

A Study on Effective Teaching in English Classes of High School

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Abstract:

With the implementation and advancement of the new curriculum reform, more and more scholars and teachers begin to study effective teaching in English of high school. And they have also done a lot of researches on how to improve the efficiency of effective teaching in English of high school. However, English teaching still has ineffective or inefficient problems. In response to the above problems, this paper aims to provide some suggestions for effective teaching in English classes of high school by analyzing and studying the teaching status of English in high school.

Key words: English classes of high school; effective teaching; study

1. Introduction

The concept of effective teaching originated from western scientific teaching movement in 20th century. After the movement of effective teaching improvement influenced by American pragmatism philosophy and behavioral psychology, it attracted attention of scholars all over the world. Before the 20th century, the dominant teaching concept of western education theory is "Teaching is an art". Since the 20th century, however, with the influence of scientific thought and psychology, especially the development of behavioral science, people realized that teaching is also a kind of science. Teaching has not only a scientific basis, but also it can use scientific method to study. As a result, people began to pay close attention to the theoretical basis of teaching's philosophy, psychology and sociology. They were also concentrated on how to use the method of observation, experiment and other scientific methods to study the teaching problems. Effective teaching is proposed under this background.

The core of effective teaching is the teaching efficiency, namely, what kind of teaching is effective? Is efficient, inefficient or ineffective? The so-called "effective" mainly refers to the specific progress or development of students obtained after a period of teaching by teachers. The teaching is effective or not does not mean that the teacher has to finish teaching content or treat it seriously. It means what students have learned or how they have learned. If students don't want to learn or they have gained nothing after learning, even if teachers teach harder and harder, it is still ineffective teaching. Similarly, if students learn very hard, but they haven't gotten properly developed, it is also invalid or ineffective teaching. Therefore, whether students have development or not is the only indicators of effective teaching.

The overseas studies on effective teaching mainly focused on the evaluation standards, teaching strategies other aspects of effective teaching. Stephanie S.D. put forward five evaluation criteria for effective teaching. Namely, teachers and students participate in teaching activities together to promote learning; developing students' language and improving the quality of them through curriculum development; making learning more meaningful by combining classroom learning with real life; developing students' cognitive skills by letting them take part in challenging activities; implementing dialogue teaching. He pointed out that those five evaluation criteria correctly describe teachers' behavior to help students learn effectively. Gagne thought that effective teaching strategies include two kinds: the first one is teaching management strategies; the second one is teaching instructional strategies. The content of teaching management strategies include: teaching activities should be organized properly and teaching routines should be followed. The content of teaching instructional strategies include: clear teaching objectives, timely and effective feedback and review and consolidate the necessary knowledge. He believed that the differences between effectiveness of teaching reflect the differences between management and instructional strategies. Teaching management strategies allow students to contact teaching materials, and it can keep for a long period of time. The teaching instructional strategies can simplify learning materials. In addition, he proposed the issue of "teaching dynamics". He thought that teachers who gain better effectiveness in teaching not only have good teaching management and instructional strategies, but also organize and use those strategies very well.

The domestic researches on effective teaching mainly focused on the principles, strategies and other aspects of effective teaching. He Shanliang pointed out that the fundamental principle of effective teaching is the principle of subjectivity. He thought that the basic premise of effective teaching is to enhance students' subject consciousness, the inner basis of effective teaching is to grasp the subjective development mechanism, and the practical path of effective teaching is to give full play to the subjectivity of students. Under the perspective of objectivism, Qiu Ting and Zhong Zhixian put forward 21 effective teaching principles in detail. Tan Wei advocated that self-regulation, cooperative inquiry, building eco-classroom, effective use of media networks and other strategies should be used in English teaching. Yu Yuelin proposed that four effective teaching strategies should be applied to teaching middle school English. The first strategy is to stimulate learning motivation, which is the standpoint of effective teaching. The second strategy is to change the way of learning, which is the breaking point of effective teaching. The third strategy is to enrich the content of classroom teaching, which is the effective point of effective teaching. The fourth strategy is dedicated to "the zone of proximal development", which is the growing point of effective teaching.

In 2001, the compulsory curriculum reform has entered the experimental stage; the high school curriculum reform has begun. In 2003, "the ordinary high school English curriculum standards

(experiment)" (hereinafter referred to as the "standard") was published, and entered the trial phase from September 2004. The implementation of the new curriculum reform proposed new requirement for high school English classroom teaching, namely, effective teaching.

