



## **An Analysis of Affective Factors of Deaf College Students' English Learning Based on Affective Filtering Hypothesis**

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**Abstract:** The college English course for deaf students is a compulsory course for students during the university period. The influence of learning motivation, learning anxiety and self-confidence on deaf students' English learning should be considered. By balancing various emotional factors, students can obtain good learning results. The influence of affective factors on learning is undeniable. Therefore, learning motivation, learning anxiety and self-confidence, as three major affective factors, combined with the learning reality of deaf students and the observation of front-line teachers and front-line classrooms in the investigation, the author explores the influence of affective factors like learning motivation, learning anxiety and self-confidence on deaf students' English learning, and puts forward improvement measures and suggestions at the end of the article.

**Keywords:** deaf students, English learning, affective factors

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### **Introduction**

Hearing impaired students are an important part of special education. People call those hearing impaired students who study in special education schools "deaf students". With English becoming a compulsory course for deaf college students, many special teaching schools have set up this course for deaf students. However, as a disadvantaged group, deaf students still have a lot to explore and study in their English learning rules and English teaching methods. To solve the problems that arise in their teaching, we need to comprehensively consider more factors. This study focuses on deaf college students in a university in Zhengzhou, focusing on their English learning. It is conducted through classroom observation and interviews with students and teachers. Starting from the affective factors of deaf college students in English learning, this paper analyzes the influence of motivation, anxiety and self-confidence on deaf college students in English learning through Krashen's affective filter hypothesis.

The study of second language acquisition theory began in the 1960s. With the deepening of the research, scholars have found that the influence on English learning includes not only external conditions but also internal factors. Positive affective factors can promote the learning effect of students, while negative affective factors such as anxiety and inferiority will hinder the learning progress of learners. Krashen also put forward the affective filtering hypothesis. Krashen pointed out that affective factors are like a sieve for students' learning and have an important impact on students' language learning<sup>[1]</sup>. Many experts and scholars have gradually begun to analyze and study language learners at different stages and under different conditions from the perspective of affective factors. In the existing studies, it is rare to analyze the current situation of deaf college students' English learning from the perspective of emotional factors. This study investigates the influence of three major emotional factors in Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis: motivation, anxiety and self-confidence on deaf students' English learning by going deep into the deaf students' Classroom, communicating with deaf students and teachers, analyzing their test scores and classroom performance.

Through interviews with teachers and students in the College of special education of a university in Zhengzhou, the author goes into the classroom to observe the students' class situation, and makes a long-term dynamic observation of the students' status, so as to understand the extent to which students are affected by motivation, anxiety and self-confidence in English learning. Through the investigation and analysis of the English learning status and emotional factors of three English teachers of special education universities and 160 deaf college students in Zhengzhou University, it is of guiding significance to the English learning of deaf college students with similar learning situations and conditions in China. For some developed areas



of special education in China, or schools with advanced teaching concepts, teaching means and teaching equipment in special education, The deaf students' learning situation and the influence of motivation, anxiety and self-confidence will be quite different from the objects of this survey.

### **Literature at home and abroad**

Krashen's second language acquisition theory mainly includes five hypotheses: acquisition learning hypothesis, natural order hypothesis, monitoring hypothesis, affective filtering hypothesis and input hypothesis. Krashen believes that second language acquisition involves two different processes: acquisition and learning. The so-called "acquisition" means that learners absorb knowledge unconsciously and can use the language fluently and correctly. "Learning" means that learners consciously study and understand a language and then acquire it. The monitoring hypothesis holds that the knowledge acquired through "learning" is monitored by language rules; However, the knowledge acquired through "learning" can be free from excessive monitoring and can be used freely. The natural order hypothesis holds that the rules of language learning are sequential, and no matter what is learned first, it will eventually return to a certain order, which shows that the order is universal. The input hypothesis holds that learners can only learn through a large amount of input. And this input is understandable. Only when the language input that the learner is exposed to is "understandable" can positive and visible effects be produced. The affective filtering hypothesis holds that the amount of comprehensible input that learners are exposed to and their affective factors have an important impact on language acquisition because of the individual differences of learners<sup>[1]</sup>.

The author searched the CNKI with "English Teaching for deaf students" and "English Teaching for deaf students for college students" as keywords, and found more than 100 studies related to English Teaching for deaf students, of which only a few were from the perspective of affective filtering factors. From the content of the literature, there are many empirical descriptions from the front-line teachers of English Teaching for deaf students. The domestic research on deaf students' English mainly has these achievements. Zhang Songbai starts from the particularity of deaf students' learning English, analyzes the factors affecting deaf students' learning English, pays attention to the defects and advantages of deaf students' learning English, and promotes the English Teaching of deaf students in deaf schools<sup>[2]</sup>. Sun Mulin pays attention to the advantages of deaf students' attention characteristics, and suggests using visual supplements in English learning to maintain students' attention<sup>[3]</sup>. In his research on English Teaching for deaf students, Ding Zubao analyzed the different psychological characteristics of deaf and healthy people, as well as the difficulties encountered by deaf students in English learning, and suggested teaching deaf students English pronunciation and letters according to phonemes<sup>[4]</sup>. Zhou Lin's research starts with the learning materials of deaf students, classifies and deletes the learning materials of deaf students, and suggests that the teaching contents of deaf students be stratified to better promote the timeliness of the classroom<sup>[5]</sup>.

