

Reform on Process Evaluation in Basic English and Study on Its Utility

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Keywords: Process evaluation, Principles of scientific management, Comprehensive, Scientific, Standard, Utility

Abstract: The traditional and experiential process evaluation failed to reflect students' studying quality and urge them to study harder. The mal-function of traditional and experiential process evaluation mechanism triggers the reform. Basic English, as a fundamental stem course, should carry out a scientific process evaluation mechanism in order to cultivate students' academic core competence. Based on Taylor's Principles of Scientific Management and three rounds of reforms, the new scientific process evaluation mechanism holds three criteria: be comprehensive, be scientific and be standard. In the reform of replacing experiential evaluation, the new scientific mechanism has shown great and striking utility.

1. Introduction

The acquisition of a language is a progressive process. The evaluation is an indispensable part of English teaching and learning and should penetrate in all the stages. With the evaluation, we can learn about the implementation of the course, assess studying level and quality of students' as well as get to know their achievements, problems and needs in order to make some pertaining adjustment. Accordingly, its appraisal and adapting function can be exercised. The evaluation itself is an educative interaction between students and teachers. With the evaluation, teachers encourage students to make more achievements, give them suggestions to overcome shortcomings so as to ensure the realization of the teaching goal and consolidate educative function.

2. Background of the New Process Evaluation Mechanism

Specialty Catalog and Introduction of Undergraduate Course of Common Colleges and Universities (2012) states: English Major aims at cultivating inter-disciplinary talents with solid English basic knowledge and abundant cultural knowledge who can skillfully use English to translate, teach, manage and study etc. in departments of foreign affairs, education, financial trade, culture, technology¹. It is obvious that solid English basic knowledge, the academic core competence of English majors, should be put at the first place

Many teachers, employers and even students themselves think lots of English majors has a poor command of English basic knowledge, with the striking problems of weak listening ability, non-standard pronunciation, clumsy oral English, fragmented grammar knowledge and flawed writing skills.

The reality that English majors lack solid basic English knowledge and their academic core competence should be improved shows that the conventional progressive evaluation mechanism fails to exercise its function to adjust and consolidate. It is an urgent need to develop a new, scientific and effective mechanism.

Some teachers did not make timely and detailed record about students' studying attitude and studying performance. Other teachers generalized all the students at the same level, with their score ranging from 95-99 which just differed slightly. The gap is the scores did not reflect students' real difference in their studying attitude and studying performance. Some teachers even failed to match the score with the respective student. In all, the conventional process evaluation was quite

¹ Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, PRC, 2012

superficial.

Some teachers did make some records about students' performance which were either too rough or neglected when students were evaluated. When teachers evaluated students, scores were mainly based on teachers' subjective impression, which was doomed not to be objective.

Because teachers did not evaluate students in the objective way, some students thought whether they studied very hard all the time or not would lead to a mere-a-few-point gap which could be ignored after the final calculation and which was definitely unnecessary. It was vital only to have a good final review. As a result, students took no notice of the importance of the studying process and the process evaluation became futile. Consequently, it is an urgent need to develop a new, scientific and effective mechanism.

Frederick Winslow Taylor was a famous American management specialist, the founder of scientific management. Taylor thought the essential goal of Scientific Management was to seek the highest productivity of labor. In order to achieve the goal, the important measure was to substitute the experiential management with scientific management.² The influence of his theory has been lasting until today and his theory was the root of modern management theory.

The "process" of process evaluation is radically different from the "result". Process evaluation is distinctly oriented, focusing on the process achievement of developing students' intelligence in teaching and learning, duly judging students' studying quality, praising their achievements and finding their problems. The function mainly lies in reflecting students' performance and driving them to summarize and introspect.

The writer thinks process evaluation aims at better introspection and summarization. Scientific process evaluation mechanism aims at seeking the highest efficiency of teaching and learning. In order to achieve this, the important measure was to substitute the experiential evaluation mechanism with scientific and standard evaluation mechanism. The New Mechanism has the theoretical base on the Principles of Scientific Management.

