

Explorations to "Students-oriented" Teaching of The Guide to English-Speaking Countries Constructed by Multiple Paths

Yade Yang

Baoshan University, Baoshan Yunnan, 678000, China

Keyword: Multi-path, Students-centered, A Guide to English-speaking Countries, English Teaching.

Abstract. Among the courses of English majors, A Guide to English-speaking Countries is an important compulsory course. In the past, traditional classroom-based English teaching mode had many problems, which highlighted great limitations to the acquisition of English. In this paper, centering on the "students-centered" teaching argument, it will enrich the classroom-based English teaching mode by multiple paths, with the hope of obtaining breakthrough teaching quality and effects.

Introduction

To set up the teaching of A Guide to English-speaking Countries in colleges and universities, it aims at helping students to learn the brief introductions of English-speaking countries, such as politics, history, education, literature and tourism, so as to comprehensively show the culture of these countries. On one hand, the course of A Guide to English-speaking Countries has essentially opened the gate of fundamental cultural communication for students to learn English. On the basis of improving English level, students can improve their comprehensive cultural qualities. On the other hand, this course has injected more interests and vigor into English language teaching, which has brought profound significance to students' English learning and application.

Problems Existing in the Teaching of A Guide to English-speaking Countries

Outdated Contents of Teaching Materials

Currently, Chinese university students have used more than 10 editions of the teaching material-- A Guide to English-speaking Countries. However, there are no big differences, which have basically followed the quite outdated versions in the past. Some teaching materials even introduce the data five or six years ago. Learning contents are not so novel. Besides, there are many other deficiencies. Currently, many versions are not revised at all. The setting and arrangement of structure are not so reasonable, which seriously affects the English teaching effects and qualities in universities and colleges.

Generally Difficult Teaching Materials

Difficulty of teaching materials of A Guide to English-speaking Countries is obviously big. There are a huge amount of information and a broad range of knowledge. There are rich specific terms, which increase the learning difficulty for university students. In addition, many universities and colleges have arranged limited classes for students majored in English, which puts forward high standards and challenges for teaching efficiency of teachers. How to strengthen the students' absorbing efficiency of English within a limited time has become a big problem for teachers. Besides, there are many hidden key problems which are easy to be neglected.

Wrong Position of Teaching Emphasis [1]

While teaching A Guide to English-speaking Countries, many teachers have insisted on their own dominant positions in class, who think that teaching of A Guide to English-speaking Countries is quite difficult and students do not possess enough experiences to learn independently. Consequently,

students are always in the positions of passively accepting the knowledge. Such a mode has been followed in traditional Chinese classrooms for a quite long time. As teachers-centered teaching, although teachers master the classroom rhythm by themselves and they can give the pull play to lead students, students are always in the positions of passively accepting knowledge. Thus it is hard for them to cultivate interest in learning English, whose learning enthusiasm for widening the horizon is restricted as well. Consequently, teachers cannot actually harvest high-effective teaching effects. With the promotion of globalization, progress of social civilization and development of era, under the global background of taking English as the first language, importance of English learning and acquisition can be imagined. The society has much higher requirements of English majors with strong application ability. On the premise of possessing independent learning and positive learning ability, students can possess certain innovative abilities, so as to satisfy the requirements of social development and become the applicable talents in the English-application field after entering the society.

In a word, teaching of A Guide to English-speaking Countries has great difficulty, which is the social talent demand's test for teaching abilities of university teachers in the New Era. Therefore, on the basis of consistently reforming and improving teaching methods, teachers must adopt students-centered approach, actually follow the dominant role of students and improve the teaching efficiency, transform the passive knowledge acquisition in the past to subjective and positive learning process, fully explore students' interest in learning English and improve their understandings about English culture and history, and also gradually overcome the disturbances brought to teaching work caused by irrational teaching materials, further to help students to actually learn the overview of English-speaking countries^[2].

Analyzing on Construction of "Students-centered" Teaching Approach

Teachers should set up the "students-centered" teaching concept ideologically.

