

A Study on the Integration of Teaching, Learning and Evaluation in Senior High School English Classroom Based on the Core Competence of English Subject

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Abstract

English Curriculum Standards for General High School (2017 edition, Revised in 2020) proposes that the complete teaching activities should include teaching, learning and evaluation, which requires English teachers to revolve around the idea of the integration of teaching-learning-evaluation to carry out teaching practice in high school English classes, which can effectively develop each student's core competencies of English subject. Through observing four classes in the first grade of a high school and interviewing four English teachers of these classes, aiming to answer the following questions: 1) What is the current situation of the implementation of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in senior English class based on the core competences of English subjects? 2) What are the causes of these problems? The study finds that the current problems are as follows: there is inconsistency in the goals of teaching, learning and assessment; and the class lacks assessment and its method is simple; besides, the students' learning situation cannot achieve the learning goals. Through interviews, the reasons are as follows: first, teachers' awareness of the integration of teaching, learning and assessment isn't strong enough; Second, teachers lack the awareness of evaluation; Third, teachers' awareness of students' analysis is slight weak. At last the study puts forward the following suggestions to solve these problems: first, teachers should strengthen the understanding of the integration of teaching, learning and assessment; Second, teachers should enhance the awareness of evaluation in the classroom; Thirdly, teachers should strengthen the connection between learning situation and teaching design.

Keywords

Integration of Teaching-Learning-Assessment, Classroom Observation, Core

1. Introduction

In 2014, the Ministry of Education put forward the “core competences System for Students”, requiring all schools to implement the requirements of core competences and give full play to the educational value of subject teaching. In 2018, English Curriculum Standards for General High School (2017 Edition) clearly pointed out the core quality connotation of English studies and further emphasized the educational role of subject teaching. Among them, it also pointed out “to establish an assessment system which is student-oriented, aiming to promote the comprehensive, healthy and individual development of students”. The assessment should promote the formation and development of the core quality of students’ English subject”. In order to provide feedback to students, classroom assessment activities should run through the whole process of teaching, serving to test teaching objectives.

In recent years, Chinese scholars have also begun to pay attention to the teaching concept of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment. They have conducted relevant research, all of which have made certain progress. However, there is still a lack of research on the implementation of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in English classes, especially in high school English classes. Therefore, this study focuses on the current situation and existing problems of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in literature-based high school English classrooms.

2. Core Competencies of English Subject and Integration of Teaching-Learning-Assessment

This research is based on the research of core competences to define the concept. The research group headed by Lin Chongde, elaborated that core competences refers to the essential character and key ability that students should have and can adapt to the needs of lifelong development and social development. English Curriculum Standards for Senior High Schools (2020 edition) points out that the core quality of a subject is “the concentrated embodiment of the value of discipline education, and the correct values, essential qualities and key abilities gradually formed by students through the study of the subject. The core competence of English subject mainly includes language competence, cultural awareness, thinking quality and learning ability”.

The new curriculum standard points out that a complete teaching activity includes teaching, learning and assessment, and “integration” refers to the integration and unity of these three aspects. The integration of teaching-learning-assessment, also known as the consistency of teaching-learning-assessment, is the degree of coordination among the three factors of teacher’s teaching, stu-

dents' learning and assessment in the whole classroom teaching system, which jointly point to the understanding of curriculum objectives (Wang & Zhang, 2020). In this study, the implementer of "assessment" is not an expert in the field of education, but front-line teachers conducting classroom teaching. And it's the assessment that aims to obtain a clear understanding of students' achievement of learning objectives in class.

3. Literature Review

The United States is the first country to put forward the integration of assessment and teaching. In the 1940s, the assessment committee led by Taylor (1994) published the Smith-Taylor Report on education issues, which proposed the modern education assessment system for the first time. After 1980, the United States began to study the integration of teaching-learning-assessment. A series of reforms have been carried out in education and the development of formative assessment system has been promoted. Popham (2004) pointed out that curriculum, teaching and assessment are a whole, and they should be closely linked together. It is believed that what students ultimately need to achieve through learning is to achieve the target point, while in teaching, only through assessment can we know the achievement of the goal. Therefore, assessment should be linked with the goal, and finally teachers can determine the suitable teaching for students. In addition, students should know their learning goals, so that they can know what they should learn and the degree of their learning.

