The Application of German Movies in DaF Advanced Audiovisual Courses

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Abstract: Compared with the traditional German advanced audiovisual class which mainly relies on the textbook, the classroom atmosphere of the movie class is more active, the students' motivation and learning efficiency are higher. Unlike the modified and unnatural language of textbooks, the more realistic language of movies can better train students' listening skills in real contexts. In addition, movies can show the non-verbal communication between speakers, which has stronger cross-cultural communication function. Teachers must choose appropriate films, prepare their lessons well and organize their teaching in a scientific and rational manner in order to teach students general foreign language skills, culturally sensitive knowledge and competence, and film literacy, to enhance students' language skills in the five areas of watching, listening, speaking, reading and writing, and to improve students' cross-cultural communication skills, humanistic literacy, and appreciation of film and television.

1. Introduction

The traditional advanced audio-visual course of German is based on the textbook, and its teaching content is often based on listening, with less "visual" proportion. The classroom exercises are mainly multiple choice, fill in the blanks, questions and answers, and there may be a small amount of thematic discussion, but in general, there is a lack of interaction between teachers and students, especially between students, so the atmosphere in the classroom is not active enough, and students are not highly motivated, and the final effect of the lectures is unsatisfactory. In addition, audio-visual teaching materials take a long time to be written and published, so their contents may not be innovative enough. Moreover, the language used in textbooks is often artificially set for specific scenes and lacks authenticity compared with real-life language. Movies, on the other hand, are rich in themes, varied in scenes, and close to life, and thus can show the background and environment of the target language in a more realistic and detailed way. As a kind of flexible media, movies can be well integrated into listening teaching and bring the real language, country and culture information into the classroom, which helps students' foreign language learning. Therefore, the appropriate use of movie teaching in German advanced audiovisual courses is a useful attempt to make up for the above shortcomings and achieve better teaching results, and ultimately improve students' German language proficiency. In this paper, starting from the analysis of the advantages of film teaching, we discuss the use of German

films in advanced audiovisual German courses and their role in improving the students' language proficiency and comprehensive ability from the aspects of film selection, the formulation of teaching objectives, and the classroom organization of the film class.

2. Advantages of introducing movies in audiovisual classes

The distance between China and Germany is vast, and the language and cultural differences between the two countries are enormous. Although senior German majors often have the opportunity to go to German universities for one or two semesters, not a few of them are unable to go due to quota limitations or give up their applications for other reasons. In addition, there are fewer opportunities to communicate with native German speakers at home. German-language movies are particularly suitable for conveying authentic information about the language, the country and the culture, and can therefore bring German learners closer to Germany and its people and culture. Films have the following advantages over listening materials in textbooks.

2.1 Films are better able to motivate students and increase their learning efficiency

The entertaining and ornamental nature of movies creates a relaxing and enjoyable atmosphere for students to learn German, which reduces their psychological tension and enables them to quickly enter a better cognitive state mentally. Compared with listening content that is only stimulated by sound, movies provide foreign language learners with visual aids that help comprehension. The combination of character activities, scene and picture alternation, dialogue and soundtrack makes students' visual and auditory organs get mobilized at the same time, which can fully stimulate students' interest in learning, and make students acquire information in a more realistic language environment, which helps them remember and understand, and then improve their listening and speaking skills. According to statistics, 70% to 80% of people's perception of the surrounding environment is visual perception, and only 13% is auditory perception. [1] Thus, movies not only bring audiovisual lessons to life, but also outperform purely written materials, audio texts, and small videos of too short a duration in terms of efficiency of knowledge acquisition.

2.2 The language of the movie is more authentic

Movie language is closer to reality, more varied and has a more natural speech rate than textbooks, which have a smoother speech rate inside and are often free of noise and background sounds because they are recorded inside a studio. The most important advantage of authentic listening is that it develops the listener's self-confidence, but in existing advanced audiovisual courses in German, students hear mostly unnatural language produced for textbooks in terms of speed, vocabulary, situation and style. Listening textbooks tend to use simplified, lower-than-normal-speed, overly clear language materials that are specialized for teaching purposes. In contrast to textbooks, movies can create the most realistic contexts using images, speech and background sounds, so the language used in movies is closer to real language and can better hone students' listening skills in real contexts.

