Exploration of a Teaching Model Combining Linguistic Theory and Practice for English Major Students

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Abstract: *With the acceleration of globalization, the importance of English as an international lingua franca has become increasingly prominent. Linguistics, as an essential component of the English major curriculum, provides students with tools for a deeper understanding of linguistic phenomena at a theoretical level while cultivating their language application skills in practice. However, the current curriculum often emphasizes theory over practical application. This paper aims to explore a teaching model that combines linguistic theory with practice by systematically designing teaching objectives, content, methods, and resources to enhance students' comprehensive abilities. The research results show that this teaching model effectively improves students' mastery of linguistic knowledge and practical application skills, increases their interest and motivation in learning, and provides a reference for future improvements in English major courses.*

Keywords: *English major, linguistics, teaching model, combination of theory and practice, teaching effectiveness evaluation*

1. Introduction

In the context of today's globalization, the quality and effectiveness of English teaching, as a critical tool for international communication, have received widespread attention. Linguistics, as a core course for English majors, plays a significant role in developing students' language abilities. Through the study of linguistics, students can gain an in-depth understanding of the structure, functions, and usage rules of language, thereby enhancing their language application skills and cross-cultural communication abilities. However, traditional linguistics teaching models often focus on the transmission of theoretical knowledge while neglecting practical application, making it difficult for students to flexibly apply what they have learned in real language use. Therefore, exploring a teaching model that organically combines linguistic theory and practice is of great significance for improving the overall quality of English major students.

2. The Importance of Linguistics in English Major Courses

2.1 Overview of Linguistics and Its Status in English Studies

Linguistics is the systematic study of language structure, function, and application, encompassing various branches such as phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics. As a core course for English majors, linguistics provides students with a theoretical foundation for understanding linguistic phenomena and rules, enabling them to systematically grasp the intrinsic mechanisms of language.

In English studies, the role of linguistics is indispensable. First, linguistics helps students understand the nature and structure of language, thereby learning and applying English more effectively. Through the study of phonetics and phonology, students can master pronunciation rules and sound change patterns, enhancing their listening and speaking skills. Through the study of syntax and morphology, students can deeply understand sentence structure and word formation, improving their reading and writing abilities. Additionally, linguistics provides scientific tools for language analysis, enabling students to systematically analyze and interpret linguistic phenomena, enhancing their research capabilities and critical thinking skills.

2.2 Cultivation of Comprehensive Abilities for English Majors through Linguistics

Linguistics is not only a means for English majors to learn language knowledge but also a crucial tool for cultivating their comprehensive abilities. Specifically, linguistics plays an important role in the following aspects:

Enhancing Language Analysis and Comprehension Abilities: Through studying linguistics, students can systematically grasp the structure and usage rules of language, enhancing their ability to analyze and understand linguistic phenomena. For example, learning semantics and pragmatics helps students understand semantic levels and pragmatic principles, allowing them to use English more accurately.[1]

Improving Cross-Cultural Communication Skills: Sociolinguistics and intercultural communication studies in linguistics provide students with a theoretical framework for understanding language use differences in different cultural contexts. Through these studies, students can better understand and adapt to language and cultural differences in cross-cultural communication, enhancing their cross-cultural communication abilities.

Cultivating Critical Thinking and Research Skills: Linguistics education emphasizes the observation, analysis, and interpretation of linguistic phenomena, cultivating students' critical thinking and scientific research abilities. For example, through linguistic experiments and field studies, students can master scientific research methods and skills, enhancing their independent research capabilities.

Promoting Autonomous Learning and Lifelong Learning Abilities: Linguistics courses require students to think actively and explore continuously during the learning process, which helps cultivate their autonomous learning abilities and lifelong learning awareness. For instance, by studying language change and language acquisition theories, students can understand the processes and mechanisms of language learning, making them more confident and efficient in future language learning.

2.3 Current Deficiencies in Linguistics Curriculum and the Need for Improvement

Despite the important role of linguistics in the English major curriculum, there are several deficiencies that need to be addressed:

Disconnect between Theory and Practice: Current linguistics courses often emphasize theoretical knowledge at the expense of practical application. This makes it difficult for students to flexibly apply what they have learned in real-world language use, affecting their language application abilities. Therefore, curriculum design should focus more on combining theory and practice, increasing practical components to help students apply linguistic knowledge in real contexts.