The earliest concept of "integration of teaching and assessment" was put forward in the 1990s. After that, many related teaching studies were carried out, and the research on integration of teaching and assessment was relatively mature. From curriculum formulation to curriculum implementation, the principle of integration of teaching and assessment was strictly followed. At the same time, Japanese scholar pointed out that the assessment results should come from teaching and feedback to support teaching, to realize the integration of teaching-learning-assessment.

The UK also put forward the concept of "assessment for learning" in the late 1990s, advocating that teachers' teaching should promote students' learning. Subsequently, countries around the world began to study how to realize "assessment for learning" in teaching, advocating the integration of assessment and teaching, and realizing the integration of teaching-learning-assessment. Scholars such as Lipnevich & Smith (2009), as well as the British assessment Reform Group, pointed out that teaching, learning and assessment should be an organic whole. Teachers and students need to share teaching objectives, learning objectives and assessment information, and improve teaching and learning through teachers' feedback, student self-assessment and peer mutual assessment.

Overall, the integration of teaching-learning-assessment has basically formed a paradigm in foreign research, which has some reference for domestic research.

The domestic research originated from Professor Sambell K. et al. (2012)

who pointed out that the learning process can have an impact on curriculum standards, classroom teaching and examination assessment, and further promote its development. Since 2006, the number of literature on the integration of teaching-learning-assessment has been on the rise. However, the number of subjects related to English is not so much, so the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in English classroom teaching still needs to be explored by more scholars.

Napper V. S. (2012) pointed out that teaching, learning and assessment should be trinity. Teaching and assessment should be closely related and mutually restricted. Teaching is essentially “data-driven” which refers to the feedback of teaching assessment. He also pointed out that assessment is not implemented only after teaching and when learning is over. But it exists in the entire teaching process.

Scholar Jiang Jingru (2021) proposed three suggestions on how to carry out instructional design and assessment design under the guidance of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment: 1) Design assessment objectives with core teaching content as the center; 2) Make sure that teaching objectives and assessment objectives, learning tasks and assessment tasks are consistent. Lu Zhen (2016) also believes that the integration of teaching-learning-assessment is an objective law for the good operation of the teaching system. Teaching, learning and assessment are three different aspects of the teaching system, which cannot be run independently. A good teaching system must be an integrated teaching mode of teaching, learning and assessment.

Chinese research on the integration of teaching-learning-assessment has been deepening. However, there are relatively few research on the current situation of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in English classrooms based on the core competences of subjects, so this research is necessary.

4. Theoretical Foundations

4.1. Bloom's Theory of Mastery Learning

In the late 1960s, the famous American educator and psychologist Bloom put forward the theory of mastery learning (Cohen, 1987). The feedback-correction system in this theory means that in classroom teaching, teachers should timely diagnose the level of students' learning, and then adjust the teaching progress, improve teaching methods, and achieve teaching goals. The strategy of mastery learning is to supplement the regular group teaching with repetitive feedback and help with corrective function which is suitable for each individual student (Xu, 1992). As mentioned in mastery learning theory, the teaching process is a dynamic activity process, that it to say, teachers get feedback on students' learning status to adjust the teaching progress in a timely manner. After that students receive supplementary knowledge and only in this way can they achieve the expected teaching objectives. Bloom's theory of mastery learning provides some theoretical guidance for this research. In this study, in the teaching process based

on ITLA teaching, classroom evaluation activities run through the whole process of teaching and serve to detect teaching objectives. Obviously, Bloom's the theory of mastery learning and ITLA teaching both emphasize that teachers should timely diagnose the level of students' learning, and then adjust the teaching progress, improve teaching methods, and achieve teaching goals. That is to say, teachers use evaluation in the classroom to obtain the learning information of the students in the teaching process and judge the distance between the students' current learning status and the teaching goals. After that, teachers give students timely feedback and adjust the teaching progress to promote students to learn more effectively.

4.2. Modern Curriculum Theory

Modern Curriculum Theory is created by **Ralph W. Taylor (1949)**. The curriculum theory put forward by him in *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* is called "Taylor Principle", which has deeply influenced the curriculum research of many countries in the world. "Taylor Principle" is also called "target model" and the core of modern curriculum theory.

