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RESEARCH ON COOPERATIVE LEARNING BASED ON " FLIPPED CLASSROOM" TEACHING MODE IN HIGHER VOCATIONAL ENGLISH TEACHING

Tan Shuhui

Yishui College, Linyi University, Yishui Shandong, 276400, China
634532135@qq.com

Abstract

Since its appearance, the teaching mode "flipped classroom" has quickly become a most popular teaching mode in recent years. In practice, many a scholar has tried exploring this teaching mode and has got remarkable effectiveness. According to the characteristics of "flipped classroom" teaching mode and its realization form, this paper mainly explores the feasibility of applying "flipped classroom" and analyzes the implementation strategies of cooperative learning in higher vocational English teaching.

Keywords

"Flipped Classroom", Cooperative Learning, Higher Vocational English Teaching

1. Introduction

Since its appearance, the teaching mode "flipped classroom" has quickly become a most popular teaching mode in recent years. In practice, many a scholar has tried exploring this teaching mode and had got remarkable effectiveness.

Cooperative learning, combining classroom teaching with group activities, is a learning method and teaching strategy employed in many countries. Known as the most important and most successful teaching reform in recent years (Tan, W., 2002) cooperative learning is highly recognized and generally accepted by major scholars.

In recent years, under the strong support of state policy, China's vocational education has been developed well. A large number of higher vocational colleges are trying to expand the scale of running school. In these schools, however, the student pool is very complicated, and there exist certain differences in the students' cultural basis and learning ability, there being no exception in English learning. So it is necessary to explore an effective English teaching mode for vocational students, thus, to improve the students' interest in English learning and to achieve high efficiency in English classroom teaching.

2. The Characteristics of "flipped classroom" Teaching Mode and its Realization Form

The so-called flipped classroom refers to a teaching form in which teachers create teaching videos, students watch the videos at home or outside classroom, then they go back to the classroom to have a face-to-face communication and finish tasks.

With the application of modern information technology in the field of education and the innovation of education concept, "flipped classroom", a new teaching mode different from traditional ones, gets to be accepted and gets expanded continuously in the field of education since it was first studied in the United States in 2007 (Wenxia, P., 2015, December) There appear more and more articles related to flipped classroom research, and flipped class room practice is rising rapidly.

"Flipped classroom" teaching mode is a subversion of traditional teaching mode. Compared with traditional teaching ones, "flipped classroom" teaching mode has the following characteristics.

2.1 Knowledge Teaching is transferred outside Class

In traditional teaching mode, teachers complete knowledge teaching mainly through explanation in classroom; however, in flipped classroom teaching mode, based on course characteristics, teaching goals and student's characteristics, before class, teachers make teaching videos for students to learn outside class. Thus the imparting of knowledge is transferred from in class to the outside (Lei, N. & Bo, D., 2015). So the students can arrange their study according to their own situation, can decide their own learning time and learning process, and can repeatedly watch what they have difficulty in learning.

2.2 Knowledge Internalization is transferred in Class

In traditional teaching mode, the students consolidate what they have learned and realize knowledge internalization mainly through doing huge amount of homework, a lot of exercises or practice. In flipped classroom teaching mode, the students watch videos and make a note of the difficulties they encounter outside class, in classroom, to achieve a complete understanding and master new knowledge, they interact with the teacher and their classmates, discussing problems, helping each other, learning from each other.

Thus, we can draw the conclusion that "flipped classroom" teaching mode just means studying first online, then realizing individual teaching.

3. The Feasibility of Applying "Flipped Classroom" in Higher Vocational English Teaching

Cooperative learning is a structured, systematic learning strategy, 2-6 students of different learning ability making up a group to engage in learning activities in a mutual cooperative way, and to accomplish group learning objectives together. In this way, not only the learning level of each student but also the overall performance can be promoted.

"Flipped classroom" teaching mode provides the possibility for the deepening of cooperative learning, meanwhile, it also puts forward new requirements for cooperative learning. In the "flipped classroom" teaching mode, students' dominant position is more obvious. In order to give full play to the role, cooperative learning is an essential form of classroom organization.

In higher vocational colleges, the characteristics of the teachers, the characteristics of the students and the teaching environment make it possible for the implementation of English cooperative learning in the "flipped classroom" teaching mode to be put into effect.

3.1 The Characteristics of the Teachers in Higher Vocational Colleges

Higher Vocational College English teachers have a relatively high degree of education, and have a stronger consciousness and ability to accept new things. They have a better ability to apply information technology.(Haiyan, L., 2014, July).Most of them have learned how to apply computer network, having a solid foundation in the production of courseware, resource search and multimedia resources acquisition and processing. This characteristic provides technology support for smooth implementation of the flipped classroom.

3.2 The Characteristics of the Students in Higher Vocational Colleges

The students in higher vocational colleges are older than primary and middle school students, have a stronger independent learning ability and at the same time, have more free time after class to finish video learning.(Haiyan, L., 2014, July).

