

# The Study of Application of Cloud-class to Improve Students' Information Literacy in College English

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## ABSTRACT

Educational informatization is an inevitable trend of education development. Finding a proper way to improve students' information literacy in the process of college English learning is an urgent project. This paper, through the practical research of using cloud-class in college English courses, explores the ways and methods of using information teaching method to improve students' information literacy in the process of college English teaching. It proves that cloud-class is a practical method to enhance students' information literacy and ought to be popularized to other courses.

**Keywords:** *Cloud-class, Information literacy, College English.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The essence of "information literacy" is a kind of basic ability that people need to have in global informatization. Information literacy is a kind of adaptability to the information society. In 1992, Doyle defined information literacy as followed: a person with information literacy can realize that accurate and complete information is the basis for making reasonable decisions. He can also determine the demand for information, form problems based on information demand, determine potential information sources, and develop successful retrieval schemes. A person with information literacy should have the ability to obtain information from computer-based retrieval and other information sources, to evaluate information, to organize information in the practical application and to integrate the new information and the original knowledge system as well as to use information in the process of critical thinking and problem solving. To sum up, information literacy mainly has four characteristics: (1) the sensitivity of capturing information; (2) the decisiveness of screening information; (3) the accuracy of evaluating information; (4) the freedom of

exchanging information and the originality of applying information.

## 2. THE CONTENT OF INFORMATION LITERACY

In 1998, the American Library Association (ALA) and the Association of Educational Communication (AEC) formulated nine information literacy standards for students' learning, which summarized the specific contents of information literacy. Among them, there are four standards that deeply fit the application of cloud-class, a modern information means of college English courses. The first one is that students with information literacy can obtain information effectively and efficiently. The second one is that students with information literacy can evaluate information skillfully and critically. The third one is that students with information literacy can use information accurately and creatively. The fourth one is that students who have made positive contributions to the learning community and society have information literacy, and can actively participate in group activities to explore and create information.

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### **3. INTRODUCTION TO CLOUD-CLASS**

Cloud-class is a new mode of real-time interactive teaching in mobile environment. It is a client app based on mobile network environment, which can meet the real-time feedback teaching interaction between teachers and students in and out of the class. Cloud-class aims to help teachers improve the efficiency of interaction with students and stimulate students to learn on mobile devices, so as to achieve teaching interaction, resource release and feedback evaluation between teachers and students. Cloud-class can enrich teaching activities and improve students' activity participation and learning enthusiasm. It is helpful for teachers to know students' learning situation in time and optimize teaching methods. Using this advanced teaching platform, teachers can provide students with rich teaching resources and make the whole learning process run through before, during and after class. This app can be installed on mobile terminals such as mobile phones and tablets or any other platforms, which greatly facilitates students to learn knowledge at any time, changes the way of learning, and promotes students to control their spare time effectively.

### **4. THE WAYS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' INFORMATION LITERACY IN CLOUD-CLASS**

According to the advice of educational information experts, teachers and students in modern society should have six information skills: to determine information tasks, to determine information strategies, to search information strategies, to choose and use information, to synthesize information and to evaluate information. The cloud-class is used as a teaching method, which fully practises the skills students need to possess.

#### ***4.1 Cloud-class Provides Flexible and Changeable Teaching Methods***

The information age provides a lot of learning tools and teaching modes for students. Cloud-class is one of the effective learning tools, which has changed the traditional teaching mode.

Before class, teachers release resources through cloud-class, and the resources are various, including pictures, audio, video, documents, Web links, PPT, etc. These materials can be uploaded

from the computer, the high-quality video resources in Teachers' mobile phones can be recorded, and references in the course circle of cloud-class can be obtained, etc. The timing for releasing resource is selected by the teacher according to the class situation. Students need to determine the information task, retrieve relevant information according to the task, and process the information released by teachers characteristically. Because students have checked the relevant resources in cloud-class before class, formed personalized cognition, and completed relevant exercises or tests, they have made a good preparation for the problems to be taught and discussed in this unit in advance, so they will have a strong pertinence when attending the class. As the duration of college English classes is decreasing year by year, the demand for higher-end employment and further study is increasing year by year, the teaching effect of College English is highly demanded year by year in contradiction, English learning without limitation is becoming more important. The full warm-up before class is very important for students to understand the background knowledge related to the theme and improve the humanity quality. In this process, the students' ability to retrieval, selection and utilization of relevant information and comprehensive evaluation is integrated, which effectively improves the information literacy.

