Construction of SPOC Blending Teaching Model of College English Course in Application-oriented Institute

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Abstract. Based on the concept of SPOC and blending learning theory, this paper aims to construct a “personalized” College English SPOC blending teaching model according to the requirements of the present college English teaching and curriculum reform in a certain Application-oriented Institute. It is supposed to reconstruct and prepare the teaching contents by making full use of the related internet teaching resources such as MOOC, fine-designed courses and so on.

Research Background

In order to overcome the shortcomings of MOOCs mode teaching, such as high cost investment (video-producing, network-knowledge designing, etc.), innovation of teaching and learning methods (new teaching and learning methods that are consistent with the content of the course and learners’ characteristics), non-standard certification of teaching quality (such as credit, degree certification) and so on, foreign researchers actively devote themselves to study and strive for a small and refined Teaching mode. Under that circumstances, Professor Armando Fox of the University of California at Berk (2013) pioneered the concept of SPOC (Small Private Online Course) and applied it to practical teaching. At present, foreign studies of SPOC mainly from the following two aspects: (1) the definition of elaboration: Anant Agarwal regards it as a branch of MOOC; Rolf Hoffman’s “SPOC = classroom + MOOC”, which shows that SPOC is a hybrid teaching mode integrating physical classroom and online education; and (2) the exploring practice of teaching mode: For example, Harvard University and Colorado State University design one teaching model according to the needs of applicants. Teachers select a certain scale of learners from applicants to participate in the SPOC practice of the course, while UC Berkeley and MIT adopt the blended learning model which combines physical classroom and online learning, etc. Various practical studies show that the hybrid SPOC teaching mode based on classroom teaching and online teaching is more popular in Colleges and universities, so the SPOC Blending Teaching Model mentioned in this paper also refers to this hybrid teaching mode.

Domestic research on SPOC began in 2013. Previous studies mainly focused on the analysis of the connotation of SPOC, such as Kang Yeqin (2014), Chen Ran and Yang Cheng (2015). Following that, they began to explore the teaching mode of SPOC. For example, Tsinghua University, Zhejiang University, Tianjin University and other universities adopted the blended learning mode which combines physical classroom and online learning to some courses, putting SPOC teaching model into practice. Since the latter half of 2015, more and more universities and researchers have begun to pay attention to this flexible, free and practical mode of online and offline integration. However, most of them paid attention to the application of SPOC in science and engineering courses, and seldom apply it to college English teaching in Applied Undergraduate colleges.

From what mentioned about, we can see that the research at home and abroad mainly focuses on two aspects: on the one hand, the introduction of the theory of SPOC hybrid teaching; on the other hand, the application practice of University Science and engineering courses supported by the platform of large data teaching resources. At present, there is little research on the application of curriculum in Local Applied Undergraduate Colleges and universities without the support of big data teaching resources platform, especially on the exploration and practice of College English
course. As for how to apply this model to college English teaching, how to adapt to the educational environment of Applied Undergraduate Colleges and universities, what details should we care about when carrying out SPOC model to teach College English courses in Applied Undergraduate Colleges and universities, and how to verify the effectiveness of this model to different teaching objectives, there is much room for research.

Teaching APP

Moso Teach Class is a teaching assistant APP with mobile terminal launched by Moso Teach Technology. It can use mobile intelligent devices to carry out classroom activities in and out of the mobile network environment. Based on the class space created by teachers in the cloud, the platform provides students with course subscription, message push, homework, courseware, video and information services on mobile devices (Holina, 2016).

It mainly includes the following five aspects: (1) Introduction about the Class: including the invitation code, learning requirements, learning progress, examination arrangements and so on; (2) Student Performance in Moso Teach Class: Teachers can not only understand each student's learning progress, homework completion status and the corresponding experience value obtained by completing the assignments in Moso Teach Class, but also can set a sign-in sign to let students sign in to class in order to obtain the statistics of each student's attendance in class; (3) teaching resources: teachers upload various learning materials for the class, including courseware, videos, etc.; (4) class activities including tests, questions/discussions, brainstorming and voting/questionnaires, which can be completed after class or set up as classroom activities; (5) notification module: teachers can post the information about courses in this platform by accessing to certain aspect in this module.

In fact, nowadays, with the widespread use of smartphones, there are many mobile cloud platforms that can carry out the flip teaching, such as Superstar, Netease, Wechat and so on. Moso Teach Class is not only free for teachers and students, but also easy to operate. It is not limited by time and place. The most important thing is to help teachers supervise students’ learning behavior, learning results and collect statistics related to teaching data, so it has been widely promoted among teachers and students.

SPOC Teaching Practice of Applied College English Based on Moso Teach Class

Theoretical Basis

In April 2015, the Ministry of Education issued the “Suggestions on Strengthening the Application and Management of Online Open Course Construction in Colleges and Universities”. It pointed out that colleges and universities can choose suitable learning platforms and small-scale proprietary online course platforms according to their needs to carry out the construction and application of online open courses so as to provide individualized and comprehensive services for college teachers, students and social learners. The Application-oriented Undergraduate Colleges and universities are different from other types of colleges and universities because of their different sources of students and training objectives. The "S" in SPOC refers specifically to small-scale and individualization, so this study believes that the SPOC model can meet the individualized needs of Applied Undergraduate Colleges and universities.