2. The Definition and Characteristics of Effective Teaching

2.1 The Definition of Effective Teaching

As to the definition of effective teaching, the academic circle has not yet formed a unified view. According to the comprehensive view of scholars both at home and abroad, the definition of effective teaching include two categories. One of the definitions is to examine effective teaching through the relationship between teaching inputs (or teaching consumed) and teaching outputs (or teaching income). This kind of definition mainly include the following ideas: effective teaching method is efficient teaching; effective teaching refers that it can bring the best teaching effect with certain teaching inputs (time, energy, effort); effective teaching refers that teachers follow the objective laws of teaching activities, with minimal time, effort and resources invested, to obtain teaching effectiveness as much as possible, achieve specific educational objectives and meet the educational value of social and personal needs. Another kind of definition is based on the students' learning as a starting point. This kind of definition mainly include the following ideas: promoting students' effective learning and the goal of teaching is to enable students to learn well; the teaching purposes are successfully implemented, the students are willing to learn and students are able to engage in learning after teaching. These two types of definitions both have shortcomings. The first type of definition lack of attention to the teaching behavior in the teaching process; the second type of definition concerns the teaching behavior, but it ignores the teaching process. In this article, the author agree with Yao Limin's point of view, namely, the connotation of effective teaching should be closely linked to those two concepts : "efficient" and "teaching". From the perspective of the connotation of "teaching", effective teaching refers to the effectiveness of the teaching process. The effectiveness of the teaching process refers that teaching should conform to teaching laws. From the perspective of the connotation of "effective", effective teaching shows that teaching should be effective, cost-effective and efficient. Effective teaching means students progress and development after teachers' teaching. Cost-effective teaching refers that the results of teaching activities and teaching objectives, teaching objectives and specific social and educational needs of individuals are consistent. Efficient teaching refers that certain teaching input can produce teaching achievements as much as possible.

2.2 The Characteristics of Effective Teaching

The characteristics of effective teaching refer to the distinctive signs of effective teaching, namely, the signs that effective teaching distinguished from inefficient or ineffective teaching.

2.2.1 It Has Clear Teaching Objectives

Bloom said that good teaching begins with clear objectives. To inspect the effectiveness of the classroom teaching, the teaching objectives should be cleared before the implementation of teaching; otherwise, all the inspection does not make any sense. So, clear teaching objectives are the premises of effective teaching. Teaching objectives are the soul of teacher professional activities, the direction of each class, and they are

the direct bases to define whether the teaching is effective or not. Teaching objective is not aim. For example, "cultivating students' noble sentiment", "improving students' writing skills" are not standardized statements of objectives, as these statements can not be compared and evaluated. Professor Cui Yunhuo proposed that standard teaching objectives have some requirements: students as the main body in the behavior; the behavior can be measured, evaluated and it is specific and clear; the conditions of behavior refer to the specific restrictions or scopes that affect students' learning outcomes; the basis to provide reference for evaluating is the minimum standards of performance that students expected to reach after learning; after the study on the original cognitive conditions, emotional attitude of students and curriculum standards, the intent of textbook writers and students' needs, teachers then can determine the teaching objectives.

2.2.2 It Can Promote Students' Effective Learning

To promote students' learning refers that teaching should focus on the needs of students and organize and implement teaching around them. Students are the main body of learning. The function of teaching reflects mainly from students' progress and development. Therefore, effective teaching should promote students' effective learning. Constructivism teaching view holds that students learn by actively building new knowledge, rather than just passively accept or copy the knowledge gained from teachers or textbooks. Thus, Teaching should arouse the enthusiasm of students to develop their initiative, their participation and commitment to learn.

2.2.3 The Relationship between Teachers and Students Is Harmonious

The theory of modern relationship between teachers and students suggests that teacher-student relationship is an important prerequisite for teaching activities and it is an important factor in the effect of teaching. Moreover, the status of teacher-student relationship directly affects the classroom atmosphere, the enthusiasm of teachers' teaching and students' learning, and finally it will affect the effectiveness of teaching. In the teaching, teachers care, love, trust, and respect students, and communicate effectively with students. They establish close friendships with students and form a harmonious relationship, and thus improve the effectiveness of teaching. Teachers who teach effectively are good at using verbal and non-verbal signals to effectively convey teaching information, show love, praise, affection, friendship, and trust, etc. In this way, it not only achieves the purpose of teaching, but also contributes to the formation of harmonious teacher-student relationship.

2.2.4 It Can Motivate Students

Motivating students refers that teaching has caused the students' interest in learning, stimulated their motivation to learn, and promoted their active participation in teaching. Only under those following conditions, namely, students are interested in learning, students have desire and motivation to learn and they are initiative into it, learning can achieve good results. Only stimulating students' motivation, arousing their enthusiasm, teaching can make them actively engaged in learning, and learn better. Therefore, the characteristic of effective teaching is to motivate students. A lot of researches and teaching practices have proved that learning motivation is one of the important factors that affect students' learning effect. If teaching can stimulate students' motivation, the students' academic performance can be improved.

