

A Study on the Application of PBL Teaching Method in College English Teaching

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Abstract: PBL, problem based learning, is a new teaching strategy which stimulates students' interest in learning new knowledge and improves their ability to solve problems through real situations. In the process of solving problems, teachers are no longer functioning as traditional teaching subjects, but the leader and educator of teaching. Teachers leave the task of problem detection, problem analysis and problem solving to the students, so as to improve their ability. Based on the author's learning and practical experience, this paper first analyzed the concept and goal of PBL teaching method, and then analyzed the practice of PBL teaching method in college English teaching.

1. Introduction

Many foreign language teachers believe that the purpose of foreign language teaching is to help students master language skills, while ignoring the core purpose of foreign language teaching is to enhance students' knowledge. Therefore, foreign language teaching is limited to the mechanical teaching of the language points of the given teaching materials; the lack of the expansion and excavation of the text content has resulted that "foreign language teaching has invested too much time and energy in language skills." But the study and study of the deep culture expressed by language is far from enough. So, how can we improve language learning from skill development to knowledge acquisition and thinking training? PBL teaching method (problem-based learning) provides the possibility to achieve this goal^[1]. In PBL teaching, the teaching content is set up as the social and humanistic knowledge related to the language materials, and the cooperative teaching method is adopted to reform the English teaching from the content and the way.

2. The Idea and Goal of PBL Teaching Method

2.1 Theoretical Background of PBL Teaching

Based on the constructivism theory of modern teaching, PBL holds that learning is the process of learners' active construction of knowledge. This teaching method is based on three basic principles: First, learning is a process in which learners construct knowledge actively rather than acquire knowledge passively. This principle is based on cognitive psychology. Knowledge is stored in memory in the form of related concept network connection. Learning is to link new knowledge concept with existing concept network structure. This new knowledge is easy to understand and extract in solving problems, reproducing situations and reviewing the original knowledge^[2]. Therefore, in the process of teaching, teachers need to put forward problems based on students' original knowledge structure in order to activate the original knowledge and promote the establishment of a multi-directional relationship between the new knowledge and the original knowledge structure. Second, learning should be more effective on the basis of cooperation. collaborative learning is a core part of the PBL, which is advocated by the American Johnson brothers. Collaborative learning makes each member of the team take on different roles and missions. They can only rely on each other and cooperate to complete the task assigned by the teacher. Anyone's gain and loss will affect the interests of the team. This constraint ensures the active participation of each individual. Collaborative learning has shown great advantages in

English teaching. Studies have shown that collaborative learning creates a relaxed and active learning atmosphere for English learners. It can not only reflect the individualization of teaching, but also enhance students' interest in learning. It is also conducive to the development of critical thinking and language communication skills. Third, learning is most effective under conceptualized conditions. In other words, only by putting the acquisition of knowledge into a certain real situation can we achieve a deeper understanding of knowledge and promote the transformation and application of knowledge in real situations. Traditional teaching implies the assumption that conceptual knowledge can be abstracted from the context in which they are learned and applied; however, students temporarily memorize conceptual knowledge but do not know how it relates to the real world. Therefore, the existing knowledge cannot be applied to the actual situation. In conceptualized teaching, teachers focus on a macro situation, leading students to find problems, form problems and solve problems with the help of all kinds of information in the situation. This allows students to apply their knowledge and skills to practical problems and achieve meaningful learning.

2.2 Goals and Advantages of PBL Teaching

Based on these three teaching concepts, the teaching objectives of PBL can be set as follows: to construct a wide range of flexible knowledge and to realize the integration of multi-disciplinary knowledge; to cultivate a good way of thinking and form effective problem-solving strategies; to develop autonomous learning ability and self-directed learning skills; to become an effective cooperative learner; to stimulate internal motivation for learning. Compared with the traditional teaching method, PBL teaching method has created a relaxed and active learning atmosphere for students, enabling them to construct knowledge independently and actively. In addition, it will get more extensive information from peers and teachers in cooperative learning. It can stimulate students' thinking activities, deepen students' understanding of knowledge and promote the transformation of knowledge. It is beneficial to cultivate students' desire for knowledge and inquiry. In addition, it can not only benefit the learning of knowledge, but also exercise students' ability in many aspects, such as document retrieval, language application and expression, induction and logical reasoning, as well as the ability of autonomous learning and lifelong learning. In view of this, the PBL teaching method will meet the teaching requirements of the acquisition of cultural knowledge and the improvement of language application ability in college English learning^[3].

