

Research on Multimodal Oral English Teaching in Junior High School based on the Activity-based Approach

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Abstract: This study is based on the theory of the Activity-based Approach and explores the practical application of multimodal oral teaching in junior high school English classrooms. Through literature analysis and teaching practice, this study designed a multimodal oral teaching model based on the perspective of the Activity-based Approach, namely multimodal input, knowledge processing, and multidimensional output. It also conducted a one-semester teaching experiment. The research results indicate that multimodal oral teaching can effectively improve students' oral expression ability and learning interest, and promote comprehensive development. This study provides new ideas and methods for middle school English oral teaching, and has certain reference value for improving the quality of English teaching.

Keywords: Activity-based Approach, Multimodal Teaching, Oral Teaching, Junior High School English, Teaching Practice.

1. Introduction

With the acceleration of globalization, the importance of English as an international lingua franca is becoming increasingly prominent. In junior high school English teaching, cultivating oral ability has always been the focus and difficulty of teaching. Traditional oral teaching methods are often limited to mechanical imitation and repetitive exercises, making it difficult to stimulate students' interest and creativity in learning. In recent years, multimodal teaching theory has provided a new perspective for English oral teaching. Multimodal teaching emphasizes promoting language learning through multiple sensory channels and expression methods, which coincides with the "learning by doing" concept emphasized by the English learning activity view.

2. Definition of Core Concepts

2.1. Modal

Zhu (2007) believed that modality refers to the channels and media used by humans in the process of communication, including symbols such as images, language, colors, music, etc. The emergence of multimodal discourse is due to the comprehensive use of multiple sensory channels by people in the process of communication. The London Group (1996) considered that modalities include five modalities: language, vision, hearing, posture, and space. Huang and Zhang (2019) pointed out that from the perspective of semiotics, modality refers to the ways and channels of information transmission, while multimodality refers to the use of various symbols such as language, sound, and images for information transmission.

2.2. Multimodal Teaching

The New London Group (1966) pointed out that multimodal teaching is the use of as many means and methods as possible in the teaching process to stimulate students' multiple senses for learning, and advocated that teachers should actively use teaching methods such as online resources, pictures, role-playing, videos, etc. to stimulate students'

multiple senses for learning. Royce (2002) analyzed the complementary relationship between images and text in multimodal discourse, as well as the coordinated relationship between multiple symbol modalities in language teaching. He suggested that teachers should use computer-presented visual, auditory, and other modalities in the classroom to help students develop multimodal discourse communication skills. He also pointed out that reading and writing activities in multimodal teaching methods can also be introduced into listening and speaking classes to cultivate students' listening and speaking abilities. Wang and Hong (2014) pointed out that multimodal approaches used in junior high school classrooms mainly include courseware, music, songs, videos, and teacher body language.

2.3. Activity-based Approach

The English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2022 Edition) pointed out that the concept of Activity-based Approach refers to a series of English learning activities that reflect comprehensive, relevant, and practical characteristics, such as learning comprehension, practical application, and transfer innovation, guided by thematic significance. Based on existing knowledge and relying on different types of discourse, students can promote their own language knowledge learning, language skill development, cultural connotation understanding, diverse thinking development, value orientation judgment, and learning strategy application in the process of analyzing and solving problems. This process is not only a process of integrating language knowledge and language skills, but also a process of continuously enhancing cultural awareness, improving thinking quality, and enhancing learning ability.

3. The Connotation of Multimodal Oral English Teaching in Junior High School Based on the Perspective of Activity-based Approach

With the deepening of basic education curriculum reform,

there have been significant changes in the teaching of oral English in junior high schools in China. This change is reflected in changes in the teaching environment, changes in teachers' teaching concepts, and changes in teachers' teaching behavior and students' learning behavior. However, there are still some problems in the teaching process: teachers overly focus on the cultivation of language knowledge and skills, lack in-depth cultivation of students' oral abilities, monotonous oral teaching activities, and fragmented and superficial oral teaching; Secondly, at the student level, the phenomenon of not liking to speak, being afraid to speak, and being unable to speak still exists, and students' oral output ability is weak.

The English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2022 Edition) points out that the English curriculum for compulsory education is the unity of instrumentality and humanity. It is necessary to enable students to use English to do things, help students understand different cultures, compare cultural similarities and differences, draw on the essence of culture, and gradually form the awareness and ability of cross-cultural communication and exchange, so as to lay a foundation for students to learn lifelong and adapt to future social

development. Secondly, the new curriculum standards advocate for the integration of learning and thinking, and a creative approach to English learning activities. Similarly, English oral teaching should also adhere to the concept of learning through experience, applying in practice, and innovating through transfer, allowing students to engage in multimodal oral learning in real situations and real problems.

