Practice and Reflection on College English Reading Teaching Based on Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion (PAD Class) Mode

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ABSTRACT

Chiefly taking the students as the main body of teaching, Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion (PAD Class) teaching mode conforms to the development law of modern education, arouses the teachers' enthusiasm and inspiration in English teaching, increases the students' motives to study and explore actively, and facilitates the efficiency and quality of English classroom teaching. Based on this background, in order to explore its actual teaching effect, to investigate perception of the learners, and to explore the appropriate paths of college English reading teaching reform, this paper discussed and analyzed Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion (PAD Class) teaching mode by investigation and empirical method, which revealed that learners benefited from autonomous learning and group learning and Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode was favorable to improving English proficiency of middle-level students. Besides, this paper puts forward that the teachers should be close together with their students to offer immediate guidance and help in the process of the students' individual independent learning and group cooperation.

Keywords: *Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion, practice, reflection, reading teaching, college English*

1. INTRODUCTION

It is one of the requirements of the teaching reform in colleges and universities to carry out heuristic, discussion and participation instruction in the classroom. College English course is a compulsory basic course for college students, which covers a wide range and has a great influence on students' comprehensive ability. In order to improve the quality of higher education in an all-round way, it is necessary for us to implement the continuous reform of College English teaching. At present, although multimedia technology is widely used in College English teaching, the classroom features of teachers' ceaseless speaking and students' listening with silence remain the same as ever before, therefore, the teaching effect is not satisfactory, and students' interest in learning is not aroused. In addition, in view of large class size, it is very difficult for teachers to take into account the students' needs, and to make a great balance between the active students with good English proficiency and the inactive, poor English proficiency learners. On the one hand, the degree of students' participation in classroom activities is relatively low, and the classroom atmosphere is relatively dull and dry. On the other hand, college English teachers are under a heavy burden of teaching, which easily leads to their burnout. As a consequence, both teachers and learners in colleges and universities need to explore new teaching mode.

With the continuous development and innovation of educators, in the process of college English reading teaching, there springs up the application of Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode, which effectively improves the efficiency and quality of teaching, meets the specific needs of teachers and students, so as to truly stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning and to enable students to do English reading appreciation in a better way. Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode is welcomed among teachers and students in colleges and universities. However, in the process of practical use, Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode has also encountered corresponding problems, so this paper attempts to analyze and explore the practice and reflection on college English reading teaching based on Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode.

2. AN OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION-ASSIMILATION-DISCUSSION TEACHING MODE THEORY

The Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode is a new teaching mode, which was proposed by Professor Xuexin Zhang in the Department of Psychology of Fudan University in 2014. He established the teaching mode on the foundation of the fact that teachers' instruction was not equal to students' acquisition, besides, classroom discussion required students' internal understanding and problem generation [7].

Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode still pays attention to the classroom teaching content, and teachers should conduct meticulous and patient guidance,

so as to ensure that students in the process of learning can better absorb the corresponding knowledge points for the purpose of expansion and promotion. When teachers make the teaching designs, they should realize that the presentation and discussion are staggered in time. After the teacher's presentation, the students are offered a certain amount of time to study independently and carry out personalized internal absorption. The requirements of teaching in this new teaching mode are intensive instruction and "blank space" should be guaranteed, so much so that students can arrange their own time to solve the problems in the "blank space" after class, prepare for the group discussion in class, and realize the sublimation and problem discussion based on the understanding of the classroom teaching content. Consistent with the motivation of foreign flipped classroom and MOOC, this teaching method can effectively improve classroom efficiency, increase students' logical thinking consciousness, stimulate students' learning imagination, cultivate students' research-oriented thinking, and enable students to think and explore better according to the content of teaching. It does not emphasize the interaction between students and teachers, but also advocate autonomous learning, in addition to team spirit.

Generally speaking, Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode divides the lecture time that originally belongs to the teacher into two parts. One part is left to the lecturers to teach English reading materials, the other part is left to the students to discuss and think on their own [1]. Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode includes three stages: Presentation, Assimilation and Discussion, which are called Pad Classroom for short, as shown in Figure 1, and classroom discussion, case analysis and literature report are involved into the teaching process.
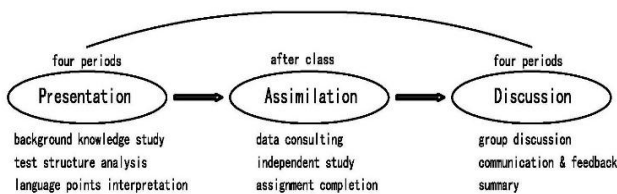