Taylor's four questions also apply to classroom teaching. Before class, teachers should consider what the teaching objective of the class is, what materials and teaching methods to choose. How to organize selected materials and teaching methods to achieve teaching objectives, and how to assess whether teaching objectives are being achieved. This logical sequence requires the teaching objectives, teaching activities and evaluation activities of classroom teaching to be interdependent and integrated with each other to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum.

Based on this theory, the author can also get some insights from the theory, and they will be helpful in answering the research questions, which is highly in line with the present study and serves as the theoretical foundation for conducting this study.

5. Research Design

This part will roundly show how this research is designed, mainly describing its research subjects, research questions, research instruments, data collocation, as well as data analysis.

5.1. Research Questions

The main purpose of this study is to explore the situation of the implementation and existing problems of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment based on the core competences of English subjects in high school English classroom teaching. Two questions will be answered as follows respectively.

1) What is the current situation of the implementation of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in senior English class based on the core competences of English subjects? What are the current problems?

2) What are the causes of these problems?

5.2. Research Participants

The research participants are four English teachers who are in different age and their classes which are all in the first grade from a high school in Wuzhou City. In the study, the author selected four different types of classes as classroom observation objects because of their different teaching progress.

5.3. Research Instruments

During the study, the author used two research methods, namely classroom observation and interview.

5.3.1. Classroom Observation Scale

In the research, the author will observe and record the implementation of the integration of teacher-learning-assessment and teacher-student interaction in real English classes. Teaching, learning and assessment in each is coded according to the division table of core competences level of English subject. Finally, the current situation can be analyzed through the consistency degree of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment.

5.3.2. Interview

After analyzing the classroom observation records, four English teachers were interviewed respectively to investigate the causes of problems in the implementation of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in senior English classes.

Before the interview, the researcher told the teachers that the interview would be used for the research data of the graduate thesis and would not reveal their information or bring them any negative influence. The researchers recorded the interviews with a recording device and then transmitted them into the text.

5.4. Research Procedure

First, the author finds Yang Jidong's classroom observation scale through literature reading and uses his teaching-learning-assessment consistency scale to analyze the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in senior English class. Secondly, the author designs classroom observation records and conducts classroom observation in target classes to explore the current situation of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in senior English class. Then, according to the classroom observation results, interview questions were put forward and four English teachers were interviewed to analyze the causes of problems in the implementation of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment. Finally, some suggestions are put forward through the analysis and literature reading.

6. Results

This part is dedicated to analyzing and interpreting the data collected from the observation and the information gathered from interview.

6.1. Analysis of Classroom Observation

Four teachers are called teacher A, B, C and D in turn. The classroom observation analysis and discussion are as follows:

Teacher A's class contains five steps. In the first three steps, the core competences of teaching, learning and assessment are consistent. In the fourth step, students failed to learn to summarize and integrate the information of the article, resulting in the lack of thinking quality in learning. And teacher A did not evaluate their answers, so there was not assessment. So, the teaching, learning and assessment are not corresponding. In the fifth step, some students couldn't express their ideas in English well which means that the level of their language ability didn't reach the teaching objective. And even realizing the situation, teacher A didn't evaluate students' English expression. So, the teaching, learning and assessment are not corresponding. In general, the core competences involved in two fifths steps of teaching, learning and assessment are inconsistent, indicating that the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in this class is basically implemented. And the reasons of the in-conformity are the lack of assessment and students' learning.

Teacher B's class contains five steps. In the first, third and fifth steps, the core competences of teaching, learning and assessment are consistent. In the second step, teacher B did not evaluate students' answers but directly taught the function and usage of modal verbs to students. Therefore, there is no assessment. In the fourth step, teacher B evaluated students' spelling and grammatical mistakes in their sentences which is about language ability but didn't evaluate their cultural awareness. As a result, the assessment in this step lacks cultural awareness. In general, the core competences involved in two fifths steps of teaching, learning and assessment are inconsistent, indicating that the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in this class is basically implemented. And the main reason of the in-conformity is the lack of assessment.

Teacher C's class contains four steps. In the first, second and fourth steps, the core competences of teaching, learning and assessment are consistent. In the third step, some students failed to use their English language knowledge proficiently and integrally to express their ideas so that the level of their language ability didn't reach the teaching objective which also resulted in that teacher C could only evaluate this level of language ability. So, the teaching, learning and assessment are not corresponding. In general, the core competences involved in one fourths step of teaching, learning and assessment are inconsistent, indicating that the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in this class is basically implemented. And the main reason of the in-conformity is that students' learning can't reach the requirement of teaching objective.

