

The Research on the Application of Flipped Classroom to the National Minority Preparatory English Teaching

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Abstract: At present, the research and practice of the flipped classroom at home and abroad focus on the primary school and middle school. Most of them is the research on the teaching practice and on the comparison between the traditional teaching method and the flipped classroom. In the developed area, the primary schools and middle schools have carried out the flipped classroom. However, there are few researches on the flipped classroom of the university, especially of the national minority preparatory teaching. Therefore, the author will review the theory of the flipped classroom and put forward the educational reform of the flipped classroom in the national minority preparatory English teaching and explore the teaching patterns of the flipped classroom in the national minority preparatory English teaching.

1. The resource and theoretical basis of the flipped classroom

1.1 The resource of the flipped classroom

Flipped classroom is a teaching environment which employs the techniques and the activities in a mixed way. In the flipped classroom, the traditional lecturing to the students in class is replaced by the experiment and the discuss in class. At the same time, the lecturing in class is recorded into video and will be completed by students out of the class. The flipped classroom is originated from the Salman Khan, a Bangladeshi American. He recorded his own teaching videos in which he tutored his nephews in their math and got unexpected result. In order to let more students who have difficulty in learning math, he released his recorded video in the YouTube in November, 2006. This video aroused people's attention. In 2007, Salman Khan opened the unprofitable website of Khan Academy. In 2009, Khan Academy was awarded the educational prize in the Microsoft Technology Award. Salman Khan made the part-time job to his main job gradually. At present, he has released more than 2300 free video course. More than 56000000 people took part in his video course through the Internet. If we say that Salman Khan's teaching video is used to tutor the learning of the students, the chemistry teacher Jonathan Paulman and Aran Sam in the Colorado High School have the real attempt of the flipped classroom against the traditional teaching method. From the spring in 2007, they put the video in which they combine the spontaneous explanation and the demonstration of the powerpoint into the Internet. They made the students watch the teacher's explanation in the video at home or after class. Therefore, they can save the time in class to discuss the questions and homework face to face in order to solidate the knowledge the students had learned. This teaching method had made positive effect in the study of the students and the concept of the flipped classroom is well received by the schools in the Northern America. The flipped classroom became a new trend in the educational reform. Especially in the last two years, "Economist", "New York Times" and some other main medium gave warm attention and positive report to the flipped classroom.

1.2 The theoretical basis of the flipped classroom

The theoretical basis of the research is the constructivism learning theory. From the 20th century to now, the learning theory developed from the behaviourism to cognitivism to constructivism. Among them, constructivism had two schools, one is the cognitive constructivism whose representative is Piaget; the other is social constructivism whose representative is Vygotsky.

Constructivism learning theory thought that the meaning is made of some knowledge and experience. But different people have some differences in the previous knowledge, one's learning style and actual needs. Therefore, they had different understanding in the same thing. Constructivism learning theory thought emphasized the importance of the learning experience of the learners and thought that learning is the learners' process of constructing the meaning with the interaction to the world outside based on the learners' previous learning experience. The teacher should not take the teaching as the simple transfer of the knowledge and should guide the students to make use of the students' previous learning experience to get more new learning experience and focus on the processing and transmission of knowledge.

2. The process of the flipped classroom

2.1 The preparation

2.1.1 The analysis of students

Under the pattern of the flipped classroom, the subject of teaching is the students, they transfer and internalize the learning material all by themselves. The students plays a central part in the flipped classroom. Therefore, the teacher should carefully analyze their characters, knowledge, interests and cognition and then they can make the teaching materials, teaching process and teaching accumulative methods accordingly. In 2017, the author had taught 3 classes whose English is very good. Their target school is the one of the top universities. Their grades are most from 110-120 in the college entrance examination. These national minority preparatory students has the good foundation of English and self-study ability comparing to other students which guarantee the implementation of the flipped classroom. Through the research of questionnaire and interview, the author gave out 156 questionnaires. The questionnaire was mainly about the students' characters, knowledge, interests and cognition. The survey showed that 65% students were introvert, 35% students were extrovert and liked to express themselves and interact with the students. 75% students thought that their foundation for English was good and could volunteered to express themselves and cooperate with the flipped classroom. 25% students showed that they had doubt for their English and for they ability for self-study. 80% students thought that they had interest in English and hoped that they could learn English well. As for the listening, reading, speaking and writing, 88% students thought that they still had a long way. By questionnaire, the author found that the national minority students had been accustomed to the traditional learning method. They performed well in the vocabulary and sentence structure, but they were less likely to speak in public. This provided the necessity for the implementation of the flipped classroom. By the flipped classroom, the teacher thought that the students' applied linguistics ability could be improved and their self-confidence could enhanced. The teacher can design more targeted teaching strategies to help the students internalize what they had got from class.

