Exploration of the Application of Multimodal Teaching Mode in German as a Second Foreign Language Teaching for English Majors in Universities

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Abstract: With the development of information technology, the reform of teaching models in universities has become an inevitable trend. The acceleration of globalization has made multilingualism an important cornerstone of international communication. The demand for elective courses in a second foreign language (such as German) among English majors in universities is increasing, and the traditional single teaching model has been difficult to meet the diverse learning needs of students. Therefore, this article will explore how multimodal teaching models can be effectively integrated into the teaching of German as a second language in English majors in universities, from the aspects of the current application of multimodal teaching in language education at home and abroad, the teaching characteristics of German as a second language, the difficulties of German learning for English majors, and the construction and implementation strategies of multimodal teaching models. The aim is to improve students' comprehensive language application ability, cross-cultural communication ability, and learning interest, and provide practical references for teaching reform.

Keywords: Multimodal Teaching; English Major in Higher Education; German as Second Foreign Language; Teaching Application; Language Learning

1. Introduction

In today's increasingly globalized world, international exchange and cooperation have become a vital force in promoting social progress and development. As important bases for cultivating international talents, universities require their English majors not only to be proficient in English but also to possess the ability to speak at least one second language, in order to cope with the increasingly complex international environment. German, as one of the important languages in Europe, has become the second language of choice for many English majors in universities due to its international influence in various aspects such as economy, culture, and technology. However, the traditional teaching model of German as a second language often focuses on the impartation of linguistic knowledge, neglecting the cultivation of students' language proficiency and cross-cultural communication skills, making it difficult to meet the needs of students' comprehensive development.

At the same time, English majors are deeply influenced by the English thinking pattern, and their acceptance and differentiation ability of German is different from that of German majors. Therefore, different teaching methods should be adopted for the second language teaching of English majors.

In recent years, as an emerging teaching concept, the multimodal teaching model has provided new ideas and methods for the teaching of German as a second language in English majors in universities with its rich teaching resources and diverse teaching methods. This study aims to explore the application of the multimodal teaching model in the teaching of German as a second language in English majors in universities, analyze its effects on improving students' comprehensive language application ability, cross-cultural communication ability, English-German translation ability, and learning interest, help students solve the problem of confusion between English and German, and provide beneficial references and

lessons for the reform of German as a second language teaching in universities.

2. Overview of Multimodal Teaching Theory

In modern educational theory, multimodal teaching theory is a new teaching concept that distinguishes itself from traditional teaching theories. "Modality" itself is a symbol that can be combined on the body and corresponds to hearing, touch, vision, taste, and smell. In daily communication, the modalities do not operate independently. According to the communication state between human senses and the external environment, modalities can be divided into three forms: single modality, dual modality, and multimodality.[1] Therefore, this theory emphasizes that humans perceive the world through five senses: vision, hearing, touch, taste, and smell, and interact with the external environment through various senses. In multimodal teaching, learners' multiple senses are coordinated through multimodal methods, thereby deepening their understanding and memory of knowledge.[2] In order to mobilize the coordinated operation of the five senses, various sensory channels and media means, such as text, graphics, images, body language, video, sound, and online media, should be utilized in the teaching process. Traditional teaching methods, such as classroom lectures, PPT presentations, video explanations, case analysis, and scenario simulation, should be combined to stimulate students' interest in learning and improve their learning outcomes.

The application of multimodal teaching in language education both domestically and internationally is showing a positive and diverse trend. In China, with the rapid development of educational technology, multimodal teaching has gradually penetrated into language classrooms.

Teachers have begun to utilize multimedia courseware, videos, audios, and other resources to present language materials through visual, auditory, and other sensory channels, stimulating students' interest in learning and improving teaching effectiveness. Over the past 25 years, the research on multimodal language teaching abroad has shown a fluctuating growth trend. The core areas of research are second language acquisition strategies, language teaching theories and methods, multimodal meaning construction, and multimodal literacy research. [3] Many countries and regions are actively exploring and practicing multimodal teaching models, aiming to enhance students' language communication skills and cross-cultural communication abilities through diversified teaching methods and strategies.

