

A Study of Learners' Satisfaction towards College Oral English Flipped Classroom

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Abstract—Flipped Classroom, by reversing the teaching procedures, is leading a new trend of teaching reform. This paper takes questionnaire and interview as the instrument, exploring college oral English learners' satisfaction towards college oral English Flipped Classroom teaching model. The result shows that learners are generally satisfied with college oral English Flipped Classroom teaching model, especially the phase of comprehensive improvement and the phase of language use, and they agree with the fact that Flipped Classroom teaching model is effective in improving their English speaking ability. The paper further discusses the possible explanations of the results and provides some suggestions for college oral English Flipped Classroom teaching.

Index Terms—learners' satisfaction, Flipped Classroom teaching model, college oral English teaching

I. INTRODUCTION

Flipped Classroom is a new classroom-based teaching system which readjusts the teaching procedures before and in class. In traditional classroom, knowledge is imparted before class and homework for consolidating and practice is put after class. While with Flipped Classroom model, before class teachers provide teaching videos and other relevant teaching materials through network for students' autonomous learning; and in class, classroom activities are implemented among students and teachers, such as discussion, Q&A, feedback, cooperative exploring and interactional communication. Some scholars think that teaching video is not the core of Flipped Classroom model, instead, the subversion of traditional teaching process and the reflection on "student-centered" is the true meaning of Flipped Classroom. The success of Flipped Classroom is attributed from inquiry-based learning and project-based active learning.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This part consists of four sections, namely, the theoretical basis of this study, previous studies on Flipped Classroom, college oral English Flipped Classroom teaching model and learning satisfaction.

A. Theoretical Basis---Attribution Theory

Attribution is a concept from social psychology concerned with how individuals interpret events and how this relates to their thinking and behavior. As for successful interpretation, learners may attribute it to some learning strategies they employed. Thus the research on learners' ILS (short for interpretation learning strategies) attribution tends to be more important.

Attributions are considered as the causes or reasons given by individuals for a behavior or event which is related to them or some others (H. Douglas Brown, 1994). Attributions are quite universal in our daily life. According to Forsterling (2001), attributions are also labeled as causal explanations. Pintfich & Schunk (2002) indicate that motivational psychology has been further conducted based on the investigations on the reasons or causes of individuals' behaviors.

Given the fact that people seek to find out the reason why particular events have occurred, Forsterling (2001) points out that Attribution Theory deals with how individuals give explanations for the events and the psychological consequences of these explanations as well.

From different points of view, there are different classifications of attributions. Considering the relationship between the actor and the attributor, attributions can be categorized into self attributions and other attributions (H. Douglas Brown, 1994); while taking function into consideration, according to Butler (2002), attributions can be classified into productive attribution and unproductive attribution.

There are two factors when considering learning satisfaction: one is learners' attribution towards emotional attitude in learning, and the other is the source of learners' self-worth. Attribution theory explains the causes of success and failure, assuming that the explanation and categorization of the causes decides the future behavior. Therefore, learners' attribution of previous failing task determines their motivation of the subsequent task. Driscoll thinks that internal causes include ability, effort and state of mind, while the external causes include task difficulty, teachers' attitude and the help of others. Therefore, as for Flipped Classroom teaching, teachers need to guide students to attribute their success and failure to hard work and effective learning strategies to promote continuous learning motivation of students.

B. *Previous Studies on Flipped Classroom*

Flipped classroom originated in the Forest Park School in Rocky Mountain Colorado United States (Zhai Xuesong, Lin Lilan, 2014). In the spring of 2007, two chemistry teachers in the school, Bergmann and Sams started using recording software to record the PowerPoint presentations and lecture voice. They uploaded the recorded video to internet to help absent students make up missed lessons. Later, the two teachers made students watch teaching video at home and finish homework and explained the difficulties that students met during self-learning in class. In 2004, Salman Khan have recorded more than 1500 micro education speeches at home whose topics covered math, physics, finance, biology and contemporary economics; In 2007, Salman Khan began to build Khan Academy—a non-profit website which would be specially used to explain the content of different subjects by video and to answer netizen questions, and where there would be learning tools of on-line excises, self-evaluation and progress tracking (Bergmann J. & Sams A, 2012). From then on, Flipped Classroom began to become a new educational model that aggregated a number of common concerns.

