Difficulties and Solutions in English Teaching in NCO Vocational and Technical Education: A Case Study of Practical English [1] for Vehicle Maintenance Technology Major based on Practical English Information Teaching Platform

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Abstract: In order to improve the teaching quality and effect of English teaching in NCO vocational and technical education, taking Practical English for Vehicle Maintenance Technology Major as an example, this paper firstly analyses the main difficulties existing in current English teaching. Then it puts forward corresponding solutions and suggestions in teaching principles, teaching content, teaching strategies and diagnosis in class with the application of independent research and development Practical English Information Teaching Platform already used in English classroom teaching, which can provide reference for the development of English teaching in NCO vocational and technical education [2].

1. Introduction

According to the teaching syllabus and training program, Practical English, as a kind of professional English, is a compulsory course for NCO vocational education of the three-year Vehicle Maintenance Technology Major and the future working position is vehicle maintenance technicians or unit leaders of the equipment support detachment. Thus, considering the reality of NCO position requirements, the teaching objectives of this course are as follows: based on the vocabulary and language learning strategies, the course is to help students to master the necessary English vocabulary in the barracks, basic military English at home and abroad as well as the expressions related to professional vehicle maintenance, focusing on training students to apply English knowledge into practical language skills, which will consequently lay a quite solid foundation for the students to be primarily qualified for their future positions, especially with the need of participating in international military joint exercises, performing foreign affairs tasks and participating in peacekeeping operations [3].

2. Difficulties in English Teaching in NCO Vocational and Technical Education

2.1. Difficulty in Teaching Content

According to the current teaching content, the combination with students' future job requirements is not close enough with relatively low practicability [4]. Traditional English teaching attaches importance to basic knowledge, but for military vocational students, it is not necessary and appropriate due to their weak learning background with a lack of learning experience before. If English teaching content cannot arouse their interest, it is hard to achieve the ideal comprehensive training of language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, writing and even translation. Meanwhile, through investigation of four military vocational academies, it is found at present, the class hours are relatively small comparing with civil vocational academies with no more than 60 class hours as a Professional English mode. Therefore, it is impossible to systematically learn

English knowledge structure with the limitation of time.

2.2. Difficulty in Teaching Strategies

The current traditional English teaching mode is not in line with the reality and the cognitive rules of military vocation education teaching objectives [5].

Taking a class in our academy as an example, with large age difference, they come from units from all over the country, which leads to their different levels of energy concentration, learning consciousness and ability, work experience and knowledge structure. However, they also show relatively obvious learning characteristics:

Theoretically, all students should have a certain basic knowledge of English language. In one class, a total 73 students include 45 with junior college degree or above and the rest with high school or secondary school education background. Though communication with teaching objectives, however, their actual English foundation is generally weak. And with a quite weak English foundation, they don't like teachers' inculcating continually in class and they are easy to get tired of traditional English classroom teaching.

As young students and soldiers, they like to play games and have strong practical abilities with a strong sense of collective honour and team consciousness. At the same time, they also have a strong personality to have the courage to accept the challenge and to show their thinking.

2.3. Difficulty in Diagnosis in Class

To fulfil the need of specific English language skills cultivation of military vocation education English course, it is an effective method to improve classroom teaching effort with a design of skill training activities in classroom teaching following with timely evaluation on the results of students' skill use in order to carry out targeted teaching and guidance [6]. Currently, however, English classroom teaching is not comprehensive and effective enough to grasp the students' learning status through just observing the reaction of several individuals facing questions. Therefore, it is very difficult for teachers to evaluate the learning progress and effect of the whole classroom students timely and precisely on their own.

3. Solutions in English Teaching in NCO Vocational and Technical Education based on Practical English Information Teaching Platform

In order to provide solutions, the course team designs and develops a special information teaching platform by using the application software Dlephi XE7, hoping to make great innovations in the teaching implementation of the course. The running of JSFL code relies on Flash runtime environment, and each run invokes files in JSFL formats, so it is more convenient to operate in the actual application [7]. While designing, it follows the principle of taking students as the main body and teaching as the centre, fully achieving three goals: Firstly, it will rich representations of classroom teaching to implement the real-time interaction of teachers and students, consequently raising the efficiency of the learning and training. Secondly, by putting a lot of fun in the classroom, it is to improve the military vocational and technical education students' interest in learning. Let students learn knowledge in the game and exercise skills in tasks. The third is to improve the teachers' classroom teaching control ability with quick and accurate classroom diagnosis to achieve targeted teaching.

