Research on the Application of Second Language Acquisition Theory in College English Speech Teaching

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Abstract: The teaching of English speeches in universities aims to enhance oral communication ability, improve English communication skills, and expand English knowledge, occupying a core position in English teaching in universities. This article takes the theory of second language acquisition as the background, analyzes the important role and value of this theory in English speech teaching in universities, and explores how to apply the theory of second language acquisition in English speech teaching in universities. It aims to strengthen the cultivation of English skilled talents and provide a brief reference for improving English speech teaching in universities.

Keywords: Second language acquisition theory; Teaching English speeches in universities; Practical strategies

1. Introduction

English speaking skill is an important way to test whether college students have a solid foundation in English, whether they have meticulous logical thinking, and whether they have strong psychological qualities. English, as an important language for international communication, is gradually being offered in major universities in China, aiming to provide students with broader development opportunities. In recent years, various universities have incorporated English speech teaching into their English majors, which is an important means to enhance students' English oral expression skills. In addition, with the widespread establishment of English majors, English speaking has been included in the scope of university discussions. Research on English speech teaching is mostly based on teaching methods and models, and relevant scholars have constructed a relatively complete English speech teaching curriculum system after discussion, demonstrating the importance of English speech teaching. The above research mainly focuses on practical methods and summarizes experience as a supplement, but few universities have applied second language acquisition theory to English speech teaching, which makes teaching lack a certain foundation. This article mainly takes the theory of second language acquisition as the background and studies its fundamental role in English speech teaching in universities. It also

strengthens students' internal driving force as the foundation, masters English learning skills, explores teaching models and methods that are more in line with students' development needs under the guidance of second language acquisition theory, further improves the teaching strategies of English speech in universities, and comprehensively enhances the theoretical and practical level of English among college students.

2. Relationship between second language acquisition theory and English speech teaching

Krashen, the proposer of second language acquisition theory, mainly focuses on observing the methods that students use when learning a second language. He points out that second language learning mainly involves two processes, one is "learning" and the other is "acquisition." There is a fundamental difference between the two, and "learning" mainly refers to the language knowledge that learners acquire through systematic and conscious learning; "acquisition" refers to the unconscious acquisition of language usage methods and fundamental knowledge by learners from the moment they are born, in the process of interacting with the outside world, and the formation of their unique language cognition, in order to fully express their own views. Therefore, in the process of English teaching in universities, teachers should deeply explore the theoretical connotation of second language acquisition, clarify the relationship between mother tongue learning and English learning, cleverly use the differences between the two learning methods, and apply them to second language learning unconsciously.

The fundamental difference between acquisition and learning lies in whether it is conscious learning. The focus of learning is that students unconsciously learn language through daily interactions with people and things. For example, college students usually pursue popular British and American dramas, and through multiple watching sessions or discussions with classmates, they unconsciously say classic lines, imitate the movements, intonation, and word order of their favorite characters, and inadvertently learn various English sentence structures. Students who enjoy listening to English songs will also unconsciously hum music melodies, lyrics, intonation, etc. The process of listening to songs has become an unconscious English learning process. In the process of second language acquisition, students enjoy more freedom and are more likely to pay attention to grammar rules, speaking order, and intonation, and ultimately master their own second language learning methods. In addition, the theory of second language acquisition also emphasizes learning a language in the environment in which it is located. For example, international students who have just arrived in an English-speaking country may not have a clear ability to express their personal opinions in English even if their basic English skills are adequate. However, since they are in an English learning environment, English can be seen and heard everywhere, thus they learn to express their personal opinions in English unconsciously. From this, it can be seen that applying second language acquisition theory to English speech teaching in universities can create a good English reading and speaking atmosphere for students, build a comprehensive English learning environment, deepen the influence of external English environment on students' English learning, promote students to be more relaxed and happy in English learning, and improve their English oral expression skills and communication level [1].

3. Practical strategies for college English speech teaching based on second language acquisition theory

In order to improve the comprehensive English proficiency of college students, especially their oral expression skills, universities have introduced English speech teaching in English major teaching, innovated English speech teaching models based on the theory of second language acquisition, optimized English speech teaching

methods, and effectively improved the effectiveness of English teaching as the foundation. In the specific implementation process, the following aspects will be mainly addressed.

