

# *An Analysis of College English Teaching Strategies*

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**Abstract:** In contemporary society, cultural communication and dissemination among countries have broken through the limitations of nationalities and borders. Both school teaching and family education have paid more attention to the teaching strategies of bilingual learners. This paper utilizes literature analysis to explore three strategies in the process of English teaching in colleges. By analyzing the current status of three types of college English teaching problems, three feasible strategies are provided for this purpose, picture books, English original movies, and group activities to decline the anxiety of college English classes and to maximize students' motivation and participation. The implementation of the above three measures can help bilingual learners to have better skills in their second language.

**Keywords:** teaching strategies, English picture books, original English movies, classroom activities

## 1. Introduction

In contemporary society, the cultural exchange between different countries has broken through the limitations of ethnicity and national boundaries, which undoubtedly brings more potential possibilities for the teaching process of bilingual classes. In the process of research, some educationalists generally pointed out several questions about the current situation of English teaching. For example, Xu believed that contemporary teachers still have stereotypical concepts, outdated and conservative teaching methods, low comprehensive quality and a shortage of teaching evaluation systems in the process of teaching [1]. The same point of view was maintained by Wang and other scholars, the problems they pointed out are often with similarity [2]. On top of that, many scholars have given some feasible measures for the above existing problems. For example, Wang pointed out that teachers should pay attention to the training of students' practical abilities. In other words, teaching can adopt the teaching mode of inquiry, create diversified language environments, and exercise students' language communication ability [3].

It is easy to find that in analyzing the current situation of the college English teaching process, there still have some problems such as teaching methods and tools failing to keep up with the times, low student interest and classroom participation, and so on. Therefore, in the college English class, teachers can reveal the existing teaching problems. This paper proposes three strategies by studying the current state of education, which can provide some guiding suggestions for bilingual teaching in China and effectively improve teachers' teaching efficiency within a short time.

## **2. Current Status of College English Teaching**

### **2.1. Out-fashioned Teaching Methods and Teaching Tools**

Choosing the proper methods and appropriate tools is a necessary process for achieving teaching objectives. In terms of today's college English teaching status, teachers are often in the dominant position, spending too much time talking about textbooks and ignoring student initiative. Although it is undeniable that this teaching mode still has positive significance for theory teaching, its practical value is rather low. In the choice of teaching tools, teachers should adhere to the basic principles of openness, diversity, and innovation. However, in the current education teaching, the concept of teaching is too single and outdated, most teachers focus on verbal instruction during lessons rather than some new intelligent demonstration aids, which is contrary to the trend of social renewal and development. Thus it is not difficult to find that English teaching methods and tools in some universities are too old-fashioned and do not adapt well to the development of society and students' ability levels.

Contemporary students have a deeper understanding of self-knowledge and learning styles. Unlike in the past, modern students are no longer satisfied with passive acceptance of education but emphasize more on their own choice and initiative. Therefore, previous teaching methods and tools are no longer applicable, and educators need to adopt more open and diversified educational methods to meet students' different learning needs. For example, students prefer game-based education or interactive courses, which will require educators to have corresponding educational experiences and strategies to provide students with more comprehensive and effective learning support.

### **2.2. Low Student Interest in College English Classes**

English classes focus on developing students' ability to communicate based on cultures and also lay a solid foundation for students to continue to explore their studies in English and find a decent job in the future. But there is a common problem that cannot be ignored in major universities, that is, students always lack strong motivation to learn English. Many students are in a comfort mentality after entering the universities and lack an intrinsic motivation for English learning. On the one hand, if they are learning an unfamiliar second language, they will develop a kind of acquisition barrier that leads to a lack of intrinsic interest. On the other hand, they don't realize the importance of English in the future study, work, and even daily life, which leads to college students being passive in English learning [4]. Most students are only required to pass the final exams or domestic English skill exams, such as CET4 and CET6, and have no higher requirements for their comprehensive English application skills.

At the same time, English teaching also emphasizes the development of students' ability to learn a second language independently. Most universities do consider the development of students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills during their teaching objectives but in the process of implementation, most teachers focus on students' test pass rates on tests and repeating the same learning content every day. Thus students will feel bored about classes, which causes a lack of interest in the process of learning English.

### **2.3. A Mismatch Between Students' Speaking Ability and Literacy**

In the current educational context, most students are good at literacy but have a serious deficiency in listening and speaking skills which is a common issue within universities. This problem causes students to struggle with daily oral communication [5]. One of the reasons for students performing worse in speaking is Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety (FLSA) [6]. Many factors affect the development of FLSA such as students' language limitations, students' background, lack of speaking

practice, and potential issues in nowadays education system. In addition, teachers' teaching strategies are simple and direct, which causes students to lack strong motivation to concentrate on the class and weakens the efficiency of English learning [7]. Thus, students can spell vocabularies correctly, but their pronunciation may not be standard.

### **3. Strategies for College English Teaching**

#### **3.1. Choosing the Right English Picture Books**

In the English classroom, students always find themselves struggling with language, especially vocabulary, syntax, and semantics, during reading. Sometimes they cannot understand the meaning of the whole sentence or even the whole story. Therefore, in addition to fixed textbooks, choosing different teaching tools for students with different levels is an effective strategy that many teachers can choose in the teaching process.