Applying multimodal teaching theory to teaching can make the teaching process more lively and interesting, enhance students' participation and learning enthusiasm. At the same time, it also helps to cultivate students' multimodal literacy and critical thinking skills, enabling them to better adapt to the needs of future society. It conforms to human cognitive laws and can improve teaching effectiveness and learning experience, which is also a modern educational concept that will play an increasingly important role in future educational practice.

3. Teaching Features and Challenges of German as a Second Language

German as a second language is a compulsory course for English majors, and the teaching of German as a second language is an integral part of English major education. It aims to cultivate the second language proficiency of English majors, organically combining the impartation of language knowledge such as phonetics, grammar, and vocabulary with the training of basic skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation.

Unlike the major in German, German as a second language is targeted at students majoring in English. These students are more prone to confusion when learning German under the influence of a long-term English environment, English expression, and English thinking. Chinese is an isolating language, which has significant differences in grammatical structure and expression from German. However, both English and German belong to the West Germanic branch of the Indo-European language family, and there are similarities in writing, pronunciation, and grammar. In addition, there are many loanwords in German from English, which leads to confusion for English majors at the initial learning stage.

In terms of phonetics, each letter and letter combination in German has a fixed pronunciation. Although it has the same 26

letters as English, the pronunciation is different from English, which makes English majors who have been accustomed to the pronunciation of English letters often use English pronunciation methods to read German during the phonetic stage, which directly leads to difficulties in spelling German words. The pronunciation characteristics of German, such as large mouth shape, strong and forceful sound, and less liaison, are quite different from English, which is both a difficulty and one of the characteristics of teaching. Therefore, teachers need to spend a lot of time and energy on pronunciation and phonetic correction.

Moreover, the complexity of German grammar is even greater than that of English. German grammar is widely recognized as complex, such as the gender of nouns (feminine, masculine, and neuter), inflectional endings, and inflectional endings of adjectives and verbs, all of which are much more complex than those in English grammar. Therefore, German grammar teaching is a key and difficult point in teaching. The sentence structure of German is rigorous, with strict requirements for word order, especially the position of verbs, which poses great difficulties for students who are accustomed to the English word order at the initial learning stage. Students need to spend a lot of time memorizing and practicing in order to master the grammar rules and use them flexibly. According to my classroom teaching experience, English majors still have insufficient mastery of German grammar at the end of the first semester, and there are still significant problems with pronunciation, which are greatly influenced by English thinking.

Moreover, as a second language, learning German may not be the main interest of all students. Some students may not study seriously because learning a second language is not a core course in their major, resulting in poor learning outcomes. After a year and a half of study, they still cannot pronounce correctly. Therefore, how to stimulate students' interest and motivation in learning, and improve learning outcomes, is an important challenge that teachers need to face.

The traditional teaching model cannot effectively address the aforementioned issues. In the traditional German teaching model, emphasis is often placed on teaching grammar, vocabulary, and other knowledge points first. This "spoon-feeding" approach fails to reflect the advantages of small-class language instruction and can lead to a lack of training and mastery of analytical, evaluative, and innovative skills, potentially even causing students to lose interest in learning. [4]

4. Construction of Multimodal Teaching Mode

The modal teaching model refers to the process of integrating multiple sensory modalities such as vision, hearing, and touch during the teaching process to provide students with a rich and three- dimensional learning experience. This model fully utilizes the advantages of modern information technology, such as multimedia presentations, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence, to meet the cognitive characteristics and needs of different learners and improve learning outcomes.

Firstly, the integration of the five senses should be fully considered in the selection of multimodal teaching resources. Visual modalities include pictures, videos, PowerPoint presentations, etc. Auditory modalities include audio, songs, dialogue recordings, etc. Tactile, gustatory, and olfactory modalities include role-playing, scenario simulations, physical operations, etc. Utilizing various resources such as text, images, videos, and audio, a multimodal learning environment is constructed.[5] The integration of these teaching resources is the foundation for constructing a multimodal teaching model, and also reflects the diversity characteristics of the multimodal teaching model.

