

Original Paper

Research on Exploratory English Teaching Methods in Art Colleges

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Abstract

English teaching has met troubles in students specialized in arts who can't understand the teachers' explanation. Force feeding duck teaching in classroom hasn't completed the task of teaching. Inquiry English teaching is introduced in this article to improve the status.

Keywords

English teaching, students specialized in arts, inquiry teaching

1. Introduction

In Chinese, “exploration” means “exploration” or “research”. According to the definition in the Oxford English Dictionary, inquiry is “the activity of seeking knowledge or information, especially truth; the activity of searching, researching, investigating, and testing; the activity of questioning and questioning people”. For the concept of exploratory learning, according to the widely cited definition in the US National Science Education Standards, “scientific inquiry refers to the various ways in which scientists use to study nature and provide explanations based on factual evidence obtained through research. Scientific inquiry also refers to various activities in which students construct knowledge, form scientific concepts, and comprehend scientific research methods. Therefore, the introduction of “exploratory learning” in school curriculum refers to the activity or process in which students independently seek or construct answers, meanings, understandings, or information around certain questions, texts, or materials with the help and support of teachers.

The “College English Teaching Syllabus” stipulates that college English teaching is an organic component of higher education, and college English courses are a compulsory basic course for college students. College English is a teaching system that mainly focuses on English language knowledge and

application skills, learning strategies, and cross-cultural communication, guided by foreign language teaching theories, and integrates various teaching modes and methods. According to this regulation, art schools also offer English public courses, with the aim of enabling students to effectively communicate oral and written information in English in future work and social interactions. As is well known, the academic performance requirements for art students in cultural courses are relatively lower than those of ordinary high school students, so in college, students find it very difficult to learn English. However, compared to students in other majors, students majoring in art have their own unique thinking styles and psychological situations. Their visual thinking ability is strong, while their logical thinking ability is relatively weak. They are imaginative and creative, and their thoughts often show jumping characteristics. However, they are not organized enough, and their emotions are prone to fluctuations. We believe that using exploratory English teaching methods in art colleges is feasible. Let's discuss this issue below.

2. The Functions of Exploratory English Teaching Methods

Exploratory English teaching can effectively solve the problem of insufficient motivation for students to learn English. Exploring the teaching process is not an end in itself, but guiding students to learn knowledge through exploratory teaching is an important goal. Traditional concepts and practices claim that the core qualities of school education are integrity, punctuality, quietness, and diligence. These four qualities can produce good factory workers and good students - if "good" is defined as faithfully following others' procedures rather than developing one's own - like "good" children. This type of indoctrination education emphasizes the discourse hegemony of books and teachers, imagining students as absolute ignorant individuals and denying that education and knowledge are the process of exploration. Educators do not believe that students are conscious beings or critical thinkers, they do not trust or believe that students have the ability to think, and they do not consider whether students are willing to accept. And this approach of replacing students' thinking and imposing it on them is not about teachers and students discussing, communicating, and talking together. The result is that students will adopt a negative attitude towards teachers' viewpoints, greatly reducing the effectiveness of lectures.

Exploratory English teaching aims to enhance students' ability to discover and solve problems with exploratory value through observation and reflection on language phenomena. Therefore, it is very important for teachers to create problem scenarios and assign analysis and exploration tasks for students. In teaching, we should also always pay attention to grasping the appropriate opportunity for inspiration to guide students to explore. The timing issue lies not only in the teacher's arrangement of the order of several questions, but also in the grasp of the depth of students' thinking about the problems. If various questions can be raised during the teaching of sentences that are closely related to the center of the text and key points, it will undoubtedly lead students' thinking to depth, greatly expand the scope of thinking, and improve the level of thinking. The issue of students' autonomous

generation in exploratory learning should also be taken seriously. There are many questions that students may explore, and the methods and methods of exploration are also very flexible. As long as teachers give students the right and opportunity to explore, each student can demonstrate their talents in the exploration. Students can explore the process of knowledge generation and development; Can be explored at the connection points between new and old knowledge; Sometimes when students question and explore difficulties; Sometimes exploring in solving practical problems; You can also explore the pursuit of novelty, differentiation, and change in things. In short, different levels of understanding of knowledge can lead to exploration, and different ways of thinking about problems can also lead to different explorations. It is worth noting that students' exploration of knowledge does not involve inventing or creating things like scientists' exploration. Students' exploration is motivated, inspired, and induced by teachers, using scientific methods to explore knowledge that they have not yet understood and mastered. The law that students follow in exploring is from not knowing to knowing, from not knowing much to knowing much, from learning knowledge to being able to learn and use knowledge, and then transforming knowledge into ability. The process of students exploring knowledge is to use their existing knowledge and experience to solve the unknown factors contained in textbooks, and to tap into their internal potential through various methods such as "learning, thinking, questioning, and exploring". This not only obtains new knowledge but also increases their abilities.

