

Analysis of the Advantages of Small Class Teaching for English Core Literacy

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Abstract: The core idea of the new curriculum renovation is: "To all, teaching students in terms of the individual aptitude" "to make every student improved" "to meet the needs of diverse types of students at various levels." [1] With the core literacy requirements of English, the extensive implementation of quality education provides an opportunity for small class based target-oriented teaching. The target-oriented teaching can fully take care of the individual needs of students and is conducive to training the personal quality. Therefore, compared with the traditional classroom teaching, especially for English teaching, the advantages are apparent. This paper comprehensively analyzes the advantages of small class target-oriented teaching and gives out some case studies in teaching practices.

1. Introduction

The concept of core literacy is that our country conforms to the trend of world education renovation and development, and from the level of national strategy, sets the development direction of education renovation in the new century. The core literacy of English subject mainly includes: cultivating students' language ability, learning ability, independent thinking and cultural characters [2]. To this end, the English small class target-oriented teaching mode will surely become a milestone in the reformation of English education in China. The target-oriented teaching is a new attempt of the theory of "teaching students according to their aptitude and varying from person to person" that has actually been proposed in ancient China. The target-oriented teaching emphasizes that the teacher's "teaching" should adapt to the students' "learning" [6]. Although the students may have differences, it is not allowed to sacrifice the development of a part of students in exchange for the development of the others. Individual differences in students are valuable educational treasures for deep development. Compared with traditional classroom teaching, small class based target-oriented teaching has obvious advantages, which makes teaching more targeted, conducive to teaching students in terms of their aptitude, and facilitating the interaction between teachers and students. Since September 2004, our school has carried out multiple small class based target-oriented English teaching reformation experiment programs. Through more than ten years practice, small class based target-oriented teaching programs have not only provided favorable exemplary examples for the development of core literacy in English teaching, but also injected new vitality into the overall renovation of school education and teaching.

2. Small Class Based Target-oriented Teaching

Compared with the traditional classroom teaching, the small class based target-oriented teaching has the distinct difference in the aspects of quantitation and quality. It retains the advantages of the classroom teaching system, and still uses the class as the basic teaching organization form. However, it breaks the traditional way of class and teaching activities, so that the small class based target-oriented teaching can better meet the requirements of personal educational development [3]. The rising issue is how small class based target-oriented teaching reflects its advantages during cultivating students' core literacy in English. The author believes that it can be found from the following sections.

2.1. Development of Students' Learning Ability

It is important to develop students' ability to learn independently and actively. The English core literacy aims at students' learning ability: to actively use and actively adjust English learning strategies, to broaden English learning channels, and to enhance the awareness and ability of English learning efficiency. Therefore, "independent, inquiry, cooperation" learning has become an important feature in the core literacy of English. Students are required from to passively accept knowledge to actively explore knowledge, learn from knowledge, learn to learn, and learn to cooperate in order to adapt to the needs of society development. Therefore, teachers must pay attention to the study of students' learning methods, improve their ability to learn independently and actively, and make their core literacy develop comprehensively, so that they will truly become the master of learning. Therefore, the teaching should pay attention to the cultivation of students' learning ability.

When small class teaching is grouped, we have many advantages available. For example, groups can be assigned according to the degree of students; group members can be selected according to their own wills. The order of the seats can be disrupted during the competition and the students are placed in terms of the assigned groups. With a sense of freshness, cooperation will be more motivating and the competition will be more exciting.

In my class, the Guangzhou version of Oxford's seventh grade-Unit 6 Reading section is presented in the form of a travel guide that introduces three famous attractions on the Shanghai Bund, People's Square, The Bund and Yu Garden. The author first let the students understand the overall urban appearance of Shanghai, and focus on these three attractions. Then the students are required to make a brief tour plan. The topic of "Travelling" has a strong dialogue function and interesting performance scenes. The rising issue is how to let students learn knowledge and improve their ability in an easy and happy way? Therefore, the author thought of five English groups in the class. Each group has 5 members, and the degree of learning between the members is not the same. After finishing the new lesson, the author designed such an assignment: asked each group to act the English drama in the leisure time, in which they talked about the famous city of their favorite. Finally, they performed the individual dramas in the classroom, and the teacher ranked their performances. Next day, the class was lively, and the students in each group were very engaged. Their passionate performance attracted a burst of applause. Some groups introduced Beijing: Beijing is the Capital of China; People there love eating dumplings...; Some groups introduced Bangkok: Bangkok is the capital of Thailand; People like eating fruit...; Other groups introduced Tokyo: You Will see many tall buildings and large shopping malls if you visit Tokyo; Tourists usually go there for shopping; There are also many parks and gardens;.... The students collected the information they found at home or outside, and then rewrote, and complemented it with the group's classmates. Their scripts are both interesting and detailed. This kind of communication and competition between groups, and thinking collision make students' thinking in an exciting statue. Moreover, because of the target-oriented teaching, the level of students is relatively close to each other. Due to the small number of performers, the performance is also easy to control and does not cause chaos. Compared with traditional classroom teaching, this advantage of improving students' learning ability through "independent, inquiry and cooperation" learning methods is very obvious.

