Research on Blended Teaching of College English

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Abstract: With the rapid development of the Internet, English teaching is bound to take full advantage of the network to improve the teaching effect.This study attempts to explore how to optimize the teaching effect of online and offline blended teaching mode based on the Production-oriented Approach, which takes students' output as goal, so as to make a contribution to the reform of English teaching.

Keywords: Production-oriented; Blended teaching; Students' output

1 Introduction

"Production-oriented Approach (POA)" is a theory proposed by Professor Wen Qiufang of Beijing Foreign Studies University in 2014 to overcome the disadvantages of "separation of study and use" in Foreign language teaching in China. POA teaching can be roughly divided into three stages: "driving", "facilitating" and "evaluating", each stage must give full play to the leading role of teachers. In terms of teaching philosophy, it emphasizes learning center, integration of learning and application and whole-person education, while in teaching process, it emphasizes "driving, facilitating and evaluating" under the guidance of teachers.

Online + offline blended teaching should be the mainstream in the future, Why? Because they complement each other. The current coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) has led the Ministry of Education to call for "suspending classes but never stopping learning". Online courses are being rolled out across the country. Teachers become anchors, but there are many complaints. To begin with, it is difficult for teachers to monitor students' performance while online teaching and it requires students to have strong self-discipline, which is especially difficult for primary and middle school students. Secondly, teachers should prepare a large number of materials and have support staff to help them sign in and punch in, which increases the burden on teachers. Thirdly, some students living in the rural or from families that do not have access to computers or the Internet, or their Internet signal is not good, all that affect their study; Fourthly, all the long-time online courses will wear students' eyes out. However, blended online + offline teaching can avoid these shortcomings. The best teaching effect can be achieved by putting some knowledge points that are suitable for online learning online and conducting effective supervision and interaction with students in face-to-face teaching.

2 Design of blended teaching

In this study, freshmen newly enrolled in the School of Food Science in 2019 are selected as subjects. Of the two combined classes, the one with 74 students is taken as the experimental class and the other one with 77 students is selected as the reference class. According to the English score in the college Entrance examination, the overall level of the two classes is similar[1]. The experimental class has the highest score of 133, the lowest score of 30 and the average score of 91.15. The average score of the reference class is 91.05, with the highest score 126 and the lowest 49. The experimental class uses online + offline blended teaching to strictly supervise the students' online behaviour, while the control class only uses online for a few contents and the teachers do not monitor, and most contents are completed in traditional class.

Three online Apps are put into use in this study,

that is Cloud Class, Keke English, and Accompanying Classroom (attached with the textbook "New Progressive College English". In the Cloud Class, students sign in, upload homework, discuss and brainstorm, etc. Accompanying Classroom is usually used to preview and test, and students memorize words by Keke English. This semester, the offline class is mainly about text analysis, homework summary and group activities.

3 Process of blended teaching

3.1 Teaching plan

At the beginning of the freshman year, the teacher randomly divided the 74 students of the experimental class into 10 groups, balanced the number of students in each group appropriately according to the English score of the college Entrance examination, and each group selected a group leader, who set up a QQ group aiming to facilitate group activities in the future. The control class was also divided into 10 groups and selected group leaders.

In the first semester, four units were taught in the first volume of *New Progressive College English*. Before class, the teacher would upload related video materials with background information, language points, vocabulary and text structure to the Cloud Class so that students may do autonomous learning. In class, teacher analyzed text, interpreted difficult language points, organized group activities with the help of the special functions of Cloud Classroom-- "brainstorm", "quick response", "hand-raising", etc. After class, the teacher would assign homework via Cloud Class and answered students' questions. Language quiz, unit test and comprehensive test were conducted in the Accompanying Classroom. Meanwhile, students clocked in Wechat group every day after memorizing words via "Keke English". With the help of these Apps, it can make up for the lack of opportunities for students to "open their mouths" to express themselves in the class with a large number of students. These platforms extended classroom and allowed students to state their views freely in English .

The following is taking unit 1 "The Pursuit of Dreams" (from Book One of New Progressive College English) as an example to show the teaching process. Firstly, Before class, the teacher uploaded the a handful of materials: vocabulary recording, text recording, grammar points as well as micro-video "word-formation" and "translation notes", online activities like " to know you, me and him", brainstorm questions "What did they (Qian Xuesen &Steve Jobs) come across when pursuing their dreams? How about you?" The brainstorm questions led students into the unit topic and group activity offered students a chance to get to know each other by introducing themselves to each other, at the same time, students could "produce" English[2]. The first three contents made students have a preview towards the whole unit, which was "input of knowledge", while brainstorm questions and group activity were "output". Listing examples and vocabulary tips are available to facilitate the "output". In face-to-face class, the teacher commented students' online responses to brainstorm questions and corrected the common mistakes. In the process of text analysis, "shake it off" function of Cloud Class was often used to randomly call students to answer questions, and the first student who gave the right answer in "quick respond" would be given awarded marks. Such activities not only created active classroom atmosphere, but supervised students at the same time to avoid being distracted. In writing part, students were asked to write an essay "My Dream Job" according to the theme of this unit. In the Accompanying Classroom, students were required to complete a short English listening test. All in all, listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation skills were emphasized and practiced in different steps of the unit.

