Advocating Cooperative Learning and Creating Efficient English Class in Higher Vocational Colleges

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Abstract. Cooperative learning, as a new teaching theory and strategy system, plays an important guiding role in English teaching in higher vocational colleges. According to the characteristic of higher vocational education and higher vocational English teaching present situation, proposed to create effective classroom teaching mode: reasonable grouping—setting goals—a difficult point lecturing—group discussion—group report—group evaluation. A great deal of research and practice proves that advocating cooperative learning is the demand of society and the call of the Times.

Introduction

Nowadays the society is a highly competitive society that attaches great importance to cooperation. Cooperative Learning started in the United States in the early 1970s, and made substantial progress from the mid 1970s to the mid 1980s. Cooperative learning can improve classroom atmosphere, improve students’ grades, and help the students form a good non-cognitive quality. It has been praised as "one of the most important and successful teaching reform in the recent more than ten years." Cooperative learning can help students to cultivate the ability of access to information, and is good for students to form and develop their self-awareness. In cooperative learning, students interactive, share information, and at the same time they love and help each other and have emotional communication.

The creator of Learning Together (LT) ---the Johnson brothers (Johnson, D.W. & Johnson, R.T.) in the Cooperative Learning Center of the university of Minnesota in the United States believes "Cooperative learning is a kind of learning style to apply team in the teaching, to make the students participate in learning activities together, and to promote their own as well as others’ learning." Different scholars have different opinions on the basic characteristics of cooperative learning. The most influential opinions are the three elements of Slaven and the Johnson brothers’ (Johnson, D.W. & Johnson, R.T.) five elements. Slaven believes that the basic features of cooperative learning include group rewards, personal responsibility and equal opportunities for success. The Johnson brothers believe that the basic features of cooperative learning include positive interaction, face-to-face promotion, personal responsibility, interpersonal and group skills, and group reflection. The Johnson brothers’ definition is more comprehensive, more explicit, and closer to the substance of cooperative learning. Positive and personal responsibilities are the core elements, interpersonal and group skills are essential elements, and group reflection is the promotion element.

Features of Higher Vocational Colleges Education

In order to adapt to the rapid development of social needs, the higher vocational college education has attracted people’s attention since the 1990s. China’s the higher vocational college education has entered a new stage of development since then. In recent years, the higher vocational college education scale is expanding, the development of the college is becoming more and more mature. Compared with Secondary vocational education and normal higher education, the higher vocational education has its inherent characteristics.
1. The fundamental goal is to cultivate professional talents who adapt to the first line demand of production, construction, management and service.

2. Construct classroom and teaching content system with "application" as the main idea and feature.

3. The basic approach of talent cultivation is combining the school with the employing department, combining the teachers and students with the actual operation, and combining theory with practice.

Current Situation of Higher Vocational English Teaching

The goal of higher vocational college English teaching is to cultivate students in the future work needed in the process of English application ability, at the same time of good language foundation, the key to improve listening, speaking, writing and other application ability, especially the English communication ability in the process of work. However, there are still some problems and imperfections in English teaching in higher vocational colleges.

Higher Vocational English Teaching Objects

The college entrance examination admission scores of admitted students of higher vocational colleges are lower. The entrance basic situation is: the pronunciation is not accurate, can not remember words according to the phonetic symbols to, the vocabulary is very limited, can’t understand, don’t say, dare not say. Dumb English. They are lack of grammatical knowledge, confusion of concepts, lack of comprehension of long sentences, and analysis of the relationship between them, so their reading and writing abilities are poor.

Teaching Methods

The class structure has been used in the class teaching system since the J.A. Comenius (1592-1670). The superiority of the whole class teaching pattern is not to be said, but its inherent shortcomings have been repeatedly criticized, and many innovative measures are coming. The development of science and technology, for example, radio, television, computer and multimedia technology, network technology is widely used in classroom teaching which can enrich the teaching content and atmosphere, improve the students’ interest in learning. However, influenced by traditional teaching concept for a long time, some teachers have some misconceptions about the training objectives and quality of education in vocational colleges. They can’t understand the important role and significance of advanced teaching methods in teaching quality. Therefore, they can’t actively change the teaching concept, are still lack of the residue and innovation consciousness, also lack of the teaching method and the teaching means of innovation.

