

# *Study on the Practice of Interactive Teaching Activities in College English Teaching*

—Based on Empirical Research

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**Abstract**—The interactive teaching mode of College English is one of the focus on a teaching mode of higher degree, which is able to realize the common transformation of teachers' teaching styles and learning styles of students, and effectively improve the efficiency of classroom teaching of English Curriculum in a certain extent, to promote the English teaching by the form of interactive transition to true interactive. This article based on the empirical research in the actual teaching, testing the practical effects of interactive teaching, so as to better develop and apply this teaching mode in the future teaching situation.

**Keywords**—English teaching; interactive teaching; teaching mode; empirical research

## I. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH DESIGN

In the first half of the school year 2016-2017, the author selected two classes with relatively similar English foundation as the object of this study, and the study was divided into two stages. In the first stage, the class A was set as the Experimental Group (32 students) and the class B was the Control Group (35 students). In the experiment, in order to reduce the accident probability, the two groups respectively carried out 3 writing activities (30 minutes each), 3 classroom reading and discussion activities (10 minutes each), 3 classroom C-E translation activities (30 minutes each) and 3 background knowledge sharing activities (15 minutes each). 4 types of activities produced a total of 24 activity results. In the second stage, the teacher verified the relevant assumptions and drew conclusions based on on-site observation and collection of activity results. In the two stages of the study, the Experimental Group had an interactive discussion in groups before each activity and teachers were required to be involved with and give appropriate guidance; the Control Group had no intervention link before each activity.

## II. VERIFICATION AND ANALYSIS OF RELATED RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

### A. *The hypothesis and verification of classroom propositional writing activities*

In the experiment activities of classroom composition, the author mainly wanted to verify the following three hypotheses.

First of all, it is assumed that interactive teaching can improve students' comprehension and executive ability of

writing. In the actual situation, the students in the Experimental Group, under the premise of interactive discussion and guidance, had a clear understanding of the topic and related clues. Their writing ideas were also smooth. The result of every writing activity was slightly better compared with the previous one and there was no deviation in their understanding. Without any intervention and guidance, students in the Control Group showed a passive tendency to accept the composition activities in the classroom. Because of bad English foundation, some students were even unable to understand questions and tips of writing activities, so that what they wrote was irrelevant to the required theme sometimes. Thus, interactive teaching can effectively improve the students' understanding and execution before their actual writing.

Secondly, it is assumed that interactive teaching enables students to acquire new learning experiences. As a result of the experience of the last writing activity, in the next essay activity, the Experimental Group still took the way of random combination to form discussion groups. But the author found a very interesting phenomenon, that is, the alternating combination of new and old members in a discussion group more or less promoted other members of the group to re-examine the topic understanding, writing ideas and even wording of the writing activity. The reason is that this random-group discussion before writing activities produces an immediate generative experience because of the involvement of new individual experience. The emergence of this experience will break the previous mindset of students and can force students to rebuild new ways of thinking and improve their deficiencies. Therefore, the individual experience of the students in the Experimental Group was actually stimulated and increased. The students in the Control Group, due to the lack of this interactive link, experienced all the three writing activities passively and unenthusiastically. For them, classroom activities without any interaction were only to finish an assignment asked by the teacher.

Finally, it is assumed that the student's learning activities interact with the teacher's teaching activities. Compared with the students in the Control Group, the students in the Experimental Group could get more equal opportunities in the process of interaction. Moreover, students could find problems in activities under the guidance of teachers and discussed them actively with teachers to form a new sharing relationship of inquiry and thinking of writing knowledge. In this way,

individual students got opportunities to well release and show their ability, so that they could fully experience the sense of accomplishment brought by their obtained knowledge and thereby be more conscious to achieve the goal of writing. In general, English writing courses adopting interactive teaching method can help students enjoy the courses better, promoting them to cultivate good learning habits [1].