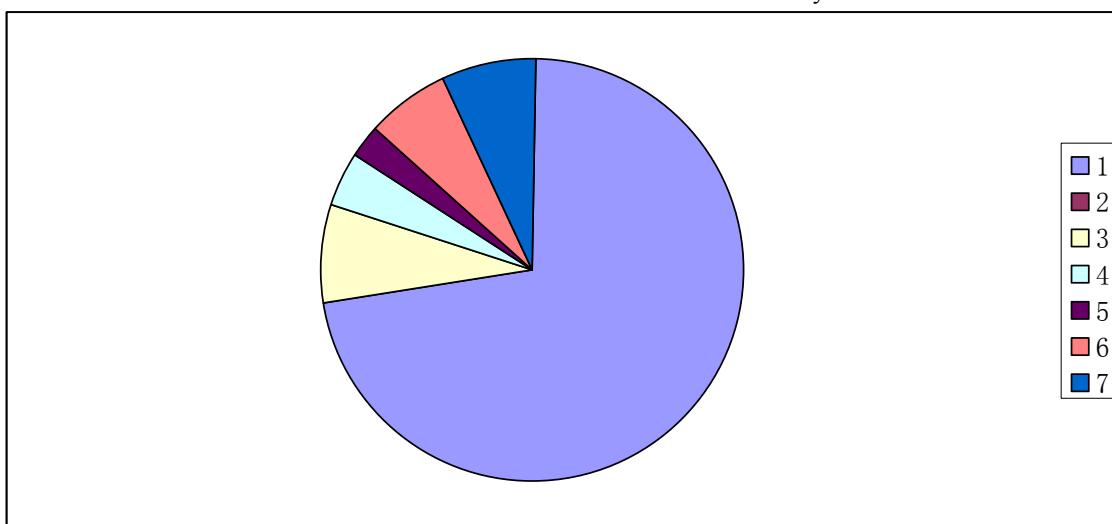
2.2. Designing Teaching Scenarios to Train Students' Language Skills

In the core literacy of English, the connotation of language ability is: the ability to understand and express meaning, intention and emotional attitude in the way of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in social scenes [2]. The cultivation of language ability requires the reconstruction and application of language. Usually the teachers need to integrate the content of the knowledge that students will learn according to the textbook. If they can be integrated in terms of the unit goals and topics, and associated with the designed teaching activities, the students' thinking will be continuously stimulated and the student's language skills will be more intensely exercised. In the subtle, students can access and learn the core literacy advocated in the English teaching, and cultivate the correct values.

The small class based target-oriented teaching provides students with a large room for free development, which is helpful for teachers to design various interesting situational teaching activities. For example, the author made a good attempt during teaching the Guangzhou version of Oxford English seventh grade-Unit 1. Since the core task of this module is to let students practice how to write a letter, how to introduce themselves and their families in the letter. The author first arranged homework for students to bring photos of themselves and their families to the school. In order to rouse students' interest and their desires, they were arranged into two groups to conduct interviews. This kind of practice requires collaboration to complete successfully. During cooperation, they could exchange ideas and linguistic knowledge, and work together to complete tasks, so that they could realize the strength of cooperation, and get new knowledge and ability from the partners to promote themselves. After exercises, every student showed the photos on a projector and gave a presentation through multimedia facility. In the relaxed and fun activities, the students not only completed the teaching tasks, but also were inspired to "speak" and "listen" through communicating with speakers. In particular, there was plenty of time for every student to have the opportunity to show and exercise on the stage, which was impossible for traditional classroom teaching.

