

Exploring the Effectiveness of the Flipped Classroom Model in University Oral Japanese Course

GUO Rui

Dalian Maritime University, Dalian, China

With the wide application of multimedia technology in teaching, flipped classroom model has attracted extensive attention from educators. This paper takes oral Japanese course as an example and combines the author's teaching experience to analyze the common problems in the teaching of oral Japanese course from three aspects: before-class, during-class, and after-class. In view of the existing problems in teaching, the paper puts forward application strategies of flipped classroom model in oral Japanese course from the perspectives of teaching preparation, independent study before class, flipped classroom in class, and supplementary teaching evaluation after class. The results show that flipped classroom model has played a positive role in improving students' oral Japanese ability, highlighting students' dominant position, and inspiring students' learning initiative.

Keywords: flipped classroom model, college Japanese teaching, oral Japanese course

Introduction

In recent years, with the assistance of multimedia technology, the flipped classroom model breaks the traditional teaching method with teachers as the main body, cultivating students' autonomous learning ability. The flipped classroom model resets traditional classroom teaching links and supports students' personalized learning, which has aroused extensive attention and application exploration in China's education field. Therefore, it is of great necessity to probe into the origin, idea, and value significance of the flipped classroom model, and constructs the flipped classroom model in oral Japanese course in colleges from two dimensions of teaching stage and application strategy.

The flipped classroom model can attract attention and discussion around the world because of the Khan Academy founded by Salman Khan in 2011 (Jin, Hui, & Shi, 2021). After the flipped classroom model was introduced into China, it has aroused widespread concern and research in the education field. With the development and progress of multimedia technology, flipped classroom model has become a popular choice for teachers to conduct teaching practice (Guo, 2020). Traditional classroom teaching is mainly based on teachers' lectures, and students learn knowledge passively (Wang, 2021). Flipped classroom model changes the learning style from students' passive learning to active learning, which mobilizes the learning initiative of students better. In terms of theoretical research, a model of flipped classroom was constructed based on case studies of online and offline hybrid teaching method of college Japanese course, which could improve the quality and efficiency of Japanese teaching (Sa, 2021). Some scholars adopted the action research method to optimize the flipped

classroom model, and developed teaching design from student-oriented implementation layer and teacher-oriented design layer, with the four elements of learning objectives, learning tasks, learning activities, and learning evaluation as the basic intermediary points (Wang, 2021; R. D. Wang & L. L. Wang, 2021). Empirical research was conducted on the teaching design of flipped classrooms in courses of “Japanese Listening” and “Japanese Reading”. The result shows that flipped classroom model highlights the students’ dominant position in learning, satisfies students’ requirements for language practice, and contributes to stimulating learning interest and learning initiative. The author believes that any kind of teaching model is not unique, and a flipped classroom model that meets the needs of the students should be formulated according to different teaching stages, teaching objects, and teaching contents (Ling, 2018).

Problems in the Teaching of Oral Japanese Course

Taking Dalian Maritime University as an example, the overall goal of oral Japanese course aims to cultivate students’ Japanese language expression ability and conversational communication ability. As a major compulsory course, it is offered in all grades from the beginning of enrollment. The training programs and focuses of oral Japanese course are distinct in different grades. The oral Japanese course is set as “Japanese Conversation” in the freshman year, “Japanese Audio—Visual—Speaking” in the sophomore year, “Japanese Interpretation” in the third year, and “Japanese Speech and Debate” in the fourth year. With the increase of study time, the requirements for students’ speaking ability also increase. The freshman and sophomore stages focus on the basic training of students’ Japanese language, requiring students to be able to conduct oral conversations in daily life scenes and have an ability to give a speech in Japanese. In the third and fourth grades, students’ interpreting skills should be developed, so that they are capable to perform the role of Japanese interpreting in formal situations. However, in the author’s teaching experience in college, there are some problems in the traditional teaching practice process.