3.1. Creating a realistic learning atmosphere

The theoretical connotation of second language acquisition theory is to emphasize that students, under the influence of their daily living environment, improve their language learning ability, integrate second language learning into daily life practice, and unconsciously form a unique understanding of the second language, thereby fluently using the second language. Therefore, college English teachers should consciously create a realistic learning atmosphere for students. In this learning atmosphere, students unconsciously apply English in daily oral communication, constantly receiving and understanding new knowledge, making English learning lively and interesting. As English is the mainstream language of international communication, Chinese students receive varying degrees of English education from a young age. Although the learning process of English is relatively long, in the early and high school learning stages, indoctrination teaching is mainly used, and more attention is paid to their reading and writing skills. The evaluation criteria are also mainly based on exam scores, which makes English learning superficial, students are unable to deeply understand the connotations of English learning and integrate English learning to achieve good expression and understanding. Therefore, in the process of teaching English speeches in universities, teachers should fully utilize modern multimedia teaching equipment, campus broadcasting, etc., to create a good learning atmosphere for students' English listening and speaking. For example, during the break time of campus broadcasting, students can give speeches through campus broadcasting. In the speech-teaching classroom, public speech teaching can also be carried out using the staircase classroom in the teaching building, creating a real speech atmosphere for students and ensuring that every student participates in the entire speech-teaching activity [2].

In addition, during the process of teaching English public speaking, teachers can also invite some foreign students and teachers to give demonstration speeches. In this way, students are attracted by these infectious speeches, which stimulates their interest in learning English public speaking. In such a strong learning atmosphere, students' English language skills, language awareness, communication skills, and public speaking skills will continuously improve unconsciously. In the process of teaching English speeches, teachers can play some language-rich and exciting American dramas for students, such as the well-known *Marvel*. Through these native American dramas, students can effectively cultivate their English language skills. In daily communication, students will also imitate the dialogue tone and methods in American dramas. In short, under the influence of a good learning atmosphere, students' English learning, speaking, and communication skills can be improved.

3.2. Scientifically assigning learning tasks

College English speech teaching is a highly practical teaching activity. In order to continuously improve students' English speech ability, teachers must continuously organize practical teaching activities related to speech. In practical teaching activities, students are instructed to give speeches three to five times based on their individual development or the actual situation of speech teaching hours, and scientifically assign speech tasks according to the actual situation of students. The themes of English speeches are diverse, such as information, science, and introduction. Before assigning English speech tasks, English teachers should clarify the theme of the speech activity, allowing students to create their own speech topics based on the determined theme, their English expression skills, and interests. Then, based on the determined topic, students collect relevant information, write the speech outline and speech draft, and finally summarize them for the teacher's review.

After receiving the teacher's review, students should be given adequate time to prepare for the off-topic speech. During the process of speaking without a script, other students can ask relevant questions about the content of the speech, and the speaker can provide answers. This not only exercises students' coping and speaking skills but also enhances their listening skills [3].

In English teaching in universities, it is well known that second language acquisition theory places great emphasis on the second language learning environment. Therefore, when assigning speech activity tasks, teachers should try to ensure the source of the speech as much as possible. Students are required not to conduct simple searches on the Internet or make simple excerpts from extracurricular books, but to be original. That is, to deepen their understanding of the English communication environment, students obtain the relevant materials needed for the speech through the process of communication with others and then organize and write the obtained materials on their own, ultimately finalizing the manuscript. When selecting a speech topic, the teacher finally selects some topics related to foreign festivals, so that students can obtain relevant information through communication and exchange with foreign teachers. This process not only exercises students' habits and ability to listen to English but also exercises their ability to speak English, effectively cultivating and improving their English speaking skills.

3.3. Carrying out mutual aid teaching activities

The cultivation and improvement of English learning ability is not something that students themselves can accomplish. As emphasized by the theory of second language acquisition, learning English requires the cooperation of the environment and others. When learning our mother tongue, it is precisely because we are in the communication environment of our mother tongue on a daily basis that we have strong communication and exchange abilities. Learning English is the same, thus teachers need to create a good language environment for students. During the process of teaching activities, teachers should speak English throughout the teaching process and require students to use English for communication and exchange. For example, in classroom questioning, students must answer in English, and in group discussions and learning, students are also required to communicate with each other in English to achieve the purpose of English teaching. In the process of English speech teaching, teachers should also continuously strengthen mutual aid teaching, so that the role of mutual aid teaching can be fully realized. In English speech teaching, teachers should not only pay attention to the students who give speeches, but also to the audience, so that the audience can organize, analyze, and summarize the problems and information in the speech. At the same time, teachers can also use multimedia devices to record the entire process of students' speeches, which can facilitate watching in the future, summarize the problems that arise during the speech process, and better reflect and summarize the learning, hence laying a solid foundation for the improvement of students' English expression and speech abilities [4].

