Heterogeneous Cooperative Teaching Method in College English Teaching

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Abstract: Higher education institutions pay more attention to developing students' English communication skills and continuously improving their pragmatic skills in the process of English teaching, which is also an inevitable requirement of language teaching. Through group learning, students can be motivated to learn English, achieving better learning outcomes. This article explores heterogeneous cooperative teaching methods that are compatible with current university English teaching.

At present, many English teachers in universities regard improving students' English communication skills as their teaching goal. Therefore, students actively participate in English teaching and continuously use the English knowledge they have learned as an important component of English classroom teaching. In recent years, the teaching form of group activities has been increasingly applied in English classrooms in universities, and many English teachers have also made a lot of beneficial attempts[1]. In this article, measures are proposed to adapt to heterogeneous cooperative teaching in college English teaching, providing students with more opportunities to output English, in order to effectively improve their effective and fluent English communication activities.

1. Heterogeneous group composition

Introducing cooperative learning into English teaching in higher education institutions means scientifically dividing students with different levels of English learning into study groups and constructing an English learning environment that supports and promotes each other within the group. When building a group, we need to fully consider various factors such as size, choice, and composition. Generally, a four person group is the most basic form, mainly because: firstly, from the seat, it can be better organized, only two students need to turn around and sit face to face. Secondly, there are four people in the group, and two person activities can also be conducted to ensure better communication effectiveness and channels. Thirdly, considering the level of student participation and the responsibilities they bear, the smaller the number of students, the more advantageous their operations will be.

In order to ensure that each student in the group is heterogeneous, that is, they have different learning abilities, interests, gender, family, etc., we can use a random form to divide learning groups. The four person collaborative learning group will continue throughout the semester, providing students with more time and space to become familiar with each other, enabling the development of

collaborative skills and the cohesion of the group, and overcoming difficulties through cooperation. A study group with stable relationships over a long period of time can achieve an increase in both the quantity and quality of learning, ensuring high attendance rates and better enhancing students' learning attitudes. It is particularly suitable for application in large class teaching. Moreover, after the formation of the group, there are three ways to enhance cohesion and cooperation.

Firstly, group members select a name through consultation to represent their group identity.

Secondly, assign names to four group members, such as Carl, Ethan, Daniel, Norman, etc., to be chosen by both teachers and students. By assigning names, students can have a higher sense of identification, which is the key to combining individual responsibility in group activities.

Thirdly, due to the maximum capacity of students in the class space and the lack of experience in self-directed and cooperative learning, it is necessary to scientifically choose a team leader. The team leader not only has good organizational skills, but also can guide their own team members, which greatly helps to improve the efficiency and quality of group activities.

2. Adaptation technology

Collaborative learning is gradually implemented from three dimensions: complex structure, difficulty of tasks, and duration[2]. At the beginning, using the simple learning form of thinking sharing, there are three steps: first, students think within a given topic, then exchange their opinions within the group, and finally select a representative to share their group's opinions throughout the class. The technology used in this project consists of three parts: classroom presentation, structured discussion, and evaluation. In order to evaluate group activities, we can use the form of individual tests. Due to the limited time available for large class teaching, it is not suitable for corresponding teaching activities. Therefore, more attention should be paid to group evaluation and group activities.

2.1 Classroom presentation

The teacher's presentation in class is the foundation for conducting group activities and evaluations. By showcasing, one can learn about reading content, vocabulary, writing skills, grammar learning, and more. Through the form of whole class teaching, the teaching content is more concise than before, so many learning materials can be completed in groups. For example, group task: After more than 40 years of development through reform and opening up, China has undergone fundamental changes in multiple aspects. GDP has increased many times compared to 40 years ago, and technologies such as high-speed rail, 5G, aerospace, and infrastructure are at the forefront of the world. Students are asked to choose a dynamic example or describe in detail the revolutionary changes that have occurred in a certain aspect of China. To facilitate adding corresponding readings to students' reading materials.

While reading, the teacher could spare 10 to 15 minutes of a whole session time solving any misunderstandings, knowledge points that students may encounter during their studies. At the same time, we can reserve other clues for group work, such as the breakthrough in China's lunar exploration project and new measures for epidemic prevention. The members of the group consult and communicate with each other, and conduct in-depth reading and exploration to complete the learning task. At the same time, the classroom presentation also includes an introduction to collaborative group tasks. Distribute the group task list to each group. The worksheet includes tasks, requirements, and may also include phrases that are helpful for completing tasks and collaborating with groups. We can also provide corresponding scoring standards for students to evaluate themselves and each other, such as the infectiousness of classroom presentations, the richness of content, and the level of understanding of team members. Each group needs to provide detailed information on the worksheet, record the roles played and tasks completed in this class.