#### *B. The hypothesis and verification of classroom reading and discussion activities*

In the experiment of classroom reading and discussion activities, the author proposed the following two hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: classroom reading activities under interactive teaching can improve the collaboration ability of students' knowledge input. The students in the Experimental Group were randomly divided into six groups and each group was responsible for an article. For the reading material, each group had 7 minutes for reading and 3 minutes for discussion. Then, in the process of participating in the students' discussion, the author found that some students were lazy with the task. Specifically, students with poor foundation tended to rely too much on the better students in the course of reading, and they avoided the corresponding responsibility as a member of the group and even were marginalized by the group. This was much more common among students in the Control Group. This can be attributed to that there are some loopholes in the organization form of reading activities. To a reading and discussion activity, the form of discussion can be collective, but it is inevitable that some students do not have the chance to make a statement at an activity, which brings opportunities for some students to slack off. In the aforementioned writing activities, although there were interactive discussions in the collective form, every student had to complete their writing task relying on their own ability finally. In the discussion activities, the students with good ability could represent the whole group while students with poor ability were objectively denied the right to speak. Therefore, the design of classroom activities under interactive teaching needs to be more precise, otherwise interactive teaching will be counterproductive.

Hypothesis 2: classroom reading activities under interactive teaching can promote students' overall understanding of text. Judging from the speech performance of the Experimental Group, students' statements not only presented the collective wisdom of the teachers and students, but also displayed of the students' individual ability. These students had a better understanding of the overall article, could extract required information from the text and then presented it after re-thinking and combination. Their language expressions and thinking were organized. In contrast, the students in the Control Group generally stated extemporaneously. They just said what came into their minds, with loose language and unorganized thought. Most students literally understood the whole text while hardly paying attention to the structure or wording of the text. Looking back on classroom reading and discussion activities, it can be seen that putting students in the main position in English teaching does not mean that the teacher can *laissez-faire* after assigning the students a task. On the contrary, the teacher should launch a topic suitable for interactive teaching according to the teaching requirements and make students

blend into the interactive teaching situation through a certain guidance, so that they can become interested in the interactive topic [2]. In the process of discussing problems, the teacher should actively provide guidance for the students and prevent students' interactive discussion from deviating from the original teaching goal by monitoring their actual learning situation. The teacher should also provide reasonable solutions and tactical guidance to the difficulties encountered by students in learning, helping students solve these problems [3].

#### *C. The hypothesis and verification of classroom C-E translation activities*

The C-E translation activity in class demands good English skills. In this link, the author assumed that the interactive teaching can enhance students' exploration and cooperation ability in translation activities, including the conversion ability of understanding and thinking as well as the capacity of wording and phrasing. In the actual operation, the students in the Experimental Group accepted the interactive teaching strategy of "dividing -- cooperating -- dividing -- cooperating". First of all, the students were required to read and ponder translation materials by themselves to form their own ideas; then grouping interaction between the teacher and students was carried out to listen to students' ideas and do related discussion; after that, student were asked to complete the translation task independently; at last, some good translation was selected as model essay for students to learn and discuss. Seen from the final translation results of the Experimental Group, the four-step interactive teaching strategy can not only broaden students' thinking about problems, but also provide students with opportunities of multi-dimensional understanding conversion. This can help students to adopt reasonable recommendations from other students or the teacher more rationally and comprehensively in the subsequent translation activities. In the process from the discussion to thinking to practice and to feedback, the wording and phrasing ability of students in the Experimental Group had been repeatedly tempered. Although there were still some shortcomings, the students in the Experimental Group had established a diligent and thoughtful learning model subconsciously.

In this link, students in the Control Group mostly focused on the translation of words, phrases and sentences, without the overall consideration of the context. Most students just mechanically translated the material word for word and sentence for sentence, and the actual effect of translation was a patchwork of words. Students feel painful in this link. To sum up, the interactive teaching in English teaching requires teachers to guide students to find problems autonomously and take these questions as the content of cooperation and exchange. The job of a teacher is to guide students to interact with each other instead of telling the students the answers to the questions and asking them to keep these answers in mind [4]. In teaching, teachers can provide students with some clues or strategies related to solving problems through the setting of interactive contexts, guiding students to explore spontaneously and gain answers by consulting information, actively discussing and analyzing problems. Interactive teaching requires students to take part in the teaching activities directly. The problem that cannot be solved by a student's own efforts

can be proposed into the collective discussion for answers, instead of the teacher demonstrating an interactive process for the students, because it will reduce the opportunities for students to practice interaction. In interactive teaching, it is very common that students and the teacher have different views on a problem. The teacher should respect the viewpoint of every student, rather than denying them at the beginning. Students and the teacher can reach a consensus through discussion and exploration to find the best solution.

