The Influence of Emotional Factors in Second Language Acquisition and Its Countermeasures from the Perspective of Educational Psychology

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Abstract: With the acceleration of globalization, the importance of second language acquisition has become increasingly evident. It is not only a key way for individuals to improve their comprehensive quality and broaden their international horizons but also an important step for the country to cultivate international talents and enhance global competitiveness. Therefore, this paper focuses on the influence of affective factors on learning effects. From the perspective of educational psychology, this paper systematically explores the impact of emotional factors in the process of second language acquisition and its coping strategies. Through literature review and theoretical analysis, this paper outlines the main theories of second language acquisition and the affective factors that arise in second language acquisition. Subsequently, two key affective factors, self-efficacy and anxiety, and their effects on second language acquisition are analyzed in detail. The paper further proposes targeted strategies for second language acquisition, such as stimulating motivation and interest, reducing anxiety and stress, enhancing self-confidence and self-efficacy, promoting cooperative learning and emotional support, and implementing personalized teaching and tailored teaching, which aim to help learners better cope with the challenges posed by affective factors and to improve the effect of second language acquisition. The findings underscore that affective factors play a crucial role in second language acquisition, and effective affective management strategies are of great significance in improving learners' second language proficiency.

Keywords: educational psychology, second language acquisition, learning motivation, learning environment, affective factors

1.   Introduction

In theera of globalization, second language(L2) acquisition has become a central focus in the field of education. For university students, proficiency in an international language not only enhances their overall personal qualities but also gives them a crucial competitive advantage in their career development. However, teaching practices often reveal that many university students are not satisfied with the results of second language acquisition despite their time-consuming and painstaking efforts. This discrepancy highlights the critical influence of affective factors.

Second language acquisition refers to the process by which an individual learns another language based on having mastered one language (usually the mother tongue). This process involves several disciplinary fields such as linguistics, psychology, and education, and is an important branch of contemporary language research. Within thisdomain, affective factors have attracted much attention as the core influences on learning effectiveness, covering multiple dimensions such as motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the specific content of self-efficacy and anxiety, to explore the mechanism of their effects on learning effectiveness, and to propose effective strategies. Through theoretical reading and analysis, this paper reveals the intrinsic connection between affective factors and the effects of second language acquisition and lays the foundation for the construction of a more comprehensive theoretical system of second language acquisition. This study provides a new perspective for theoretical exploration in the field of second language acquisition. Unlike traditional research that focuses on teaching methods and learning strategies and ignores the importance of affective factors, this study focuses on the key role of affective factors in the process of L2 acquisition and reveals their deeper connection with the acquisition effect, thus laying a solid foundation for the construction of a more complete theoretical framework of L2 acquisition.

2. Theoretical background of second language acquisition

2.1. Major theories of second language acquisition

Second language acquisition, or bilingualism for short, refers to the process by which an individual learns another language based on mastery of his or her mother tongue. This process spans multiple disciplines, including linguistics, psychology, and education, and constitutes a key branch of contemporary language research. Theories of second language acquisition emphasize the importance of exploring the essential features of a second language in educational practice and developing detailed learning plans.

Numerous theories in SLA provide diverse perspectives on how learners acquire a second language. Among them, Krashen's input hypothesis and Swayne's output hypothesis are highly regarded. In addition, other theories have significantly influenced second language acquisition. For example, socio-cultural theory highlights the interactions and between social environmental factors and individual learners in the process of second language acquisition, and the theoretical model of second language writing feedback constructed within the framework of socio-cultural activity theory highlights the initiative of the feedback subject and the role of socio-cultural environmental factors in the second language writing feedback process. [1] This model provides important ideas for a deeper understanding of the mechanism of second language acquisition, asserting that language acquisition is not only a psychological activity within the individual but is also closely related to the social environment. Learners construct and manifest their social identities through language during social interactions, a process that contributes to the continued development of their language proficiency. By analyzing SLA from multiple perspectives, these theories provide not only a robust framework for understanding the complexity of second language learning but also practical guidance for educational practices.

2.2. Emotional factors arising in the process of second language acquisition

Second language learners are influenced by numerous factors in the learning process. Among them, affective factors are crucial. Historically, language learning research has overemphasized cognitive processes and brain activity, often neglecting the affective dimension. Humanistic psychology suggests that cognitive and affective factors need to be integrated to promote the all-round development of the human being, leading to increased attention on the emotional aspects of foreign

language teaching. Language learners are inevitably bound by emotional factors such as personalities, attitudes, motivations, anxieties, and self-confidence in the acquisition of a second language. For example, college students often experience emotional anxiety during second language learning, which slows down their learning process. According to Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, language acquisition is affected by affective filtering, in which low affective filters intercept less linguistic input and more linguistic knowledge is assimilated and learned, and high affective filters reduce the linguistic input partially, making language learning more difficult. When language filters are strong, students are reluctant to take the initiative and may feel a high degree of anxiety and unease during the learning process, which further affects acquisition [2].