3. The Practice of PBL Teaching Method in College English Teaching

3.1 Problem Preparation before Class

Different from the traditional teaching methods, the role of teachers and students has changed greatly. In the process of teaching, teachers have changed from traditional speakers to instructors and promoters. Students have changed from passive receivers to active knowledge explorers and participants. In addition, the use of the teaching method requires all students to use English in the process of learning, which is a challenge for most students. On the one hand, teachers should actively encourage students to use English thinking to think and solve problems, so as to eliminate students' fear and anxiety and can actively participate in English teaching. On the other hand, the teacher should set up the relevant questions for the students according to the main points of English learning, so that the students can collect the information with the questions, exchange discussions with the questions, and finally get the answers to the problems.

3.2 Search Information by Students in Groups

In the course of study, the students should be divided into groups according to the questions they are interested in, and each group has one member. Group members ask questions and make full use of existing resources such as books, literature and the Internet to look up information. In this process, the teacher can give appropriate help to students; group members can also help each other and make division of labor and cooperation. For example, when organize the students to learn the concept of the civil rights movement, one student can inquire about the historical background and

causes of the civil rights movement, and another student could inquire about the main leaders of the civil rights movement and its main achievements^[4]. Others can look up important historical events of the civil rights movement. Through systematic division of labor and cooperation, team members can have a comprehensive understanding of the concept of the civil rights movement. In addition, it not only improves the students' reading level, but also enhances the feelings among the group members and the sense of cooperation through a large amount of information collection and collation.

3.3 Group Communication

In the first unit of classroom teaching, group members need to integrate all kinds of information and data collected by themselves, and present their own data and their knowledge points respectively, so as to achieve complementarity and correction of information among team members. In the course of teaching, teachers can add people to the group discussion and give the group members timely guidance to promote the students' English use ability. In the course of discussion, students may find new problems that have not been concerned before, or put forward more interesting questions, so as to urge them to inquire and organize relevant information and data, and to find out the answers to the questions through their own efforts. For example, in learning anti-war movements, students may ask questions about the causes of the Vietnam War, the historical process and so on. Teachers should guide students to continue to look around the above issues after class and try to get the answer to the question. In order to prepare for the sustainable development in the future, the students' English reading quantity and knowledge reserve are increased through group communication and reading after class [5].

3.4 Classroom Discussion about Problems

After having inquired, sorted out the materials and discussed in groups by the students, the second unit of classroom teaching may be summarized by the group representatives on the questions they have studied, and the other groups may ask questions about what they say. Teachers need to assess the results of group members' discussions, emphasize on the most important knowledge points, and supplement students' knowledge that is missing or incomplete^[6]. In the whole classroom discussion, the students use English to explain their knowledge, communicate with each other and answer questions. They take the language as the carrier and make a serious analysis and discussion of the meaningful learning content. To a certain extent, language conceptualized learning is realized. At the same time, each group can obtain knowledge from the discussion of other groups, which not only improves the efficiency of learning, but also expands the scope of knowledge, so that it can master the teaching contents comprehensively and thoroughly.

3.5 Teachers' Evaluation and Summary

While summing up the teaching process, teachers should also make an objective assessment of the learning situation of the various groups, especially those whose learning tasks have been accomplished better, so that to create a sense of honor for all members of the group and promote further learning. From asking questions to summing up and evaluating problems is a big circle of teaching methods^[7]. In the process of discussion and communication, the students will also have new problems, which need to consult the relevant information and date and discuss further, so that to constitute an internal cycle of teaching. Students will enrich their knowledge and improve their language understanding and communication ability in the cooperative learning of problem-raising and problem-solving.

4. Conclusions

The PBL teaching method changed the traditional teaching mode of pharmaceutical English, aroused students' enthusiasm in learning and developed students' ability of independent analysis and problem-solving and the spirit of teamwork. Moreover, it improved students' self-study ability and scientific research ability, and accumulated certain professional experience for students' future study

and work. The PBL also enriched the teaching form of teachers and enlivened classroom atmosphere. Therefore, PBL teaching method, as an open teaching method, can promote the cultivation of creative and practical pharmaceutical talents, and it is worth popularizing in the teaching of Pharmaceutical English. However, there are still some problems in the implementation of the law. For example, the method itself does not have a unified model, so it is still necessary to study the whole teaching process in depth. We should sum up the teaching experience and form a set of PBL mode suitable for pharmaceutical English course, so as to cultivate more qualified pharmaceutical talents.

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