

The Application of Task-based Teaching Method for English Teaching in Application-oriented Colleges

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Abstract

Task-based teaching method is a new educational concept. In classes, teachers should actively play a leading role, setting up teaching situations to create favorable conditions for students' active participation, stimulating students' learning motivation. On the basis of analyzing the current situation of English teaching in application-oriented colleges, the application and maneuverability of task-based teaching method was discussed. This article aims to explore suitable English teaching models in application-oriented colleges that can cultivate students' practical English application abilities.

Keywords: key words, orkforce sizing, job-shop production, holonic model

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1. Introduction

Task-Based Learning theory is a far-reaching language learning theory and teaching model proposed by researchers working on foreign language teaching method and second foreign language learners in the 1980s after extensive research and implementation. This task-oriented teaching model has gradually become popular in China educational circles and attracted more and more attention. The English teaching in application-oriented colleges emphasizes the purpose of application and the balance of practicality and pertinence of teaching content, integrating basic language skills and real foreign language communication abilities to meet the high demand for talents in 21st century. Due to that the task-based teaching methods emphasizing the importance of practicality, it is suitable for English teaching for application-oriented colleges. Application-oriented college is different from research university, the former focuses more on cultivating technical application skills. Students trained by these colleges should master basic knowledge as well as professional skills.

2. Task-based teaching methods and tasks

As an emerging educational method, "task-based teaching" originated from the recent language communication theory and basic teaching, which has profound impact on cognitive psychology. Scholars have different opinions on the understanding of tasks. Some scholars insist that tasks should be practical, while other scholars emphasize the educational role of tasks. Elis advocates learning by performing a series of tasks, which can trigger language knowledge, language ability and language learning process, and the setting of tasks can create the necessary environment and conditions for language learning. She claims that learners need opportunities for meaningful interaction and the possibility of receiving language input that is conducive to stimulating language learning when they are "forced" to use an accurate and appropriate foreign language to complete tasks. She believes that the goal of a task is to guide learners to collaborate to solve certain problems through meaning interaction. She also notes that the teacher's guidance of tasks in the classroom is a prerequisite for learners to implement the task, and it is the method for class organization and arrangement. The term "task" is a little different from the traditional meaning in our daily life, like reading, writing or listening. Instead, the term "task" in English teaching refers to the behavior in class, that is students' performance during learning, understanding and perceiving language. The purpose of task-based teaching is to stimulate students practicing language. Tasks are guided by meaningful language use, including a series of actions performed during foreign language teaching. During the process of participating in activities (completion of tasks), students have always maintained a proactive learning attitude. In other words, "task-based teaching" sets up a series of tasks with the purpose of promoting students to improve their language skills in the process of executing the tasks. The core idea of "task-based teaching" is to learn language through language interaction. Therefore, during this interaction process, students need to maintain a proactive learning

attitude in order to complete the task and apply as much resources as possible including linguistic and non-linguistic to reach a consensus, in order to solve various communication problems. "Task-based teaching" not only focuses on the completion and quantity of students' tasks, but also the improvement of language skills in the process of completing these tasks. In such a task-based English teaching environment, teachers will assign appropriate tasks, whether completed individually or in a team. At this stage, proper evaluation will be made based on the results to ensure language input and output in an interactive and collaborative environment. In this way, students can truly take the initiative in learning and their learning attitude will be improved.

3. The current situation and English teaching principles of application-oriented colleges

3.1 Outdated teaching philosophy and teaching model

The primary task of English teaching in application-oriented colleges is to make students capable of reading and translating professional materials use relevant tools, as well as conducting basic oral or written communication during work. In general, it is to improve students' practical English skills through systematic learning. Generally speaking, application-oriented college still follows the teacher-centered English teaching method at the junior high school level. In the classroom, teachers dominate the teaching process, and students only passively receive knowledge and act as listeners. Teachers seldom or even do not provide students with a platform for self-expression. Students rarely have the opportunity to practice. Therefore, despite two years of study, most students are still unable to use English proficiently.

3.2 Weak foundation and uneven level

Due to the uneven distribution of education level between different provinces in China, students' English skills level varies greatly. Besides, students admitted to application-oriented colleges are less competitive compared to those admitted to research university, usually possess relatively weak foundation in class performance. The main obstacle is the insufficient vocabulary, which greatly affect the communication ability, thus impeding other skills improvement. Many students lack a diligent and studious attitude, while some students only focus on obtaining diplomas rather than improving their actual abilities.

This article takes the unit 1 Growing up from College English as an example to explain the task-based teaching method in designing college English classroom activities.

4. The application of task-based teaching method for College English in application-oriented colleges

For the goals of application-oriented colleges, task-based teaching method has greater advantages than the traditional teaching model, since it could promote stronger self-motivation. Application-oriented college is mainly about cultivating practical talents, emphasizing the full mastery of theoretical knowledge and the high development of application abilities. The task-based teaching method is based on the concepts of "student-centered" and "humanistic education", which is fully consistent with the emphasis on students' practical application abilities in application-oriented colleges. Due to its substantive and interactive nature, task-based teaching methods can significantly improve students' participation and ignite students' intrinsic learning motivation, which enables them actively master language.

4.1 Pre-task stage

Before class, the teacher will assign some homework and students will complete these assignments in their free time with the help of tools such as the library and the Internet.

Warming-up Activities-Discuss the following questions: What is the definition of growing up? What the advantages and disadvantages if any of growing up?

