

Research on Blended Teaching Mode of College English Based on Implicit Learning Theory

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Abstract

This paper explores the blended teaching mode supported by the mobile learning platform through an empirical research. It aims to analyze the relevance of implicit learning theory and language sense in College English audio-visual course, it also puts forward positive strategies on implementing implicit learning theory in English learning so as to promote autonomous learning and ensure the effectiveness of teaching.

Key words: Implicit learning; Blended teaching; Mobile learning; Language sense

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INTRODUCTION

For many years, college English teaching has always been teacher-centered and the students are passive learners who are asked to do many drills in classes but unable to use them in the real world, students often suffer from “dumb” English. It is essential to create a language environment so that language learners can enhance their sense of language in a subtle way.

With the popularization of smart phones and the rapid development of “Internet + education”, mobile learning is

playing an increasingly important role in digital learning. It is not limited by time and space, so that learners can acquire knowledge anytime and anywhere. It provides a new learning model for college students to promote their independent learning and innovation ability. Blended learning, as a new educational mode, is a combination of the traditional teaching and digital teaching based on the interactive function of mobile learning. In the context of Internet plus, blended learning methods have gradually replaced the traditional static learning mode of “Textbook teaching + PPT”. In recent years, teachers have gradually changed from habitually playing discs, students simply listening to recordings, etc., to the new teaching mode constructed by text, image, audio and video and other forms.

In College English listening and speaking context, the implicit theory could be used to help students fully experience and understand English, so that the implicit theory can play an automatic role in English learning and achieve a desirable learning effect. Therefore, it is necessary to reform English teaching concepts, improve teaching methods and strategies and create favorable implicit learning conditions. It's imperative to improve students' language application ability and pay attention to the combination of implicit learning and explicit learning for the purpose of improving the effectiveness of English learning.

In view of the common practical problems in College English listening and speaking teaching, this study will take college English listening and speaking class as an example, using the teaching resources of mobile learning platform to carry out hybrid teaching, and explore the concept, essence and characteristics of implicit learning.

IMPLICIT LEARNING THEORY

The concept of implicit learning was first proposed by American psychologist A.S. Reber in his “Implicit

Learning of Artificial Grammar” in 1967, he defined implicit learning as “the process of unconsciously acquiring complex knowledge about stimulating situations”. With the deepening of research, other foreign scholars have developed the concept of implicit learning. Lewicki, czyzewska and Hoffman (1987) proposed that: implicit learning refers to the learning situation in which the subjects acquire specific knowledge but can't say it or even realize it. Therefore, it has been the teacher's great concern to help students achieve the acquisition of “unconsciousness” after the “conscious” training of listening and speaking ability during the teaching process.

In recent years, the concept of implicit learning has been widely introduced into the field of language teaching and learning. The introduction of implicit learning into English teaching has a positive practical significance for cultivating students' sense of language and improving the teaching effect of listening and speaking. The transformation of implicit knowledge in College English output-oriented teaching is the starting point to stimulate students' implicit knowledge with comprehensible output and guide their explicit transformation. By internalizing explicit knowledge into students' implicit skills through teaching practice, knowledge transformation can be realized. Hence, the research results of implicit learning provide a good inspiration for the study of English teaching strategies.

BLENDED ENGLISH LEARNING

Implicit learning and explicit learning are two cognitive processes that exist simultaneously in the learning process. Adult foreign language learning is mainly explicit learning, accompanied by implicit learning. Only when the target feature of the second language is suitable for the acquisition stage of the learners' second language development, can the explicit knowledge of this feature be transformed into implicit knowledge through practice. For a long time, in classroom teaching, teachers are concerned about students' conscious explicit learning, and lack of necessary understanding of the unconscious language processing process of implicit learning. At present, College English learners' listening and speaking lags behind their reading and writing ability. Teachers need to select various forms of language materials according to students' learning ability to comprehensively promote the development of explicit and implicit knowledge.

Under the background of mobile Internet era, instructors and students have daily access to networking media in their private and professional contexts. Compared with the traditional classroom teaching, the mobile teaching platform has the advantages of real-time, efficient and interactive. The use of mobile teaching platform is especially beneficial to the improvement of College English listening and speaking ability. Teachers

can use the online English learning applications and smart phones to conduct College English teaching, which helps to enrich the classroom teaching strategies. What's more, students can be provided with independent learning path and rich learning resources by combining classroom teaching with modern information technology.

