

Exploring the Application of Multimodal Teaching in University English Classrooms

Lei Chen*

Wuhan University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, Hubei, 430081, China

*Corresponding author : Lei Chen, Lzcjzjg123@163.com

Copyright: 2024 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: With the rapid development of educational technology, multimodal teaching is of great significance for improving the quality of college English classrooms. However, in practical teaching, multimodal teaching still faces certain limitations and challenges in college English classrooms. This paper explores the application of multimodal teaching in college English classrooms and its potential impact on learners' language proficiency from the perspective of second language acquisition, and proposes a series of optimization strategies, including building an efficient teaching environment, enhancing interaction between teaching and learning, and personalized learning pathways, aiming to create an efficient, interactive, and personalized English learning environment, promote the comprehensive language ability development of college students, and provide new perspectives and practical approaches for college English teaching.

Keywords: Second Language Acquisition; Multimodal Teaching; College English Classroom

Published: Dec 30, 2024

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/jetp.v1i4.133>

1. Introduction

In recent years, the rich results of second language acquisition research has provided theoretical support for the reform of teaching methods, while multimodal teaching offers a practical path for achieving this reform. Inspired by second language acquisition theory, teachers can gain a deeper understanding of learners' cognitive processes and use various channels such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic in multimodal teaching to create a rich and colorful learning environment for students. This teaching model not only helps to stimulate students' interest in learning but also deepens their understanding of the deep structure of the language, improving the naturalness and flexibility of their language use. However, research on the application of multimodal teaching in college English classrooms has not yet formed a complete theoretical and practical system, especially lacking in-depth exploration from the perspective of second language acquisition. This article aims to explore the application of multimodal teaching in college English teaching from the perspective of second language acquisition and analyze the feasibility of multimodal teaching in enhancing the effectiveness of college English teaching, providing college English teachers with more scientific teaching strategies and creating a comprehensive and effective English learning environment for learners.

2. Overview of Second Language Acquisition

2.1 The Concept of Second Language Acquisition

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) refers to the process by which learners, based on their learning of the first language

(mother tongue), gradually acquire the ability to express and understand the new language fluently through exposure, learning, and practice of the second language^[1]. Second Language Acquisition is not merely the learning of language knowledge; it involves multiple dimensions of the learner, including cognition, emotion, and social interaction, and is a manifestation of comprehensive ability. Learners need to actively explore and utilize the second language, maintain sustained interest and motivation, and continuously practice the language to improve their language skills. Furthermore, a solid foundation of language knowledge provides the necessary support for acquiring a second language and is key to the development of language ability. Good psychological quality can help learners face difficulties and challenges in the learning process, maintaining the persistence and efficiency of learning.

2.2 The Relationship between Second Language Acquisition and English Teaching

The research on second language acquisition provides a theoretical foundation for English teaching, guiding teachers to adopt learner-centered teaching methods based on learners' cognitive characteristics, thereby optimizing teaching design and ensuring the effectiveness of textbooks and curriculum content. This teaching method emphasizes a learner-centered approach, enhancing learners' language application abilities by stimulating their communicative competence and intercultural understanding. The findings of second language acquisition research enable teachers to provide more accurate assessments and feedback, promoting personalized learning and self-reflection for learners. At the level of professional development, knowledge of second language acquisition allows teachers to more effectively integrate multimedia technology resources, meet the diverse learning needs of learners, and strengthen the curriculum content of cultural diversity.

3. The Application of Multimodal Teaching in University English Classrooms

3.1 Multimodal Applications in Listening Teaching

With the widespread application of multimodal teaching in the field of language education, college English listening instruction has gradually integrated this concept. The multimodal teaching approach has achieved significant results in improving students' listening comprehension ability and practical language application skills.

By integrating video and audio materials, listening classes become vivid and realistic. For example, using video clips from international news not only provides listening materials but also helps students better understand the context through visual information, thus improving the accuracy of listening comprehension. At the same time, with real-time subtitles and keyword prompts, students are aided in learning and remembering new vocabulary during listening practice. In addition, designing interactive listening activities, such as allowing students to discuss the content they hear on online discussion platforms or engaging in role-playing in simulated environments, not only strengthens students' listening skills but also enhances their language expression abilities and critical thinking^[2].

