A Survey and Analysis of College English Students’ Satisfaction Under the Flipped Classroom Model

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This paper investigates the satisfaction of Chinese college students in English learning under the flipped classroom model. A questionnaire was scientifically compiled and in-depth interviews were conducted with students. The survey results show that students have high satisfaction with teachers’ video design before class, students have slightly lower satisfaction with their own learning video before class, students have the highest satisfaction with teachers’ classroom design, and students have medium satisfaction with their own classroom learning. According to the survey, the following enlightenment is drawn: The flipped classroom has high student satisfaction in English learning. However, the flipped classroom model cannot solve all the problems of college English classroom teaching, and what we should do is to give full play to its advantages. We can improve the learning effect of flipped classroom and increase students’ learning satisfaction by optimizing the online learning environment of flipped classroom and improving students’ autonomous learning ability.

Keywords: flipped classroom, English learning, student satisfaction

Introduction

The concept of student satisfaction is originated from customer satisfaction, which refers to a pleasant feeling after that the customer enjoys the goods or services. Experts and scholars regard students as consumers and university education as a service, and they introduce the theory of satisfaction into education research field. As for the definitions of student satisfaction, opinions are divided. The first one defines the student satisfaction from the perspective of the students’ direct feelings. For example, Knowles (1983) thought that student satisfaction is a pleasant feeling or attitude towards learning activities. Tough (2017) held the opinion that student satisfaction is a subjective feeling or attitude towards learning activities. If learners have a pleasant feeling or positive attitude towards learning activities, they will express “satisfaction”; otherwise they will express “dissatisfaction”. Krashen (1990) believed that student satisfaction refers to students’ satisfaction with teachers’ teaching, achievements, and interpersonal relationships. In another point of view, the definitions of student satisfaction emphasize a comparison between the expected outcome and actual feeling during the learning process. For example, Owston, York, and Murtha (2018) believed that student satisfaction refers to an attitude or feeling that learners show in the learning process after comparison between perceived value and expected value. Scholars holding this view think that the student satisfaction with learning is related to whether the needs...
of learners can be satisfied. If the learning expectation and needs are satisfied during the learning process, the learner will behave in a state of satisfaction, which will promote the motivation and desire of the student to further study. Conversely, if students’ expectations and needs are not satisfied during the learning process, then the learning motivation and willingness of the students to learn further will decrease. Flipped classroom completely subverts the traditional teaching mode and brings the knowledge originally to be learned in the classroom to the front of the class. Learners perceive new content by watching videos, reading relevant materials, learning PPT, doing exercises and online discussion. The classroom has truly become the place of learners—display, performance, and interaction, and the role of teachers has been transformed into instructors and facilitators to answer questions and solve puzzles for learners (Li, 2017). In this study, student satisfaction with can be defined as a pleasant, otherwise disappointing, feeling after accepting the education services in the flipped classroom learning environment. This feeling comes from the comparison between the expected outcome and outcome perceived, and it mainly includes the satisfaction for the platform, resource construction, learning support, classroom teaching, teaching ability, learning effect, and so on.

Research Design

Research Object

The subjects of this study are 500 sophomores in five majors’ classes of education, physics, international economy and trade, computer science and technology, and Chinese philology in a normal university. This course uses the textbook New Horizon College English (Third Edition) published by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. The reading and writing course covers 40 class hours, one semester, and 18 weeks in total. The courses are held in multimedia classrooms, and students have smartphones that support 4G networks. Students have been learning English since primary school. Now, they have mastered a certain amount of vocabulary, a relatively systematic knowledge of grammar, can read articles at Level 4, and can basically express their ideas in English.

Research Contents and Methods

Under the flipped classroom model, College English teaching classroom has become a place for teachers and students to discuss and communicate. There are both teacher-student interaction and student to student interaction. For the form of classroom communication and interaction, teachers can design a variety of classroom activities according to the actual situation of students, so that students can not only consolidate old knowledge, but also absorb new knowledge. In the interaction between teachers and students, teachers can design group guidance, collective guidance, one-to-one personalized guidance, homework guidance and troubleshooting to continuously improve students’ English expression ability and oral proficiency. In student interaction, teachers can design group practice, cooperative learning, group discussion, and other ways to continuously deepen students’ understanding of the knowledge learned and cultivate students’ innovative thinking ability. At the same time, teachers should also use the method of teaching students in accordance with their aptitude to provide personalized guidance for difficult problems encountered by different students in the learning process. For example, for students who have difficulties in grammar learning, focus on strengthening grammar guidance. In addition, in the interaction between teachers and students, teachers can also organize and carry out colorful classroom activities, such as debate, speech, guessing game, and role play, which can not only enhance the interest and attraction of English classroom, but also enhance students’ interest in English
learning. Finally, using the methods of questionnaire, this paper investigates the students’ satisfaction with English flipped classroom from the two dimensions of pre class activity design and classroom activity design.

