Study of College English Teaching based on SPOC

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Abstract

SPOC is a localized learning model of MOOC. It integrates the advantages of massive online open courses and makes up for the shortcomings of traditional classroom teaching. This paper first analyzes the definition and characteristics of SPOC and its advantages in college English teaching, and then constructs a SPOC-based college English teaching model from teaching philosophy, teaching content, and teaching methods, which provides a new idea for college English teaching reform.

Keywords

SPOC; College English Teaching; Teaching Model.

1. Introduction

SPOC (Small Private Online Courses) originated from universities' reform of MOOC (Massive Open Online Course). It is bound to have a significant impact on the teaching of various disciplines in universities around the world. As a public basic course in Chinese universities, College English has the characteristics of a large number of learners and wide coverage. The study of SPOC and its application to college English teaching will provide a reference for China's College English teaching reform.

2. The Overview of SPOC

2.1. Definition

SPOC (Small Private Online Course) is a small-scale private online course formed by setting access conditions for participation, consisting of elements such as micro-videos, instant exercises, interactive discussions, and quizzes. It was proposed by Professor Armando Fox of the University of California, Berkeley, USA. Currently, Universities such as Berkeley, MIT, and Harvard are experimenting with SPOC. SPOC requires a controlled number of students, and therefore makes it more conducive to interaction between learners, and between learners and teachers, thus increasing student initiative and autonomy. The SPOC concept is designed to solve the problems arising from MOOCs learning, set up teaching plans based on students' characteristics and teaching needs, set up teaching content based on online teaching resources, and reorganize relevant teaching resources. The SPOC is closely related to the emergence of MOOC, which is a relatively niche and low-profile online education teaching model compared to MOOC. It emerged a year after the birth of the MOOC, which was just becoming a global phenomenon at that time. MOOCs were taking the world by storm because of their simplicity, low cost, wide-coverage, and independent interactive learning. To a certain extent, the SPOC model makes up for the shortcomings of the MOOC.

2.2. Features

Firstly, "S" refers to the smallness. Compared to the grandness of MOOC, the SPOC is concerned with more precise demands, so it is extremely small. The so-called smallness is firstly reflected in the scale of the SPOC, which is mainly for students in school or not. SPOC has a very

complicated application process and requirements, and there are strict requirements for students, who are selected with great precision. After the application is approved, the scale of the course is relatively small. Each course will not exceed 500 students, which is unthinkable compared to MOOC.

Secondly, "P" represents the private class. As mentioned above, its target audience is more precise, so it has the characteristics of a private class. However, this is only one of the aspects of the private nature, which is determined by the need to have a corresponding knowledge base. The SPOC education model, with its strong focus on individualized online and offline coaching, is a teaching tool that is tailored to the individual's needs. At the same time, it also makes it quite private, which is another important difference from the MOOC education model.

Thirdly, "O" means open class. The SPOC education model is not just private teaching, but also open, and this openness is relatively open, not fully open. At the same time, it is not for all students, in short, it is for those who have a certain knowledge base and are willing to learn. Those who do not meet the application criteria can take the form of auditing, but they do not get online and offline tutoring. It is because of this feature and requirement that SPOC has a higher quality of teaching than MOOC. This is another distinctive feature of SPOC compared to MOOC.

3. The Advantages of SPOC for College English Teaching

3.1. Rich Online Learning Resources

Traditional English classroom teachers mainly use various teaching materials released by publishers. Although the publishers are constantly updating their courseware, they still can't avoid the problem that the course content is old. This makes it necessary for teachers to find suitable teaching content for students in their own colleges online. SPOC can make full use of MOOC resources, National Quality Courses, and other online learning resources while using textbooks. This has greatly enriched the variety of teaching contents, and through the integration with the best online resources, it has made the teaching of English at university more relevant and greatly improved the efficiency of English teaching.

3.2. Unrestricted Learning Time and Place

SPOC model can be free from the restrictions of time and space, and its teaching organization is more flexible. As long as students have mobile phones and access to the Internet, they can use their own time to study the course-related materials uploaded by teachers to complete their studies, as well as the corresponding exercises. This can greatly improve students' learning efficiency.

3.3. Personalized Approach to Learning

As the English levels of undergraduate students are generally uneven, traditional English classes cannot repeat the key and difficult points of teaching. This makes some of the students have insufficient mastery of the content of the class. By using the SPOC model, teachers pass on relevant content to students, and the students can learn according to their actual level. They can watch the content repeatedly and move to the next part at their own pace. For students with relatively good grades, teachers can upload teaching content with different levels, so that they can satisfy students of different learning levels. At the same time, the content is fresh, current, and practical, which is more in line with the characteristics of students and can stimulate students' interest in learning.

3.4. Rigorous Teaching Evaluation

Scientific and reasonable evaluation of students should include both summative evaluation and formative evaluation. However, in the present teaching, the main way to evaluate students is

summative evaluation. The proportion of formative assessment is small and the form is single. Generally speaking, teachers use students' attendance and assignment submission as the main basis for their assessment. In the SPOC teaching model, teachers can monitor students' learning through big data analysis, which is more objective.