3.2 Multimodal Applications in Spoken Language Teaching

By integrating interactive technological tools such as smart blackboards and speech analysis software, teachers can provide timely feedback on students' pronunciation, promoting accuracy and naturalness in their speech. At the same time, designing role-playing and scenario simulation activities that are close to real-life situations can enhance students' opportunities for language practice and communication skills. Incorporating multimedia materials, such as movies, songs, and podcasts, not only enriches the teaching content but also provides students with abundant contextual input, facilitating improvements in listening and pronunciation. The use of interactive communication platforms and the organization of cross-cultural exchange activities allow them to learn and adapt to various language expressions and social habits through multicultural interactions. The combination of these multimodal teaching approaches not only increases the fun and practicality of teaching but also provides students with a comprehensive and three-dimensional language environment.^[3]

3.3 Multimodal Applications in Reading Instruction

The introduction of videos and animations is also an important part of reading instruction. Through video content related to the reading material, students can see the scenes and activities described in the text, and such visual presentations help enhance students' attention to details and their understanding of the deeper meanings of the text. In addition, teachers can organize group discussions for students to share their understanding and interpretations of the reading material. In this process, students are not only practicing practical communication in English, but also improving their critical thinking and

language expression skills through interaction with peers.

3.4 Multimodal Applications in Writing Instruction

The introduction of multimodal teaching is a significant improvement over traditional writing teaching methods, involving the combination of various senses such as visual, auditory, and tactile. In the classroom, teachers can use storyboard techniques, allowing students to draw storylines while adding text descriptions. This combination of visuals and text helps students understand how to convert visual information into written information. At the same time, writing and feedback through online platforms and blogs give students the opportunity to apply writing skills in real contexts and receive real-time feedback from peers. This interactive writing process can significantly enhance students' motivation to write.

In teaching research writing, multimodal presentation can help students better organize and present information. For example, by using tools such as charts, graphs, and presentations to support their research arguments, students can learn how to create and interpret data, thereby enhancing their analytical and argumentative skills.

In the evaluation phase of writing instruction, multimodal feedback is equally important. Teachers can provide feedback in the form of videos or audio, and such personalized feedback often captures students' attention more than traditional written feedback, helping them to understand their strengths and areas for improvement more clearly.

4. “Problems Faced by Multimodal Teaching Applications from the Perspective of Second Language Acquisition”

4.1 Cognitive Overload and Information Filtering

Multimodal teaching may lead to cognitive overload, especially for beginner learners. It becomes a significant challenge for learners to filter useful content for learning when processing multi-channel information. The multidimensional input of information needs to be carefully designed to avoid excessive interference with students and ensure that the amount of information matches the students' processing capacity.

4.2 The Complexity of Teacher Role Transformation and Instructional Design

Teachers must rethink and reconstruct every aspect of classroom teaching, which not only includes the reorganization of subject content but also involves the design of learning activities, the selection and use of multimedia materials, as well as the real-time monitoring and adjustment of the learning process. These transitions are not something all teachers can easily adapt to, especially for those who are accustomed to traditional teaching models, who may feel overwhelmed.^[4]

4.3 Lack of Learning Motivation and Autonomy

Traditional teaching methods are teacher-led, which limits students' space for active exploration and self-learning. The curriculum content may not align with students' actual needs and interests, thereby reducing their engagement and interest in learning. On one hand, students may feel helpless due to a lack of necessary learning strategies and self-monitoring abilities. On the other hand, external incentives (such as grades and reward systems) may not be well integrated with students' intrinsic interests, resulting in their learning motivation being more externally imposed rather than internally driven.

4.4 Unequal Acquisition of Technical Resources

On one hand, regions with poor economic conditions may be unable to provide advanced teaching equipment and sufficient technical support, resulting in disparities for students in accessing and using multimodal teaching resources. On the other hand, teachers may not be able to effectively utilize these resources due to a lack of appropriate technical training, which in turn affects the quality of teaching. At the same time, the school's infrastructure, such as internet speed and stability, also directly impacts the availability of multimodal learning resources. In addition, differences in family economic conditions can affect whether students have access to these technological resources at home, further exacerbating the imbalance.

5. Strategies for Multimodal Teaching from the Perspective of Second Language Acquisition

5.1 Improve the cognition of second language acquisition

In order to enhance students' proficiency in a second language, teachers must employ effective teaching methods. Considering the positive contributions of second language acquisition theory in English education, a deep understanding of this theory

is crucial for both teachers and students. By deepening their knowledge of second language acquisition, teachers can adopt relevant teaching strategies more flexibly, stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning English, and thereby improve their learning outcomes.

5.2 Combining Modern Technology to Assist Teaching

In the process of second language acquisition, the use of modern technology has become a key to enhancing teaching efficiency and quality. Through interactive whiteboards, teachers can access online resources and use images, videos, and audio materials to enrich the teaching content. At the same time, students can provide instant feedback on their understanding through response systems, allowing teachers to adjust teaching strategies in a timely manner. Applications and learning management systems enable students to continue language learning and practice outside the classroom. Popular video communication software can also help students practice real-time conversations with people from around the world. When using multimedia for classroom teaching, teachers should fully exert their leading role, allowing students to better exercise their subjective initiative, transforming the focus of education from teachers to students^[5].

