

An Investigation on the Present Situation of Foreign Teachers' Oral English Teaching in Newly-Established Undergraduate Colleges

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Abstract – In order to give full play to the role of foreign teachers in college English teaching, this paper makes a questionnaire survey and interview on the present situation of oral English teaching for the students and the foreign teachers. Based on the results of the investigation and the interviews, the paper analyzes the present situation of foreign teachers' oral English teaching from the aspects in which there are teaching aims, teaching plans and teaching contents of oral English courses, teaching modes and classroom activities, forms and standards of oral English examinations, advantages of foreign teachers, teaching characteristics of foreign teachers' oral English classroom, problems in foreign teachers' teaching, problems of students' own existence and students' evaluation of foreign teachers and puts forward some suggestions.

Keywords – Foreign Teachers; Newly-Established Undergraduate Colleges; Oral English Teaching; Suggestions.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF INTRODUCING FOREIGN TEACHERS

In order to promote the development of local economy and optimize the layout of colleges and meet the needs of the higher education popularization, the newly-established undergraduate colleges that have been approved since the late 1990s have become an important part of our higher education system. They carry the responsibility of the leaping development of higher education in China, whose level affects the overall level of higher education in China and whose healthy development needs enough attention. With the acceleration of the process of global economic integration, China's higher education has become more and more modernized, internationalized and diversified, and the introduction of high quality foreign experts and teachers plays an important role in improving the teaching quality of higher education. In recent years, the employment of foreign teachers and experts in colleges and universities in China has been increasing, and the vast majority of foreign experts play an important role in college English teaching and research, but there are some problems. [1]

The foreign teachers employed by Yibin University are mainly in oral English teaching. In order to give full play to the role of foreign teachers in college English teaching, the author investigates the present situation of foreign teachers' oral English teaching, discusses their teaching characteristics, and puts forward some suggestions.

II. RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to explore the advantages and disadvantages of foreign teachers' oral English class, this survey on the one hand, investigates students' views on foreign teachers' oral

English class by using questionnaires. On the other hand, the foreign teachers were interviewed to investigate their views on oral English class. Through the investigation of foreign teachers' oral English teaching, we hope to provide some reference for foreign teachers' oral English teaching and the teaching management of foreign teachers. [2]

A. Research Questions

1) What teaching mode do the foreign teachers adopt in oral English teaching 2) How do the foreign teachers evaluate their oral English class? 3) How do the students evaluate the oral English class taught by foreign teachers?

B. Subjects

Subjects: Two foreign teachers from the United States and one from Australia have all been trained in higher education and related teaching. There are 100 students who have learned English for at least 9 years, participating in the questionnaire in six teaching classes of Grade Two, and 98 questionnaires were collected.

C. Research Method

In the results of the questionnaire, the first is to interview foreign teachers and discuss their views on oral English class. The second is to make a questionnaire survey of 100 undergraduates majoring in English, which includes teaching content of the foreign teachers, teaching methods, the quality of foreign teachers and oral examinations. The teaching situation of foreign teachers is surveyed and analyzed to make full use of the resources of foreign teachers, improve the efficiency of oral teaching and maximize the students' oral proficiency. Based on the students' responses to the teaching of foreign teachers, they can make a choice from 6-9 options in each of these issues [3]. In addition, students can also add their views on the teaching situation and the similarities and differences between Chinese and foreign teachers. The author also conducted a random interview with the students and added the analysis.

III. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

A. The Collection and Analysis of Foreign Teachers' Interview Results

Three foreign teachers with some oral English teaching experience have been trained in oral English teaching before coming to our school, one of which has a Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults in Cambridge University (CELTA certificate) and TESOL International English Teacher Qualification certificate (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages IV certificate), and engaged in oral teaching in Switzerland and China.

1) *Teaching Aims, Teaching Plans and Teaching Contents of oral English courses* [4]

The purposes of oral English teaching is to build up students' confidence in speaking English, enlarge their vocabulary and improve their ability to use daily language. They have no detailed teaching plans, and they decide their teaching content by themselves, sometimes which is from the internet such as Daves ESL Cate. And they know nothing about the corresponding content of the Foreign Languages School. Therefore, they arrange the content

casually, the degree of which is not stable, lack of systematic.

