College English Classroom Teaching Based on Production-oriented Approach

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Abstract—**Production-oriented approach theory advocates that all classroom teaching activities should serve a single goal, effective teaching and learning, and in classroom teaching, all language teaching activities should be closely related to application, realizing no boundary between "learning" and "application", and the complete integration of "learning" and "application". Based on the production-oriented approach theory, this study designs a new classroom teaching approach of college English to encourage students to improve their enthusiasm in participating in classroom learning and make students achieve a sense of achievement in the learning process, thereby promoting students to make efforts to move forward, apply what they have learned to practice and effectively improve their comprehensive English application ability.**

Keywords—production-oriented approach; teaching activities; learning-centered; integration of learning and application

I. INTRODUCTION

Higher education is an important way for the country to cultivate high-quality professionals, and the classroom in colleges and universities is the main place to cultivate talents for the future development of society. There is no natural and relaxing learning environment for Chinese people to learn English other than English class, which is also the main channel for language input. Therefore, it is particularly important to make full use of the precious time in English class and create a positive and favorable classroom environment for students. Since the new century, the voice of college English teaching reform has continued. In addition to affirming the great contribution of college English teaching to the national strategy and the talent market, the criticism of "time-consuming and inefficient" college English classroom teaching is also unceasing. Some scholars believe that college English teachers in China generally "stress instructing over practice" and "stress language knowledge over communicative competence"[1]. Besides, according to our preliminary investigation, the phenomenon of "extreme discourse power of teachers" and the "extreme lack of discourse power of students" is very common in the college English classes in most colleges and universities in Shaanxi province, which makes students have a weak sense of participation in classroom activities, lack the interest in classroom learning, and have no chance to experience the sense of achievement of class learning,

thus, seriously affecting the effectiveness of classroom learning and the teaching effectiveness of college English course. Therefore, it is imperative to improve the current college English classroom teaching approach.

This study attempts to introduce the "production-oriented approach" (POA) theory into college English classroom teaching design, and explore new ways of college English classroom teaching.

II. INTRODUCTION TO POA

The "learning-centered theory" advocated by POA advocates that all activities of classroom teaching should serve the effective learning. In the "integration of learning and application theory" advocated by POA, "learning" refers to input learning, including listening and reading; "application" refers to "output", including speaking, writing and interpreting. The "integration of learning and application theory" advocated by POA advocates that in the classroom teaching, all language teaching activities are closely linked with the application, realizing no boundary between "learning" and "application", and the complete integration of "learning" and "application".

Students no longer study texts alone, but use texts as a means to learn to complete output tasks in English. The POA teaching process covers three phases: 1) motivating; 2) enabling; 3) assessing. All these three phases must be mediated by teachers. The mediating role here is embodied in the functions of guide, design, scaffolding, etc. [2].

The POA theory aims to solve the problem of "the separation between language learning and application as well as teaching inefficiency" in foreign language teaching in Chinese universities.

At present, there are many teaching experiments providing classroom practical experiences and lessons for the construction of the POA theory. Some focus on the specific teaching links [3, 4, 5], some are conducted based on a single unit teaching [6, 7, 8], and some focus on textbook compilation [9]. This study attempts to apply the POA theory to the design of college English classroom teaching so as to improve students' discourse power in the classroom environment and their comprehensive English application ability.

III. DESIGN OF COLLEGE ENGLISH CLASSROOM TEACHING

On the one hand, in order to cultivate students' cooperation ability and team spirit, students are encouraged to learn from each other and help each other; on the other hand, in order to encourage students to be good at tapping their own potential, and flexibly use the knowledge they have learned, in the design of teaching activities, the combination of individual learning and group learning is adopted. This can effectively avoid the drawbacks of pure group activities, namely, some less active students often rely on active classmates to complete tasks and miss the opportunity to participate in the various learning activities and exercise themselves.

In order to improve the efficiency of group learning, each study group has 4-5 members, whose English level belongs to high, middle and low level separately. The group leader is rotated among the members, aiming at providing each student with the opportunities to engage in the learning activities and challenge themselves and experience the joy of learning and the sense of achievement, and finally become interested in English learning. As to the individual activities, in order to stimulate students to devote to the activities, in-class checking is very necessary. So in each class the teacher will randomly select some students to present their learning result, which can effectively motivate students to spend more time and energy finishing the activity so that they can have good performance in the class when asked by the teacher. The teaching process includes the following four aspects:

A. Preparation before Class

For students who have just entered the university, the focus of English learning, on the one hand, is to improve their listening and speaking skills, and on the other hand, rapidly expand their vocabulary, promote their English reading and writing ability, and finally realize the integral improvement of their English comprehensive application ability.