Single Teaching Methods: Traditional linguistics teaching methods mainly rely on lectures, lacking interactivity and innovation, which makes it difficult to stimulate students' interest and motivation. Improving teaching methods by adopting diverse teaching strategies such as task-based teaching, case studies, and group discussions can enhance students' engagement and learning effectiveness.[2]

Insufficient Resources and Support: Some institutions lack sufficient investment in linguistic teaching resources and support, limiting the availability of rich teaching materials and practical platforms. This restricts students' practical opportunities and experiences in learning. Therefore, increasing investment in linguistic teaching resources and support, establishing multifunctional language laboratories, and providing more practical opportunities and resources are necessary.

Incomplete Evaluation System: The current evaluation system for linguistics courses mainly relies on final exams, neglecting the assessment of students' learning processes and comprehensive abilities. Improving the evaluation system by adopting diversified evaluation methods such as regular assignments, project reports, and oral presentations can help comprehensively assess students' learning outcomes and development.

3. Designing a Teaching Model Combining Linguistic Theory and Practice

3.1 Determining Teaching Objectives

When designing a teaching model that combines linguistic theory and practice, defining clear teaching objectives is the primary task. These objectives should include knowledge objectives, ability objectives, and quality objectives to ensure students' comprehensive development in all aspects.

Knowledge Objectives: Enable students to systematically grasp the basic concepts, theories, and research methods of linguistics, and understand the structure, function, and change rules of language. Through studying branches such as phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics, students can form an overall understanding of the discipline of linguistics.

Ability Objectives: Cultivate students' language analysis and practical application abilities. By integrating practical activities such as phonetic analysis, grammatical parsing, and corpus research, students can apply theoretical knowledge to specific linguistic phenomena, improving their problem-solving abilities.

Quality Objectives: Enhance students' critical thinking, cross-cultural communication skills, and autonomous learning abilities. By participating in linguistic research projects and cross-cultural communication activities, students can develop independent thinking, innovation awareness, and a global perspective, laying a solid foundation for future academic research and career development.[3]

3.2 Selecting and Integrating Teaching Content

The selection and integration of teaching content are crucial for achieving teaching objectives. When designing course content, it is important to focus on the organic combination of theory and practice, ensuring students' comprehensive development during the learning process.

Theoretical Module: Includes core theoretical courses in linguistics such as phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and sociolinguistics. These courses aim to provide students with a solid theoretical foundation, enabling them to systematically grasp basic linguistic knowledge and research methods.

Practical Module: Includes practical activities such as language data collection and analysis, corpus research, linguistic experiments, and field studies. Through these practical activities, students can apply theoretical knowledge to actual research, enhancing their hands-on abilities and practical experience. For example, designing a phonetic experiment to analyze the impact of different pronunciation methods on speech recognition, or conducting a field study to investigate language use in a specific community.

Integrated Module: Combines theoretical and practical content through comprehensive courses and projects, allowing students to deepen their understanding of theory through practical application. For example, offering interdisciplinary courses such as natural language processing (combining linguistics and computer science) or psycholinguistics (combining linguistics and psychology) to help students expand their knowledge and skills at the intersection of different disciplines.

3.3 Teaching Methods and Strategies

The selection of teaching methods and strategies is crucial for achieving teaching objectives. Diverse teaching methods can stimulate students' interest in learning, enhance classroom interaction, and improve teaching effectiveness.

Combining Lectures and Discussions: In theoretical courses, use lectures to convey foundational knowledge, supplemented by discussions to guide students in-depth thinking and exploration. For example, when teaching syntax, the instructor can lead students in case analysis and discussions on the syntactic structures and generation rules of different languages, cultivating their critical thinking.

Task-Driven and Project-Oriented Methods in Practical Courses: In practical courses, educators can use task-driven and project-oriented methods to enhance students' engagement and practical abilities. Educators can design specific tasks, such as phonetic analysis tasks or corpus construction tasks, allowing students to master practical skills through task completion. For example, educators can require students to collect and analyze a set of corpora, exploring language usage patterns and characteristics.

