

Research on Effective Teaching Behavior of College English Teachers from the Perspective of Blended Teaching

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Abstract: Blended teaching is the “new normal” in education now, and countries all over the world hope for its teaching to be more effective. The teacher is one of the key factors in realizing effective teaching. Thus, it is of great practical significance to examine whether the teaching behavior of college English teachers can promote students’ effective learning from the perspective of blended teaching. To solve the main problems, which exist in the effective teaching behavior of college English teachers in Hunan Province, China, this research puts forward four strategies, that is, to deeply understand the concept of blended teaching, improve teachers’ blended teaching ability, improve online teaching management level, and effectively carry out the diversified evaluation, with the goal of realizing effective teaching.

1. Introduction

Blended teaching is regarded as the “new normal” in education. Nowadays, many colleges and universities in China are actively carrying out the reform of college English blended teaching. However, technology and resources will not work automatically, and any reform will ultimately be implemented by the executor of teaching—teachers. Therefore, whether the teaching behavior of college English teachers is effective and efficient directly restricts the quality of blended teaching and the effectiveness of students’ English learning. Therefore, from the perspective of blended teaching, it is of great practical significance to examine whether the teaching behavior of college English teachers can promote students’ effective learning.

2. Definition of Effective Teaching and Effective Teaching Behavior

At present, the academic circles have not reached a unified definition of the connotation of effective teaching, but they have done a lot of research. Effective teaching means that teachers can effectively promote proper learning (Braskamp & Ory).^[1] Dunne and Wragg (2005) regard teaching that helps students and their learning progress as effective teaching.^[2] Chinese scholar Tao Tao (2015)

thinks that effective teaching refers to teaching with excellent teaching effect and high teaching efficiency. ^[3] Gong Baocao (2017) pointed out that the “effectiveness” of effective teaching mainly refers to the concrete progress or development obtained by students after a period of teaching by teachers. ^[4] In short, effective teaching is effective, beneficial and efficient teaching that conforms to the teaching rules^[5].

As the implementer of teaching, teachers mainly influence students’ learning through teaching behavior, so it is necessary to study teachers’ teaching behavior in order to achieve effective teaching. Scholars generally believe that teaching behavior includes teachers’ teaching behavior, students’ learning behavior and teacher-student interaction behavior.^[6] This paper studies effective teaching from teachers’ teaching behavior. Jia Zhenxia (2019) believes that effective teaching behavior should be all behaviors that teachers cause, maintain and promote students’ expected learning and development in teaching, and it is a behavior that reflects the connotation of effective teaching.^[7] Li Xiaoxia (2020) believes that the effective teaching behavior in blended teaching mode is the teaching behavior that teachers use blended teaching mode to promote students’ learning, help students achieve good learning results and keep learning progress.^[8] Generally speaking, effective teaching behavior refers to all behaviors that can be observed and measured through questionnaires, interviews and other research methods and promote students’ development. This research adopts Jia Zhenxia’s definition of effective teaching behavior which was proposed in 2019, and uses her index framework of effective teaching behavior of English teachers in blended teaching environment to conduct research.

3. The Current Situation of College English Teachers’ Effective Teaching Behavior in Blended Teaching

According to the previous research, many colleges and universities in Hunan Province have carried out college English teaching reform and conducted online and offline blended teaching. The types of blended teaching are mostly additive, that is, online learning is used as a supplement and assistance, and classroom face-to-face teaching is the leading, and a small number of them are flipped and mixed classroom. For teaching evaluation, the methods of summative evaluation and formative evaluation are mainly used, such as classroom participation, online tasks, written assignments and final exams, but there are few forms of self-evaluation and mutual evaluation.

This research draws on the content of the third part of the “Effective Teaching Behavior Status” in the “Non-English Major College English Curriculum Blended Teaching Questionnaire” compiled by Jia Zhenxia with a reliability of 0.941. It examines the actual situation of college English teachers’ effective teaching behavior in blended teaching from the aspects of online learning management behavior, teachers’ organization of face-to-face classroom behavior, teachers’ support behavior and teachers’ diversified evaluation behavior. The survey results show that teachers actively provide students with resources, answers and emotional support, publish online learning task lists, focus on explaining important and difficult points in face-to-face classes, and carry out some teaching evaluations. However, there are also some outstanding problems, mainly reflected in the following aspects.