According to the teaching practice, the author found that many students were reluctant to speak in class because they were not confident, and some students gave up participating in in-class activities just because they were very nervous when speaking in the public. Some students are unable to take part in in-class activities because they have not prepared well or entirely not prepared and cannot keep up with the progress of the class. Other students are unable to answer the questions raised by teachers because of their poor English. In response to these problems, in order to effectively encourage students to actively participate in classroom learning and proactively express their personal opinions, the teacher first emphasizes to students that they should pay much attention to the preview work before class so as to cope with in-class questions successfully. At the same time, it is necessary to clearly explain to students the specific requirements of the preview work.

The preview work includes three tasks: 1) reading the text independently and completing the reading comprehension exercises; 2) summarizing the main idea of each paragraph and the theme of the whole text; 3) reading the text intensively with reference to the meaning of the new words, analyzing the structure of the long sentences and understanding the sentence meaning, and underlining the sentences they cannot understand;

4) participating in the group discussion about the problems they met when previewing the text.

In order to cultivate students' autonomous learning ability, pre-class preview is very important. Although most teachers leave preview assignment to students, there is no mandatory and specific requirement, so students usually ignore it because of other personal matters, which seriously affects the classroom teaching effect. Therefore, in order to ensure the effectiveness of the classroom teaching, the teacher should not only propose clear requirements for the preview work, but also should check the preview work in time.

The check of students' preview work is mainly carried out in three ways: 1) checking students' textbooks before class to know their effort before class; 2) checking students' group discussion results; 3) checking the preview work through in-class questioning, which can urge students to take the preview seriously, focus on exploring their potential, and participate in classroom activities so as not to be absent-minded in class.

Pre-class preview is the premise of efficient classroom teaching, so it is very indispensable to clarify the tasks of preview, stipulate the definite requirements of preview and check the results of preview in time.

B. In-class Interaction

The traditional classroom teaching is dominated by teachers' imparting knowledge to students, but this classroom teaching is completely different from the traditional one. The main tasks of this classroom teaching are as follows: 1) checking students' preview work; 2) solving the problems that cannot be solved by students themselves in the preview; 3) supplementing the teaching content. The specific classroom teaching links are as follows:

Firstly, with reference to the reading comprehension exercises on the textbook, students' mastery of reading skills is checked in the form of random questioning. This can help the teacher know clearly whether the students have understood the text and grasped the reading skill. If students have some problems in doing the reading exercises, the teacher will guide students to solve the problems through in-class discussion, through which students are directed to think over the problem and try their best to find the solution to the problem and most importantly students are encouraged to express their own understanding of the question. This can also help students form the habit to explore the answer to the question on their own and also offer students the chance to practice their oral English.

Secondly, teachers ask some questions about the structure and meaning of the long and difficult sentences to know whether students have understood them. If students do not understand the sentences, the teacher will guide them to have a discussion about the sentence, making them to understand it. According to the practical teaching experience, many students are weak in the mastery of sentence structure especially the long sentences. When they see long and difficult sentences, they usually are unwilling to analyze them and do not know where to start. It is usually a very difficult work for them to find the stem of a sentence. However, the sentence structure plays a key role in improving students' reading, writing and

translating ability. Therefore, when doing the preview work students are especially required to try to analyze the long sentences' structure. If they cannot do it, students are encouraged to discuss it with other group members. If they still cannot solve the problem, it will be the focus of in-class discussion, the purpose of which is to enhance students' basic language ability.

Thirdly, the teacher makes use of the vocabulary exercises and translation exercises on the textbook to check whether students have mastered the new vocabulary and the relevant phrases in the text. As to the key words and phrases, the teacher will offer specific explanation about the usage and some application-oriented exercises will be done to strengthen students' mastery of the important words and phrases.

Fourthly, on the basis of discussing the language points of the texts, the students are guided to clarify the structure of the texts and retell the contents of the texts. Then some students are encouraged to stand in front of the whole class to retell the text, which can propel students to have the courage to speak in the public and improve their oral English. Besides, in order to improve their performance in class, this activity can urge students to devote more time and effort to the preview work. Therefore, pre-class preparation and classroom activities can actually promote each other.

Fifthly, based on the in-class discussion of the text, the teacher leaves an assignment to students, that is, asking students to find the English materials related to the topic of the text to read after class, and write a reading report by using as many the new words and phrases as well as the sentence structures learned and discussed in the text as possible. At the beginning of the next class, some students will be randomly selected to share their reading report orally with other students, which can encourage students to write the report better and help improve their courage to speak in public and at the meantime their oral English will be improved naturally.

