The Difficulties and Challenges of Learning English in a Multilingual Environment

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Abstract: This article explores the difficulties and challenges of learning English in a multilingual environment, as well as possible solutions. Multilingual environment refers to the situation in which one is exposed to two or more languages at the same time, which has both advantages and disadvantages for English learners. This paper analyzes the influence of multilingual environment on English learning from four aspects: language input, language output, language cognition and language emotion, and points out the existing problems and perplexities, such as language interference, language confusion, language conversion and language anxiety. This paper also puts forward some coping strategies, such as choosing suitable learning materials, adopting diversified learning methods, looking for practical opportunities, cultivating language awareness and language confidence, etc. The purpose of this paper is to provide some useful suggestions and references for people learning English in a multilingual environment.

1. Introduction

English is one of the most widely used languages in the world today, and it plays an important role in international communication, science and technology, education and culture and other fields [1]. Therefore, learning English has become a necessity or choice for many people. However, learning English is not an easy task, especially for those who live in a multilingual environment. Multilingual environment refers to the situation in which one is exposed to two or more languages at the same time, which has both advantages and disadvantages for English learners. This paper will analyze the difficulties and challenges faced by learning English in a multilingual environment from four aspects: language input, language output, language cognition and language emotion, as well as possible solutions. The purpose of this paper is to provide some useful suggestions and references for people learning English in a multilingual environment.

2. The Influence of Multilingual Environment on English Learning

2.1 Language Input

Language input refers to the language information received by learners from the external environment, which is an important source and basis for language learning. Multilingual environment can provide learners with rich and diverse English input, increase their language sensitivity and

awareness, broaden their horizons and knowledge, and promote their cross-cultural communication ability. Multilingual environment may also lead to insufficient or inappropriate English input of learners, resulting in language confusion or language interference of learners, and affecting learners' language acquisition and language development [2]. Therefore, learners need to choose appropriate English input in a multilingual environment, pay attention to distinguishing different language features and rules, and avoid wrong language habits and patterns.

2.2 Language Output

Language output refers to the way learners express their own language information orally or in writing. It is an important goal and test of language learning. Multilingual environment can provide learners with a variety of opportunities for English output, increase learners' language practice and use, improve learners' language skills and language level, and cultivate learners' language creation and innovation [3]. Multilingual environment may also lead to insufficient or inaccurate English output of learners, resulting in language conversion or language transfer of learners, affecting their language expression and language communication. Therefore, learners need to choose appropriate English output in a multilingual environment, pay attention to follow different language norms and requirements, and avoid wrong language expression and language communication.

2.3 Language Cognition

Language cognition refers to learners' understanding, analysis and processing of language, which is an important process and means of language learning. Multilingual environment can provide learners with multi-dimensional and multi-layer approaches to English cognition, increase learners' language thinking and language logic, improve learners' language analysis and language solution, and cultivate learners' language learning and language research [4]. Multilingual environment may also lead to learners' insufficient or incorrect English cognition, resulting in learners' language bias or language misunderstanding, affecting learners' language understanding and language evaluation. Therefore, learners need to choose appropriate English cognition in a multilingual environment, pay attention to comparing and associating different language characteristics and rules, and avoid wrong language thinking and judgment.

2.4 Language Emotion

Language emotion refers to learners' attitude, emotion and motivation towards language, which is an important factor and motivation for language learning. Multilingual environment can provide learners with diverse and colorful English emotional stimulation, increase learners' language interest and love, improve learners' language confidence and language satisfaction, and cultivate learners' language enthusiasm and language loyalty. The multilingual environment may also lead to learners' emotional inadequacy or instability in English, resulting in learners' language anxiety or language stress, affecting learners' language self-esteem and language self, and hindering learners' language engagement and language persistence [5]. Therefore, learners need to choose appropriate English emotions in a multilingual environment, pay attention to regulating and controlling different language emotions and psychology, and avoid wrong language attitudes and behaviors.

3. Difficulties and Challenges

In learning English in a multilingual environment, learners must not only face the difficulty of English itself, but also face the additional difficulties and challenges brought by the multilingual

environment. This paper will analyze the main problems and perplexities encountered in learning English in a multilingual environment from four aspects: language input, language output, language cognition and language emotion, as well as the possible causes and consequences.