Teacher D's class contains four steps. In the first, second and fourth steps, the core competences of teaching, learning and assessment are consistent. In the third step, it's hard for students to summarize that the text describes food from different aspects like history and so on and teacher directly told them the answers, so there is no assessment. In general, the core competences involved in

one fourths step of teaching, learning and assessment are inconsistent, indicating that the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in this class is well implemented. And the main reason of the in-conformity is the lack of assessment.

Through the analysis of classroom observation and interview, the author finds that there are still several problems in the implementation of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in senior English class based on the core competences of English subject and reasons that cause these problems.

Based on classroom observation, the major problems are as follows. First, there is inconsistency in the goals of teaching, learning and assessment. The implementation status of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in senior high school English class based on the core competences of English subject performs well. Most of the teaching steps can make the teachers' teaching, students' learning and assessment be committed to the development of the same core competences of students. However, there are still six inconsistent steps in the four classes. Second, the class lacks assessment and its method is single. The teachers didn't evaluate students' learning in some steps. For example, when teacher B explained the usage and meaning of modal verbs in class, the teacher didn't give feedback to students' answers but speak out the knowledge points directly which failed to guide students' learning through evaluation. In addition, the methods of teacher evaluation are relatively simple, mostly asking students to answer questions or complete textbook tasks. Third, the students' learning situation cannot reach the teacher's teaching goal. It can also be seen that teachers hope students can reach the second level of some core competences, but students can only reach the first level.

Hui Jin et al. (2019) said that the consistency of teaching, learning and assessment in class teaching is the premise of the design and organization of the integration of teaching, learning and assessment. So, the consistency of teaching, learning and assessment can be used to analyze the current situation of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in class. The results show that the implementation of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in these classroom teaching is basically implemented but it still needs to be improved because there are some inconsistent steps. The reason of the four sixths inconsistent steps is the lack of assessment, and the two sixths is that students failed to reach the expected level of core competences of teaching. In order to explore the reasons for the two problems concluded above in the process of the integration of teaching, learning and assessment, the author conducted the following interviews with four teachers using three questions.

Through the classroom observation, the author analyzes the problems in the implementation of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in senior English class and explores the causes of these problems through interview.

6.2. Analysis of Interview

Q1: Have you understood the integration of teaching-learning-assessment? Will you implement it in your class?

According to the interview, all the four teachers have understood the integration of teaching-learning-assessment, but they have not deliberately implemented the integration of teaching-learning-assessment. They simply think that the implementation of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment means a class which should have teaching, learning and assessment. Therefore, it can be analyzed that teachers haven't deeply understood the concept and it leads to the fact of inconsistency of teaching, learning and assessment in classroom observation.

Q2: Do you set assessment goals in your daily teaching? What assessment methods do you usually take to evaluate students' learning?

According to the interview, only one teacher will consciously formulate assessment goals, and the remaining three teachers hardly formulate assessment goals. In addition, the author also found that the way of classroom assessment of these teachers is to ask questions in class, complete the corresponding classroom activities such as filling in the form according to the knowledge learned, and exercise after class and examination. In general, teachers' assessment awareness is not enough, the assessment methods in class are relatively simple. Teachers tend to focus on evaluating whether students have achieved the corresponding learning goals through exercises after class. So, these reasons lead to a lack of assessment in the class.

Q3: In your daily teaching, what factors will you consider when designing teaching?

According to the interview, most teaching activities are carried out based on their teaching experience. Three teachers mainly considered the curriculum standards and textbooks when designing, which showed that teachers have a strong awareness of curriculum standards and textbooks. However, only one teacher emphasized that teaching design should proceed from the actual situation of students. So, teachers haven't pay much attention to students' learning situation when designing. Combined with the analysis of the classroom observation of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment, it can be said that the reason why the students' learning fails to meet the teachers' expectations is that the teachers' awareness of students' learning situation is weak.

