

Exploration and Application of Online Flipped Class for Oral Chinese as a Foreign Language

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Abstract

The covid-19 pneumonia epidemic disrupted international students' pace of returning to China on schedule. Under the dual background of home study and online learning, international students lack the environment for Chinese language learning and communication. After returning to their own country, they almost no longer speak Chinese. This has led to the deterioration of oral Chinese expression ability and lower Chinese proficiency. Therefore, how to make online and offline teaching homogeneous and equivalent has become a huge challenge for teachers of Chinese as a foreign language. Through the teaching practice of online flipped class for oral Chinese as a foreign language, both questionnaire survey and interview is applied to analyze the effects of online teaching. The factors that affect online flipped class are explored and the corresponding solutions are proposed. Furthermore, the methods to encourage students to maintain enthusiasm for learning Chinese and improve oral expression ability are probed. Moreover, it will provide reference for online teaching of oral Chinese as a foreign language.

Key words: Chinese as a foreign language; Online teaching, flipped class

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1. INTRODUCTION

The covid-19 pneumonia epidemic has caused the society to pay high attention to online learning. It is required that the government-led, university-based, and society participation methods be adopted to jointly implement online teaching to achieve “stopping of classes and non-stopping of teaching and learning” (The Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2020). On February 17, 2020, an article *How to teach and learn under “stopping of classes and non-stopping of learning”* is published to prevent copying and applying normal classroom teaching methods directly to online teaching (The Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2020). Online teaching is a new teaching method developed in the era of “Internet +” and in the reform of informatization teaching (Yang, 2019). It has changed the form of traditional classroom teaching. As one of the important means to improve the teaching effect and quality of college education, it is rapidly popularized and developed (Wang et al., 2019).

Oral Chinese is the first challenge faced by international students after coming to China, and it is their common communication problem. How to enable international students to master the basic Chinese communicative skills in a short period of time and improve their Chinese communicative level is the top priority of oral Chinese teaching. Since online teaching has been fully implemented, teachers and students have been unable to communicate face-to-face, especially for students who returned to their own countries. Due to time lag and the internet problem, it has become more difficult to carry out online teaching with less interaction. As a result, there has been deterioration in oral Chinese expression ability and proficiency. Therefore, universities and teachers choose different tools and strategies to conduct oral Chinese teaching activities as a foreign language. In the background of home learning and online learning, how to effectively carry out teaching activities

and avoid online learning in vain has become an urgent problem for teachers to solve. How to keep students' enthusiasm for learning Chinese and ensure the quality of oral Chinese learning has become a huge challenge for teachers. Hence, the methods and strategies of online teaching of Chinese as a foreign language are particularly important at this time.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This project is carried out through an online flipped class teaching experiment with second-grade international students in a university. A combination of questionnaire survey and interview is applied. A total of 50 questionnaires are sent out and 50 questionnaires are returned through online questionnaires. 5 students are interviewed via Dingtalk video. By understanding the effects of online teaching of oral Chinese as a foreign language, it is to explore how to perform effective online flipped class in the current environment? How to ensure the teaching effect and mobilize students to improve their initiative and enthusiasm in learning Chinese? What are the factors affect online flipped class quality and how to solve the problem?

3. RESEARCH IMPLEMENTATION

The textbook used in the present study is *Communicative Chinese 301 (Volume 2)* (Kang & Lai, 2015). The content includes greeting, acquaintance and other communicative functions, focusing on cultivating learners' ability to communicate in Chinese. Therefore, this study takes the communicative project as the lead to create learning contexts. Through survey on which learning software students like to use, it is finally determined to use Ningxia Medical University online learning platform (hereinafter referred to as "learning platform") + Dingtalk live class + Dingtalk group, to realize the remote classroom flip, and meet the needs of teaching links before class, during class and after class.