2.2 Structured group activities

The main goal of conducting group activities is to complete designated tasks, achieve more meaningful communication and exchange during this process, encourage students to convey their ideas, and place greater emphasis on fluent communication, not just accuracy.[3] Therefore, we can arrange group activities in this way. One is to require students to complete the task within the given time. Textbooks are the main source of our tasks, which can be 5-minute classroom activities or several weeks long group tasks, such as English speeches on the reasons and results of talent loss in developing countries. Students can explore the information in textbooks, collect materials after class, and discuss and analyze through group cooperation. During this process, a small amount of Chinese may appear, but the homework must be presented in English throughout. If necessary, the teacher needs to provide assistance. Secondly, display groups can be assigned random numbers to the members. Thirdly, the student with this number represents this group and conducts group activities throughout the class. This means that the actual performance and evaluation scores of this student represent the entire group. Fourthly, steps 2 and 3 can be repeated to achieve full coverage of all students in the group. Throughout the entire teaching cycle, both the group and students within the group have the opportunity to showcase themselves, and the sum of group member scores is the final score for the group. The reason for adopting this form is mainly because the probability of each student being selected in the group is the same but uncertain. Under this unknown premise, group members adhere to a responsible attitude towards the group and deeply learn the corresponding knowledge content. This form forces every student to actively participate in learning activities. Each student is a potential representative of the group, and their shortcomings can directly affect the overall score of the group. In such a situation, they must help each other. This activity relies more on mutual promotion and team awareness. This teaching method is more suitable for teachers who generally find it difficult to pay attention to the large class teaching format of each student. However, in this process, we should also be aware that in order to ensure the smooth operation of the activity, the previous stage can adopt the form of voluntary participation by students.

2.3 Group evaluation

Unlike relying solely on the teacher's evaluation to obtain the final grade, this evaluation method mainly involves the following four steps: firstly, based on the established standards in the worksheet given to the group, students within the group evaluate the presentation group[4]. Audience groups without displays will be evaluated for each display group, and a certain score will be obtained through negotiation, which will be filled out on the worksheet. Moreover, the presentation team showcases their own performance and conducts self-evaluation activities. The lowest score is C, and the highest is A plus. Secondly, the teacher points out the shortcomings and advantages of the presentation, and provides corresponding improvement measures to the students. After mutual evaluation and self-evaluation, the teacher provides feedback, otherwise it will affect the opinions of the students. In the later stage, other students in the group can be encouraged to actively comment on their peers' performance. Thirdly, after the selected group is presented, the teacher needs to retrieve the worksheet and can refer to the form of group mutual evaluation and self-evaluation to carry out grading work. Although evaluation and scoring are not the final outcome, effective measures must be taken to make students feel the value of their work. Fourthly, after the teacher conducts the grading, the grades should be posted on the bulletin board in the classroom. If there is no objection from the student, it is approved. If there is objection from the student, the teacher needs to provide a reasonable explanation or adjust the score. As a collaborative learning group, peer evaluation and self-evaluation within the group can enable students to reflect on their learning experiences, strengthen communication between students, and guide them to engage in deep thinking and learning. In this process, we need to build

an equal and democratic learning atmosphere and environment. As English teachers in higher education institutions, we need to pay attention to the fact that students take evaluations very seriously. In many cases, student evaluations are generally similar to those of teachers.

3. Course evaluation

Course evaluation should not only focus on group activities, but also on individual efforts. The final score of college English consists of two parts: the final score, which accounts for 70%, and the group score, which accounts for 30%. In order to give students equal opportunities for success, activities should be conducted fairly and impartially. We can innovate evaluation by adjusting grades based on the degree of student progress. For example, if a score is B plus and the group's score is B minus, then the group's score can be adjusted to B. The reason for this setting is mainly to stimulate students' competitive awareness, especially to compete with themselves. Teachers can also introduce reward points in group evaluations to better encourage students and guide them to participate. Reward points are mainly given to students who respond quickly to teacher questions or perform well in group presentations.

4. Conclusion

With the acceleration of internationalization, especially the irreversibility of globalization, English, as the most widely used language in the world, has attracted much attention. Many students are not only committed to improving their theoretical knowledge, but also to continuously improving their English communication skills. Therefore, as English teachers in higher education institutions, we should deeply analyze and think about how to better carry out English teaching activities, comprehensively improve students' English application level through effective measures, and achieve better pragmatic effects.

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