments. Those who have already learned one language can improve their language proficiency by comparing and contrasting the second language with the first language. Therefore, the application of the theory of second language acquisition in college English teaching has become a very important issue. At present, the application of the theory of second language acquisition in college English teaching varies greatly in domestic and foreign universities. In foreign countries, many universities have adopted this method, such as Yale University in the United States and professors at Cambridge University in the UK pay much attention to this issue. In China, although some universities have begun to try this method, there are still certain limitations due to the education system and the characteristics of the students themselves. However, although foreign universities are more mature in the application of the theory of second language acquisition, they have also encountered many difficulties and challenges in the practical process. For example, how to choose suitable teaching materials and how to design effective course content are all factors that need to be considered. In addition, the professional quality of teachers is also an important factor

affecting the application of the theory of second language acquisition. Only with high-quality teaching faculties can students achieve good bilingual abilities under guidance. In summary, the application of the theory of second language acquisition in college English teaching is a complex process, which involves not only the choice and implementation of teaching methods but also the influences of various factors. In the future development, we should continue to explore new application methods and constantly improve existing methods, so as to provide students with better learning experiences and higher language proficiency (Zhang Huan, 2021).

4. Strategies for Applying Second Language Acquisition Theory in College English Teaching

4.1 Stimulate Students' Interest in Learning

In college English teaching, it is crucial to inspire students' interest in learning. Only when students have a strong interest in the content, they are learning can they truly and effectively improve their language proficiency and abilities. Therefore, teachers need to use various methods to stimulate students' interest in learning, thereby promoting their active participation in classroom activities and achieving better grades. Firstly, teachers can use lively and interesting course designs to attract students' attention. For example, interactive teaching methods can be employed to involve students in classroom activities, which not only enhances their self-confidence but also helps them better understand the content they are learning. Additionally, multimedia technologies such as videos, images, and music can be utilized to enhance the attractiveness of the courseware. Secondly, teachers should pay attention to students' needs and interests and provide them with personalized learning experiences. For example, setting up group discussion sections in the classroom or encouraging students to freely communicate their own ideas and thoughts can help strengthen students' cooperation and communication skills. At the same time, teachers can also develop specific teaching plans for different types of students to meet their needs and interests. Finally, teachers should focus on cultivating students' ability for self-directed learning. By guiding students' self-evaluation and reflection, teachers can help them identify problem areas, and improve their own learning methods. In addition, teachers should also give students a certain degree of freedom to choose learning materials and textbooks that suit their own learning styles and pace in order to better adapt to their individual needs and interests. In summary, inspiring students' interest in learning is a complex process, but as long as teachers continue to explore new teaching methods and techniques, they can continuously improve students' learning effectiveness and interest level (Bardovi-Harlig K & Comajoan-Colomé, Lloren, 2022).

4.2 Create an Authentic Language Communication Situation

Creating a real and challenging communication environment is an important means of enhancing students' oral expression ability in college English teaching. Interactions in this kind of environment can help students better understand and apply the knowledge they have learned, as well as stimulate their interest and enthusiasm for learning. Therefore, how to effectively create such a scene has become an important issue in college English teaching. Firstly, teachers should make use of opportunities both inside and outside the classroom to provide practical scenarios related to new words. For example, organizing group discussions or role-playing activities can give students opportunities to use new words in communication. In addition, providing more practice opportunities for students can be done through field trips or online video conferences. These activities can not only enhance students' understanding of new words but also make them more confident in facing various situations. Secondly, teachers should also focus on creating an open and inclusive atmosphere. This requires teachers to respect students' opinions and ideas and encourage them to freely express their own views. At the same time, it is also important to avoid excessive criticism and condemnation in order to establish a good teacher-student relationship and promote student progress. Finally, teachers need to pay attention to students' mental state and promptly identify and address any problems that may arise. For example, if a student is not performing well, appropriate measures need to be taken to help him/her overcome difficulties. Similarly, if some students show high potential, they should also be given appropriate support and encouragement to stimulate further development. In conclusion, creating a real language communication situation is a very important task in college English teaching. Only by using effective methods to achieve this goal can students' oral expression ability be truly improved, thus achieving better educational results (Zhang Y, 2021).

4.3 Strengthen Students' Self-monitoring

Strengthening students' self-monitoring is crucial. Firstly, students should be made aware of the content they are studying and the knowledge points they need to master. Only then can they clearly define their learning objectives and directions, and develop corresponding study plans. Secondly, students should be encouraged to actively participate in

classroom activities, such as group discussions and role-playing. These activities not only promote communication and interaction among students but also stimulate their interest and motivation, making them more engaged in learning. In addition, online tools or apps such as Quizlet and Anki can be used to help students with self-study and testing. Finally, it is important to provide stronger feedback and guidance to students, identify problems in a timely manner, and provide targeted advice and assistance. In summary, strengthening students' self-monitoring is an effective method that enables students to gain a comprehensive understanding of their situations and development status. It also provides teachers with more reference and data support to better adjust teaching content and methods, thereby enhancing teaching effectiveness (Li S, 2021).

5. Conclusion

In this study, we conducted a thorough exploration and application of the second language acquisition theory in college English teaching. By analyzing existing research results and practical experience, we believe that the theory is of significant importance in improving students' English learning outcomes. Specifically, we made the following conclusions in the following areas: First, we found that the second language acquisition theory can help teachers better understand students' language learning processes and thus develop more scientifically reasonable teaching plans. For example, we can match students' cognitive structures with the goals of second language learning to better guide their learning processes. In addition, the theory can also provide an effective evaluation method for teachers to assess students' learning situations and adjust teaching strategies in a timely manner. Second, we also noticed that the second language acquisition theory can promote the development of students' intercultural communication abilities. By understanding the differences between different cultures, students can better adapt to different social environments and play a greater role in international communication. Meanwhile, the theory can also stimulate students' interests and enthusiasm, making them more willing to participate in English learning activities. Finally, we also believe that the second language acquisition theory needs flexible application according to actual situations. Although it provides some useful insights, whether it is applicable to each specific teaching scenario still requires specific analysis. Therefore, in the actual teaching process, teachers should consider various factors comprehensively based on their teaching goals and students' characteristics and choose suitable teaching methods accordingly.

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