

Practice and exploration of WeChat based elementary school English extracurricular learning platform

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Abstract : English class has been the main front of students learning English. Due to limited class of primary school, students who want to master this basic course, have to use the extracurricular learning platform to add. Development and popularization of communication tools, which provide a great convenience for students to learn and master English knowledge. By creating a WeChat group, photos sharing, project practice, communication exchange, recommended readings and other functions of WeChat, pupils can greatly improve the efficiency and the level of English learning.

Extracurricular learning is the extent of teaching and the developing of learning. For the language learner, extracurricular learning is the base of class learning. extracurricular learning can optimize the English learning process, increase students' cultural life and delight their interests of learning. With the helping of extracurricular learning, students could cover the shortage of in-class learning, expand their view, increase their ability of listening, speaking, reading and writing. It can really train students' abilities of self-studying and language using. However, most of students still have misunderstanding of "what and how to learn ", thus the guiding of extracurricular learning becomes much more important.

With the developing of the Internet, teachers can use WeChat as a platform of communication and learning English, in order to increase and keep the interests and positive attitudes of English learning. So, how to use WeChat skillfully in Primary school English teaching?

I: The feasibility of primary school students using WeChat in extracurricular learning.

1. Primary school's students have extracurricular learning by WeChat is good for balancing the education resource.

Under the traditional education method, the education resource such as teacher resource, educational funding and educational environment show an unbalance distribution. Zhiwei Lin had a survey based on the pool data from 1996-2003 of 31 provinces (including Autonomous Prefecture and Direct-controlled municipality). and according to this research, the three economic zone of our country, East Zone(developed) , Middle Zone(medium developed) and West Zone(undeveloped) have a huge deference on the balance of education resource. West Zone has the highest unbalanced rate and the East Zone has the lowest.

2. Multimedia and social network have becoming the main method of information developing.

Multimedia and social network break the limit between transmitters and receivers. Unidirectional transmitting is the feature of traditional media, the transmitters make and release the information, and the receivers accept them passively. Because of the feature we mentioned above, traditional media cannot deliver the information timely and effectively. However, the developing of multimedia and social network have made a revolution on this unidirectional relation. The receiver can both accept and release the information, they can share opinions on any topics they want. It makes the relation of communication not only bidirectional but also multidirectional.

3. Learner can use "spare time" to study in order to use time effectively.

Learner can study anywhere besides class, such as office, bus, metro, or even at meal. It can use your waiting time effectively and build the sense of achievement.

4. Learner can create a custom studying in order to increasing the positively of study.

Learner can create a cosmetic system base on the hobby, interest and unfamiliar knowledge. Learner can also receive the in-time information and share them with friends and study groups over the Internet.

5. On-going studying will change the relationship between teachers and students, and it will change the role of teachers during the class.

6. On-going studying has expend the number of object that receiving education.

Modern society is a lifetime learning society, but the stereotype of learning method becomes the obstruction of receiving education. On-going studying is a method that allows you to study everywhere and every time. Two heads are always better than one. On-going studying will make learning no longer only involve students.

7. On-going studying is conducive to build lifetime learning system and increase quality of the nation.

With the call of building learning society, more and more citizen notice the important of knowledge. As the developing of on-going studying, people can finally find out that it is never too old to study.

II: the practical using of WeChat in Extracurricular primary school English learning.

1. Creating the WeChat group, organized conversation

Teacher set up the WeChat group, and parents can join the group with teacher's help. Teacher and students can review the class materials and even learn new knowledge. There are three steps for the methods of conversation.

Step 1: chat by typing

Student can type the stuff that learned from class directly on WeChat as a method of reviewing.

Step 2: multi-students conversation

It requires more than 3 classes of a week to study English well. Not only for English, but all kinds of languages require a large amount of language input in order to increase the output. With the traditional learning method, the average time for student can own per class is less than one minute.

