

Analysing the Impact of the Affective Filter Hypothesis on Teaching Spoken Chinese as a Foreign Language

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Abstract

In the export of China's excellent culture to the outside world, the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language has played a very important role in promoting the world's understanding of China, which is also the mission of teaching Chinese as a foreign language. This paper focuses on the influence of the affective filter hypothesis on the teaching of oral Chinese as a foreign language. First, Krashen's "emotional filter hypothesis" is introduced to explain the influence of internal affective factors on language learning. Secondly, it analyzes the influence of motivation, self-confidence and anxiety on Chinese oral teaching. Through teaching practice observation, motivation is the most important factor affecting foreign Chinese learners. Finally, through the teaching methods of pleasant teaching, motivational teaching and situational teaching, some feasible suggestions for classroom teaching of Chinese as a foreign language are provided, in order to provide reference materials for the analysis.

Keywords

Affective filter hypothesis, Chinese as a foreign language, Spoken language teaching, impact analysis

1. The theory of Krashen's "Affective Filter Hypothesis"

It proposes that the affective filter is an internal processing system that subconsciously organises the learner's absorption of language through affective factors and explains the influence of affective factors on foreign language learning. The core of his model is the "Input Hypothesis", which consists of five hypotheses: the Acquisition and Learning Hypothesis, the Monitor Hypothesis, the Input Hypothesis, the Natural Order Hypothesis and the Affective Filter Hypothesis (Feng Qiuyu, 2014). Thus, Krashen's theory of second language acquisition is the "Input Hypothesis Model". The affective filter hypothesis is based on the theory of affective filter, which allows us to conclude that there is a strong relationship between students' own learning success and their own emotions, and that Krashen believes that affective factors can act as a filter to regulate emotions and can have a deterrent effect on language input. Therefore, as a good teacher of Chinese as a foreign language, it is important to pay more attention to students' emotions than to their performance (Zeng Qingfan & Zhang Jizhi, 2013). The affective filter hypothesis has an impact on learners' psychological and emotional factors, mainly motivation, self-confidence and anxiety.

2. The influence of the affective filter hypothesis on teaching spoken Chinese as a foreign language

2.1 The impact of motivation on spoken language teaching

The motivation of foreign language learners can play a very important role in the learning process and is a major factor in helping foreign language learners to maintain and motivate their learning (Zhang Mengli, 2020). For adults, there are two main types of motivation in learning a foreign language, the first is integrative and the second is instrumental. In the case of integration motivation, it comes from the learner's practical need to be able to talk freely with native speakers in the course of their development. In the case of instrumental motivation, the learner wants to learn the target language well enough to get a good job. In some cases, these two motivations can co-exist and are not mutually exclusive. In a speaking classroom, students will not mobilise their existing linguistic and cultural knowledge if they are not strongly motivated to participate in the class.

2.2 The impact of self-confidence on spoken language teaching

Learners' self-confidence in learning can play a key role in oral learning. Self-confidence can lead to a positive evaluation of oneself and an objective assessment of one's level and ability in the target language, and this is also true in the case of Chinese language learning. In the classroom, it is crucial for teachers to build up students' confidence as different levels of speaking can affect their motivation to learn. For example, when learning the difference between "fall" and "drop", teachers can draw two trees at different locations on a white sheet of paper, and draw a few ripe apples on the fruit tree on the left and a few yellow leaves on the fruit tree on the right, so that students understand that ripe apples 'fall' from the tree. The apples 'fall' from the tree and the leaves 'fall' from the tree. The teacher uses oral descriptions to guide the pupils to read out the corresponding content and introduces appropriate dialogue with the two words, so that they can develop confidence in a fun learning environment and not be influenced by their different levels of speaking. This way of teaching not only makes the content more visual and vivid, but also helps learners to be more flexible in their use of spoken Chinese for communication (Jiang Ying, 2014).