Simulation and Role-Playing in Language Courses: Educators can use simulation and role-playing to enable students to apply what they have learned in realistic language environments. For example, educators can simulate linguistic conferences where students play different roles to present and discuss academic papers, training their language expression and communication abilities. [4]

Flipped Classroom and Online Learning: Instructors can utilize modern educational technology to implement flipped classrooms and online learning, improving teaching efficiency and students' autonomous learning abilities. Students can learn theoretical knowledge through online platforms before class and engage in discussions and practical exercises in class, deepening their understanding and

application of knowledge.

3.4 Teaching Resources and Support Tools

Rich teaching resources and advanced support tools are essential for achieving teaching objectives. When designing a linguistic teaching model, it is important to fully utilize various resources and tools to enhance teaching effectiveness.

Textbooks and Supplementary Readings: Instructors can select authoritative linguistic textbooks and incorporate the latest academic research findings to provide systematic theoretical knowledge. Additionally, instructors can recommend related supplementary readings such as academic papers, research reports, and classic cases to expand students' reading range and knowledge base.

Multimedia Resources: Educators can utilize multimedia technology to create rich teaching materials such as video lectures, audio demonstrations, and animated presentations, enhancing the intuitiveness and interest of teaching. For example, through phonetic experiment videos, students can visually understand the production and recognition processes of phonetics, improving learning outcomes.

Online Platforms and Tools: Instructors can utilize online learning platforms such as Moodle, Blackboard, etc., to provide course materials, online discussions, and assignment submission functions, facilitating students' autonomous learning and communication. Additionally, instructors can use linguistic-specific software and tools such as Praat, ELAN, and AntConc to help students conduct phonetic analysis, corpus research, and text processing.

Laboratories and Practice Platforms: Educational institutions can establish multifunctional linguistic laboratories that provide phonetic experiment equipment, corpus resources, and data analysis tools, supporting students in various practical activities. For example, institutions can set up phonetic laboratories equipped with high-quality recording equipment and analysis software for students to conduct phonetic experiments and research.

4. Effectiveness of the Teaching Model Combining Linguistic Theory and Practice

4.1 Achievement of Teaching Objectives

When evaluating the effectiveness of the teaching model combining linguistic theory and practice, the achievement of teaching objectives is the primary focus. By comprehensively assessing students' performance in knowledge acquisition, skill enhancement, and quality development, the actual effectiveness of the teaching model can be determined.

Knowledge Acquisition: Based on final exam scores and course assignments, most students were able to systematically grasp the basic concepts, theories, and methods of linguistics, demonstrating a solid theoretical foundation. For instance, in courses such as phonetics, syntax, and semantics, students accurately understood and applied relevant theories for language analysis, proving the effective achievement of teaching objectives in knowledge transmission.

Skill Enhancement: Through the design of practical activities such as language data analysis, corpus research, and field surveys, students' practical operation skills and problem-solving abilities have significantly improved. For example, when completing phonetic experiments and language investigation projects, students independently conducted data collection, analysis, and report writing, showcasing high practical application skills.[5]

Quality Development: The teaching model focuses on cultivating students' critical thinking, cross-cultural communication skills, and autonomous learning abilities. Through participation in linguistic research projects and cross-cultural communication activities, students exhibited strong independent thinking and innovation abilities. In cross-cultural communication courses, students could understand and adapt to language use differences in different cultural contexts, enhancing their cross-cultural communication skills.

4.2 Student Feedback and Teacher Reflection

To comprehensively understand the effectiveness of the teaching model, student feedback and teacher reflection are important evaluation methods. By collecting students' evaluations of the course and teachers' reflections on the teaching process, the teaching model can be further optimized to improve

teaching quality.

Student Feedback: Most students held a positive attitude towards the teaching model combining linguistic theory and practice. They generally believed that this model not only increased their interest and motivation in learning but also enhanced the integration of theoretical knowledge with practical application. For example, in course evaluation questionnaires, students expressed that through practical operations and project practices, their understanding of linguistics deepened, and their learning outcomes significantly improved. However, students also pointed out some shortcomings, such as limited resources for practical activities and the high difficulty level of certain tasks, which affected their learning experience.

