Research on the Blended Teaching Mode of “Intermediate Speaking” Based on SPOC

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The epidemic has accelerated the application of blended teaching in China, and many domestic colleges and universities have adopted online teaching methods. After the epidemic, due to the different severity of the epidemic in different regions, many colleges and universities still use online and offline hybrid teaching methods. The “Intermediate Spoken Chinese” class for international students in my school adopts a mixed online and offline teaching mode. In the past year, we have designed online and offline flow charts for teachers and students, actively compiled online courses, and achieved good teaching results, which have been well received by students.

Keywords: Blended teaching, Intermediate speaking, SPOC

Introduction

SPOC (Small Private Online Course), that is, a small-scale restricted online course, was first proposed by Professor Armando Fox of the University of California, Berkeley in 2013. It solves the problems of high dropout rate and low pass rate of MOOC with a small scale and restriction.

Its main body is micro-teaching videos. Professor Rolf Hoffmann of Darmstadt University of Technology in Germany believes that “SPOC = MOOC + Classroom”, which organically combines the advantages of MOOC (online courses) and traditional classrooms. SPOC can be seen as the inheritance, improvement, and transcendence of MOOC.

The international scholars’ research on SPOC began in the United States in 2012, and later extended to European countries represented by Spain, China, Arabia, Russia, and other countries. These studies mainly focus on two aspects: One is the research on the SPOC blended teaching model; the other is the practical application and effect exploration of the SPOC blended teaching.

The research on SPOC in China started in 2014, and the research hotspots focus on two aspects: One is the research on the concept and teaching mode of SPOC; the other is the research and effect verification of teaching practice based on SPOC. Tsinghua University, Zhejiang University, Nanjing University, and other colleges and universities have successively launched their own SPOC platforms, adopting a hybrid teaching model that combines online and offline, and continuously promote the reform of education and teaching in colleges and universities.

By comparing relevant studies in China and other countries, we find that:

(1) Their research scope and focus are consistent, that is, the conceptual research and practice research of SPOC blended teaching model.

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(2) The current research on SPOC blended teaching model.

(3) The SPOC blended teaching model can fully mobilize the initiative and enthusiasm of students in learning, which is conducive to cooperative learning, practical teaching, and the cultivation of applied talents. As far as the current research is concerned, the conclusions drawn from relevant teaching practices are that the SPOC blended teaching mode is superior to the traditional teaching mode. Scholars generally believe that the SPOC blended teaching model can refine the content of traditional courses and improve students’ autonomous learning ability, so that teachers can focus on personalized teaching instead of focusing on teaching each lesson, practical teaching, cooperative learning, etc.

China’s blended teaching model originally lags behind that of the United States and other countries. However, after the outbreak of the epidemic, China’s basic education and higher education have fully started online teaching. In the post-epidemic era, many courses in colleges and universities have adopted online and offline blended teaching model.

“Intermediate Spoken Chinese” is a core Chinese course for international students studying in China, with strong practicality. However, the traditional teaching model does not give students enough preparation before opening their mouths to speak, so that students “have nothing to say” in the classroom, and it is prone to the situation that students’ participation is not high.

In this context, we propose to introduce the SPOC blended teaching model into the traditional “Intermediate Spoken Chinese” course, organically combine online learning and offline learning, stimulate and transform students’ learning methods, and put the knowledge preparation before speaking to the online and offline; through activities and tasks, students can learn by doing and improve their speaking skills. Really return the classroom to the students, and realize the transformation of the teaching mode of cultivating applied talents with students as the center and ability training as the core.

The Feasibility and Necessity of Implementing the Teaching of “Intermediate Spoken Chinese” Based on SPOC

Rich Online Resources

On May 8, 2014, the Chinese university MOOC platform of “icourse” website was officially launched (https://www.icourse163.org/), which is the largest Chinese MOOC platform in the world. 801 colleges and universities in China have cooperated, and there are nearly a thousand courses including national excellent online courses on the platform. Searching for “Chinese” on the platform, you can find a total of 343 courses related to Chinese. Excluding the courses for Chinese majors, there are 21 Chinese courses for foreign students. Among them, I chose the “Intermediate Chinese Audio-Visual and Speaking” course of Beijing International Studies University as my main online course content. This course is divided into: airport pick-up, supermarket shopping, first-time greetings, friend invitation, etc., 20 units. The course is based on scenarios and functions. Each unit has contents such as introduction, new words, videos, and culture. Students can learn the basic language knowledge required for the scenario/function in the online course, and can learn how to use in life. In the teaching process, I will add and delete it according to the level and needs of the students to make it more suitable for my students to learn and use.

Software and hardware conditions are mature

Because the foreign students stranded in China are in the same time and space as their teachers, there is no
time difference. The students have computers and the dormitories have the Internet, so the hardware and software conditions for blended teaching are all available.

**Higher opening rate of students and higher efficiency**

In traditional speaking classes, students are often unable to participate in oral expression activities because of insufficient thinking time and preparation. Online courses can make up for this. This enables students to be fully prepared in offline classrooms, to be able to express and discuss relevant topics orally, and to better complete oral expression activities.

**The Implementation Path of the Blended Teaching Mode of the Intermediate Oral Chinese Class**

Robert Talbert’s Flipped Classroom Structure Diagram

In 2011, Professor Robert Talbert from the United States summarized the flipped classroom structure diagram based on his teaching experience (Figure 1). He divided the flipped classroom into two stages and five steps: In the pre-class stage, students watch the teaching video and complete the guided practice questions; in the middle stage, the teacher makes a quick and simple evaluation of the students’ autonomous learning, problem-oriented to promote the internalization of students’ knowledge, and finally carries out group reports and results presentations.