Next, it is necessary to clarify the teaching objectives and select appropriate teaching activities and resources based on the objectives from the integrated teaching resources. After that, the design of teaching activities can be carried out. When designing multimodal teaching activities, attention should be paid to the interactivity and personalization of teaching activities. Interaction with the learning environment can be achieved through role-playing, group presentations, and scenario simulations to enhance learning participation and interest. At the same time, the learning content should be combined with real-life situations, so that students can learn and

practice in simulated situations to enhance learning effectiveness and application ability. Multimodal teaching design should also pay attention to the following principles: situational principle - creating real or simulated language environments, interactive principle - promoting multi-directional communication between teachers and students, and students and students, comprehensive principle - integrating listening, speaking, reading, writing, translation and other skills training.

In addition, multimodal teaching should be implemented in the teaching process, and regular feedback should be given to students to assess their learning outcomes. However, there are a series of problems and challenges in the construction of multimodal teaching models. Firstly, multimodal teaching requires the integration of various technologies, and the compatibility and stability of these technologies are one of the challenges. Secondly, because it involves a large amount of student data and personal information, how to ensure data security and privacy is an important issue. Thirdly, traditional teaching concepts and methods are difficult to adapt to the multimodal teaching environment, which requires teachers to have higher information literacy and teaching ability, especially the need to master new technologies to adapt to the needs of the multimodal teaching environment.

5. Implementation Strategies of Multimodal Teaching Mode in German as a Second Foreign Language Teaching for English Majors in Universities

Implementing multimodal teaching in the teaching of German as a second language in English major programs in universities requires teachers to consider the construction of multimodal models from pre-class preparation to classroom implementation and post-class consolidation.

Now the course of German as a second language (1) is taken as an example. This course is the initial course of German as a second language. The main contents of the course include: the pronunciation and writing of German letters, basic German phonetics; German daily conversation, gender, number and case of nouns, and the present tense conjugation of basic verbs; basic grammar,

basic listening and reading, as well as German society and culture. The textbook used in this course is "New College German", and the first unit focuses on the German alphabet, basic phonetics, tones, and daily conversation. Therefore, when explaining the German alphabet, teachers should first realize that there are 26 letters in the German alphabet that are written in the same way as the English alphabet, but their pronunciation is different. This makes it easy for English majors with no foundation in German to confuse the pronunciation. In addition, German has four diacritical letters, which are completely unfamiliar to English majors. Therefore, how to make students remember these four diacritical letters is also a key point in teaching.

In response to the aforementioned key teaching challenges, teachers need to establish a multimodal teaching environment and design classroom materials accordingly during their pre-class preparations. The multimodal teaching environment encompasses both the physical setting, such as classroom layout and multimedia equipment and the psychological environment, including the learning atmosphere and teacher-student interaction. Nowadays, classrooms in universities are equipped with advanced multimedia devices, including projectors, sound systems, and interactive whiteboards, which allow teachers to flexibly utilize various educational resources such as images, audio, and video. Multimedia resources can be employed to stimulate students' interest during the introduction phase of teaching.

In the presentation of teaching content, a multimodal approach should also be adopted. To allow students to intuitively perceive the differences between German and English alphabets, I employ a visual and auditory combination method. By comparing the pronunciation of Chinese, English, and German letters through videos and audios, students gain a direct understanding of German letter sounds. Subsequently, through explanations, students are encouraged to practice their pronunciation. In the auditory training of German letters, to enhance students' enthusiasm and interest in learning, and to foster an open and interactive learning atmosphere, besides traditional recording materials, videos of different versions of

German alphabet songs are introduced. In pronunciation practice, students are organized into different groups for alphabet spelling competitions, and they are also encouraged to sing alphabet songs together. This allows students to practice using the language while exercising their tactile and kinesthetic modalities.

