

The Analysis of the Flipped Classroom Teaching Mode

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Abstract: Flipped classroom is a new type of teaching method, which is a hot topic of research and discussion among many educational researchers. Different from the traditional teaching mode, it can perfectly solve the disadvantages and defects exposed in the traditional teaching form. In this study, the flipped classroom is mainly elaborated from three aspects: overview characteristics, benefits and challenges, in order to give a reference to other researchers.

Keywords: Flipped classroom; Teaching mode; Benefits; Challenges

Introduction

The implementation of 'China National long-term education reform and development plan (2010-2020)' has promoted the combination of information technology and education. More and more new teaching methods are applied in China, including MOOC, blended learning, online class, the flipped classroom, etc. This dissertation is about one of the new teaching method—the flipped classroom.

1. Definition of the flipped classroom

According to Wikipedia, the flipped classroom provides more chances for the teacher to interact with students in class, making use of technology. Bergmann and Sam (2012) define that the flipped classroom is 'which is traditionally done in class is now done at home, and that which is traditionally done as homework is now completed in class'. Yang (2017) also states that the flipped classroom is the reversion of the traditional classroom, which asks students to watch online videos before class and participate in the group discussion in class, while the teacher answering their questions. Zhao and Wang (2018) said that in the flipped classroom, students practice what they have learnt before class in class. As far as I am concerned, different from the traditional classroom, the flipped classroom requires learners to watch online videos or read learning materials before class and discuss and communicate with others to deal with problems in class, which can satisfy the needs of different kinds of students.

2. Benefits of implementing the flipped classroom

It is worth mentioning that the flipped classroom is a method to increase students' initiative in learning by creating a great learning environment. It is not an online course which aims at replace teachers, but a method to ensure students can absorb knowledge anytime and anywhere, as long as they have access to the internet (Chilingaryan & Zvereva, 2016). Its great advantages are discussed in the following part including benefits to teachers, students and education.

2.1 Benefits to teachers

As the main force in the flipped classroom, teachers gain a lot of benefits from it. On the one hand, the flipped classroom can refine teachers' teaching concept. They would pay more attention to students' differences and teaching in accordance with their aptitude. On the other hand, it promotes teaching skills, such as the arrangement of teaching material, classroom teaching, and organization of class.

2.2 Benefits to students

Better learning outcomes

First of all, students can achieve a higher level of language proficiency under the flipped teaching model. Not only because it is students who speak most in class, but also that students can work at their own pace, deciding when and where to study the materials according to their study situation. Moreover, they can learn at their own pace by pausing, rewinding and replaying the videos at will. It is also of great importance to those who are absent from class or have difficulty in the knowledge. It is useful for learners who have

trouble to catch up with the group. By exposed to target knowledge repeatedly, learners can understand learning materials more deeply and consolidated.

Learning performance

The flipped classroom can increase the interest and motivation of students, due to 'the fierce debate, the sparks of the collision of ideas', and so on during the class (Feng, 2016). Furthermore, during this process, students participate in the discussion, which can enhance their engagement and add their interest. Learners will feel more interested, excited and amused in class since most of the class time is used for group work and discussion.

Moreover, during the process of learning by themselves and discussing and communicating with others in the class, learners should set their cognition and use strategies to exchange perspectives with each other, be concentrated while listening and reach an agreement, which can help students be more cognitively engaged in class. Furthermore, the flipped classroom gives learners more initiative, where students have to raise questions and then discuss in groups to solve them. Under the flipped teaching model, students will be more motivated to ask questions, be more active in group work and complete tasks in time. Students will also be more active while cooperating with others in discussion and communication.

Learning ability

The flipped classroom has a significant effect on students' comprehensive ability, such as autonomous learning ability, teamwork ability, responsibility, problem-solving skills, speaking skills, creativity, critical thinking, etc.

In the flipped classroom learners have more initiative in the flipped classroom, which can help them construct higher-order thinking ability. Since they have to gain knowledge in advance, and then raise questions in class, and discuss them with the teacher and their classmates. In addition, because learners are provided ownership of their learning, their responsibility and autonomous learning ability will increase. Furthermore, owing to collaborative learning, learners have to cooperate with others and work together to solve problems, they will learn from each other and set up their team spirit.