3.1 Careful Preparation Before Class

To determine the learning group

The teacher first creates a learning context based on the content of the course to stimulate students' interest in learning. The students are divided into 6 learning groups, with 4 to 5 students in each group. One of them are determined as the group leader. They are required to collect materials related to the learning theme in groups to lay a solid foundation for later project report. Taking "I also like swimming" as an example, the theme of the project can be the type of exercise, the benefits of exercise, and the benefits of swimming.

To develop self-study before class

The teacher instructs students to watch micro-class videos sent on the learning platform in advance. They need to

list the problems encountered in the study through online discussion, and submit the discussion report and photos to the Dingtalk group on time. The teacher checks the course data before class, analyzes the cause of the problem according to the questions raised in the students' discussion report, and prepares lessons in a targeted manner. In the process of preparing lessons, the teacher focuses on solving common problems in students' learning, guiding them to think actively and construct knowledge.

3.2 Solving Problems in Class

To understand the learning situation before the live class

The teacher conducts a test on the online learning platform 5 minutes before the live class. According to the test results, students are asked to try to write the knowledge points of this lesson. At the same time, they are required to find out the personal problems in the test and submit them to Dingtalk group.

To answer questions during the live class

According to the collected questions, the teacher uses Dingtalk group to analyze the knowledge points and answer students' doubts and difficult questions. Take "I also like swimming" as an example, the teacher reorganizes the learning content of this lesson. It is mainly divided into four parts 1) Basic sentence pattern: What kind of sports do you like? Do you swim well or not? 2) New knowledge points: the usage of "have" or "not have". 3) Induction: To construct the knowledge of the chapter in the form of a mind map, so that students can master the key knowledge of this lesson. 4) Knowledge expansion: The related expressions of hobbies, students are encouraged to actively create more relevant sentence patterns. During the live class, students are encouraged to actively ask questions and keep good notes through online call to master the key and difficult points.

To check the learning effect at the end of the live class

After the live class, students are required to organize class notes and submit them to the Dingtalk group within the specified time. The teacher checks whether the students are seriously involved in the whole learning process.

3.3 Improving Ability After Class

(1) To consolidate course knowledge by completing homework

After the course is over, students are required to complete basic exercises to further consolidate their knowledge. They also need to take photos of all assignments and upload them to Dingtalk group. The teacher provides timely feedback based on students' homework completion, and adjusts the content and progress of the followed teaching.

(2) To sublimate learning effect based on group report

According to the project theme of the learning group, the students are allowed to discuss the implementation plan

and complete the tasks in a group, and finally select a representative to report. Students use Wechat and Dingtalk to develop online discussion via video or audio in class or outside class. The Teacher participates in the whole process of guidance. For example, in the lesson “I also like swimming”, students discuss the topics they have chosen before the class. Taking “the benefits of exercise” as an example, students can use Chinese to express the benefits of exercise by looking up data, such as exercise can make people relax, happy, and prolong life. The teacher corrects students’ language expressions online and guides them to solve problems. The students are also encouraged to use more Chinese vocabulary to express and communicate with family and friends. Group project research and report can help students to further deepen the learning effect after fully mastering the content of the course and expand the scope of knowledge.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

By understanding the advantages and disadvantages of students’ online learning, as well as the problems and suggestions for online learning through the practice and exploration on online flipped class for oral Chinese as a foreign language for one semester, the following conclusions are attained.

4.1 Online Flipped Class for Oral Chinese as A Foreign Language Has Significantly Improved the Current Situation of Online Teaching

There are many problems in the initial stage of online class for oral Chinese as a foreign language, such as uneven quality of teaching videos and poor teaching activities. Through the practice of online flipped class, it is found that after implementing all aspects of teaching in accordance with the flipped class procedures, the current situation of online class has been significantly improved. The teachers require students to independently study the designated teaching videos and knowledge before class. The quality of students’ online learning has been obviously improved, as well as the interaction during the live class progressed smoothly and successfully. The teachers prepare teaching materials meticulously and patiently before class, such as recording teaching videos, making PowerPoint for students’ self-study using, collecting and sorting learning materials, designing teaching activities, so that the quality of teaching videos and materials are guaranteed. At the same time, it greatly encourages teachers to strengthen the organization and effectiveness of teaching activities.