On the other hand, Blended Learning, in a broad sense, refers to a new teaching form that combines online learning with traditional classroom teaching with the support of new information technology. This new teaching method combines the advantages of traditional teaching and digital learning in the teaching theory of constructivism, behaviorism and cognitivism, and advocates that teachers play a leading role in the whole teaching process. Students, as learning subjects, complete the learning tasks assigned by teachers through self-learning and collaborative learning. From the definition, it can be seen that the combination of advantages of network teaching and classroom learning is the biggest characteristic of mixed teaching. Zheng Yunxiang (2015, 04) believes that
Wang Zhuli’s new constructivism theory provides a new vision for college students’ personalized learning. In personalized learning, learners can choose the learning resources according to their interests and needs according to their own learning progress. From this, we can see that SPOC hybrid teaching mode embodies two concepts of blended learning and personalized learning of new constructivism. Therefore, during the period from September 2016 to July 2017, this study carried out the SPOC mixed mode experiment teaching of College English curriculum with the help of the Moso Teach Class.

Teaching Practice

After choosing the teaching model and the supporting platform, we will focus on what to teach and how to teach. Based on the idea of SPOC blended teaching, this paper will carry out practical teaching of case course “College English” according to what to teach (that is, teaching content) and how to teach (that is, teaching design and teaching implementation).

Teaching Content. The screening of teaching content is to identify and define the needs of learning. Based on the questionnaires on the English learning status of the students of Grade 2012 and 2014, it is found that the most eager and difficult thing for students to learn is their communicative competence. In addition, the real society and working environment require future graduates to attach great importance to students’ English application ability. Therefore, this study reconstructs the teaching content and adds communicative English to the original teaching materials, such as communicative English and situational English that students might need to express themselves both in real life and the future workplace. What’s more, under the influence of the concept of green development, in order to save costs, this study made full use of network resources by downloading some micro-videos related to English from other teaching websites as pre-class learning materials to upload to the Moso Teach Class.

Teaching Design. Since SPOC is an online and offline integration model of teaching, the teaching design will also focus on both online and offline aspects. Online teaching is divided into pre-class and post-class modules. Pre-class on-line teaching content mainly refers to a series of setting tasks assigned by teacher according to the what students need. Students should complete online learning and related homework exercises before class. Post-calse on-line refers to the
corresponding questions and exercises selected by teachers according to the relevant knowledge points required by teaching objectives to consolidate the learning content. Off-line teaching mainly refers to a knowledge-assimilated process by teachers’ explanation and students’ performance in class. However, the design of all online and offline teaching activities are inseparable from the preparatory works. Therefore, the specific implementation of teaching is based on the two stages of online and offline and the four modules shown in Fig. 1. (Fig. 1)

**Teaching Implementation.** This paper is going to take a topic *Asking for And Giving Directions* as an example to present the specific teaching implementation process as shown below.

1. **Pre-preparation stage:** based on the data collected from internet, teachers should pick out the most frequently used vocabulary, useful expressions, sentence patterns, situational videos and English maps of our institute related to the topic of *Asking for And Giving Directions*, which should be uploaded to the Moso Teach classes. Teachers should also design some pre-class self-learning sheet for students based on the collected pre-class teaching materials.

2. **Pre-class online learning:** students should make full use of their spare time to complete pre-class tasks independently according to the self-learning task list before class.

3. **Classroom activities:** teachers make efforts to encourage students to actively participate in language practice activities by adopting the vocabulary contests, situational responses, video dubbing, role playing, brainstorming and other activities. Details are shown in below Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Form of Activity</th>
<th>Presenting Way</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Vocabulary contests</td>
<td>PPT Show Pictures ; Students race to answer</td>
<td>Individual or group activities</td>
<td>Related vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Situational responses</td>
<td>PPT Show Pictures ; Students race to answer</td>
<td>Individual or group activities</td>
<td>Sentence patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Video dubbing</td>
<td>Students dubbing</td>
<td>Group activities</td>
<td>Oral Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Role playing</td>
<td>Showing the campus map in English</td>
<td>Group activities</td>
<td>Oral Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Brainstorming</td>
<td>Showing the city map in English (blanking-filling)</td>
<td>Teacher-student interaction</td>
<td>Daily communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Recognizing words by Listening</td>
<td>Playing tracks</td>
<td>Individual or group activities</td>
<td>Listening practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **On-line activities after class:** Teachers set relevant tasks to reinforce students’ mastery of what they have learned according to their performance in class.

**Summary**

Through one year’s practice of SPOC blended teaching, we can make a conclusion that the SPOC teaching mode reflects the current “green development” concept by restructuring excellent network resources. At the same time, it also makes up for the lack of interaction between teachers and students in MOOC classroom by combining off-line classroom teaching, thus advantageously promoting the convergence of on-line and off-line teaching. In addition, the blended SPOC teaching model based on the Moso Teach Class APP being free for both teachers and students provides an opportunity for those Application-oriented Undergraduate Colleges and universities without big data teaching platform to save the cost of network construction. What’s more, the E-generation students can quickly and happily accept the blended teaching model based on mobile terminal, which improves their interest in English learning, thus promoting their autonomous learning ability and improving their comprehensive English application ability.

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References