Currently, "students-centered" teaching philosophy plays a quite important guiding role in the classroom of English in universities and colleges. The traditional "teachers-centered" concept in the past has been transformed into "students-centered" concept. Teachers are required to advocate the establishment of philosophy and ideological transformation. Moreover, they should implement those to the classes of A Guide to English-speaking Countries, and then become the important Medias of teaching activities. "Students-centered" philosophy emphasizes on students' dominant role in teaching activities, which is helpful to let students give play to learning initiative and enthusiasm. However, it does not mean to deny the leading role of teachers in class. Under the "students-centered" mode, teaching can better promote the teaching effects and significance of teachers, which can also put forward higher requirements for teachers' leaning ability. Therefore, on the basis of totally mastering the psychological activities and changes of students, teachers should unblock their problems effectively and timely, encourage students to positively give full play to the subjective initiative and confirm the "students-centered" philosophy of A Guide to English-speaking Countries.

Teachers must implement the "students-centered" teaching form in deed.

Ideological transformation of teachers can be manifested by the teaching. For instance, before carrying out the teaching activities, teachers should make a complete plan of the classroom teaching to be developed, including content, key and difficult points, teaching model and method. Besides, they should also accurately predict the current English knowledge level, language application ability and comprehension degree of English-speaking countries' culture of the teaching objects, so as to play a better leading role of teachers in the teaching activities and better serve the leaning subjects^[3]. Under this premise, teachers should select high-effective teaching activities and models, so as to stimulate huge learning potentials and enthusiasm of students and encourage them to participate in teaching activities. It is noteworthy that teachers must pay attention to the differences of learning subjects during the process. Teaching activities must guarantee the learning requirements of students

at different levels, so as to guarantee that all students can benefit from activities. Setting of activities must be classified and hierarchical. Generally speaking, teachers' planning and designing of teaching activities have the fundamental guarantee for improving the learning efficiency of students. To give the play of initiative, it is also conducive to leading students to learn independently. Teachers should communicate more with students, comprehensively understand them and really develop high-efficient students-centered teaching classes.

Teachers should organize "students-centered" learning activities.

Teaching of A Guide to English-speaking Countries is quite different from the normal English teaching. Due to the extensiveness of knowledge, there are more space for teachers to develop more interesting teaching activities. With the help of such an advantage, teachers should positively cultivate students' learning interest and enthusiasm, fully stimulate good classroom learning atmosphere and construct multi-path teaching mode. 1) Teachers should organize colorful teaching activities, such as group discussion, speech competition and classroom debate. Starting from the group activities of university students and characteristics of students, students can realize the important position as learning subject and learning significance during the process of participating in the activities, so as to activate the classroom atmosphere, stimulate the interest in learning English, broaden the horizon and improve the students' comprehensive abilities. 2) Teachers should emphasize on diversified teaching forms. Closely combined with concrete structure and content of A Guide to English-speaking Countries, teachers can make expansions and classifications properly. Targeted at different types and requirements of courses, teachers can adopt different teaching forms and methods. Such as the grammar course, teachers should pay attention to complementary learning form between preview before class and review after class. In class, it should be dominated by interpretation and demonstration of teachers. By analyzing the abstract difficulty of learning grammar, teachers can carry out teaching activities. Such as the listening class, teachers are required to take the current grammar knowledge of students as the basis, further to inspect their abilities to apply English knowledge. Moreover, closely combined with the factors of English-speaking countries' culture and communication customs, teachers can develop the teaching activities. 3) Teachers should take full advantage of the modern multimedia technology. Such as the situational teaching and English listening course, once students understand knowledge of English-speaking countries, the listening process is not unitary or boring. With the help of multimedia technology, teachers can represent images for students, so as to feel the knowledge vividly. Teachers can also make some noises on purpose and increase the listening difficulty for students, so as to let students obtain the most practical knowledge and feelings through all kinds of tests and inspections, and then actually improve the English learning ability.