3.1 Teachers are not Careful in Managing Students’ Online Learning Behavior

For blended teaching, the management of its online part is obviously not fine. First, the organization of online teaching should be further improved. English teachers will arrange autonomous learning tasks according to the teaching objectives and progress, but most students do not pay enough attention to online learning. There are some problems, such as inadequate understanding of knowledge points, low participation, and inactive online interaction. This reflects that teachers should put forward clear productive tasks for students’ online learning, take more online interactive

incentives, and give timely feedback to help students do a good job in online learning. Second, teachers do not analyze students' online learning behavior enough. Students will leave a lot of behavioral trace data when they learn online. However, Due to teachers' lack of awareness and literacy in analyzing students' online learning data, they cannot understand students' learning process in detail. Third, online learning content needs to be consolidated. The survey shows that in face-to-face teaching, teachers don't always consolidate and answer questions about online learning content.

3.2 Teachers' Behavior in Organizing Face-to-Face Lectures is not Deep

When organizing face-to-face courses, college English teachers have the following aspects which are not deep enough: First, there are still "two skins" in online and offline teaching. Online learning content is not related to classroom face-to-face teaching content and lacks integration. There is still insufficient analysis of students' online learning behavior, and it is not necessarily possible to adjust the content of face-to-face teaching in a targeted manner. Secondly, the teaching concept of "double subject" is still insufficient. Nowadays, teachers gradually accept the "teacher-led, student-centered" teaching method, pay attention to students' learning participation and experience, and also realize that they should create situations and give students opportunities to use language. However, in the actual face-to-face English course, they are still influenced by the traditional teaching concept, focusing on the cultivation of language knowledge and language skills, and less on the cultural attributes of language and cultivation on students' ability to communicate in language. Third, the activities of cultivating students' higher-order thinking ability are not enough. Teachers have gradually abandoned all-round teaching and highlighted the key and difficult points of teaching, but they still focus on teaching. Teachers rarely use debate, classroom display, group activities, role-playing and other forms, and the organization and planning of activities, the cultivation of students' higher-order thinking ability, and the guidance and feedback after students' participation in activities are still not enough.

3.3 Teachers' Lack of Diversified Evaluation Behavior

Blended teaching emphasizes teaching evaluation, and there are obvious shortcomings: First, it emphasizes results over process evaluation. Due to the influence of traditional teaching, college English teachers still tend to implement summative evaluation based on exams, so it is difficult to find out the problems in students' learning attitude, cooperation ability, learning efficiency and information literacy during the whole learning process. Second, the evaluation subject and evaluation method are single. The survey found that in blended teaching, teacher evaluation is the main method of teaching evaluation, and students' self-evaluation and group mutual evaluation are rarely adopted. Some teachers don't know how to design evaluation forms, some find it inconvenient to operate, and some find it unnecessary.

4. Strategies to Improve College English Teachers' Effective Teaching Behavior in Blended Teaching

In view of the outstanding problems of English teachers in implementing effective teaching behavior in the above article, the following strategies are proposed to help them improve.

4.1 Deeply Understand the Concept of Blended Teaching

The concept of blended learning originated from the concept of blended learning abroad, which was formally advocated by Professor He Kekang in China in 2003, and then became popular in China. Generally speaking, blended teaching can be divided into broad sense and narrow sense. Blended

teaching in a broad sense refers to the combination of various learning theories, teaching media and teaching modes, so as to achieve the best teaching effect. (Driscoll, 2002; He Kekang, 2004; Zhu Zhiting, 2004). In a narrow sense, blended teaching is a mixture of face-to-face teaching and online learning (Barnum, 2002; Hofmann, 2008; Ronghuai Wang, 2006; Li Thicken, 2008)^[9]. Compared with other teaching concepts, the blended teaching concept emphasizes the following aspects: First, the educational idea of “taking teachers as the leading factor and students as the main body”. In order to change thinking, “what students need now” is a question that teachers need to think about, not “what teachers can give students”. Everything is aimed at promoting students’ development, and teachers should return the classroom to students to maximize the learning effect. Everything is aimed at promoting students’ development, and teachers should return the classroom to students to maximize the learning effect. The second is the organic integration of “online + offline” teaching. Online teaching and offline teaching are two teaching links that are organically unified. They are not simple accumulation or mixing, but have inherent teaching logic. They should be organically integrated to exert the effect of $1+1 > 2$. The third is to promote students’ deep learning and higher-order thinking. After learning the basic knowledge of online platform, Students do not enter the classroom with empty heads, but “prepared” to enter the classroom. Then teachers should design activities that can better cultivate students’ analysis, evaluation and creation to develop higher-order thinking in face-to-face classroom, and then stimulate students’ intrinsic motivation, actively participate in and cooperate with learning through diversified teaching methods such as case discussion, role-playing, achievement reporting, project production and reading materials, so as to promote students’ deep learning and develop higher-order thinking. Fourth, pay attention to formative evaluation. Blended teaching pays more attention to the attitude and performance of students in the learning process and plays the role of formative evaluation.

