

An Exploration into the Formative Assessment of English Teaching in Higher Education

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Abstract: *Teaching evaluation is not only an important way to obtain the teaching feedback for teachers, but also the effective method to improve the learning method for students. Formative assessment result is helpful for students' learning and for teachers' teaching quality enhancement. In this paper, the concept and advantages of formative assessment are introduced, and the necessity and principles of formative assessment of English teaching in higher education are explained and its strategies are discussed.*

Keywords: higher vocational colleges, English teaching, formative assessment

INTRODUCTION

Teaching evaluation is an important link and mean to achieve teaching goals. At present, the evaluation of English teaching in colleges and universities is mainly based on traditional summative evaluation. This evaluation method has certain fairness and effectiveness, but it overemphasizes the cultivation of students' test-taking ability, which has an adverse effect on the students' initiative. English test questions emphasize the assessment of listening, reading, writing, and translation skills, which cannot fully reflect the students' actual application and level of English learning. Therefore, in order to better improve teaching effectiveness and improve students' academic performance, it is necessary to make full use of formative evaluation methods in college English teaching. However, the application of formative evaluation in colleges and universities is not much, or it is not well implemented, so it is necessary to further explore the application of formative evaluation.

The Connotation and Advantages of Formative Assessment

The Connotation of Formative Assessment

Formative assessment was proposed by American scholar M. Scriven in 1967 and was later widely

used in the field of teaching. The evaluation content includes the knowledge, skills and attitudes formed by students in the learning process. The purpose of the evaluation is mainly to provide feedback to teachers and students. On the one hand, it helps teachers improve teaching methods and improve teaching quality, and on the other hand, it helps students find a more suitable learning method to improve their learning efficiency. Only in this way can the teaching information be fully fed back to teachers and students, so as to meet the needs of students, adjust teaching, and motivate and urge students to improve their learning methods and strategies. Formative evaluation mainly uses various evaluation methods to evaluate students' performance, grades, emotions, attitudes and other aspects in their daily learning process, so as to collect relevant information and let students actively participate in the evaluation process from passive acceptance in this process.

Advantages of Formative Assessment

Teaching activities are a fluid and changing process. There are many complex factors in this process. Assessment is an indispensable part of teaching activities. Only by adopting effective means and procedures to evaluate teaching can we fully understand the current teaching situation and improve teaching strategies. Therefore, the formative assessment system is conducive to evaluating the entire process of student learning, timely feedback, improving teaching, and improving the interaction and equality between teachers and students. The advantages of formative assessment are mainly reflected in the following aspects: First, multiple evaluation subjects. Summative assessment is mainly one-way, with teachers in a dominant position and students in a passive position. Students' initiative is mainly based on oppression, so it is not easy to give full play to students' subjectivity. Formative assessment is based on students as the main body, emphasizing the benign interaction between the evaluator and the evaluated, encouraging students to self-evaluate and mutual evaluation among classmates, promoting students' self-feedback and self-reflection, and cultivating their thinking ability. Secondly, the evaluation content is diversified. Formative assessment is an assessment of the entire learning process of students, involving many factors such as knowledge mastery, learning motivation, learning attitude, learning strategy, emotion, etc. Secondly, the assessment methods are diverse. Teachers can evaluate students' classroom performance, homework, quizzes, reports, seminars, etc., and can also conduct a more comprehensive assessment of students through questionnaires and interviews.

The Necessity and Main Principles of Using Formative Assessment in College English Teaching

It is very necessary to use formative assessment in college English teaching. This is not only the need of education and teaching, but also the need for the development of formative assessment, and the need to teach students in accordance with their aptitude and pay attention to the development of students' differences. Introducing formative assessment in college English teaching can directly benefit teachers, students and education management departments. First, formative evaluation of the

teaching process can enable teachers to obtain information feedback during the teaching process, thereby improving the quality of English teaching; second, formative evaluation is implemented in classroom teaching, and there is a mutually dependent relationship between the evaluated and the implementer, which can enable both parties to cooperate better in the teaching process, fully realize the effectiveness of formative evaluation, and thus help students improve their learning efficiency; finally, formative evaluation has the function of providing effective information for teaching decision-making and management, which is of great significance to the decision-making and management work of the teaching management department. The teaching management department can make full use of the information fed back by formative evaluation to judge the value of the course and have a more detailed understanding of the students' learning status, so as to better set up courses, improve the level of teaching decision-making, and continuously improve all aspects of teaching management. The evaluation content in college English teaching involves various aspects such as basic English knowledge, language skills, emotional attitudes and autonomous learning ability. Therefore, the scientific principle must be followed in the evaluation process. Only by taking a pragmatic attitude to objectively and comprehensively evaluate the content of the evaluation can it truly promote teaching improvement and motivate students to learn. In addition, formative evaluation of English teaching should follow the guiding principle to promote the realization of English teaching objectives. Therefore, teachers should guide students to pay attention to the learning and cultivation of knowledge, skills and other aspects in the evaluation process, and guide students to improve and improve their comprehensive qualities such as learning habits, learning methods and cooperation awareness. In view of the diversity of evaluation content, evaluation subjects, evaluation methods and evaluation channels of formative evaluation in college English teaching, it is necessary to adhere to the principle of diversity of formative evaluation. In addition, the design of the evaluation plan of formative evaluation should be based on the actual situation of students, and should be simple, easy to operate and feasible. Only in this way can students actively participate in the evaluation.