The general design of the rest units were similar to Unit 1. The fifth unit "The Water Problem" was designed to have students complete the whole unit by group cooperation. Students finished the exploration towards the unit theme "the world water resources--Water resources China --solutions" by group tasks assigned by the teacher. From the text analysis to practice after class, mainly through a series of tasks, step by step, the teacher let students not only learn the language points, but at the same time, more importantly have them explore the urgent problem in the world - the environment and resources. Through their own research, PPT and presentation, students really understood how serious environmental problems are in the world, and realized how important it was for us to protect the environment and natural resources in our daily life. The practical significance of digging into the depths of cultural learning, which goes far beyond language learning itself. What students say is more educational for them and their peers than what the teacher says. The students looked up the data and sighed, "I have

no idea that the water problem in the world and China was so serious", "So many people don't have clean water to drink?" and "So many water areas are polluted!" "We should save water in the future!", "Don't waste a drop of water any more." So far achieving this effect, more than half of the teaching objectives of this unit was fulfilled.

3.2 Comparison of final exam results

The first semester lasted for 12 weeks, and the final exam was held in December. Let's have a look at the final exam results:

class item	number of test takers	100-90 points	89-80 points	79-70 points	69-60 points	Below 60 points	Average point
Reference class	77	3	25	21	25	2	73.83
Experimental class	74	6	31	21	16	0	76.87

After teaching of one semester, the average point difference in the college entrance examination widened to 3.01, which was 0.1 in College Entrance Examination. Besides, the number of students with more than 80 points in the experimental class was significantly more than that in the control class, and on a scale of 60-69 and below 60 were also better than that in the control class.

It can be seen that the experimental class still achieved the expected results with the combination of online and offline teaching mode. The online time and many network resources broadened their thinking, and various online teaching activities motivated their learning enthusiasm. In addition, the background data monitoring of online learning could also supervise students with poor self-consciousness. The experience values in Cloud Class results in the student a kind of competition relation, for anyone does not want to lag behind, which is advantageous to the online learning progress. In contrast, in the reference class, the teacher only used two online activities for two units, but did not specifically monitor the students. Most of the time was traditional classroom teaching, so the students' enthusiasm was not fully mobilized. Besides except completing the necessary homework, they did not invest more in English learning after class.

3.3 Discussions

(1) When supervision was not in place, students' poor self-consciousness led to unsatisfactory learning effect. Because there was no background monitoring data of Keke English, sometimes the supervision was ineffective and some students were not self-disciplined, which would cause a big gap in progress. Some students nearly completed Level 180 the vocabulary of the four-level syllabus, while some just reached level 80. Some of them failed to complete the study tasks as expected.

(2) Teachers sometimes did not give students in-time feedback and some students were not motivated enough to learn. Since the teacher was in charge of two big combined classes with 151 students, some homework correction and feedback time was extended without immediate effect.

(3) There were insufficient or improper arrangements in connection between online and offline content. For example, for the important grammar points involved in the text, the online materials had been put for students to study by themselves, and in class now and then they were drawn out to mention lest some students fail to notice.

3.4 Solutions

As for the Keke English platform, now it adds the function of background data monitor and the teacher may check data to remind the backward students.

For the problem of lagging work correction and feedback in first semester, this term appropriate adjustments have been done -- online assignments will not only be corrected by the teachers, it may be completed with the help of online intelligent auxiliary rating or students' mutual grading or assigned students' rating, etc. The teacher just holds scoring criteria, interprets common problems, fully sharing the convenience of the network.

How to solve the problem of online and offline content distribution, which is also a crucial problem, lies in as follows: the knowledge points and vocabulary these contents just need to memorize will be put online for self-study, text analysis and group activities will be fulfilled offline, while problem discussion and content expanding will adopt online+offline mode, that is students' production online plus teacher's comments offline.

4 Conclusion

5g hasn't spread but 6g will have almost fell to the ground, the overall internet speed boost is just around the corner. The advantages of online teaching is becoming more and more apparent, online+offline blended teaching must be the mainstream in the future.

During the pandemic, the educational departments at all levels have carried out various training, lectures to make teachers master making micro class, live teaching and online instructional design, which lays a good foundation for the future blended teaching. Based on the first semester of immature blended teaching, and the second semester online teaching experience, the perfect teaching plan will contain three parts: the first part of the online self-study before class, the teacher will upload the materials such as vocabulary, grammar knowledge online and supervise students to preview in each unit prior to the start of the unit. The second part will be the traditional face-to-face teaching, text analysis, group activities and other interactive tasks. In the third part, the extension content of the unit is firstly submitted online and then teacher will summarize offline. These three parts will use the network and pay attention to students' language output, from language input parts, each part will be based on some language materials so as to lower the difficulty and push the output. Another thing to note is that when uploading materials online makes them available in batches, otherwise, a lot of materials will make students confused and at a loss.

References:

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