

# A Preliminary Study of Questioning Strategies in Higher Vocational English Class

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**Abstract:** Classroom questioning is an important part of classroom teaching, an important teaching means to achieve teaching objectives, and an effective interactive way for teachers and students to communicate. With the continuous advancement of curriculum reform, classroom questioning plays an increasingly important role in English classroom teaching in higher vocational colleges. Reasonable and effective classroom questioning can stimulate students' interest in learning English, improve their enthusiasm for learning, exercise their creative thinking ability and ability to analyze and solve problems, create a lively classroom atmosphere and improve teaching quality. According to some problems in classroom questioning in actual teaching, the author puts forward some corresponding teaching suggestions and explores more effective questioning strategies in order to stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning English, improve the quality of English classroom teaching and promote English teaching in higher vocational colleges.

**Keywords:** Higher vocational English; Classroom questioning; Strategy

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## 1. Introduction

Classroom questioning is an important means for teachers to communicate with students in English. As teaching is a bilateral activity, it is composed of teachers' teaching and students' learning. It is a process in which students actively participate in learning, actively explore and independently discover learning methods. In the specific process of English classroom teaching, students often do not use tools to assist learning. The interaction between teachers' questions and students' answers creates opportunities for students to use language. Since students' thinking process generally starts with questions, teachers' questions play a very important role in the teaching process and have been a focus of classroom teaching for many years.

Questioning is regarded as a common teaching strategy in classroom teaching. Through classroom questioning, teachers can understand students' understanding and mastery of the knowledge they have learned, cultivate students' ability of thinking and judgment, and also enable students to concentrate on learning. But in actual teaching, some teachers still have various problems when they ask questions in class. Therefore, it is of great significance to improve the quality of English classroom teaching in higher vocational colleges by deeply understanding the specific situation of classroom questioning and exploring reasonable classroom questioning strategies.

## 2. Problems in the Current English Classroom Questioning in Higher Vocational Colleges

Classroom questioning is an effective teaching strategy, an important part of classroom teaching, and an important means for teachers to carry out teaching. Effective classroom questioning strategies can mobilize students' learning enthusiasm, stimulate learning interest, cultivate and promote students' creative thinking ability, exercise students' language expression ability, enhance communication between teachers and students, and create a good teaching atmosphere.

Classroom questioning is an important means for teachers to communicate with students in English. But in actual teaching, there are some problems in classroom questioning. Through investigation, the author found that there are mainly the following problems:

- (1) Some teachers are blind and random when asking questions, the type of questions is relatively simple, and the difficulty of

the questions is not combined with the students' English level, which to some extent reduces the students' enthusiasm to participate in answering questions.

(2) Some teachers' questioning objects are more one-sided and concentrated, and more students with good English scores are assigned to answer, while some students with poor English scores are ignored. This will cause psychological negative effects on some students, resulting in polarization of learning results.

(3) In actual teaching, most teachers do not give students enough time to think about questions, resulting in low accuracy or enthusiasm of students.

(4) Some teachers do not evaluate the students' answers or the evaluation is relatively general and simple. Even the positive evaluation is only a simple praise, not a specific and enlightening evaluation, which is not conducive to encouraging students to participate in answering questions.

(5) In class, it is rare for students to ask questions on their own initiative, and some teachers also ignore this. In the traditional classroom teaching, teacher questioning still plays a leading role.

### **3. Teaching Suggestions**

In view of the problems existing in the actual teaching, the author, combining with more than ten years of teaching experience in higher vocational education, has carefully studied and explored the questioning strategies in the English class in higher vocational education, and put forward some suggestions.

#### **3.1 Teachers should reasonably design problems according to teaching objectives**

Teachers should design different problems from the subject characteristics, teaching content and students' actual situation of higher vocational English. First, classroom questioning should be purposeful. Teachers should carefully design questions according to teaching objectives, key and difficult points, and students' English level. Through classroom questioning, we hope to stimulate students' interest in learning, encourage students to participate in the classroom, understand students' mastery of knowledge, and promote students' thinking ability. Secondly, classroom questioning should be understandable. The questions put forward by teachers should be easy for students to understand and have certain difficulties, so as to mobilize students' enthusiasm for answering questions and cultivate students' creative thinking ability.