3.1 Difficulties and Challenges in Language Input

In a multilingual environment, learners may encounter the following difficulties and challenges in terms of language input: (1) Insufficient English input: In a multilingual environment, learners may not get enough English input because they need to balance different language needs and language resources, or because they are in an environment that lacks the use and communication of English. This will lead to poor English input quantity and quality, affect learners' English listening and reading ability, and limit learners' accumulation and mastery of English vocabulary and grammar [6]. (2) Inappropriate English input: In a multilingual environment, learners may be exposed to inappropriate English input because they may encounter different English dialects, accents, styles and usages, or because they may be disturbed and influenced by other languages. This will lead to mistakes and confusion in learners' English input, affect learners' English comprehension and memory ability, and cause learners' English errors and misunderstandings. English language input is also related to video. English language input is obtained by watching English videos, movies, documentaries, short films, news, etc. The combination of vision and hearing is an important measure, which can promote learners to form stronger listening comprehension and oral expression skills and immerse themselves in the real context and experience different cultural backgrounds. However, in the Chinese language environment, learners learn language input in a single way, ignoring the application of English videos, movies and documentaries, resulting in poor enthusiasm for language input learning.

3.2 Difficulties and Challenges in Language Output

In a multilingual environment, learners may encounter the following difficulties and challenges in language output: (1) Insufficient English output: Learners may not get enough opportunities to export English because they need to adapt to different language environments and language objects, or because their environment lacks English needs and feedback. This will lead to poor English output quantity and quality, affect learners' English speaking and writing ability, and limit the effect and level of learners' English communication and expression. (2) Inaccuracy of English output: Learners may produce inaccurate English output because they may be influenced by different language habits and language patterns, or because they may encounter conversion and transfer of other languages. This will lead to errors and irregularities in learners' English output, affect learners' English accuracy and fluency, and cause learners' English confusion and perplexity. Due to the different phonetic systems of English and Chinese, learners may encounter problems with inaccurate pronunciation, especially for some consonant and vowel pronunciation habits. This can affect listening and speaking. At the same time, the grammatical structure of English differs significantly from that of Chinese, such as the usage and expression of tense, voice, sentence pattern, etc., which makes it difficult for learners to understand and fully grasp these differences.

3.3 Difficulties and Challenges in Language Cognition

In a multilingual environment, learners may encounter the following difficulties and challenges in language cognition: (1) Deficiency of English cognition: Learners may not have access to adequate English cognition because they need to balance different language learning and language research, or because their environment lacks English theory and empirical evidence. This will lead to poor English cognitive quantity and quality, affect learners' English understanding and evaluation ability, and limit

the development and improvement of their English thinking and logic [7]. (2) Incorrect English cognition: Learners may have incorrect English cognition because they may be influenced by different language thinking and language patterns, or because they may encounter biases and misunderstandings of other languages. This will lead to errors and irregularities in learners' English cognition, affect learners' ability of English analysis and solution, and cause learners' English confusion and perplexity. When Chinese learners come into contact with the English language, they may need to gradually understand and get familiar with the context, cultural differences and idioms of English-speaking countries, which will also have an impact on their language cognition. (3) The lack of English listening ability training is also a major obstacle to language cognition. Listening to the material to solve the problem through the pan-listening technique is a key step. After mastering this language habit and having a clear cognition of the corresponding background knowledge, it is less difficult to know the meaning of the listening material. Take the phrase "an apple of love," for example. It doesn't mean "an apple of love." It just means a familiar vegetable, the tomato. Why does this expression mean this? Because in the eyes of the West, the tomato is the same shape and color as the human heart, so when this vegetable was first introduced into the market, people only regarded it to express their feelings for their lovers [8]. Slowly, people accepted the edible nature of the tomato and included it in the category of food. However, in the Chinese language environment, it is easy to misunderstand many phrases and fail to grasp the foreign cultural background.