5.3 Emphasize the selection and use of instructional materials

The selection of teaching materials should be customized based on the actual needs and interests of the students. For young students, animated and gamified teaching applications such as "Duolingo" or "Rosetta Stone" can provide highly interactive and engaging learning experiences. This multimodal learning, which combines visual and auditory elements, helps strengthen memory. For adult learners, real-life scenario simulations related to their profession or interests can be chosen, such as using video materials of simulated business meetings to improve their practical English skills. The use of teaching materials should focus on diversity and interactivity. Through such multi-channel learning, students can understand and absorb new knowledge from different perspectives.

5.4 Emphasizing language practice in real contexts

In second language teaching, stimulating students' active participation through interaction is an effective strategy. In the classroom, teachers can use the Socratic method, which involves asking open-ended questions to encourage students to think and respond actively, rather than just waiting for the teacher's explanation. For example, in role-playing, setting up the classroom as a store or hospital allows students to use the language they have learned in a simulated context. This not only enables them to practice the language naturally in engaging activities but also enhances their communication skills. Additionally, "fishbowl" discussions can be conducted, where a group of students discusses in the "fishbowl" (the center of the classroom) while other students observe from the outside. The outer students can later join the discussion or provide feedback.

5.5 Strengthen independent learning and collaborative learning

Encourage students to set personal learning goals and plans based on their interests and needs. Teachers can recommend various online resources and learning tools, such as language learning apps, online courses, language exchange forums, etc., to allow students to continue language learning outside the classroom. Regularly arrange group collaborative projects, encouraging students to divide tasks and work together to complete specific language learning tasks. Encourage peer teaching among students to make learning more efficient. High-level students can help beginners, while beginners can consolidate their knowledge through teaching. Organize activities such as language corners and debates, allowing students to use the language in practical communication while learning to listen to and understand others' viewpoints. Encourage students to conduct self-assessments and provide feedback among peers. Assessment tools, such as feedback forms or self-assessment checklists, can be provided to help students gain a clearer understanding of their learning progress and areas for improvement.

5.6 Improve the formative assessment and feedback mechanism

From the perspective of second language acquisition, improving formative assessment and feedback mechanisms is a key link to maximizing teaching effectiveness. Specifically, teachers need to adopt multimodal teaching strategies, integrating diverse teaching resources such as visual, auditory, and dynamic interactions, and using modern teaching technologies like online platforms and interactive software to provide timely and personalized feedback to students. In teaching practice, teachers should encourage students to engage in communication within authentic contexts, enhancing teacher-student interaction and

strengthening collaborative learning among students through methods such as role-playing and group discussions, allowing students to apply the language they have learned in practice. Furthermore, formative assessment should combine continuous self-assessment, peer review, and teacher feedback to construct a multidimensional assessment system, enabling students to timely adjust their learning strategies and improve language acquisition efficiency. This comprehensive application not only helps optimize the learning process but also significantly enhances students' cognitive and application abilities in the second language.

6. Conclusion

Multimodal teaching plays an important role in enriching the teaching methods of college English classes and enhancing students' language skills. By combining various learning channels such as visual, auditory, and interactive elements, it greatly enhances the interactivity of teaching and the learning experience for students. To further promote the development of multimodal teaching in second language acquisition, this article proposes a series of optimization strategies, including creating a more efficient teaching environment, enhancing teacher-student interaction, and developing personalized learning pathways, with the aim of promoting students' overall language abilities while improving the overall quality of college English teaching, providing empirical basis and theoretical guidance for the innovation and progress of college English education.

References

- [1] Zhou Limin. A Study on the Impact of Learner Factors on English Teaching in Second Language Acquisition [J]. *English Square*, 2023 (6) : 45 - 48.
- [2] Zhang Jianjun. The Teaching Model of College English Classroom from the Perspective of Second Language Acquisition [J]. *English Square*, 2022 (31) : 76 - 79.
- [3] Qin Yan. Research on the Reform Path of English Interpretation Teaching from the Perspective of Second Language Acquisition [J]. *English Teacher*, 2022, 22 (13) : 12 - 14, 20.
- [4] Wang Yanli. New Positioning of Teacher's Role in Multimodal Teaching Mode of College English [J]. *Modern Communication*, 2018 (19) :49 - 50.
- [5] Peng Cheng. The Impact of Second Language Acquisition on English Teaching and Optimization Suggestions [J]. *Modern English*, 2023 (11) :46 - 49.