The Blended Teaching Practice in College English Course Based on Rain Classroom and BOPPPS Model

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Abstract: As a public compulsory course, College English is an important part of the university curriculum system. In order to solve many practical problems in traditional public college English courses, this paper integrates the Rain Classroom and BOPPPS model into the teaching practice of College English course, constructing a blended teaching model that includes online and offline teaching and runs through the whole teaching process, so as to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of college English classes and contribute to the exploration of blended teaching practice in college foreign language education.

Keywords: BOPPPS model; Rain Classroom; College English; Blended teaching practice

1. Introduction

As a public compulsory course, College English is an important part of the higher education curriculum system. The construction and development of College English course contributes to the reform and innovation of higher education courses. In recent years, with the rapid development of information technology and the increasing integration of science and technology with education, foreign language teaching methods have been quietly changed. More and more colleges and universities have made a lot of attempts to turn from the traditional classroom teaching model to blended teaching model. However, College English course is faced with the following deep-rooted problems: it is difficult to unify the teaching methods because of the wide range of students' specialties; Covering too much content in so many aspects as reading, writing, listening and speaking makes it hard to complete the teaching task under the background of class hours reduction; teachers get used to cramming education and students are so addicted to cellphones, which makes the classes inefficient. Therefore, in order to deal with these problems, this study combines the Rain Classroom and BPPPOS model and applies them to the teaching practice of College English course, so as to explore how to make full use of information technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of College English teaching and contribute to the exploration of blended teaching practice in college foreign language education.

2. Theoretical Foundations

2.1 Rain Classroom

Rain Classroom is a new intelligent teaching solution jointly launched by Tsinghua University and Xuetang Online. It is committed to providing data and intelligent information support for all teaching processes quickly and free of charge. It is also a smart teaching instrument and a mobile learning platform that can be plugged into PowerPoint and connected with the communication software WeChat [1]. Rain Classroom has a variety of functions, including uploading multimedia courseware, signing in for attendance, picking students to answer questions randomly, bullet-screen interaction, in-class tests and discussion, downloading courseware for review and releasing examination tasks, which help teachers understand students' learning situation in time, improve students' learning enthusiasm, and promote the efficiency of classroom teaching.

2.2 BOPPPS Model

The BOPPPS model, originated from Canada, was developed and promoted by the Instructional Skills Workshop (Instructional Skills Workshop) (ISW) [2]. This teaching model is composed of the following six teaching units including Bridge-in, Objective, Pre-assessment, Participatory Learning, Post-assessment and Summary, for which BOPPPS is short [3]. Bridge-in (B) is to introduce the

teaching content via various ways like pictures, videos, game activities related to the topic so as to stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm. Objective (O) is to set clear learning objectives for students and make them understand the learning results that they are expected to achieve. Pre-assessment (P) is a test in the beginning of a class which aims to evaluate students' knowledge base, preview results and mastery of the content to be taught in class. Participatory Learning (P) is the core unit of this model. It means teachers should guide students actively participate in interactive classroom activities by means of teaching skills and strategies. Post-assessment (P) is a test in the end of a class, which aims to know whether students have accomplished the expected results and achieved the learning goals. Summary (S) is to summarize the teaching content, reflect on the teaching process, evaluate students' performance and prepare for the next class [4]. The BOPPPS model runs through the whole teaching process, practicing the student-centered teaching concept. As is compared with the traditional teaching model, it can better engage students in classroom activities.

3. The Application of Rain Classroom and BOPPPS Model in College English Course

Taking Rain Classroom as an online teaching platform and the BOPPPS teaching model as theoretical basis, this paper takes the example of Text A named "Toward a brighter future for all" in unit one from New Horizon College English Reading and Writing Textbook One. It carries out teaching design through six units: bridge-in, objective, pre-assessment, participatory learning, post-assessment and summary, so as to demonstrate how Rain Classroom and BOPPPS model are integrated into College English teaching.

3.1 Bridge-in

The main purpose of the bridge-in part is to stimulate students' interest, and arouse their curiosity and enthusiasm about the content to be taught, so that students can be more active and focused on the classroom learning. The text "Toward a brighter future for all" is a speech delivered by a university president to freshmen. Considering the uniqueness of speech, teachers upload audio of the text and words on Rain Classroom in advance for students to read and preview before class. In class, teachers play the uploaded video clips related to welcome speeches on the classroom computer, and students are suggested to post bullet-screen comments through the bullet-screen function to express their feelings about the speeches. And then, teachers show students some topic-related questions to discuss in groups. For example, "What is the ideal university like in your eyes?" or "What are your expectations of your college life?" The series of introduction activities can stimulate the classroom atmosphere and arouse students' interest to learn the following parts.