The multimodal teaching model emphasizes the diversity of teaching methods. Based on the actual situation and learning needs of students, various teaching methods such as lecture, discussion, case analysis, and role-playing are flexibly selected. The learning of phonetics is suitable for the lecture method, while other teaching contents, such as explaining the culture of German-speaking countries, can adopt the case teaching method, guiding students to conduct in-depth analysis and discussion through specific cultural events or phenomena; in oral training, role-playing activities can be organized to allow students to communicate in German in simulated real situations.[6] At the same time, the traditional Chinese-German teaching model is not suitable for the second language teaching of English majors. English majors are more easily influenced by English pronunciation, grammar, and thinking than students of other majors. Therefore, introducing the English-German teaching model, appropriately supplemented by Chinese, is more suitable for English majors. For example, when explaining the usage of "es gibt", let them use the "there be" sentence pattern in English for analogy, they will understand more easily. It can also help students directly feel the differences in pronunciation and grammar between English and German.

In the multimodal teaching model, students are the mainstay of the classroom. The relevant content of college German textbooks has certain limitations.[7] If teachers solely rely on textbooks to cultivate students, they can only enable them to understand basic German knowledge, but cannot cultivate their ability to apply knowledge to their own use, nor can they help them develop the habit of active learning.[8] Teachers should actively guide students to participate in classroom activities and encourage them to express their own views and opinions. The interactive German teaching model fully embodies the concept of "student-centered", which helps improve students' practical ability to flexibly use German. At the same time, teachers should also pay attention to students' learning differences and provide personalized guidance and support for students at different levels. Because of different levels of acceptance, students' mastery speed also varies.[9] Through group cooperation, independent learning, and other methods, students' learning interest and initiative are stimulated, and their learning effectiveness is improved.

Finally, the multimodal teaching model also emphasizes the diversification of evaluation and feedback. Teachers should adopt various evaluation methods, such as classroom performance, homework completion, quizzes, and final exams, to comprehensively assess students' learning outcomes.[10] Our school's second language German adopts a method that combines theoretical courses with practical courses. Students' evaluations include not only homework and classroom performance but also the writing of practical training reports. At the same time, teachers should provide timely feedback to students to help them understand their strengths and weaknesses so that they can make targeted improvements and enhancements.

In summary, the implementation strategies of multimodal teaching mode in the teaching of German as a second language for English majors in universities include constructing a multimodal teaching environment, adopting multimodal teaching content presentation methods, diversified teaching methods, giving full play to the role of students, and a diversified evaluation and feedback mechanism.[11] The implementation of these strategies will help enhance students' learning interest and effectiveness, and promote their all-round development.

6. Conclusion

The application of multimodal teaching mode in the teaching of German as a second language for English majors in universities has been significantly validated. This mode integrates various teaching resources and technical means, such as audio, video, images, and texts, making classroom teaching more vivid and intuitive, greatly enhancing students' learning interest and participation.

In the multimodal teaching model, students' abilities in listening, speaking, reading, and

writing German have significantly improved, especially through multimedia materials that simulate real-life contexts, helping students better understand and use German. At the same time, the multimodal teaching model also promotes the cultivation of students' cross-cultural communication skills, enabling them to better adapt to a diverse international environment.

For future teaching, the multimodal teaching model provides important insights and suggestions.

Firstly, teachers should continue to strengthen the integration and innovation of teaching resources, make full use of modern technological means, and enrich teaching content and forms. Secondly, teachers should focus on cultivating students' autonomous learning abilities, guide them to actively use online resources for extracurricular learning, and broaden their knowledge horizons. In addition, teachers should also strengthen interaction and communication with students, timely understand students' learning needs and confusion, and provide them with more personalized teaching guidance.

In summary, the multimodal teaching model has significant effectiveness in the teaching of German as a second language for English majors in universities. By continuously optimizing and improving this model, we can further enhance the quality of German teaching, allowing English majors to truly master a second language rather than just learning it in a superficial way. This approach aims to cultivate more high-quality talents with an international perspective and cross-cultural communication skills.

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