#### *D. The hypothesis and verification of text background knowledge sharing activities*

The sharing of text background knowledge is a good choice to enliven the classroom atmosphere and promote student interaction. In this link, the author assumed that interactive teaching is a good opportunity for students to release their individual differences, and also an effective way to promote the harmonious relationship between the teacher and students. Since the Control Group could not incorporate any intervention, the activity could only be done in the form of a pre-class assignment. During the class, the teacher asked students to share the information they collected one by one on the podium, trying to keep the original flow pattern of the class. The author noticed that although there were some interactions in the Control Group, these interactions were rigid. The students on the stage just focused on their words while student audience only donated their ears. Few students asked questions or had doubt about the content they had heard, and it was also difficult for the teacher to ask questions to stimulate students' interest. The classroom atmosphere was rather dull and the relationship between the teacher and was indifferent. Obviously, such classroom interaction is not the real interaction. However, such kind of situations is common in our daily English teaching activities, which seriously hinders the effective dissemination of knowledge and even deviates from the original intention of English teaching.

In the case of random grouping, each group of students in the Experimental Group had a specific topic for discussion. After 5 minutes of free discussion, the teacher randomly joined the group discussion, listened to each student's talk and shared his point of view with the students. During this period, the viewpoint of every student was respected and the teacher did not refute any student's views on the spot. By carefully observing the abilities and characteristics of each student, the teacher recorded the interests, strengths and weaknesses of each group in a timely manner. Then, each group selected a representative to summarize the group discussion and shared the discussion results in the class, and the teacher and students of other groups asked questions or commented. Throughout the experiment process, the equal exchange of the teacher and students was the prerequisite for the success of interactive teaching. In this process, students in the Experimental Group gradually put down the psychological guard and took the interactive process as the opportunity to communicate with classmates or teacher, so that their individual differences (such as good ability in organization, planning, expression, record, observation, conditioning atmosphere, summing up, etc.) could be shown from different angles. This brings the energy and enthusiasm of college students into the classroom.

In a word, the interactions between the teacher and students can be greatly increased through interactive teaching. The teacher can stand in the student's perspective and be fully aware of the needs of students in the teaching activities, which is helpful for the teacher to fully respect the views of students in teaching and develop a more effective teaching plan [5]. At the same time, students can understand the teaching intention of the teacher and realize the significant results brought by the teacher's teaching methods. Furthermore, they can participate in teaching activities more actively under the guidance of the teacher, and thereby give full play to their ability in learning and complete assigned tasks faster. From this point of view, interactive teaching has a very positive impact on both teachers and students and makes them influence each other and promote each other. Through interactive learning, students can promote the teacher to adopt better teaching methods to improve teaching efficiency, while the teacher can promote students to study consciously. This not only narrows the distance between the teacher and students, but also makes the teacher's teaching and the student learning interplay with each other, achieving the common progress of teaching and learning.

### III. CONCLUSION AFTER THE CASE STUDY

In general, based on the comparative analysis of respective performance and result of the Experimental Group and the Control Group in classroom activities above, the author gained the following conclusions.