2) *Teaching Mode and Classroom Activities*

Teaching activities in accordance with the Celta model include recipes, fashion discussions, some activities in the daily life scene which can build up students' self-confidence in learning English and some activities in which Foreign teachers likes to allow students to talk and share students' thoughts.

Table 1. Teaching Characteristics of Foreign Teachers' Oral English Classroom.

Teaching characteristics	Distinctive method	Relaxed & active atmosphere	Rich & diverse content	Cultivation of confidence	Cultural input	Good rank order in class	Use of multimedia	Teacher-student interaction	Student-centered
Students (Percentage)	83.3%	93.3%	64.8%	89.5%	56.3%	77.8%	100%	95%	76.5%

The students are required to practice speaking in groups or in pairs, or to try to get students to speak English in front of the class. Foreign teachers often praise students, let students recognize their study, and remind students of making mistakes every day. They arrange students with strong ability and poor performance in one group. They do not criticize their students, and often encourage them by recommending answers, because they think that while speaking English in front of the native speakers the students are nervous, and that criticism can easily destroy their confidence.

3) *The Forms and Standards of Oral English Examinations*

Medium-term exams are to make speeches and final exams are to make presentations. They believe that the most important part of oral English is effort, and most of the results are determined primarily on the basis of individual efforts rather than answers. The total oral score includes class participation 30%, examination 70% (1/3 verbal expression, 1/3 grammar, 1/3 fluent pronunciation tones).

4) *The Advantages of Foreign Teachers*

Authentic spoken English can help Chinese students to fix small mistakes, help them to learn English, so Chinese students regard authentic spoken English as the authority of English learning, and believe in foreign spoken language teachers. But foreign spoken language teachers regret that they can't explain the meaning of words in Chinese like Chinese English teachers. People who speak native languages had better teach spoken language, because non-native language teachers can't use really slang and idioms,

and phonetics and cultural knowledge play an important role in language learning.

B. The Collection and Result Analysis of Students' Questionnaires

1) *The Teaching Characteristics of Foreign Teachers' Oral English Classroom* [5].

Table 1 shows that 83.3% of the students think that the teaching methods of the foreign teachers' oral English classes are very distinctive. 93.3% of them think that the foreign teachers create a relaxed and harmonious atmosphere of the classroom. 64.8% think that the classroom content of foreign teachers is rich and diverse, and they often use recipes, fashion discussion and other materials close to the daily life as classroom teaching content. 89.5% believe that they are encouraged and guided by foreign teachers, which strengthens the self-confidence of learning language. 56.3% think that the foreign teachers focus on cultural input and help the students understand more Western culture. 77.8% think that the class is kept in good order and the students can actively participate in classroom. 100% think that foreign teachers often use multimedia, material object, picture model and simple strokes for teaching. 95% think that the foreign teachers pay more attention to the active interaction between teachers and students. 76.5% think foreign teachers take the student as the center and allow students to practice more through teacher-student, student-student, groups and other forms.

2) *The Problems in the Teaching of Foreign Teachers*

Table 2. Problems in the Teaching of Foreign Teachers.

Teaching Problems	Random classroom content	Speaking too fast	Different examination standards	Not understanding Chinese	Different levels of content	Unclear objectives
Students (Percentage)	62.8%	20.5%	40%	65%	45.3%	70%

Table 3. Problems of Students' Own Existence.

students' problems	Lack of confidence	Small vocabulary	Unfamiliar with grammatical sentence patterns	Listening to other people speak English	Nervous	Not taking the initiative to answer

Students (Percentage)	5%	7%	11%	16.6%	70%	10%
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Table 4. Students' evaluation of foreign teachers

Evaluation	Strong teaching ability	Teaching flexibility	Pure speech	Strong sense of responsibility	Fine sense of humour	Vivid activity	Fresh teaching content	Use of body language
Students (Percentage)	78%	83%	100%	95%	67%	89%	97%	35%

From table 2, more than half (62.8%) of the students think that the oral classroom content is at random, lack of a certain system. 45.3% think classroom content difficulty is inconsistent, 70% think the goals are not clear, 20.5% think that foreign teachers speak English too fast, 65% think foreign teachers do not understand Chinese, influencing the classroom effect. 40% students think that different teachers have different test standards, and the scores can't fully show the differences between the students. From the interview, it also shows that foreign teachers seldom use school textbooks, which makes it difficult for Chinese students who have been accustomed to using textbooks for a long time to adapt to their teaching.