The multimodal oral teaching of junior high school English based on the perspective of activity-based approach should follow the "three-level" principle of the perspective of English learning activities, namely perception and understanding, application and practice, and transfer and innovation. Teachers should use film and television clips, graphic posters, and other materials to create authentic contexts during the classroom introduction stage. In the practical application stage, meaning construction is promoted through mind maps, role cards, and gesture imitation. Conduct dubbing performances, digital story creation, cross-cultural debates, and other practical activities in the process of migration innovation. Figure 1 shows the practical framework of the junior high school English oral teaching model based on the perspective of English learning activities.

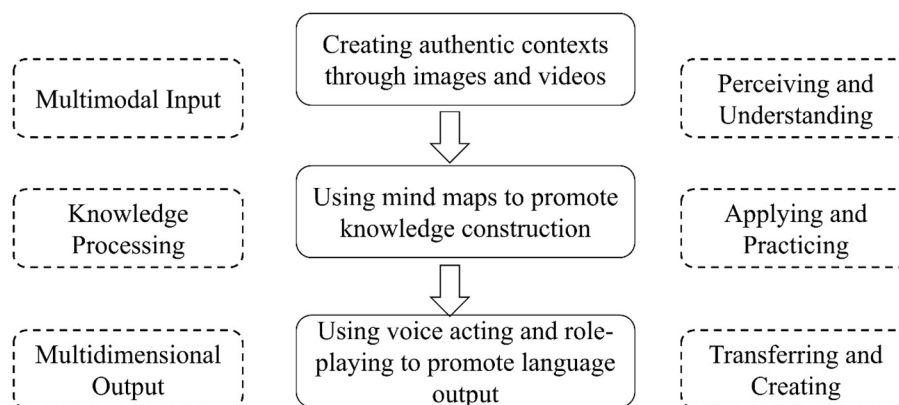


Figure 1. A Framework for Multi-Modal Oral English Teaching Mode in Junior High School Based on the Perspective of Activity-based Approach

4. Teaching Steps of Multimodal Oral English Teaching in Junior High School based on the Perspective of Activity-based Approach

4.1. Multimodal Input

In the multimodal input stage, teachers need to create a realistic language environment through videos, images, or other multimodal means. Creating authentic contexts through diverse modal resources, stimulating students' interest, and providing a foundation for language input. Teachers can select film and television clips related to the theme (such as documentaries, cartoons, short videos), and use both visual and auditory stimuli to help students perceive speech intonation, cultural background, and communication scenes. At the same time, it is also possible to combine posters or brochures with illustrations to help students understand the text content through visual symbols such as color, layout, and images. By using multimodal teaching tools to provide rich language input, students' psychological barriers to oral expression can be reduced. Through the synergistic effect of multimodal resources, students can comprehensively

perceive language and culture.

4.2. Knowledge Construction

The goal of knowledge construction is to promote students' deep processing and internalization of new knowledge through multimodal tools and activities. During this process, teachers should guide students to organize language knowledge and cultural information through mind maps. Students can use mind maps to organize vocabulary and sentence structures related to the topic. Students can enhance the vividness of language expression through body language and gesture imitation. For example, imitating the body movements and expressions of characters in film and television clips can help students understand the meaning of nonverbal communication. Assist students in transforming input language knowledge into internalized language abilities. Promoting thinking development through multimodal tools can enhance students' logicity and creativity. Secondly, it can enhance students' sense of participation and cooperation, and cultivate their ability for self-directed learning.

4.3. Multidimensional Output

The goal of language output is to promote students'

language practice and transfer innovation through diverse output activities.

Teachers can select film and television clips or animated films for students to practice dubbing, imitating pronunciation, intonation, and emotional expression. Secondly, teachers can organize debate activities around cultural differences to cultivate students' cross-cultural awareness and critical thinking. Finally, teachers can conduct role-playing activities in simulated situations, utilizing both verbal and nonverbal communication methods. By providing multidimensional language output opportunities, it can promote the comprehensive application of students' language abilities. Cultivate students' transfer and practical abilities through innovative activities to enhance their confidence and sense of achievement.

5. Teaching Case of Multimodal Oral English Teaching in Junior High School based on the Perspective of Activity-based Approach

This study takes Module 8 of the 8th-grade textbook of the Foreign Language Research Press as an example. The theme of this module is "Tourism and Nature", and students need to use corresponding sentence structures to discuss tourism. The specific requirements are as follows:

Please talk about a place of interest.

You can talk about:

- (1) Where is it?
- (2) How big is it?
- (3) What does it look like?
- (4) What's special about it?
- (5) What can you do there?
- (6) How do you feel about it?
- (7) Any other information you know about it?