The writer has been teaching Basic English for years. Three rounds of reforms had been carried out in Grade 2013, Grade 2014 and Grade 2016, with different measures and effects. The several reforms also provided practical support for the formation of the new process evaluation mechanism.

3. Structure and Essence of the New Process Evaluation Mechanism

In the first and second years of English majors, the focus is on fundamental English ability. In the third and fourth years, the focus will shift to some business, education and translation courses. So it is crucial to cultivate English fundamental ability in the first two years. The first two years realized the transformation from high school English to advanced English. In the first two years, students have basic English for the longest term with the most periods each week. Basic English, as the stem course in the first two years, is like a necklace to join listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation together.

The attendance is to check whether students attend classes on time, which is the basic requirement. Its percentage is not high, as low as 10%, and focuses on the studying attitude.

Note-taking(10%) and passage dictation(10%) require students to listen and take down the notes. While there is no fixed standard for note-taking and it is rather subjective, there is a fixed standard for passage dictation and it is quite objective. Students have to take down words and phrases in note-taking, which is quite basic. Students have to take down the whole sentence and even the whole passage in passage dictation, which is rather comprehensive and challenging.

Sentence translation(10%) focuses on translation ability, also subjective and comprehensive.

Text presentation(10%) asks students to give a lecture about the selected texts, which asks them to understand at first and teach it later, checking students reading and speaking, which is difficult and subjective and should encourage students to take the brave try.

Note-taking, passage dictation, sentence translation and text presentation are to check whether students take part in the teaching and learning actively.

² Frederick Winslow Taylor, 1911

Word dictation enjoys the greatest percentage as high as 40% mainly because words are the backbone of English learning and its evaluation can be very objective, which urges students to review immediately after the class. Have at least one word dictation every two weeks. The success or failure of each word will be linked with the process evaluation score. Word dictation lays emphasis on studying efficiency.

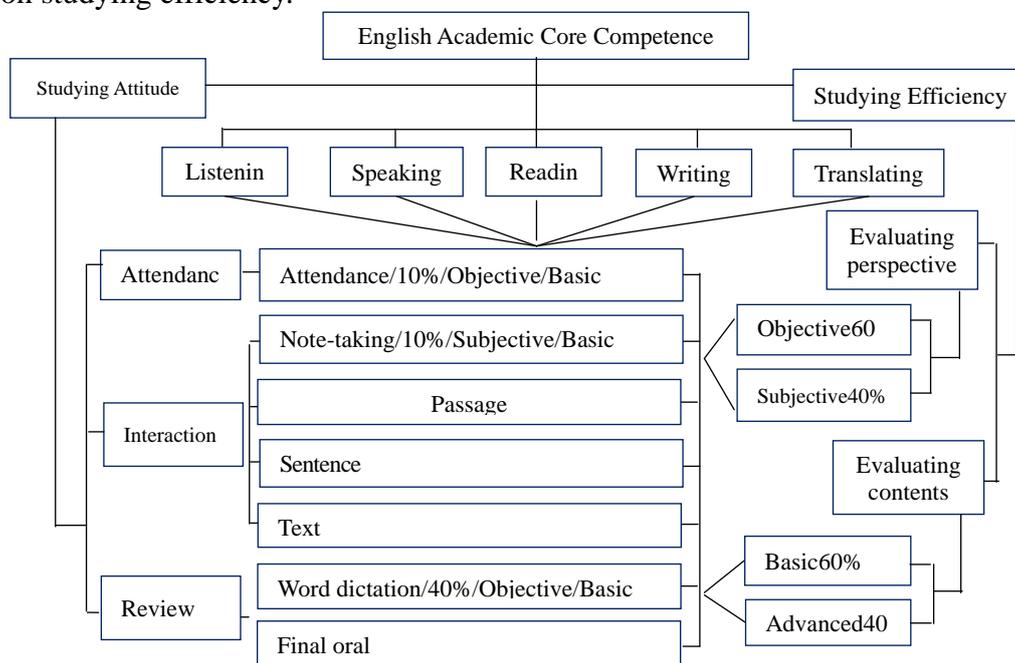


Fig.1 Structure of the New Process Evaluation Mechanism

Final oral test asks students to deliver an oral English speech about what they have learned, with a high and subjective criterion.