#### *A. Interactive teaching is a tool for students to obtain new experience*

Seen from the results of the four kinds of classroom activities of the students in the Experimental Group, the interactive classroom teaching is helpful for students to explore, learn, create and combine an effective learning method for themselves, which breaks the inertia of infuse-teaching style and actively cultivates students' ability and curiosity about knowledge exploration. On the one hand, this is more conducive for students to avoiding weaknesses to achieve their own learning goals. On the other hand, this can stimulate the curiosity of students. A student can get some useful learning methods and ways through the interaction with other students in class or after class, which can benefit both himself and others. Moreover, one goal of interactive teaching is to enable students to take the initiative to control their learning trajectory. The achievement degree of students' learning goals is directly proportional to the increase of students' inquiry ability. The implementation of the interactive classroom teaching mode leaves the opportunity of "feeling the stones across the river" to the students. The more frequent interaction, the more opportunities of experience communication, and students can explore problems from more perspectives and thereby they can better achieve their own learning goals.

#### *B. Interactive teaching is the regulating valve of class generality and individuality*

According to the classroom performance of the students in the Experimental Group, interactive teaching should not only spur all members toward the same goal, but also allow the students with stronger personal abilities to play their own



advantages. For the failure of hypothesis verification in the reading link, the author thinks that reasonable division of labor should be developed according to the ability of students to achieve the purpose of their common progress, so as to improve students' ability of acquiring knowledge. For example, the students with weaker ability can take charge of tasks related to record or coordination in the interaction and those with outstanding individual ability can be assigned to give the final summary statement. The ultimate goal of interactive teaching is to help all participants develop accordingly or gain new learning experience. Students are naturally different in their personal abilities. Teachers in the interactive teaching should not only properly curb the outstanding students, but should also continuously encourage those with weaker ability, so that all of them can complement each other in classroom interactive teaching. Otherwise, the interactive classroom teaching will be difficult to progress smoothly and it will be also difficult to achieve the teaching objectives set by the teacher. The design of interactive teaching should take into account various aspects. The most important significance of interactive teaching is more than improving the efficiency of English classroom teaching. What more important is to attract all the students participate in collective learning activities through the interactions, helping the students learn how to mutually help, cooperate, communicate, learn, live, give play to their strong points and avoid their shortcomings. In other words, interactive teaching can hone students' body and mind, making them more mature [6].

*C. Interactive teaching can enhance students' understanding and executive ability*

Seen from the comparison of the Experimental Group and the Control Group, interactive teaching indeed enhances the efficiency of students' classroom learning. Students' clear understanding and strong execution of classroom teaching tasks is the guarantee for the completion of classroom teaching tasks. Because of the lack of necessary classroom interaction and guidance, the learning efficiency of the Control Group was basically in the horizontal state, without any substantial improvement in the quality of classroom teaching. To students in the Experimental Group, with adequate interaction and teachers' supervision and guidance in each classroom activity, students could clearly understand the meaning and objectives of each activity, and they also showed better efficiency and higher confidence in the subsequent implementation process. Therefore, it can be said that interactive teaching is not only conducive for teachers to transmit the teaching tasks clearly, but can also help students to achieve their learning goals more easily. Interactive teaching realizes the good integration of the

teacher's "teaching" and students' "learning". The more unified of the goal of "teaching" and "learning", the higher the efficiency of classroom execution.

*D. Interactive teaching embodies the humanistic care that teaching benefits teachers as well as students.*

Confucius once said: "the teacher should be insatiable in learning and tireless in teaching; it is also the teacher's duty to care about students and love students." The education in the new era should not only one-sidedly emphasize the authority of teachers while ignoring students' self-esteem, should not one-sidedly lay stress on intellectual education while ignoring moral education and cannot only advocate the cramming education while neglecting interaction. Otherwise, education will be very dull and inactive. The author felt the humanistic care through the experiment in class: first of all, it is necessary to recognize the dominant role of students in classroom; secondly, teachers should respect the individual differences of students; thirdly, it is needed to understand the needs of students in many aspects; finally, teachers should promote the liberation and development of students' personality. The humanistic significance of interactive teaching is that it can promote the harmonious relationship between the teacher and students and that the teaching and learning can influence and benefit each other, ultimately achieving the common progress and mutual understanding between the teacher and students. In return for the respect, understanding and encouragement from teachers, students will trust, support and appreciate the teacher. What more meaningful is that the interactive teaching makes both teachers and students practice the fusion of wisdom and experience the coexistence of life.

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