According to a survey on autonomous learning ability, about 80% of the students think that they have a strong or ordinary independent learning ability, and only about 20% think their autonomous learning ability is perfunctory. This shows that higher vocational college students can study autonomously outside class.

Through English learning in primary school and high school, the vocational college students obtain the basic ability in English listening, speaking, reading, writing and other aspects. This guarantees the smooth progress of English autonomous learning.

3.3 The Teaching Environment in Higher Vocational Colleges

Now, in most vocational colleges, the teachers mainly adopt the teaching mode of combining multimedia teaching with the students' independent learning on Internet in English Teaching (Haiyan, L., 2014, July). The establishment of network learning platform provides an essential technical support for the implementation of "flipped classroom" teaching mode. To meet the needs of vocational college English teaching, the teachers may produce English learning videos for the students to learn autonomously outside class. And class time can be used to solve difficult problems and complete tasks, achieving the practical application of English.

In higher vocational college, English teacher's innovation ability and consciousness and their information technology application ability, the students' self-regulated learning ability and the English learning environment, make it possible for the flipped classroom teaching to be carried out in English Teaching in higher vocational colleges.

4. The Implementation Strategies of Cooperative Learning in Higher Vocational English Teaching

In Higher Vocational College English classroom teaching, in order to achieve group cooperative learning, teachers can refer to the following strategies to optimize English classroom teaching.

4.1 Group Formation

Flipped classroom is essentially a task based teaching mode, and the best way to complete tasks is cooperation, just means establishing groups. (Xinan, Z., 2015). When forming groups, pay attention to the following two points:

4.1.1 To focus on the cultural construction of groups

Let each student set up group consciousness and always bear in mind that he is a member of the group (Xinan, Z., 2015). Teachers can take some measures to deepen students' group consciousness and cultivate the students' collective sense. To create a good group atmosphere, teachers should frequently inspire team cooperation to form group members' heart force, enhance the sense of collective honor, and lead to group unity.

4.1.2 To focus on internal coordination and mutual assistance of groups

There exist many differences between team members in specific learning. Some students may be good at expression, some good at understanding, while some students have a weak ability to accept new things, some can't focus on learning. In traditional teaching, this contradiction is difficult to mediate, but group cooperation teaching can provide a good platform. In the division of groups, teachers should fully consider the significant differences existing among the students, and continually tap the advantages of the students, thus to achieve a complementary effect of "learning merit from others to mend one's shortcoming"(Xinan, Z., 2015).

4.2 Preparations before class

In order to ensure the smooth process of "flipped classroom" teaching mode, teachers must be well prepared before class, which mainly includes the design of teaching tasks and teaching video production.

When designing, carrying out and inspecting learning tasks, teachers should take full account of the needs of the students and their English learning ability. The learning tasks should be integrated, intuitive, workable individual, and moderate.

Video teaching plays a crucial part in "flipped classroom" teaching mode (Xinan, Z., 2015). When making teaching videos, teachers should pay attention to enriching the content of the video and having a distinct theme, and the video form should be proper, video material appropriate.

4.3 Classroom activities

Class activities include: results show, quizzes, and classroom summary

4.3.1 Results show

In the display of the results, teachers must pay attention to the choice of and the roles of the main body. The listening, speaking, reading, and writing of English words, phrases, sentences, grammar, and dialogues can be completed by the team members in order according to internal division. By doing so, the students can clearly be aware of their responsibilities and tasks and their position in the group, improving the cohesion within the group, and creating a harmonious atmosphere.

Teachers should also encourage the students to provide effective demonstration suggestions and to bring forth new ideas, to demonstrate the learning results through a variety of teaching activities.

From classroom observation, it is found that in the process of group show, without Teachers' supervision, the members of other groups usually disperse their attention in class, even causing class discipline to be lax. To solve the problem, teachers can assign evaluation task to the students who don't have to display learning results, which can on one hand reflect the extent of their learning, on the other hand, can effectively maintain classroom discipline to form a good classroom learning atmosphere (Xinan, Z., 2015).

4.3.2 Quizzes

Considering the students' individual differences, teachers should give the students certain exercises to practice to consolidate what has been learnt and guarantee the comprehensiveness of

knowledge, enabling the students to achieve the integration of practice and theoretical knowledge.

4.3.3 Classroom summary

Teachers should adopt positive ways to formulate some principles that the students can adhere to in the process of classroom summary, and encourage the students to explore and blaze new trails in conclusion process (Xinan, Z., 2015). The summary of knowledge in English classroom learning can be various, such as: organizing the students to sum up the language points, letting the students write the important and difficult points on the blackboard; other students or groups replenish. So the students can participate in the summary of learning results and experience their main status in English classroom.

5. Conclusion

As a new teaching mode, "flipped classroom" changes teaching process, and even changes our way of thinking. Foreign experimental data show that flipped classroom is really of great value. But we should not be seeking short-term successes and quick profits; we should continuously explore, to find a suitable road to our actual conditions. The prospects are bright, the road is tortuous. As long as it is good for students and the development of students, and can help cultivate innovative talents, every approach is worth trying.

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