In class, the ways in which students participate in-class interaction become diverse. The voting questionnaire, brainstorming, question-answer discussion, testing, group task, etc. enrich the in-class activities. Brainstorming and question-answer discussion and discussion activities make students have a platform for speaking English and expressing themselves freely, which helps to eliminate students' anxiety and make the class participation more actively. The column chart or percentage generated in the poll questionnaire, the real-time reflection of scores, answer time and class ranking in the test cater to the students' fast food culture psychology and grasp their learning dynamic situation immediately. For example, in the introduction section of Text A "a life full of rich" in unit 2 of the "New Edition of Comprehensive College English Course", a questionnaire, which entitled "Which ones are very important to you?" is set up and 7 answers are provided for students to choose from. The two-minute limitation is set in advance. After the deadline, the answers of students are clear at a glance: 83% of the students choose parents and friends, 79% of them choose health, money 69%, study and work 45%, love and

marriage 34%, social activities and physical appearance 7%. After mastering the contemporary university students' value cognition, teachers can revise and guide the values more conveniently and introduce the contents of this text. The process of this questionnaire survey realizes the interaction between students and themselves, the interaction with other students and teachers. Teachers become the designers of curriculum and the guide of students' learning, so that students can become the main body of learning. Teachers build a learning environment and tools with internet and multimedia technology, which has rich information, reflective and conducive to students' autonomous learning, cooperative learning and research learning. The strategies for students' independent learning are developed. Students can explore freely, and the development of their critical and creative thinking is promoted greatly.

After class, instant review can also be achieved through cloud-class. Teachers can arrange homework in class. Students are supposed to upload their homework in the form of pictures, text, audio and so on, in the unit of individual or group. Teachers' ways of correcting have become diversified. They can give corresponding scores and comments, which can make students evaluate each other. Teachers can also discuss with students in the comments, which can not only ensure privacy but also effective communication. Students' mutual evaluation can increase interest and interaction between students, so as to facilitate students to understand the learning status and phase of other students. Students can understand their advantages and disadvantages in time through the teacher's comments on their homework, and further communicate with the teachers where they don't understand. This is also a positive extension of flipped class. Teaching is not only in the class, but also after class. Students can still think actively and ask questions, and solve puzzles. Cloud-class provides a convenient communication platform for both teachers and students. Students can use cloud-class to carry out extended learning, obtain relevant information, evaluate information of the course through other information sources, apply to the information obtained in specific practice, integrate new information with the original knowledge system, and use information in critical thinking and problem-solving process.

#### ***4.2 Cloud-class Can Improve the Interest of Learning***

Cloud-class can stimulate students' interest and let students complete the learning task easily and happily in interesting activities. Interest is the motivation of learning, and it plays a very important role in learning activities. Whether students are interested in learning content or not is one of the keys to the success of the class teaching.

In the course of teaching Text A "Writing for Myself" in unit 1 of Volume 1 of the "New Edition of Comprehensive College English Course", I release the video "How to have spaghetti?", the document "Beautiful Boy", "Introduction to John Lennon", "What is American educational system?", the related audio files in the textbook of this unit. And the questions of "What do you think of American and Chinese educational systems?" and "What does growth mean to you?" are put forward. These contents arouse the curiosity of students, inspire students to complete the task assigned by teachers. At the same time, students also search for relevant information on the content they are interested in, carry out critical thinking, and use various information resources to solve problems.

#### ***4.3 Cloud-class Is More Conducive to Helping Students Carry Out Inquiry Learning***

The interactive environment created by information technology can promote students' learning initiative. According to the theory of cognitive learning, people's cognition is produced by the interaction of external stimulation and people's psychological process. Only by giving full play to students' initiative and enthusiasm, can we obtain effective cognition. In the interactive environment, students are no longer in a passive position, but become the main body of learning. Under the guidance of teachers, they can choose what they want to learn and how to practice according to their own learning habit and interest, which is in line with the requirements of the new curriculum standard and modern education concept.

