

The Application of Flipped Classroom in English Vocabulary Teaching in Junior High School

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Abstract: Vocabulary is the foundation of learning English. Therefore, vocabulary has always been the basis and difficulty of English. The current situation of teaching English vocabulary at the junior high school level is not very satisfactory and fails to achieve the desired effect. The teacher is the center of the classroom, and the interaction between the students and the teacher in the classroom is neglected. As a new teaching mode, the use of flipped classroom can increase the interest of vocabulary teaching process and stimulate students' learning initiative. Through writing of this paper, I express the approval of the current flipped classroom applied to junior high school English vocabulary teaching, hoping to achieve the purpose of proving that the flipped classroom teaching mode is effective for junior high school English vocabulary teaching after in-depth analysis and detailed examples.

Keywords: The flipped classroom, junior high school; English vocabulary teaching

1. Introduction

The flipped classroom is a product of the new era and has the characteristics of the times. The basic idea is flipping the traditional learning process on its head and allows learners to complete independent learning of knowledge and concepts after class. The classroom is an intermediary agent of interaction between teachers and students, mainly for answering questions and debriefing discussions, thus achieving better teaching results. Its advocacy of the concept of independent learning, the sense of cooperation, and the enhancement of students' comprehensive quality are in line with the new curriculum standards for junior high school English, which require that "English education should be humanistic and instrumental at the same time."

1.1 Definition of Flipped Classroom

The term flipped classroom, also called inverted classroom, was originated in America popularized by Aaron Sams and Jon Bergman from Woodland Park High School. ^[1]This mode is in response to a realization that class time would be better spent guiding knowledge and providing feedback instead of delivering direct instruction. Bergman and Sams deemed that direct instruction could be conveyed by recording video content for students to participate before class (and any time), freeing up valuable class time for activities that allow deeper exploration of content. The flipped classroom is an approach of learning mode, which inverts the direct teaching from group studying to private studying. And group discussion becomes a dynamic and interactive learning space where students apply concepts to practice and participate in the class actively.

2. Characteristics of Flipped Classroom

The first is breaking through the time and space of knowledge transfer. It adopts the concept of learning first and teaching later. It emphasizes student autonomy and personalized learning. The flipped classroom replaces the traditional classroom but teacher focuses on teaching through using videos and other vehicles. Students no longer have to worry about missing classes due to sick leave or personal leave and they have the chance to catch up with the teaching schedule. Students who are slowly learning to digest and accepting can repeatedly study on their own speed and it is possible not to miss knowledge points. The flipped classroom reverses the traditional location of teaching classroom. ^[2]

The second characteristic is meeting students' individual learning needs. The flipped classroom provides students with

abundant learning resources to help them personalize their learning process in terms of starting points, learning speed, and learning methods. After understanding the characteristics of the target groups, the teacher provides each student with a learning style that is suitable to them. Personalized tutoring for students' individual problems, so as to meet their individual learning needs and improve the quality of learning.

The last characteristic is having the support of information technology. ^[3]The rapid development of information technology is changing the way people live, work and learn. The flipped classroom requires the support of information technology, which requires the use of computers, cell phones and other electronic devices to play videos and send them via the Internet. China's education information implementation construction has developed significantly, and the construction of digital education resources has taken shape.

3. Theoretical Basis of Flipped Classroom

Constructivism is first come up with by psychologist Piaget. He believes that students must only rely on their own construction to complete the acceptance of knowledge. Students are supposed to invert passively learning to self-constructed knowledge. ^[4]Constructivism focuses more eyesight on initiative, sociable and situational learning. In other words, students can achieve the goal of interaction into their own knowledge system in nearest development area and culture environment through cooperative application. Although the role of teachers is not the center, the guidance should be provided with students learning direct guidance instead of implicit guidance, to offer students with superior quality learning materials, learning resources and teaching learning methods.

The theory of mastery learning is put forward by Benjamin Bloom in the 1960s. Bloom deemed that if students possess enough time and appropriate teaching, they can achieve outstanding academic performance. This means that learners can be proficient if they are permitted to study at their own speed and with proper help. The other two are the students' emotional attitude which includes learning motivation, learning interest and learning attitude. So long as learners are given enough time and guidance to study according to the actual condition of their own speed, they will be able to achieve the learning goals.

The zone of proximal development theory (ZPD) is put forward by Vygotsky in 1930s. It describes the level of intelligence that children may reach. But the key point is that how to understand and determine developmental level of the child. The other is their potential developmental level of problem solving with adult guidance or in cooperation with competent peers (potential development level). ^[5]It reveals the essential characteristics of teaching and learning is not to train and strengthen of developed internal mental functions, but stimulate and form of mental functions that do not currently exist.

4. Feasibility of Flipped Classroom

With the speedy advance of science and technology, there is a great change in people's life. The popularization of smart phones and tablet computers has brought the era of the Internet. It also brought the era of integration of education and the Internet. The emergence of micro learning resources has brought new opportunities for traditional junior high school English vocabulary teaching. Students can search a large amount of information and knowledge from the internet. In response to the current problems of many course contents, few hours, strong practicality and uneven student needs, the teaching mode of flipped classroom can be explored.

