

Research on the ARCS-based Task Teaching Model of Oral English in Rural Senior High Schools

Dengwen Wang¹, Lu Qi²

School of Foreign Languages, Gannan Normal University, Ganzhou, Jiangxi, 341000, China

E-mail: gnnucnwdw@126.com

**Corresponding Author*

ABSTRACT. *With the development of globalization, cross-culture communication becomes more and more frequent. As an international language, English is still dynamic. At the same time, with the reform of English in national college entrance examination, more emphasis will be put on the practical use of English. Therefore, oral English plays an important role in English learning and teaching. This article expounds what is ARCS-based task teaching model and how to apply the model to teaching oral English in rural senior high school, followed by a further discussion measures taken to better ARCS-based task model in teaching oral English when using the model in rural senior high schools.*

KEYWORDS: *ARCS-based task teaching model, oral English, rural senior high schools*

1. Introduction

Oral English teaching plays an essential role in learning English and English teaching. Contrary to the rapid development of Chinese economy and education, the level of oral English teaching remains low, especially in rural senior high schools where oral English has long been neglected. It's reported that more than 90 percent of the rural senior high school students can not express themselves in English. Most of them are not willing to open their mouth and speak English. Old-fashioned teaching method or model combining low teaching ability faculty contributes to this situation. To improve the situation, better and more efficient model has to be applied to teach oral English in rural senior high schools.

2. What is ARCS model

ARCS-based task teaching model incorporates the concept of task into the ARCS-based teaching model. This model is designed by John M. Kelly. Like the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), it is a model to stimulate students' learning initiation and improve the teaching. However, it pays more attention to the students' personal factors as well as the external factors. It can help the teachers to find out more methods to spur the students' activeness. Also, it can solve many teaching problems. There are four components in ARCS model --- Attention, Relevance, Confidence and Satisfaction. The four components are connected with each other.

First, attention means the concentration on some certain objects, which belongs to a psychological activity. It is the prime element which aims to arouse and maintain the students' motivation. So, what teachers confront with is to remain students' attention. Only if teachers can fix up their attention, can they assure that students have the basic of learning. As attention is the first step, teachers should be keen to discover effective strategies and spend more time to study how they can attract students' attention.

Second, relevance is what teachers need to think after they attract students' attention. There are two kinds of relevance: goal-orientation, experience-orientation. The former is regarded as an instrument to achieve that goal; the latter is the feelings in the learning process. As English is a communicative language, it is linked with life to a great extent. Teachers are supposed to provide students with topics close to their students' life.

Third, it is known that those who lack confidence are not willing to take part in collective activity. Teachers ought to build students' confidence so that they take make a positive attitude to study. Therefore, teachers are expected to build students confidence by praising and encouraging students as much as possible. Praising and encouragement meet the desire for students to be recognized.

Fourth, students need a sense of satisfaction from achievements, from rewards or from the entertainment. Generally speaking, students' satisfaction has positive correlation with the motivation to learning. If the student is satisfied with the outcome, they are more active to study. So, the vital task of teachers is to give them as much positive feedback as possible to let them have a sense of accomplishment.

3. The application of tasks to ARCS-based teaching model

As it has been mentioned in the above part, ARCS model is systematic teaching model which consists of attention, relevance, confidence and satisfaction. How can teachers put tasks into in ARCS model in practice?

3.1 The steps in designing a task

When designing oral English tasks, teachers, first, need to take the students' need, interests, and abilities into consideration. If teachers can know about what their students need, and stimulate their interest, they will be more active in learning. Teachers should also keep in mind that a task ought to suit to students' ability. If tasks are beyond their abilities, they feel upset.

second, list the tasks as many as possible, which is also called brainstorming. But bear in mind the communicative purpose of the tasks. The aim of designing the task is to practice the students' oral English. If the goal is ignored, a task is easy to deviate from teachers' desire.

Step 3, evaluate the tasks. Think about whether they serve as the teaching aims. tasks are intended to convey some information and knowledge to students; how much they suite the students' needs, interests, or ability level. If the task is too difficult to cope with, make right corrections.

