

Mixed-Mode Teaching Exploration Supported by Information Technology

-- Based on Business English Reading Teaching

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Abstract: With the popularization of the information technology application ability standard and the in-depth implementation of the educational informatization policy, online and offline mixed-mode teaching application has become increasingly normal. This paper, based on the current situation of business English reading teaching applied undergraduate colleges and universities, discusses the rational utilization of information technology, explores online and offline mixed business English reading teaching practice and fuses advantages of traditional face-to-face teaching and modern online education. That's how to provide business English major students with more flexible and diverse learning experience.

Keywords: Information technology, mixed-mode teaching, business English reading.

1. Brief Analysis of Mixed-Mode Teaching

Mixed-mode teaching is a method which combines traditional face-to-face teaching with online teaching. In practical application, it does not refer to add up those two teaching methods together simply, but complements the two methods to each other through their own advantages achieving better teaching results.

It usually has the following typical characteristics. First, online teaching practice is not the auxiliary or icing on the cake of the whole teaching activity. On the contrary, it is a necessary activity. Second, offline teaching or traditional face-to-face teaching mode is not a copy of related classroom teaching activities. In fact, this kind teaching based on the premise of online learning effectiveness, which always carries out more profound learning activities. Third, this "mixing" mode of what we talked about is in a narrow level, especially online combined with offline, which does not involve teaching theory, teaching strategies, teaching methods, teaching organization forms and other factors[1]. That's because teaching itself has a broad sense. So if someone classifies this mode in a broad sense, it has no meaning. Ultimately, mixed-mode teaching practice has no unified mode. However, it has some common grounds in the teaching pursuit, that is to give full play to the online and offline two kinds of teaching advantages. This would change the situation of overuse in the traditional teaching process so as to improve students learning initiative and cognitive participation.

In conclusion, mixed-mode teaching not only combines the advantages of traditional face-to-face mode and modern technology, but also pays more attention to the optimal utilization of educational resources and students' cognitive feelings[2].

2. Current Status of Business English Reading Teaching

As a large number of foreign-funded enterprises entering

into the domestic market, the demand for business English talents is on the increase as well. For the teaching of business English professional courses in application-oriented undergraduate colleges, business English reading refers to a practical course that mainly takes business knowledge as the teaching basis. It emphasizes not just about focusing on language field, but also the improvement of a practical comprehensive quality. Actually, it aims to help students achieve higher career goals through the usage of English language.

Current status of business English reading teaching in applied undergraduate universities:

In the first place, it is insufficient in vocabulary accumulation of business English major. In recent years, there is a phenomenon during the teaching process of business English that business English major students from different levels whose English foundation is generally poor. Therefore, it is difficult to guess the relevant meaning according to the context because of the lack of professional vocabulary and poor grammar when those students encounter unfamiliar topics in discourse. In addition, there exists a lot of "familiar words with unfamiliar meanings" phenomenon in business English reading. For instance, the word "policy" is generally translated as "政策", but it should be understood as "保单" in insurance articles; generally speaking, "balance" is translated as "平衡", while in economic and trade articles, its meaning is derived into account "账户余额". The above is in accordance with the condition students majoring in business English need to master relevant professional vocabulary, which can be seen as one of the current difficulties for them.

Moreover, students major in business English facing with the lack of business background knowledge. If the reading process is separated from its background knowledge and logical thinking, relevant English articles will become an empty shell for their readers. In addition to English vocabulary and writing logical structure during this kind process, the crucial juncture is business knowledge background. For the reason that English reading materials

often contain economic trade and finance, these all embody professional and time-sensitive. So if students want to be able to understand relevant professional materials, they need enough understanding in corresponding ideas in order to truly find out the author's intention. However, the lack of relevant understanding of business culture and social facts for application-oriented undergraduate colleges' students leads to some difficulties in reading business English articles.

Last but not least, It is an urgent priority for students to develop good reading habits. Students' English reading habits are an important factor affecting the learning efficiency. During the process of English reading, most students have formed some unscientific habits, such as when reading silently, they will use a pen or a hand in the article below, a word, a sentence resulting in low reading speed, or just try to translate every word or sentence into Chinese, etc. Above reading habits will seriously affect their reading speed and efficiency. Besides, most of them also embrace improper reading methods who only pay attention to the analysis of the language difficulties, but ignored the overall discourse structure, the author's intention and even article topic. This greatly affects the improvement of their reading ability.