Teacher Reflection: Through observing students' classroom performance and learning outcomes, teachers conducted in-depth reflections during the teaching process. Teachers generally agreed that the teaching model combining theory and practice effectively stimulated students' enthusiasm and initiative in learning, improving classroom interaction and participation. For example, when teaching pragmatics, through case analysis and situational simulations, students actively participated in discussions and provided unique insights, demonstrating high levels of thinking. On the other hand, teachers also identified some issues in teaching, such as students' poor adaptability to practical tasks and the need for better integration between practical sessions and theoretical lectures.

4.3 Existing Problems and Improvement Measures

Despite the overall success of the teaching model combining linguistic theory and practice, several issues remain that require improvement:

Problem 1: Insufficient Practical Resources: Some institutions lack sufficient investment in practical teaching resources, resulting in students having inadequate equipment and support during practical activities. For instance, shortages in phonetic laboratories and corpus resources limit students' practical opportunities and experiences.

Improvement Measure: Educational institutions should increase investment in practical teaching resources for linguistics, establish multifunctional language laboratories, provide high-quality recording equipment and analysis software, and enrich corpus resources to ensure students have ample equipment and resources for practical activities.

Problem 2: Uneven Task Difficulty: Some practical tasks are designed with high difficulty levels that exceed students' abilities, leading to increased learning pressure and affecting learning outcomes. For example, certain advanced corpus analysis tasks are too complex for beginners to complete.

Improvement Measure: Educators should design tasks based on students' actual levels and abilities, ensuring tasks have graduated and progressive difficulty. Implementing staged tasks and group collaboration can gradually increase task difficulty, helping students sequentially master practical skills.[6]

Problem 3: Insufficient Integration of Theory and Practice: In some courses, the connection between theoretical lectures and practical sessions is not tight enough, making it difficult for students to effectively apply learned theories in practice.

Improvement Measure: Educators should strengthen the organic combination of theory and practice, ensuring each practical session has clear theoretical support. Using case analysis, situational simulations, and project-oriented teaching methods can integrate theoretical knowledge into practical activities, helping students better understand and apply theory in practical operations.

By implementing the above improvement measures, the teaching model combining linguistic theory and practice can be further optimized to enhance teaching effectiveness and students' comprehensive abilities, promoting the continuous improvement of teaching quality in English major programs.

5. Conclusion

This study explores the teaching model combining linguistic theory and practice for English major students, drawing the following main conclusions:

Achievement of Teaching Objectives: Based on the combined teaching model, students significantly improved in both linguistic knowledge acquisition and practical application skills. The achievement of teaching objectives indicates that this model effectively addresses the shortcomings of traditional

teaching methods.

Student Feedback and Teacher Reflection: Students generally believed that this teaching model increased their interest and motivation in learning, enhancing their autonomous learning abilities. Meanwhile, teachers, through continuous reflection and adjustment of teaching strategies, further optimized the teaching outcomes.

Existing Problems and Improvement Measures: Despite the significant achievements, several issues, such as insufficient teaching resources and limited practical opportunities, were identified during the implementation process. Future efforts should focus on improving teaching resources, enhancing practical session design, and increasing the operability and practicality of the teaching model.

Future research should focus on the following areas:

Optimization and Promotion of the Teaching Model: Researchers and educators should validate the effectiveness of this model in more teaching practices, explore its application in different linguistic branches, and promote its wider use.

Professional Development and Training of Teachers: Educational institutions should enhance teachers' understanding and mastery of the teaching model combining linguistic theory and practice, improving their teaching innovation and practical guidance abilities.

Continuous Evaluation and Feedback on Teaching Effectiveness: Educational institutions should establish a long-term evaluation mechanism to continuously track and assess teaching effectiveness, using feedback to constantly improve teaching design and quality.

Through these efforts, the teaching model combining linguistic theory and practice can play a greater role in English major teaching, comprehensively enhancing students' language abilities and overall quality, and laying a solid foundation for cultivating high-quality international talents.

Acknowledgement

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