In the recent years, the researches on Flipped Classroom in China have grown exponentially which shows that the concept and idea of Flipped Classroom has become a hot subject of teachers' research and practice. It starts from introduction and exploration of Flipped Classroom teaching model and teaching design, then an increasing number of teachers and scholars start teaching practice, such as Jukui Middle School in Chongqing and the 5th Middle School in zhuhai District Guangzhou. Apart from this, the practice of Flipped Classroom in college English teaching are carried out step by step, such as the application research of Flipped Classroom in professional English of educational technology (Wang Xiaodong, 2013) and exploration to Project-based Flipped Classroom teaching of New College English (Yu Wenhao, 2015), but there is a lack of evaluation of the effect of Flipped Classroom teaching experiment. Thus, it is a beneficial exploration to conduct teaching experiment to test the effect of Flipped Classroom teaching model and learning satisfaction of the learners.

C. *Flipped Classroom Model in College Oral English Teaching*

According to the connotation of the Flipped Classroom and constructivism theory, in reference to Robert Talbert's and Zhang Jinlei's (2012) Flipped Classroom teaching models, combining with the characteristics of college oral English courses and college students' learning characteristics, the author has constructed Flipped Classroom teaching model of "three processes, four phases" (three process namely "process of before-class knowledge transfer, process of in-class knowledge internalization, process of after-class knowledge expansion", and four phase, namely "phase of language input, phase of language use, phase of comprehensive improvement, phase of consolidation and extension").

During the process of knowledge transfer before class, teachers provide new knowledge on the network platform for students' autonomous learning. This process is to complete the process of knowledge input, and is mainly the preparation for the next phase of training, such as preparation of language, knowledge and subject (content). In the process of in-class knowledge internalization, it includes two phases, namely situational training and penetration, and the design of the task goes from the easy to the difficult, from primary task to complicated task, and step by step, enables the students to achieve language ability in the class activities. After-class knowledge expansion is auxiliary and extension of classroom teaching, aiming to create an open, free, relaxed, and authentic language environment for students' oral English learning, providing a large number of opportunities for language practice, to further develop students' ability of language application. Students learn to use language to think independently and solve problems on their own in the activities, which truly reflects the major role of students in oral English teaching.

D. *Learning Satisfaction*

Satisfaction in human psychology is a person's assent to the reality of a situation, recognizing a process or condition (often a negative or uncomfortable situation) without attempting to change it or protest. Learning satisfaction is essentially a kind of attitude. Attitude is (positive or negative) assessment of someone or something. The learning satisfaction in this study is learners' attitude on evaluating the characteristics of the practical course, and it's a two-way attitude, including positive and negative feelings.

Affective events theory thinks that emotion is response to the events in certain learning environment. A working environment includes all factors that related to work, such as diversity of a task and working autonomy, which may be disturbing or exciting or both. This theory shows that learners will have emotional responses towards events in learning, which will then influence their learning effect and satisfaction. For learners, the process of learning contains a serious of events that related to them.

III. METHODOLOGY

This part consists of two sections. The first section addresses research objective. The second section describes the research design that consists of the subjects, the instrument, data collection and data analysis.

A. *Research Objective*

Based on previous study on Flipped Classroom teaching model in college oral English, this study aims to investigate students' satisfaction towards Flip Classroom teaching model in college oral English teaching with the instrument of

questionnaire, in order to discover students' attitude and response towards employing Flipped Classroom model to oral English teaching and put forward suggestions and countermeasures towards popularization and application of Flipped Classroom model in college oral English teaching.

B. Research Design

1. Subjects

The subjects are 152 second-year non-English major students in Huaiyin Institute of Technology who had already finished oral English learning for one semester with Flipped Classroom teaching model and most of them have already passed CET-4.