Based on interview, the reasons of the problems are as follows. First, the reason for the inconsistency is that teachers have a relatively narrow understanding of the concept of the integration of teaching, learning and assessment. The four teachers all affirmed the positive role of the idea, but they don't deeply realize that this concept requires the integration and consistency of teaching, learning and evaluation. Instead, they simply believed that it is enough if there is teaching, learning and evaluation in the classes. Therefore, they tend to ignore the inconsistency of teaching, learning and assessment in class. Second, teachers' sense of the integration of teaching, learning and assessment isn't strong enough. The teachers seldom design evaluation activities in teaching design, most of them directly refer to the teaching objectives and their own teaching experience. In addition, most of the assessment methods used by teachers are to let students com-

plete the tasks. And through the answers of students, they can clearly understand the achievement of students' learning objectives in class and then evaluate their answer to guide students to improve themselves. Third, teachers' awareness of learning situation is slight weak. Teachers pay more attention to the test points, curriculum standards and teaching materials and their own experience in setting teaching objectives. So, they are less able to connect the objectives with learning situation of students, resulting in that students can't be able to accurately answer questions and unable to organize language answers fluently.

According to the analysis of the interview, the author finds that the teachers lack the awareness of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment, which leads to the inconsistency of teaching, learning and assessment in classroom observation. Second, teachers' assessment consciousness is not enough, and the classroom assessment method is single, which leads to the lack of some classroom assessment. Third, Teachers' awareness of the learning situation of students is weak, which leads the fact that students fail to meet teachers' expectations.

7. Suggestions

7.1. Strengthen Teachers' Awareness of the Integration of Teaching-Learning-Assessment

Teachers should deeply study the concept of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment, and realize that the teaching process should include teaching, learning and assessment, all of which are indispensable. They should establish a coherent teaching, learning and assessment system. Teaching is the main activity of teachers and learning is the main activity of students. Both teachers and students play an important role in the classroom. Teachers should pay attention to the development of their own professional level, grasp the latest trend of curriculum reform in time, and have innovative spirit, to master any type of classroom teaching skillfully. And they should also help students to realize the subject status, timely grasp students' learning progress, understand students' needs for English learning, to improve teaching strategies. This also reflects the role of assessment in teaching, and timely assessment can help teachers and students understand their own achievements and deficiencies.

At the same time, assessment can also help teachers and students to detect whether teaching objectives have been achieved. The cohesion of teaching objectives, students' learning and assessment is helpful to realize the coordinated development of students in language ability, learning ability, cultural awareness and thinking quality. And it is conducive to the implementation of the key ability and the basic task of moral education.

7.2. Enhance Teachers' Awareness of Assessment in the Class

Assessment activities can help teachers to clarify whether students have achieved the expected teaching objectives and find the problems in teaching in time, to

adjust the teaching progress and teaching strategies.

Meanwhile, it can help students understand their own knowledge, to encourage students to adjust their learning strategies in time to improve their English level. Therefore, it is crucial to strengthen teachers' assessment consciousness in the classroom. The enhancement of the consciousness mainly depends on the teacher's own initiative to carry on the effort. Therefore, teachers' awareness of assessment can be improved by actively participating in academic activities on assessment, or actively experiencing its important value in the process of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment.

7.3. Strengthen the Relationship between the Analysis of Students and Teaching Objectives

There is phenomenon of inconsistency between teaching and learning in the classroom observation. The reason is that teachers don't fully consider the learning situation, so they need to strengthen the relationship between learning situation and teaching objectives when they carry out teaching design. Under the requirements of the new curriculum reform, the teaching should pay more attention to the development of students' core quality, and the design of the teaching process should follow the student-oriented principle, mainly including: 1) student-centered, pay attention to the cognitive characteristics of students; 2) conform to the mechanism of knowledge acquisition; 3) pay attention to the life experience of students, consider the application value of knowledge, and reflect the discipline thought. Therefore, teaching objectives should be designed based on the analysis of students.

8. Limitations and Prospects

In this study, the author analyzes the implementation status of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in senior English class, which provides a good reference and experience for the author to explore the teaching path of the integration of teaching-learning-assessment in the future. What's more, the author hopes to provide reference for other scholars who are interested in this field.

The limitations of this study are as follows: In terms of investigation, the selected survey objects are not comprehensive enough and the number is limited, which needs further investigation. In the process of classroom observation, the judgment of teaching, learning, assessment, core competences and its level is difficult to avoid subjectivity, which leads to errors in the coding of literacy level of teaching, learning and assessment.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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