

The Application of Formative Assessment in Interactive Comprehensive English Classroom Teaching

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Teaching evaluation is an important part of the teaching process of college English courses, and effective formative assessment can reflect the entire teaching process from multiple perspectives and ensure the smooth achievement of teaching objectives. Formative assessment is an assessment that runs through the entire learning process, based on humanism and constructivism, with various forms of evaluation.

Keywords: evaluation, formative assessment, Interactive Comprehensive English

Introduction

Formative assessment can enhance learners' interest in learning, cultivate their learning attitudes, and strengthen their confidence and communication skills. On the flip side, formative assessment can enable teachers to obtain timely feedback on student learning, revise teaching methods and techniques, and improve teaching quality as well. After the reform of English teaching in our university, teachers have realized the significance of formative assessment, and various forms of formative assessment have been fully considered in their teaching.

For the course of Interactive Comprehensive English, teachers design such feasible plans as observation, class quizzes, group discussions, and classroom presentations based on the teaching progress and difficulty levels, as implementation methods for formative assessment. Students need to do a lot of pre-reading and review work in order to demonstrate their post class achievements, logical thinking, and language expression abilities in the formative assessment that runs through the entire semester, and develop their teamwork spirit while complementing each other's strengths and weaknesses in the process. Teachers also better understand the contribution of students in the group through these evaluation plans, so as to teach according to their aptitude, and record the results of student presentations at any time, giving students opportunities to showcase.

The Concept and Theoretical Basis of Formative Assessment

A complete evaluation system includes formative assessment and summative assessment. Summative assessment is the assessment conducted at the end of a teaching stage, such as a final exam. The summative evaluation, which takes students' grades as the evaluation object, is an important means of testing teaching outcomes, but it overlooks the evaluation of the teaching process. Formative assessment is a process and developmental assessment conducted during the teaching process, which is more conducive to reflecting the learning status of students throughout the entire teaching process than final exams and proficiency exams. This

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assessment allows students to always maintain clear goals, plan appropriately, and adjust their learning behavior in a timely and appropriate manner, thereby improving their learning abilities. It compensates for the demerits of summative assessment and is an indispensable step and means of testing teaching.

The concept of formative assessment was first proposed by philosopher Scriven of the University of Chicago in his book *The Methodology of Evaluation* in 1967. American educator Bloom first introduced this evaluation method into classroom teaching. The so-called formative assessment is to evaluate the ongoing teaching activities, that is, to evaluate the learning process of students in the process of forming their knowledge, skills, and attitudes, provide feedback to teachers, and make timely adjustments to teaching to improve teaching quality. Formative assessment emerged with the rise of American humanism in the 1960s, and its theoretical basis is humanistic theory and constructivist theory.

The Problems in the Current Evaluation System of College English Courses

The main problem in the current evaluation of college English curriculum teaching is the lack of a comprehensive formative assessment model and implementation standards, which lies in:

Single Evaluation Criteria

Formative assessment is a holistic concept with various forms and contents. However, in the specific operation process, each teacher is basically “independent” and lacks a unified standard. Attendance rate and homework submission are regarded as the results of classroom formative assessment, and the recording of regular grades is equivalent to formative assessment. Only measurable external behavioral goals are emphasized, without emphasizing the evaluation of students’ learning process, which cannot fully reflect their learning process and actual abilities. Meanwhile, this evaluation ignores the complexity and richness of students’ personalities in terms of learning content, methods, goals, etc., and does not reflect their individual differences, lacking consideration for the creativity and diversity of their thinking. How to establish standards for formative assessment of English classrooms at different levels, respecting the individuality of students while being fair to other students at the same level, is an urgent issue that needs to be addressed.

Single Evaluation Subject

Formative assessment is a collective concept that reflects the important role of teachers, students, textbooks, homework, and online self-directed learning in foreign language teaching. For a long time in the college English classroom, the main body of evaluation has been teachers, and only teachers have evaluated students. However, student self-evaluation and peer evaluation have not been widely achieved, or only occasionally. Through self-evaluation and peer evaluation, students can have a more comprehensive understanding of their learning situation and improve their English proficiency and social skills through communication with others. Without this aspect in classroom assessment, it will be an incomplete assessment.

The Lack of Enthusiasm of Students to Participate

There are various forms of classroom evaluation, which requires active participation from students; otherwise it is difficult to achieve the expected evaluation results. In college English classrooms, some students always cooperate well with the teacher’s design and participate in various teaching and evaluation activities, but some students are unwilling to participate due to introverted personalities and other reasons. How to mobilize the initiative and enthusiasm of this group of students is also a question that every university English teacher needs to consider.

