

Exploration of Interactive Teaching Models in University English Speaking Instruction

Xu Han, Cheng Huang

Hainan Vocational University of Science and Technology, Haikou, 570100, China

Abstract: *With the acceleration of globalization, the importance of English speaking skills in international communication has become increasingly prominent. Traditional university English speaking teaching models often focus on the mastery of grammar and vocabulary, neglecting the development of actual communication skills. This results in students having weak speaking abilities in real-life situations. As a student-centered and interaction-oriented teaching method, the interactive teaching model offers a new pathway to address this issue. This paper aims to explore the potential, application, and specific strategies of the interactive teaching model in university English speaking instruction. Through theoretical analysis and practical research, the effectiveness of this model in enhancing students' speaking abilities is verified. The research indicates that the interactive teaching model not only increases students' participation and initiative but also significantly enhances their language expression and communication skills, providing strong support for the reform of university English speaking instruction.*

Keywords: *interactive teaching model, university English, speaking instruction, speaking ability, teaching reform*

1. Introduction

In the context of the knowledge economy and information age, English speaking ability has become an essential skill for personal career development and social interaction. However, traditional university English speaking teaching models show evident deficiencies in cultivating students' actual communication skills, with students facing numerous challenges in speaking both inside and outside the classroom. Research-based teaching and interactive learning methods, as focal points of modern educational reform, offer new approaches to solving this problem.

The interactive teaching model emphasizes teacher-student interaction and student-student interaction, creating real-life scenarios and problem-oriented learning environments to stimulate students' interest and initiative in learning, thereby enhancing their language application skills and overall competencies. In response to the drawbacks in current university English speaking instruction, this paper attempts to explore the application of the interactive teaching model and its potential in improving students' speaking abilities, proposing specific implementation strategies.

This research holds significant practical and theoretical value. On the one hand, it helps improve the current state of university English speaking instruction and enhances teaching effectiveness. On the other hand, it provides practical experience and theoretical support for the further promotion and application of the interactive teaching model.

2. The Potential of Interactive Teaching Models in Enhancing Students' Speaking Abilities

2.1 Theoretical Foundation: The Relationship between Interactive Learning and Speaking Ability Development

Interactive learning theory emphasizes social interaction and collaboration in the learning process, which is closely related to the development of speaking abilities in language learning. According to Vygotsky's social constructivist theory, learning is a social activity where knowledge is constructed through interpersonal interaction and collaboration. In an interactive learning environment, students are not merely passive recipients of knowledge but active constructors. In speaking learning, interaction provides students with opportunities to use the language practically. Through real dialogues and

exchanges, students can acquire the language during interaction.

Moreover, interactive learning helps reduce students' language anxiety and enhances their motivation to learn. Krashen's affective filter hypothesis suggests that a low-anxiety learning environment facilitates the absorption of language input and improves language proficiency. Interactive learning creates a safe and supportive environment, making students more willing to engage in language practice, thereby reducing anxiety caused by language errors and improving speaking abilities.

2.2 Advantages of Interactive Teaching Models

Interactive teaching models offer several advantages, especially in improving students' speaking abilities. Firstly, interactive teaching emphasizes active participation and collaborative learning among students. Unlike the traditional teacher-centered lecture model, interactive teaching involves forms such as group discussions and role-playing, encouraging students to actively participate in classroom activities, continuously practicing and enhancing their speaking abilities.

Secondly, interactive teaching models help cultivate students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. During interactive activities, students are required not only to express their viewpoints in English but also to listen to and respond to others' opinions. This dynamic exchange process stimulates students' thinking and develops their logical reasoning and coherence in speaking.

Additionally, interactive teaching models provide real-life language use scenarios. Students practice language in simulated real-life situations, such as mock meetings or discussions on social issues, which better integrate classroom learning with real life, enhancing the flexibility and practicality of language use.^[1]

2.3 Specific Impacts of Interactive Teaching on Speaking Abilities

Interactive teaching has significant specific impacts on enhancing students' speaking abilities. Firstly, through interactive activities, students have more opportunities for actual language output. Compared to passive language input, frequent language output practice can more effectively promote language acquisition, enhancing students' pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary usage, and grammar structure mastery.