4.2 In-task stage

In class, students will be divided into several groups. First, potential keywords, phrases, and sentence structure that may be used will be demonstrated by PPT. Then, each group member will discuss their own opinion on the definition as well as advantage and disadvantages of growing up. If any conflicting opinions occur, let them discuss. In the process of completing tasks, teachers must always monitor everyone, and use targeted methods to help students transform their thinking into verbal expressions. After the implementation of the designed tasks, the students' enthusiasm for learning was successfully ignited, which not only strengthened the knowledge they learned, but also effectively improved their English speaking and thinking skills.

4.3 Post-task stage

Teams present their previous group discussion and make evaluation on the completeness of the review and the appropriateness of the verbal explanation, and summarize the main vocabulary and language points. This process effectively improved students' language skills, critical thinking and teamwork ability.

5. The advantages of task-based teaching method

Design a variety of tasks suiting application-oriented college students to stimulate their enthusiasm for learning and thus enhance their enthusiasm for learning English. In the process of performing tasks, students combine language theory with practical skills, which is beneficial to improving their comprehensive language application skills. Encourage students to actively integrate into language communication activities and inspire innovative thinking, which is of great benefit to tapping students' subjective initiative, and helping to enhance students' innovative concepts and innovative strength.

In the task-based teaching method, many works have to be done by couples or more instead of individual. Specifically speaking, a strong spirit of cooperation can ensure the successful completion of tasks. Therefore, it also helps develop students' teamwork skills and enhance team cohesion. In the task-based teaching process, every student can get the opportunity to think independently and actively participate under the encouragement of teachers, which helps to maintain their enthusiasm for learning, gradually form a positive learning attitude, and improve their personal self-learning ability.

6. Things to note for task-based teaching method

6.1 Tasks must be designed to meet students' language abilities and ensure that the difficulty is moderate

When planning teaching tasks, teachers must be able to accurately grasp students' needs and understand their English skills, concepts, interests and preferences in order to design tasks suitable for them. Plan various teaching tasks according to students' specific conditions, and rationally evaluate the rationality and executability of task, thereby ensuring that the task-based teaching method can meet the language proficiency of all types of language learners, and at the same time ensure that the tasks have certain challenge performance while maintaining operational feasibility.

6.2 Teachers must keep adjusting their roles when using tasking-based teaching method

Although taking students as the main body is the principle of task-based teaching method, this does not mean that teachers are just spectators. Timely adjustment of their roles can help student complete tasks more effectively. Before teaching begins, teachers need to use textbook materials to carefully plan activities that are consistent with students' language abilities and can attract their attention. When assigning tasks, teachers should indicate and review students' planned routes. Teachers act as supervisors during students' activities. When students are conducting group activities, teachers can visit each group one by one to understand the progress of the activities and give corresponding suggestions. When students make their summary presentations, the teacher should appear as a moderator and comment on each team's completion of the task. In the final stage of the task, the teacher should sort out the students' summary reports and correct common language errors.

6.3 The impact of testing and assessment methods

As an innovative education method, task-based teaching method has been widely used in practical teaching aspects such as speaking, reading, and writing, and has achieved remarkable results. However, the assessment system of task-based teaching method still has many shortcomings and lacks standards. Existing examination methods cannot truly reflect students' communication skills and comprehensive qualities. Due to the lack of effective evaluation methods, it is difficult to measure educational results, and students' enthusiasm may also be affected. Therefore, how to conduct powerful assessments requires further research. It is recommended to use a method that combines teacher evaluation and student self-evaluation.

7. Teaching reflection on task-based teaching method

Generally speaking, task-based teaching method focuses mainly on students' active participation, and teachers' adjustment and help as a supplementary, which can effectively improve students' self-learning ability. In task-based teaching, emphasis is placed on communication and shared learning among students, which is considered a key path to improving students' self-learning abilities.

To make task-based teaching method effective in English teaching, the following factors need to be considered: First of all, when planning teaching activities, we must pay full attention to Students' English proficiency ensures that the difficulty level is adapted. Courses that are too difficult will cause stress and rejection among students, and courses that are too easy will make students feel bored. Because the backgrounds and English proficiency of students vary widely, teachers must consider when assigning tasks. For students with poor English proficiency, some simple tasks should be assigned, such as describing simple environments or steps; for students with higher English proficiency, some challenging tasks can be assigned, such as oral presentation of topics, etc. Next, during the task execution phase, the educator needs to be able to flexibly change your role according to circumstances and quickly adjust tasks to adapt to unpredictable classroom dynamics. Although task-based education focuses on students, this does not mean that the educator is just an observer. Instantly changing roles can help student complete tasks more effectively and achieve teaching goals. Teachers are guides, supervisors, and critics after each task.

8. Teaching reflection on task-based teaching method

At present, most students in application-oriented colleges express a positive attitude towards task-based teaching in public English courses. The task-based teaching method has played a positive role in promoting students' language skills and learning abilities, which is specifically reflected in: increasing students' interest and enthusiasm in learning, helping students regain their confidence in learning English; improving students' language skills; enhancing students' self-learning ability. Judging from the characteristics of task-based teaching applied in English teaching, it emphasizes the practicality of English, which is very important for students in application-oriented colleges. At present, the focus of English education is to integrate learning and practicality, that is, to use while learning, so as to cultivate students' strategic use, problem thinking, technology application, cross-field learning ability and career vision. This teaching model breaks the separation of learning and practice in the past. Therefore, practical task-based teaching is fully in line with the current trends in the reform of English education.

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