

# The study of high school English speaking teaching under the multiple intelligences theory

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**Abstract:** This paper takes multiple intelligences theory as the study object, the main purpose is to explore the application of multiple intelligences theory in oral English teaching in senior high schools. Firstly, this paper analyzes the theory of multiple intelligences on the basis of reviewing previous studies. Then according to the present situation and problems of oral English in Chinese senior high schools, this article discusses how to apply the theory of multiple intelligences to oral English teaching in senior high schools.

**Key words:** multiple; intelligences; English oral teaching; senior high school

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## 1 Introduction

The theory of multiple intelligences helps teachers to find the advantages and changes of students in teaching. Hence, teachers can fully consider the characteristics of students and then provide students with a diversified learning environment, so that education can be successful in everyone. Therefore, educators all over the world are exploring how to apply this theory to practical teaching, and a large number of related studies have emerged. The research on the theory of multiple intelligences is still in its infancy in China and the education system in China largely ignores the oral English teaching in middle schools. So in high schools, teachers can apply the theory of multiple intelligences to senior high school English classroom to enhance the interest of classroom learning, and improve students' interest in learning and oral English level. In recent years, with the vigorous promotion of quality education and the emphasis on oral English learning in senior high schools, the application of multiple intelligences theory in oral English teaching in senior high schools has become a topic worthy of study.

## 2 The multiple intelligences theory

### 2.1 The definition of multiple intelligences theory

The theory of multiple intelligences is a kind of "internal constructive" learning theory. It emphasizes that the understanding of knowledge and the construction of knowledge system vary from person to person, due to the cognitive differences of each student and the initiative of knowledge construction. This theory holds that human intelligence is pluralistic, and there are at least several intelligences that can be developed.

### 2.2 The formation and development of multiple intelligences theory

The theory of multiple intelligences was put forward by Gardner in 1983 and has been developed many times since then [1]. According to the theory, there are at least seven intelligences in each person, namely language intelligence,

mathematical logic intelligence, music intelligence, space intelligence, body movement intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and self-awareness intelligence and the classification of intelligence is not limited to these seven intelligences. With the deepening of research, more types of intelligences will be identified or the original intelligence will be improved [2]. For example, Gardner put forward the eighth kind of intelligence--the intelligence of understanding nature in 1996. In a specific social and cultural environment, everyone has different intelligences. Intelligence is usually combined in a complex way. This is a challenge to the traditional monistic theory [3]. The theory of multiple intelligences provides an opportunity for educational reform.

### 2.3 Previous studies on multiple intelligences of English teaching

#### 2.3.1 Studies abroad

Foreign scholars' research on the theory of multiple intelligences mainly focuses on the differentiated teaching.

Robin Fogarty elaborated the integration of multiple intelligences and interdisciplinary courses, and discussed the methods, strategies and classroom cases to implement the whole set of interdisciplinary courses, which is of great significance for the development of students' multiple intelligences and the establishment of meaningful education and evaluation methods [4].

Howard Gardner believes that the theory of multiple intelligences puts forward a new concept of intelligence. There are at least nine relatively independent intelligences in individuals at the same time. The theory of multiple intelligences respects individual differences, embodies the concept of personalized education, and provides important enlightenment for contemporary personalized education.

#### 2.3.2 Studies at home

Chinese scholars' research on the theory of multiple intelligences mainly focuses on its application in China's education reform.

Chen Ying believes that with the continuous reform of the education system, oral English will become the focus of English teaching. Therefore, senior high schools should strengthen the teaching of oral English, taking the improvement of students' oral ability as the teaching goal, so as to promote good communication between students [5]. However, during the teaching process, students spend most of their time on the college entrance examination and less time on oral English learning. At the same time, students' comprehensive English ability is insufficient. In a word, under the comprehensive conditions, the quality of oral English teaching in senior high schools is not high. At present, the theory of multiple intelligences can change the traditional teaching methods, which is a favorable basis for improving oral English teaching in senior high schools. Therefore, this paper analyzes the theory of multiple intelligences and its application in high school oral English teaching, so as to provide reference for oral English teaching [6].