After the speech teaching activity, the teacher should evaluate each student's speech, including oral pronunciation, content expression, on-site performance, etc., and provide personalized speech suggestions for the speech performances of different students, so that students can understand where they need to improve and enrich their speech experience. For students with weaker psychological qualities, teachers should provide personalized guidance based on their characteristics, encourage students to challenge and overcome themselves, and use their rich personal speaking experience to alleviate their psychological burden and tense emotions. In the practical teaching of English speech, teachers should pay attention to communication and interaction with students, understand their personal preferences, clarify their favorite teaching modes and content, select topics that students are familiar with, stimulate their interest in English speech, provide a soothing speaking atmosphere for students, and encourage them to express their personal oral communication situation, thereby

improving their English speech ability.

3.4. Conducting speech competitions

The key to improving the English speaking skills of college students lies in speaking and practicing more, improving their personal psychological quality and oral expression skills through speech practice. For this purpose, teachers can hold in-class speech competitions irregularly based on the actual teaching situation of their class, and can also collaborate with other classes in the school to jointly hold speech competitions of a certain scale. The theme of the speech can be determined based on campus activities. For example, when holding a speech competition during traditional festival months, the theme can be set as the origin, connotation, and commemorative characters of traditional festivals. On the one hand, it can effectively inherit China's traditional culture, and on the other hand, it can stimulate students' patriotism. For example, when organizing competitions in different seasons, themes can be set according to the current hot topics. In summer, college students often hold sports events, and speech competition topics can be related to sports activities. Starting from real-life situations, students search for English speech materials, make English learning useful, improve their English application ability, and enhance their English speaking skills. For students who are indecisive about the topic of their speech, they can consult their teachers or foreign teachers at our school in a timely manner. Teachers can also provide guidance on the content of the speech, so that their speech can not only demonstrate their oral English proficiency, but also showcase their rich cultural connotations, thereby continuously improving their overall English proficiency in speech competitions. The learning of any language is improved through speaking and practicing more, and English learning is no exception, especially in the teaching of English speeches in universities. The core lies in oral expression skills. Only by engaging in English communication as much as possible can students learn a second language smoothly and confidently participate in competitions, fully demonstrating their personal English style.

Speech competitions can not only improve students' overall English proficiency but also shape a sound personality and strengthen the improvement of their psychological quality during the competition. Stable emotions and calm psychological qualities are the inherent excellent qualities of students throughout their lives, which are related to the quality of their speeches. The phenomenon we see on a daily basis is that many students are well prepared and stable before the competition, able to express their personal opinions smoothly, and proficient in reciting manuscripts. However, when they step onto the stage, they become timid when facing numerous judges and audience members, leading to confusing word order and forgetting their lines. Therefore, based on the theory of second language acquisition, English speech teachers in universities should provide students with a certain speaking atmosphere in their daily learning, organize more small-scale speech competitions, and let students consider speech as a part of their learning, thereby improving their psychological literacy, calmly facing various types of speech stages, and comprehensively exercising their various abilities. Some students have a mentality of placing too much emphasis on the results, which puts high pressure on them before the competition. Due to being too nervous, they cannot fully demonstrate their true strength. At this time, teachers should give students some encouragement, acknowledge their efforts, and make positive evaluations of any competition results, so that students can radiate confidence from the inside out, cultivate their courage to challenge difficulties, and lay a solid foundation for their future career and shine in their personal life path in the future [5].

4. Conclusion

After all, learning English is different from one's mother tongue, and the importance of English is well known.

Therefore, in order to enhance the English speaking and communication skills of Chinese students, and improve their comprehensive English literacy, it is necessary to apply theories that are more suitable for Chinese students. The theory of second language acquisition aims to create an English learning environment for students, ensuring that English is always present and helping them improve their English proficiency unconsciously. Applying this theory to English speech teaching can effectively enhance students' oral expression skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Teachers should establish a second language learning awareness, apply second language acquisition theories to their own English speech classes, and organize English reading and speaking training, as well as students' self-analysis and understanding. Effective teaching evaluation by teachers can truly promote students to gradually improve their English comprehensive skills in speeches, learn to summarize experiences, self-reflect, and timely correct various problems in the speech process, guide students to overcome nervousness and improve psychological quality, and promote universities to cultivate more high-quality English talents for society.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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