

Advantages and Disadvantages of College English Grading Teaching Mode

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Abstract: With the improvement of China's international status, English, as an international language, has been attached with more and more importance by people. Through a summary of college teaching modes and a research of grading teaching mode, this work analyzed the advantages and disadvantages of the grading teaching mode, with the proposal of some thoughts about college teaching modes as well.

1 INTRODUCTION

Among various English tests during the college years, the beginning of CET-4 and CET-6 is one of the most important indexes for measuring the English level of students. College English Test plays a positive role in China's college English teaching. The test results could reflect the teaching achievements of English teaching workers directly as well as the English learning ability of students, providing theoretical basis for teachers to deepen the teaching work more comprehensively [1]. However, there are still many problems in grade examination. The comprehensive application ability of students can't be fostered. Therefore, we should try to improve the quality of college English teachers while continuously perfecting the grading system, so as to comprehensively improve the teaching quality of college English.

2 DEVELOPMENT HISTORY OF COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING

College English is the most important component of English language teaching. It is an important stage for students from school to society as well as a transition from theoretical learning to practical application. Therefore, the English education of this stage is of great importance [2]. The college English teaching in China has gone through a long history. Since the 20th century, every historical period has

made reform under the guidance of certain education policies.

2.1 Stage of Promulgating English Syllabus

Since the founding of new China, the foreign language teaching was mainly Russian. It is not until 1962 that China has promulgated the first English Syllabus and begun to promote the education of English. The main requirement of this stage was reading, without syllabus requirements in listening, speaking and writing. Besides, the teaching work remained in "teaching". Teachers took the impartment of knowledge as the main task and let students learn and accept the knowledge mechanically without considering the "learning" problem [3]. The classroom atmosphere was always dull, which could not motivate the enthusiasm of students and inspire the English thinking of students.

2.2 Stage of Reform and Opening-up

Along with the Reform and Opening-up, China has continued to enhance the communication with countries in the world, thus making English learning extremely urgent. At that time, a batch of international scholars, who had learned advanced theories of the times, returned from beyond the sea. Based on the English learning requirements at that time, they compiled a new College English Syllabus. The Syllabus requires: the purpose of college English teaching is to cultivate students' strong pre-reading ability, certain listening and translation ability as well as preliminary writing and speaking

ability. The new Syllabus covers every aspect of English teaching, but it is mainly aimed at cultivating students' reading ability. Focusing only on the impartment of knowledge, teachers can't motivate the enthusiasm of students. They didn't separate the reading class from the listening and speaking class, neglecting the practical application ability of students.

In this stage, objective and accurate analysis on the quality of English teaching was made for the purpose of making students learn and use English much better and promoting the implementation of teaching syllabus. And the assessment of college students' practical English ability was made, too. Since 1986, Chinese Educational Department has begun to implement the CET-4 and CET-6(College English Test, CET).

Though the efficiency in management, academy and education was relatively low, China still paid much attention to the education of college English and put forward higher and higher requirements for college English teaching.

2.3 Stage after Entering the 21th Century

Since the beginning of the new century, China has had an ever closer cooperation with countries in the world as China's social economy develops continuously. Domestic forms are also in constant development. "Emphasizing reading skills" couldn't meet the requirements of the current society for the English ability of college students. With the development of high technology and network technology English, computer have been gradually applied into the English teaching. Multimedia has also been widely used in English teaching.

To meet the practical requirements of contemporary college students for learning English, the Ministry of Education formally launched the College English Curriculum Requirements in 2007. It specifies the teaching purpose of college English as "cultivating the comprehensive application ability of students, especially listening and speaking ability. Enable them to communicate in English effectively and enhance their independent learning ability at the same time." This reform has imposed extremely profound influence on the teaching philosophy, teaching target, teaching mode and teaching evaluation system of college English. In December, 2008, China has made pilot reforms in CET-4 and CET-6, the listening part of which has increased to 70% while the composition part is on the increase, too. This reform could help make an evaluation of

students' practical application ability in listening, speaking, reading and translation.