3.4 Difficulties and Challenges in Language Emotion

In a multilingual environment, learners may encounter the following difficulties and challenges in terms of language emotion: (1) Lack of English emotion: Learners may not get enough emotional stimulation in English because they need to balance different language attitudes and language emotions, or because their environment lacks English encouragement and support. This will lead to low quantity and quality of learners' English emotion, affect learners' interest and love in English, and limit learners' enthusiasm and loyalty in English. (2) Instability of English emotions: In a multilingual environment, learners may have unstable English emotions because they may be subjected to different language pressures and language anxiety, or because they may encounter conflicts and difficulties in other languages. This will lead to the fluctuation and imbalance of learners' English emotion, affect learners' English confidence and self-esteem, and hinder learners' English commitment and persistence. (3) Because learners tend to be more comfortable, positive and confident in their native language environment, they are not positive enough in learning English in the Chinese language environment and lack sufficient self-confidence. They will be timid when communicating with others in English, which will affect their expression ability. At the same time, as a foreign language, English is prone to problems in communication that the meaning expressed is inconsistent with the heart and the understanding is not accurate enough. Over time, learners will think that they are not a "good child" in English learning, and their confidence in English learning will gradually decrease. The culture and habits of English-speaking countries are quite different from those of China, which easily causes learners to face the trouble of cultural estrangement, and the context discomfort is also quite common. Therefore, it is difficult to fully master and learn English well in the Chinese language environment, and there is also a deficiency in language emotion expression.

4. Solutions

To learn English in a multilingual environment, learners must not only recognize and cope with the difficulties and challenges brought by the multilingual environment, but also seek out and adopt the opportunities and advantages brought by the multilingual environment. This paper will propose

some effective solutions to learning English in a multilingual environment from four aspects: language input, language output, language cognition and language emotion, as well as possible effects and benefits.

4.1 Solutions for Language Input

In a multilingual environment, learners can take advantage of the following opportunities and advantages in language input to improve their English learning effectiveness and level: (1) Learners need to take advantage of the rich and diverse English input provided by the multilingual environment. Learners can contact different English sources and types, such as native English speakers, non-native English speakers, English teachers, English media, English networks, etc., to get rich and diverse English input.[9] This can help learners understand the diversity and variability of English, broaden their horizons and knowledge, and promote their intercultural communication ability. (2) Learners need to take advantage of the English input provided by the multilingual environment for comparison and connection. Learners should compare and relate different languages, such as mother tongue, second language, foreign language, etc., and obtain English input for comparison and connection. This can help learners discover the similarities and differences and connections between English and other languages, improve learners' language awareness and sensitivity, and promote learners' language acquisition and language development. (3) The quantity and quality of English input should be increased. Learners should be exposed to English as much as possible, using various ways and means, such as watching English movies, listening to English songs, reading English books, browsing English websites, etc., to obtain a large number of high-quality English input. Learners should also pay attention to the selection of English input suitable for themselves, and choose the appropriate difficulty, content and form of English input according to their English level, interests and goals. (4) The features and rules of English input should be distinguished. Learners should pay attention to observe and analyze English input, understand the features and rules of different English dialects, accents, styles and usages, and avoid confusion and misunderstanding. Learners should also pay attention to distinguish and eliminate the interference and influence of other languages to avoid mistakes and confusion. By comparing and connecting different languages, learners can find the similarities and differences between English and other languages and improve their language awareness and sensitivity.

4.2 Solutions for Language Output

In a multilingual environment, learners can take advantage of the following opportunities and advantages in language output to improve their English learning effectiveness and level: (1) The multiple and varied English output opportunities provided by the multilingual environment should be utilized. Learners can use different language environments and language objects, such as native English speakers, non-native English speakers, English teachers, English classmates, English friends, etc., to obtain a variety of opportunities for English output [10]. This can help learners exercise and improve their English speaking and writing ability, increase and improve their English communication and expression effect and level. (2)The English output provided by the multilingual environment should be compared and analyzed. Compare and analyze different languages, such as mother tongue, second language, foreign language, etc., to obtain the English output of comparison and analysis. This can help learners discover the differences and connections between English and other languages, improve learners' language application and language creation ability, and increase and improve their English accuracy and fluency. (3) The quantity and quality of English output should be increased. Learners should use English as much as possible, and make use of various occasions and ways, such as participating in English activities, joining English clubs, making English speeches,

writing English articles, etc., to obtain a large number of high-quality English output opportunities. Learners should also pay attention to choosing English output suitable for themselves, and choose English output with appropriate content, form and style according to their English level, purpose and object [11]. (4) Learners need to follow the norms and requirements of English output. Learners should pay attention to abide by and master the norms and requirements of English output, understand the rules and usages of different English phonetics, grammar, vocabulary and rhetoric, and avoid mistakes and irregularities. Learners should also pay attention to distinguish and eliminate the influence and interference of other languages and avoid conversion and transfer. By comparing and analyzing different languages, learners can find the differences and connections between English and other languages, and improve their language use and language creation.

