

Research on College English Classroom Construction Based on Semantic Wave

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Abstract: In this paper, the influence of English teaching methods and teachers' behaviors on students' learning in China is discussed. Through analysis, it is found that classroom discourse practice plays a significant role in teaching plan and teaching content. Therefore, in the research based on discourse practice and belief, a college English classroom promotion model is constructed from the perspective of semantic wave based on three dimensions (individual factors, situational factors, and overall factors), providing a scientific basis for the development of college English teaching in China and a valuable reference for curriculum reform and teaching plan formulation.

Keywords: English classroom discourse practice and belief; Semantic wave

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1. Introduction

In China, in order to improve the level of English teaching, many attempts have been made to introduce, develop, and integrate various teaching methods. The English teaching methods in China have been greatly developed. These include grammar-translation, listening and speaking (communication), task-based teaching, and mixed teaching. The research and discussion on teaching methods among teachers have been refined from methodology to teachers' behavior. These research directions mainly focus on two aspects: "Why do teachers behave in such a way?" and "What influence their behaviors have on students' learning?"^[1] From the basic concept of speech act, we may find that speech is, in fact, an activity with rich connotation, reflecting the interactions among language, reality, and personal understanding. Therefore, the best way for teachers to demonstrate their personalized teaching methods is to imbue themselves with the local culture. In classroom display, the problem of classroom discourse is the focus of teaching plan and the information transmission of teaching content.

English teacher's classroom discourse refers to a specific discourse decision-making process and a realistic discourse constructed by an English teacher in a specific educational situation according to various theories^[2]. From the perspective of language, it can be seen that classroom discourse not only displays strong individual characteristics, but also reflects its social and cultural background on the basis of improving educational methods. Therefore, in order to thoroughly understand the logic of language classroom discourse practice, it is necessary to analyze and clarify the relationship between English teachers' discourse practice and discourse belief in English teaching from the perspective of semantic wave and social and cultural background.

This paper discusses the role between college English discourse practice and belief and teachers' classroom discourse practice from the perspective of semantic wave; a college English classroom

promotion model is then constructed, and both English education and teachers' growth are analyzed from three dimensions (individual factors, situational factors, and overall factors) so as to provide a scientific basis for the development of college English teaching in China. The study of teachers' classroom discourse practice from a dialectical and critical perspective may deepen the understanding of both teachers and educational administrators about the logic of English classroom practice, provide some ideas for college English classroom construction, and offer valuable reference for college English curriculum reform and teaching plan formulation.

2. Operation logic of semantic wave in college English classroom discourse

Semantic wave is a method of accumulating knowledge and also the key to the changes in semantic gravity and semantic density, both of which are closely related ^[3]. Through cumulative knowledge-building, students can transfer what they have learned to future context under existing cognition so that the knowledge of each major will be closely linked to their own background knowledge, thus deepening their understanding of what they have learned.

In this paper, college English classroom is selected as the topic, and issue of how to use classroom discourse practice in college English teaching is discussed. In classroom discourse, teachers realize the construction of their understanding of themselves, others, language, teaching, situation, and society and output the expression of their classroom discourse on this basis. On the one hand, it reveals the teacher's understanding and influence on language, text, teaching, students, and the social and cultural environment ^[4]. On the other hand, it enhances students' understanding of reading and writing.

Semantic wave is considered a prerequisite for cumulative knowledge-building. In college English class, teachers "unpack" highly abstract and technical theories and deconstruct them through examples and situations. Through that, knowledge is constructed and "repackaged." The knowledge generated by examples and situations is accumulated and eventually abstracted into concise theories. By summarizing objective matters and reasoning actual ones, "rational" knowledge construction transpires. On the basis of knowledge construction, abstract and concise theories are transmitted ^[5]. This is the idealized logic of college English teaching. However, in real life, not every teacher can control his/her classroom discourse well although semantic waves are well-controlled. Since teachers are social individuals, they possess unique characteristics in social cognition and cognitive orientation. Each teacher has different personal experiences and understandings of the same matter. When the discourse context taught integrates with the current social and cultural situation, new perceptual knowledge will be produced, which will have a great impact on the teaching of English knowledge. As a result, different teachers have different meanings and explanations for the same problem.