2. Instrument

The instrument includes questionnaire and interview. With Lu Xing's questionnaire in Research on Faculty Acceptance of Hybrid Learning in Universities (2011) as reference, the questionnaire was designed 18 questions covering five dimensions, including the following three sections: the first section involves students' overall recognition and satisfaction towards the usefulness, usability and suitability of Flipped Classroom teaching model in college oral English teaching; the second section refers to students' specific satisfaction towards teaching and learning methods in each phase of Flipped Classroom teaching model; the third section involves students' attitudes and opinions towards Flipped Classroom teaching effect. The responses of questionnaire are measured with five-point Likert Scale.

3. Data collection

In order to collect more objective authentic data, after finishing oral English learning for one semester with Flipped Classroom teaching model, students are required to fill out the questionnaire. Finally, in addition to the questionnaire, the writer has also interviewed individual students after class to further understand their attitudes towards Flipped Classroom teaching model in college oral English teaching and the possible problems in implementing Flipped Classroom teaching model. The students surveyed are in a random sample.

4. Data analysis

In order to ensure the validity of the instrument, the writer uses SPSS to analyze reliability of the revised questionnaire. According to the result of Alpha reliability analysis (Tab.1), the Alpha coefficients of the dimensions in the questionnaire are between 0.745 and 0.932, proving that the questions in the questionnaire have high internal consistency, and the questionnaire is highly reliable.

TABLE 1
RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

	Usefulness	Usability	Suitability	Satisfaction towards each phase	Effect
Cronbach's Alpha	0.932	0.874	0.786	0.745	0.803

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Result

1. Student's overall satisfaction towards college oral English Flipped Classroom teaching model

According to the recycled effective questionnaires, more than half students (57%) said that they are willing to or relatively willing to accept the reform of Flipped Classroom teaching model in college oral English teaching, the value of overall satisfaction is 3.45, as is shown in Table 2. The satisfaction of each item is also at a higher level, among which, satisfaction towards the usefulness is of the highest, achieving 3.87.

TABLE 2
STUDENT'S OVERALL SATISFACTION TOWARDS COLLEGE ORAL ENGLISH FLIPPED CLASSROOM TEACHING MODEL

Type	Overall satisfaction	Usefulness	Usability	Suitability
Mean	3.45	3.87	3.43	2.94

2. Students' satisfaction towards each specific phase of college oral English Flipped Classroom teaching model

Questionnaire also emphatically investigates the students' satisfaction towards each specific phase of Flipped Classroom teaching model in college oral English teaching. From Tab.3 we could tell that students surveyed are mostly satisfied with the phase of comprehensive improvement, followed by phase of language use, phase of consolidation and extension and phase of language input.

TABLE 3
STUDENTS' SPECIFIC SATISFACTION TOWARDS EACH SPECIFIC PHASE OF COLLEGE ORAL ENGLISH FLIPPED CLASSROOM TEACHING MODEL

Teaching phase	Phase of language input	Phase of language use	Phase of comprehensive improvement	Phase of consolidation and extension
Mean	3.45	3.84	3.97	3.81

3. Students' satisfaction towards Flipped Classroom teaching effect in college oral English teaching

One of the aims of the research is to explore students' satisfaction towards Flipped Classroom teaching effect in college oral English teaching, thus the third section is centered about learners' subjective cognition of Flipped

Classroom teaching effect. According to the result, up to 81% of the students agree with the fact that Flipped Classroom teaching model is effective in improving their English speaking ability. Only 6% of them think that it's useless or not much useful. In the aspect of autonomous learning, 74% of the students approve that Flipped Classroom teaching model have a positive effect in improving their autonomous learning ability, and only 11% of the students deny it. As for students' satisfaction towards teaching efficiency, the value has also reached a high level of 78%. The result shows that the students surveyed have a common view that Flipped Classroom teaching model has positive effect on promoting their various abilities as well as the efficiency of teaching in college oral English course.

In addition, some of students mentioned in the interview that their attitudes towards Flipped Classroom also depend on some objective factors that are closely related to the teachers, such as teachers' attitude and abilities on teaching video, classroom organization, classroom activities, from which we could tell that Flipped Classroom teaching model put forward higher requirements for college English teachers.