The proper and effective use of information technology provides students with more space for inquiry learning, and makes the class really become a platform for their exploration and communication, reflecting the educational concept of "teaching is the leading and learning is the main body".

#### **4.4 *Cloud- class Is Helpful to the Development of Innovative Spirit and Information Ability***

Students use information resources, with the help of information technology, to solve problems. Meanwhile, they master and apply information technology knowledge and skills, and acquire good information literacy. In the information environment, the status of students in class has changed, so that students become the real main body of learning, their exploratory learning is broadened, and their conducive ability is strengthened. Innovative spirit, with the help of information technology, stimulates students' desire to create, cultivates students' divergent thinking and different thinking. In the information environment, students' learning style has undergone great changes, which is more convenient for them to carry out mutual learning, and cultivate their team cooperation ability.

### **5. METHODS OF IMPROVING INFORMATION LITERACY AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF INFORMATIZATION**

#### **5.1 *Teachers Need to Update Their Ideas***

In the information technology environment, teachers not only need to learn to use modern information technology means, but also change the old concept, use the concept of information and modern educational theory to guide their own education and teaching activities, so that the design of teaching activities can meet the needs of information learning. The courseware with words and pictures as the main content cannot satisfy the needs of information-based teaching. We need to fully integrate the teaching content and information technology, and use information technology to vividly display the monotonous and boring text content in the teaching materials. Through the combination of sound, words and images, teachers can form an integrated teaching material and create a dynamic environment. The teaching environment is the combination of static and emotional expression.

#### **5.2 *Strengthening Training to Improve Teachers' Educational Informatization Level***

In the information-based teaching mode, teachers are not the only source of information for students' learning. In the process of information acquisition, teachers need to cultivate students' ability to acquire knowledge and guide them to explore activities. In the process of learning, teachers should stimulate students' interest and desire in learning, guide them to study actively, explore actively in the information-based teaching environment, and improve the ability to solve problems. Therefore, teachers must master modern educational technology, such as, micro video recording and editing, the use of network platform and different clients, so as to improve their information literacy and the ability to use information technology to solve problems in work, life and study. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen teachers' training and improve the level of teachers' informatization.

#### **5.3 *Teachers Need to Change Their Roles***

Education informatization brings new challenges to teachers. Teachers are both organizers and cooperators in teaching; while students are both learners and researchers. Students with immature psychology are easily lost in the virtual world. Teachers should organize and select information resources reasonably, share them with students, and achieve effective guidance in the process of learning interaction with students. In the process of learning, teachers should guide students not to focus on the presentation of information means, such as animation, video, games, but on how to solve problems and acquire knowledge through these resources.

### **6. AVOIDING THE MISUNDERSTANDING OF INFORMATION TEACHING**

The main purpose of information-based teaching is to better improve in-class efficiency and solve the key part and difficult points of learning. Therefore, we should not pursue information-based teaching and use information-based means blindly. Not all teaching contents are suitable for the use of information technology. We should set up the application of information technology according to the needs of teaching contents. It's needed to adhere to the development of students. We should not pay

too much attention to the study of subject knowledge, but to how to guide students to use information technology tools in solving problems, especially by combining the study of information technology with subject teaching, so that students can use technology as a tool to acquire knowledge, process information and acquire the ability to solve problems. At the same time, teachers should also care about the emotional development of students, and should not ignore the direct conversations and communication with students because of the intervention of information technology. Education informatization is the inevitable trend of the future development of education, and information-based teaching will become an important part of it. Improving the information literacy of teachers and students will become a normal subject of education and teaching.

## 7. CONCLUSION

After a 6-term practical study, it proves that cloud-class is indeed a practical method to enhance students' information literacy. It can bring a comprehensive improvement to English teaching and studying. And it ought to be not only persisted for long but to be popularized to other courses.

## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

This paper is independently completed by Bei Gao.

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