

A Study of Homework Assignment

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Abstract : The aim of this paper is to provide some reference for English teaching. On the basis of Humanism , the questionnaire survey and interview, the author found the main problems in English assignment: the traditional English homework is not very suitable for the interest of the students in the course. There are many problems in the traditional English homework designing, mainly by copying words, reciting the text, and doing exercises. Students are overburdened with homework, thus impede their interest in learning. Consequently, students are unwilling to do their homework, dislike English course, or even hate English. The paper tries to analyze the reasons and find out more effective ways for students to learn English, to improve students' learning efficiency and to reduce the burden of students. By doing this the author hopes the findings can help improve English teaching in primary and middle schools.

Keywords: English-Homework; New Curriculum Environment; Effective Measures

1. Research Background and Significance

Recently, the importance of English education has been attached to. According to the English Curriculum Standards 2011, there are curriculum goals can be achieved by a lot of language practice which includes doing various forms of assignments. In traditional homework assignments, teacher puts emphasis on copying new words, vocabularies and phrases, even puts texts on the first place. Students are busy in doing too much English copying homework, and have not any interest in English. It cannot develop students' ability of acquiring knowledge. Students have to keep doing these mechanical assignments, but teacher thinks they can get high marks in examinations. Actually, the students become good at taking examinations but lack of the ability and experience of using the language in real life, which can't help them meet the needs of society in the future. Little by little, students get used to depending on teachers instead of learning on their own.

To sum up, students just copy it from others, and think homework is a tedious repetition, mechanical memorization, and students hold a negative attitude towards homework. As a result, students dislike English, and the positive effect of homework is reduced.

2. Methodology

This paper adopts scientific research methods such as literature research, questionnaire survey and investigation research and interview.

3. Analysis

3.1 The data of questionnaires

In my internship experience, I taught the Grade Seven, Class6 and Class12 in a Lhasa Junior Middle School. I decided to do a research about the homework assigning, so I made the 122 questionnaires to find the problem.

Then I analyzed these questionnaires, the main issue is: Though back the questionnaires, then I analyzed and collected them, I found in the "Junior middle school English homework questionnaire", the first question ' How long do you finish your English homework every day?' and the second question 'How long do you feel it is suitable to finish English

homework?’ The first one, 27students chose ‘between 10 and 20 minutes’, 48students chose ‘in half an hour’, 18students chose ‘in an hour’, 1student chose ‘over one hour’. The second one, 36students chose ‘between 10 and 20 minutes’, 43students chose ‘in half an hour’, 13students chose ‘in an hour’, 2students chose ‘over one hour’.

Form the questionnaire, we can check half students need almost half an hour to write their English homework, they also had other subjects homework, so they will be very busy for their homework, we need to improve the homework assigning to help them learn efficiently.

The diagram of ‘How long do you feel it is suitable to finish English homework?’