Secondly, interactive teaching models help improve students' language fluency and accuracy. Continuous dialogue practice allows students to gradually reduce pauses in their speech and enhance sentence coherence. Simultaneously, immediate feedback from teachers and peers during interaction can help students correct language errors and improve the accuracy of their expressions.

Interactive teaching also enhances students' intercultural communication abilities. Through interactions with peers, students are exposed to different viewpoints and cultural backgrounds. This diversified exchange broadens students' horizons and enhances their ability to communicate in various cultural contexts, fostering sensitivity and adaptability in intercultural communication.

3. Application of Interactive Teaching Models in University English Speaking Instruction

3.1 Core Elements of Interactive Teaching Models

3.1.1 Teacher's Role: Guide and Facilitator

In interactive teaching models, the teacher's role shifts from a traditional knowledge transmitter to that of a guide and facilitator. The teacher is no longer the sole focus of the classroom but instead guides the learning process by designing interactive activities, posing questions, and providing feedback. Teachers need to possess excellent communication skills and flexible teaching strategies to cater to different students' needs and interactive contexts. Additionally, teachers should focus on creating a positive learning atmosphere, encouraging students to participate in discussions and express their views, helping them overcome language anxiety and build confidence.^[2]

3.1.2 Student's Role: Active Participant and Collaborator

In the interactive teaching model, students are active participants and collaborators. They are no longer passive recipients of knowledge but actively construct knowledge through interactive activities. Students need to actively engage in classroom discussions, group activities, and role-playing exercises

to continuously improve their speaking abilities and communication skills through practice. Active participation not only enhances individual language skills but also fosters teamwork and intercultural communication abilities through collaborative learning.

3.1.3 Interactive Environment: Real-Life Situations and Problem-Based Learning

The interactive environment is one of the key elements of the interactive teaching model. Teachers should create real-life language use scenarios and problem-based learning environments, enabling students to practice language in simulated real-life contexts. Such an environment can stimulate students' motivation to learn and enhance the authenticity and practicality of language use. Through scenarios like mock meetings, press conferences, and discussions on social issues, students can better apply classroom learning to real life, improving the flexibility and adaptability of their language expression.^[3]

3.1.4 Teaching Resources: Diversification and Technological Support

Rich and diverse teaching resources are essential for the successful implementation of interactive teaching models. Teachers should utilize multimedia, online platforms, and language learning applications to provide diverse learning resources and interactive tools. For example, using video materials, online discussion platforms, and virtual reality (VR) technology allows students to engage in language learning and interaction through multi-sensory stimulation. Additionally, teachers can introduce international exchange programs and cross-cultural activities to broaden students' international perspectives and enhance their intercultural communication skills.

3.2 Design and Implementation of Interactive Activities

3.2.1 Group Discussions and Collaborative Tasks

Group discussions are one of the most commonly used activities in interactive teaching. Teachers can design various discussion tasks based on course content and student interests, such as social issues, cultural differences, and environmental protection. In group discussions, students need to work collaboratively to complete tasks, fostering teamwork and language expression skills. Teachers should intervene appropriately during discussions to provide guidance and feedback, ensuring depth and breadth of discussion. Furthermore, teachers can design interdisciplinary collaborative tasks, such as working with students from business and engineering disciplines to simulate business negotiations and project planning, enhancing students' practical application abilities.

3.2.2 Role-Playing and Simulation Activities

Role-playing and simulation activities are highly effective practices in interactive teaching. By simulating real-life situations like interviews, press conferences, and meeting speeches, students can practice language expression and communication skills in specific roles. Teachers can pre-set scenarios and assign roles, providing relevant background information and language support to help students prepare and perform role-playing activities. Such activities not only improve students' language fluency and accuracy but also develop their adaptability and intercultural communication skills.^[4]

3.2.3 Technology-Enhanced Interactive Activities

Modern technology offers a wealth of tools and platforms for interactive teaching. Teachers can use online discussion platforms, language learning applications, and virtual reality (VR) technology to design innovative interactive activities. For example, using online platforms for remote group discussions allows students to interact with peers from different cultural backgrounds, broadening their international perspectives. Language learning applications can be used for speech assessment and feedback, helping students identify and correct pronunciation issues promptly. VR technology can be utilized for virtual tours and simulated interviews, enabling students to practice language in immersive experiences.