2.3 The impact of anxiety on spoken language teaching

Anxiety is the more repressed feelings, such as nervousness, apprehension and fear, that learners experience when learning because of a lack of understanding of the language and culture. There are two broad categories of learner anxiety: facilitative anxiety and avoidance anxiety. Facilitative anxiety can change the learner's own stress in a positive direction, further transforming it into motivation and giving the learner a strong will to learn and a positive mindset to face difficulties and ultimately complete tasks in learning (Liang Feifei, 2021). Conversely, avoidance anxiety can lead to anxiety or even avoidance of learning and ultimately failure to complete the learning task. In addition, the anxiety that students experience when undertaking learning is also mainly related to country and self-evaluation. Generally speaking, Japanese students are more prone to anxiety than in traditional Western countries. This is due to the unique Japanese culture of shame and personality traits, where Japanese people are particularly concerned about what others say about them, especially negative comments, while instead their self-evaluation is low. In fact, speaking proficiency and anxiety are usually inversely proportional, meaning that Japanese people's speaking proficiency is much lower than their kanji ability.

3. The teaching methods of affective factors in affective filter hypothesis

3.1 Pleasant teaching method

The basis of enjoyable teaching and learning is to provide vivid images and to achieve a fun and educational effect. Guiding students to feel happy in their learning, setting up scientific learning content for them and inhaling language through some of the simpler language inputs is key (Lu Qinyue, 2021). Research has shown that when a person is in a happy mood they can feel self-satisfied, and this satisfaction comes mainly from the sense of achievement gained in language learning, so a happy classroom atmosphere plays a vital role in facilitating the teaching of spoken foreign languages. Some experienced teachers have used enjoyable teaching methods in the past to teach spoken Chinese. Some teachers use a variety of methods such as cards, drawings and presentations to create a lively classroom atmosphere for learners, which often results in twice the effort (Zhang Renran, 2015). By maintaining a high level of interest in learning the spoken content, learners are able to explore their own potential for learning Chinese and are more willing to accept the content taught by the teacher, which also brings the teacher and learners closer together.

3.2 Motivational teaching method

The main purpose of motivational teaching is to set certain incentives for students in teaching spoken Chinese and to stimulate learners' desire to learn through appropriate motivational measures. For motivational teaching, learners with positive attitudes are motivated to learn more about Chinese culture and history and are willing to learn and express themselves through more opportunities. Motivation, as the name suggests, is a process of stimulating learners' motivation, inducing learners' behaviour and encouraging them to explore their potential learning goals. The teacher can provide the right guidance for the students and can also take the initiative to talk to the learners and support them emotionally. The teacher can also use rewards, such as targeted praise and recognition for some students after their oral expressions, and can also promote motivation through oral competitions. Learners are encouraged by the goal of competition and can develop a positive mindset in their minds. If a speaking teacher fails to identify potential problems with learners in a timely manner, it is likely that students will gradually give up the path of learning Chinese, and as a good teacher of spoken Chinese for foreigners, it is important to try to avoid this situation.

3.3 Situational teaching method

Situational teaching has been used for a long time and has been effective in the teaching of foreign languages. Its main significance lies in the practice of leading students to perfect the basic structures of the target language in situation (Xu Jing, 2012). Situational teaching is one of the most effective ways of reducing the affective rule because it is a way of developing a more extroverted personality. In psychological terms, there are two main types of personality, the first being extroverted and the second being introverted. The main reason why extroverted personalities can contribute to language learning is that learners with more extroverted personalities are able to maintain a positive and talkative attitude and are able to experiment in their speaking and practice, which is why they get more speaking practice. Introverted learners are less talkative, prefer to think alone and there is a gap between them and extroverted learners in terms of language expression (Li Wenjing, 2016). Situational teaching can help students to develop a stronger desire to express themselves, linking language knowledge with situational teaching and guiding them to practice speaking in situation, so that they can master complex conversations with understanding.

4. Conclusion

In summary, students' own emotional state can play a key role in how well they learn. Teachers of Chinese as a foreign language should take a comprehensive approach to students who lack confidence and suffer from anxiety, so that they can see more of their own good side and develop their self-confidence. They should also pay attention to setting communicative tasks for students that are appropriate to their level, and make timely evaluations and encouragement according to their completion. In addition, in Chinese language learning, due to the phenomenon of phonetic change, different meanings are expressed. Spoken Chinese has a certain tone in its expressions, which needs to be mastered through the change of tone. Therefore, some researchers in the teaching of spoken Chinese as a foreign language can use some of the conclusions drawn from the second language to apply them in the teaching of spoken Chinese, so that students can achieve better learning results in learning Chinese as a foreign language.

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