

Exploration of Multimodal Vocabulary Teaching Based on the OBE Theory

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Abstract: This paper investigates multimodal vocabulary teaching based on the Outcome Based Education (OBE) concept. Throughout the research process, the OBE concept provides the overall framework, while multimodality serves as a specific teaching approach. Vocabulary teaching in the comprehensive English course offers research content and specific examples for this paper. The OBE concept, which emphasizes outcome-oriented education, imposes new requirements on curriculum design, teaching objectives, and educational outcomes. The comprehensive English course integrates various modes and media, implementing diversified and flexible teaching. Vocabulary teaching, as the core of the comprehensive English course, becomes an important case study in this paper.

1. Introduction

Currently, the OBE teaching concept requires outcome-oriented teaching that revolves around expected learning outcomes and teaching objectives (Lü, 2020). Under this concept, the comprehensive English course has updated its teaching design and implemented exams that reflect teaching objectives and learning outcomes (Hansen, 1989). Vocabulary teaching, as the foundation of language education, is a crucial element in achieving functional competence within multimodal teaching (Royce, 2002). Throughout the vocabulary teaching process in the comprehensive English course; an outcome-oriented approach is emphasized, focusing on developing students' language usage and comprehensive abilities. To align vocabulary teaching with teaching objectives, the comprehensive English course, in the context of blended curriculum reform, has developed multimedia courseware and learning resources to facilitate multimodal vocabulary teaching.

2. Outcome-Based Teaching Design Based on the OBE Concept

2.1. Overview of the OBE Concept

The OBE concept emphasizes outcome-based education, involving clear teaching objectives or learning outcomes, targeted instruction, continuous monitoring of the learning process, and learning

outcome assessment and feedback (Hansen, 1989). Under the guidance of this concept, teachers can scrutinize and reflect on their teaching designs. Therefore, OBE-based teaching requires teachers to accurately anticipate teaching objectives and provide feedback on students' learning outcomes to enhance their learning experiences.

2.2. OBE Concept and Comprehensive English Vocabulary Teaching

The comprehensive English course is a core foundational course for English majors, aiming to help students build a strong professional foundation, enhance their language skills, and improve their overall qualities during the early years of their undergraduate studies. The course places significant emphasis on reforming vocabulary teaching methods and designing vocabulary teaching models suitable for online instruction. Without vocabulary knowledge, individuals cannot effectively convey meaning (Tang & Liang, 2021). Vocabulary teaching is centered around unit themes. At the end of each unit, students are required to produce various forms of outcomes using the vocabulary they have learned. Guided by the OBE concept, vocabulary teaching in the comprehensive English course allows teachers and students to efficiently achieve their teaching and learning objectives.

3. Vocabulary Teaching under the Multimodal Theory

3.1. Multimodal Theory

Zhang (2009) defines multimodal discourse as an activity that engages multiple senses in communication. The primary senses involved are visual, auditory, and tactile. According to Zhang's explanation of multimodal theory, participants in communication use various senses and multiple modes of communication to create meaningful expressions that align with their communicative goals (Zhang, 2009). In traditional classrooms, teachers primarily use printed materials as knowledge carriers. Students receive symbolic information through written text on paper and engage in meaning production through writing with a pen. Teachers impart knowledge through spoken language combined with language symbols (Zhang, 2009). In this traditional teaching mode, the combination of visual and auditory interactions predominates. The advent of information technology has enabled the use of various modalities, such as images, sounds, videos, and web content, as material resources in the classroom. These modalities interact with and complement each other, enhancing and shaping new meanings collaboratively (Royce, 2002).

3.2. Designing Unit Vocabulary Teaching under the Multimodal Theory

Guided by the OBE concept, the comprehensive English course emphasizes student outcomes and requires a diversified and flexible approach to teaching design. Teachers must ensure that the learning process proceeds smoothly while providing a variety of modes for students to engage in meaningful expression, construction, and design (Jewitt, 2008).

4. Specific Application of Multimodal Theory in Comprehensive English Vocabulary Teaching

4.1. Pre-class and In-class

Vocabulary teaching in the comprehensive English course is a continuous process. In multimodal theory, outcomes involve creating meaningful expressions by using various senses and modes to

connect different modalities (Kress & Leeuwen, 2017). Currently, the combination of visual and auditory modalities is the primary mode of language instruction in classrooms. Vocabulary teaching begins by introducing words and aims to enhance students' multimodal communication abilities (Royce, 2002). During the vocabulary teaching process, teachers stimulate students to analyze the connections between language and images using multiple senses (Jewitt, 2008). Before delving into a text's content, teachers provide information elements such as words, images, and audio. Students learn to synthesize information across various modalities, identify relationships between different types of information, and ultimately interpret meaning.

4.2. Post-class

After completing a unit, students participate in unit extension tasks individually or in groups. Teachers encourage students to apply various symbolic meanings in their communication, play diverse symbolic roles, and construct richer systems of meaningful expression based on the newly acquired vocabulary (Kress & Leeuwen, 2017). During this process, students bring in multimodal reading and writing from their extracurricular knowledge about unit content. This illustrates the efforts made by teachers to match teaching methods with students' information-rich contexts (Thompson, 2008).

5. Conclusion

Outcome-based teaching design, guided by the OBE concept, demands a focus on outcomes, diversified assessment methods, and encourages students to produce various forms of outcomes. Students' learning outcomes integrate multiple modes and use a rich array of communication media. When choosing modes for communication, students tend to favor certain modalities (Jewitt, 2008). The process of multimodal vocabulary learning is a self-defined and self-designed process of meaningful expression. Only by incorporating language classrooms that reflect students' interests in popular culture can more students engage in the entire learning process. In the "discussion board" segment, where students have more autonomy, teachers discover that the complex and versatile modalities offer students unlimited possibilities for changing narrative styles (Jewitt, 2008). Students' learning identities are flexible and constantly changing as they switch between and explore different modalities. Multimodal vocabulary teaching has changed the roles of learners, making them peer writing guides, proofreaders, and reviewers. In summary, advancing multimodal vocabulary teaching in comprehensive English is essential.

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Data Availability

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Conflict of Interest

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