### **Influence of learning motivation**

Deaf college students generally have low motivation to learn English. Because of their physical condition, deaf students cannot have language output like normal students. Some students with mild hearing impairment or who can hear sounds with the help of hearing aids will have some speech output. However, they are still not used to language output, and the output mode is mostly writing. Therefore, their sense of learning achievement will be greatly reduced. In addition, deaf college students' lack of interest in English learning is also an important reason that affects their learning motivation. In junior high school and high school, deaf students will put their energy into English learning because they have concerns about entering school. In college, English is a required course, and they only need to pass the final examination. Therefore, the learning pressure and goals also reduce their learning expectations, and their learning motivation gradually decreases. Third, deaf students have difficulties in learning English. They need to learn words and sentences in combination with sign language, and memory processing is more than that of college students with sound hearing. For hearing-impaired college students, learning is more difficult. Therefore, learning motivation will decline with the increase of learning difficulty. Fourth, up to now, there is no teaching material specially prepared for hearing-impaired college students. Their teaching materials are all simple new concept English, etc. the content is boring and not very targeted. The students are less interested and interested in learning. Fifth, the English classes of hearing-impaired college students lack some intelligent auxiliary equipment. Many college English courses are only taught in ordinary multimedia classrooms, and the interaction of students is poor. If there are better targeted classrooms and auxiliary equipment, students can use these equipment to see sign language more intuitively, and then interact to improve their concentration and interest. At present, ordinary multimedia only has courseware and other auxiliary equipment, Students need to observe the teacher's sign language and screen, which is easy to distract their energy. Moreover, due to the epidemic, many college students and teachers need to wear masks in the classroom and cannot distinguish lip language, which brings greater difficulties to the classroom. Students are prone to have poor understanding of the teacher's teaching. Many teachers of special education also respond that they actually rely more on lip language than sign language, Students cannot fully understand the teacher's intention. Sixth, the modern classroom will use app, Mooc, SPOC and other resources to extend the classroom. Students can use these resources to effectively preview, review, self understand and explore. This is also an effective way verified by many teaching reform experiments, which is conducive to students' inquiry learning and autonomous learning. However, there are few apps for deaf students to learn, or there is no real large-

scale promotion and application. The students' classroom mode is still stuck to traditional teaching, students have little understanding of extracurricular resources, and students' interest and motivation are not high.

### **Influence of anxiety**

Generally speaking, there is an inverted U-shaped curve between anxiety level and learning efficiency. If the anxiety level is too strong or too weak, the learning efficiency will be reduced, and the learning efficiency of moderate anxiety is the highest. The influence of anxiety on learning is mainly shown in:

1. The relationship between anxiety and knowledge. Because anxiety is generated in situations that have potential threats to individual self-esteem, anxiety will inevitably urge individuals to change their current arousal state. Whether it is normal anxiety or allergic anxiety, as long as the degree is appropriate, it can promote knowledge learning. On the contrary, low anxiety and high anxiety are not conducive to learning. In daily teaching, teachers should cultivate or restore students' self-esteem by avoiding setbacks and failures, and reduce or prevent neurotic anxiety.
2. The relationship between anxiety and learning difficulty. Generally speaking, anxiety can promote the less complex learning and mechanical learning, while it can inhibit the more complex learning or the deep-level learning that needs to rely on flexibility.
3. The relationship between the role of anxiety and learning ability. The influence of anxiety on knowledge learning is also restricted by students' learning ability. For ordinary students, moderate anxiety is the best level of anxiety, which can promote learning, while excessive or weak anxiety will reduce learning efficiency and even destroy learning.
4. Effect and duration of anxiety. The short-term anxiety has little effect on learning, while the long-term anxiety will not only affect the physical and mental health of individuals, but also have a negative impact on learning.
5. The role of anxiety and the age of the individual. For young students, anxiety is easy to have adverse effects on their learning and inhibit their learning. With the growth of students' age, the negative influence of anxiety gradually decreases, while the positive influence gradually increases.
6. Examination anxiety and learning. Generally speaking, there is a negative correlation between test anxiety and academic achievement. The higher the test anxiety, the worse the academic performance. In terms of different subjects, the more complex and abstract the learning materials are, the more obvious the influence of test anxiety is. Serious test anxiety has at least the following three hazards: first, the rigidity of cognition; second, the obstacle of social adaptation; The third is morbid fear and schizophrenia. Teachers should develop students' appropriate anxiety and keep it at a certain level. First of all, they should pay attention to strengthening students' thinking cultivation, so that they can have a correct orientation for their own behavior, and deal with difficulties calmly and properly. Secondly, we should have a correct understanding of the students to establish the learning objectives suitable for their abilities.