3.2 Objective

Objectives are desired accomplishments and expected outcomes. Teachers present the learning objectives of each session of class on Rain Classroom so as to help students better understand the contents to be mastered. As for this text, the learning objectives can be mainly classified into the following three aspects. Firstly, language objective. Through the study of the text, students should master the key words, phrases and sentence patterns, and be able to apply them flexibly. Secondly, cognitive objective. In the process of learning the text, students should understand the characteristics and requirements of speech writing. Thirdly, moral objective. When finished learning the text, students should be aware of how to plan their university life and study, and what responsibilities should be borne as youth in the new era.

3.3 Pre-assessment

The purpose of the pre-assessment is to test the students' understanding of the content to be learned after they finish preview tasks before class. Before class, teachers make multiple choice questions about the key words and phrases in the text, or set short answer questions, such as "what is the main idea of this passage", and "how to divide the structure of passage". And then, teachers release those questions in class task on Rain Classroom. In the first ten minutes of class, students are required to take out their mobile phones to complete the class task released so that teachers can immediately check the students' answers. In this way, teachers could better understand the students' familiarity with the text and their weaknesses, so as to adjust teaching intensity and rhythm in the subsequent class teaching according to the specific situation of students.

3.4 Participatory Learning

Participatory learning is the core unit of BOPPPS model, which encourages students to participate in the whole process of classroom learning. It is an intensive embodiment of student-centered education. In college classes, the most troublesome problem for teachers is that students can't focus on classroom learning all the time. How to make students stay focused as much as possible, instead of playing with their phones and sleeping is that teachers have to get students more involved in class activities. As to the text in unit one, teachers make use of the various functions on Rain Classroom to set all kinds of activities. First of all, during the process of text learning, teachers launch a poll on Rain Classroom about whether you are a night owl or an early bird when it comes to the topic of staying up late at night in the text. Students are required to vote on Rain Classroom. And then, from the voting results, teachers

could know more about students' living habits, thus narrowing the distance with students. Meanwhile, teachers randomly invite some students to share the reasons why they choose to be night owls, and discuss the bad effects of staying up late, guiding students to keep a regular schedule and improve learning efficiency. Secondly, teachers explain the writing skills and characteristics of speeches to students by analyzing the text structure and show them some classic speech clips on Rain Classroom. Students are asked to imitate those speakers to give a speech in class. In the whole teaching process, teachers guide and students participate so that the interaction between teachers and students is enhanced, the classroom atmosphere becomes better, and the classroom efficiency can be promoted.

3.5 Post-assessment

Post-assessment aims to test whether the teaching objectives set before class is realized. Some multiple choice questions about language points and speech writing characteristics could be made on Rain Classroom for students to finish. Through the post-assessment, teachers can understand the learning situation of students, while students can reflect on whether they have acquired some results and whether they have achieved their learning goals in this class.

3.6 Summary

Summary can help students review and reflect on the key content in class. At the end of the class, teachers guide students to review the key words, phrases and sentence structures learned in class. At the same time, teachers also release text summary questions in the form of blank filling on Rain Classroom to help students further understand the content of the text and cultivate students' ability to summarize and extract key information. Finally, the top five students who have the highest total scores of exercises on Rain Classroom should be praised and rewarded with additional class participation points respectively. Thus, students can be encouraged to make continuous efforts and take College English lessons seriously.

4. Conclusion

This paper combines Rain Classroom and BOPPPS model into the exploration of a new way to carry out online and offline blended teaching in order to solve some problems deep-rooted in College English course. It is of great practical significance. Since the BOPPPS model advocates an objective-oriented and student-centered teaching concept, teachers are required to utilize diversified teaching methods, optimize teaching design, and increase classroom interaction, while the Rain Classroom can meet the dual needs of online and offline assisted teaching and learning because it covers many functions that can be employed before class, during class and after class. Both of them are perfectly compatible in terms of teaching purpose, teaching process and teaching effect. Combining them together can stimulate students' learning interest and enhance students' learning initiative, thus improving the efficiency of classroom teaching.

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