2.1.2 Exploring the teaching material

The exploration of video materials should be based on the teaching target and teaching contents. For the limited teaching facilities, the teacher is recommended to record the teaching video by themselves. When recording the videos, the teaching contents should be interesting and knowledgeable and the time is limited to 10 minutes. In addition, the contents of the recorded video should be appropriate to the students and make sure the explanation of the video is clear and vivid. The students can choose their cellphone APP, and the teacher can upload the video to the internet platform such as QQ and Wechat. Before class, the teacher can explore the video materials to explain some historical and cultural knowledge related to the teaching materials and add some background information of the text to make the students have a deeper understanding of the text and culture. In the process of class, the teacher can make a quiz to check if the students have watched the video and understood the knowledge the video want to transfer. The students can also make the class colorful, for example, the students can download the teaching material from YouTube.

2.2 Designing teaching process

The fundamental teaching process of the flipped classroom is as following: before class, the students watch the appointed video course or some other teaching materials including PPT or some reading list so as to get interaction and transfer of knowledge between teacher and students and students and students by learning the video course. In class, the teacher guide the students the cooperate with the team members based on the independent study and make use of the theme discussion, the report of the result and scenario simulation and some other patterns of the flipped classroom to exhibit, check and discuss in order to internalize the knowledge to great extent. The textbook of the national minority preparatory students is “English”. The teacher divide every unit into six parts: vocabulary; main idea of the text; structure analysis; cultural explanation; writing guide; free question. Take unit 1 in the textbook, the teacher makes six video courses and every video course lasts about 8 minutes and prepares the additional PPT, text and the recording of the text. This unit introduces the reasons for people’s longevity. First of all, the teacher explore the related video and add explanation and combine the background information to make the micro-class. The students watch the micro-class before class. In class, the students adopt the learning patterns of group learning to check if the students have grasped the culture and sentence structure by the team report and brainstorm.then, the teacher picks out an article which introduces the healthy life in China. This article includes 5 sentences, every group translates one sentence. The translation should be discussed and then the best one should be confirmed. After completion, every group shows their translation by the method of jigsaw. Every group should comment on the translation of other groups and get the best version. Then it comes to the last part free question. The teacher makes comments and concludes the teacher performances based on the class and defines the important and difficult point in the next class.

2.3 Patterns of flipped classroom

In order to break the dilemma of the traditional teaching method, the author explores three patterns of the flipped classroom. By implementing the flipped classroom, it can get three achievements: enhance self-confidence; improve output; the emphasis of application of knowledge.

2.3.1 The pattern of students being teacher

At the beginning of every class, the author has divided the class into several groups to make the teaching more flexible. Every unit in the book of “English” starts with the vocabulary. After the author explains the usage of the vocabulary in the text, the teacher will leave some related background information related to the text and leaves them assignment. In class, the students will be the teacher to explain the text instead of teachers. Before class, the students should make a good preparation in a group. In class, the students will read the text and explain the text. In the end, the teacher will add and comment on the students’ performance and make a conclusion. In this pattern of the flipped classroom, the teacher should undertake many roles. Before class, the students should design and organize the teaching activity. In class, the teacher should listen, comment, correct and add the teaching materials. After class, the teacher should help the students solve all kinds of problems. This practice shoes that this pattern can be applied in the national minority preparatory English teaching.