Figure 1. Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion Teaching Mode

Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode is a local initiative in China, and has been rapidly improved. The related researches of the Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode have been conducted by plenty of scholars. According to Ruifeng Chen, the concept of Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode contains "Presupposition and Generation", which stimulates the enthusiasm and creative talent of teachers and students, and makes teachers and students become the subject of learning process [3]. Jiantie Li, who aims at the problems existing in the traditional teaching model, applies the new teaching mode and internalizes the knowledge in the teaching [2]. Wanli Zhao, applies Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode to

college English teaching, and combines with practical cases, proposes that this mode plays a positive role in enhancing students' internal learning motivation, improving students' thinking ability and problem-solving ability, and boosting teachers' growth and development [4]. Xiufang Zhao believes that this new mode has a positive guiding impact in college English translating teaching, which makes students change from passive to interactive learning [6]. Xuyang Liu and Xiaoying Guo solve the problems of students' hollowness of composition content and unreasonable structure by integrating this teaching mode with dynamic evaluation, just to name a few [5]. Up to now, there are more and more teachers and schools all over the country trying to use Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode. However, there are not many in-depth empirical types of research on the implementation of college English curriculum.

3. PROBLEMS ON COLLEGE ENGLISH READING TEACHING

In practical reading teaching, Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode has also been stuck with some corresponding problems.

3.1 Problems of Teachers

First of all, in the current English teaching situation, teachers often only pay attention to teaching English theoretical knowledge, ignore the training of students' reading ability, teaching evaluation criteria are rather sole and single, as a result, students learn in a very passive way, and they often do some rote memorization, and it's demanding to conduct the effective reading skills expansion. Secondly, teachers do not pay enough attention to the students' feedback, so that their supervision is not in place. Teachers generally believe that as for non-English majors, in the process of English learning, there is no need to expand their English reading skills further. Those students only need to master a few basic reading skills and grammatical knowledge. Thirdly, generally speaking, college English textbooks don't attach enough importance to write reviews after reading, nor do they give corresponding training guidance to students. In the classroom reading teaching process, the lecturers' methods are too traditional and single, seriously affecting students' development of thinking ability and output capacity.

3.2 Problems of Students

In the process of learning, students with good language reading ability can think and explore actively, while students with poor English proficiency always remain silent. In the long run, in the process of English learning and expansion, students' polarization is more serious. Some students are not willing to use their brains to think or

have a weak interest in English reading learning. Some students do not want to spend time consulting materials to consolidate and enhance their knowledge, unwilling to discuss with other students. Some students have poor confidence in their oral communication ability so as to avoid thinking and exploring. In the process of classroom discussion, some students give up the opportunities to think independently and lack the spirit to make active explorations, and even the phenomenon of plagiarism arises. All of these factors lead to students' lack of independent reading ability, which absolutely prevents students to express their views effectively, and correspondingly the classroom learning atmosphere cannot be built satisfactorily.

4. THE PRACTICE OF PRESENTATION-ASSIMILATION-DISCUSSION TEACHING MODE IN COLLEGE ENGLISH READING TEACHING

4.1 The Application Background of the Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion Mode in College English Reading Teaching

With the continuous development and progress of college English education, College English Test Band 4 and Band 6 have been greatly reformed and innovated, and the reading score has been raised to 35% of the total mark. Therefore, English teachers should start from reality and conduct English reading teaching according to students' learning status and mastery state, so that they can guide students to learn English better by means of enhancing their logical thinking consciousness and fostering their English reading skills.

In the current practice of English reading teaching, not a few teachers adopt traditional teaching methods to instruct students, which makes students too passive in the process of learning. Students' autonomous practice time in and out of class is relatively limited, which leads to the fact that the students can not satisfy their study needs and promote their own reading ability according to their own actual situation, what's more, their self-confidence of English learning has been seriously hit. Students' passion and interest in reading and teachers' teaching ability, teaching consciousness and energy devotion cannot be matched well. Teachers cannot understand the students' specific learning level, so they cannot arrange the teaching strategies on the basis of the students' learning conditions, which results in the prospects that the effect of college English reading teaching cannot be really improved, therefore, the quality and efficiency of teaching need to be optimized as soon as possible. Over the course of the actual teaching practice, lecturers had better make good use of the Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode as well as the diversified teaching concepts to carry out their teaching, which can effectively reform and

innovate the traditional classroom model, so that the disadvantages of traditional teaching model can be avoided, additionally, students can feel the charm of English learning, thus stimulating students' independent reading ability, accordingly, helping students to learn English better and broaden their mental horizons with the guidance of teachers.