Anxiety is also a common emotion among deaf college students. Because of the obstacles in communication with the outside world, the difficulties in learning can not be solved in time through effective communication. Therefore, deaf college students are prone to anxiety in learning. Especially for English learning, deaf college students will have more fear of difficulties and anxiety in English learning because of greater resistance to language learning. Teachers should pay attention to guiding students to keep their anxiety at an appropriate level, not to be too anxious, nor to let students have no pressure. Too simple learning tasks are not conducive to deaf students' learning progress.

From a comprehensive perspective, teachers can start with the following aspects to deal with the anxiety of deaf students: first, teachers should fully respect the self-esteem of deaf students in the classroom, and at the same time, introduce a certain competition mechanism to mobilize students' enthusiasm for learning, wake up their anxiety awareness, and enable them to use anxiety to promote learning. Second, the learning difficulty should be slightly higher than the current level of students. According to Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis, the best input amount for second language learning can be expressed as "i + 1", that is, the learning content should be slightly higher than the current knowledge level of students. This is more conducive to students' understanding and internalization of the received information, so as to carry out the next stage of learning and achieve the gradual effect. Third, deaf students can help prolong their attention by maintaining a slight anxiety. Deaf students' attention usually lasts a short time through a series of teaching conditions and activities. It is also very necessary to cultivate and promote the development of deaf students' attention in the teaching process<sup>[1]</sup>.

### **The influence of self-confidence**

Through the in-depth observation of the deaf students' classroom and the communication with the deaf college teachers, it is found that the college students with better English performance are usually extroverted, confident and dare to express themselves. They will actively speak in class, cooperate with teachers to practice on the stage, prepare and review more in the study, and the quality of homework is higher. It can be seen that self-confidence has a great positive correlation with the learning effect of deaf students. To create a positive classroom atmosphere, fully mobilize the deaf students' English classroom atmosphere, and establish students' self-confidence in learning is a key goal of the deaf students' English classroom. How to build their confidence in learning? We can start from the following aspects:

First, teachers should optimize the classroom and set the classroom links more in line with students' learning interests. More teaching aids can be combined in the classroom, such as making more use of pictures, videos, physical objects and other intuitive feelings, so that deaf students can give better play to their visual advantages, and can more directly associate the physical objects with English words, reduce the middle sign language memory procedures, and students can improve their learning efficiency. Communicate with them in time and listen to the feedback of deaf students. Deaf students' feedback to the classroom can help teachers better improve the classroom, and can also establish a more effective form of classroom interaction.

Second, teachers should pay more attention to the psychological construction of deaf students, help deaf students establish confidence in learning, and establish a learning situation in which they help and promote each other. In the course of teaching, we should also add guidance on their learning methods to help them find their own learning ways. We should be more patient with learning, find effective and suitable ways to relieve their confusion and difficulties in learning, improve their psychological quality and make them form good personality. Group teaching and inquiry learning are adopted to promote deaf students' learning.

Third, to help students establish the habit of autonomous learning, help deaf students to expand their extracurricular reading and improve the quality of English output. Students' learning interests, methods and abilities can be integrated and greatly improved through self-learning. Moreover, after students form the habit of self-learning, the habit of self-learning will be internalized, developed, persisted and accumulated, and "habit will become natural". Students will benefit for life. In class, teachers should pay attention to equal communication with students, cultivate, infect and motivate students, so as to promote their active learning. Push students to the position of active learning, let them attract students to participate actively through inquiry learning, and try to rely on students to complete the teaching process.

Fourth, encourage deaf students to try to express themselves in English and strengthen oral English practice. Most deaf students live in non deaf families or can make sounds with the help of hearing aids. Therefore, encouraging them to output in English can help deaf students build confidence and better apply what they have learned. At the same time, by stimulating students' interest in learning and building up their self-confidence, teachers help deaf students cultivate their way of thinking, help them improve their international vision, make them understand the cultural differences between China and the West and the local customs and humanities around the world, and contribute to the comprehensive development of deaf students.