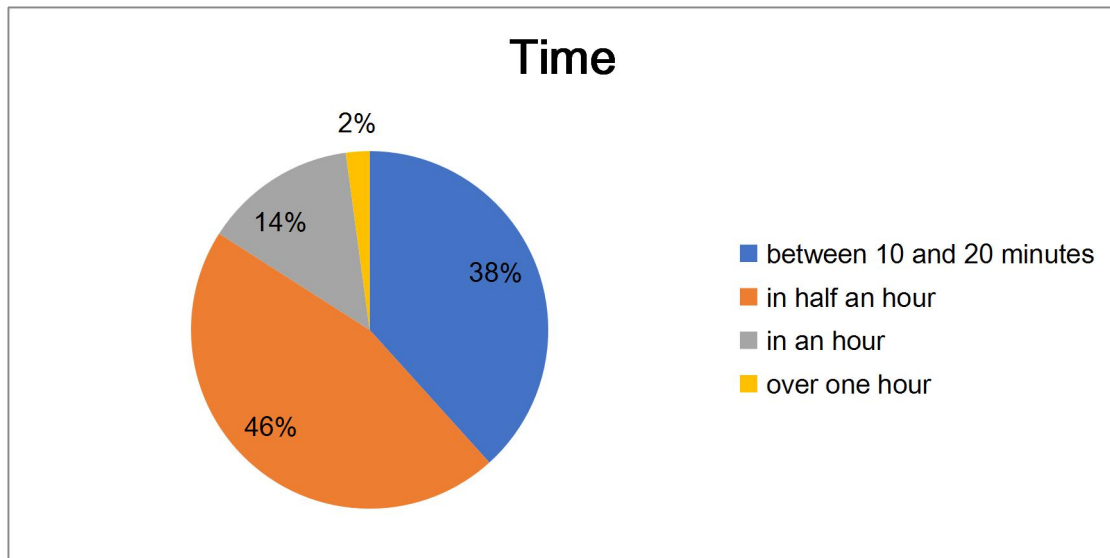


Diagram 1 Homework Time Table

Form the diagram 1, we can see students want to reduce the time of doing homework, so teachers need to assign more suitable jobs for students, making students can do their homework more efficiently.

The forth question ‘ Do you think the time you finish English homework every day is related to your English study results?’ I analyzed and summarized student’s answer to find most students think it is related each other. So the less time they use, indicating the better they learnt.

The question ‘What do you think the main problem of the English homework assigning in class?’ 37students thought ‘the homework is boring’, 17students thought ‘the home work is too much, I want to have a pastime’. 37students thought ‘need to assign homework on the basis of individual ability’. 13students thought ‘The homework is too much, but it can’t improve English effectively’. Other 5 samples were invalid.

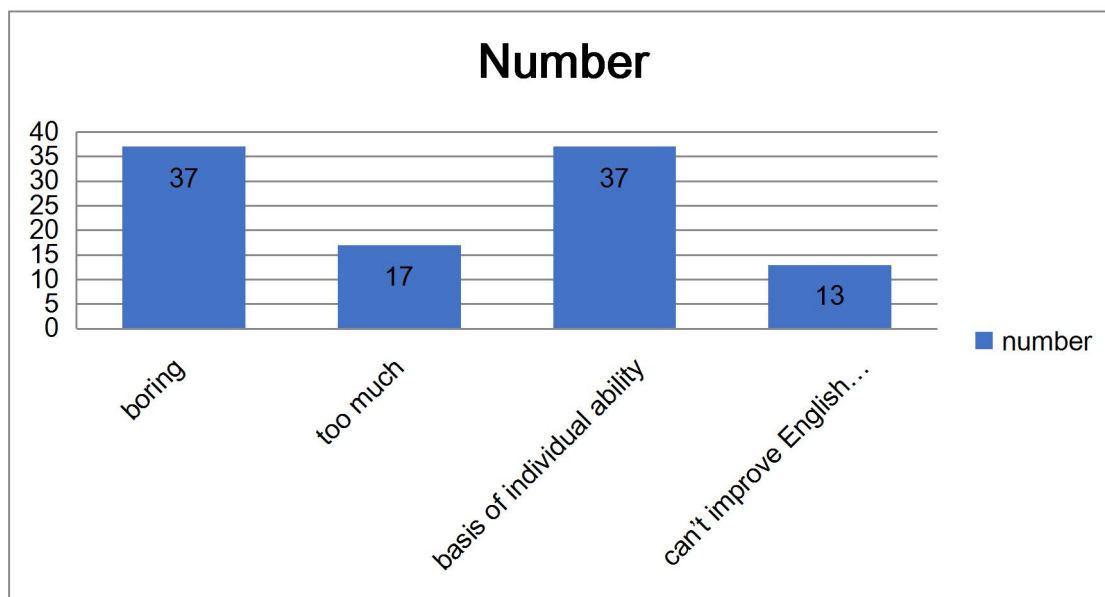


Diagram 2 Attitude Number Table

At the end of the questionnaire, the subjective question ‘ How do you feel doing English homework can improve your study result?’ There were 90 answers. 75% students thought it was OK. 25% not. The affirmative reason: 1.Doing English homework can help us remember the vocabulary. 2.Doing homework can consolidate what you learnt today. 3.Doing homework can let you know the key point of learning English.4.Doing homework can made the recitation of the text. The dissentient reason: 1. Just doing transcription was useless. 2.Homework was boring, I didn’t like it.3.sometimes, it can’t improve my scores.4.so much homework, I wrote so fast, I can’t remember it.