Based on the related theories and researches of implicit learning, this study will explore how to stimulate learners' unconscious cognition in mobile learning of College English listening and speaking, effectively combine explicit learning with implicit learning so as to improve the students' comprehensive ability of using English language.

3. A CASE STUDY

3.1 Objective and Methodology

It is acknowledged that implicit learning theory provides scientific theoretical basis for the construction of English learning system, meanwhile, it also offers theoretical aids in renovation of teaching concept, method and strategies. Implicit learning is different from explicit learning, but it complements explicit learning and promotes college students' English listening and speaking.

At present, in the process of College English learning, students' language input and output are relatively limited. As we all know, language acquisition is inseparable from language learning environment. A large number of language input and output can create a language environment for students' English learning. A good language environment will promote the formation of learners' language sense and improve their language perception ability.

The research tries to cultivate and improve the students' English sense and comprehensive listening and speaking ability through the experimental data of the comparison group and the control group in the teaching process during a semester of empirical research. In this study, 95 non-English majors of Grade 2019 from Qingdao University of Science and Technology were randomly divided into control class and experimental class. Before the teaching experiment, the subjects took the comprehensive test of entrance English. The control class adopts the traditional teaching mode, and the experimental class adopts the blended teaching mode of mobile terminal online learning and classroom teaching. A post test was conducted at the end of all teaching. All relevant data were collected and processed by statistical software. This study focuses on the analysis of the characteristics and nature of language sense, and uses implicit learning theory to carry out relevant questionnaire surveys and teaching experiments.

Through the research, it aims to explore the theory of implicit learning as the basis and discuss the significance of the four aspects of the potential, the cultivation of language sense, the relationship between implicit learning

and explicit guidance, and the implicit acquisition of humanistic quality and moral cultivation in College English listening and speaking instruction. The purpose is to improve students' language sense, mentality and autonomous learning level.

3.2 Design and Findings of the Study

This study analyzes the importance and necessity of applying mobile learning to college English audio-visual course. In this study, 95 non-English major freshmen were selected as subjects, and the experiment lasted for one term. Every two weeks, the subjects are required to complete one unit through mobile autonomous learning software *English Fluency* while attending classroom listening and speaking course, and completed the final test. The App listening and speaking training is based on the mobile platform, corresponding empirical online data from the courses are collected and analyzed. At the end of the semester, a questionnaire survey was conducted among the students who completed this course in a blended format regarding the teaching effect. The questionnaire mainly reflects the basic information of the students. In addition, after the experimental study of one semester, the English scores and quantitative scores of language sense of the two classes before and after the study were compared. The key points of the language sense test include pause, sentence stress and new words.

Data gathered strongly support online mobile autonomous learning as an appropriate supplementary format for learners, online learning is as rigorous as traditional classroom teaching. Mobile software *English Fluency* is an effective way to assist college oral English learning and listening comprehension. The results show that over 80% students agree that *English fluency* App assisted oral English learning, and they have made obvious progress in pronunciation and overall English fluency. The automated oral English scoring system provides a convenient platform for learners, aiming to foster learners' ability of autonomic learning and thus enhance the overall command of English. According to the research findings, both explicit learning and implicit learning take place actively during online learning. Students put forward various language and culture issues in the online discussion forums and teachers will offer quick feedback in online learning environment including QQ group and Wechat group, both sides are satisfied with the quality of mobile learning.

The results show that under the guidance of implicit learning theory, the language sense ability and final grade of students in the class using mobile learning are improved more significantly than those in the normal class. It can be concluded that the language environment is the main factor affecting the students' language sense. A large number of language input and output can create a language environment for students' language learning, thus promoting the formation of language sense. It is very

important to introduce the theory of implicit learning into English teaching and increase language input to cultivate students' English language sense, which may give rise to the improvement of students' comprehensive language perception. While combining the theory of implicit learning with the use of English learning apps, teachers should also update the teaching concept, teaching methods and teaching strategies, and improve the teaching quality of College English listening and speaking class.

THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF BLENDED TEACHING MODE

The theory of implicit learning studies learning phenomenon based on our unconscious mind. By analyzing the implicit learning theory, this study explores the possibility of implementing English implicit in college English learning and proposes some strategies through three perspectives—enhancement of language sense, the selection of online materials and learning guidance of teachers.