4.2 Improve Teachers’ Blended Teaching Ability

The improvement of college English teachers’ blended teaching ability can focus on some core abilities. First, improve the ability of blended instructional design. On the one hand, we can obtain the relevant theoretical knowledge of blended instructional design through various channels. Learn how to design teaching environment, teaching resources, teaching activities and teaching evaluation by reading related books, participating in teaching and research activities and studying educational courses. On the other hand, it promotes skills improvement. For example, by participating in teaching design competition, imitating excellent teachers and training educational skills, the skills of mixed teaching design can be improved. Second, the improvement of information technology literacy. Teachers should further study the functions of various teaching platforms to achieve proficiency, and select high-quality learning resources, make micro-courses, massive open online course and other teaching resources, and enhance the teaching effect through the promotion of information technology. Third, pay attention to reflective teaching. Reflective teaching, also called reflective practice, is a reflection on teaching experience. Poser (1989), an American psychologist, put forward the formula of teachers’ growth: $\text{experience} + \text{reflection} = \text{growth}$. Therefore, only by constantly reflecting, examining and analyzing their own teaching in the actual blended teaching, can college English teachers deepen their understanding of the concept of blended education and improve their own blended teaching level by discovering and solving problems and constantly summing up experience.

4.3 Improve the Management Level of Online Teaching

As an organic part of blended teaching – online teaching, teachers also need to carefully design its content. After analyzing students’ needs before class, we should set the overall teaching objectives and unit objectives, select high-quality network resources such as massive open online course and

micro-classes, or record classes by ourselves and send them to students for study. Assign autonomous learning tasks, such as previewing the content of teaching materials, discussing topics, analyzing cases, submitting homework online, and completing listening, writing and reading exercises or tests. Inform students about the specific assessment methods and requirements of online learning, and take appropriate incentive measures to encourage students to take online tasks seriously and improve the efficiency of autonomous learning. At the same time, college English teachers should improve their data analysis literacy. When students study on the online teaching platform, they will leave two kinds of data. One is behavioral data, such as data on students' use of online learning resources, data on learning progress, time spent on learning, data on online interaction, and so on. The other is the result data, such as homework completion data, classroom real-time evaluation data, autonomous learning data, examination data and so on. English teachers need to learn to dig these data deeply to understand students' learning status and learning effect, which not only provides teachers with the basis for analyzing their learning situation, adjusting teaching design and organization, but also helps teachers to improve their teaching.

4.4 Effectively Carry out Diversified Evaluation

Great changes have taken place in the teaching environment, teaching process, teaching time and space, teaching resources and so on, so its teaching evaluation should be different from the summative evaluation commonly used in traditional teaching, and mixed teaching needs diversified evaluation. First, the diversification of evaluation subjects. In traditional English teaching, teachers are the main body of evaluation. However, now China advocates "double-subject" teaching, emphasizing that students are the main body of learning activities and attach importance to students' learning experience. Therefore, students can be included in the evaluation subject in mixed teaching, which can improve students' participation on the one hand and enhance their self-evaluation ability on the other. Second, the diversification of evaluation methods. English teachers can use a variety of evaluation methods, such as self-evaluation, intra-group evaluation, inter-group evaluation and student mutual evaluation, to better play the guiding role of evaluation; We can also pay more attention to process evaluation, not only pay attention to students' grades, but also pay attention to students' attitudes, interests and improvements in the learning process from a developmental perspective; Qualitative evaluation and quantitative evaluation can also be combined. Blended teaching strongly advocates the construction of a diversified evaluation system with the participation of multiple subjects. According to the specific situation, flexible evaluation measures are adopted to give play to the appraisal function and incentive function of teaching evaluation in order to optimize the evaluation effect.

5. Conclusion

In short, the effective teaching behavior of college English teachers is directly related to the effectiveness of students' English learning and restricts the quality of blended teaching. In the future, college English teachers should deeply understand the concept of blended teaching, improve teachers' blended teaching ability, improve online teaching management level, effectively carry out diversified evaluation, and even provide personalized teaching, so as to make teaching behavior more effective and efficient, finally realize the effective teaching.

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