Research on the Influence of Interactive Teaching Method on the Learning Effect of College English

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Abstract: English has been a subject in the university classroom since the 1980s. This subject helps produce more excellent talents in economics, politics, and culture who are proficient in English language in China, and enable our country to better integrate with the global economy. At the same time, the relationship between our country and the international community has become closer. However, the social environment is constantly developing and changing. The traditional teaching methods can be said to be ineffective and associated with many shortcomings. Traditional teaching methods were used in the English lessons. Under this teaching mode, students were the passive subjects on the receiving end of what have been taught. The teacher was always talking in the classroom and the students were listening. This teaching style also affects the effectiveness of learning. Compared with traditional teaching, interactive teaching method has its unique advantages. It is a new teaching mode and under this teaching mode, students can actively communicate with teachers in the classroom to complete learning tasks. The initiative to perform self-directed learning is also greatly improved, and the students’ English proficiency can be improved.

Keywords: Interactive teaching method, College English, Learning effect

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1 Introduction to interactive teaching method

As early as the 1970s, Professor Palin Scorsa of the United States proposed the concept of interactive classroom teaching, which led to the development of interactive teaching methods. The so-called interactive teaching method is to change the previous teaching mode so that students can change their learning attitude from being passive to active, while the students will always be the subject in the learning process. The responsibility of the teacher is to ensure that students learn in a conducive environment and develop specific teaching scenarios. In addition, teachers also nurture the students so that they have their own thoughts and develop creative abilities. Teachers should actively communicate their thoughts and emotions with them, so that students become active seekers of knowledge instead of the passive learners in the past. During daily teaching, we should make good use of the subjective initiative between teachers and classmates, so that students can perform free, equal, and purposeful communication and dialogue. In teaching, students should be the main subjects and teachers should be the auxiliary to enable students to take the initiative to participate and communicate. The teacher’s task is to formulate teaching tasks, to ensure that students learn in a relaxed and happy learning atmosphere, to strengthen the interaction between students and teachers, and to reduce the pressure on students.

There are two principles of interactive teaching methods. The first principle is interactivity. The core of interactive teaching method is the principle of interactivity, and the soul of this teaching method is classroom interaction. Interaction in the classroom can take many forms, such as grouping students and talking directly to the teacher, etc., which can encourage students to complete tasks through active communication. The second principle is difference. Because new college students are from different places, their level of understanding of English is also
different, which requires teachers to set the teaching requirements, set the interaction requirements according to the specific conditions of each student. In addition, different students have different hobbies and specialties, so the teacher must understand the characteristics of each student and adjust the teaching goals flexibly. Teachers should choose different methods according to different students, motivate the students’ enthusiasm for learning, so that students can manifest their potential, actively communicate while learning, and develop good habits.

2 The impact of interactive teaching methods on college English learning

2.1 Creating a good learning environment

The interactive teaching method has advantages in comparison to the traditional teaching method. Specifically, the interactive teaching method can manifest the subjectivity of both teachers and students better in the classroom, and at the same time this method can improve the attention and energy of teachers and students, so that the students can grow a proactive learning interest towards English. This also help make the learning atmosphere more lively in the classroom. For college English teachers, interactive education also brings them a lot of benefits. They can use this teaching method to eradicate the boring atmosphere that is deeply rooted in the traditional classroom. With the introduction of the interactive teaching method, the learning environment has become more pleasant and relaxed, and students will become naturally interested in learning content. Coupled with the teachers’ well-designed teaching scenarios, the students will be impressed, making them more motivated and active when participating in activities during English lessons. This would definitely help transforming the English language learning style from passive to active.

2.2 Reducing students’ anxiety in learning English

Learning English language should be a proactive process. If students are anxious while studying, it will greatly reduce the efficacy of English learning. As we all know, the traditional method of teaching college English is that the teacher imparts knowledge to the students. In this process, the personality and creativity of the students cannot be unleashed and manifested. The students are afraid of making mistakes, especially in front of the teacher. Therefore, when they have questions, they dare not ask, and they choose not to have any doubts about questions that they cannot be certain. If the teacher uses the interactive English teaching method in the teaching process, the students dare to put forward their questions and opinions during the lessons, and thus, the students’ doubts in the learning process can be eliminated. When teachers use interactive methods to teach, they should start from the aspects of guidance, encouragement, and inspiration. If students cannot solve the questions or problems with their abilities, the teachers should patiently guide them, help them analyze the problems, and tell them that they should dare to try. This would encourage them to maximize their own value.