Strategies of Formative Assessment in College English Teaching

Classroom Observation

Classroom observation can make an intuitive evaluation of students' learning behavior. It is a basic method of formative evaluation and an effective method to describe students' learning process through observation. In college English teaching, through classroom observation, teachers can further understand students' daily learning status, including listening, speaking, reading, writing ability, learning progress, etc., so that teachers can better carry out teaching activities, select teaching materials needed by students, and carry out teaching activities that are helpful to students' learning. Through classroom observation, relevant information about students' language skills development can also be effectively collected. Compared with traditional written test methods, this information

can be better obtained in classroom observation. **S**

Student Self-assessment

Student self-assessment is an important method in formative assessment. Teachers should encourage students to actively participate in this process and let students improve their autonomous learning ability through self-monitoring and self-assessment. In English teaching, teachers can conduct self-assessment on students in terms of writing, listening, reading, translation, language expression, etc. Taking writing as an example, whether there is a concept before writing, whether the topic is appropriate, whether the beginning and ending of the writing conform to the norm, whether the sentence expression is clear and complete, whether the sentence structure is reasonable, etc. are all items for students to conduct self-assessment. Self-assessment is not a process of completing a task, but a process for students to manage themselves. In this process, teachers need to guide students at all times and provide them with relevant self-assessment standards, so that students can naturally understand and master their own learning status in the evaluation process and develop a psychological sense of responsibility for their own learning.

Mutual Evaluation among Students

Mutual evaluation among students can promote cooperation among students, which reflects the current trend of emphasizing students' cooperative learning ability in English teaching in colleges and universities. Allowing students to evaluate each other can help them develop a close relationship of mutual care and support, which has a very positive significance for students' physical and mental development and the establishment of social responsibility and self-esteem. For example, the teacher organized a writing teaching activity and asked students to write on the topic of "Differences about the students' feeling before the exam and after the exam." After completing the task, the students presented it to the whole class, and other students evaluated their task completion and results, or they evaluated each other in pairs. When conducting mutual evaluation, students should express their opinions and conduct evaluations in combination with reality, which is conducive to establishing a good relationship between classmates and conducting mutual evaluation in a harmonious atmosphere. Mutual evaluation among students can not only promote cooperation among classmates and improve learning efficiency, but also allow classmates to share learning experiences and methods with each other, solve problems together, enhance the sense of competition in learning, and create a strong learning atmosphere.

Teachers' Evaluation of Students

In the use of formative evaluation in college English teaching, although teachers are no longer the only evaluators, they also play an important role in the evaluation system. When teachers evaluate students' learning behavior, learning process and performance, they play many roles, the most

important of which is motivation. Helping students to conduct self-evaluation, managing students' learning, guiding students to re-examine their learning methods, adjusting learning goals, and providing students with feedback are the purposes and roles of teachers' evaluation of students. As organizers, implementers and planners in the evaluation system, teachers' evaluation of students includes knowledge mastery, emotions, attitudes and abilities shown in the learning process, etc. Teacher evaluation can be carried out throughout the classroom discussions, learning tasks, student homework and extracurricular practice of teaching activities, and various forms of evaluation are adopted, which is also the basic requirement of formative evaluation. Teacher evaluation requires teachers to have good professional skills and professional qualities, and only the use of appropriate evaluation methods will have a positive impact, motivate students' learning and promote their development.

In short, the application of formative evaluation in college English teaching plays an important role in improving teaching management, improving teaching quality, helping students improve learning methods, adjusting learning strategies, etc. One of the purposes of evaluation is to mobilize students' initiative in learning and give full play to their subjectivity, so that students can tap their potential in English learning, activate the driving force of English learning, and finally achieve the leap of the three realms of English learning: language image realm, emotional image realm, and mental image realm. College English teaching must follow the principles of scientificity, orientation, diversity, and feasibility in the application of formative evaluation, and adopt a variety of channels and methods to carry out evaluation activities. I believe that it will be of great help to improve the quality of college English teaching and further deepen the reform of curriculum assessment.

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