B. Discussions

1. Learner's general satisfaction towards college oral English Flipped Classroom

The main purpose of this study is to see whether learners are satisfied with college oral English Flipped Classroom. The result shows that not only they are satisfied with Flipped Classroom in college oral English, they also approve the improvement of their various abilities brought by Flipped Classroom. I suppose that the following aspects explain the result.

a. Flipped Classroom satisfied the learner's demand for personalized learning of college oral English.

Learners' different oral English proficiency is a difficult issue in college oral English teaching, and the teacher's classroom teaching could not satisfy all the learners who need a teaching model that could consider their different English proficiency and individualized learning. The emergence of Flipped Classroom satisfied their needs at this very point.

Flipped Classroom subverts the traditional teaching model and establishes an individualized student-centered teaching model. The learners could watch the teaching video and teaching materials before class, which improves their self-regulation of learning. The students could adjust their learning progress and results according to their own actual situation and acquire a personalized learning. For the content that has yet been understand, they can watch it back again, and for which that they have already mastered, they could fast-forward or just skip and in this case, they could decide by themselves what and when they will learn. When students meet difficulties in learning before class, they can also ask for help from their teachers through the network. In addition, the teaching video has another advantage, that is, to facilitate students' review and consolidation after a period of time's learning.

b. Flipped Classroom teaching model helps to improve learners' autonomous learning ability.

Autonomous learning is a kind of completely spontaneous learning, through which students can be responsible for their own learning. By establishing learning goals, they monitor their learning process, make effectively self evaluation and thus make learning plans and successfully put them into practice (Holec, H, 1981). Autonomous learning is not only a good learning attitude, but also a kind of learning ability.

Under Flipped Classroom teaching model, students' themselves are responsible for the preliminary knowledge learning phase, arrange their learning process, internalize and construct their language and culture knowledge system independently and complete the tasks assigned by the teacher, which undoubtedly has an important role in promoting learners' autonomous learning. Apart from this, as they could learn the teaching materials at their own pace according to their individual learning characteristics, their anxiety can be reduced to the minimum level, and they will be eager and confident towards the upcoming learning activities. Because it's not a face-to-face communication among students and teachers, students could learn leisurely and easily in a threat-free, friendly and self-esteem-obtained learning atmosphere, so that their enthusiasm and participation to learning run unprecedentedly high.

c. oral English Flipped Classroom teaching model helps to improve learners' oral English proficiency.

The syllabus of college English states that the purpose of college oral English teaching is to develop their oral expressing ability and enable them to communicate effectively in their future work and social communication. In order to fulfill this goal, colleges and universities generally use communicative teaching method in oral English teaching whose core is classroom interaction, understanding information in specific context and mutual cooperation. Apart from this, there emerge various kinds of student-centered and "learning in doing" teaching mode, including ESP (English for Special Purpose), theme-based and task-based teaching mode whose common ground is to emphasize interaction among learners and teachers in knowledge internalization and knowledge system construction. While in traditional classroom, teachers put great effort in knowledge impacting and time is limited for classroom interaction.

Flipped Classroom teaching model changes this awkward situation by placing knowledge-transfer process before class. As students have accomplished autonomous learning of the target content before class, time for classroom interaction and collaborative learning among teachers and students has been greatly extended. Its core characteristic is exactly to enhance classroom interaction among students by reducing the time of teachers' teaching, leaving students more time for classroom learning activities, and through interactive collaboration, students will put what they have learned before class to practice (Hu Jiehui, Wu Zhongjie 2014). Therefore, Flipped Classroom teaching model fits with the teaching aim of college oral English teaching and learner's learning needs, and is helpful to improve learners' oral English ability, which is also one of the reasons why the subjects of the survey are satisfied with this teaching model.