You can use these expressions:

- (1) I guess (that)...
- (2) I know (that)...
- (3) I think (that)...
- (4) I am sure(that)...

Teaching objectives:

- (1) Language ability

Students can master high-frequency vocabulary related to travel and nature, such as hiking, waterfall, scenery, and

protection.

Students can use target sentence structures to describe travel plans and natural experiences.

Students can improve their pronunciation, intonation, and fluency of expression through multimodal resources.

(2) Thinking quality

Students can analyze the characteristics of natural landscapes through pictures and videos, cultivating their ability to observe and summarize.

Through role-playing and debate activities, students can develop logical and critical thinking skills.

(3) Cultural awareness

Students can enhance their environmental awareness by learning about the natural landscapes and cultural significance of different countries through dialogue.

(4) Learning ability

Through multimodal input and output activities, students can enhance their ability to integrate and express information.

Cultivate students' self-learning and collaborative abilities through group collaboration and presentation.

5.1. Multimodal Input

Activity 1: The teacher plays a BBC travel video, allowing students to perceive expressions related to tourism and asking them questions.

Question 1: What natural scenes can you see in the video?

Question 2: Which place would you like to visit? Why?

Activity 2: Display posters of world-renowned natural attractions and guide students to describe the content of the pictures.

Question 1: What is the most impressive part of the picture?

Question 2: How would you describe the colors and shapes?

Activity 3: Play travel listening clips and guide students to extract key vocabulary related to the tourism theme

[Justification]: The addition of rich language input, videos, and images can enhance students' interest and reduce their psychological barriers to oral expression. At the same time, through the synergistic effect of multimodal resources, students can comprehensively perceive language and culture.

5.2. Knowledge Processing

Activity 1: Guide students to organize vocabulary and sentence patterns related to travel based on the theme. Figure 2 shows the relevant expressions organized by the teacher and students.

questions	answers	expressions
(1)Where is it?	(1)It is located in...	(1)...city...province
(2)How big is it?	(2)I guess that it has...	(2) scenery
(3)What does it look like?	(3)I am sure that it looks like ...	(3) impressive
(4)What's special about it?	(4) I know that it...	(4) tourist
(5)What can you do there?	(5)It is obvious that we can ...	(5) souvenir
(6)How do you feel about it?	(6)It is so...that...	(6) sightseeing
(7)other information you know about it	(7)...	(7) cuisine
(8)...		(8) landmark
		(9) reservation
		(10)...

Figure 2. English Expressions Related to the Theme

Activity 2: Organize group activities, set tourist roles, and discuss the “best tourist destinations.”

Scene Creation: Mike from the UK meets Xiaoming from China during his travels, and they have a great conversation. Mike thinks that many places in China are very beautiful, but due to language and other limitations, Mike wants Xiaoming to recommend a very representative natural landscape in China for him. In this way, Mike can travel with peace of mind.

Teachers distribute role cards, and students prepare dialogues based on their roles:

Mike: Inquire about scenic spot information and activity suggestions

Xiaoming: Introduce the characteristics and precautions of the scenic spot

[Justification]: By using mind maps to organize relevant expressions, students can consolidate their learned knowledge. Secondly, through group activities, students’ sense of learning, participation, and cooperation can be cultivated.

5.3. Multidimensional Output

Activity 1: Students need to create an ecological travel plan for Mike based on the completed conversation. Students need to draw a simple travel map, mark travel precautions, and provide English explanations.

After each group completes the English explanation, students are required to complete a self-evaluation of their oral class. Figure 3 is a junior high school English multimodal oral self-evaluation form based on the perspective of the Activity-based Approach.

Multimodal Spoken Language Self Evaluation Form				
Dimension	After this class, I am able to:	1	2	3
Multimodal Input	extract vocabulary related to tourism from the videos played by the teacher.			
	use the expressions I have learned to describe the content in the picture.			
Knowledge Processing	organize vocabulary and expressions related to the topic through mind maps under the guidance of the teacher.			
	use relevant expressions to complete situational dialogues.			
Multidimensional Output	complete the task of making a travel map with my group classmates.			

Figure 3. Junior high school English multimodal oral self-evaluation form based on the perspective of the Activity-based Approach

[Justification]: To promote students’ comprehensive language proficiency by providing multidimensional language output opportunities. Developing students’ transfer and practical abilities through the innovative activity of creating travel maps.

6. Conclusion

The multimodal oral teaching of junior high school English based on the perspective of Activity-based Approach is guided by themes, supported by the perspective of Activity-based Approach, and student-centered. While fully leveraging the leading role of teachers, the oral teaching mode of multimodal input, knowledge processing, and multidimensional output is used to cultivate students’ interest in oral learning and their oral abilities.

Acknowledgments

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