

The New Thinking of IELTS Teaching Models for Sino-Foreign Cooperative Class

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Abstract. More and more colleges have set up the cooperative class with foreign college, and if they want to go broad to study, they must have satisfactory IELTS achievements. So the IELTS teaching is very essential. In this essay, I will show a current situation of IELTS teaching in my college, and introduce the new teaching models and give some concrete measures according to my teaching experience.

Introduction

Sino-foreign cooperative education is a new form which aims to import the high quality educational resources from the college abroad, and fosters interdisciplinary and international talents. IELTS teaching is a very essential part in the Sino-foreign cooperative education. It determines whether students can complete the courses from foreign teachers without difficulty. And more importantly, it determines whether they can go to their ideal college abroad successfully. In the practical teaching, we face many problems, from both teachers and students, and teaching materials, the reform of teaching models and management models. This essay aims to discuss the common problems in IELTS teaching, and share some teaching models which are practical and functional in our own teaching process, and at last, recommend some concrete measures. IELTS teaching is a new form which is greatly different from the traditional college English teaching, and there is no ready-made experience for us to learn from, and it needs us to study and explore for better ways and methods.

The Current Situation

Compared with the traditional college English teaching and professional English teaching, IELTS teaching faces more challenges, because its results depend whether students can go abroad successfully. On the one hand, there are many influential factors about learners, on the other hand, the college and teachers lack the mature and available experience for teaching and management.

The Influential Factors for Learners. For the students of Sino-foreign cooperative class, they entered the college with a relatively low mark, and the English level isn't so high. Most of them don't have good learning habits and lack autonomous learning ability, so they will depend more on the teachers. To help them get 6 in IELTS and enter the cooperative college is a big challenge for both course managers and teachers. [1]

Lack the Mature and Available Experience. We have college English course for most students and some professional English courses for English-major students. IELTS teaching needs a new curriculum setting for contents and period arrangement. To ensure more students pass the exam, we should add more class hours. There is a statistic from New Oriental, if you want to get 6 in IELTS, at the basis of passing CET-4, you still need six months to one year's professional learning, but it is not realistic to teach IELTS according to the professional English teaching model. [2] And we don't have the ready-made experience to use, and we lack the mature and available experience to adapt.

The demand is very high, but to meet it is very difficult. To help the low-base students improve quickly, we need some effective and efficient models and methods. With consideration of all-aspect factors, we should change the traditional teaching models to adapt the needs of IELTS teaching. [3]

IELTS Teaching Models

Firstly, we should reform the existing teaching ideas, and abandon the former college English models, explore and research the advanced and new teaching ideas. Neither do we copy the New Oriental models, nor copy other colleges' successful experience overall. According to the actual situations of our college, we should create some new teaching models which are scientific and reasonable and of our own characteristics.

Secondly, every teacher should do a deep research about the IELTS testing system, be familiar with every question type and follow its current trends and change so that we can make more sound and detailed teaching plans, and put it into practice of the everyday teaching. Every teacher should attend the IELTS regularly, at least 2-3 times a year. With the average score of at least 6, the teacher has the qualification to teach IELTS. We will select the excellent teachers to make a professional team which will be responsible for the course teaching and management. All the courses are taught in mini class, with 20-30 students, to make sure all the students can take part in the curricular activities as much as possible.

We divide the IELTS course into 4 courses: reading, listening, speaking and writing, and each course are taught by a single teacher who is specified and the strongest in that aspect. Compared with one teacher teaches the whole class in college English teaching, this method lets the cooperative class have the strongest teacher staff, and it encourages the teamwork in the group and lightens the burden and workload of preparing the course. At the same time, it optimizes the teaching staff structure, and students can get high quality courses, experience and get different styles and advantages of every teacher. It helps cultivate students' interests in learning, and make the classroom atmosphere active. [4]

Thirdly, make the teaching plan and contents according to the features of IELTS. IELTS is tested into four parts, with each subject has a single score, and then integrates a total score. This requires students to have a balanced development of each single subject, or they can't get the expected score of foreign cooperative college. For example, some colleges in Britain require students have a total score of at least 6.5, and single subject at least 6. Writing is difficult subject for Chinese examinees, so if your writing didn't pass 6, you'll not have the qualification of that college although you have the total score of 6.5. [5] So our college divides the IELTS into 4 courses, with 4 different teachers. According to the statistic results of IELTS official website and the statistic situation of our students in several tests, we adjust the class hour distribution in time. For example, this term we change the reading course 4 hours into 6 hours per week, listening and speaking are still 4 hours per week, and we add 2 hours to writing to make it 4 hours per week. This changing helps students improve their reading and writing ability. Extensive reading can generate writing, and writing mistakes can be corrected by reading. Speaking course is taught by foreign teachers, let students have the target language input in the first year, learn how to communicate with foreign teachers, and move the psychological barriers. In the real speaking test, they will talk and express them more freely because they always talks to foreigners.