Interaction

The flipped classroom has a great effect on the relationship between teachers and students and students themselves. For one thing, during the collaborative learning process, students should cooperate. Thus, they have more time to communicate and establish friendly relationships. For another, in the flipped classroom, the teacher has more time to address problems for a particular student. Therefore, students have more opportunities to ask the teacher questions and achieve effective feedback and instructions.

Moreover, it also promotes and harmonizes the relationship between teachers and students. The role of the teacher is changing from "a sage on the stage" to "a guide by side", thus teachers will have more time to stay and chat with students, which will increase intimacy between them. Different from traditional class, where students listen to and write down what teachers saying, a flipped class can create a more comfortable and effective environment for students to speak out what they want to say, which provides more opportunities for teachers to communicate with students.

3. Challenges in implementing the flipped classroom

3.1 Challenges for teachers

When conducting the flipped classroom, teachers need to achieve three changes, including the changes in their roles, thinking and teaching methods.

First of all, they need to change their roles. They will not only vary from traditional knowledge transmitters and information communicators to learners, users of educational technology, video and courseware producers, but also from the former pedagogues to the assistance of learning.

Next, teachers have to change their thinking. Under the teaching model of the flipped classroom, the quality of education is not only concerned with the acquisition of knowledge from students, but also with the overall quality of the development of students, and the concept of value for students. Teachers should change their traditional 'knowledge-based' thinking of students' achievements, if not, they were not able to adapt to the requirements of the flipped classroom. Moreover, they also need to change their thinking that they are those who control the class. In the flipped classroom, students are indeed the masters. What teachers should do is leaving the podium and going to the middle of the students to interact with them and meet their individualized learning needs.

Finally, it has a high requirement for teachers' skills. The teaching method is different from the traditional one, including the following three parts. To begin with, before class, teachers have to make a short video about the new knowledge for students to preview online, which has a high requirement on teachers' information technology capability. It is necessary for teachers to use the information tools to prepare lessons, produce courseware, record teaching videos, and provide network learning resources. Moreover,

teachers should even evaluate online teaching and other series of teaching work. Then, in class, they should design student-centred classroom activities. In the flipped classroom, teachers are no more speakers and tellers but helpers and listeners. They give students the most time to communicate and discuss with each other and then help solve what students cannot deal with. Therefore, the teacher has more time for particular students. However, the level of students in one class is even different. Hence, it is more difficult for teachers to meet unusual satisfactions of diverse students.

3.2 Challenges for students

Firstly, the flipped classroom brings a lot of burden to students, which asks learners to do a great deal of pre-class work and after-class tasks. Compared with the traditional classroom, learners have to learn target knowledge by themselves before class and solve problems with peers in class in the flipped classroom. Such teaching model adds more burdens to students since they need to spend more time learning before class to understand target knowledge and find problems to discuss in class. Moreover, the flipped classroom can also bring about 'uneven learning outcomes'. Because of different learning ability and competence, although some students pay more time on pre-class learning, they still cannot achieve a good grade, which can even cause students being unconfident in learning.

Secondly, learners need to improve their autonomous learning ability. Under the model of the flipped classroom, the roles of students change from the passive receivers of knowledge to the active builders of knowledge. First, students are required to preview materials online by themselves before class and find out what the difficulties are. However, due to the influence of traditional teaching model, students may be accustomed to listening to the teacher, and when provided with great autonomy, some students may lack self-monitoring ability to learn on their own. Thus, if they do not prepare for class, they cannot follow the teacher in class.

Finally, in class, students need to work in groups to deal with problems. Nevertheless, some students may dare not to speak in front of others because of afraid of making mistakes or shy. Moreover, some students may dare not to ask the teacher questions in class.

4. Conclusion

Although, in China, the examination-oriented education system decides that no matter what method you use in teaching, as long as more students can enter a better school, it is suitable for students. Therefore, the traditional classroom is the premier choice for most Chinese teachers, especially English teachers. However, a new teaching mode can stand the test of time. Maybe in the future, the flipped classroom will be popular in English teaching in middle school, or may be Chinese scholars will take the essence of flipped teaching to their dress and explore a better teaching mode suitable for Chinese education.

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