## **3 Problems in oral English teaching in high schools**

### 3.1 Oral English is ignored & the class arrangement is unreasonable

Listening, speaking, reading and writing are four basic abilities required by the new curriculum standard [7]. As a language, English is mainly used for communication between people. But from the current situation of English teaching, our middle school English teachers ignore the function of English language communication, they pay too much attention to the explanation of English knowledge points in the process of classroom teaching [8]. Although some English teachers have arranged students to practice English conversations in class, they are relatively mechanical and simple.

### 3.2 Students' weak English foundation makes oral English learning difficult

Students' English foundation is generally poor. English and Chinese belong to different language families. There are many differences between the two languages. According to the Chinese way of thinking and language habits, middle

school students save English words into a so-called sentence. This phenomenon is common in their compositions. The root cause is the difference between English and Chinese, which makes it difficult for middle school students to learn English.

### 3.3 Lack of oral atmosphere leads to less practice opportunities

Many students' pronunciation and intonation are not standard. They lack self-confidence, dare not speak, feel nervous and anxious when they speak English to the teacher and the whole class, worrying that teachers and students will laugh at them.

Many oral textbooks are old and lack of new ideas. They just list some sentence patterns, dialogues, short passages and other text forms. The form is single and the content is old, which cannot effectively mobilize students' interest and learning enthusiasm.

## **4 Suggestions on the application of multiple intelligences theory in oral English teaching in high schools**

### 4.1 Carrying out individualized teaching according to students' intelligence

In oral English teaching, teachers should set different teaching tasks according to the characteristics of each student. At the beginning, teachers can introduce the characteristics of each intelligence to students, and let them judge which intelligence is stronger, and then make full use of their strong intelligence to promote their own learning. After each student finds their own superior intelligence, teachers need to divide the same class of students into the same groups.

### 4.2 Innovating teaching methods

First, optimize the teaching process. For example, the classroom activities in teaching such as group discussion, vocabulary games, storytelling, debate, diary keeping, and other activities can effectively improve students' language intelligence; the use of inclusion method to explain grammar by English teachers will better attract students with strong mathematical logic intelligence and develop students' mathematical intelligence logical ability.

Second, we should emphasize diversified teaching methods. Multiple intelligences provide English teachers with different ways to show students information and explain teaching materials. In addition, in English classroom, teachers should connect the teaching content with students' real life, encourage students to keep a diary and write a summary to enhance students' self-conscious introspection.

### 4.3 Creating a relaxed environment for better communication

For students' anxiety in class, teachers should first break through students' psychological barriers, make students dare to speak English, and then encourage them to be brave and willing to participate in classroom activities. For students who dare not speak, we can start with simple questions. For students whose pronunciation is not accurate, teachers should help students correct their pronunciation and build up their confidence in speaking English.

Second, it is suggested that teachers should actively carry out a variety of classroom activities to create a good communicative atmosphere in oral class, such as English speech, debate and so on, create a relaxed competitive communication atmosphere to fully mobilize the enthusiasm of students.

Thirdly, teachers can evaluate students' usual classroom performance. For example, they can record students' usual oral classroom performance evaluation scores into the final total score by the week. In this way, we can urge students to actively participate in classroom activities, create a good classroom communication atmosphere, and then achieve good teaching effect.

## 5 Conclusion

The education system in China largely ignores the oral English teaching in middle schools, especially in high schools. In this context, this paper takes the theory of multiple intelligence as the study object, and the main purpose is to explore the application of the theory of multiple intelligences in senior high school oral English teaching. Firstly, based on the review of previous studies, this paper analyzes the theory of multiple intelligences. Then, in view of the current situation and problems of senior high school students' oral English, this paper discusses how to apply the theory of multiple intelligences to senior high school oral English teaching.

### Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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