Besides, make sure all the students have a solid foundation of language and enough knowledge and skills, our college plans to strengthen the basis study in the first 2 years. In the first academic year, raise students' interests of learning English, and practice listening and speaking more. In the second academic year, we add more teaching of reading and speaking, enrich students' vocabulary and let them master the relevant reading and writing skills. Skills can be useful only at the basis of excessive practice of writing and reading. [6] In the last academic year, we will have more integrated training about the test, and help students acquaint and adapt the testing models.

At last, use modern educational technology to enrich the language input and output. All the courses are taught in the language lab and multi-media classroom, we give students the latest and original teaching materials with the help of modern facility. In the class, these facilities will help

both teachers and students develop all kinds of activities, such as presentation, discussion, debating, reading contest, etc. The model of teacher teaching, and students listening has been already out of date, and the input only from teacher's lesson is also too limited, nowadays students can absorb the knowledge and obtain the ability from many channels, such as English newspaper, English channel program, English movies and TV shows. So teachers' introductions and guidelines are very important to broaden their outlook. It will raise students' learning interests and inspire their learning motivations.

Concrete Measures

Hold All Kinds of Training for Teachers. The college should organize all kinds of training for the IELTS teachers, take our college for example, we organize IELTS training for all teachers during the summer and winter vacations, and we invite some excellent teachers from New Oriental or other colleges to give our teachers some professional training. We also select some teachers to study aboard in batches in our cooperative college——Singapore Chartered Institute of Technology. At the same time, we employ some excellent teachers who have a high level of education and also have overseas study background. So all the teachers in the team have the training of IELTS course teaching, and they are familiar with the testing and training process.

Set up Mini Class. We have the mini class with only 20-30 students to ensure all the students can participate in the class activity as much as they can. For the foreign teaching, we always avoid the big class. In the class, students not only needs to listen to what teacher said, but also need to participate in the class activities, such as discussing a problem, making a conversation to practice oral English and act a play, and so on. All these activities can not make sure all the students take part in, if it can, that will be very time-wasting. [7] So mini-class is very reasonable, practical and effective. And the teacher with a mini class knows the advantages and disadvantages of each student and then helps them accordingly.

Periodical Assessment, Mid-Term Exam Combined with Final Exam. Assessment and testing are good ways to let both teachers and students know their working results. From testing, teachers know where their teaching emphasis will be on, and whether the teaching methods are workable. And for students, they will have a clear picture of what they learnt and their study condition, and they will find problems to solve with the help of their teachers. So regular assessment is very necessary, and every assessment has its own functions. Periodical assessment just focuses on the latest knowledge we've learnt in the last 2 or 3 weeks. After the assessment, students can have a clear mind map of they've learnt. Mid-term and final exams should pay more attention to the actual applications of the overall knowledge and skills. [8] With the assessment, students can see their progresses and improvements, and they will have more confidence in the further learning.

Introduce the Tutorial System before IELTS. For the students who will take part in IELTS this term, we will give him a personal studying plan according to his last results of IELTS, and appoint a teacher to help him or her finish the plan. In the process of the preparation of IELTS, they can ask their tutor for help if they have any problem. Each tutor is responsible for 5-6 students. Each student has their own week points, for example, Lucy may be weak in writing, and Lily may be bad at listening, and their tutors will give personal assignment for each of them. Experience has proved that this is a proper and effective method to increase students' IELTS scores.

Organize a Real Test Simulation of IELTS. We all know the exam fee of IELTS is a little expensive (1750RMB), [8] and in order to let all the students who are ready to take part in IELTS know the whole process of IELTS, we ask our teachers to organize the materials and compile some simulation questions and have a real test simulation for students according to the IELTS process, let students know the exam without spending money attending it if they are not ready.

Invite Some Famous Experts on IELTS to Give Students Lectures. In the lectures, they give students some training, and they analyze the exam trends and hot topics for speaking and writing, and answer students' problems and puzzles. Sometimes these experts also give us advice on our IELTS teaching. Both teachers and students learn something from these lectures.

Select and Compile IELTS Textbooks. Textbooks are very vital to the teaching and learning of a course. In our college, every teacher should have an extensive reading of the books published and select the best ones to make a recommendation, some of the reference books about IELTS are very good and are our precious teaching materials, but there is no book suiting our students very well. So we will choose one book as a main textbook, and compile another book as an addition to make the textbook suits our learning situation. Also we recommend some reference book for the students who want a deeper and further learning.

Conclusion

The IELTS teaching for Sino-foreign cooperative students are very important. First, it lays a solid foundation of English for students, and then it helps students get a required score to the college they want to study in. Finally, it ensures students have a good English level to adapt the study abroad. All these need us to reform the traditional teaching models, adapt the new curriculum system and explore new teaching methods to help students study abroad.

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