In addition, classroom questioning should be interesting. According to the teaching needs of higher vocational English and the psychological characteristics of students, teachers can put forward some questions related to the text and life, skillfully put forward interesting questions, and arouse the curiosity of students.

#### **3.2 Teachers should expand the scope of questioning and face all students**

Because different students have different levels of English, receptivity and learning styles, teachers should choose the subjects according to the degree of difficulty. Don't only assign some excellent students to answer and ignore most students. Try to reduce the number of students' collective answers, otherwise most students will be unwilling to think and their interest in learning will become weaker and weaker. Teachers should put forward different questions for different students. For example, let students with weak English skills answer simple questions, and let students with good English skills answer more challenging questions. Teachers should make each student work hard to answer with the current level, and their ability will be improved accordingly.

#### **3.3 Teachers should grasp the waiting time according to the actual situation**

In English class, teachers should not rush to ask students to answer after asking questions, but should grasp the waiting time according to the difficulty of the questions. This requires the teacher to carefully prepare the type and difficulty of the questions to be asked before class, so as to roughly understand the required waiting time. Generally speaking, the waiting time for questions with low cognitive level, such as display questions and judgment questions, is shorter, while the waiting time for questions with high cognitive level, such as reference questions and understanding and analysis questions, should be appropriately extended. In addition, teachers should adjust the waiting time appropriately according to the different subjects. Different students have different cognitive level, learning basis, reaction speed and personality, and the required waiting time will also be different. Teachers need to know more about these situations so that they can grasp the waiting time when asking questions.

However, it is worth noting that the longer the waiting time is, the better. If the time is too short, students can't fully think, but if the time is too long, students will be too relaxed and inattentive, making the classroom atmosphere dull, and also affecting the teaching progress. If the problem is too difficult for students to answer, the teacher can give appropriate prompts, or leave

the problem for students to think and discuss after class. Therefore, teachers should accurately grasp the waiting time, and give students different waiting time according to the actual situation, so that students have enough time to think and understand questions, so that students can answer questions correctly, improve the quality of students' answers, and exercise students' creative thinking ability.

### **3.4 Teachers should take various forms to give positive feedback**

Teachers should give students positive feedback as much as possible, which can not only strengthen students' knowledge, promote students' learning motivation, but also activate the classroom atmosphere. For example, for students' correct answers, teachers should try not to use simple "Good", "OK", "Fine", "That's right." and other general words to praise, but try to make detailed comments or follow-up questions, which will help mobilize students' enthusiasm and confidence in answering questions. For students with inaccurate answers, teachers should not directly criticize or deny the whole, but first affirm the correct part, and then guide students to think about the existing problems. For students who can't answer questions, teachers can give students appropriate encouragement, eliminate students' nervousness, give appropriate prompts, and guide students to answer questions.

### **3.5 Teachers should create a good atmosphere to encourage students to ask questions**

In the classroom, students should not only master knowledge, but also develop their imagination, thinking ability and innovation ability. Therefore, teachers should encourage students to ask questions and cultivate students' ability of autonomous learning.

First of all, teachers should create a good classroom atmosphere so that students are willing to ask questions. Teachers should create various situations or scenarios related to the teaching content according to the English level and psychological characteristics of higher vocational students, so that students can consciously and actively find problems, put forward and solve problems, rather than directly obtain the answers to problems, which can give students a deep feeling, stimulate students' interest in learning, mobilize students' enthusiasm for participation, and are willing to actively ask questions. So as to cultivate students' thinking ability and innovation ability. Secondly, teachers should cultivate students' questioning ability and let students be good at questioning. In the process of students' autonomous learning, teachers should guide students to think seriously and independently, so that students can find problems and put forward problems; Teachers should let students ask questions according to the teaching content, and the questions should be clear, specific and targeted; Teachers should guide students to look for doubts and raise questions; Teachers should also purposefully cultivate students' curiosity, encourage students to innovate and raise some unexpected questions; Students may be superficial or inaccurate when they begin to ask questions. For this, teachers should encourage and guide students to pay attention to language expression, so that students' questions can be further improved.

## **4. Conclusion**

In English teaching in higher vocational colleges, teachers should correctly use classroom questioning strategies to stimulate students' interest in learning, improve their enthusiasm for learning, cultivate students' ability to use English language, be diligent in thinking, be good at thinking, cultivate students' English communication ability, improve teaching effects, and lay a good English foundation for students' future employment.

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