The fifth question ‘Do you like to do your English homework?’, There were four choices: ‘Like’ ‘Just so so’ ‘Don’t like’ ‘Hate’.

From the questionnaire 4.60% students thought doing the English homework was just so so, they thought doing the homework was their jobs, so they did the homework just for the study job. I thought the phenomenon was very severe, the students were not volunteer to do their homework, it meant that the students are not interested in doing the homework, just to complete the task, so we need to awaken students’ interest to learn independently, to design the more suitable English homework assignment.

They thought these jobs were general way to consolidate their study, like their teachers in a Lhasa Junior Middle School, They liked the interesting homework to do and thought it was also good for learning English. My purpose is to improve the English homework assignment, making the students do the homework which is suitable for their development.

3.2 The interview of students

First I made an interview outline, I prepared the key question inside, then I gave the 7 students interview. Like the first question ‘Do you think English homework can improve your English performance? Why?’ Almost all students said ‘yes’, they thought the memory and recitation can make the knowledge point become familiar and store in brain. They thought doing homework can made a consolidation for what they learnt in class. There is also one student said doing English homework just had a little help, he thought the recitation doesn’t have the good effect. The second question ‘Do you have more English homework per day than other subjects?, Can you finish the English homework every day, Why?’ The students for a Lhasa Junior Middle School said the English homework was not too much, it only took them less than 30 minutes. They can finish the English homework every day in time, because they knew that doing homework was students’ duty and the teacher would check their homework strictly. They thought homework was acceptable, but they wanted more forms of homework, such as learning English songs, drawing, and explaining exercise books.

3.3 The interview of teachers

Firstly, I made the interview outline, then I gave the introduction to the teachers about my purpose and requirements of my interview. The first question 'What forms of homework do you usually assign?' Almost teachers said the main English homework were the copying word and text, reciting and dictation. They said these forms of homework was easy to check and had the general effect. The dictation and recitation can consolidate the knowledge point. They also thought doing a lot of homework exercises was a good way to improve their academic performance, because the exercises had the same forms and skills of the test paper. The second question 'Generally, how much work do you assign every day, or how much time to complete them? Why?' Almost all teachers said they would assign half 1 hour homework, because other subjects also had homework, balanced each subject. 1 teacher said there were several forms of homework every day, there were exercise books, recitations, and practicing hand-writing. The last question 'Which types of homework do you think can develop students' abilities, Why?' They said there were lots of ways to improve students' English ability, like copying words, writing, exercises and dictation. 1 teacher said writing test paper was also good way to improve the scores, to make students understand why they should do the paper in the way, then they was suitable for the test.

4. Conclusion

Now, we know these problems and recognize the essence of the problem in teaching English, English homework assignments should be improved for children' study.

First, we need to update the reform of the teaching pattern. According to the English Curriculum Standards 2011, we need to develop students' comprehensive abilities, to change some of the bad mechanical methods of learning English, to become suitable for the development of students.

Secondly, we made the research of English homework assignment in a Lhasa Junior Middle School, we need to solve the present practical problem, design the suitable homework for the student in the school, throughout the performance of classroom, practical extracurricular, suitable for the development of students, can play an efficient effect, so that students were interested in doing homework, can really improve the students' learning methods of homework, change the deficiencies of original modality, to optimize the homework assignments for students.

Change the attitude of teacher teaching English, made them not just think learning English in the mechanical way. Try to use the neoteric way to suit for their class teaching, change the traditional inherent learning methods to the neoteric way, to provide an effective theoretical and experimental basis for the English learning education in China.

All in all, we need great wishes of the students, using humanism theory and ways to think the problems, solving and optimizing the problems in English teaching in practice, and putting forward the methods that are really effective and suitable for the students' English learning.

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