4. Strategies for Enhancing Speaking Skills through Interactive Teaching Models

4.1 Creating Real-Life Situations and Problem-Based Learning Environments

Creating real-life situations and problem-based learning environments is one of the core strategies of interactive teaching models. This strategy aims to place students in real or simulated language use environments, allowing them to practice and improve their speaking skills while solving actual problems.^[5]

4.1.1 Simulating Real-Life Situations

Teachers can design various simulated scenarios related to students' lives, studies, and future careers, such as mock job interviews, international conferences, press conferences, and tour guide sessions. Through these simulation activities, students can not only practice language expression but also enhance their ability to use the language in real situations. Teachers should provide background information, role assignments, and task instructions to ensure that every student has the opportunity to participate and showcase their skills.

4.1.2 Designing Problem-Based Tasks

Problem-based task design involves teachers creating learning activities around specific issues to stimulate students' thinking and discussion. For example, teachers can present current social issues or academic controversies for students to investigate, discuss, and debate. This task design not only enhances students' language expression abilities but also cultivates their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

4.1.3 Feedback and Reflection in Context

In real-life situations and problem-based learning environments, timely feedback and reflection are crucial. Teachers should provide immediate language feedback during activities to help students correct errors and improve the accuracy of their expressions. Additionally, teachers should encourage students to reflect on their performance and engage in group discussions after activities to summarize experiences and identify areas for improvement.^[6]

4.2 Designing Diverse Interactive Activities

4.2.1 Group Discussions and Debates

Group discussions and debates are common and effective forms of interactive teaching that can significantly enhance students' speaking abilities. Teachers can design various discussion topics and debate issues based on course content, such as social issues, cultural differences, and environmental problems. In these activities, students are divided into groups, each taking on different roles and discussing or debating from different perspectives. This not only broadens students' knowledge but also hones their logical thinking and expression skills.

To maximize the effectiveness of these activities, teachers should set clear goals, establish discussion rules, and ensure that every student has the opportunity to speak. Before the activity, teachers can provide necessary background information and language support to help students prepare. During the activity, teachers should actively guide, intervene when necessary, and provide timely feedback and suggestions to ensure a deep and productive discussion. After the activity, teachers should summarize and provide feedback, praise outstanding students, point out areas for improvement, and encourage students to reflect on and summarize their performance.

Additionally, teachers can use technology, such as online discussion platforms and real-time polling tools, to enhance the interactivity and engagement of discussions. Through repeated practice, students' speaking abilities and confidence will significantly improve.

4.2.2 Role-Playing and Simulation Activities

Role-playing and simulation activities help students improve their speaking skills by participating in various real-life scenarios in different roles. Teachers can design activities such as mock trials, Model United Nations conferences, and simulated corporate meetings, allowing students to engage in deep communication and interaction in specific roles.

In mock trial activities, students can play roles such as lawyers, judges, and witnesses, conducting case hearings and debates. This format allows students to experience the use of legal language and enhances their logical thinking and expression skills. In Model United Nations activities, students represent different countries and discuss and debate international issues, improving their speaking abilities and cultivating intercultural communication and global awareness.

When designing these activities, teachers should provide detailed role descriptions and contextual backgrounds to ensure that students understand their tasks and objectives. During the activities, teachers should actively guide, provide timely feedback and suggestions, and help students continuously improve their language use skills. Through role-playing and simulation activities, students can practice speaking in real-life contexts, improving their adaptability and intercultural communication skills.

4.2.3 Project Collaboration and Presentations

Project collaboration and presentations combine language learning with practical application, making them highly practical activities in interactive teaching. Teachers can design team projects based on course themes, such as environmental protection campaigns or cultural festival presentations, allowing students to engage in extensive language communication and collaboration while completing the projects.