4.1 Enhancement of Language Sense

Language sense is an important competence which helps facilitate learning a language with close connection to the learners' acquisition of a language. Implicit learning is consistent with language sense in terms of its learning mechanism. the formation and development of language sense is a kind of typical implicit learning, the mental representation of language sense is just the outcome of implicit learning.

A large amount of English input and is very helpful in the cultivation of the language sense, which can be regarded as a key to successful English learning. Learners need to understand the inputted information quickly and automatically, combining verbal fragments into meaningful outputted language in order to achieve the application of language. This spontaneous mechanism is attributed to the effective input of language and internalization of language structure, helping to form the implicit knowledge in students' conceptual system prior to the automatic use of language. To a large extent, the formation of output ability requires learners to automatically and quickly understand language information and organize expression, while this spontaneous mechanism is based on effective language input and continuous internalization of language structure to form implicit knowledge in students' conceptual system.

4.2 The Selection of Online Materials

When learning English, in most cases we don't have a special language environment, the combination of implicit learning with explicit learning helps to create an autonomous language learning environment for ourselves. Abundant online English mobile learning resources are

conducive, especially the emergence of Wechat public platform, which provides a new direction for the learning the English.

Wechat public platform, as a new mobile communication software, provides a new teaching platform for college English learning. It assists English instruction by extending the classroom to extracurricular activities, which can spur interest in learning. For instance, as an oral English learning software, *English Fluency* has attracted many learners with its rich content and instant feedback, interesting learning mechanism and professional scoring system. Students could be more actively involved in learning as positive knowledge seekers rather than passive knowledge receivers. They are more eager to ask questions and work hard towards their learning goals, so online learning can be active, collaborative, and meaningful.

It can not be denied that Wechat public platform plays a good auxiliary role in the aspects of teacher-student communication, knowledge transfer, personalized learning and evaluation. Nevertheless, the teaching process is also affected by these factors such as forms of resources, push frequency, interaction quality and evaluation rules. Other problems of students include insufficient login times, low online time and inadequate interaction between teachers and student.

4.3 The Teacher's Role

Implicit learning theory has strong practical value and provides a new perspective for English teaching, students are supposed to be cognitive subjects and active language builders through effective online autonomous learning.

It is found that proper planning and close monitoring of a practice activity helped to raise the students' awareness of their own learning process and consequently enabled them to be more responsible for their learning. The specific findings are listed as follows. To start with, the automatic scoring feedback method of mobile phone oral English application software under teacher's instruction can improve students' oral English more than the simple application software automatic scoring. In addition, Teachers' intervention has more positive effects on the accuracy, intonation and communication of oral English. Furthermore, students are more inclined to accept the combination of teachers' instruction and mobile phone oral English application software. Last but not least, teachers' feedback brings students the greatest amount of anxiety, but it does not affect the enhancement of students' oral confidence and interest, As a result, teacher's instruction can not be absent from mobile learning feedback of oral English.

It's understandable for teachers to stimulate attention and motivation by pushing the learners for feedback and development. To a certain extent, along with the students' subjective efforts and teachers' guidance, the teaching mode of knowledge imparting dominated by teachers

will be transmited into the teaching mode of ability cultivation dominated by students. Thus, blended learning is more effective than the traditional approach. Teachers should take full consideration of the choice of App and the determination of content, and give full play to teachers' leading position based on sufficient attention.

CONCLUSION

With the development of "Internet +", information technology plays an important role in education and teaching and helps to promote the continuous reform of teaching mode. Nowadays, with the rapid progress of mobile network and means of communication, mobile learning is becoming a necessary way of learning compared to the traditional teaching mode. This blended teaching method can improve the learning efficiency of spoken English and listening ability, providing a good platform for the communication between teachers and students. In this paper, practical research is carried out through detailed design of mobile learning resources, the education and technology integration can stimulate students' learning initiative and enthusiasm, effectively promote students' learning.

From the perspective of combining mobile learning with implicit cognition, this study analyzed the influence of implicit learning theory on the blended learning of College English audio-visual course. In the course of the research, teachers are expected to adopt the teaching sequence of "implicit → explicit → implicit", in order to solve a series of practical problems in audio-visual course and enhance the cognitive awareness of the learners, and improve the learners' listening and speaking ability in an all-round way.

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