

Research on the Application of Flipped Classroom in College English Writing Teaching

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ABSTRACT. *This paper introduces the definition and characteristics of flipped classroom, analyzes the theoretical basis of flipped classroom and the advantages of flipped classroom in college English writing. It explores the application of flipped classroom of college English writing from three stages: previewing before class, deepening in class, and consolidating after class.*

KEYWORDS: *Flipped classroom; College English; Writing teaching*

1. Introduction

The ultimate goal of language learning is output, and output language education can stimulate students' motivation for language learning (Wen Qiufang 2013). *College English Teaching Requirements* clearly states: "College English courses should improve students' comprehensive English application ability, cultivate students' output language skills and better meet the current needs for talent training." However, the traditional college English classroom pays more attention to the language input and ignores the language output, as a result, the teaching of English writing has not reached the expected effect. Therefore, it is urgent to reform the teaching of college English writing. In recent years, the flipped classroom model advocated by the academic circle has a positive impact on the English writing level of college students. Flipped classroom adheres to the student-centered teaching concept, advocates to stimulate students' learning motivation, and divides the classroom into three stages: before class, during class and after class. Flipped classroom conforms to the goal of educational development and provides new ideas for the reform of college English writing teaching.

2. An overview of the flipped classroom

2.1 The Definition of Flipped Classroom

Flipped classroom is a new teaching mode that reverses knowledge transfer and internalization, reverses the roles of teachers and students in the traditional teaching process, and rearranges classroom teaching activities of teachers and students. That is, online teaching is implemented after class to enhance knowledge in class. Wang Binhong (2014) believed that any teaching mode in which teachers deliver learning materials for students to view before or after class, then discuss between teachers and students or between students and students in class, and solve problems can be called flipped classroom. It can be seen that flipped classroom is the learning process of traditional classroom. This new teaching mode is conducive to stimulate students' enthusiasm in English learning and improve their independent learning ability.

2.2. The Characteristics of Flipped Classroom

1) Change the Teaching Process

Traditional teaching process emphasizes knowledge imparting before knowledge internalization. Teachers are mainly responsible for the teaching of knowledge in class, while the internalization of knowledge depends on students' practice outside class. However, flipped classroom reverses the teaching process. That is, students need to complete the learning of new knowledge before class, and the classroom becomes an interactive place between teachers and students, including answering questions and correcting students' wrong understanding, so as to realize the use of knowledge and achieve good teaching results.

2) Change the Roles of Teachers and Students

Student-centered is the core concept of flipped classroom. The teacher is the director and supervisor of the whole process, who before class must build "scaffolding" for students to construct new knowledge, to avoid students into the wrong area, so as to facilitate students to acquire knowledge, organization processing and in-depth learning. Students are the subject of the whole learning process. Flipped classroom can truly realize students' independent and personalized learning. Students have more freedom in the learning process.

3) Change the Teaching Resources

Although in traditional classroom teaching online teaching video is provided for students, the lack of interactive experience often leads to failing to meet the requirements of enhancing students' personal quality. However, flipped classroom can effectively utilize modern information technology to make secondary processing of teaching resources. Thus, Teachers can make scientific and reasonable micro-lesson video according to their own teaching and students' characteristics. Teaching video is mainly for specific knowledge points, usually about 10 minutes.

In the process of autonomous learning, students can play, pause and replay teaching video, and take notes for reflection and consolidation of knowledge points.

4) Change of the Teaching Environment

The teaching environment is no longer confined to the classroom. The learning inside and outside the classroom forms a whole teaching environment through the cyberspace. This greatly facilitates teachers to organize teaching, introduce teaching resources, record students' dynamic learning process, and timely learn students' learning status. Classroom interaction changes to paralleling virtual space and real space, which helps students to complete learning tasks comprehensively.

3. The theoretical basis of flipped classroom

3.1 Constructivism Theory

Constructivism theory is one of the important theories of flipped classroom. There are two categories of constructivism, one of which is cognitive constructivism represented by Piaget, while the other of which is social constructivism represented by Vygotsky. Constructivism advocates that “students are the center of the classroom, and all teaching activities should be based on the needs of students”. At the same time, it emphasizes the importance of learners' existing learning experience, and holds that individual learning is a process that learners construct new knowledge and information through interactive understanding with the outside world on the basis of existing knowledge, experience and cognitive structure. In addition, teachers should pay attention to the creation of corresponding situations when organizing teaching activities, so that students can learn in a relaxed and lively language environment, guide students to construct new knowledge and experience with the help of existing cognition, and pay attention to the processing and conversion of knowledge. It is based on constructivism that flipped classroom can flip classroom, flip the roles of teachers and students, flip teaching resources and flip teaching environment.