2. Suggestions for popularizing and employing Flipped Classroom teaching model in college oral English teaching

To effectively popularize and employ Flipped Classroom teaching model in college oral English teaching, the writer have proposed the following suggestions.

a. Implementing individualized education

According to the learners of different learning style, English proficiency and gender, teachers need to make corresponding adjustment when implementing Flipped Classroom model, considering the current situation and demand of different types of learners. For example, generally speaking, there are differences in learning style and interest between male and female learners, thus, appropriate learning tasks could inspire their learning to the greatest extent. Therefore, teachers better arrange different teaching tasks for male and female learners respectively. What's more, in view of the situation of science and engineering students, it's unlikely for them to spend too much time in oral English learning, thus, under the premise of cultivating students' innovation ability and cooperative ability, teachers could consider simpler tasks and focus on the key points when announcing tasks of students' autonomous learning, so as for the form of classroom interaction and communication.

b. Strengthening teaching management

Teachers should put more emphasis on monitoring, guiding and motivating autonomous learning before class, and make sure that students put equal effort on each phase of Flipped Classroom teaching model. From the result of the study, we could tell that learners prefer vigorous and relaxed teaching activities like video watching and classroom interaction, while for the activities that involve knowledge, practice and analysis of language and culture which requires time, effort and patience, it seems that they don't enjoy the process. As a matter of fact, as an integrated teaching system, the phases of Flipped Classroom model cannot be separated from each other. Without memorizing and understanding of knowledge, the analysis of the application of knowledge is impossible, and without the usual knowledge accumulation and elaborate preparation of teaching activities, classroom interaction becomes a castle in the air. The author supposes that it's necessary to strengthen the monitoring and guidance of students' autonomous learning process. Through online learning system, teachers could monitoring students' self-learning and give feedback at any time. For those who have bad learning attitude or procrastinate in learning process, teachers need to remind them. On the other hand, students' performance in self-learning phase could be brought to evaluation system, which views the four phases as equally important ones, thus to encourage them to actively get involved in self learning.

c. Providing information technology support

Information technology is an important part in Flipped Classroom, which decisively influences the depth of the students' extracurricular learning and the creation of students' learning environment. The release of teaching video, students watching video before class and finishing homework after class, and teachers guiding students to carry out individualized and cooperative learning, all these rely on the support of information technology. Therefore, schools should be dedicated to ensure the effective implementation of Flipped Classroom in college oral English teaching from the following four aspects: improving the server's configuration and accelerating the school network speed so as to ensure that the teaching video in the network could go smoothly, equipping the teachers employing Flipped Classroom in college oral English teaching with corresponding recording equipment to ensure the quality of teaching video, building a more mature and advanced network teaching platform to ensure the release of teacher's teaching video and the interaction of teachers and students, and providing knowledge popularization and the overall training for teachers and students, enabling them to correctly use network teaching platform and to carry out cooperative learning, helping them adapt to the new teaching mode as soon as possible.

d. Establishing new evaluation system

In the traditional teaching evaluation, students' learning achievement is mainly determined by examination results of the course, at the same time, students' score is also the main basis of evaluating whether the teaching is successful or not. While in Flipped Classroom teaching, the existing traditional education evaluation should be abandoned and give place to new education evaluation mechanism. Teachers could hold a variety of forms of activities like exhibitions, report meetings and debates to give students opportunities for communication and discussion about their learning experience and sharing their learning achievements, and then evaluate them according to the students' comprehensive performance. Evaluations can also be made through students' self-evaluation and mutual evaluation and their learning results on the network teaching platform, truly achieving the good combination between formative evaluation and summative evaluation, quantitative evaluation and qualitative evaluation, relative evaluation and the individual difference evaluation. This kind of multidimensional evaluation centered from teacher evaluation to students' self-evaluation and mutual evaluation ensures the scientificity of evaluation, and at the same time it facilitates the combination of quantitative and qualitative evaluation through switching from single evaluation to multiple and intelligent evaluation, which is more beneficial to the students' personality development.

V. CONCLUSION

From this study, we could tell that most students are satisfied with employing Flipped Classroom model in college oral English learning which meets their demand for individualized learning and helps them improve their autonomous learning ability. While at the same time, there are still big challenges promoting Flipped Classroom model in college oral English teaching. To further improve students' satisfaction and teaching effect, teachers will strive to continuously

motivate their interest in oral English learning and stimulate their intrinsic motivation. No matter in teaching preparation, teaching materials organization or task design, as well as incentive and guiding measures, teachers need to study in depth. As long as learners put all efforts in Flipped Classroom learning and keep their learning interest, it would be certain that they could gain a lot and get improved in oral English.

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