2.3 The cross-cultural communication function of the movie is stronger

Films "[...] can promote immersion in the target language culture. Authentic language use and the depiction of information about the country are ideally suited for conveying knowledge about the country".[2] Students gain a better understanding of the country, history and culture of Germany and develop intercultural competence. Last but not least, compared with listening materials, movies are able to show non-verbal communication styles between speakers, such as facial expressions, expression in the eyes, body movements, gestures and so on. There are huge cultural differences between China and German-speaking countries, so it is necessary to understand and master the

elements of German nonverbal communication behavior. Through German movies, learners are able to correctly interpret and imitate the non-verbal communication behaviors of Germans.

3. Suitable Movie Selection

From the point of view of subject matter and language difficulty, films that are close to life, with easy subject matter, moderate speed of speech and less specialized terminology should be chosen, such as dramas, romances and comedies. War movies with too many battle scenes and horror movies with too thrilling plots are not suitable for classroom teaching. Teachers can also choose movies with different backgrounds and themes, such as history, culture, religion, morality, war, immigration, and youth problems. In terms of language difficulty, it is recommended to choose movies that are slightly above the students' current language level, because many word meanings can be guessed or unimportant through the scenes, and it is not required to understand all of them except for the finely watched segments. In terms of the use of subtitles, it is recommended that Chinese subtitles be used in the teaching of B1 and B2 level students because it helps them to understand the plot. For C1 and C2 students, German subtitles are not necessary or should be used, as they are better able to decode the meaning of the language themselves with the help of images. The following movies are more suitable for classroom use: *Nirgendwo in Afrika, Das Wunder von Bern, Vier Minuten, Gloomy Sunday - Ein Lied von Liebe und Tod, Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum, Die Welle, Die Fälscher, Das Leben der Anderen, Der Tunnel, Im Westen nichts Neues, Der Untergang, Die Wannseekonferenz, Rosenstraße, Sophie Scholl - die letzten Tage, Knockin' on Heaven's Door, Good Bye, Lenin!, Im Juli*.

In terms of movie length, we also have to pay attention to the control of the length of the movie. Since there are only two audio-visual classes, the length of the movie is mostly more than one and a half hours, and some movies are even more than three hours. In addition to the necessary playback, pause, explanation and other activities in the teaching process, it may lead to the teaching progress cannot be completed. If a movie is shown in two sessions, it may cause students to lose interest and forget part of the content, thus affecting the teaching effect. Therefore, teachers must make reasonable editing of the movie before class. Teachers can cut out the clips with no or little dialogues and keep the clips with more dialogues and close to the students' language level. However, it is necessary to ensure the consistency of the content, so as not to affect the students' understanding of the movie as a whole, and ultimately retain the length of one hour is more appropriate. For example, the movie *Lola rennt* is divided into three paragraphs, and there is some repetition in the plot, so you can only select the parts that are different from each other.

4. Reasonable development of instructional objectives

Three major didactic target competency areas can be differentiated for film work in DaF lessons, which can be configured variably and integrated into the task concept.

The first target competency area is the teaching of general foreign language skills DaF (language-based learning): The four basic language skills of listening, speaking, writing and reading are to be promoted. Film content and dramaturgical tasks include theme, problems, characters, and plot. In the case of literary adaptations, appropriate film and narrative dramaturgical tasks are to be given. Auditory-visual comprehension as a fifth skill is also encouraged. In addition, other language skills and abilities such as grammatical, phonetic tasks, vocabulary tasks, etc. are to be promoted. The language varieties and linguistic peculiarities of the film must be dealt with and language attention must be developed.

The second target competency area is the teaching of culturally sensitive knowledge and skills (culturally responsive learning). This includes culture-specific aspects and development of cultural awareness (for example, by comparing film posters or film reviews of the same film in selected countries or intercultural tasks with a change of perspective).

The third target competency area is the teaching of film competence ("ability to read moving images and consciously deal with the medium of film "). This includes teaching the film-analytical skills that are relevant for film comprehension (film analytical cinematic tasks). Development of image literacy and film literacy (image and film reading skills and film analytical tasks on the meta level). Teaching of the technical language varieties from the field of "film/photography", which are necessary for the film description (technical content and language film-related tasks), and Development of media competence (receptive as well as productive action-oriented tasks).[3]

5. Scientific and effective teaching organization

Teachers must scientifically and reasonably plan the proportion of viewing, explaining and practicing, so as to avoid turning the audio-visual class into a movie appreciation class that takes up too much time for viewing and lacks interaction, or a national conditions class that is mainly based on explaining and too little practicing. "Clear task setting and goal orientation lead to the learners developing the competence they need to decode the language of the pictures. Only when they look more closely do they discover details, additional meanings and backgrounds. This pausing and decelerating is an important skill acquired in learner-centered instruction with visual media." [4] The teaching organization of a movie class can follow the following three steps:

