The Application of Interactive English Teaching Mode in Junior Middle Schools

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Abstract

Interactive English teaching mode is a kind of new challenge to teachers under the new curriculum standard. In order to create a harmonious and equal teaching environment, teachers must be able to have a positive interaction with students, that's to say, to respect students' dominate role and to attract students to participate in teaching activities actively. The thesis aims to conduct a series of studies of interactive English teaching mode in junior middle school and hopes it could have a good effect to improve students' applied ability of English.

Key word: Interactive English teaching mode; New curriculum standard; Junior middle schools

INTRODUCTION

With the development of reform and opening up in China, the relationship between China and other countries over the world is increasingly strengthened. English, as a world language, plays a more and more important role in our daily life. Therefore, for junior middle school students in the new era, improving their applied ability of English is not only the requirement of talents education but also the demand of the times. In traditional English teaching mode, teacher is the center of the whole class. What teacher taught is the only source of knowledge. On the contrary, students are only passive receivers. Their engagement in the English classroom activities is not that enough. As is known to all that junior middle school students are quick in mind, energetic and full of thirst for knowledge. However, they are often easily shacked by the traditional teaching model. English Curriculum Standard (2011 edition) explicitly stipulates: "English course must face all-level students, stress on quality education, focus on every student's emotion, stimulate their interest in English and enforce real interactive English classroom." (Cheng, 2002). Thus, it is necessary to vigorously implement the interactive English teaching mode in junior middle school classroom to improve the efficiency of teaching and to strengthen students' applied ability of language.

1. AN OVERVIEW OF INTERACTIVE ENGLISH TEACHING MODE

Social interaction theory considers the social communicative function that language has played in human relationships as the origin of the structure of human beings' language. This theory stresses environment, especially social interaction as the origin of language (Gui, 2004). Social interaction theory belongs to the branch of language acquisition theory. It emphasizes on the importance of interaction in the process of language learning. Students' progress and their communicative ability's improvement cannot do without the classroom interactive activities. Brown (2003) points out: In interactive teaching activities, teacher is the controller, director, administrator, facilitator and information provider. He thinks language teaching as a gradual transition continuum from instructional teaching to non-directive teaching, which makes students get rid of their dependence on teachers, textbooks and classroom activities unconsciously and acquire the ability of using

English independently. Through interactive English teaching mode, student can experience the authentic language materials by seeing, listening and reading. By using those language materials to have some classroom activities, such as discussion, role-playing and debating, it can increase students' language input, arouse their learning interest, boost their self-motivation and improve students' applied ability of English.

Interactive English teaching mode takes teaching activity as an excellent way for teachers and students to exchange their thoughts and emotions. By doing activity, a harmonious interaction between teacher, students and teaching materials is formed; a positive teaching resonance is produced and a good teaching effect is achieved. The key of interactive teaching mode is interactive, which refers to the mutual influence between teacher, students and other teaching materials (Lü, 2005). Teacher should shift his role from knowledge importer, teaching dominant and classroom controller to the guider, organizer and collaborator of the class. Students should shift their roles from knowledge receivers and order followers to the participants and protagonists of the class. In interactive English teaching mode, teacher and students are all the initiative subjects. All of them are the organizers and participants that can have the opportunities to show their capabilities and talents. Actually this is how interactive English teaching mode achieved its teaching objectives successfully. A successful teaching mode need to form a new bilateral teaching relations , in which teacher should take chance to guide students skillfully, swift teaching methods flexibly and give lessons attractively, and students under the guidance of teacher should try to think independently, take part in classroom activities enthusiastically and free themselves from conventions boldly. They teach and learn from each other and build a real learning community. Thus, interactive English teaching mode is a successful teaching method according to the requirement of new curriculum standard.

2. MAJOR FACTORS OF INTERACTIVE ENGLISH TEACHING MODE

2.1 Teacher's Guide: The Prerequisite for Interactive Teaching

In the process of Interactive English teaching, the interaction between the teacher and the students is based on teacher's guide. Before the class, the teacher can introduce to them the background knowledge and put forward the teaching requirements, thus clearing the obstacles of studying new knowledge, providing the abundant perceptual materials, and laying the foundation for the students' understanding better. Meanwhile, the teacher's guide is benefit for creating the proper language environment and providing the opportunity of language communication. And the guide can be placed before or after the class. The students use English continuously in the process of interaction, which stimulates their interests in learning English and develops the ability of communication.

2.2 Student's Understanding: The Basis of Interaction

At the beginning of the class, the teacher should set the practical and staged teaching aims, according to the students' features in psychology and physiology. The students can know the methods and requirements of self-study and to catch the new lesson in the process of self-study. The students' self- study makes preparation for interactive learning. Then they can finish all kinds of tasks (listening, speaking, reading and writing).

2.3 Group's Activities: The Main Body of Interaction

This part is based on the students' self-study and tentative perception. The group is made up of all- leveled students and can be rearranged every a period of time. During the class, the member reads the passage, and other members give their evaluation. Then through taking turns in asking questions, they will understand the whole passage. And the leader of the group makes a summary of every member's questions to invite all to discuss and think about. Then every leader gathers their questions they can't handle, and discuss them among all the groups. In the process, the teacher should play the leading role in the discussion and help the students solve the problems through taking part in the discussion. When the students have difficulties in understanding, the teacher should lead them to find the right answer by themselves, instead of displaying the model answer. In the way of self - regulated learning can the students discuss and cooperate with each other.

2.4 Discussion Among the Groups: The Key of Interaction

After the discussion, the students have solved the basic problems. The teacher can ask more difficult questions which may come from the discussion in groups. In order to find the answer, the students can discuss within and then among the groups. the teacher invites an excellent leader to answer the question, and encourages other groups to make a judge, complement, even criticism. After that, every group raises their questions for all groups' discussing. During the discussion, the teacher should lead them opportunistically to embroider on this theme. Finally, the teacher and students make a summary of what they have learned.