Concrete Measures of Constructing "Students-centered" Teaching of A Guide to English-speaking Countries

Brainstorming Teaching Method

In the 1940s, Osborne put forward the concept of brainstorming. To apply that to the current college English teaching classroom, it requires teachers to lead students to have more thoughts about the problems within a certain time and put forward suggestions^[4]. To apply such a method to the classes of A Guide to English-speaking Countries in colleges and universities, teachers are required to offer a wide platform for students to public their opinions. In addition, they have to try to give no comment on speeches or opinions of students, so as to create an environment for them to express opinions freely and respect every student's opinion about relevant English knowledge. Teachers usually apply the brainstorming teaching method to the classes having discussions. For instance, centering on one subject, under the premise of free operation or independent thinking, it can be developed by discussion. They cannot only seek opportunities for students to exercise thoughts and ability of expression, but also draw inferences about other cases from one instance. Under the premise of

accumulating daily English knowledge, students can understand, analyze and accumulate relevant problems of English-speaking countries. The brainstorming teaching method mainly aims at letting students express their opinions, which conforms to the requirements of A Guide to English-speaking Countries and also the leaning demands of English. During the process of expression, students' subjective position in learning is more specific, namely the teaching form under the guidance of "students-centered" philosophy^[5].

Cooperative Learning Approach

To apply the cooperative learning approach to English Teaching in colleges and universities, it aims at cultivating students' spirit of unity and cooperation, consciousness of responsibility, increasing the sense of collective honor. Under the premise of specifying the subjective position in learning, every student can improve the ability promoted by the learning of peers. Such a method usually takes concrete teaching materials of A Guide to English-speaking Countries as the basis. Centering on certain contents, teaching is implemented. During the process of promotional development, contents will be gradually disintegrated into several subtasks, further to be arranged to different groups specifically. By collecting data, integrating information, communicating and discussing, and also sharing the link and process of conclusion, students in groups can solve problems together. They cannot only accumulate English knowledge, but also feel the techniques of seeking common points while reserving difference, helping each other and making progress. For instance, to learn the knowledge of English-speaking countries with different cultural backgrounds, learning of any country's language is based on its cultural background. However, cultures of those countries with the same language are diversified as well. Therefore, cultural learning of countries using the same language is not a simple task. While analyzing the knowledge point, teachers can assign different groups to represent different English-speaking countries simultaneously, allocate tasks of introducing cultural backgrounds, summarize information and get a conclusion, and also share and explore with other students.

Online Teaching Approach

With the help of modern internet teaching tool, teachers can develop independent researches and learning under the network environment. Relying on powerful network functions, teachers can establish the teaching net about A Guide to English-speaking Countries, students can learn and expand based on teachers' preparations in advance. Teaching of online platform mainly lies in independent learning, thus students can be encountered by many problems in the process, who need to think and solve those problems independently. It can promote students to improve their abilities to think independently and solve problems. Besides, online resources have a large capacity, which can let students realize the independent learning and stimulate their interests in learning. Moreover, open learning environment can also help students to give full play to associate and innovate. While preparing teaching materials, teachers need to pay attention to the setting of all knowledge points and extension of knowledge, so as to help students to realize the supplement of knowledge as much as possible. In addition, teachers should take advantage of the fresh and beautiful online teaching interface, attract learning attentions of students and also take advantage of audios and videos to increase the learning enthusiasm of students.

Practical Activities

While setting up all kinds of English teaching practices, teachers need to pay attention to the key factor, namely the diversity of activities. By taking advantage of novel and interesting teaching approaches, teachers can promote the teaching quality and effect of A Guide to English-speaking Countries. Starting from the interests of students, teachers can seek more practicing opportunities for students, such as participating in investigating foreign enterprises, or, based on various English materials and movie clips, integrating that into teaching.

All in all, the course of A Guide to English-speaking Countries in colleges and universities is a quite special English specialized course, with quite strong comprehensiveness and broad contents.

From the student-centered perspective, teachers can construct classroom teaching mode by multiple channels, further to actually realize effective teaching and let students to obtain knowledge in good environment and colorful teaching activities, so as to comprehensively improve their own comprehensive abilities and actually become useful talents for the society.

Acknowledgement

Foundation Program: Educational Quality and Reform Engineering Program of Baoshan College Researches on Construction of Formative Assessment Model in Teaching of A Guide to English-speaking Countries, Serial No. 15B003JGY) .

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