But teachers should narrow the gap in challenging and subjective aspects, with the gap between 3 points in 10 points, the poor 8 points, the medium 9 points and the good 10 points.

The new scientific process evaluation mechanism should follow the following principles:

According to Taylor's Principles of Scientific Management, scientific management should cover every stage of production. Therefore, a scientific process evaluation should cover every stage of teaching and learning. The scientific process evaluation of basic English covers: attendance, note-taking, passage dictation, sentence translation, text presentation, word dictation and final oral test. All these seven aspects respectively or coincidentally cover five English accomplishments, listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating. And they also cover studying attitude and study efficiency, subjective aspects and objective aspects, basic aspects and challenging aspects.

According to Taylor's Principles of Scientific Management, scientific management should formulate the scientific productivity and standard producing methods. Therefore, a scientific process evaluation should formulate the scientific evaluating frames and methods. The scientific process evaluation of basic English lays 60% on objective aspects which is to urge and 40% on subjective aspects which is to encourage. The objective aspects overweigh the subjective aspects. The scientific process evaluation of basic English lays 60% on basic aspects and 40% on challenging aspects. The basic aspects overweigh the challenging aspects.

Taylor thought one of the important measures was to standardize tools, operation, actions and environment etc. if we wanted to substitute individuals' experience with scientific knowledge. If we want to substitute the experiential evaluation with the scientific evaluation, one of the important measures is to carry out standard evaluation criteria, standard evaluation operation and standard evaluation environment. The writer publicizes the evaluation contents and evaluation criteria at the very beginning of every term. Every student is very clear about the evaluation system. The writer also publicizes the evaluation results immediately after they are appraised. All the students are appraised in the same evaluation environment. The teacher does not change the evaluation results

and respects them.

4. Utility of the New Process Evaluation Mechanism

The writer has been teaching Basic English since 2011. In Grade 2011, the writer considered to reform the experiential process evaluation. After the three rounds of reforms in Grade 2013, Grade 2014 and Grade 2016, a sound, relatively scientific and feasible process evaluation process mechanism came into being. In 2016-grade, the writer taught four classes basic English. Among 157 students, 150 students participated in a survey about the new process evaluation mechanism. 140 of them thought the new mechanism was very fair and transparent, with the percentage of 93.3%. 10 of them thought the new mechanism should be fairer and more transparent, with the percentage of 6.7%, 7 of which came from English 1163 that has been taught by the writer for only one term. The influence and effect of the new mechanism on English 1163 was limited. No students thought the new mechanism was not fair and transparent at all.

Table 1 Data of the Survey about the New Process Evaluation Mechanism

Class	Number of Voters	Very Fair & Transparent	Can be More Fair & Transparent	Not Fair & Transparent at All	Term of Teaching
English 1163	33	26	7	0	1 terms
English 1164	36	36	0	0	3 terms
English 1165	38	37	1	0	3 terms
English 1166	43	41	2	0	3 terms
Total	150	140	10	0	

Judging from the three rounds of reforms, the writer thought the motivating effect of the new process evaluation mechanism was very evident. In the past, some students were inactive when they were asked to share their sentence translation and passage dictation. Since the sentence translation and passage dictation are included into the process evaluation mechanism, students' participation is greatly improved. Besides, the quality of after-class review is much better. All these transformations help to consolidate academic core competence.

Table 2 Data of Students' Performance under Different Process Evaluation Mechanisms

Stages of Reform	Class	Rate of TEM 4	Term of Teaching	General Rate of School	Gap	Process Evaluation Average Score	Sensitivity to Process Evaluation
Conventional & Empirical	English 1113	93%	3 terms	71.43%	+21.57%	—	★★★★★
	English 1114	83%	3 terms		+11.57%	—	★★★
Partially & Relatively Scientific	English 1133	62%	4 terms	58.30%	+3.7%	—	★★★
	English 1134	48%	4 terms		-10.3%	—	★★
Fully & Strictly Scientific	English 1143	37%	2 terms	48.09%	-11.09%	84	★
	English 1144	60%	2 terms		+11.91%	86	★★★★★
	English 1145	76%	4 terms		+27.91%	90	★★★★★

Table 2 takes different classes in three years as the example, some under the traditional process evaluation, some partially and relatively under the new process evaluation, other fully and strictly under the new process evaluation. Comparing their passing rate in Tem 4, we can draw a conclusion: basically speaking, the more sensitive the class is to the process evaluation, the higher the average process evaluation scores will be and the higher the passing rate of Tem 4 will be which particularly and clearly shows in 1143-1145. The new process evaluation mechanism plays an important role in

motivating and consolidating.

