

A Research on the Down-to-Earth Primary English Teaching in the Context of Education Reform

Tao Pang

Xinglongtai Qu Kangqiao Tongshuguan, Panjin, Liaoning, 124000

Abstract: With the integration of global economic, English promotes communication among countries and development of international trade. So, as a language, English plays a very important role in daily communication and in accessing to more abundant resources and information. However, in China, English teachers mainly revolved around the textbooks focusing on the grammar rules, phrases and exam-related exercises without thinking about practical application in everyday life in the past. As a result, it had led to the phenomenon of mute English and the widely-believed idea of uselessness of English. In order to meet the requirements of the new curriculum reform (NCR), English teachers should innovate and transform teaching methods, and put those methods into practice. Only by connecting teaching and down-to-earth practicing, can students' language skills be improved. In fact, not only will English abilities be improved, but also students' confidence in learning can be built by then.

Keywords: New curriculum reform (NCR); Primary English teaching; Down-to-earth; Practice

Introduction

As the education system in China develops and innovates, especially after the new curriculum standards (NCS), English teaching in primary schools has also ushered in a new development opportunity. It greatly encourages promoting English teaching and makes learning become more practical. This article combines the author's actual English teaching experience in the context of NCS, analyzes the primary school English teaching, expounds the existing problems and tries to propose some improvement strategies, hoping that they will help English teaching to better play its educational significance.

1. Meanings of Down-to-earth Primary School English teaching

From the perspective of constructivism, when carrying out teaching activities, English teachers should consider their students' current language level and foundation to innovate and implement their teaching methods properly and at that time the role of students as teaching subjects can also be fully played.

This concept has already been highly valued by a majority of English teachers so they're now conducting their teaching down to earth to improve the effect and quality of their classes.

First, teachers should know well about students' daily life, analyze it and then try to combine teaching scenes with it in class, which is conducive to promoting the effective development of teaching; what's more, a teacher-student relationship of equality and respect should be established, which makes sure new teaching methods respected in class; last but not least, down-to-earth teaching (DET) enables students to think about English learning from the perspective of real life and actual applications. DET also helps to correct their attitude toward English learning and inspire their awareness and interest in it.

2. Strategies for the Down-to-Earth Primary English Teaching in the Context of Education Reform

2.1 Based on the textbooks, teachers should be fully prepared

At present, English teaching in China is inseparable from grammar rules and other exam-related knowledge in textbooks. In order to realize DET, it is necessary for teachers to link textbooks with the real life and get fully prepared. Many stories and dialogues in the textbooks happened in foreign countries, due to the differences of culture, tradition and other background information in different

countries, there will be great impact on students when learning them. For one thing, this will lead to the inability to directly apply the languages to the real life. It may also cause students to have a sense of fragmentation in their learning, which will eventually influence the effectiveness of English classes. Therefore, to shorten the gap between teaching and learning, teachers need to be flexible with textbooks and to rethink, reorganize and change teaching materials when making plans. For example, I have taught My Weekend Plan in the textbook of NSPEP for many times during my teaching career, but various teaching targets, materials, activities and methods were adopted. Like recently, travelling and shopping at the weekend are hard to realize because of COVID-19. And students are now experiencing a totally strange period of time. As to their weekend plans, they must have changed dramatically. To shorten the gap between scenes in the textbook and those in current society, I have changed the video that I normally would show my students to one that is about life during the pandemic. We talked about the coronavirus and the impact that it had on their life and I also shared epidemic-related words with them.

Teaching and learning should serve the students with more practical use not just exams skills. To achieve this goal, English teachers should prepare carefully for their classes and be flexible with their teaching.

2.2 Teaching should be combined with real scenarios

Scenario-Based Learning (SBL) uses real-life situations and provides a relatable and highly relevant learning experience to the learners, whose immersive approach creates a high engagement quotient for them. Teachers integrate textbooks and daily life, and then provide information-based teaching scenarios for students. Although teaching scenarios are not the same as actual ones that students have experienced, scenario-based teaching can still demonstrate textbooks vividly and directly through which students' interests and effectiveness can be stimulated and the gap between teaching and learning can be shortened. It also means more interaction and experiencing, less instillation in class. For example, when teaching How do You Feel? of NSPEP, role-play is a very interesting and efficient way to show the content in the textbook. Teachers can ask students to act as characters in the textbook, and let them conduct dialogues in the classroom and show the other students different emotions directly. In this way, both active atmosphere and interest and initiative of students can be brought into teaching, which will gradually improve English teaching in class.

Scenario-based teaching makes English class impressive and vivid, and it is not just to instill knowledge to students any longer but give them a chance to live in it.

2.3 Based on teaching content, collaborative research is needed

Teamwork has an advantage in improving students' learning efficiency. It can optimize the performance of DET, and combine the corresponding teaching content and teaching methods to build a three-dimensional teaching model. For example, teachers can divide students into groups, and let them research and discuss in groups. During discussing, team members verify their learning by comparing with each other so that they can improve and optimize their learning methods and effects. As an English teacher, I also conduct research in teams and discuss teaching results in order to better English classes and promote the realization of DET. In the class of I have a pen pal of NSPEP, I asked students to pretend to be each other's pen pal and write to each other. I organized my teaching and researching team to listen while I was having the class and we discussed and shared our views after class, which helped me to apply DET with personal characteristics and explore how to use it to solve specific problems faced in teaching in teamwork.

2.4 Diversified and down-to-earth evaluations are necessary

Evaluations of learning should be diversified especially in the context of NCR. And diversified evaluations based on DET, such as mutual evaluation, self-evaluation, parent evaluation etc., will help deepen the NCR. On the other hand, English homework should also be assigned in a DET way. Putting on a play, or designing a word-puzzle instead of reciting passages or copying new words will be more attractive to students, which will help them finish their assignment in a better state of mind, and master and apply English language better in real life.

Conclusion

The advantages and values of DET are very prominent, and teachers must make reasonable choices to ensure that students are enthusiastic about learning so that the teaching goal of applying what they have learned can be reflected.

References:

- [1] Du Gongsui. Using Multimedia Skillfully to Realize the Teaching of Primary School English in Lifestyle [J]. Nanfang Lunkan, 2016,(12):105-107.
- [2] Xin Shuyan. The Current Situation and Countermeasures of English Teaching under the New Curriculum Reform [J]. Modern Education Science, 2014,(10):162-163.