2.5 Performance Display: The Test and Judgment of Interaction

Only through testing can we know if we have achieved the learning goals. The way of testing can be divided into evaluation with test and the important one without test

which can make the students to experience success and failure. The encouragement from the teacher and students will be benefit to create a relaxing atmosphere in which students can learn more words, speak more, listen more and project themselves more.

3. A CASE STUDY OF INTERACTIVE ENGLISH TEACHING MODE

The aim of interactive teaching is to create a favorable language learning environment for students. Now the thesis will take a case study --Unit8 What Should I do? Of Grade 8 Go For It! to further illustrate how to design a successful interactive English teaching class. The design of the class is demonstrated as follows:

3.1 Warm-Up Activity

Warm-up activity is used to stimulate students' interests in English, guide them to pay attention to the target language environment and help them to be well prepared for the new lesson. According to the content of this lesson, a short video that James pays respect to Michael Jordan is displayed. While watching the video, students are asked to listen carefully for the sentence that repeated most in it. After students speak out the answer together, teacher leads in the new lesson and write down the title What Should I Do? On the blackboard, and then students could realize what they are going to learn in the following class.

3.2 Group Work

Teacher prepares 5 pictures for each group. Each group chooses one picture and describes the picture with their group members together. Then teacher gives 2 questions to each group to discuss according to the content of their picture: Q_1. What is wrong with him/her? Q_2. What should he/she do? This process not only provides students with the opportunity to express themselves freely but also the opportunity to practices of those sentence patterns frequently. By answering these two questions, it is believed that students could have a better understanding of the contents and objectives of the class, which would be good for the teacher to carry out the next teaching procedures.

3.3 Classroom Discussion

Teacher asks each group to appoint one representative to show their group work results to the whole class. After the representative's demonstration, teacher will ask some more questions to guide the whole class to think the problem deeply. And then the whole class discusses the problem excitedly to think out some other solutions to solve the problem. Those questions give more chances for students to speak English and provide feedback to teachers about students' understanding of the teaching objectives. Meanwhile, it causes a series of dialogues and discussion between teacher and students also. In fact, all of these are important factors of interactive teaching.

3.4 Testing

After the learning for nearly half an hour, it is time for the teacher to test what students have already learned. Teacher arranges some exercises that related to the language point for students to consolidate their learning. Once students finish the exercise, the teacher will not give the right answers immediately but to ask the whole class to find out the right answers together, which can mobilize students' participation and make the testing part lively also.

Through the warm-up activity, group work and classroom discussion procedures, students are very familiar with what they are required to master in the class. And attributing to the practice before, there is no doubt that the whole classroom atmosphere is very happy and excited, the interaction between teacher and students is harmonious, and all the teaching objectives including vocabulary, speaking and listening are all practiced well. Hence, it is the right time that teacher should make a brief summary about all the language points to help students have a holistic, comprehensive and deeper understanding of what they are required to master in the class. At the same time, teacher should make an objective evaluation to the whole classroom activities so that it can give a timely feedback to students on their performance in the class. And only in this way could the effect of interactive teaching be guaranteed.

4. SIGNIFICANCE OF INTERACTIVE ENGLISH TEACHING MODE

4.1 Promote the Full Implementation of New Curriculum Standard

In recent years, junior middle school curriculum has been doing the adjustment all the way to make every effort to meet the needs of the times. The key of the curriculum reform does not lie in the design and change of teaching materials, but the teacher's teaching behavior (Gan, 2010). The full implementation of the new curriculum is largely depended on the accurate positioning of teacher's role, the true realization of students' subjectivity in the class and the innovation of teaching method. While the interactive English teaching mode just can contribute to the manifestation of students' subjectivity, the accurate positioning of teacher's role and the true changing of teaching method.

4.2 Cultivate Students' Innovation Ability

Every student is an independent individual, owning their own ways of thinking, emotions, willingness and characteristics. The goal of education is to promote student's development and make them to be the master of study. In interactive English teaching mode, teachers are encouraged to create new opportunities to introduce open teaching methods like discussing, having conversations, making presentations and performing to the class in terms of interactive forms. This kind of interactive form

does good for students to find out, research and explore problems. During the interaction process, students can make full play of their subjectivity, creativity and initiative. Therefore, interactive English teaching mode can conduce to cultivate students' innovation ability.

4.3 Update Education Idea, Establish a Harmonious and Friendly Teacher-Student Relation to Achieve a Two-Way Process

The American psychologist Rodgers says, "a successful teaching relies on a sincere understanding, a mutually trusting teacher-student relationship and a safe harmonious atmosphere in class." (Liao, 2003) Teaching is a two-way process. In three teaching aspects including teaching content, procedures and relationship, if interaction and communication are lacked, the class teaching will be pale and depressing—No souls, no ups and downs. Therefore, teachers are required to update teaching idea and create a harmonious mutual communication. Interactive English teaching mode emphasizes on the harmonious interaction between teacher and students. It updates education ideas and realizes the concept of teacher and students to learn while teaching.

CONCLUSION

Though the interactive English teaching mode is a new type, it's not a throughout denial of traditional English teaching mode. Therefore, in the teaching process, teachers should inherit useful components in traditional teaching science, establish a vigorous and interacting teaching operation system, in order to let students really involve into the class teaching and fully cultivate language using ability of students. The achievement of maximal teaching outcome is based on a harmonious relationship between teachers and students. Interactive English teaching mode can help realize the biggest goal--Students are able to listen, speak and communicate in English.

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