3. The Current Teaching Status of English Class of High School

3.1 The Understanding of Teaching Methods Is Superficial and Teaching Efficiency Is Low

Some teachers believe that only by adopting new teaching methods, the new curriculum can be reflected. They think the use of 3 P teaching method and five-step teaching method are all outdated, so the traditional teaching methods can not be used any more. So, regardless of the right fit, they blindly apply the so-called modern foreign language teaching methods into class. For example, English new curriculum advocates that the task-based teaching method should be adopted. Even though some teachers only change the name of all the activities in the classroom teaching, they regard them as task settings. It lacks of hierarchy and relationship between tasks and tasks, and it hasn't given clear instructions and requirements for students to complete tasks, making the task activities become a mere formality. The result is that students spend a lot of time in learning, but the actual fact is inefficient, or even negative efficient.

3.2 It Lacks of Interactive Teaching

Teachers or students have become the main body of the classroom, and there is no interaction with each other. In some classes, teachers rattle all the way, regardless of the reaction and acceptance ability of students, just to complete the teaching tasks. Thus, they always feel "finish it firstly, repeat it if not understand". This has caused a kind of situation that students passively accept in class, and teachers do not extend the curriculum and use vivid examples to explain grammatical problems that students are difficult to understand, but require students to memorize them rigidly. Some teachers give the class to students, make an arrangement for them and let them learn by themselves. Although students get freedom in this kind of teaching, the teaching effect is not obvious.

3.3 The One-side Classroom Teaching Evaluation

Teaching evaluation is an important component of effective teaching. Scientific evaluation system is an important guarantee to achieve the course objectives. The content of traditional evaluation is one-sided. It relies mainly on the English subject knowledge and exam skills, but pays little attention to learning processes and methods, psychological quality, values, and overall quality of the evaluation. Students are the main parts of evaluation activities. But in the context of the new curriculum, they ignore the main body of students in the classroom; teachers still control the whole class. Most of the students just carefully take notes, there is little opportunity for them to interact with teachers or speak, so the teaching process seems boring and dull.

4. Some Suggestions for English Teaching of High School

4.1 Teachers should update teaching concepts, improve teaching methods

Under the background of English curriculum, people advocate quality-oriented education. Quality-oriented education is a kind of education that aims at improving people's quality, which focuses on the development of students' comprehensive ability, the overall quality of students, and it advocates that students' innovation ability and participation awareness should be improved in the teaching process. Therefore, teachers should change their teaching ideas, changing the past exam-oriented education into quality education; improving teaching methods to guide students to learn, so that they can develop students'

good study habits, and thereby improve students' comprehensive ability to use language.

4.2 Teachers Should Establish a Harmonious Relationship between Teachers and Students to Achieve Interactive Teaching Mode

Harmonious teacher-student relationship is the prerequisite to improve the efficiency of the English class. Harmonious teacher-student relationship can inspire students to identify the words and deeds of the teacher, make students feel relaxed in class and show a willingness to meet the wishes of the teacher's teaching, and thus the effective learning environment is created. Teachers should develop students' own expertise; protect their self-esteem and creativity on the basis of the differences of students' physical and mental development. Teachers should understand students' inner world and their interests, hobbies, concerning and caring for students at any time and place. In language practice, teachers should use encouraging language and gestures, respect students' self-esteem, and eliminate insecurity factors in class, making students have a sense of closeness to teachers and feel secure. Thus, students can participate in teaching activities boldly and actively, enjoy learning, and make teachers become their mentor.

4.3 Teachers Should Pay Attention to the Diversity and Effectiveness of Evaluation

In order to improve the effectiveness of classroom assessment, teachers should choose accurate evaluation languages; meanwhile, they should pay attention to the diversity and effectiveness of evaluation languages. The new curriculum points out that teachers should focus on process evaluation, and give priority to formative evaluation in the process of English teaching. The formative assessment is to evaluate students' daily performance, progress and emotions, attitudes and strategies reflected in the process of daily learning. Compared with summative evaluation, formative evaluation is more conducive to the development of students, and it can diagnose and promote students' learning. Therefore, teachers should focus on formative assessment, pay attention to the art of evaluation. Besides, teachers should be adept at using tone, eye contact, body language and other means to give timely evaluation to students when they are learning. In addition to the good performance of learning, teachers should give timely recognition and praise to students who demonstrate good ideological and moral quality so as to improve the ideological content in language teaching. For different levels of students, teachers should have different evaluation criteria, they should treat those students differently in the evaluation process, so as to stimulate the enthusiasm of students at different levels, and promote the development of their thinking. Undoubtedly, appropriate and effective assessment is the catalyst for effective classroom.

5. Conclusion

In short, English teaching reform in high school is a long-term project, which requires teachers explore, reflect and summarize in their daily work. So, in the process of English teaching in high school, teachers should start from the reality of students, changing the situation that classroom teaching activities only concerned with teachers' "teaching" into the situation that teaching not only pay attention to teachers' "teaching", but also pay more attention to students' "learning". Thus, teachers can reach the target of improving the efficiency of classroom teaching.

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