

An Exploration of the Immersion English Teaching Model

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Abstract. The successful experience of the immersion teaching method under the background of Canadian bilingual national policy not only enriches the theory and practice of second language teaching in Canada, but also exerts more and more influence in the international arena. It is a pioneering combination of language learning and subject knowledge learning. It can be used for reference in the reform of foreign language teaching to change the current state of inconsistency between professional learning and foreign language learning, so that both sides of teaching can obtain the most possible learning results in a limited time and space.

Key words: immersion; teaching mode; second language.

1. Introduction

Immersion teaching method was founded in 1960s. It is a brand new second language teaching mode initiated by French-speaking Canada. It refers to the basic teaching mode of using non-native second language as the direct teaching language, that is, students are "immersed" in the target language environment. In teaching activities, teachers not only use target language to teach target language, but also use target language to teach related subjects. In other words, second language is not only the content of learning, but also the language tool of learning. The immersion teaching method realizes the development of the teaching mode from isolated and simple foreign language teaching to the combination of foreign language and knowledge of different subjects, and provides a broad and rich language environment for students to learn and use the new target language.

2. The Implementation Status of Immersion Teaching Model

French immersion educational programs generally adopt three modes: early full immersion, mid partial immersion and late partial immersion. (Canadian Encyclopedia, 2006) The first model is the early full immersion. The model is divided into three stages. The first stage begins in kindergarten and ends in second or third grade. The whole process of education and teaching is carried out in a single environment of French as a second language. The textbooks are all in French. The difficulties and requirements are in line with those of the English equivalent textbooks. Teachers are qualified French-American teachers or qualified bilingual teachers. Students can communicate in English or ask questions to teachers in English. The second stage is from grade two or grade three to grade six, in which English and French are both used as instructional and media language in education and teaching. The third stage is from the seventh grade to the end of secondary education. In this stage, the teaching of 3 to 5 subjects is generally reserved in the French environment. The second model is the medium-term immersion. It leaps over the French immersion in the kindergarten and lower grades of Model One, and begins to use French as the instructional language directly from the fourth grade. This model is generally determined by the specific conditions of students and their communities, and the overall requirements of local education, as appropriate. The third model is late immersion. In this model, French, as a second language, is delayed to the later stage of primary school or the beginning of junior middle school. It is also flexible to a certain extent under the premise of the overall requirements of students, their communities and local education.

In addition, there is a comprehensive mode, which integrates the above three modes into one, and then is completed in three steps. That is, the first step, in kindergarten, grade one and grade two, education and teaching are 100% French environment. All teaching activities are carried out in French environment. Teachers are French teachers or French teachers who know English. The aim is to cultivate children's second language acquisition of French and lay a good foundation for the future

development of French language acquisition. The second step is to offer English Language Art course in the third grade. The teaching guideline is English, while other teaching methods remain unchanged. The purpose of joining the English Language Art Course is to cultivate students' English language cognitive ability, appreciation and application ability, as well as bilingual awareness and learning ability. The third step is that French in junior middle school accounts for 40% of the whole teaching language and 30% in senior middle school. The purpose of French intervention in middle school is to maintain, expand and improve students' bilingual ability through the continuous use of French language practice in teaching activities and lay a foundation for the next stage of university education or employment preparation.

3. Problems in the Adoption of Immersion Teaching Model in China

English immersion teaching in China is still in its infancy, although schools try their best to create a small environment for learning a second language, for example, to actively create an all-English environment, to enable students to actively learn English, to design textbook courses for English learning, and to teach content, not only to learn the English language itself, but also to learn English as a teaching content. To make students practice listening, speaking, reading and writing in all aspects and infiltrate many English learning contents, first of all, teachers give students enough English input, so that students can better understand the language. Only when the input reaches a certain level, students can make relevant output of English.

However, in our country under English immersion teaching mode, there is only a limited environment for learning English in school at present. Students who lack a large social environment for learning English must return to their mother tongue naturally when they return home after a day's study in school and return to their normal living environment. Therefore, it is difficult to implement immersion teaching.

At present, the most prominent problems restricting the implementation of immersive foreign language teaching mode in China are as follows:

3.1 Lack of Natural Language Environment

According to the theory of second language acquisition, children's language ability is acquired naturally in a certain language environment, and a rich language environment is the most basic condition for the success of foreign language teaching. The immersive foreign language teaching practice further proves the view that learning a foreign language requires a language environment. Language environment includes not only the small language learning environment in the classroom, but also the natural language environment outside the classroom. At present, our country does not have a large environment for learning English as a second language. Foreign language learning mainly relies on the small environment of classroom teaching and adopts mechanical rote learning or repeated practice. This will affect the authenticity and effectiveness of foreign language learning, and is not conducive to the cultivation of students' comprehensive ability to use English. Therefore, in foreign language teaching, attention should be paid to creating a rich foreign language environment so that students can be exposed to the natural language environment and develop their language use and communicative competence.

3.2 Lack of Qualified Bilingual Teachers

Qualified bilingual teachers are the key to the successful implementation of immersive foreign language teaching. As a kind of bilingual teaching, immersive foreign language teaching requires teachers to have scientific educational ideas, reasonable knowledge structure, solid mother tongue foundation, strong English teaching ability, and be able to teach subject courses skillfully in foreign languages. Most English teachers are trained in the traditional Chinese classroom mode. Like the traditional exam-oriented education, they mainly teach grammar and vocabulary, mechanical listening and speaking, and a lot of exercises. Chinese teachers have not received the foreign teaching mode, and have not made a clear study of the mode and method of immersion teaching. And

immersion teaching itself has high requirements for teachers. It requires teachers to teach both mother tongue and foreign language at the same time, and can stimulate students' interest in learning, guide students to use English to better their learning and communication, so not many teachers can meet these requirements. The level of teachers in China is uneven, and further research and study are also needed in English teaching and foreign teaching models. Teachers doesn't have enough pragmatic competence and their educational background is limited. In the process of teaching, it is easy to neglect the teaching of students' pragmatic competence.