#### **Improvement Measures**

Firstly, optimize teaching materials, extend and expand learning contents. There has been no special teaching material for deaf students in English learning. Teachers make simple choices according to the teaching materials of deaf college students. Through investigation, front-line teachers and students have a high voice for exclusive teaching materials and hope to have special teaching materials for deaf students. They can increase emotional resonance by entering the world of deaf students, paying attention to the study and communication of deaf students, and introducing some foreign deaf students' study and life. At the same time, we can consider the learning rules of deaf students, and more Chinese auxiliary understanding, which is more in line with the current situation and laws of deaf students. Deaf students can help understand English words and English grammar by learning English sign language. However, through understanding, many front-line English teachers in schools only use lip language and Chinese sign language in class. Therefore, deaf students have not systematically learned English sign language. If these contents are added to deaf students' textbooks, it will also greatly promote their English learning. The app or learning resources suitable for deaf students' English learning should also be enriched. Through increasing choices, deaf students' interest in autonomous learning can be improved and their competitiveness can be enhanced<sup>[6]</sup>.

Secondly, Optimize teaching design and improve teaching methods. Teachers should pay more attention to the deaf students' dependence on sign language, vision and Chinese in the classroom organization. They should work hard in the classroom design and organization, give consideration to the deaf students' learning characteristics, and make the classroom atmosphere as active as possible. Teachers should be good at using multimedia assisted teaching methods to give students more intuitive feelings and visual impact, so as to attract students' continuous attention to the classroom. Deaf students rely more on Chinese for their understanding of words and sentences. Therefore, teachers can use the method of combining Chinese with sign language and lip language in class to make students understand the learning content thoroughly, so as to better internalize and improve<sup>[7]</sup>. Group activities and cooperative exercises should also be arranged in the classroom to encourage students to participate more in the classroom. In the teaching link, through the way of independent inquiry learning, students can be motivated to find answers actively, which can help students develop good self-learning habits.

Thirdly, make clear the teaching objectives and highlight the cultivation of reading and writing abilities. Through the investigation, it is found that the English skills that students most want to improve are reading and writing. Moreover, students' reading and writing abilities have a great impact on their future career choice and lifelong learning. In this case, teachers should aim at the learning needs of deaf students and focus on training their reading and writing abilities. In the life of deaf students, English reading and writing are of the greatest significance to them. Reading and writing are related. In the classroom, teachers expand the reading materials of deaf students, deeply analyze the reading materials, and enable students to apply

what they have learned, organize the use of language, and use written language for English expression and writing. These are the clear teaching objectives in the English Teaching of deaf students.

Lastly, promote learning through examination and organize students to take CET-4 and CET-6. According to the learning situation of the students in the surveyed schools, some deaf students pass the CET-4 every year, which indicates that deaf students can achieve a better level of English through hard work. Teachers can add examination oriented training in the classroom according to the enthusiasm of deaf students for the CET-4 and CET-6, enrich the reading materials of students through the explanation and analysis of the real questions, stimulate their interest in learning, and establish reasonable learning goals, Improve the confidence in learning. Through the guidance of CET-4, students can also prove themselves through their own efforts and open their horizons and horizons in English learning.

### **Research Findings**

The author observed the English class of deaf students for a month, and communicated with deaf students and teachers during class to understand their English learning situation and psychological factors. It was found that deaf undergraduates have insufficient motivation in English learning, and they basically only pursue passing the final examination, without higher pursuit and goal of improving their English level. Moreover, deaf students generally feel that their English level has dropped significantly after entering the University. In high school, they will attach great importance to English learning in order to enter the University. At the university stage, there are only four class hours of English classes per week. Because there is no suitable teaching material, the second volume of the new concept selected by the teacher is not very interesting to students, and the article reads boring. The teacher also does not track and investigate students' learning after class, As a result, their learning objectives at the university stage are not clear, the interest of College English classes is not strong, and there is no strong learning motivation. In the study, the author also found that the classroom teaching methods of deaf students are relatively single, mainly translating sentences and spelling words, the classroom atmosphere is not active enough, and the teaching methods are relatively single. This is also the main reason why students' learning motivation is not strong. As mentioned in the affective filtering hypothesis, appropriate anxiety is conducive to students' learning. Therefore, teachers should encourage students to take CET-4 and CET-6 exams, take the initiative to add CET-4 and CET-6 reading and writing in the classroom, invite students who have passed the CET-4 and CET-6 exams to introduce their learning experience and methods through lectures and news releases, and provide experience references to other students who can't find learning methods, so as to create a better learning atmosphere, To create better learning results, establish deaf students' confidence in English learning, and find their learning motivation and goals at the university stage.

### **Epilogue**

There is still a long way to go in College English education for deaf students, which deserves more people to study, explore and solve practical problems. Through teaching reform and other means, the deaf students can improve their learning motivation, maintain an appropriate level of anxiety, and establish their confidence in English learning, which has a long-term positive impact on the deaf students' English learning and progress. Moreover, the development of English education for deaf students is also very helpful to their physical and mental health development, the improvement of learning effect and the acquisition of self-efficacy.

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