

Study on the Project-based Approach to Teaching EFL Writing for Students in Sport Universities

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ABSTRACT. *Based on the theory of constructivism, humanistic theory and multiple intelligence theory, this study aims to find out the feasibility model of PBA in EFL College English writing teaching with students of Special Education Majors in Shandong Sport University as participants by means of longitudinal comparison of pre-test and post-test, the horizontal comparison between Experimental Class and Control Class, as well as the comprehensive analysis of the data from the quantitative and qualitative dimensions.*

KEYWORDS: *Project-based approach; Sport universities; College English; Writing Teaching*

1. Introduction

English writing teaching plays a critical part in college English teaching. Not only can it develop students' writing skills, but also help them consolidate their English knowledge, cultivate their language competence and arouse their interests in learning English. This study aims to find out the feasibility model of PBA in EFL College English writing teaching for students in Sport universities[1].

2. Current situation

In EFL college English writing teaching, the traditional teaching approaches, among which PPP model is most popular, cannot adapt to the requirements of today's social development, nor can it cultivate students' learning, operational, cognitive, practical and innovative abilities[2]. In most traditional teaching processes, the teacher makes the students grasp the language knowledge by presentation and drills, and then allows them to make hypothetical communication under control or semi-control, so as to achieve output of language and form the learning result. Students' use of language is based on the knowledge level, not on the real life communication needs. Therefore, it is a one-way teacher-centered process of knowledge transmission that ignores the status of students in learning as well as their real learning needs.

3. The definition and characteristics of project-based approach

William Heard Kilpatrick puts forward the concept of “project teaching” in Teachers College Record and defines “project” as a fully engaged and planned action needed in a specific social environment (Kilpatrick 319). The project-based approach is to give an independent project to students and make them be responsible for the information collection, program design, project implementation and final evaluation themselves. Compared with the general learning tasks, the projects in PBA have obvious characteristics of practical activity tasks and they are essentially the practical activities planned and implemented by students under the guidance of teachers. The activities include both team activities and activities with their practical works, thus giving students experience in the interaction of people, people and things[3].

4. Methodology

The study choose the Class 1 and Class 2 students of 2018 Special Education Majors in Shandong Sport University as research participants, who are pre-tested by the same writing test and scored by the same language proficiency scale and then investigated by a questionnaire on the actual situation when the PBA is applied to college English writing teaching. Then a 16 weeks teaching experiment is carried out. The EFL writing teaching of the Experiment Class (Class 1) mainly uses the teaching activity design of PBA while the Control Class (Class 2) still uses the traditional PPP writing teaching model.

By the end of the experiment, a same writing test is used to post-test the students of the two classes and the same language proficiency scale is used for scoring. In addition, a same questionnaire is distributed to investigate the changes of the students. Through the longitudinal comparison of pre-test and post-test, and the two questionnaire as well as the horizontal comparison between Experimental Class and Control Class, as well as the comprehensive analysis of the data from the quantitative and qualitative dimensions, the study analyses whether the PBA can improve the English writing ability of students in Sport Universities.

5. Results and suggestions

A simulating test of CET-4 is used for the pre-test. it can be seen from the marks of their writing that there is little difference in the writing level between the students in the EC and CC. From the statistics in Table 1, we can see that although the equal variances are assumed as the significance in pre-test is 0.253, more than 0.05, the teaching experiment that applies PBA in writing teaching has made more progress as in the statistics the significance difference between the two classes in post-test is 0.364.

Table 1 Independent samples test t-test of pre-test and post-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variations		T-test for Equality of Means			
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Pre-test score	Equal variances assumed	1.344	.253	.710	83	.493	.7144
	Equal variances not assumed			.713	82.857	.492	.7350
Post-test score	Equal variances assumed	2.054	.364	3.621	83	.026	2.0341
	Equal variances not assumed			3.599	80.057	.026	2.0341

6. Conclusion

The study shows that PBA, which can give practice of cognitive abilities, is of great significance and feasibility for the improving of college English writing in sport universities. By means of doing projects in their English writing, students can think actively, find their weaknesses in actual use and construct the knowledge then apply their understanding of the learned knowledge into the process of the projects. There is an obvious improvement in the structure and unity of their writings. The study shows that PBA, which can give practice of cognitive abilities, is of great significance and feasibility for the improving of college English writing in sport universities.

Reference

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