

Comprehensive English Assessment System Based on Mobile APPs

Xiaolei Luan

School of Foreign Languages, Jilin Engineering Normal University, China

Funding: Educational and Scientific Research Project of Jilin Province(GH19328).

Abstract: Comprehensive English is a professional basic course for English majors, with the most class hours and the highest credits. It can be said to be the most important course in English majors. However, the procedural assessment in the previous comprehensive English assessment system, that is, the usual assessment, was largely determined based on the subjective impression of teachers. However, with the emergence of various English learning apps, students' learning methods and content have changed a lot. With major changes, the previous assessment system has not been able to play its due role. Designing a reasonable comprehensive English assessment system based on mobile APP is the unshirkable responsibility of comprehensive English teachers. Carefully and reasonably designed comprehensive English assessment system can promote students to improve learning efficiency, reduce classroom lecture time, improve teaching effect, and play a vital role in cultivating qualified English professionals.

Keywords: Comprehensive English; Assessment system; Mobile APP

Publication date: October, 2020

Publication online: 31 October, 2020

***Corresponding author:** Xiaolei Luan, lxlxyd@126.com

1 Introduction

Assessment is an indispensable and important link in teaching. Well implemented assessment can promote students' learning enthusiasm, guide students' learning direction, and improve students' academic performance

and ability. If it is not implemented well, it can only be a formality and cannot play the role of motivating, leading and improving. Therefore, whatever course should have its own reasonable assessment system. In response to the special situation of the Covid-19, this semester we have developed a comprehensive English assessment system based on the mobile APP. The advent and development of smart phones is the product of the rapid development of Internet technology. For college students, smart phones are the basic configuration of college life. Without smart phones, there is no college life. Although college students' reliance on smartphones has brought a series of challenges to classroom management, it also provides convenience for college students' learning. In particular, the advent of various English learning apps has broken the limitations of student learning time and space and provided better conditions for college students to learn English independently. The mobile app plays a positive role in accumulating students' English vocabulary and improving their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. At the same time, the mobile APP also provides the possibility and convenience for the remote assessment of various English courses.

2 The disadvantages of our school's previous comprehensive English assessment program

In 2005, Our school first enrolled English major students and the comprehensive English course was opened for the first time in our school. The assessment at that time was a summative test of learning results. With the development of teaching reform, the comprehensive English course assessment plan tried to organically combine of the summative assessment

with the formative assessment that promotes student learning, but the formative evaluation at the time, that is, the assessment of students' daily learning situation, accounted for only 20%. The effect of promoting student learning is not obvious enough. With the further deepening of teaching reform, the proportion of formative evaluation has been increased to 50%, but the assessment method is complicated. For example, students' word test accounts for 10% of formative evaluation, and teachers give students dictation tests 10-20 times every semester, record each test result, and finally take the average value as the assessment result of this item. This method is time-consuming and laborious and may cause statistical errors. In short, the previous comprehensive English assessment system needs to be improved to be easier to operate. A more objective alternative to the assessment plan that can promote the development of students' independent learning ability is called for to replace the old one. Due to the epidemic situation this semester, teaching and assessment of all courses of our school are carried out online which makes the assessment method based on mobile APP become inevitable.

3 Principles of formulating assessment plan

The formulation and implementation of any plan must be based on certain principles. The formulation of the comprehensive English assessment plan is based on the following principles:

3.1 Principle of simplicity

The form of learning and assessment should be simple, easy for students to operate, and easy for teachers to manage.

3.2 Quantitative principles

Quantifiable and objective evaluation standards for students' daily assessments should be established avoid the teachers' subjective impressions which determined the students' daily assessments in the previous assessment program.

3.3 Principle of flexibility

The form of learning and assessment content should be changed from the mechanical, rigid and single method in the past, based on flexible assessment methods.

3.4 Pertinence principle

The content of learning and assessment should be in line with the actual situation of the students, and should

be closely integrated with the actual needs and interests of the students to solve the important and difficult points in teaching.