Insufficient Preparation Before Class

The teacher assigns the task of previewing conversational materials a week in advance. Students are required to do shadowing exercise every day, be able to imitate the expressions in the conversational materials, and conduct independent conversations around the topic of the conversation. Although part of students can complete the task carefully according to the teacher’s requirements, there are still some students who are opportunistic when completing the task, just reading the conversational materials several times. The result of this is that although these students can also speak Japanese in the materials, they have problems, such as inaccurate pronunciation of words, unnatural pronunciation and intonation of sentences, and incorrect sentence segmentation. Imitation learning is of considerable importance for oral Japanese learning, and the learning effect will be greatly reduced if omitting the crucial step of shadowing.

Teacher’s Dominant Position and Students’ Low Participation in Class

The teaching arrangements in the classroom are generally based on the textbooks. In addition to conversation, the content of oral Japanese textbooks usually contains vocabulary, grammar, exercises, etc. Although students have learned most of the grammar and sentence pattern in basic Japanese and other courses, they are impossible to achieve complete synchronization. Moreover, it is inevitable that there is some content that students have not learned in the oral textbooks. Therefore, the teacher still needs to explain the grammar and sentence pattern which students have not been learned, as well as the important and difficult vocabulary. However, there is relatively

few oral Japanese course hours per week. In a 90-minute class, if the teacher takes up too much time for the explanation, it will reduce the time for students to practice in class, leaving students in a state of passive learning, and failing to reflect the teaching goals of oral Japanese course that are different from other courses. In addition, some students' inadequate preparation before-class can lead to unsmooth implementation of classroom exercise or poor performance in the exercise. Whether it is too much time for teachers to explain in-class or insufficient preparation of students before-class, it will affect the teaching progress and is not conducive to the development of oral teaching.

Tardy Teaching Evaluation and Poor Homework Effect After Class

Oral courses are different from other courses in that most of the assignments are homework that requires oral practice. Because class time is limited, teachers are impossible to check the completion of students' oral assignments one by one and tend to neglect to follow up on students' learning situation, which affects the final teaching effect. In addition, teaching evaluation is usually the teachers' evaluation of students, which lacks links for students to evaluate teachers. Teachers cannot adjust and improve teaching contents and methods in time during the teaching process, which can also affect the students' learning effect.

Application Strategy of Flipped Classroom Model in Oral Japanese Course

Teaching Preparation

Some new words and grammar often appear in the conversation materials, and students should fully understand the content in conversation materials in order to complete the conversation successfully. Therefore, teachers need to record instructional videos to determine the scope and focus of students' learning and explain the important and difficult vocabulary and grammar.

Independent Study Before Class

The pre-class links are completed by the students themselves before the weekly conversation class. It mainly consists of two parts: watching the course videos and completing the conversation assignments. Teachers upload instructional videos and conversational materials in social software. Students are required to download and watch instructional videos at the specified time, master the vocabulary and grammar appeared in the instructional videos, and earnestly complete the conversational assignments in the instructional videos. At the same time, teachers also post specific assignment requirements in social software.

Flipped Classroom in Class

The oral Japanese course has two lessons per week, totaling 90 minutes. In-class links include student questioning and discussion, teacher induction and Q&A, and homework evaluation. The time allocation of each part of the teaching arrangement is adjusted according to the setting of the teaching theme and teaching content.

All the teaching arrangements in the classroom are carried out under the principle of taking students as the main body and teachers as the leading role, giving students the initiative in the classroom, and truly achieving "flipping" in the classroom. However, the flipped classroom does not completely entrust the classroom to the students. In the teaching process, the teacher should play a guiding role. Under the guidance of teachers, the initiative of students can be fully mobilized to give full play to the advantages of "flipped classroom". First, around the knowledge points in the instructional videos and the content in the conversation materials, the teacher encourages students to put forward the difficulties and questions encountered in self-learning before-class, and

simultaneously lets students discuss and present their own views on the problems raised by students. Furthermore, the teacher summarizes and answers questions. The last step is to conduct homework evaluation, which is used to check the students' pre-class self-study. The homework is usually the assignment of conversation topic, requiring two or three students to have a Japanese conversation around the topic and apply the key vocabulary and grammar taught in the instructional videos. When students present their homework, they are required to simulate the actual conversation scene on the stage. The assessment items include conversation etiquette, vocabulary and grammar, phonetic intonation, and language expression ability these four sections. After the conversation, the teacher gives scores to each group of students on the spot based on their homework evaluation, affirm the merits of each group, and correct the problems that arise during the conversation in time.