3.2 Autonomous Learning Theory

Learners' autonomy is the ability to conduct self-learning. In the broad sense, autonomous learning refers to learners' learning activities that are related to learning and beneficial to their own development in different forms. In the narrow sense, autonomous learning refers to the process that students can independently complete some valuable and creative activities with the help of teachers. In the flipped classroom teaching mode, teachers need to make video materials for students to view and learn before class. Classroom activities are mainly about communication and interaction. After class, students' self-internalization and improvement are more emphasized. These autonomous learning activities not only pay attention to students' arrangement and construction of relevant knowledge, but also pay attention to the cultivation of autonomous learning ability, so that they can learn creatively and become the masters of the classroom.

4. The advantages of flipped classroom of college English writing

Firstly, applying flipped classroom to college English writing teaching can cultivate students' autonomous learning ability and provide them with the initiative of learning. In traditional English writing teaching, teachers control the whole teaching process while students passively accept it. Passive learning will suppress students' subjective initiative and creativity in learning. However, in the flipped classroom teaching model, students take the initiative to learn new knowledge in advance, which is helpful for students to put forward their own questions about writing in class and actively interact with teachers, and fully feel the importance of autonomous learning, so as to continuously improve their autonomous learning ability.

Secondly, flipped classroom can eliminate the hierarchical concept between teachers and students, making the relationship between teachers and students more harmonious. In the traditional teaching mode of writing, the unequal concept between teachers and students will cause a kind of pressure on students' psychology, which makes it difficult for students to get interested in writing in class. However, flipped classroom adheres to the concept of student-centered, where students are the subject of learning and teachers are the instructors and supervisors of students' learning, providing more communication opportunities for students and inspiring and encouraging students to innovate their writing ideas.

In addition, in flipped classroom, students' learning is not restricted by time and place (Leis & Cooke, et al 2015). The use of network resources makes learning more diverse and purposeful. Students can arrange writing exercises at their own pace, time and place. Flipped classroom is helpful for students to contact with the real world and expand and enrich the teaching content to a certain extent.

5. The construction of flipped classroom application of college English writing

There is no fixed model for the application of flipped classroom in college English writing class. The approach of reversing is determined by its teaching content. Flipped classroom teaching mode is mainly composed of two parts, including in-class and after-class. It can be divided into three stages: pre-class previewing, in-class deepening and after-class consolidating and internalizing. Furthermore, a good flipped class of college English writing requires well-made video, perfect classroom activities and a strong learning environment. Close collaboration between teachers and students and between students is the key to a successful flipped classroom of college English (Temizyurek & Unlu 2015).

5.1 Pre-Class Previewing Stage

The flipped classroom teaching mode of college English writing focuses on the transfer of knowledge in the pre-class stage. Teachers make micro lessons before class, including corresponding writing strategies, words, phrases and sentence

structure, etc., and provide excellent model essays for students to study and imitate. In flipped classroom teachers pay more attention to the personalized cultivation of students and can make assignments according to students' abilities. Flipped classroom also requires students to learn the knowledge points in micro class before class, and report the problems which they encounter in the learning process to the team leaders. Then, the representatives summarize the problems and feed back to the teachers.

5.2 In-Class Deepening Stage

In English writing flipped classroom, the teaching is mainly aimed at some writing problems which the students encounter while studying by themselves. Teachers are the leaders and commanders in the in-class deepening stage, who should not only stimulate students' potentials, but also help students internalize the relevant writing methods. Peer teaching method is a good way to promote mutual learning among students and promote their internalization and absorption of teaching content (Mazur 1997). Therefore, teachers should encourage students to discuss in class, and find the gaps which they miss in the previewing stage. Thus, students can get a feeling of existence from the discussion and play a leading role. Meanwhile, teachers can become a mentor but a dominant in class, to promote students to absorb and understand the content of writing. Teachers should also design teaching activities according to the teaching content, such as presentation in class and group work and so forth. After the discussion, teachers should encourage students to evaluate and learn from each other, and follow up the whole process, and then make the final evaluation of the writing content and students' performance, and put forward suggestions for modification.

5.3 After-Class Consolidating and Internalizing Stage

In after-class consolidating and internalizing stage, teachers mainly judge students' compositions and students modify their compositions by themselves. Teachers judge students' compositions from the perspective of ideological conception, language organization and application, sentence coherence and macro perspective, and provide such detailed notes that students can proof, without limiting students' thinking. In addition, teachers should mark students' mistakes or expressions that are not authentic. Students should modify their exercises according to teachers' opinions immediately after they get feedback from teachers. Students should also realize the corresponding evaluation criteria and peer review. By peer reviewing, students can learn different ways of thinking in writing, learn from each other, stimulate their enthusiasm in writing, promote their mastery of writing skills, and improve their English writing gradually. Finally, students interact with teachers and classmates online to exchange their writing experience and deepen their English writing skills again.

6. Conclusion

In a word, flipped classroom is the product of the emergence of Information Age. It is a classroom that deeply constructs knowledge and plays an important role in improving the quality and efficiency of college English writing teaching. More and more attention has been paid to the research of college English writing teaching based on flipped classroom, which not only helps improve students' English writing level, but also makes teaching more targeted and purposeful. College English writing classroom teaching should follow the development trend of information technology in the new era, combine flipped classroom teaching mode, and make bold innovation to maximize teaching benefits.

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