4.3 Solutions for Language Cognition

In a multilingual environment, learners can take advantage of the following opportunities and advantages in language cognition to improve their English learning effect and level: (1) The multi-dimensional and multi-layered approaches to English cognition provided by the multilingual environment [12]. Learners should get to know different English theories and evidence, such as English linguistics, English literature, English education, English translation, etc., and get a multi-dimensional and multi-layered approach to English cognition. This can help learners understand the depth and breadth of English, improve learners' English comprehension and evaluation ability, and promote learners' language learning and language research. (2) Learners need to take advantage of the comparative and relational English cognition provided by the multilingual environment. They can compare and relate different languages, such as mother tongue, second language, foreign language, etc., to gain comparative and related English cognition. This can help learners find the similarities and differences and connections between English and other languages, improve learners' language thinking and language logic, and promote learners' language analysis and language solution. (3) The quantity and quality of English cognition should be increased. Learners should know English as much as possible, and use various ways and methods, such as referring to English textbooks, reading English papers, consulting English dictionaries, browsing English websites, etc., to obtain a large number of high-quality ways of English cognition [13]. Learners should also pay attention to the choice of their own English cognition, according to their English level, interests and goals, choose the appropriate difficulty, content and form of English cognition. (4) The characteristics and rules of English cognition should be distinguished. Learners should pay attention to observation and analysis of English cognition, understand different English thinking, language patterns, language rules and language characteristics, and avoid mistakes and irregularities [14]. Learners should also pay attention to distinguish and eliminate the influence and interference of other languages and avoid bias and misunderstanding. By comparing and relating different languages, learners can discover the similarities and differences and connections between English and other languages and improve their language analysis and language solving.

4.4 Solutions for Language Emotion

In a multilingual environment, learners can take advantage of the following opportunities and advantages in language emotion to improve their English learning effect and level: (1) The rich variety of English emotional stimuli provided by the multilingual environment should be utilized. Experience different English cultures and English life, such as English music, English movies, English festivals, English customs, etc., and get the stimulation of diverse and colorful English emotions [15]. This can help learners understand the charm and interest of English, improve learners' interest and love in English, and promote learners' enthusiasm and loyalty in English. (2) The

regulation and control of English emotions provided by multilingual environment should be utilized. Learners should adjust different English stress and anxiety, such as English test, English speech, English communication, etc., to obtain the adjustment and control of English emotions. This can help learners overcome English difficulties and challenges, improve learners' English confidence and self-esteem, and promote learners' English commitment and persistence [16]. (3) The quantity and quality of English emotion should be increased. Learners should feel English as much as possible, and use various ways and means, such as appreciating English culture, experiencing English life, exchanging English experience, sharing English achievements, etc., to obtain many high-quality English emotional stimulation. Learners should also pay attention to choosing their own English emotions, and choose the appropriate content, form and style of English emotions according to their English level, personality and emotions [17]. (4) The stability and balance of English emotion should be regulated. Learners should pay attention to regulate and control English emotion, understand the causes and consequences of different language pressure and language anxiety, and avoid excessive and out of control. Learners should also pay attention to distinguish and resolve conflicts and dilemmas in other languages and avoid them. By comparing and connecting different languages, learners can find the advantages and disadvantages of English and other languages and improve their language confidence and self-esteem.

5. Conclusion

This paper explores the difficulties and challenges of learning English in a multilingual environment from four aspects: input, output, cognition and emotion, as well as possible solutions. This paper holds that the multilingual environment has both advantages and disadvantages for English learners. Learners need to choose the appropriate English input, English output, English cognition and English emotion in the multilingual environment, and make use of the opportunities and advantages brought by the multilingual environment to improve their English learning effect and level. This paper hopes to provide some useful suggestions and references for people learning English in a multilingual environment.

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