3. Characteristics and connotations of college English classroom discourse from the perspective of semantic wave

The classroom style of college English teachers corresponds to their own narrative style and discourse system. Since the teachers' own discourse practice is recognized and influenced by themselves, others, language, teaching, situation, and society, from the perspective of semantic wave, the key factor that affects semantic density and semantic gravity is the accumulation of knowledge. The accumulation of knowledge in English teaching is mainly manifested in reading and writing. Although there are some differences in the expression of these two components, they both construct a narrative system by changing the common ground of semantic density and semantic gravity, among which individual factors, situational factors, and macro factors have more pronounced influence on teachers' narrative curriculum discourse practice and may jointly influence teachers' individuation and creativity in classroom discourse. In this paper, the connotations of individual factors, situational factors, and macro factors are discussed, and their influences

on teachers' beliefs and practices in classroom discourse are analyzed.

3.1. Individual factors

Teachers' beliefs are closely related to their growth experience, education experience, and teaching experience. Their teaching, research, life, study, and other experiences have a significant impact on their beliefs and, to a certain degree, their teaching activities. In addition, the composition of individual factors is closely related to specific situations in addition to the social and cultural environment. This composition includes the "situation" and "reality" of individual factors. With the development of time, the "situation" and "reality" of individual factors have strong individual characteristics with the ontology of research objects. From the perspective of a timeline, the situational and macro factors described below are the specific educational situation and macro-social humanistic situation in which the "present" teachers are at. At the level of belief, although teachers actively construct their own classroom discourse, they still follow the "inertia" in discourse practice. This "inertia" has a significant relationship with teachers' past experiences. Survey results have shown that as people grow in different environments and have different learning and life experiences, there will be different educational methods and ideas as well as classroom speech beliefs. Therefore, the difference in teachers' personal life experiences will have a great influence on their thinking and decision in classroom discourse behavior.

3.2. Situational factors

Situational factors include campus culture, interpersonal relationships, and the system of teachers. These middle-level influencing factors also have an effect on teachers' education and development. Research has shown that schools that value teamwork and have more open cultural perspectives will obtain better outcomes more readily when participating in projects, whereas schools that practice relatively closed campus culture and prioritize personal development often do not achieve good outcomes. A collaborative campus culture is one of the necessary factors to promote teachers' development ^[6].

Although teachers may study in the same college or university, they will have different educational ideas due to the influence of external factors, such as their situation and individual differences. Therefore, even in the same situation, their cognitive level, as a whole, will show certain differences. These differences are derived from their experiences to a certain extent. However, as far as the data in this paper are concerned, among all the individual differences, the differences in teaching years and age are the main reasons for the different effects of situational factors. Compared with older teachers, new teachers have lower autonomy in education, and it is difficult for them to achieve full autonomy in their own classroom discourse design ^[7]. On the other hand, new teachers have higher social expectations and the desire to quickly adapt to the environment; hence, it is easier for them to reform the discourse design and practice in classroom teaching. However, this change has not affected teachers' discourse belief in classroom, leading to the lack of discourse power among new teachers. Therefore, concessions have been made, but they not only failed to promote teachers' growth, but also caused anxiety and fatigue among teachers.

3.3. Macro factors

According to data analysis, the major factors affecting classroom discourse at present include China's language education policy, standardized tests, social ideology, academic development, scientific and technological development, and so on ^[8]. According to investigations, from teachers' classroom discourse belief to the design and implementation of classroom discourse, they are all divorced from reality. This is consistent with the findings of previous investigations on teachers' educational behavior and concept. The contradiction between teachers' classroom discourse belief and the external and macro environment renders the adjustment of classroom discourse design, which is reflected in actual situations and consistent with

previous studies on teaching beliefs ^[9]. According to literature, their previous life, learning, teaching, and research experiences, along with current national policies and social thoughts have a significant influence on their beliefs.