5.1 Before watching the movie

Teachers have to make a lot of preparations before the class: not only do they need to have a comprehensive understanding of the content of the movie being shown, but they also need to have a comprehensive grasp of the characterization, social phenomena and cultural elements in that movie. In addition, teachers should also master the basic technical operations such as screenshots, video editing, insertion and removal of subtitles, and language conversion of subtitles. Before watching a movie, teachers can first introduce the movie's period background, history and culture and other information. After that, with the help of movie trailers, movie posters, movie screenshots or playing silent movie clips, etc., they can briefly introduce the plot as well as the main characters and directors so that students can better understand the theme and content of the movie.

5.2 During the movie

Teachers can set judgment questions, multiple-choice questions, fill-in-the-blanks questions, short-answer questions and other questions about the characters, plot and other elements of the movie for students to complete during the viewing. Since the speed of speech in the movie is fast and it is difficult for students to record detailed information while watching the movie, the work task during the screening should not be too difficult or too much examination of details, so as not to affect the effect of watching the movie as students spend a lot of time paying attention to the questions. To ensure that students understand correctly, the showing of certain segments can be paused and important segments can be shown several times. For grammar and vocabulary tasks, students can be asked to compile vocabulary for a particular topic and note down important sentence patterns.

5.3 After watching the movie

The classroom activity following the viewing of the film is one of the most important aspects of movie lesson, and teachers can organize both oral and written tasks.
Oral task: The teacher organizes a class discussion on the appreciation of the work in class, summarizing the content of the film, retelling a scene, discussing the thematic ideas and evaluating the characters according to the key words recorded during the viewing. Teachers can also instruct students to practice dubbing for selected clips after class and check the dubbing effect in the next

class. More motivating for students than dubbing is role-playing based on shadowing exercises. Shadowing is an exercise in which utterances of film characters are immediately imitated as accurately as possible. Students work in small groups to select clips with a relatively slow speech rate and complete dialogue sentences, and decide on the roles they will play to practice shadowing. In order to ensure a smooth flow of dialog between the characters, each student should be familiar with the entire segment and the lines of others. After all members of the group have completed their respective shadow exercises then they will work together to role-play the selected segment and perform it live in class at the next lesson. Due to the limited classroom time, it is not easy to have too many roles in the selected segment, 3-5 roles are appropriate, and the performance time for each group is about 5-8 minutes. This kind of practice helps to reduce students' anxiety and increase their interest in learning, and it effectively combines sight, hearing, speaking and acting, improving both students' oral and non-verbal communication skills.

Written tasks: Teachers may instruct students to write after-viewing or movie reviews, sequels or rewrites of the ending after the lesson. Students can also be guided to do more in-depth research and write reports on cultural or other themes that appear in the movie, such as the representation of the "evil of mediocrity" in *Persischstunden* and a personal interpretation of "Civil Courage" in *Rosenstraße*.

In this session, teachers need to explain the key and difficult vocabulary in the movie lines, analyze the grammar, teach the necessary knowledge of the country, and make a comprehensive assessment of the students' performance in acting, dubbing and other activities, including voice, intonation, speed of speech, fluency and expressiveness. Teachers can adopt different assessment methods for different movies. In addition to the linguistic aspects, teachers should also take into account the students' motivation in their usual lessons, the tacit understanding of teamwork, etc., and try to make a comprehensive and fair assessment.

6. Conclusion

The use of German movies in DaF advanced audiovisual classes improves students' learning motivation, stimulates their interest in language learning, enhances the fun of teaching, and boosts college students' enthusiasm for learning German. This kind of movie teaching cultivates students' five skills of watching, listening, speaking, reading and writing, which positively affects their vocabulary, grammar, listening comprehension, speaking skills and so on, and can improve students' language ability well. Furthermore, since German movies contain a lot of national and cultural information, teaching film also deepens students' understanding of German politics, economy, history, society, religion, folklore and so on, and greatly improves their intercultural communication skills. In addition, the analysis of plots, characters and shooting backgrounds also improves students' humanistic literacy and appreciation of film and television. In conclusion, the use of German movies in DaF advanced audiovisual classes is a useful attempt to achieve better teaching results and a good supplement to traditional listening teaching.

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