3.5 Dynamic principle

Both the daily assessment and the final assessment should be changed according to changes in teaching conditions and students' needs, so that the assessment plan is constantly improved.

4 Assessment form and content

Assessment form and content determines the learning mode and learning content. In order to achieve the goal of correcting students' learning attitudes and developing students' comprehensive ability to use English, the assessment of this course is divided into two forms: daily assessment and final assessment, and the two assessment methods are equally emphasized, respectively accounting for 50%. The daily assessment content includes class attendance, uploading of learning materials, class test scores, participation in brainstorming and completion of homework. The final assessment content is based on the content of Test Band 4 for English majors. Since students are required to take a special listening test, the final assessment content usually includes vocabulary, grammar, reading, cloze and writing.

5 Teaching requirements

A reasonable assessment system should be dynamic and constantly improved according to changes in the actual teaching situation. Due to the Covid-19, this semester the comprehensive English course should be taught and assessed on the cloud class teaching platform at the request of the school.

5.1 Teaching requirements of this semester

5.1.1 Sign in and sign out (students are required to sign in at the beginning and sign out at the end of each class on the Cloud Class app)

5.1.2 Teaching resources (Teachers must upload text audio, unit PPT courseware, etc. before teaching each unit)

5.1.3 Test (At the end of each unit, the teacher must give quiz in the test module. The quiz is directed at vocabulary and structure which is a very important part in college English test)

for English majors. There are 20 multiple-choice questions in the quiz)

5.1.4 Brainstorming (Teachers ask questions in the brainstorming module according to the teaching content in each teaching unit, and students can freely express their views on the problems)

5.1.5 Homework (After each unit of teaching, the teacher must assign homework in the cloud class homework/group task module. The homework for this semester is to write a composition according to the requirement.)

6 The assessment plan for this semester based on the teaching requirements of this semester

The assessment plan consists of two parts: daily assessment and final assessment.

6.1 Daily assessment

6.1.1 Class attendance assessment

Class attendance assessment accounts for 20% of the daily assessment. First, the teacher initiates the sign-in before the class, the student clicks sign-in to complete the sign-in task, the teacher initiates the sign-out when the class is over, and the student clicks sign-out to complete the sign-out task. This is done every time in class. The number of check-ins in a semester is automatically recorded by the cloud class, counted and assigned corresponding experience values.

6.1.2 Assessment of daily performance

The assessment of normal performance accounts for 20% of the daily assessment. It is determined by the how the students view the resources of the cloud class. When the students view the resources, the cloud class will record the time the students spend viewing the resources and give students a certain amount of experience values based on the teacher's setting.

6.1.3 Assessment of learning effect

The assessment of learning effects accounts for 20% of the daily assessment, which is determined by the test scores of the students in the cloud class. The test results are automatically given in the cloud class and converted into corresponding experience values.

6.1.4 Assessment of classroom participation

The assessment of classroom participation accounts for 20% of the daily assessment and is determined by the students' participation in brainstorming. As long as the students express their opinions based on the questions, the system will give them a certain amount of experience values. For students with novel ideas and logical discussions, the teacher can give them additional rewards.

6.1.5 Assessment of homework

The assessment of homework accounts for 20% of the daily assessment. It is determined by the completion and level of the student's composition writing. The teacher's assessment of the composition can be done manually or by the assistant Xiaomo of the cloud class that can automatically correct the assessment and assign the corresponding experience values.

The cloud class provides an automatic statistics function. As long as the teacher enters the proportion of each module in the assessment, a daily transcript will be derived from the cloud class.

6.2 Final assessment

6.2.1 Vocabulary and grammar assessment

There are altogether 30 multiple-choice questions mainly based on tests for English majors- grade four, each with one point, accounting for 30% of the final assessment.

6.2.2 Reading assessment

There are four passages in this part, each with five multiple-choice questions, 20 questions in total, 2 points for each question, accounting for 40% of the final assessment.

