

Assignment 1

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In the factors affecting second language learning, the author divides the factors that affect individual second language acquisition into: Motivation, aptitude, personality, Intelligence, and learner preferences are five categories, but the boundaries between these five factors are not absolute. A characteristic can be the combination of several factors. The age of acquisition is another factor well-discussed later.

Research methods and problems

Questionnaires are generally used to study the factors affecting second language acquisition, for example, the relationship between proficiency and motivation was compared from the results of the questionnaire. However, one difficulty is that some factors such as motivation, extroversion and attitude are difficult to be identified and observed as well as their interact with each other, which makes it difficult to observe the independent effect of one factor.

Another difficulty is how language proficiency is defined and measured. To illustrate, one study found that motivation had a significant impact on oral communication skills but not on Metalinguistic knowledge. This contradictory result is caused by the measurement method of language proficiency.

Finally, it is difficult to say that the relationship between the two factors is always what is commonly believed, such as motivation and success. It is generally believed that high motivation leads to success, but it is also possible that early success leads to motivation or motivation and success together promote the success of second language learning, or there are other factors that lead to success.

Review of factors

Intelligence

The traditional measurement of 'intelligence' is based on test performance, but some recent studies show that 'intelligence' is more important for some second language abilities (such as vocabulary, reading and grammar). However, there are many qualities and abilities of individuals that cannot be experienced in traditional IQ tests. In fact, many learners who do not perform well in the tests can be very successful in second language learning.

Aptitude

The most widely used aptitude tests are the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) and the Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery (PLAR). They all thought Aptitude consisted of several specific abilities. However, it should be noted that a large number of aptitude studies are based on grammar translation or audiolingual method. After the extensive use of communicative approach, many teachers find that students' performance has little relation to aptitude. Aptitude research now plays a more important role in understanding students' own talents and then choosing teaching methods suitable for

students so that teachers can better organize classroom activities. There has been limited research into the effects of traditional aptitude (identify sounds, memorize new words, figure out grammatical rules, etc) in the present classroom.

Personality

The influence of personality on second language acquisition is difficult to measure and to draw a definite conclusion. Extroversion and inhibition are the focus of researches. It is generally believed that extroversion is beneficial to second language acquisition, while inhibition can cause negative effects. But the results and process of different studies are controversial. The same is true for other studies (esteem, empathy, talkativeness, and responsiveness), where it was difficult to find a clear and definite relationship between personality and second language acquisition. Nevertheless, the researchers believe that personality does play an important role in second language acquisition. The relationship between them is complicated and personality is likely to play a role in combination with other factors.

Motivation and attitudes

Studies have shown that motivation plays a positive role in SLA, but how it plays a role in SLA remains unclear. Motivation can be divided into two main factors in second language acquisition: communication needs and attitudes towards the second language community. Robert Gardner and Wallace Lambert (1972) used the terms integrative motivation to refer to personal and culture motivation and instrumental motivation to refer to practical motivation. The power dynamic between individual identity and language will also affect learners' attitude towards the second language and thus affect their motivation.

In the classroom setting, the study of motivation of second language acquisition does not involve too much, but the research of educational psychology mainly focuses on this aspect. Graham Crookes and Richard Schmidt (1991) believed that lead-in, the use of various activities and cooperative goals, could promote the motivation of students in the classroom. In addition, the influence of cooperation or competition on students' motivation varies with different cultural backgrounds.

Learner preferences

It can also be called personal learning style. There are perceptually based learning styles such as vision, auditory and kinaesthetic. And researchers conduct a large number of studies on cognitive learning style in field independent and field dependent learner. There are few studies on the relationship between different learning styles and the success of second language acquisition.

Learner beliefs

Almost all second language learners have strong beliefs and opinions about how their instruction should be delivered based on their previous language learning experience. There is little research in this area. Learner beliefs and learner preferences information can help the second language teacher to adjust students' education strategies and classroom activities.

Age of acquisition

The influence of age on second language acquisition is a lively debated topic. There is an obvious difference between adult immigrants' second language acquisition and their next generation. One

explanation for this difference is the Critical Period Hypothesis.

The Critical Period Hypothesis suggests that there is a time in human development when the brain is predisposed for success in language learning. In addition to physiological development, the second language learning environment of adults and children and adolescents is another factor. Patkowski's (1980) research shows that age is an important factor in native like mastery of a Second Language, not just for accent, which gave support to the Critical Period Hypothesis. Catherine Snow and Marian Hoefnagel-hohle's research results show that adolescents and adults make faster progress at first in second language acquisition, but children catch up and overtake them later in the second language environment, There is no Critical Period. The Critical Period Hypothesis is controversial, but it is not necessarily The younger The better to learn a second language. Both studies aim at achieving a native-like mastery of the second Language, but that is not the goal of all second language learners. If the goal is basic communicative ability and the course only provides a limited context for second language use, young learners will be more likely to get frustrated and affect their progress.

The relationship between second language acquisition and learning motivation

Then, I would like to discuss my understanding of the relationship between second language acquisition and learning motivation in combination with other researchers' research theories on motivation.