3 VARIETIES OF COLLEGE EDUCATION MODES

3.1 Traditional English Teaching Mode

In this kind of teaching mode, teachers fully play a leading role in teaching, emphasizing the mastery of the basic knowledge of the language. Students mainly grasp the knowledge in the classroom and consolidate the knowledge after class. When making examinations, the function of normal times makes a smaller proportion while the final grades occupy a majority of proportion, generally 70%.

3.2 English Teaching Mode with the Assistance of Multimedia

With the overall improvement of Chinese education, many schools begin to equip classrooms with multimedia, providing more English information for students via campus network. Meanwhile, teachers could make PowerPoint autonomously by using the educational means of multimedia, presenting the teaching content more vividly. What's more, teachers could, according to the characteristics of students, explain the key and difficult points targetedly with the combination of listening and speaking, which is of great help for the cultivation of students' English ability.

3.3 Graded English Teaching Mode

Current college English education is primarily a teaching mode centered on teachers. This kind of mode is teacher-oriented which neglects the learning ability of different students. Therefore, it's difficult to solve the problem of uneven scores of different students. The graded teaching mode of English is hence given birth to. This kind of teaching mode separates students according to their achievements, classifying them into fast class, middle class and slow class. Different teaching plans and teaching tasks are formulated for students with different foreign language foundations. This form could meet the requirements of students with different foreign language foundation and learning abilities and improve the English application ability of students in a comprehensive way.

3.4 Grading Teaching Mode

The National College English Test is a national teaching examination, the purpose of which is to make objective and accurate measurements of college students' practical English ability, thus providing services for college English teaching. College English Test is a large-scale standardized examination, serving as a standard for teaching evaluation. After years of reform, College English Test has been widely recognized, producing great values. Take this as an opportunity, graded teaching mode appears in college education. In this mode, teachers, taking grading test as the mode, exercise the listening, reading, writing, and translation ability of students according to the question types in the examination, which help improve the practical English level of college students to a certain extent. Yet, there are still some problems. For example, the application ability of English can't be fully exercised.

4 ADVANTAGES OF COLLEGE GRADING TEACHING MODE

4.1 Improving the English Teaching Level in China

CET-4 and CET-6 have aroused the attention of administrators in colleges and universities to college English teaching, greatly mobilizing the enthusiasm of teachers and students. A large number of statistical data shows that CET-4 and CET-6 have a high credibility as well as high examination efficiency, which meet the quality requirements of large-scale standardized tests and help finish teachers' teaching tasks and students' learning tasks required by College English Syllabus. Meanwhile, they could reflect the English level of Chinese college students. In this way, this kind of tests could effectively help promote the implementation of College English Syllabus and improve the college English teaching level in China.

4.2 Checking the Teaching Work of Teachers

College English Test is a measurement of students' grasp of basic English knowledge and English application ability during the college years. The annual CET-4 and CET-6 could provide a large amount of true and reliable data for us, which could

not only help teaching management departments at all levels to analyze the problems of college students in every aspect, but also provide actual theoretical and data basis for abstract English learning. Through CET4 and CET6, English educators could analyze the actual English situation of the school and grade based on the real data. Hence, they could make measurements of the practical English ability of college students objectively and figure out solutions to specific problems, in order to serve for college English teaching better.

4.3 Measuring the English Level of Students

The CET-4 and CET-6 held annually by China are unified proposition based on College English Syllabus. Students study and make practice according to the question types in the grade examination. Teachers could also explain the key and difficult points in the exam comprehensively, which is good for students to grasp the basic English knowledge and application abilities in other aspects. Examining the level that students have achieved during the college learning stage through this kind of grade test is to make an objective and fair evaluation of students' practical application ability of English.

4.4 Setting an Evaluation Standard

After the education reform, college English test adopts modern educational statistics. The scores are usually equivalent-treated, which could reflect the English level of Chinese college students objectively with high-credibly. At present, College English Test has been widely recognized by the society, becoming one of the standards for personnel departments at all levels and the employing units to measure the English level of college students.