For students, there are two ways in which they choose English books. Firstly, the most influential factor is that teachers always recommend picture books that are suitable for bilingual students. Media is another factor and if they like one movie they will desire to read the English originals. What's more, when they get access to the internet they will pick up some books from piles of recommendations.

So when teachers recommend books for Emergent Bilinguals of English or English as a New Language (ENL), the goal is to offer texts that are well-written and illustrated and provide appropriate support for meaning-making [8]. In addition, these books must be relevant to their daily lives, mainly because their background and understanding of the world will influence their reading [9]. A well-written and illustrated book can provide appropriate support for predicting, which means it can help students understand the picture book's theme. Students can deduce the meanings of unfamiliar words and sentences in picture books based on their academic background and cultural relevance, which allows them to make better predictions about the storyline of the picture book, i.e., what will happen next. In other words, it should contain both content accessibility and language accessibility. For example, *Luli And The Language Of Tea* and *Amy Wu And The Perfect Bao*, both picture books are related to the cultural background of the students. Tea and Bao are part of traditional Chinese culture, so students can use their background to cope with the characters and stories in the books as they would in everyday life. Even though the readers are not very familiar with the language in the book, their predictions can match the author's expressions. The scenarios they are familiar with can stimulate students' interest in learning English, experience progress and success, and improve students' language skills.

How English teachers can effectively give a balance between picture books and textbooks is still a serious and worthwhile issue to think about. It will be an effective teaching method that teachers should focus on in the future.

#### **3.2. Watching the Original English Movies**

In the process of teaching method adjustment, teachers can choose today's college students' interested topics and appropriately design some practical activities to stimulate students' interest in learning English. Watching American films and discussing current Hollywood movies are one of the most popular topics of conversation among college students nowadays. So teachers can show high-quality English soundtrack movies in class. Watching original English movies can increase students' interest in learning English and strengthen their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills at the same time. In addition, the efficiency of the class can be also improved.

Firstly, teachers should pay attention to the effective combination of knowledge between the interesting accessibility of English original movies and the traditional teaching methods. Secondly, focusing on whether the relevant language and culture from another country in the movies can be

understood by students [10]. In the process of implementation, teachers should strictly control the topic and time of the movie showing to make the most of the value of English movies for students' English learning. Regarding the themes of the screenings, teachers can make a list of different levels of students through a progression according to the language difficulty and the topics of the films. For example, movies selected for students should be based on themes that are educational and motivating such as friendship, family, love, and social values. At the beginner level, they can show *Coco* and *Wonder*, at the intermediate level of the project, teachers can show *The Pursuit of Happyness* and *Forrest Gump*. At the advanced level, they can choose to show the slightly more difficult classics *The Shawshank Redemption* and *Star Trek*, etc. These films with rich connotations can help students establish an English language environment, learn about different cultures and strengthen vocabulary and oral expression skills, while helping students establish correct values, build self-confidence and strengthen their outlook on life. Besides, the length of English movies is often limited due to the limitation of class time available for teaching English in college. Therefore, teachers show only the most exciting parts of the film in class and desire students to watch it afterward. Students can write a review of the movie or make a presentation of what they have learned or anything they want to comment on before their next class [11].

### 3.3. Organizing Classroom Activities

To address the problem of speaking anxiety caused by fear and embarrassment, teachers can divide students into different groups, organizing classroom activities as a strategy to help students learn English. Each group consists of students with different levels of language skills, and rehearsing classical English textbook plays and dramas, by repeating the lines and reading and reciting them with emotion, students can imitate the performance and enhance their English pronunciation and familiarity with English in a natural language content. After the performance, different groups exchange ideas and discuss with each other, then teachers give appropriate guidance. Through this form, the advantages of multimedia are used to create relevant situations. Teachers use multimedia devices and interactive programs to broadcast class PowerPoint, videos, and preview images. Creating rich scenes for students, and stimulating their sensory experiences, which can effectively improve the problem of students' distraction and stimulate students' participation and enthusiasm for English knowledge. So that they can change their minds from "I have to learn" to "I want to learn" that not only improve students' literacy but also highlight students' main position in the learning process.

By bringing the classroom to a living content and allowing students to naturally integrate into the class, a better educational outcome can be achieved, for example, students' language capabilities can be strengthened so that they are no longer afraid to speak English.

## 4. Conclusion

In this paper, the current status of college English teaching has been analyzed and pinpointed. Accordingly, three practical strategies that can be utilized in the college English teaching classroom are proposed. Compared with boring theoretical lectures, the introduction of picture books, English original movies, and classroom small group interaction not only can enrich the teaching content but also help to enhance students' interest. More importantly, these lively methods can reduce the difficulty of learning English for students to some extent. Students will no longer have a sense of dullness in learning and will be nourished by interesting content. At the same time, whether it is an English picture book or an English movie, or a textbook play, the words, syntax, and semantics are combined with specific story context, which reduces the difficulty of understanding English knowledge and provides favorable conditions for students to learn and utilize English knowledge.

This paper focuses on the theoretical level of analysis. To improve the teaching strategy, the actual implementation process needs to be changed based on the specific situation in the classroom. In the future, according to the subjective differences and knowledge acceptance of different students, personalized strategies suitable for different students can be explored and promoted to maximize the efficiency of college bilingual education and the ability of bilingual learners.

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