Optimizing Classroom Teaching Mode and Creating Efficient Classroom

According to the basic characteristics of cooperative learning, teachers can adopt the following teaching mode: reasonable grouping—setting goals—a difficult point lecturing—group discussion, group report—group evaluation.

Reasonable Grouping

Generally speaking, the English cooperative learning group is composed of 3 ~ 5 people. Before the implementation of cooperative learning, teachers should guide students to be independent in grouping, as far as possible make members in character, interest, orientation, personality characteristics, etc, differently to keep reasonable, highlight the heterogeneity of it.

Setting Goals

Seneca, the ancient Roman philosopher, once said, "when you don’t know which port you’re going to, the wind blows against you." The same is true of teaching. To plan a class, you have to know what you want to accomplish when the lesson is completed. The goal of the group is to pursue students’ recognition of collective achievements, which can help to indicate the direction of
cooperative learning. In general, the teaching objectives should be raised from both macro and micro goals. The macro objective is to make students connect methods, content and curriculum structure with the meaning in social reality, not limited to learning content. The micro goal is to reproduce the content of the course. Specifically, teaching objectives can be divided into: knowledge target, ability target, method goal, moral education goal.

Teaching Difficult Points

As the guide, the teacher should deal with the heavy and difficult language of the speech, avoid all aspects of the speech, emphasize practice. The teaching time should be controlled within 15 minutes.

Group Discussion

After the problem was set up, the teacher asked the students to discuss it in group form. Teachers should encourage students to collaborate on the basis of individual learning and thinking. Without independent thinking and their own thoughts and understanding, students can only become spectators or listeners in cooperative learning.

Group Report

After the panel discussion, each group selected a central spokesperson to report the results of the discussion to the class.

Group Evaluation

The group evaluation should be different from the traditional end-of-term assessment (final, final exam). In the group evaluation, the group should be graded on the principle of encouragement. The team score was the average score for each group member [7]. The aim is to remove the intangible difference between the students who are introverted and the students with good grades and extroverts, so as to explore their potential to learn English. Only scientific and reasonable evaluation can guide and promote the effective development of group cooperative learning activities. In addition to the number of activities and the number of participants, the assessment of the group’s cooperative learning should include the following:

1) evaluation of knowledge objectives. Due to the large difference in the knowledge base of the group members, it cannot be absolutely required to pass the course examination or achieve excellent results. It is important to inspect each member of the team and see if he or she has made progress and improved his performance.

2) evaluation of capability objectives. Cooperative learning requires students not only to have the ability to think independently, but also to have the ability to communicate and express themselves. Thinking ability can be divided into divergent thinking and convergent thinking, Specific image thinking and abstract thinking. As for social skills such as expression ability, teachers can evaluate from the aspects of coherence, generality, integrity, and organization, etc.

3) evaluation of emotional goals. The evaluation of emotional goals includes students’ learning attitude, learning interest, personality and other aspects. Attitudes and interests are closely related, and they interact and constrain each other.

Set a target of emotional evaluation, help teachers create conditions conducive to creative thinking activities for the students and, to help teachers in the diagnosis of students’ learning difficulties, for the implementation of cooperative learning provides favorable conditions.

Conclusions

This paper introduces the advanced foreign theory of cooperative learning in college English teaching. Numerous studies show that cooperative learning in higher vocational English is consistent with the progress of era and social development. From the practice history of human education, the organizational form of teaching has passed the long development path from individual teaching to class teaching, and then there are many innovations and modifications to the class teaching.
Cooperative learning is not a simple group teaching and group discussion, nor is it a teacher’s lecture in class teaching and a student representative. In the teaching theory of cooperative learning, life attitude is the content. We want students to see cooperation as values. As a cooperative learning of values, it pays attention to the cultivation of students’ cooperative quality and the cultivation of cooperative spirit. It means that we through the change of teaching methods, students are encouraged to put in the same boat as their own efforts to target, means that we require students to a collaborator to analysis, observation, it also means we hope our students in the face of the choice of "cooperation" or "go it alone", can choose more cooperation. People since ancient times is a social animal, the ultimate goal of school education is to cultivate people for the society, to ensure that every student can naturally fit into society, become a qualified citizen in society after graduation.

References