Flipped classroom-based instruction allows teachers and students to work together in an open, shared, interactive, and collaborative space. The interactivity of the classroom is enhanced comprehensively, forming a teaching mode in which students are mainly learning and teachers are teaching through the flipped classroom teaching mode.

5. The Application of Flipped Classroom in English Vocabulary Class

5.1 Current Situation of English Vocabulary Teaching Vocabulary Class

Deduction is still the common teaching method used by most teachers in vocabulary classes, while this teaching method is mechanical and backward, and it is difficult to attract students' interest. With the setting of English curriculum in China, English vocabulary teaching came into being. Junior high school English vocabulary is a difficult learning point for junior high school students, both teachers and students are often struggling, time-consuming and ineffective. Some students know the vocabulary backwards and forwards, but do not choose the appropriate form in the specific sentence.

In the eyes of some students, English is very distant to them, and they don't use it at all in their real life except for exams, and in their opinion, the return of learning English is very low. And students lack of some background knowledge and they only know how to speak, spell and write the words. The teacher's inaccurate pronunciation is disadvantageous to students' pronun-

ciation. The “read after me” is a familiar sentence to students. This is the most common way to teach vocabulary in junior high school, but it may be harmful for students to learn vocabulary.

5.2 Teaching Process of Flipped Classroom in English Vocabulary Class

Step 1: Before the class

The role of teacher is designers of flipped classroom content and pace who prepares videos. When teachers make pre-course teaching videos, they should design the course according to the syllabus, so as to highlight the key and difficult points of teaching. The teacher should be clear mind about the teaching objectives and the goals to be achieved by the students. Then, the micro videos about vocabularies are provided for the students and some mandatory pre-reading tasks for students are assigned by teacher.

The role of students is performers of flipped classroom who watches the video. They complete the learning content and assignment and online communication according to the requirements of teachers. The students are the real center in the classroom. If they have grasped the current content, they can watch the next macro video to gain more information about the contents. When faced with some problems, students can communicate with partners or discuss it with groups, and gain the feedback in real time.

Step 2: In the class

The role of teachers is the leaders of flipped classroom who give students the opportunity to ask questions about their vocabulary knowledge during the learning process of the study materials provided before the lesson. Then students can show their vocabulary success in the pronunciation, spelling and writing. Next, teacher makes a summary of the learning content in the macro videos and demonstrates the difficulties of common mistakes observed from the We-chant platform to the students. The next stage is collaborative learning which is a strategy for organizing student learning through groups or teams. Then, students need to share the learning experience and the joy and success of making works in class.

Step 3: After the class

The role of teacher is assistant of flipped classroom who coaches and communicates with students. At the end of the lesson, teachers should lead students in a summary analysis of the flipped classroom and assess the students’ learning objectively. Furthermore, teachers are supposed to provide timely feedback on students’ vocabulary learning, vocabulary practice of the unit. The teacher assigns the homework to students through we-chant platform. After finishing the homework, teacher are supposed to offer feedback through we-chant platform.

The role of students is feeder of information who provides feedback to the teacher on their learning and questions from the in-class inquiry. Self-evaluation and other evaluation of their own learning effectiveness and study group are important way to conduct teaching evaluations. By allowing students to reflect after class, they can recognize and clarify their problems and deficiencies in vocabulary learning, so that they can correct their errors timely.

6. Future Directions of Flipped Classroom in English Vocabulary Class

Firstly, using the rich form of micro-learning to reduce teachers’ teaching pressure. Middle school students are in a period of rapid intellectual development. The mastery of basic vocabulary and word formation will enable students to learn well in oral communication, reading comprehension, listening and writing. The most important is to focus on basic vocabulary. Of course, Teachers themselves need to be more qualified, have stronger curriculum organization skills and the ability to guide students to the right learning style.

Secondly, using the ubiquitous nature of the flipped classroom to increase students’ interest in learning. A vast of people deem that vocabulary learning is difficult in the process of English learning. In order to change the single teaching mode, teachers need to have strong teaching organization and innovation skills, which place high demands on individual teachers’ abilities. Only in this way can students achieve full knowledge and grasp of vocabulary.

Thirdly, using the flipped classroom as a vehicle to enhance students’ independent learning skills and mastery of language materials. During the flipped classroom, the conversion method is needed for students to establish a clear concept of word classes. Teacher explains root words and affixes clearly and clarifies the word’s word class. Of course, in order to achieve more direct and efficient learning, using the huge knowledge-carrying capacity of the flipped classroom, it is good to demonstrate the prefixes and suffixes of words.

7. Conclusion

Based on the model of flipped classroom, it enriches the teaching model in the context of MOOC, which information tech-

nology and education have deeply integrated, realizing the three stages of combining online and offline before, during and after class. ^[6]Flipped classroom as a new teaching mode is the irresistible trend of current curriculum reform. The flipped classroom promotes the reform of teaching. After a period of trial, the use of the flipped classroom teaching model in junior high school English vocabulary teaching has improved students' interest in learning English. ^[7]

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