

The Development of the Blended Learning Program in College English Lesson Under the Field of Action Research

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Abstract: With the rapid development of modern information technology, especially computer network technology, blended learning has attracted more and more attention in education in recent years. This study explores the application of blended learning method in college English teaching based on action research. The purpose of this study is to develop a blended learning program through two rounds of action research, 133 non-English major students in Jilin Engineering Normal University were tracked and statistical analysis of their scores in two English final examinations. The results of this study showed that the blended learning method combined with the advantages of online learning and classroom teaching, promote the cognitive development of students, improve their motivation and confidence in learning College English, and cultivate their high-order thinking skills and social skills.

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of information technology in higher education, information technology is changing the learning mode of college students at an amazing speed. The most important feature of blended learning is to combine classroom synchronous oral communication with online asynchronous written communication, which not only ensures meaningful interactive communication in teaching activities, but also enables students to study flexibly without limitation of time, space and place [1]. The main goal of this blended learning is to provide a more engaged learning experience than classroom teaching form [2]. In addition to promoting teaching and learning, blended learning also facilitates the optimal use of teaching resources. If you schedule some classroom activities online, you will have more time to design different activities in the classroom[3]. Among the existing blended learning empirical studies, some utilized qualitative study (such as questionnaire, diaries, interview, etc.) and lack of objectivity[4,5],some applied both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, but due to limited condition, and short research duration, their results were not convincing enough[6]; still some researchers wrote their articles based on their educational experience of web-based learning and traditional teaching without theoretical guidance [7]. Therefore, there are few empirical studies on blended learning in college English teaching. The purpose of this study is to develop an English blended learning program, aiming to solve the contradiction between limited class time and too much study content. At the same time, this study hopes to improve students' enthusiasm to participate in classroom activities and finally improve students' English test scores.

2. Methodology and Result

Action research as a research method is adopted in this study, Cohen and Manion [8] point out that, "action research is a small-scale intervention for the real operation situation and the detailed observation and reflection about the effect of the intervention. The participants of this study were 133 undergraduate students who enrolled in "College English" lesson at Jilin Engineering Normal University during two semesters English teaching mode reform. All the participants came from four classes, whose majored in Computer Technology, Network Design, and Communication Engineering.

61% were female and 39% were male participants in this research.

2.1 Analysis of the Two Round Questionnaires during Action Research.

Table 1 The 1st Round Questionnaire Data Analysis

Category	Analysis
The general perception of the current college English lesson	85% of students thought learning English is very important; and preferred to choose teacher plays a guiding role, student-centered teaching model.
Students' feelings about traditional College English teaching model	Most of the students thought their English foundation and classmates' influence affected their performance in the English class; the most interesting part in English class is team task work show.
The students' opinions of about English class task design and online classroom	The task designed by the teacher is so easy, no challenge; 92% of students can willingly participate in the group tasks. 75% of students agreed to join in the online classroom.

Through analysis of the data, the result showed most of the students agreed with the idea of opening an online lesson on the internet.

Table 2 The 2nd Round Questionnaire Data Analysis

Category	Analysis
the Design of Micro-lecture	Micro-lectures within 20 minutes that would be fine; the content of the College English Band and listening parts preferred to record micro-lectures. Choosing WeChat and Youku as the interactive internet platform.
Students self-study habit	85% of students watched the micro-lectures after or before the English class. The main things that prevent students from studying autonomously are self-control. Self-study grades took 30% of the total grade is more acceptable.

Based on the data analysis of the questionnaire, the result showed that adult language learners appropriated to focus on one knowledge point for a long time (10-20 minutes). Due to the influence of students' self-control ability, learning habits and other factors, teachers are required to effectively monitor students' learning behaviors in the process of autonomous learning, enhance students' learning motivation, improve students' interest in blended learning, and realize the learning vision of continuous learning and ubiquitous learning.

2.2 Result

Through two rounds of action research, this study analyzed the data of two questionnaires, formulated and modified action plans, developed the blended learning content of College English, refined the formative assessment score, comprehensively investigated the students' English practice ability, and finally improved their academic performance.

Table 3 The 1st Development of Blended Learning Program

	Teaching	Learning
Pre-class	(1) Set up an online learning platform (Tencent QQ group), uploading English micro-lectures made by teachers, and assigning students tasks (2) Assigning team tasks according to teaching content	(1) After learning English micro-lectures, students recorded English conversation video in groups and shared it with the QQ group. (2) Through the platform, teachers and students interacted with each other.
In-class	(1) In class, the teacher selected excellent dialogue videos to share with classmates (2) On the basis of teaching language knowledge points, discussed the main ideas of the text among the students	(1) According to the improvement advice given by the teacher, students should pay more attention to English pronunciation and sentence rhythm. (2) In the team task classroom display, students learned the advantages of other teams and improved their abilities.
Post-class	Combining classroom teaching and online micro-lectures teaching content, this study refined formative assessment content and designed three practical assessment contents:	Students gradually learned how to obtain and find learning materials from the Internet. Students learned to get a sense of achievement by working in a team.

Table 4 The 2nd Development of Blended Learning Program

	Teaching	Learning
Pre-class	(1) According to the questionnaire data, re-adjust the content of the micro-lectures and set up WeChat public account; (2) Sharing team works on the Youku.net (the largest video website in China).	(1) Students chose micro-lectures videos online according to their own learning progress (2) The cooperation between team members is more tacit, and the team performance of students in class is better.
In-class	(1) Teachers chose excellent team works to display in class (2) According to students' learning feedback on the Internet, The teacher explained the difficult knowledge in class	(1) Team members have a higher degree of cooperation, and the team performs well (2) Students' English learning is more targeted
Post-class	Teachers and students participate in the performance evaluation	Students' participation in the setting and evaluation of scores promotes students' ability to participate in learning motivation, problem solving and self-reflection

3. Conclusion and Limitations

After two rounds of action research and teaching practice, college English blended learning program was an effective teaching and learning method. From the overall effect of the teacher's implementation, the student's classroom enthusiasm has been significantly improved, and students actively participate in class discussion, and ultimately improve their final grades (Table 5). Through the research, students have a positive attitude towards the blended learning style that emphasizes meaningful learning and independent learning.

Table 5 Comparison Chart of the Final Exam Scores in the three Semesters(2013.08-2014.12), Example: class 1

Class	Number of people	Before teaching reform	Teaching reform	
			The first phase	The second phase
1	32	First semester (2013.8-2013.12)	Second semester (2014.3-2014.7)	Third semester (2014.08-2014.12)
The number of failures		2	0	0
The average score		69.1	72.3	76.0

This study has some limitations. The role of teacher is the essence of network learning quality. Responsive, helpful, and knowledgeable teachers can promote an effective online learning experience [9]. The blended teaching model requires teachers to be proficient in network computer technology and have comprehensive academic knowledge, so as to better help students in all aspects. What standards should be used to measure the effectiveness of blended learning teaching design? At the same time, how to better design blended teaching needs to be further discussed by future researchers.

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