

A Study on the Application of the Micro Course in English Teaching in Higher Vocational Colleges

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Abstract

With the rapid development of network information technology, modern society has entered a new micro era. As an effective complement and extension of traditional teaching methods in the micro communication age, because the content selection and presentation form of the micro course is flexible and diversified and it meets students' individualized learning needs, the micro course has been widely used in English teaching in higher vocational colleges. Based on the author's learning and practical experience, this paper first analyzed the basic concept of the micro course and then discussed the status of English teaching in higher vocational colleges. Finally, the article proposed effective ways of the combination of the micro course and English teaching in higher vocational colleges.

Keywords: Micro course; Higher vocational college; English teaching; Application

1 Introduction

With the progress and development of the times, informatization becomes more and more popular. In many educational resources, the micro course with its exquisiteness, interest and shortness attracts attention of teachers and students in higher vocational colleges. At present, China is conducting the reform of higher vocational education and the informatization of English education is the inevitable trend in education development[1]. Therefore, the effective exploration of the combination of the micro course and English teaching in the new era

represents the general trend. In this paper, the author explored the positive influence of the micro course on English teaching in higher vocational colleges and analyzed the problems in the combination of the micro course and English teaching in higher vocational colleges in the new period. Finally, the author discussed effective ways of the combination of the micro course and English teaching in higher vocational colleges, so as to enhance the effectiveness of vocational English teaching and promote students' English ability .

2 An Analysis of the Basic Concepts of the Micro Course

The micro course was proposed by David Penrose in 2008, who is a senior teaching designer in San Juan College in New Mexico of the United States. He pointed out that the core idea of the micro course is to require teachers to integrate the teaching content and teaching objectives closely to produce a more focused learning experience. Penrose believes that there are five steps in building a micro course: list the core concepts in classroom teaching; produce a presentation and summary within 15-30 seconds; record video or audio content within 3 minutes; design after-school tasks to guide students; upload instructional videos and lesson assignments[2].

The micro course in China is first proposed by Hu Tiansheng who works in Education Information Network Center of the Foshan Education Bureau. He believes that the micro course is based on the new curriculum standards and classroom teaching practice and is presented as teaching videos, which is an organic combination of various teaching resources used in teaching activities. The micro course has the advantages of diverse types, prominent themes, strong interactivity, realistic situation and convenient use. Therefore, in recent years, more and more educational researchers have conducted research on the micro course. In particular, English micro courses have been carried out rapidly in primary schools, secondary schools, vocational schools, colleges, universities and private institutions. It can be said that as a new teaching model, micro course has a broad teaching prospect. The micro course enables teachers to teach more effective and targeted content. At the same time, students can search the appropriate resources according to their own learning needs and find the required knowledge points by themselves, which can effectively save learning time.

3 The Status of English Teaching in Higher Vocational Colleges

As an important branch of higher education, higher vocational education is mainly to cultivate applied and skilled personnel and it lays emphasis on the practicality and the professional application of the knowledge. English teaching in higher vocational colleges must meet the needs of the teaching. However, there are still some prominent problems in English teaching in higher vocational

colleges.

First, many students in higher vocational colleges have a very weak foundation in English and it is very difficult for them to learn English. Gradually, they lose interest and enthusiasm in learning English. Taking into account the poor foundation of students, teachers design the English exam papers which have a small amount of questions and which is easy, so students focus on examination-oriented learning. Therefore, students' English test ability is improved and the practical application of language has declined. The English test is not conducive to the cultivation of students' professional skills. Students' mastery of the English knowledge for passing the examination is not competitive in employment. Therefore, English teaching in higher vocational colleges should pay more attention to practicality.

Second, the teaching of English teachers in higher vocational colleges is still teacher-centered. The classroom teaching does not take students as the subjects and there does not exist any interaction between their future jobs and career situations. Students can only accept the boring and rigid language teaching content. In addition, for many English teachers in higher vocational colleges, students have poor English foundation and the teaching content is too simple. Therefore, many teachers do not have the enthusiasm and motivation to improve their professional knowledge, adjust teaching content, improve teaching methods and update assessment methods, which results in that the English teaching in higher vocational colleges is behind the times.

As a worker of the vocational English teaching, if we still teach students in accordance with the old-fashioned way of teaching, it will inevitably lead to that the practicality of the teaching is not strong and students cannot realize specialized and personalized learning. Therefore, rethinking and adjusting the teaching content, and improving teaching methods to improve the effect of vocational English teaching is extremely urgent[3]. Under the impact of modern information technology, English teaching in higher vocational colleges should adopt modern means and cultivate talents who understand English and are proficient in their own majors.