The challenges and pressures faced by foreign language teachers in classroom discourse practice are also closely related to the current speed and dimension of scientific and technological development. With the development of science and technology, teachers often make changes to their classroom discourse under different circumstances.

4. Suggestions for promoting high-quality English classroom teaching from the perspective of semantic wave

From the perspectives of semantic wave and the complexity of English teachers' classroom discourse expression, several suggestions are proposed to improve the quality of English classroom from three different levels: individual, situational, and macro.

4.1. Individual level

At the individual level, we should first focus on improving students' discourse knowledge literacy and language skill training. In this process, teachers should encourage students to actively deconstruct and reconstruct their own semantics and knowledge. At the same time, schools and teachers should provide students with a framework as guidance and direct their learning goals, respectively, so that they can achieve their learning goals. In addition, teachers should adjust their discourse density and meaning attraction according to the actual situation and teaching materials. The development of teachers' discourse ability should not be separated from the micro-details of discourse. Different discourse details have different functional, textual, and interpersonal potentials, and these potentialities have different effects on discourse learning. Since they have different effects on language learning, there are now higher requirements for teachers. Teachers would have to transform all kinds of educational materials and existing texts into discourse and learn how to make full use of online and offline resources to enrich their classroom discourse. Teachers should also include some multi-modal characteristics in their discourse. With the help of different senses, such as hearing, vision, and touch, using language, images, sounds, actions, and other methods and symbolic resources may be beneficial in helping teachers express and coordinate various modes of discourse so as to establish a complete set of discourse meanings.

4.2. Situational level

As a form of social construction, situations have certain effects on personal discourse, behavior, belief, and behavior, and these effects are produced by teachers' social intervention. Social construction is beneficial to the development of English teachers' classroom discourse. It is embodied in the following aspects: improving the materials of English-related education and research, carrying out effective management in English education and research activities, strengthening the support for English education and research, strengthening the growth of English teachers, improving the channels, perfecting the reward and punishment system, *etc.* As a key link in teachers' social network, higher education institutions develop close ties with the surrounding groups, communities, social culture, politics, and economy and form close interactions with each other, both of which play significant roles in the development of teachers' discourse ability. It is important for teachers and students to carry out educational research and learn English, respectively. Higher education institutions should build network supports for English teaching and scientific research in order to provide a comprehensive guarantee for college English teaching. They should also take the initiative to carry out educational research, introduce professional talents, hold reports and workshops all year round, establish learning programs for teachers based on network and mobile technology

with excellent universities at home and abroad, encourage foreign language teachers to participate in scientific research and continue their studies, and give priority to educational evaluation and professional title evaluation. Under the impetus for educational reform, there have been gradual changes to outdated educational ideas, teaching has been advocated to drive research, and vice versa; and the latest theories, teaching methods, and technologies have been applied in English teaching.

4.3. Macro level

From a macro perspective, China's education reform often centers around the "top-down" model. If profound and significant changes are bound to occur, a good foundation and development direction is required. The influence of the state and society on college English classroom discourse is relatively subtle. In other words, the relevant language policies of the state and social ideology have a great influence on teachers' classroom discourse.

The College English Curriculum Requirements clearly states, "College English is not only a foreign language course about basic English knowledge, but also a course that helps students to broaden horizons and learn about different cultures, that is, to improve their comprehensive cultural quality." It has both "instrumental" and "humanistic" functions^[10]. Therefore, in the teaching of college English, it is necessary to have solid basic knowledge of English in order to improve students' knowledge about the language. In addition, our language education decision-making organs and departments should have a clear focus. Paying too much attention to the instrumentality and professionalism of English may lead to negative influences, such as overspecialization and utilitarianism of English. The basic purpose and content of college English education should be to integrate general education into the thought of college English education and humanities with natural sciences. Promoting English as the carrier of life practice to improve the language level of college students and a necessary language for global citizens should be the fundamental goal. It is necessary to emphasize on knowledge learning, along with the idea of all-round development, so as to improve humanism and scientism in students.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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