4.2 Specific Practice of Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion Mode in College English Reading Teaching

The actual advantage of the Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode is to let the students think and explore effectively under the guidance of teachers. Over the course of English reading teaching, teachers should carry out supplementary teaching according to the characteristics of reading materials and students' learning level, so that students can get perfected and prepare for more targeted assignments in order to improve their reading ability effectively.

Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode was designed in the authors' actual classroom reading teaching process. The teaching materials were Books 2 & 3 of the second edition of *New Century College English Zooming In: An Integrated English Course*. The semester was up to 12 weeks, 72 class hours in total. Each unit of reading teaching had four lessons and eight class periods, and one unit was supposed to be completed every five lessons. The authors set up class QQ groups as a teaching discussion platform to release all kinds of teaching materials, teaching requirements, collect homework and register attendance. The assessment of the course combined the students' homework, discussion, and performance in QQ groups with final exam results for a comprehensive and objective evaluation. The control variables of the experiment were the authors, students' English foundation, teaching content and teaching time and the experimental variables are Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode.

The first lesson of each unit in the experimental class was classroom teaching. The authors talked about the knowledge points relevant to text A in detail and briefly assigned homework so as to help students have preliminary understanding and cognition with the aid of multimedia teaching method. The authors supervised students' reading learning by asking questions or giving reading tests to them, and gave the corresponding guidance in time, and made use of humorous and witty language to make students feel the fun of English learning. After class, the students internalized the knowledge points of reading theory and absorbed the teaching content and completed the homework. In the second lesson, the students discussed the assignments in class. Firstly, they discussed in groups. Each group consists of six members. In the group discussion, the authors also encouraged the students to express themselves boldly, used the free discussion and the free statement to enhance the classroom activity, and enhanced students' study enthusiasm. The authors

collected the remaining difficult problems from the groups. Then the whole class discussed them together. Finally, the authors put forward the solutions and summarized the key language points. In the third lesson, text B of each unit was explained by the authors. After class, homework was arranged for students to further digest the content of the class. In the fourth lesson, each group selected a group leader. The group leader was responsible for coordinating the allocation of learning tasks and organizing independent learning discussions in class, and then the group leader represented the group to make a presentation of the reading assignments of text B by means of displaying the results of thinking and summarizing.

4.2.1. Research Objectives

The Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode was used in college English reading teaching process in order to explore its actual teaching effect, and to investigate perception of the students in the experimental class, so as to explore the appropriate paths of college English reading teaching reform.

4.2.2. Research Object

The teaching experiment was conducted in two classes of Grade 2019 in Chengdu Medical College. The subjects were 90 non-English majors, including 47 boys (52.2%) and 43 girls (47.8%). The students' English level was average overall, and the students came from all provinces in the country, and there was no significant difference in the pre-test scores between two classes. One class was experimental class, in which the authors implemented Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode; the other class was control class, in which the authors adopted the traditional teaching mode.

4.2.3. Research Methods

The authors employed investigation and empirical method. Based on Xuexin Zhang's questionnaire, combined with the characteristics of the subject, the questionnaire was adapted into the questionnaire of college English Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion reading teaching mode. The questionnaire used the 5-point Likert Scale, and covered 15 items in total. The reliability of the questionnaire was relatively high, since the three-dimensional questionnaire involved classroom teaching, group discussion and overall evaluation. From textbooks to the Internet, from in-class study to extracurricular activities, individual tasks and group tasks, as well as teacher-student interactions and student-student interactions were the mainstay of this research.

4.2.4. Data Collection

In the first week when students begin to study college English, the pre-test of the difficulty of CET-4 was conducted to determine whether the experimental class and the control class could meet the requirements of the experimental conditions. After 12 weeks of teaching, students were tested with test papers of the same difficulty level again. The results of the two tests were compared to evaluate the effect of the experiment. After a semester's reading teaching, students of experimental class were fully familiar with this teaching mode. At the end of the semester, experimental class was given questionnaires about Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode. 90 questionnaires were sent out and 82 effective questionnaires were submitted, with an effective rate of 92.2%. The average time for students to complete the questionnaires was 10 minutes. After collecting the pretest, post-test papers and questionnaires, the authors used SPSS 19.0 to analyze the data.

4.2.5. Data Analysis

In the reading teaching process of experimental class, the teacher changed the former full-class teaching mode, focusing on guiding learning, arousing students' interest in English learning, encouraging students to explore and control their learning time after class. The questionnaires revealed that 24.3% of the students agree with the reform, 50.3% of the students agreed with it. 40.6% of the students thought that the teaching of "in-class" could stimulate their interest in learning English. 38.5% of the students agreed very much that the first part of Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode (the teacher's intensive in-class lecture) helped them master the unit content, grasped the key and difficult points of learning, and laid the foundation for the following independent learning and group discussion.