The information teaching platform is composed of teaching system and learning system. The teaching system can not only show teaching content, but also be real-time access to students' dynamic learning status, while the learning system is for students to operate according to current activity content and within prescribed time the result can be operated, modified and repeatedly submitted to the teaching system, which appears dynamically in the student status bar of the teacher system. In general, teacher gets real-time feedback from the students by setting up a series of interactive classroom activities and makes adjustments to giving the knowledge and skills that the students need desperately and immediately.

3.1. Solutions in Teaching Content

According to the teaching content, in view of the relatively small class hour situation, the traditional English teaching contents distribution is abandoned with peeling off the grammar system and breaking the conventional mode of language learning from the aspect of teaching material in modules and tasks, by changing most of the teaching contents into designed scenario activities of actual scenes in the future. While setting tasks in the scene, it will be progressive and interconnected from basic knowledge to single skill training to comprehensive skill training, which not only solves the key and difficult points in teaching, but also fully cultivates the language input and output ability, and finally guides the students to complete relevant practical tasks [8].

In addition, tasks created through the information platform can help students to realize the knowledge transfer and application. In traditional language teaching, students seem to understand the knowledge points but do not know what problems they are trying to solve, which is not conducive to the students' mastery of knowledge and the development of students' thinking. Learning based on the tasks in information teaching platform, however, can help students clearly perceive what kind of language knowledge can be applied to the scenario, and overall seize language learning need to learn the precise language skills in the scene. In this way, students will be able to firmly grasp the language knowledge with flexible knowledge migration and application.

3.2. Solutions in Teaching Strategies

The biggest advantage of designing teaching activities through information teaching platform is the interaction of teacher and students, in which through teaching platform students take part in activities, submit homework data and the teacher firstly inspires and guides the students to learn and then analyses students work through statistical data. Hence, targeted teaching is given by teacher with the analysis result of timely and comprehensive access to students' mastery of knowledge points. Moreover, it is beneficial to stimulate students' interest in learning through information teaching platform tasks. In the past teaching activities, teachers blindly taught students' knowledge, did not guide students to think actively or to solve problems on their own. This kind of problem-free teaching did not arouse students' strong desire to explore and learn, but reduced their enthusiasm for learning. By letting all students participate in the information teaching platform tasks, on the contrary, students' awareness of participation and their interest in learning is effectively enhanced [9]. Therefore, the establishment of information-based teaching platform has an important positive significance in improving the learning effect. But it has to be noticed that research and analysis have to be done in terms of students' serving in the future and job requirements, and then according to the position requirements and curriculum standard, the teaching content should be reasonably selected, close to the student ability training mission and trying to be continuing, comprehensive and interesting simultaneously.

3.3. Solutions in Diagnose in Class

Practical English course examination adopts the combination of formative assessment and summative assessment, each accounting for 50% of the total grade. Therefore, formative assessment is very important, which can be divided into three parts: task completion in class, homework after class, learning attitude and progress, among which task completion in class accounts for 60%. The information-based classroom teaching not only increases the interest of classroom teaching and arranges teaching activities rationally, but also can analyses and calculates the data submitted by students through systematic development, so as to comprehensively obtain the students' grasp of the current teaching content and make a scientific and reasonable formative evaluation. In the past language teaching, teachers taught language knowledge, and students passively accepted. Through classroom questions from teacher to individual students, the evaluation of the content mastery is neither comprehensive nor efficient. By creating tasks on the information teaching platform to test students, all students participate in it and upload the test results to teachers in a timely manner, which is beneficial for teachers to have a comprehensive understanding of students' overall grasp of knowledge points and to achieve a targeted and efficient organization of classroom activities.

The system design realizes the following three main functions [10]: The first one is to automatically invoke the task results submitted by students through the network teaching system, and then run the JSFL parsing files of corresponding subject in the background, and finally output the analysis results according to the student ID. The second is to carry out automatic statistics of all students' homework analysis results, and show the correct rate of each assessment point with the right number before the answer. If there is a low correct rate of a certain assessment point, it is necessary for the teacher to review the content of the assessment point collectively. The third is the analysis of the results of each assessment point for each student, and if a student shows quite lot errors of an assessment point, then the teacher can focus on coaching the student individually.

4. Conclusion

The development and application of Practical English Information Teaching Platform along with the idea of scenario activities puts forward a new mode of English teaching in NCO vocational and technical education, which can greatly improve the working efficiency of teachers and students in actual classroom teaching providing not only quick and precise assessment of students' mastery of different knowledge points to carry out targeted teaching, but also a direct and interesting way for students to master the practical language skills.

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