4.2 Online Flipped Class for Oral Chinese as A Foreign Language Can Improve Learning Efficiency and Effectiveness

After half a year of teaching experiment, the questionnaire survey show that more than 98% of students like the flipped class model and believe this model can

encourage them to study actively and make them know when and how they should complete the learning task. By completing the learning tasks before class, during class, and after class, students can grasp more solid and better knowledge than before. The learning effect is more obvious. The ability of language expression is significantly improved. Moreover, the students get a better score in the final exam.

4.3 Online Flipped Class for Oral Chinese as A Foreign Language Can Cultivate Students’ Ability of Autonomous Learning

An important part of the smooth development of online flipped class of oral Chinese as a foreign language is that students study by themselves before class. In the flipped class, students can improve their personal comprehensive learning abilities. By previewing before class, questioning online during class, exploring actively, and learning cooperatively, their thinking ability and problem analysis ability are greatly improved. In order to ensure the teaching quality, teachers urge students to learn by themselves through Wechat, Dingtalk before each class. Students gradually develop the habit of autonomous learning and can complete the learning tasks in advance. Through the guidance and encouragement from the teacher, students will formulate learning plans according to their personal situations after clarifying the learning goals. They will also supervise and motivate themselves to learn independently. After a long period of time, they will naturally develop the habit and ability of autonomous learning. As the enthusiasm for learning Chinese improves, their academic performance will naturally improve too. In addition, it is also found that most of students have been able to actively participate in teaching activities since the implementation of online flipped class practice.

4.4 Online Flipped Class for Oral Chinese as A Foreign Language Can Strengthen Students’ Ability of Cooperative Learning

During the online flipped class of oral Chinese as a foreign language, students need to complete group assignments based on the learning topics determined before class. Through interviews with students, it is found that students are unwilling to participate in group activities at the beginning, which made it difficult to carry out group projects. After continuous guidance and encouragement from teachers, students slowly begin to participate in activities, and the group division becomes clear gradually. Every student will participate in the activities and complete the tasks that they are responsible for. When encountering problems and disagreements, they actively communicate and solve them in time. After continuous running-in, communication and exchanges, students feel the joy of learning, the strength of unity, and the sense of accomplishment of cooperation. They encourage each other, explore and make progress together.

5. CONCLUSION

The online flipped class of oral Chinese as a foreign language combines the advantages of traditional face-to-face teaching and online teaching. It gives full play to the advantages of face-to-face teaching, and integrates the advantages of online learning that is not limited by time and space. It is more suitable for online teaching of oral Chinese as a foreign language, which is a new approach. In the flipped class, students do not need to be stuck at a specific time and place when learning Chinese, they can watch the video repeatedly, understand the knowledge in depth, and participate freely and actively in the course learning.

However, in this process, there are still some problems. Firstly, some students have low participation in continuing to participate in teaching activities. They are accustomed to the traditional face-to-face teaching model and passively accepting knowledge. They need to be encouraged and helped by teachers before class, so that they will learn actively and change learning methods. Moreover, they also need to be urged to complete the tasks and provide feedback timely. Secondly, some students have weak self-learning ability and poor group cooperative sense, which has a certain impact on the smooth development of project learning. The teacher needs to supervise the whole process, which add more pressure to teachers to a certain extent. Thirdly, some teachers don't do enough work in monitoring before class, so that the students' motivation and enthusiasm to participate in the teaching activities gradually weaken, which will affect the quality of online

flipped class of oral Chinese as a foreign language. Therefore, under the premise of normalization of online teaching, the teacher should further guide students to clarify their personal roles, cultivate autonomous learning capabilities, strengthen group communication and cooperation, and improve online learning capabilities.

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