Step 4, choose the language this task is supposed to use. On the one hand, keep balance in the difficulty of language involved in this task, if it is hard, amend it. On the other hand, plan the language skills the students should obtain from the task and the sentence, words, grammar included. At last, collect the material. If teachers want to students to carry out the task, they are supposed to provide them the material so that students know what and how to do.

3.2 The teaching process of Task and ARCS-based teaching model

Pre-task: Teachers can make use of various tasks to motivate and to keep students in high spirits. For instance, when teachers teach unit 2 'what is this in English', they can ask students to learn to sing an English song in class, which can arouse the students' intention and create a relaxing atmosphere. As what is mentioned above, attention is the first element of ARSC model. Thus, teachers have to prepare interesting activities to arouse students' interest. Make sure they can be flexible, that is to say, they can be adapted if there is any change.

While-task: in this phase, teachers can introduce what they are going to teach or to do, it is also the key stage in a task. A task should be relevant to students. It can be useful to their development in the future or it is related with their daily life. Besides a task must bear some relevance to their previous experience to maintain students' motivation. What is more, the process of performing a task should involve other factors, such as emotion. Students should first know the rules of a task and know how to do. Therefore, teachers ought to explain explicitly, give students a task after that.

Post-task: the purpose of post-task is to reflect how effective the oral task is. A reflection to these questions will make a difference in the next time. Because the teachers can evaluate the task by recollecting students' performance. For example, students may make mistakes in pronunciation or in use of certain words. In this case, teachers can require students to practice more. giving students after-teaching

activities is required. It can be oral presentation, speech or retelling the text. which can help students strengthen what they have learned in class.

4. Measures taken to better ARCS-based task model in teaching oral English in rural senior high schools

4.1 Strengthening rural senior high school teachers' quality

Weak faculty is big matter in rural middle schools. The new curriculum demands teachers to learn new English curriculum seriously, change their orientation of teaching, adapt to the requirement of educational reform. So, in order to improve the oral level of rural high school students, teachers' quality and resource should be strengthened. On the one hand, educational organization should improve the standard of rural teachers. In the past, schools only emphasized on teachers' educational background, ignoring their teaching ability or their oral English level. What is more, in rural schools, some teachers have heavy accent in speaking English, in this case, students are unlikely to learn standard oral English.

The government should take effective measures to encourage and attract more young graduates to devote themselves to the education in the countryside. Currently, increasing the salary of teachers is on the top of agenda, especially in the poor remote area where material property is scarce. Only in this way can schools improve the quality and resource of faculty and lay a foundation for school teaching.

4.2 Creating a learning atmosphere in and outside class

A good learning atmosphere is vital in English teaching; it can inspire students' activeness. During class, rural teachers should organize their class in English, to set a good example. Teaching language in class is expected to be rich, funny and intelligible. It must be fit to students' knowledge. So teachers should speak slowly at the beginning, at the same time, they can use body language so as to make students easy to understand. Using English in oral English teaching can train students' listening and helps students develop a sense of English language. Teachers should prepare themselves to using English by reciting some high-frequency words. So they can change their words to make teaching more colorful.

After class, teachers should take advantage of oral English activities to encourage students to speak more and practice more in a relaxing atmosphere. English singing contest or English reading contest are good choices. To make these activities go smoothly, teachers should make friends with students and know students better. This is helpful to teaching in out of class, because students will feel relaxed if they have intimate relation with their teachers.

5. Conclusion

It has still remained a difficult problem how teachers can improve rural senior high school students in their oral English proficiency. Although up to now many researchers and scholars have made numerous investigations and researches from different angles and perspectives. Among them is the ARCS-based model which can better improve classroom teaching so that students get more chances to practice their oral English proficiency. This article creatively integrates tasks into the ARCS model to raise rural senior high school students in expressing themselves in English. Still, there is much to do to perfect its application to English classroom teaching in rural areas.

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