Throughout the classroom session, the teacher encourages students to think and express their opinions by setting various questions and occasions. Because the students have already fully prepared before class, there is basically no big problem in answering the questions raised by the teacher. As long as students express their own personal opinions, it does not matter if they are wrong. This can alleviate the psychological burden of students and enhance their self-confidence and enthusiasm in participating in the in-class activities. In order to fully mobilize students to actively participate in in-class activities, students' in-class performance is graded only according to the times they participate in the in-class activities but not the quality of their answers. As a result, the rate of students' participation in the in-class activities has been greatly improved. Some students are a little nervous at first, and as they increase the number of speeches, they gradually become comfortable and confident. This is also a big step forward. Moreover, students will continue to perfect their own speeches, and then work harder to preview the texts, which can ultimately promote students' autonomous learning ability and communication skills.

C. Timely Consolidating and Strengthening after Class

In order to effectively improve the in-class teaching effect, the design of the after-class activities is necessary. Firstly, students are required to review what they have learned and write a learning report especially about the problems and questions they cannot solve by themselves. Based on the learning report, the teacher will set apart some time to offer the answer to the students. Usually, the in-class time is very limited, so the teacher can use the QQ group to give a detailed explanation about the students' question online. Secondly, students are asked to finish the left reading assignment and finish writing the reading report. Thirdly, finish the online listening and speaking tasks left on the online course platform developed by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

D. Teaching Evaluation

Reasonable evaluation method of teaching can effectively promote and consolidate the classroom teaching effect. In order to stimulate and encourage students to put effort into study, the form and the proportion of the formative assessment in the final score are paid special attention to in the teaching evaluation. The formative assessment of students' performance in learning includes the following aspects:

1) Look at the preview traces in the textbook. Before the class, the teacher checks the student's textbooks, mainly checking the students' preview traces. The books of the students who have done careful preview are always full of various marks. The students who have not seriously read the books generally have not written anything in the book. The teacher grades students' preview work based on the overall impression on the preview traces. The more marks, the better, the higher the score.

2) Record the times of students' participating in in-class activities. In the class, students have many chances to express their opinions, and one of the teacher's tasks is to record the times of students' participation regardless of the quality of the answer, on the basis of which the teacher will grade students' in-class performance. The more the times, the higher the score will be. The purpose of this is to lessen students' anxiety and nervousness and encourage students to participate in the activities. According to the real teaching practice, the frequency of students' participation in class has been improved. The rate of students' participation in each class has reached more than 92%.

3) Grade the group discussion. In order to urge students to engage in the group discussion, the teacher asks each group to set up their own QQ chat group, in which the students mainly discuss their problems in study. Each group should organize at least one time group discussion per week. The teacher will give students a grade according to their performance in the discussion.

4) Organize vocabulary and writing tests. The forms of vocabulary test include word dictation, paragraph dictation, translation and sentence-making, the purpose of which is to check whether the students have grasped the new words and phrases learned in the text. In order to lessen the teacher's work load, the students' compositions are graded online through the web- www.pigai.org. According to the online grading results of

the compositions, the teacher will tell students the integral writing performance of the whole class in the classroom, and post the excellent compositions on the QQ group to ask other students to learn from them. The most important part is that the teacher will give a special lecture about the common problems appeared in the students' writing, the purpose of which is to correct students' mistakes and strengthen their language ability.

5) Record the grades of online listening and speaking tests. Its assessment form is determined by the online learning platform. Teachers mainly urge students to complete the tasks on time and record the students' performance grades.

At the end of each term, students are evaluated mainly through the two evaluation forms, the summative assessment and the formative assessment. The summative assessment includes the final oral test and written test, which accounts for 50% of the total score and the formative assessment accounts for 50%, which includes the above five aspects. Therefore, according to the above assessment forms, it can be seen that, in order to comprehensively encourage and urge students to actively participate in learning, diversified assessment forms are necessary.

IV. CONCLUSION

The POA theory lays great emphasis on the concept that all classroom teaching activities should serve the effective learning, and can help students put what they have learned into practice and improve their comprehensive application ability.

Based on the POA theory, this study designs the new classroom teaching approach of college English, which is different from the traditional one in the following aspects:

1) the new teaching approach greatly stresses students' participation in the whole learning process, carefully previewing the text, exploring the meaning of the text, finding the problems, discussing the problems, summarizing and reporting what they have acquired, which is totally participated in by the students.

2) During the teaching process, the teacher acts as a designer of various questions and occasions, a guider to lead students to finish the variety of tasks step by step smoothly and successfully, a helper to help students to solve the problems,

and a booster to promote students to make progress in English learning.

3) The new teaching approach focuses on encouraging students to improve their enthusiasm in participating in learning, and tries to make students feel the sense of achievement in the learning process, so as to promote students to make great efforts to move forward, apply what they have learned to practice, and effectively improve their comprehensive English application ability.

In short, the new teaching approach successfully applies the essence of the POA theory, namely, the integration of learning and application to the teaching of college English.

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