3. The Application of Exploratory English Teaching Methods

The process of scientific exploration generally includes six main components: raising questions; Develop a research plan; Collect and handle the knowledge points encountered; Explain the knowledge points; Compare and check the conclusions obtained through research; Exchange research results. Regarding the specific content of the English subject, teachers should prepare a series of questions based on the characteristics of the scientific inquiry process, including: What is the central purpose of the article? What is the author's argument? What is the argument of the article, and then organize students to analyze and discuss the article, in order to improve students' correct understanding of the essential characteristics of scientific processes and develop their logical thinking ability. Whether exploratory teaching can achieve effective results is ultimately determined by whether, how, and how much students participate. At the same time, only by actively participating in teaching can students change the mechanical and dull situation of classroom teaching and make the classroom full of vitality. And each step of exploration should first allow students to try, establish their dominant position, let them learn on their own, and let them complete the exploration on their own. Students in art colleges have a mindset of emphasizing professional courses over basic courses. They focus more on technical professional training, lack concentration in class, spend less time after class, and have poor self-awareness and initiative. In order to avoid poor class performance, an exploratory teaching method is adopted, which is more suitable for art students to have a "unique" thinking style. For example

You are a student—So am I.

They eat a lot of potatoes—So do we.

After these sentences, the students engaged in active exploratory learning activities and summarized the following findings: “So do we” is an inverted structure, which is: so+auxiliary verb/conjunction verb be/modal verb+subject. The meaning of “so” is “also”, and the auxiliary verb, conjunction verb be, or modal verb in the middle should be consistent in tense with the previous sentence, while the change in number “should be consistent with the subject. This usage of “so” can only be used in affirmative sentences. In this process, teachers do not need to forcefully instill in students because students have learned a certain statement, but may not truly understand or believe it. On the other hand, what students may truly acquire may not be the knowledge expected by the teacher, but be lies, cliches, or parroting. So teachers cannot demand that they immediately learn, or that students must accept the prescribed time.

There are three ways to cultivate students’ exploratory interest in learning English in English classroom teaching, breaking the classroom environment of learning without thinking, thinking without doubt, and questioning without asking. One is the exploration of student cooperation. Let desk mates leverage their respective strengths in academic exploration, inspire and discuss relevant difficult issues with each other, and then have a group of four discuss the results of each other’s discussions; The second is group cooperation and exploration. The cooperative group can consist of four or six people, with a maximum of one hundred people. Collaborative exploration utilizes the characteristics of students’ collective thinking, complementary thinking, broad thinking, thorough analysis, and diverse opinions to make the concepts obtained clearer and conclusions more accurate; The third is the collective exploration of the large class. Namely, grasp the central topic or key issues, and allow students to express their own opinions and focus on solving difficulties. It should be noted that teachers and students should not engage in face-to-face questioning or dialogue. It is important to encourage dialogue, defense, and debate between students. Teachers should only provide guidance or guidance at key points and avoid leading students by the nose. Collaborative exploration can promote students’ ideological and emotional exchange, cultivate a spirit of unity and cooperation, build a democratic and harmonious atmosphere, and cultivate good personality traits. In an ideal classroom, all students should learn how to interact and cooperate with others, compete for fun and happiness, and engage in independent learning independently. While highlighting the dominant position of interactive cooperation, interactive cooperative learning does not deny the value of competition and personal activities, but incorporates them into the teaching process, making them compatible and complementary, and complementing each other. When learning new English texts, teachers raise relevant questions to lay the groundwork for students to learn, enabling them to have the opportunity to communicate in English, thereby stimulating their interest in learning English and actively participating in classroom teaching activities. In addition, in exploratory learning, emphasizing autonomy in the process of students’ autonomous construction of knowledge means emphasizing “independence”, but not “isolation”. In fact, exploratory learning emphasizes the interaction and influence between students,

peers, and teachers in the process of autonomous knowledge construction. For example, when asked about students' understanding and understanding of music, most students can only describe it as "pleasant", "beautiful", "joyful", and "sad", but lack understanding of the essence and connotation of music. In response to this situation, we have identified the theme of our exploration as: What is music? What is the session of music? We require students to use Music in Life as the main theme and form free groups to explore different aspects of music in life. Students independently form five groups to explore from five aspects: National theme, Music in sports, Music and diet, Music and health, and Background music. Each group has a division of labor, including searching for audio and video materials, collecting text, and using computers to create presentations... Finally, the group gathers all the materials together to analyze, organize, and process the music, images, and text, forming the research results of this topic. This stage of learning adopts the Project Based Learning approach, with most of the learning process occurring after class. The topic determined by each group is actually a project, such as selecting Music in Sports, which collects and organizes different sports music such as Olympic Games music, football music. On the basis of analyzing, comparing, and understanding its different meanings in different backgrounds, they clarify the understanding of sports music in this group. After careful study and exploration, five groups have formed their basic views on the exploration topic: National anthem: Music has no national boundaries; Music in sports: Music is a kind of comfort and inspiration; Music and diet: Music can improve our living quality; Music and health: Music can help us get out of depression and disease; Background music: Love, truth and peace are eternal themes of music.