3. Effective Integration of Mixed-Mode Teaching and Business English Reading Practice Under Information Technology

As one of the core courses for business English major, business English reading is a concrete embodiment of both theory and practice. It focuses more on students' language integration ability, business background knowledge, professional quality, and communication skills. At present, traditional teaching mode is still widespread adopted in business English reading. Although multimedia methods are gradually applied in the classroom, teaching activities are still dominated by teachers. In short, students are in passive listening "cramming" mode which cannot arouse their learning subjective initiative. So the actual teaching effect is not so ideal. In addition, current teaching materials are lagging behind what can not meet the needs of students to enter the workplace in the future, resulting in talent training out of market requirements. Relatively, the mixed-mode teaching combining online and offline has sufficient teaching resources advancing with times. Its unique teaching situation can meet the needs of teaching students in accordance with their aptitude and make up for the deficiency of the traditional teaching mode to a certain extent. Therefore, it is imperative to discuss the application of mixed-mode teaching in business English reading teaching.

In the "mixing" process, no matter teachers or students rely on information technology by using the online platform to integrate teaching resources[3]. It should be born in mind that online teaching is the premise of mixed-mode teaching. And the effectiveness of online teaching resources is an important link to promote the further improvement of business English reading teaching system. Under this guideline, teachers can adjust relevant teaching methods according to students' knowledge absorption in classroom, and then combine traditional teaching and online teaching gradually for business English simulation training in specific teaching situations. To improve students' feelings and understanding of the reading context after class, they can adopt the living form or collection of relevant online teaching courses. In view of

those deficiencies in the process of business English reading and learning, teachers could explain difficult points through the form of live broadcast or micro-class recording. Additionally, students can also recommend relevant videos or MOOC resources to complement their lack of preparation, making the way of English teaching and learning more flexible so as to improve the students' learning effect.

Make full use of the offline classroom to consolidate the learning results. In the process of the continuous promotion of the mixed-mode teaching, the role of the traditional business English reading teaching should be fully played while giving full use of the online teaching resources. That's because traditional teaching methods can provide students with an environment for them to accept knowledge face-to-face, narrow the space and time distance between teachers and students, and maintain their efficient learning state. Since ancient times, it has functioned as the main way for students in knowledge absorption. Through analyzing key points of business English reading in class, students can deepen their understanding of vocabulary and context in professional fields, consolidate the content system of business English reading and once again organize students to consolidate and flexibly apply the basic reading knowledge learned online through offline teaching practice. So they can have more opportunities to participate in learning at the cognitive level, which allow them jointly achieve more advanced goals.

Finally, it is necessary to strengthen the evaluation of the mixed-mode teaching practice. Both online and offline teaching should be regularly evaluated for reading ability level. In the meantime, students should be given timely feedback of evaluation information. At information age, it is an important measure to stimulate their reading enthusiasm to fully promote the practice of mixed-mode teaching and timely evaluate the effectiveness of their business English reading and learning ability. When formulating the evaluation plan of students' English reading level, individuals can make full use of this mixing kind to adopt one-way online or offline evaluation for assessing students' learning content at each stage[4]. That's how to timely adjust the teaching plan and form. In addition, the feedback of the business English reading level assessment results would allow students realize their shortcomings in different aspects of vocabulary, grammar, discourse and reading skills, which enables them address existing problems, so as to further improve the teachers' teaching effect and students' learning results.

4. Conclusion

With the continuous application of information technology into the classroom, the education mode of college business English reading has gradually presented a diversified and three-dimensional characteristics. In mixed-mode teaching, from slides to live teaching and online class, all those reveal the upgrade of business English reading classroom teaching experience, realize the transfer of teaching location, innovative teaching and learning time and space integration of emerging teaching methods, further break through the traditional path of solving difficulties and doubts in business English reading and learning which is conducive to establish a perfect and sound business English reading environment and improve the efficiency of business English learning.

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