In environmental protection campaigns, students can form teams to investigate environmental issues, develop publicity strategies, and present their findings through posters, videos, and other forms. In cultural festival presentations, students can choose a country or region, research its cultural background and customs, and showcase their findings through stage performances and exhibitions. These projects help students understand and apply the knowledge they have learned while developing teamwork and organizational skills.

After completing the projects, students can further practice their speaking skills and public speaking techniques by presenting their results. During the project presentations, teachers should provide positive feedback and guidance to help students improve their presentation skills and effectiveness. Additionally, teachers can organize evaluations and discussions by other students to promote learning exchange and mutual progress among all classmates.

4.3 Enhancing Interactivity with Technological Tools

Technological advancements provide more possibilities and tools for interactive teaching models. Effective use of technology can significantly enhance classroom interactivity and improve students' learning outcomes.

4.3.1 Online Discussion and Collaboration Platforms

Online discussion and collaboration platforms, such as Moodle, Blackboard, and Google Classroom, provide convenient spaces for students to communicate and collaborate. Teachers can use these platforms to post discussion topics, assign collaborative tasks, and track students' participation in real-time. Online platforms break time and space constraints and record students' learning trajectories, facilitating subsequent evaluation and feedback.

4.3.2 Language Learning Applications and Tools

Modern language learning applications and tools, such as Duolingo, HelloTalk, and FluentU, offer students a wealth of learning resources and interactive opportunities. Teachers can recommend or require students to use these applications for daily speaking practice, speech assessment, and language exchange. With the automatic feedback functions of these language learning tools, students can promptly identify and correct pronunciation and expression errors.

4.3.3 Virtual Reality (VR) Technology

Virtual reality technology provides immersive interactive experiences for language learning. Teachers can use VR technology to design virtual scenarios such as virtual tours, mock interviews, and virtual social scenes, allowing students to practice language in a realistic and engaging environment. VR technology increases the fun and authenticity of learning and significantly enhances students' participation and language application skills.

By creating real-life situations and problem-based learning environments, designing diverse interactive activities, and utilizing technological tools to enhance interactivity, interactive teaching models can effectively improve university students' speaking skills, injecting new vitality and motivation into English speaking instruction. The implementation of these strategies not only significantly enhances students' language expression abilities but also cultivates their overall competencies and intercultural communication skills.

5. Conclusion

This study explores the application of interactive teaching models in university English speaking instruction and verifies its significant effects on enhancing students' speaking abilities. The results indicate that interactive teaching models not only increase students' engagement and learning initiative but also effectively improve their language expression abilities and communication skills. Specific strategies include creating real-life situations and problem-based learning environments, designing

diverse interactive activities, and utilizing technological tools to enhance interactivity.

Future research directions can focus on the following areas: Researchers should firstly, further deepen the theoretical research on interactive teaching models to explore their applicability in different cultural and educational contexts. Secondly, they should combine other innovative teaching methods, such as flipped classrooms and blended learning, to form diversified teaching models. Lastly, through large-scale teaching practices and data analysis, they should continuously improve and optimize interactive teaching models to promote comprehensive reform and innovation in university English speaking instruction. Through ongoing research and practice, it is hoped to contribute to cultivating applied talents with high-level speaking abilities.

References

- [1] Jiang Rong. *Application of Interactive Teaching in College English Speaking Classes [J]*. *Campus English*, 2021, (37): 11-12.
- [2] Wang Jie. *Exploration of Blended Interactive Teaching Model in College English Speaking Classes under the Background of Mobile Internet—A Case Study of Xinjiang Normal Higher Vocational College [J]*. *Campus English*, 2020, (37): 127-128.
- [3] Dai Jing. *Research on College English Grammar Teaching Strategies Based on Interactive Teaching [J]*. *Campus English*, 2023, (26): 22-24.
- [4] Yang Lina. *Research on the Application of Interactive Teaching Model in High School English Writing Teaching [D]*. Shihezi University, 2023.
- [5] Chan Liye. *Practical Research on Interactive Teaching Aiding College English Speaking Teaching [J]*. *Journal of Jilin Agricultural Science and Technology College*, 2022, 31(02): 96-99.
- [6] Liu Hongjun. *Research on Interaction in College English Classes [J]*. *Journal of Heihe University*, 2021, 12(08): 102-104.