In the process of "flipped classroom", it is helpful to both students and teachers. From the perspective of students, on the premise of self-learning and thinking before class, through classroom questions and discussions, they can not only solve the problems found in their own preview, but also diverge their thinking from the questions and answers raised by other students, as well as supplement the shortcomings of their pre-class study. During the conversation presentation of the homework evaluation session, the teacher's objective comments and suggestions can also help students discover and correct mistakes in time. As far as teachers are concerned, from the questions raised by the students and the completion of the homework, they can find the more concentrated problems of the students, and understand the knowledge mastery of each student, which is conducive to targeted learning guidance in the teaching. In addition, teachers can also obtain new and enlightening knowledge or ideas in the process of students' discussion and expression of opinions.

Supplementary Teaching Evaluation After Class

In the flipped classroom model, the after-class links are often overlooked by teachers. However, after-class teaching feedback and teaching evaluation play an important role as an integral part of the flipped classroom. A better teaching effect can be achieved by successfully completing the pre- and mid-class links and consolidating them in time after class. After the weekly classroom teaching of the oral Japanese course is over, students are required to perform after-class conversation reading exercises according to the evaluation suggestions given by teachers in the class, and upload the reading recordings to the social software. After listening to the students' reading recordings, teachers compare the results of the teaching evaluation during the classwork assessment, and make comments on each student's reading recordings. In this way, teachers can check the implementation of students' evaluation of teaching in the classroom, and can also urge students to review in time after class to achieve better learning results.

In addition to the teacher's evaluation of the students in the teaching evaluation part, students can also participate in the evaluation after class. Student scoring consists of two parts. The first part is to let students give each group of students' conversational scores in an anonymous form according to the reference standards in the scoring table. The final score adopts a percentage system. The teacher collects the student score sheet, removes the highest score and the lowest score, and calculates the average score of each group of students. After referring to the classwork assessment scores and student scores, the teacher gives students usual grades of the weekly oral Japanese conversation class. The second part is to allow students to rate teachers. The scoring content includes the production of self-learning videos, teaching arrangements, etc., and a column of teaching improvement suggestions is set after the scoring table, which requires students to fill in in text form. This helps teachers

discover the learning needs of students in time, and adjust the teaching plan and teaching methods in time based on the needs of the students.

Conclusions

The use of flipped classroom model has played a positive role in improving students' oral Japanese ability, highlighting students' dominant position, and inspiring students' learning initiative. However, some problems have also been discovered during practice. For teachers, the links of pre-class preparation and after-class evaluation increase the workload of teachers. Before class, teachers not only need to make instructional videos, but also sort out the important and difficult points of teaching content in advance and design teaching links. After class, teachers should check students' recording assignments and collect and organize questionnaires of students' mutual evaluation and teaching evaluation. For students, the difference in independent learning ability leads to certain differences in learning effects. Students with poor learning consciousness have poor pre-class learning performance, resulting in unsatisfactory results in the completion of teaching tasks during and after class.

Teachers should pay attention to the problems found in teaching practice and seek solutions. In view of the problems in teaching practice, teachers can use teamwork with parallel class teachers to prepare lessons and make instructional videos together. The after-class collecting and organizing the student scoring questionnaire can also attain class committee members' help in advance. Regarding the problem of poor self-learning ability of some students, group learning can be adopted, and group members are cross-matched by teachers according to the students' grades and performance, which contributes to supervising each other. At the same time, teachers should make it clear to students that the results of classroom assessment and homework are incorporated in the students' usual grades, through which encourages students to earnestly complete the learning tasks assigned by the oral Japanese course.

In short, flipped classroom model is a new attempt and challenge in the reform of oral Japanese course. Multimedia technology and teaching theory complement each other in order to break through the shortcomings of oral Japanese teaching over the years, and accumulate experience in teaching practice to achieve better teaching effect.

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