After identifying the issues that need to be explored, students can also use modern media such as the internet to collect and analyze information related to the problem, conduct research and processing on it, and summarize their own ideas and viewpoints. For example, when studying Autumn festivals, we compare Mid-autumn Festivals in China with Thanksgiving Days in Western countries. By using some materials and images to project the background onto the screen, students' interest increases and they discuss more topics, making exploration much easier. For example, when learning The Swedish Rock Band, in addition to introducing the traditional background of the times, students can also be asked to collect information online, download files, pictures, explanations, learn about music and development around the world, talk about their favorite rock music, and bring it to school for communication. You can also create handwritten and blackboard newspapers for them to compare, analyze, and learn on their own. Through mutual understanding and learning, students naturally deepen their understanding of the text and improve their abilities. More often than not, students should also be encouraged to go to the library and the internet to search for information and improve their abilities in learning.

4. Issues That Should be Paid Attention to in Exploratory English Teaching Methods

Firstly, in English teaching, it is important to emphasize the diverse design models of exploratory learning. Not only should we emphasize hands-on exploration, but also the use of our brains. Secondly, English inquiry learning should be aimed at all students and take into account individual differences to

provide sufficient support for the development of inquiry learning. The design of exploratory questions should be oriented towards life and society, and the focus of exploratory learning should not be on the operational methods and skills of exploration. At the same time, in the exploration, it is necessary to dialectically deal with student autonomy and teacher guidance. This is specifically manifested in the exploration process where teachers should first fully listen to students' perspectives, cherish and correctly handle students' existing personal knowledge and original concepts, and guide students to actively reflect; Cherish and explore the unique feelings, experiences, and understandings of middle school students; Emphasis should also be placed on cooperation and communication among students (mutual listening among students). English teachers need to put forward different requirements for students' level of inquiry at different stages. In addition, in the process of English teaching, it is necessary to combine exploratory learning with modern technologies (such as multimedia and the Internet), so that students can improve their exploratory thinking ability under the guidance of modern technologies, thereby improving their overall English quality.

In addition, for exploratory learning, teachers also need to grasp the entire process of exploration from a holistic perspective, which is the so-called principle of holism. The principle of holism emphasizes the coordination of various parts within the system, forming an organism with a certain structure and fully utilizing the overall function to achieve the overall goal. In the system of inquiry based teaching, the teacher plays a leading role. Only by taking the principle of holism as guidance, coordinating the relationship between teachers, students, textbooks, and other course resources, and forming an organic whole of inquiry based teaching, can the overall function be fully utilized and the teaching objectives be better achieved. To fully utilize the overall function of exploratory teaching, it is necessary to first clarify the teaching objectives, which can be guided during teaching. In the process of exploratory teaching, students not only find an explanation for a certain problem or phenomenon, but more importantly, enable them to understand how to scientifically explore an unfamiliar problem or phenomenon, improve their exploratory abilities such as hypothesis, reasoning, judgment, and cultivate their exploratory spirit.

Teachers should collaborate with students to explore the situation according to the requirements of the textbook, briefly summarize and discuss the main points, grasp the methods, clarify the concepts, understand the principles, and give students a clear and clear explanation with a few finishing words. Then, students are required to apply the knowledge gained through self-study and discussion to learn how to draw inferences and solve similar or related problems. Knowledge is never fixed, it is eternal and unchanging. It serves as both the result of an inquiry process and the starting point of another inquiry process, and it always needs to be re-examined, re-tested, and re-confirmed, just like people will always encounter new, unclear, and difficult situations. (William E. Dole, Jr., 2000) Student practical exploration is a process of consolidating and expanding knowledge, as well as absorbing and internalizing knowledge into abilities. The content and form of practical exploration should be determined according to the requirements and characteristics of the subject, and there is no need to

force unity. In short, practical exploration is a favorable opportunity to develop students' innovative thinking, and the methods and forms must be flexible and diverse. As long as it is beneficial for students to expand their knowledge and develop their abilities, they can do whatever is beneficial.

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