Motivation plays an important role in the success of any complex task. In second language acquisition, learners' motivation is also a key factor. Learning motivation in second language acquisition is one of the motivations of human behavior. It is manifested as a strong desire and thirst for knowledge to learn a second language, a desire to promote the action of learning a second language, and an internal consciousness and active activity of the individual in the process of learning a second language.

I. Classification and characteristics of motivation

Because motivation is a dynamic concept and its precise characteristics are not clear, the definition of motivation has not been a unified standard. Motivation is a psycho-social factor and, to some extent, an intuitive attraction. People have different definitions of motivation, which leads to different categories.

1. In the 1950s, Gardner and Lambert divided motives into integrative motivation and instrumental motivation according to their functions. Integration motivation refers to that individual learners are interested in or tend to learn the target language, and desire to join or integrate into the target language learning group to achieve the level of imagination with the group or even hope to become a member of the group. Integration "is not just a complex of attitudes about another language community, it is not just a reason to learn a language". Instrumental motivation refers to learners learning in order to achieve a practical goal. Instrumental motivation learning is selective and less persistent. Most scholars and researchers accept the dichotomy of Gardner and Lambert fusion motivation and instrumental motivation. At present, integrative motivation and instrumental motivation are regarded as important factors affecting second language acquisition.

Contemporarily, Williams·M & R·L·Burden, a British applied linguist and educational psychologist, proposed the motivation theory of foreign language learning based on cognitivism and constructivism. Cognitivism learning motivation theory emphasizes that individual learners exert their learning potential and make action decisions through their own will and determination. They believe that only when students feel that what they learn is relevant to them and actively participate in it, can learning be meaningful and lasting (Williams·M & R·L·Burden 1997). They also point out that human learning is based on the development of the potential of autonomous learning. The purpose of learning is to learn freedom and self-actualization. Constructivism motivation theory emphasizes that individual behavioral motivation has different mechanisms, and each learner has a different understanding of external factors. They act in their own way and make attributions to results. Through the integration of cognitivism and constructivism theories, Williams and Burden proposed a new definition of motivation: individuals are aroused by certain internal or external causes, leading them to decide to act in a certain form to achieve a certain goal; The goal itself may be the action itself and the system may be used as a means to achieve another goal; Once an action is begun, it must be maintained until the final achievement of the goal.

2.Ellis (1994) proposed result-type motives, namely, motives derived from successful learning. It reflects the interaction between learning and motivation, that is, high level motivation will stimulate learning, and the successful achievement of second language learning goals will promote the improvement of learners' motivation level. Ellis's motivation is not mutually exclusive or distinct from previous theories, but complementary. Learners may be integrated, instrumental, or constructive at a certain time or at the same time. Motivation can be either the cause of learning or the source of self-learning. In addition, Ellis argues that motivation is dynamic in nature and can vary depending on the learning situation or task.

II.The deficiency of motivation theory and the corresponding possible solutions

1.The motivational analysis theory of Gardner and Lambert was most influential in the 1950s, but it was also subject to some controversy. It is generally believed that Gardner and Lambert's theory has strong regional characteristics and ignores the influence of classroom education and students' cognitive factors on learning motivation. In practical teaching, we should combine the teaching situation with their motivation theory to achieve good results.

2.The motivation theory of foreign language learning proposed by Williams·M & R·L·Burden based on cognitivism and constructivism believes that individuals are aroused by certain internal or external causes, leading them to decide to act in a certain form to achieve a certain goal. This theory emphasizes the internal causes of individual learners, and with unremitting efforts, the corresponding learning objectives can be achieved. However, this theory pays too much attention to the internal activities of learners, but ignores the external factors and the influence of social emotion on the formation of cognitive skills, thus it is difficult to solve the difference structure of different individuals on the same subject.

3.Result-type motivation proposed by Ellis (1994) takes successful learning as motivation. Result-oriented motivation is result-oriented and purposeful. But individual learners lack

enjoyment of learning in the process of learning.

III.Stimulate students' motivation in second language acquisition

Although researchers have different descriptions and definitions of motivation, they all emphasize the important role of motivation in second language acquisition. How to motivate students to learn? First of all, encourage students actively. The teacher's encouragement will make their study twice the result with half the effort. Secondly, to help students set a reasonable short-term goal and long-term goal, once the corresponding short-term goal is achieved, students will have confidence, so as to produce greater learning motivation. In addition, from the students' point of view, it is also a good way to use their own inherent motivation to acquire second language learning. Finally, appropriate care for students' lives, shorten the distance between teachers and students, teachers improve their own personality charm, which is an indirect motivation to promote students to learn a second language.

Summary

Learning motivation is a complex factor in language learning, which includes sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and cognitive linguistics. The development of motivation theory from the 1960s to the 1990s became popular, scholars also put forward different theories and research methods. For second language learners, understanding motivation theory is also of great help to improve learning efficiency, while for teachers, understanding motivation theory can better understand students' learning psychology so as to provide targeted teaching. With so many theories of motivation, we should also learn from others to achieve better goals.

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