2.3 Motivating teachers and students to participate in education and teaching activities

When college English teachers use interactive teaching methods in English teaching, not only can they increase the enthusiasm of teachers, but also stimulate students’ initiative to learn English, which is mainly reflected in the following two aspects. The first is the use of interactive teaching methods. The advantages of this teaching method can increase students’ enthusiasm for learning English, so that their interest in learning English is fully stimulated. The second is the use of interactive teaching methods, which can make elevate students’ enthusiasm for learning English, attracting everyone around them to actively participate in English classes. This would maximize the use of classroom time by teachers and students, and the teachers’ pre-lesson preparation will have a much greater influence.

2.4 Increasing students’ language practice

In college English teaching, traditional education methods focus on indoctrination and exam-oriented education. English teachers usually take the responsibility of imparting knowledge to students, and students lose the initiative to learn, which ultimately leads to an imbalance whereby input being greater than output. The aim of interactive teaching method is to provide a relaxed and happy environment for teachers and students. Through the organization of classroom activities, teachers can attract students to actively participate in the classroom to improve students’ listening, speaking and comprehension skills. Expert Cai Jigang once said that language can only be absorbed and internalized into a living mechanism if it is continuously used and communicated. The learners
will soon lose their motivation and interest to learn and study if the teachers only focus on the language foundation, reading and language input, without practically conducting communication or language output. As a reform and innovation in teaching, the interactive teaching method will overcome the shortcomings of the traditional English teaching that focuses on inclination towards knowledge impartation and language input and negligence of practical abilities and language output. This would greatly improved the students’ ability to apply language.

3 Application and implementation of interactive English teaching method

3.1 Role-playing activities
Role-playing activities can be applied to all thematic education and teaching activities. During role-playing, the teacher informs the students of the requirements before the lesson, and then the students prepare the role according to the topic content. This can help students to grasp the relevant knowledge, vocabulary and grammar during the role-playing performance. Students, as role-players, can play the role of protagonist or as teacher, explain the rules of grammar, paragraphs or knowledge in English from the perspective of the teacher. Sometimes they can also take the role of examiner to evaluate students’ reading, translation, or vocabulary. Hence, English teachers need to tutor the students before class, so as to achieve the desired learning effect.

3.2 Case analysis
There is a method in interactive teaching called case analysis, which has unique advantages. This method makes it easier for students to absorb and understand what they have learned, and to be able to better understand the content of English teaching. During English lessons, case teaching can be applied to each course topic, but it should be noted that when choosing a case, the case must happen to the students and they are very familiar with it in order to convince them well. After the teacher explains the case, the discussion and summary will be done by the students, and they can express their views during the discussion.

3.3 Debate in English
During the debate, not only the spoken English of the students, but also their ability to use their thinking will be evaluated. This interactive teaching method can spark students’ interest in learning, and also requires students to express orally so that the learning effect can reach a higher level. Therefore, teachers must choose the appropriate debate theme and professionally tutor each student before the debate. The teachers should make debate the highlight of the interactive English teaching method.

3.4 Group discussion
Dividing students into different groups for discussion is most the effective method for improving communication between students. The group leader is responsible for coordinating between the team members. The members of the group will perform analysis and conception of plan in the classroom. The discussions have enabled college English teaching to achieve good results, while also enabling students to use their knowledge more flexibly and achieve better collaboration among the group members.

4 Application of interactive teaching method in college English learning

4.1 Teacher preparation before class
Before commencing interactive teaching, teachers need to make enough preparation before each lesson. The preparation can be divided into two parts. Firstly, design the relevant curriculum content, and secondly, plan the progress of the curriculum. When designing the curriculum content, teachers should take the principle of appropriateness according to specific circumstances. When selecting the learning materials, the teacher should also choose the relevant materials based on the student’s current English level. Of course, when selecting the learning materials for students, it is also necessary to choose new content that is in line with the contemporary needs, as this can effectively help the students. Students can broaden their horizons in the process of self-enhancement after reading these materials. In addition, the fun of learning is also very important. Interesting courses can attract students to actively study, interact and discuss with each other. Teachers should make preparation before each lesson, and plan and design the curriculum content in advance. The first thing to do is to use the previously determined teaching content as the basis, summarize the teaching focus and main discussion content according to the actual situation, and at the same time, rationally design the interactive atmosphere. For example, if the nature of essay selected in teaching is narrative, teachers can
organize students to discuss the character and plot of the essay among the students; if the essay selected in teaching is environmental protection, the teacher can prepare and show some short videos related to environmental protection and speeches in English regarding the topic in class. After watching the videos, the teacher reminded students to recall the moments in their daily life, combine them with short videos, and encourage students to consider and propose a practical solution. Of course, the rhythm of classroom interaction, the depth of discussion, and the progress are also important. Teachers must know these factors well, regulate the classroom atmosphere, and flexibly control the classroom rhythm.