The importance of affective factors cannot be underestimated. Factors such as self-efficacy and anxiety profoundly impact both the pace and quality of second language acquisition. In the following sections, the impact of affective factors on learning outcomes and the corresponding learning strategies will be analyzed.

3. The impact of affective factors on learning outcomes

3.1. Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy plays a crucial role in the development of learners in the process of second language acquisition. It refers to a learner's prediction of and confidence in their ability to perform a particular language learning task. This theory was introduced by the American psychologist Bandura in 1977 and has been widely valued by all walks of life. In his 1986 book, The Social Basis of Thought and Behaviour, Bandura further developed a systematic discussion of self-efficacy, which led to the construction of a framework for the theory. In his view, self-efficacy is the perception of an individual's ability to control events that affect them, the ability to generate self-generated action processes that integrate cognitive, social, and behavioral skills, and the belief in the ability to control events that affect one's life.

Later, self-efficacy was defined as people's beliefs about their ability to organize and carry out the course of action required to achieve a particular goal. In short, self-efficacy is not only an element of subjectivity but also a motivational factor that influences behavioral choices, determines the level of effort and persistence in dealing with difficulties, and affects thinking and emotional responses. Additionally, it is also a self-generated ability that develops gradually with individual growth. Over decades of inquiry and development, it has expanded to other related applications, including education. Research has generally shown that students' self-efficacy in learning has a significant impact on their learning behaviors and achievements, and that it is a non-intellectual factor that stimulates interest in learning, improves learning efficiency, and enhances the ability to take responsibility for and manage one's learning behaviors. According to research, learners with higher self-efficacy are often able to assess their progress and effectiveness more accurately when learning a second language, thus making more rational learning plans. They have a clear understanding of their learning ability and can change their learning strategies when they encounter learning obstacles to achieve their learning goals more efficiently. In addition, self-efficacy is closely related to learners' motivation. Learners with a high sense of self-efficacy are often intrinsically motivated to learn and focus more on the enjoyment and fulfillment of the learning process rather than on the outcome.

3.2. Anxiety

Anxiety, a psychological state characterized by feelings of nervousness and fear of making mistakes, is a common emotional barrier in second language acquisition. Language anxiety encompasses bad feelings such as apprehension, self-doubt, and nervousness, and anxiety may be the biggest obstacle in foreign language learning. [4] In the process of second language acquisition, anxiety, as an

important part of affective factors, has a significant impact on learners' learning effectiveness. It can not only inhibit the effective absorption of language knowledge but also weaken learners' motivation and self-confidence.

Specifically, anxiety in second language acquisition can be subdivided into various forms such as communicative anxiety, test anxiety, and negative evaluation anxiety. Among them, communicative anxiety refers to the nervousness that learners feel when they use a second language to communicate practically because they worry that they express themselves inaccurately or fail to understand the other party's intention. This anxiety often leads to learners' tendency to avoid communicative situations, which in turn hinders the enhancement and development of their practical language skills. Test anxiety is related to learners' performance in language assessment, and its excessive state may trigger test performance failure. Negative evaluation anxiety, on the other hand, is the fear of being judged negatively by others, further hindering the learning process. In a non-native language environment, college students often show anxiety and fear, worrying about making mistakes and being ridiculed or facing disappointing stares. Under the influence of this emotion, two distinct results are usually produced. On the one hand, moderate anxiety can stimulate students' self-esteem and motivate them to actively engage in training and learning to improve their foreign language proficiency; on the other hand, excessive anxiety can make students emotionally sensitive and overly concerned about other people's evaluations, which leads to a passive attitude towards learning and makes it difficult for them to achieve ideal learning results.

4. Second Language Acquisition Strategies from the Perspective of Educational Psychology

Based on the analyses of the effects of self-efficacy and anxiety in the previous chapter, this section proposes learning strategies for second language acquisition from these two aspects.