4 Effective Ways of the Combination of the Micro Course and English Teaching in Higher Vocational Colleges

4.1 To cultivate a good teacher-student relationship and arouse students' enthusiasm and initiative in learning

The most important thing in English learning is the relationship between students and teachers. Teachers are guiders in teaching to guide the learning direction for students. If the relationship between teachers and students is too reserved, students will disgust English learning, which leads to the lack of the enthusiasm in learning. For example, there is a student who is more introverted and is not talkative. He seldom communicate with teachers and his English is poor. On one occasion, the teacher asked the student a question in English class and he gave

the correct answer. Then the teacher praised the student. From that time, the student learned English very carefully and made great progress. Gradually, he often went to talk to the teacher and went along well with teachers. His academic performance in English is also stable. This shows teachers' praise for students allows them gain self-confidence and enable them to learn hard. Paying attention to cultivating the relationship between teachers and students is very important to improve students' academic performance. The micro course is an information-based course, which requires not only students' interest and enthusiasm in learning but also teachers' guidance for students' enthusiasm and patience. There is a big difference between higher vocational colleges and ordinary high school[4]. The ordinary high schools emphasize the cultivation of culture, while higher vocational colleges focus on the training of students' ability and practice, so the good relationship between teachers and students is very important to train students' ability. It is conducive to arousing students' learning confidence and interest, enhancing their learning initiative and enthusiasm and promoting the teaching effect in a comprehensive way.

4.2 To cultivate students' self-learning ability in English

In the process of making micro courses, teachers should pay special attention to the use of basic teaching skills and educational psychology and strengthen the planning and selection of the teaching content, so that students can use the micro course to develop self-learning ability. In the production of the micro course, teachers should make an appropriate summary at the end of each lesson and highlight the key and difficult points in this lesson to help students sort out the learning thinking in the lesson and summarize the important content. In the use of micro course, teachers should take a break at appropriate time, so that students can have time to understand the knowledge. Besides, teachers should remind students of the time of the follow-up activities, so that students can do some appropriate preparation. The choice of the micro course should conforms to the purpose and personnel training model of vocational schools and fully reflects English features in higher vocational colleges, so as to improve students' innovative ability, employment ability and vocational ability in higher vocational colleges[5].

4.3 To improve English teachers' comprehensive quality of information technology in higher vocational colleges

As a comprehensive embodiment of teachers' information technology, the micro course has an important role. The skilled production and use of micro courses requires teachers to have a higher overall quality of information technology. In order to give full play to the unique role of the micro course in English teaching, English teachers must strive to improve their overall application quality of information technology. Colleges should improve teachers' ability to deal with and integrate various resources, so that they can use information technology to optimize the classroom. As an English teacher, they should have the concept of lifelong learning. With the rapid development of today's society and the renewal

and progress of the network technology and information resources, in order to apply advanced information technology to English classroom teaching in higher vocational colleges, teachers must have lifelong learning idea[6]. In the course of English teaching in higher vocational colleges, they should be proficient in the application of network software, mobile devices, teaching resources and English software, which are very helpful to English teaching in higher vocational colleges.

4.4 To popularize production methods of the micro course

As a concept, technology and method, teachers should introduce the micro course to the English teaching in higher vocational colleges, so as to enhance the development of English teaching. Only by improving the relevant theory of the micro course, can teachers strengthen the English teaching link in higher vocational colleges. There are many ways of recording micro course videos, such as the whiteboard and DV recorder, the white paper and mobile phone, and the use of professional software[7]. The main characteristics of the micro course is practical and convenient. The information technology ability of English teachers in vocational colleges is weak, so it is not advisable to use complicated methods to produce micro courses. Teachers should pay attention to several aspects in the production of the micro course: make teaching objectives clear; use innovative teaching methods; teach knowledge points that students need clearly; highlight the key and difficult teaching points in the production of the micro course; stimulate students' thinking in an overall way, so that students become interested in learning English; use relevant English teaching materials to support the micro course.

5 Conclusion

Micro course teaching plays an important role in promoting the English education in higher vocational colleges. Through the learning of the micro course, students can give full play to their subjective initiative in the classroom and select the required micro course materials according to their own actual situation. The micro course learning can not only improve students' interest in learning English, but also help students develop their interests and form a personalized learning atmosphere. Therefore, the combination of the micro course teaching and vocational English teaching in the new period has a very excellent effect, which not only promotes students' desire to learn, but also improves the relationship between students and teachers.

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