The Course Purpose of Interactive Comprehensive English

The Interactive Comprehensive English course in University of Shanghai for Science and Technology is aimed at non-English major students with the highest level of English proficiency. These students are already advanced English learners, and this course focuses on cultivating their abilities in event analysis, critical thinking, and written language organization, achieving expression in mature and accurate English language, and aligning with future professional learning and work. We need to urge students to make full use of the self-learning platform resources and transform the traditional classroom teaching model into an active, personalized, and multi-dimensional teaching model. The model integrates networks, extracurricular self-learning platforms, teaching software, classroom listening and speaking, and interactive discussion, with comprehensive thinking and application capabilities as the main focus. Classroom teaching is no longer a single intensive and extensive reading tutorial, but emphasizes more on strengthening students' oral communication and critical thinking abilities. In class, students are required to give presentations, report on hot news events, debate, discuss, perform, etc. The teacher will provide feedback and guidance, and student self-evaluation and peer evaluation will be included as well.

Practice of Formative Assessment in Interactive Comprehensive English Classroom

There are various formative assessment methods centered on the process, but regardless of which method, it should be composed of teacher evaluation, self-assessment, and group peer evaluation. This evaluation model has changed the passive position of students being evaluated in the past. During the self-evaluation process, students reflect and summarize their learning process, learn how to learn, grasp the process of pursuing knowledge, and cultivate the ability to learn independently and evaluate themselves correctly. During the mutual evaluation process, students develop the ability for cooperative learning. The combination of three evaluations has improved the teaching effectiveness of Interactive Comprehensive English. The implementation methods can be specifically reflected, including observation, teacher-student interviews, group discussions, classroom presentations, role plays, study portfolios, classroom performance, and quizzes.

Classroom Performance and Homework

Constructivist theory holds that the process of learning is a process of self-discovery, and the learner's knowledge is constructed. Therefore, teacher observation is the basic way to evaluate the learning process of students. By observing and recording how students demonstrate and showcase their learned knowledge in classroom activities, as well as their attitudes towards ongoing activities, teachers can provide correct evaluations and guide their learning.

This is the traditional method currently used by most teachers. The evaluation forms include attendance, classroom participation, tests and exercises, homework completion, and online recording in online teaching mode. This part of evaluation can be accurately quantified and obtain the most direct data.

Record of In-class Learning Process

The autonomy of learners should be the ultimate goal of teaching, and one of the responsibilities of self-directed learning is correct self-evaluation. Therefore, student self-evaluation is an important component of evaluating the learning process. Peer evaluation is important to them as well since learners know the condition of others with the comparison of themselves. The activities may include:

1. Self-summary of unit learning, difficulties, and key points. Students record their learning process while

previewing and reviewing, and evaluate their own learning effect.

2. Learning of extracurricular expansion content, including recording cultural background knowledge and creative thinking. Students introduce their findings in the classroom, and get evaluated by peers.

3. The self-evaluation of stage based listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation abilities, which can be completed at the end of stage learning by listing the knowledge and skills that should be mastered, such as vocabulary, reading strategies, reading speed, listening ability, etc.

4. Reading notes or feedback. Students take notes while exploring the reading materials and put forward questions for discussion in classroom. Peer evaluation and comments will be given during the classroom time.

5. Various English competitions and debates records. This course involves plenty of peer-evaluation. Students cooperate with and learn from each other to defend their points. Teacher evaluate their thinking, logic, and expression.

Extracurricular Learning Records

Students are encouraged to study online and read extensively through a large number of extracurricular learning activities and evaluate the gains and experiences. This process can help teachers and students understand their progress at a certain stage. The content includes:

1. Monthly interview reports, project plans, etc., presented in the form of written reports and classroom presentations. Teachers will give comments and yet-to-solve questions in the classroom or online study platform, and students post their views in the discussion area;

2. Online discussion and collaboration. Online discussion boards and collaborative platforms promote peer interaction and feedback. Teachers assign group projects, facilitate discussions, and provide guidance to enhance student engagement and develop critical thinking skills. They regularly monitor student participation, progress, and performance through online platforms, analyze data to identify areas of improvement and provide targeted support, and use virtual office hours or one-on-one video conferences to address individual student needs.

The final student evaluation score for the Interactive Comprehensive English course is composed of 60% of the regular performance grades (20% in online learning platform, 10% in the listening application platform, 10% in homework, 10% in class performance, and 10% in the oral exam) and the final exam score (40%).

Summary

Formative assessment is an important part of college English teaching process. It focuses on the learning process of learners, helps teachers adjust teaching strategies and improve teaching effectiveness, and creates scenario for students to become effective self-directed learners. Formative assessment compensates for the shortcomings of single evaluation methods and subjects, making the evaluation process an organic component of the teaching process. In the meantime, higher requirements have also been put forward for teachers, who need to conduct more in-depth research on teaching requirements, textbooks, teaching methods, and student learning conditions, and design scientific and practical evaluation strategies. Moreover, they need to continuously study the feedback information from evaluations and adjust teaching in a timely manner. However, completely replacing large-scale summative assessments with such an evaluation system would be biased. In the teaching process, the two assessments should be organically combined together in a certain proportion, so that students attach importance to both the process and the results objectively and reasonably and lay a solid foundation for

their lifelong learning.

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