3.3 Students' Weak Foundation in Foreign Languages

The implementation of immersion teaching is closely related to students' current knowledge level and foreign language foundation. Solid foreign language ability and subject-related knowledge are prerequisites for immersion English teaching. Immersion English teaching requires not only teachers' excellent professional knowledge and foreign language teaching ability, but also students' solid language proficiency. Based on students' language ability, basic interaction between teachers and students can be formed, and bilingual teaching can be carried out smoothly. When it comes to Chinese students, it is mainly manifested in their weak bilingual awareness, low language literacy, lack of confidence in immersion teaching, doubts and even conflicting feelings, and their poor English language foundation, which makes it difficult to adapt to the requirements of foreign language immersion teaching. Therefore, consolidating students' English foundation, strengthening bilingual awareness and improving bilingual competence are the important foundations of immersion teaching.

In the case that most of the students' English proficiency is not very high, directly putting the students in the English teaching situation, and teaching the whole course content in English, will make the students feel insecure, unsuitable and even anxious. Therefore, the immersion teaching of English puts forward certain requirements for students' abilities. Students should have a good foundation in English and have a certain interest in English subject, be able to learn and apply, and be proficient in communicating in English. Therefore, English immersion teaching is not suitable for all schools and all the students.

4. The Attempted Way of Immersion Teaching Mode in our Country

Based on the above analysis, the following teaching attempts are put forward.

4.1 Creating Language Teaching Environment

Restricted by the unbalanced development of students' English application ability, in the process of immersion English teaching, the proportion of classroom language and teaching content in English has gradually increased from a high proportion of Chinese to a mixture of Chinese and English. In the process of implementation, the selected professional English textbooks are taken as the starting point, supplemented by the introduction of textbook sections and the selection and paragraph of network resources. Teachers gradually increase the proportion of English in teaching language, teaching content and problem discussion. Teachers emphasize the communicative and applied functions of language, create a relaxed and pleasant classroom atmosphere, encourage students to use English as much as possible in class, adjust their electronic equipment to English state in life and study, cultivate students' habit of using English, and gradually achieve and enter the immersion state after class.

To actively create an environment for foreign language learning as the main place for immersion learning of English, schools should actively create a native environment for all English learners, from the content of teaching in class and the teaching methods adopted, finally to the goal to be achieved. Schools should adopt foreign immersion teaching mode to carry out English immersion teaching in Chinese classroom. In addition, besides school, society and family also bear certain responsibilities to create as much English learning environment as possible for students to immerse themselves in English learning environment as much as possible.

4.2 Building a Good Teacher Team

Teachers' English application ability and level are the key to the success or failure of immersion English teaching, which determines the quality of teaching effect. The selection and training of teachers is an important part of immersion English teaching. It is a convenient way to encourage teachers with high English proficiency and foreign learning experience to engage in English teaching. In addition, we should strengthen the level of training teachers, regularly carry out training programs for teachers, encourage teachers to innovative learning, send teachers abroad regularly for immersion teaching mode observation and learning, conduct more teaching exchanges, and let teachers go out to learn more advanced teaching theory and experience. It is also an effective way for teachers to go out for training or self-study and practice with guidance.

4.3 Adopting Innovative Teaching Methods

In the process of training teachers with innovative teaching methods and innovative teaching modes, teachers should flexibly use various foreign language teaching methods and means to stimulate students' interests and hobbies, teach students to use English better, and cultivate students' pragmatic and communicative abilities. Teachers should not only focus on the teaching of language and the explanation of knowledge, but also on the realization of cross-cultural communication and cultural understanding of language and the understanding of the language and cultural connotations of Western countries. On this basis, we can understand the western culture and transmit our own culture better.

4.4 Providing Abundant Teaching Resources to Balance Chinese and Western Cultures

With professional knowledge as the main body, on the basis of selecting professional English textbooks, teachers supplement their teaching materials with various imported textbooks and network resources. According to students' interests in the classroom, teachers make students learn through search, collation, reading, translation of materials and other ways of learning. At the same time, students can be asked to learn and discuss the key points one week in advance according to the teaching content. Teachers and students can discuss with each other one lesson a week, and the teacher will comment on it in time, so that this process can be recycled on and on.

The implementation of immersion teaching is to communicate in English and to design the content of the course. However, to achieve a balance between Western culture and national culture, the teaching content can be incorporated into more cultural and ethical content of the country and it can be expressed in English. Chinese culture is so profound. We can guide students to express themselves in English when they learn English to adapt to the trend of global culture in a better way.

4.5 Presenting Diversified Teaching Media and Actively Guiding Students

Teachers use immersion English teaching mode, they should strengthen the use of various teaching media and use multimedia teaching extensively so that students can immerse themselves in the teaching language environment as far as possible. In addition to physical display, students should be provided with more relevant English materials, such as offering students relevant film and television works after class. Cultivate students' interest in learning professional courses in English implicitly.

Strengthen English classroom and after-class teaching, adopt positive methods to guide students, cultivate students' ability of listening, speaking, reading and writing, increase students' output of English, strengthen basic teaching of English, cultivate students' interest in English, and cultivate and improve students' comprehensive English level. All these above should be carried out.

5. Conclusion

No teaching method is perfect, so is immersion bilingual education. Although the implementation of immersion bilingual education in China's colleges and universities is still difficult, bilingual teaching has always been the trend of the development of higher education in China. The

implementation of bilingual teaching is a reform of the traditional English teaching mode in China and a reflection on the current situation of College English teaching.

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