4.2 Five minutes before class

The prime time for interaction can be said to be five minutes before class. Five minutes before the lesson play an important role in the beginning of each lesson as students interacted with each other during this period of time which helps students aware of the topics they are going to learn in advance. In view of this, teachers are required to make full use of the five minutes before the class. Specifically, the teacher should tell the students what topics or lessons they are going to learn and arrange interactive tasks for the students in advance, roughly one to two days before the class. During the five-minute period before the lesson, students express their understanding of the topics orally. There are many forms of expression, for example, group conversations, giving speeches and singing songs. After the students have interacted with each other, the teacher is responsible for making comments and this would be the principal grade for their ordinary grades. With the double shots of pressure originating from academic performance and learning, students’ emphasis on pre-class interaction has also increased. With this, students’ speaking ability can be improved, and teaching effect can also be improved with the preconditioning that happens before each lesson.

4.3 Organization of the lesson content

4.3.1 Teacher-student interaction

Teachers need to inspire students by interacting with the students in the classroom. Before each lesson, teachers should guide students appropriately. For example, teachers can introduce students to the cultural background of the lesson so that students can give it some thoughts. The article “The fine art of putting things off” introduces how procrastination originates, how people behave in procrastination in everyday life, and how they hold different views on procrastination. Before the class begins, teachers can ask students to find out if they procrastinate. Students who procrastinate should express it themselves. After the students have finished expressing, the teacher can guide other students, from their points of view, to analyze why the student procrastinates, and talk about their perspectives on procrastination. In this way, in the process of interaction, students will quickly immerse in the learning ambience of the classroom, and probably understand the basic content of the “procrastination” that has just been learned in the classroom. After the interaction, the teacher can also make the students understand what the procrastination is by playing some videos. After that, the previous content can be replayed in order to improve the listening and speaking skills of the students.

4.3.2 Student-student interaction

In the classroom, students can interact with each other. The main interactions originate from group activities, table activities, and so on. After the teacher assigns the task, the students will be divided into groups to start discussions. The students voice out their views and suggestions on the assigned tasks or questions. Finally, the group leader summarizes the results and handed in the results to the teacher. Members of the same group help and monitor each other, improving themselves through interaction. Students from different groups can also communicate with each other by exchanging opinions.

4.4 Summarization after each lesson

After each lesson, the teacher collects the students’ summary feedback on the interactive lesson in a timely manner. If the students give unified, favorable feedback regarding the interactive lessons, the teachers should keep the feedback. For some aspects, if the students generally find it difficult to interact with others or they are not interested, the teacher should adjust the lesson content based on students’ feedback. For example, changing the theme of interaction or reducing the requirements for interaction would definitely help. The selection of the theme of activities is very important. Before making a decision, teachers must understand and consider the daily life of college students and hot topics on the Internet, and ensure that the theme of the activities is relevant to them, in order to encourage
them to participate. The expression and communication of these contents can only be achieved through their own efforts. During the lessons, teachers can also introduce foreign cultures such as European and American cultures, popular cultures, etc. to students, so that students can improve their learning interest while learning other cultures. In addition, students can summarize and conclude after each interactive lesson. The students can review the topics they discussed in class, recall what they have learned during the group interaction, summarize the problems that have occurred, and prevent the interaction issue from happening again.

In summary, the interactive teaching method has become a major teaching method in college English teaching as its advantages and effects have become more apparent. We should promote interactive teaching methods inside and outside the classroom and rely on advanced technology of modern education. This approach can adapt to the contemporary needs, conform to the laws of teaching, and improve students’ enthusiasm for English learning. The interactive teaching method can improve the holistic application of English language, and motivate students to be more actively involved in the learning process.

As a concluding remark, after a detailed analysis of the importance of Japanese teaching in colleges and universities and several important issues now a series of effective improvements and solutions are put forward. With a view to continuously improving the basic knowledge of Japanese majors in Chinese universities, it can also promote the continuous improvement of China’s international development level and cultivate more outstanding talents for the rapid development of our society.

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