To enhance learners' self-efficacy, educators can adopt the following strategies: firstly, creating practical opportunities for learners to experience success in the process of language learning tasks is a powerful way to enhance self-efficacy. Teachers should provide students with more opportunities to experience success, assign appropriate learning tasks according to students' actual levels, and avoid using learning results as the only criterion for evaluating students Instead, teachers should pay more attention to whether students make efforts and progress, make encouraging comments to students, help them discover and develop their strengths and specialties, and so on, to help students feel a sense of achievement during the process of experiencing success, form a positive self-perception, and improve self-efficacy. [5] This experience of success can effectively stimulate learners' intrinsic motivation and prompt them to be more actively engaged in language learning. In addition, building a supportive learning environment is also important for enhancing learners' self-confidence and self-efficacy. Educators should endeavor to build a positive, tolerant, and understanding learning environment to motivate learners to try and not be afraid of mistakes.

Moreover, creating a supportive learning environment is essential for boosting learners' self-confidence and self-efficacy. Cooperative learning is an effective method that not only allows students the freedom to express themselves, but also provides a favorable environment where they can develop confidence, engage in self-directed learning, and participate in enjoyable activities. [6]

In addition, developing learners' independent learning ability is crucial to enhancing their self-efficacy. Educators should guide learners to make personalized learning plans, teach them effective learning strategies and methods, and help them learn to monitor their learning process and make timely adjustments to their learning strategies. When learners are responsible for planning and managing their learning process, their self-confidence and self-efficacy will be significantly improved. By creating opportunities for success, providing timely feedback, offering constructive attributional guidance, building a supportive learning environment, and promoting self-directed learning,

educators can help learners adopt a more positive and confident attitude towards second language acquisition, ultimately leading to continuous improvements in language proficiency.

In second language acquisition, anxiety, as a prevalent affective disorder, not only affects the psychological state of learners but also may hurt learning outcomes. To effectively reduce learners' anxiety and stress, a multidimensional approach is needed. Psychological counseling and relaxation training are generally regarded as highly effective interventions.

Psychological counseling plays a crucial role in alleviating the anxiety and psychological pressure of second language learners. Counseling can take two forms: individual counseling and group counseling. Individual counseling can create a safe and private space for learners to share their difficulties and challenges. Psychological counselors assist learners in analyzing the root causes of their problems and exploring and implementing effective solutions to alleviate their psychological burden through listening, providing support, and professional guidance. Group counseling focuses on the use of interactive forms such as group discussion and role-playing, aiming to enhance the learners' sense of belonging to a group and their ability to work together so that they can acquire effective strategies for coping with anxiety and stress through mutual communication. In addition to psychological counseling, relaxation training has also been proven to be an effective means of relieving anxiety and stress. Specifically, relaxation training covers a variety of techniques such as deep breathing and meditation, which can effectively promote the relaxation of learners' body and mind, and thus relieve tension. In addition, meditation is a form of deep relaxation. It requires learners to sit still and focus on their breath or a specific object, a process that significantly improves their ability to concentrate and helps to reduce psychological stress.

In conclusion, addressing anxiety and stress is critical for enhancing second language acquisition. Psychological counseling and relaxation exercises are valuable tools in reducing anxiety, thereby improving learners' learning efficiency and self-confidence. By integrating these strategies, educators can help learners manage their emotions and improve their language learning outcomes.

5.   Conclusion

Based on the theoretical framework of educational psychology, this study provides an in-depth analysis of the roles of two affective factors, self-efficacy and anxiety, and their coping strategies in the process of second language acquisition. The study begins by systematically reviewing and summarizing the major theories of second language acquisition and the importance of affective factors in the field, building solid theoretical support for the subsequent research work. Subsequently, the study examines the emotional factors of self-efficacy and anxiety in the process of second language acquisition in detail, and analyses in depth the complex mechanisms by which these factors influence the effects of second language acquisition. In addition, based on the perspective of educational psychology, this study constructs a set of targeted second language acquisition strategies to help learners effectively deal with the challenges posed by affective factors, and thus enhance learning efficiency and outcomes. At the conclusion level, this study provides educators with a broader and deeper vision of teaching and learning by analyzing the complex effects of affective factors on the process of second language acquisition and revealing the emotional barriers and their underlying causes in the process of second language learning. At the same time, the strategies proposed in this study are highly practical and actionable, which can provide strong support for teachers to pay more attention to and satisfy learners' affective needs in teaching practice, thus promoting the continuous optimization of teaching methods and tools, and improving teaching quality and learning effectiveness.

However, this study has certain limitations. While it focuses on the effects of self-efficacy and anxiety on second language acquisition and coping strategies,the actual process of second language acquisition is inherently complex and involves many factors, including the learning environment,

teaching methods, and other contextual elements. These factors may interact with affective variables in intricate ways. Therefore, future research can take into account the interactions among various factors to reveal the inherent patterns and characteristics of second language acquisition more comprehensively.

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