Table 3 Data of Students' Performance under the New Scientific Process Evaluation Mechanism

Class	Rate of CET 4	Term of Teaching	Process Evaluation Average Score				Sensitivity to Process Evaluation
			1	2	3	Average	
English 1164	72.50%	3 terms	85	85	85	85	★★★
English 1165	84.61%	3 terms	87	86	88	87	★★★★
English 1166	63.04%	3 terms	85	83	83	84	★★

Table 3 takes three classes that have been taught under the new process evaluation mechanism as the example. Comparing their average scores in three terms with their passing rate in CET 4, we can draw a conclusion: generally speaking, the more sensitive the class is to the process evaluation, the higher the average process evaluation scores will be and the higher the passing rate of CET 4 will be. The new process evaluation mechanism plays an important role in cultivating the academic core competence.

Table 4 Data of Individual Student's Performance under the New Scientific Process Evaluation Mechanism

Level	Students' Number	Process Evaluation Score				CET-4 Score	Sensitivity to Process Evaluation
		1	2	3	Average		
Good	1164-1	93	95	98	95	593	★★★★★
	1164-2	95	95	94	95	589	★★★★★
	1164-3	87	92	95	91	567	★★★★☆
Medium	1164-4	85	86	82	84	487	★★★★
	1164-5	91	91	84	89	476	★★★★☆
	1164-6	88	82	88	86	447	★★★
Poor	1164-7	82	69	75	75	428	★★☆
	1164-8	79	76	70	75	Fail	★★
	1164-9	77	60	55	64	No try	★★
Good	1165-1	90	95	94	93	573	★★★★★
	1165-2	92	93	96	94	567	★★★★★
	1165-3	89	96	93	93	564	★★★★★
Medium	1165-4	87	86	88	87	490	★★★★
	1165-5	95	93	87	92	473	★★★★☆
	1165-6	87	91	84	87	469	★★★★☆
Poor	1165-7	—	78	78	52	420	★★★
	1165-8	81	65	70	72	398	★★☆
	1165-9	83	77	66	75	398	★★☆
Good	1166-1	84	92	91	89	593	★★★★★
	1166-2	91	92	98	94	558	★★★★☆
	1166-3	86	88	84	86	526	★★★★
Medium	1166-4	81	74	78	78	489	★★★★☆
	1166-5	83	82	88	84	452	★★★
	1166-6	85	82	85	84	446	★★★
Poor	1166-7	79	81	80	80	392	★★☆
	1166-8	80	74	80	78	390	★★☆
	1166-9	85	75	76	79	375	★★

Table 4 takes the students who have been learning under the new process evaluation mechanism for three terms as the example. Comparing the scores in three terms with their scores in CET 4, we can draw a conclusion: generally speaking, the more sensitive you are to the process evaluation, the higher your process evaluation scores will be and your stronger your academic core competence will be which can be proved with the scores in CET 4.

5. Conclusion

The acquisition of a language is a progressive course. Basic English, as a fundamental stem course, should carry out a scientific process evaluation mechanism in order to cultivate students' academic core competence. Based on Taylor's Principles of Scientific Management, scientific process evaluation mechanism holds three criteria: be comprehensive, be scientific and be standard. In the reform of replacing experiential evaluation, the new scientific mechanism has shown great and striking utility.

Acknowledgements

This paper is one of the research findings of Educational Science Planning Project in Hubei, Research on Classroom Teaching Strategies of Basic English Based on Cultivation of English Majors' Core Competence (2017GB091).

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