4. College English Teaching Strategy based on SPOC

4.1. Student-centered Teaching Philosophy

In College English teaching based on SPOC, teachers should change teaching to guiding, and take a student-centered approach to guide students. In addition, students should communicate with their teachers more often to develop a learning plan that suits them and to develop their own active learning habits according to their actual ability. SPOC resources provide a variety of learning resources for students with different levels. Students who are less advanced can learn in advance so that they can catch up with other students. According to the different learning requirements of each student, students can decide the content, method, time, and plan that is suitable for them, so that they can achieve the learning purpose. For example, teachers assign different tasks for different students after a particular section, so that students can independently choose the specific tasks that are suitable for them according to their own learning and research methods. Students who are good learners will be able to challenge themselves with more difficult tasks, while students who are a little less advanced will be able to find tasks that are suitable for them. When students complete the tasks, they will collect and organize and analyze information, they will exercise their inquiry-based learning skills, and develop their creative and problem-solving skills. This kind of independent learning will give students a sense of accomplishment and a positive emotional experience, which will also eventually promote the improvement of students' independent learning ability.

4.2. Various SPOC Resources as Teaching Content

The content of teaching based on the SPOC mainly refers to the micro-video recording of college English knowledge units, while lesson plans, syllabus, PPT courseware, relevant literature, and test questions are also prepared. After uploading these resources to the SPOC platform for online editing and integration, they are designed into a micro-course with a logical structure, and e-books, virtual simulation experiments, and movie videos can be attached to them as extended resources. The design of teaching content determines whether the subsequent teaching can be carried out smoothly. In the SPOC platform, teachers establish multiple teaching units according to the new syllabus and teaching plan, and each teaching unit is re-designed and arranged according to the characteristics of SPOC teaching, and then make teaching videos according to the knowledge points. In combination with the characteristics of the course and teaching needs, other rich digital resources, PPT courseware, reading materials, test banks, discussion forums, etc. are also produced. Teachers can use the school's website platform to build the SPOC course platform, upload the produced course resources, and establish an effective course access system to meet the small-scale and restricted nature of SPOC courses.

4.3. Flipped Classroom as Teaching Model

The flipped classroom emerged in Colorado around 2007, and with the rise of MOOC, its influence has expanded to the whole world, and now it has become a hot spot in the global education community. Most scholars at home and abroad believe that flipped classroom includes two parts: online learning before class and face-to-face learning in class, which transforms the traditional teaching model of "teacher-centered" into a "student-centered" teaching model. Students learn, adjust their learning pace, ask questions, and communicate with teachers or study partners to gain the initiative in learning. The essence of SPOC is the transformation and reshaping of MOOC, which is a new blended learning model that integrates

online learning and traditional classroom teaching by using MOOC resources and online evaluation and communication functions to change the status quo of traditional classroom teaching for a small and specific group of people. The exploration of the blended learning model provides new ideas and methods for the application of MOOC. Blended learning based on MOOC can integrate the advantages of face-to-face offline learning and SPOC-based learning organically to achieve the most optimal teaching effect. To a certain extent, this flipped teaching model based on SPOC refers to a hybrid teaching model that combines online teaching with classroom teaching. This type of classroom allows students to take the initiative in learning and changes the learning mode of students and the teaching mode of teachers. In the flipped classroom, teachers can give students more time to communicate and learn, and students can also take the initiative to learn, which is conducive to improving the quality and efficiency of teachers' classroom teaching. The SPOC-based flipped teaching model can be constructed through three stages: before, during, and after class.

4.3.1. Pre-class Phase

The Pre-class learning phase is based on the online platform for independent learning. In this phase, the teacher is the designer of the SPOC flipped classroom. According to their learning process through watching micro-lesson videos, the teacher assigns students, gives practice tasks, organizes online communication, regularly checks students, and reminds them of their completion status. Students, as the executors of the whole session, complete the tasks in an orderly manner according to the teacher's arrangement. The teacher analyzes the needs of the learners, determines the teaching objectives according to the important and difficult points of teaching, and designs the teaching contents under the guidance of the teaching objectives. Students log on to the web platform, check the task schedule in the module, and choose the corresponding video content to learn according to the task schedule.

4.3.2. In-class Phase

The In-class phase is based on classroom teaching, organizing group discussions, and internalizing knowledge. Learners have accumulated knowledge through Pre-class study. The student internalizes the knowledge through practice in the classroom. In this stage, the teacher is the main character of classroom teaching, and based on the learners' learning and completion of homework, he/she composes and summarizes the knowledge points and proposes new tasks. Teachers can provide targeted guidance to students based on learners' feedback or divide students into small groups so that they can work together to solve problems in a collaborative way.

4.3.3. After-class Phase

The After-class phase uses the online platform as a medium to consolidate knowledge. Teachers can provide extended knowledge for innovative training of students. The content is further reinforced by online communication between teachers and students. Students are required to complete the extensions after class, based on the materials and requirements provided on the SPOC platform. The teacher provides course updates to understand students' mastery of knowledge and effectively monitor their learning. The SPOC platform allows learners to provide suggestions on the course to facilitate the design of course reform.

5. Conclusion

SPOC, as a hybrid teaching model combining online and offline, can not only break the space and time limitations of traditional English teaching but also further enrich the teaching contents. Before applying the SPOC-based teaching mode, College English teachers should fully understand its advantages and shortcomings, and set up blended teaching before, during, and after class with the characteristics of college English teaching. The SPOC-based flipped

classroom provides an authentic place for learners to communicate with each other, enhances identity and participation, stimulates learning interest, and promotes in-depth learning. SPOC-based college English teaching can better facilitate college English classroom teaching, and its in-depth study is conducive to promoting the development of college English teaching reform in the information age.

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