2.3.2 The pattern of micro-class

When explaining the vocabulary, the class tends to be very boring. In order to change this situation, the teacher can make the micro-class “guess the meaning of a word based on the context”. Before class, the students can watch the video to study and note the important and difficult points. The subtitle is included in the video so as to be understood by the students. The teacher remind the students to finish the assignment by QQ and Weichat. As to the questions of several students, the teacher will give personal guidance. At the same time, the teacher will ask the students several questions related to the knowledge the micro-class conveys. In class, the teacher will make several representatives to answer the questions they confront briefly.Then the teacher will design the

teaching activities of “guess the meaning of a word based on the context” based on the important points and carry out the activities in a group. The teacher will monitor the process in every way and give some help. After class, the teacher will provide several materials such as PPT for students to learn by themselves. This pattern shows that the flipped classroom can be applied to the national minority preparatory students. The students can make use of the APP to study at any time, in any place. It can both satisfy the students’ need to study and conform to the development of the society.

2.3.3 The patterns of scenario simulation

When the teacher taught Unit 3 “the old woman and the thief”, the author found that there are so many dialogues in the text. After explaining the vocabulary in the text, the teacher make the students read the text all by themselves and divide the class into six groups. The teacher appoints the leader of each group, and then the leader will find the members of the group and reproduce the dialogue in their own words. In class, the six groups play the dialogue out based on the understanding of the context. The students play excellently and they add some elements into the dialogue and make a full preparation for it. After class, the students tell me that they are satisfied with the pattern of the scenario stimulation. After this class, the students can not only understand the contents of the text, but also practice the students speaking and listening ability and improve their cooperative ability.

3. The result of implementing the flipped classroom

After implementing the flipped classroom, the teacher makes a survey to show that if the student are satisfied with the flipped classroom. The result are showed in Table 1.

Table 1

choices	Total	proportion
Very satisfied	26	42.62%
satisfied	33	54.1%
common	2	3.28%
Not satisfied	0	0%
Not at all	0	0%

About the video course, the students choose their favorite patterns from the theme discussion, report of the result, scenario stimulation, debate, presentation, translation competition, games etc, and get their different answers showing in Table 2.

Table 2

choices	proportion
Theme discussion	60.66%
report of the result	49.18%
scenario stimulation	70.49%
debate	14.75%
presentation	9.84%
translation competition	6.56
games	44.26%
Some other activities	0%

After implementing the flipped classroom, the author finds that it has four advantages comparing to the traditional teaching method and achieve some effects.

3.1 Mixed learning

After implementing the flipped classroom, the national minority students can use their more freely and flexibly and make good use of the internet to watch the video course made by the teacher at home, in class, the flipped classroom can better reflect the interaction with the students and the teacher. The students can be attentive and finish their homework under the guidance of the teacher. These two styles mixed with each other and can play the advantage of learning.

3.2 Appropriate to people's cognitive rules

After implementing the flipped classroom, the students can develop a deep learning out of the class. They will watch the teaching video course in a willing way. In addition, in English class, the students can make use of the time in class to exchange their learning experience effectively to deepen the cognition of the students. Just as Intel said: "flipped classroom means more freedom for the learners, the educator put the transfer of knowledge out of the class and let the learners choose his most suitable way to accept knowledge. However, the educators put the internalization of the knowledge in class so as to more interaction and exchange between the classmates and the teacher and classmates."

3.3 Constructing new relationship between teacher and students

The flipped classroom change the traditional teaching method which is centered by the teacher. No matter the students watch the video course at home or the teacher and the students interact with each other face to face, the focus is always the students. The students can control the progress of the video course and raise his own questions and ideas and exchange their opinion with his teachers or classmates to gain the initiative.

3.4 Improving the effective utilization and exploration of teaching materials

The flipped classroom is an advantage to the effective exploration and utilization. It is not only a good platform to improve the utilization of the teaching materials and a strong pulse to promote the deeper exploration and development of teaching materials. Take the teaching video course for example, the traditional video course is a simple recording of the class situation and doesn't make a deep process of the teaching material. The unrelated information is too much and is easy for students to distract. In order to avoid the disadvantage of the traditional teaching video course to make better use of the video. The flipped classroom improve it. When making the teaching video course, the teacher will lay emphasis on the explanation of the knowledge and comprehension level of the students.

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