With the help of portable devices, the communication can be easier for students than let them speak in the class. Students can talk freely without being shy or awkward when they make mistakes. It can increase the memory of the knowledge, the ability of oral expression and the ability of English communication.

Step 3: teachers decide the stuff to teach base on both teaching material and students, and let the student share their own ideas.

WeChat can build a better atmosphere than in-class studying. Normally studying materials are based on syllabus and chosen by teachers, students don't have chance to choose. With the WeChat, however, students can choose the stuff by their hobby and language level from a huge amount of network resources.

2. Photo and resource sharing

Besides video chatting, WeChat can be used to share article and pictures, keep diary and writing comments. It is very convenience for students communicating with others and also increases the interest of learning English.

According to the feature of learning English, sharing photo via WeChat can train the ability of observe and expression. Teacher can build a photo-sharing column, and it allows students to share the photo in WeChat group. Every photo should be written with a paragraph of words in English, in order to explain the photo or sharing the opinion. Teacher can monthly choose some of the bests and post them on the back of the classroom for students' looking.

3. Practicing and review knowledge

Teacher can guide and encourage students to publish stuff in the WeChat group. The stuff can be a nice English word, one famous quotation, or a paragraph of article.

4. Increasing the feeling between students and teachers by communication.

Different students require different way to teach, because they have different language levels and different characters. The best way to teach is teaching individually, but it is hard to achieve under the traditional teaching method. Especially for English teachers, who usually teach two or three classes, it is difficult to finish the teaching goal while keep all the class in the same progress. Teachers usually leave the classroom after finishing class, and nearly don't have time for communicating with students. Lacking of communicating between students and teachers can lead some of terrible effects: teachers cannot know students' learning result, and students losing the interest of learning English.

WeChat group can let students and teachers communicate in time, increasing the proactively of learning English and feeling between them.

5. Guiding the Extracurricular reading and expanding the English view.

Excellent works have irreplaceable value of both idea and artistic characteristics. Language and culture are inseparable, English teaching should focus on students' understanding of foreign culture. By comparing the culture of China and foreign culture, we can increase the understanding of our own culture. In this way, we can expand the culture view and be capable of multicultural communicating.

Extracurricular reading should be a significant part to enhance English level of primary school students. However, due to the limited knowledge of the background of extracurricular reading and the limitation of students' language level, the process of extracurricular reading does not function well currently, which has a bad influence on improving students' English language ability. In this case, WeChat is really a good way for auxiliary teaching, filling the gap of the outside reading and increasing the important effect of additional reading.

III. Matters needing attention in the out-of- class study of primary school students

We already know that it can be very beneficial for strengthening the communications and links among people, improve teaching efficiency of teachers and boosting students' efficiency in studying by appropriately using WeChat to share informations. However, we should understand that WeChat is a double-edged sword and there might be some negative factors also need attention.

1. False information in WeChat

Since the user name is virtual and the real identities of users are concealed, WeChat provides an excellent stage for information counterfeiters and rumor mongers. They can send irresponsible message and spread false information purposely to make a mess. Students are weak in discerning between true and false, thus they are easily cheated.

2. Excessive use of the WeChat produces dependence

Part of the students may form a sense of dependence to mobile phones while using WeChat. Without cell phones, they will become bemused, nervous and even feel extremely loneliness. Besides, the self- control ability of children is always weak. So it is very possible that they will bring cell phones to school and play them in class.

3. Health problems caused by long-time use of WeChat

IV. Conclusion

WeChat is the product of this fast- developing information society. The proper use of WeChat can definitely provide a platform for students to learn creatively. Students can effectively learn on this platform and incredibly improve their level of vocabulary. What's more, the communication between teachers and students can be considerably and effectually developed. In education and teaching, teachers should continually enhance their ability of network technique and online

teaching, offer students guidance according to the real situation and also prevent negative outcomes of using WeChat. In this way, WeChat can surely serve better for English teaching. This project is supported by Think Tank Project of Hangzhou Normal University. (The corresponding author of this paper is Huansong Yang)

V. References

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