Another case is of teaching: How much money do you spend? It probably costs me about... I firstly said that "As for me, I have a habit of checking the expenses that I spend during several days or weeks. And from the checkbook I can list the expenses that I spend in a month as following: "

Item	Expense
1.Food	450-500yuan/month
2.Books	very few nearly zero
3.Travel	30-50yuan/month
4.Phone	20-35yuan/month
5.Music & Games	zero
6.Clothes	infrequent it depends
7.Sports	10-15yuan/month
All	520-600yuan



The students discussed within the individual groups on every member monthly expenses and completed the group's consumption situation pie chart accordingly, and then showed the pie chart for comments. Through such full discussion, the charts were produced and the results were displayed, effectively enabling students to practice oral expression in a real environment, and to achieve the purpose of cultivating students' comprehensive language ability.

2.3. Designing Game Activities To Train Students' Logic Thinking

English core literacy has special requirements for training the logic, criticality and creativity of students' thinking [5]. The middle school English Guangzhou Oxford edition textbook stresses intellectual, ideological and educational. Teachers should be good at digging these materials,

excavating the ideological connotation, adopting flexible and diverse methods, designing vivid and interesting game activities to train students' thinking, and making their thinking original and critical.

In the small class based target-oriented English teaching environment, teachers can use the various activities, such as playing games, storytelling, tongue twisters, etc., to motivate students' learning passions due to the characteristics of students' active, fun, and victorious behaviors. Especially games, this is because games are an important part of student life, and most students like classroom teaching games. The game brings happiness to their English learning, and makes their mind and body fully invested; the game makes the boring, mechanical sentence practice vivid, lively and interesting. Therefore, in English teaching, we must take full advantage of the game to improve the teaching effect and train students' thinking.

In the small class teaching, because the number of people is small and the venue is relatively large, teachers can design games with a wide range of activities and strong participation in the whole class [4]. For example, in order to let students master the sentence pattern "What do I look like? What does she/he look like?" and master some vocabulary that depicts people's personality traits, the author deliberately designed a prize-winning "guessing activity." First, let the students take out a blank sheet of paper to draw their own self-portraits, and then asked them to submit. Then a classmate took out one of them and described the portrait in English. The audience listened carefully to the description, and then carefully looked at the portrait on the projector to make a guess. Each classmate's description was very distinctive. What's more interesting is that the self-portrait of the classmates is also very funny and unique. The applause and laughter of the classmates filled the entire classroom. Another example, the Guangzhou version of the Oxford English ninth grade-Unit 7, Grammar section introduces the organization and usage of restrictive attributive clauses guided by who, that or which. To learn this part of the language skills, particularly using English thinking, it is difficult for students to do well. However, if you use games in teaching, you can easily make it easy and enjoyable. The author first asked a member of a group to say a person or thing. The first one in the group who uses the attributive clause to describe exactly the person or thing would be awarded to one point, such as:

S1: A cormorant.

S2: A cormorant is a big bird that/which can fish the fish.

S2: Mark Twain.

S3: Mark Twain is a great American writer that/who wrote many humorous short stories and novels.

S4:...

Then, let the other groups do another game opposite to the above game sequence, that is, one member uses an attributive clause to describe a person or a thing, and other members guess the person or thing that is described. The first correct would be awarded one point in the group. Such as:

S1: It's a bird that/which can fish the fish.

S2: A cormorant.

S2: He is a great American writer that/who wrote many humorous short stories and novels.

S3: Mark Twain.

S4:...

In this cycling exercise, students easily practiced and consolidated this part of the grammar knowledge and improved their thinking skills in interesting games and quizzes. Meanwhile, through participating in the game, the students showed their own personality, revealed their own strengths. Using from learning and learning from use, greatly satisfying their desires for performance and achievement.

3. Conclusion

The small class based target-oriented English teaching pursues the flexibility of the small class teaching method. It pursues the unity of the common education and the individualized education. It

pursues the development of human beings and further develops the core literacy as the core of human development. The essential pursuit is "The balance" of the harmonious development of overall quality and the unique development of personality. Small class teaching reflects the educational requirements for cultivating students' core literacy. For more than ten years practices, small class based target-oriented teaching has played its advantages and has become a breakthrough for our students to promote students' active development in classroom teaching. At the same time, some of the experiences we gained in English teaching under the small class based teaching model were also applied to the other teaching activities. The small class based target-oriented teaching is playing the role in promoting "face" with "points".

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