![The flipped classroom structure diagram of Professor Robert Talbert.](image)

**Teaching Implementation Path**

On the basis of Robert Talbert’s flipped classroom model, combined with teaching practice, a blended teaching model of “Intermediate Spoken Chinese” is designed. The specific teaching implementation process is shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3.
Figure 2. Teacher’s teaching flow chart.
In instructional design, I divide it into two stages: online and offline, and distinguish them with different colors. From Figure 2, we can see that for teachers, the online teaching stage includes five steps: editing online courses, publishing pre-class task lists, monitoring students’ learning, changing homework and answering questions, and preparing offline courses according to students’ learning. The offline teaching stage includes six steps: giving feedback on online learning, explaining new knowledge/reviewing old knowledge, assigning tasks or activities, monitoring student operations, displaying comments, and summarizing assignments. From Figure 3, we can see that for students, the online learning stage has four steps: check in, learn online video content, complete homework tests, and summarize and review. The offline learning stage includes five steps: feedback/testing, learning new knowledge/reviewing old knowledge, completing tasks or activities, showing, and summarizing.

To sum up, the so-called blended teaching is not as simple as online video broadcasting and offline test discussions as everyone understands. If you really want to learn a blended teaching course well, both teachers and students need to spend money, more time, and energy.
Problems and Countermeasures in Teaching Implementation

Students Do Not Pay Attention to Online Learning Psychologically

When the course was announced as a blended teaching model at the beginning of the semester, most students were happy because they thought the task of learning would be easier and did not take online learning very seriously from the start. Therefore, in the first class, teachers must announce the assessment method of this course, change the traditional assessment method that focuses on summative assessment to focus on process assessment, and change the original assessment method of 30% usual grades and 70% final grades to 70% usual grades and 30% final grades. And increase the evaluation method of students’ mutual evaluation. The process evaluation is more related to the usual performance. The online part includes the length of study, the timeliness of learning, the completion and accuracy of homework or tests, etc. The offline part includes attendance, speech, answering questions, and completion of homework and tasks. In this way, students can really pay attention to online and peacetime learning and stimulate their enthusiasm for learning.

The Monitoring of Students’ Online Learning Effect

After a period of teaching, we found that some students had false learning in the online learning stage. For example, while playing the video, some students are not listening carefully, but doing other things; another example is plagiarism in online assignments or tests.

On the one hand, teachers should strive to design teaching content and teaching modes that suit students’ level and interests. On the other hand, they should strengthen the monitoring of online learning.

Our countermeasures for this problem are as follows: First, make adjustments on the basis of the original online videos according to the learning content and students’ interests, delete the outdated content and the parts that are far away from students’ lives, and add practical and interesting content at the same time, especially the cultural content closely related to the language point of study, which is widely praised by students. Secondly, questions are randomly inserted in the middle of the online video, and only after answering the question can they continue to watch, which not only reminds students to study the online video content seriously, but also a test of their learning effect. In addition, in the offline classroom, teachers should conduct face-to-face and timely inspection and feedback on the content of students’ online learning. They have mastered the students’ real learning progress, and understand the problems they encountered in their learning, so as to adjust the teaching plan in the future.

Teachers’ Workload and Students’ Learning Burden Are Heavier

According to Figure 2 and Figure 3, it is not difficult to find that in this blended teaching mode, the workload of both teachers and students is actually larger than that of the traditional teaching mode. Therefore, in teaching practice, teachers’ workload and students’ credit should be increased reasonably. Teachers should fully consider the actual situation of students when designing, and should not add too much burden to students.

Teaching Effect

After nearly a year of teaching practice, the “Intermediate Spoken Chinese” team has tracked and analyzed the learning outcomes of the intermediate class students through the analysis of the achievement of course objectives, course questionnaires, and interviews.

The results of the questionnaire survey showed that 94.44% of the students believed that the teachers were actively constructing curriculum resources and made full use of the online course platform to carry out blended
teaching. 95.51% of students believe that online courses are in line with students’ level and their learning is effective. 85.19% of students believe that the online and offline hybrid teaching mode is more efficient than the traditional teaching mode.

The results of the analysis of the achievement degree of the curriculum objectives (as shown in Figure 4) show that the achievement degrees of the knowledge objectives, quality objectives, and ability objectives of the course are 0.75, 0.80, and 0.83 respectively, and the average achievement degree is 0.79, indicating that the curriculum objectives are all achieved, while the ability objectives are achieved. The highest degree of achievement indicates that the online and offline blended teaching reform of the course has achieved remarkable results.

![Figure 4. Analysis of the goal achievement degree of “Intermediate Spoken Chinese”.

Conclusion

The introduction of online and offline hybrid teaching into the intermediate oral language classroom requires teachers to better connect the two parts of online and offline teaching, so that online educational technology can give full play to its advantages and make up for the shortcomings of traditional classrooms.

The reform has been implemented for nearly a year, and the teaching effect is better. Compared with the traditional teaching method, the supplement of online courses increases the interest of the learning content and the diversity of learning forms, which is a beneficial supplement to the traditional oral classroom.

The teaching effect is obvious, and the knowledge goals, quality goals, and ability goals have been improved to a certain extent. It shows that the teaching team not only improves the students’ knowledge level, but also improves the students’ oral expression ability.

References