The results of questionnaires also suggest that 52.3% of the students in experimental class held that group discussion could enhance students' internalization and absorption of the content after class. 35.1% of the students agreed that group discussion was able to stimulate students to communicate with each other and understand the unit content better. More than half (52.6%) of the students expressed in the group discussion, teachers' check of the group discussion results, real-time summary, and final summary led teachers to become equal members of the learning community, which was conducive to the formation of a good relationship between teachers and students. The group discussion changed the phenomenon that college students were not focused in class and seldom spoke actively in class discussion. Therefore, for the role of teachers, 37.4% of the students agreed firmly that the activities of group members carried out smoothly with the teacher's timely comment, support and encouragement on the discussion.

When it came to the test results, the difficulty degree of the pre-test and post-test was the same as that of CET-4. The independent sample t-analysis was used to analyze the students' pre-test and post-test scores (see Table 1). The results of independent sample t-test showed that there was

no significant difference in the scores of two classes before Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching experiment, the average score of the experimental class was 60.309, and the average score of the control class was 58.413, p=0.072>0.05.

Table 1. Independent Sample T Analysis of Pre-test Scores

Group	N	mean	S.D.	t	df	p
Experimental class	45	60.309	17.839	-1.578	48	0.072
Control class	45	58.413	20.058			

Table 2 shows the results of the students' post-test: the average score of the students in the experimental class has greatly increased from 60.309 to 67.486, which is higher than the average score of the students in the control class. The standard deviation of the experimental class also decreased from 17.839 to 10.375, the dispersion of students' scores decreased, and the scores tended to be more stable and concentrated. After a semester's teaching of college English reading via Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion mode, there was a significant difference between the experimental class and the control class (p =0.041<0.05), which proved that autonomous learning and group learning could not only promote the individuals to fulfill their learning responsibilities, but also help students to share their learning achievements with each other, and also showed that Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode was conducive to improve the English proficiency of middle-level students.

Table 2. Independent Sample T Analysis of Post-test Scores

Group	N	mean	S.D.	t	df	p
Experimental class	45	67.486	10.375	0.957	48	0.041
Control class	45	61.413	17.249			

4.3 Reflection

The experiment shows Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion reading teaching mode achieved a good teaching effect in the middle-level class, which proves that cooperative learning can reduce the students' disparity in achievement. The survey finds that students generally accept this new teaching mode. College English reading teaching is based on the cultivation of language ability, the cultivation of students' cultural awareness, international horizons and ways of thinking, and the development of cross-cultural exchanges. In accordance with the teaching objectives, college English reading teaching advocates the concept of active learning. The activity time and space of Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion include activities in class and activities after class. The activity forms include individual independent learning and group cooperation. The communication methods include written expression and face-to-face discourse demonstration. Students' thinking includes understanding, questioning and comment. The adoption of Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion methodology can guarantee all the above activities to be carried out successfully. Therefore, the reform of college English reading teaching with reference to Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion mode has been tested in both theory and practice. Of course, half of the time of this teaching model is still for teachers to teach.

Far and away the top priority of English classroom reading teaching at present lies in how teachers can improve each student's logical thinking consciousness and English learning initiatives to the maximum extent because only in such way, can students be trained to think and explore actively, can students' logical thinking consciousness be promoted, can students' enthusiasm in English reading learning be inspired, and can students' independent thinking ability be cultivated. In the actual English reading teaching process, if English teachers want to stir up students' enthusiasm for classroom interaction and participation, they should be fully integrated together with their students. Furthermore, teachers should carry out the targeted guidance and improvement in order to construct the English classroom in an ideal, harmonious, effective manner gradually according to students' practical problems.

5. CONCLUSION

Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode is to improve students' English reading ability, meanwhile, the deep integration of teachers' questions and students' questions can create an open new environment for teaching and learning English reading, which puts an end to the single and traditional English reading teaching method with less class time and low student participation. In addition, teachers should set up correct educational and teaching concepts, adopt diversified teaching methods and guide effectively according to students' cognitive laws, thus reflecting the important role of innovative teaching and helping students to carry out effective and efficient English reading learning.

Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion teaching mode has achieved remarkable teaching results, however, there are also some problems. For example, students' self-control ability is relatively weak and cannot fully guarantee high-quality video watching after class; students' self-learning assessment system needs to be further improved in order to assign more fair points; autonomous learning requires a lot of extracurricular time; participation in various activities does not guarantee sufficient time for autonomous learning, etc. Ultimately, exploring a suitable college English reading teaching mode during the English learning stage

has important guiding significance for improving their professional knowledge level and obtaining the English proficiency required for future work to the greatest extent on students' parts.

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