**Questionnaire Survey**

The questionnaire design distinguishes two teaching forms: pre-class learning and in class teaching design. Under each teaching form, it is divided into two different subjects: teachers and students. To ensure objectivity, the questionnaire was conducted anonymously. The data were collected by Likert five level scales (1 = “Very dissatisfied”; 2 = “Dissatisfied”; 3 = “General”; 4 = “Satisfied”; and 5 = “Very satisfied”). A total of 495 valid questionnaires were collected from five classes.

**Analysis of Research Results**

**Survey Results**

According to the survey results, students’ satisfaction with their own learning materials before class was slightly lower, 38.3%; students’ satisfaction with teachers’ classroom design was the highest, 86.4%, and only 3.9% were dissatisfied; only 6.81% of the students were dissatisfied with the pre-class design; students’ satisfaction with their classroom learning was 61.5%, and the dissatisfaction was 14.7%. The survey showed that: (1) We should focus on the theme design. Generally speaking, the length of micro class hours is only 5-10 minutes. The theme of teaching design should be cut in quickly and straight to the point. (2) We should highlight the rationality of content design. The design of “micro-class” of College English is to present knowledge points, cultural background or relevant theories through videos. Through the learning of teaching videos, students internalize knowledge and understand culture, so as to master relevant concepts and theories and be willing to teach. And (3) We should increase the professional degree of courseware making. The font of the courseware should be eye-catching, and the text displayed on the screen should be concise, highlighting the key and difficult points.

**Changes in the Flipped Classroom**

Compared with traditional classroom, flipped classroom has the following changes:

***Changes in the roles of teachers and students.*** In the traditional classroom, the teacher is undoubtedly the “master”, leading all the teaching activities in the classroom, including the dissemination of knowledge points, the solution of problems, the arrangement of homework tasks, and so on. However, students can only passively “listen” and “write”, and occasionally have the opportunity to discuss in groups, so their learning initiative is not strong. In the flipped classroom, students become the main body of classroom learning activities, and students independently complete the discovery, exploration, discussion and absorption of knowledge points, so as to truly participate in teaching activities.

***Changes in teaching structure.*** The traditional teaching structure is mainly composed of knowledge imparting and digestion and absorption. Among them, knowledge transfer is completed by teachers, who require students to understand and master the relevant knowledge points taught by teachers in class through the explanation of the course content. Under the flipped classroom teaching mode, the teaching structure has undergone fundamental changes. First of all, knowledge transfer is no longer limited to the classroom, but “flipped” to the classroom before class, and students have a preliminary understanding and mastery of the content of classroom learning before class; The digestion and absorption stage also goes from after class to in class.
Enlightenment and Suggestions

The flipped classroom can develop students' higher-order thinking skills and enhance their satisfaction. In the flipped classroom, the instructors involve students in problem-solving and task-based assignments by creating a flexible, interactive learner-centered environment that provides opportunities to use the content knowledge in authentic scenarios. Students under the guidance of the flipped teaching model learn the content knowledge at their own pace before class, consolidate knowledge by raising questions and engaging in various activities through group work, accept the immediate feedback of their peers and instructors in class, and learn more related knowledge after class. Through the process, the paradigm shifts from teacher-centered approach to learner-centered approach, and ultimately, students’ higher-order thinking skills can be also developed, such as analyzing, evaluating, and creating, and therefore, enhance their satisfaction (Annie, 2018).

We should improve students’ autonomous learning ability. Students’ in-depth and effective autonomous learning outside class is the premise of the success of flipped classroom. The teaching mode of “teaching before class + internalization in class + strengthening after class” in college English flipped classroom requires students to independently complete the learning of relevant knowledge points before class. In class, knowledge internalization is realized through the interaction between teachers, students and students. After class, students sort out and summarize what they have learned, cooperate to complete learning projects, and teachers provide personalized guidance to help students further strengthen their knowledge. Only with high autonomous learning ability can we effectively learn the course content, complete online tests, and mine problems through videos and courseware.

Flipped classroom integrates students’ learning time before, during, and after class, and turns knowledge learning and ability improvement into a complete process. It promotes the improvement of students’ autonomous learning ability through the design of various learning forms, so that students gradually take English learning as a necessary condition to help them realize their life ideals, and actively participate in College English learning. So far, we have every reason to say that flipped classroom is feasible in College English teaching. At the same time, in the flipped classroom, the most important thing is not the production of video, micro class and other auxiliary materials, but teachers’ teaching design and teachers’ conscious application of the concept of flipped classroom. At any stage of social development, no teaching model can lead the way in College English teaching. Flipped classroom is no exception. What we should do is to give full play to its advantages.

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