6.2.3 Cloze assessment

There is one incomplete article with ten blanks. There are fifteen words or phrases provided. Choose the proper word or phrase to fill in the blank to make the article complete, a total of 10 points, accounting for 10% of the final assessment.

6.2.4 Writing assessment

Choose the high-frequency topics of the four-level exam, such as education, environmental society, etc., as the writing themes, and ask students to write a 200-word composition according to the specific requirements, with a full score of 20, accounting for 20% of the final assessment.

Due to Covid-19, the final assessments of this

semester are all conducted on the cloud class platform, but the cloud class platform currently provides limited testing forms, so the final assessment of this semester consists of only two parts.

(1) Vocabulary and grammar

In this part there are 40 multiple-choice questions, each with 2 points, with a full score of 80, accounting for 80% of the final assessment

(2) Writing

In this part, students are required to write a composition of about 200 words, with a full score of 20, accounting for 20% of the final assessment.

The student's final grade is equal to 50% of the daily assessment score plus 50% of the final assessment score.

7 Effects

7.1 Increased classroom participation

In the past, due to the limited classroom time, when teachers asked questions, only a few students could share their opinions in the classroom, and the participation of all members could not be realized. It is difficult to quantify the daily performance. However, this semester teachers can ask questions in the brainstorming module of the cloud class. Only by answering the questions can students get their daily performance scores. According to statistics, all the daily participation rates have increased by more than 95%. It can be seen that the students' participation in the classroom participation is very high.

7.2 Improvement of students' autonomous learning ability

In the past, the summative evaluation in the form of standardized tests only paid attention to the students' final grades, and easily ignored the students' learning process, and lacked a people-oriented development perspective. The daily assessment in the assessment program based on mobile APP uses the dynamic teaching assessment process, namely formative assessment, to guide and regulate the learning process of students. It can enable students to overcome inertia and experience the fun of success, thereby enhancing students' self-confidence and improving their independent learning ability.

7.3 Improvement of student academic performance

Since the assessment contents are clearly communicated

to students at the beginning of the semester. Students prepare, study and review in a targeted manner. All students in English Class 1841 this semester have passed the comprehensive English test, and there are 6 students with a score of 90 or more, accounting for 16.7% of the class. Last semester, there were only 2 students in this class with a score of 90 or higher, accounting for 5.6% of the class. The number of students with a score of 80 or more has also increased to a certain extent, and overall student performance has improved.

8 Conclusion

The assessment program based on the cloud class mobile app for this semester is more reasonable, and it has achieved the purpose of promoting learning by examination. However, this semester the school authority required that the cloud class platform be the first choice for teaching and assessment and there are certain limitations in cloud class platform. Any teaching evaluation method cannot be perfect. There are many uncontrollable factors that require students to use APP to learn and monitor themselves. For example, some students lack interest in learning and let others help to complete various activities or even daily assessments on their mobile phones. Consequently, some students' assessment results are high, but their English learning abilities are not strong, and the English levels are not high. Therefore, teachers should understand and respect the individual differences of students, appropriately adjust the evaluation methods, and promote the development of students' multiple intelligences to a greater extent. At the same time, make full use of the advantages of mobile APP to make it play a better role in the formative evaluation of college English teaching. With the continuous deepening of online teaching and the understanding and application of more mobile apps, the future comprehensive English assessment program will incorporate more apps and will be more complete.

References

- [1] Mingyong Z. Investigation into the use of mobile technology in English teaching and learning in institutes of higher vocational education in Hubei province in China[C]// International Conference on Futuristic Trends on Computational Analysis & Knowledge Management. IEEE, 2015.
- [2] Liu J. The Promotional Effect of Mobile APP in the Formative Evaluation of College English Teaching[J]. Overseas English (Part 1), 2017(6): 61-62.

- [3] Wang SR. Interpretation of the main points of “College English Teaching Guide”[J]. Foreign Language Circles, 2016(3): 2-10.
- [4] Yuan L. Exploration of Blended Learning and Assessment

Model of College English in the Digital Age[J]. Overseas English, 2017, 350(10): 324-325.