5 DISADVANTAGE OF COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING MODE

5.1 Being Unable to Learn Professional English

With China's internationalization level rising continuously and its communication with foreign countries more frequent, English becomes an international communication language. We can get access to a lot of English in life. For example, watching an English movie when entertaining,

reading a piece of English news when having a rest, or reading related English Literature during the learning process. College years are a critical period for us to face the world and learn a language. Learning English well could help us know the world more extensively and widely.

As a college student, there is a lot of professional knowledge to be learned during the university period. Only professional knowledge gets linked up with the world could it be better used. Accordingly, reading English Literature and understanding the foreign research progress is particularly important. For example, the computer specialty, which develops rapidly in the world at present, demands college students to be equipped with very good professional English knowledge. Currently, 80% of computer professional knowledge in the world is recorded and transmitted in English. Though China's science and technology develops rapidly, there is still a long distance from Indian country. The main reason is that the mother language of India is English, which enables India to have an advantage over China in language. Only computer major students could read the code and write programs. Therefore, only learning English well could you become a qualified programmer.

5.2 Only Being Able to Take an Examination with Weak Practical Application Ability

There has always been a lot of debate about whether CET-4 and CET-6 could be taken as a standard to check teachers' teaching ability and students' learning level of English in China. Experts think that the purpose of language test is to check if learners have certain language ability while that of language teaching is to cultivate the ability of students to use this language. Grade test, to a certain extent, checks and evaluates the teaching quality, but it has certain negative effects at the same time. Under this kind of teaching mode, it is easy for teachers to deviate from the teaching direction of cultivating the practical language ability of student required by teaching syllabus. Teachers would coach the students according to the requirements of grade test, but the teaching methods they adopt are usually not closely connected with grade examination, such as reciting good sentences and paragraphs, reading articles and so on. Yet, a discussion and statement of one problem is usually neglected. Meanwhile, students would try to grasp different skills to answer each kind of questions according to the examination kinds of questions. Some students could achieve high

grades, but when encountering a real English situation, they would become "dumb". During the learning process, students could grasp some fragmentary language information. The knowledge system is not comprehensive. The practical communication ability of student is bad. This kind of grade examination has an impact on the teaching mode of teachers. The students from this kind of teaching mode are all examination-oriented personnel with low application ability.

5.3 Being Unable to Cultivate the Comprehensive Ability

English, as a foreign language, is to make communication better. However, under the teaching mode of College English Test, both teachers and students are focused on the examination papers, which restrict the teaching thinking of teacher as well as the development capacity of students. Apart from basic grammatical competence and reading ability, English, as a communication language, has a wide coverage, including sociolinguistic competence and language communication strategy. Besides, there will be language culture problems during the communication. The process of learning English is a process which we masters linguistic knowledge and finish the language communication. During this process, we need to accept and learn the knowledge background of English and cultural history so as to exclude the interference of mother tongue, avoid the phenomenon of language errors caused by the mother tongue and establish English thinking. Obviously, the teaching mode of grade test could not improve the international communication ability of student, which is unfavorable for students to use language comprehensively.

6 THOUGHTS ON GRADING TEACHING MODE

College English Test has been recognized by the society. CET-4 and CET-6 have promoted the development of college English teaching and improved the status of College English subject in China. We should fully affirm the historic contribution it makes to the English level of Chinese college students. However, CET-4 and CET-6, to a certain extent, have also limited China's college English teaching mode. They haven't improved the quality of China's college English teaching substantially, nor have they improved the

comprehensive English application ability of Chinese college students. All in all, we should make some reforms while insisting on the grading teaching mode, trying to avoid the negative effects brought by test-oriented teaching and learning and provide more space for the development of college English teaching. In this way, it could help college English teaching develop in a healthy way and improve the communicative ability of students, thus improving their comprehensive ability to apply English in a real way.

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