3) *The Problems of Students' Own Existence*

From table 3, 10% of the students do not like to answer questions or participate in the discussion actively, and only would like to make a dialogue with their desk mates or the classmates they are familiar with, because 5% of the students lack self-confidence, afraid of losing their face because of making mistakes. 7% of the students own too small vocabulary, or 11% of the students are unfamiliar with grammatical patterns, they are afraid that they can't expressing themselves. 70% are nervous in class, but they can answer the teacher's questions as much as possible. 16.6% listen to the others more, and they speak less.

4) *The Students' Evaluation of Foreign Teachers*

From the table 4: 78% of the students think that the teaching ability of foreign teachers is strong; 83% of them think they are flexible in teaching. All of the students' think that the foreign teachers' pronunciation is pure. 95% believe that foreign teachers have a strong sense of responsibility. 67% think that the foreign teachers are humorous. 89% think that the foreign teachers' classes are vivid. 97% think that the teaching content is fresh; 35% think that foreign teachers use body languages in class. From the interview we have also learned that the foreign teachers are patient, good at encouraging the students, make the students to practice their oral English, and give the students the opportunity to behave. Therefore, most of the students have a higher evaluation of foreign teachers' oral English class. At the same time, they also put forward some teaching suggestions for foreign teachers. The students are made to learn more about the culture and customs of Western countries. The classroom forms are enriched through the forms of short sketch and comedy, and the field of students' cultural knowledge is expanded.

IV. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the questionnaire surveys of foreign teachers' oral English teaching in our college, the author puts forward the following suggestions. [6-7].

A. Foreign teachers are equipped with a Chinese English teacher as an assistant to teach and construct teaching materials.

Chinese English teachers and foreign teachers are combined with a class, work closely together to prepare lessons and mainly discuss the writing syllabus, teaching plans and classroom lesson plans. Foreign teachers chose a lively oral language material with rich practical content, the sense of the contemporary and moderate difficulty from the domestic new English publications, newspapers and English websites, and compiled it into a book as a supplementary textbook. Original textbooks and teaching materials brought by foreign teachers with authentic language and their advanced innovative teaching methods and ideas play and mobilize students' initiative, enthusiasm and creativity. Therefore, Chinese and foreign teachers can spend a lot of time together discussing teaching methods such as the grasp of difficulties, the processing of exercises, the addition of knowledge, examination arrangements, etc. So, on the one hand, Chinese teachers not only learn the new teaching method from the foreign teacher, familiar with the foreign education model, improve their oral English level and self-confidence, but also may become good friends in life. On the other hand, foreign teachers can learn Chinese and Chinese culture from Chinese teachers and learn more about Chinese students.

B. To establish a system of regular mutual lectures between Chinese and foreign teachers

Foreign teachers' understanding of Chinese culture and Chinese students can be improved and foreign teachers can understand regular teaching management rules. At the same time, more Chinese teachers can not only learn the new teaching methods from the foreign teachers, besides, they can learn how to take students as the center in teaching, how to cultivate students' communicative competence through students-centered, task-oriented, language function and skills as the goal, and focusing on language output, but also they can improve their English proficiency and self-confidence.

C. Regular development of Chinese and foreign teachers' research activities

Foreign teachers are invited to hold lectures on culture, education, current affairs, tourism, etc. and hold large foreign teaching seminars. Chinese and foreign teachers are required to sum up and exchange different teaching experiences in the same teaching field in order to absorb the advantages and strengths of their teaching and make common progress.

D. Standardizing oral English test forms for foreign teachers

The Chinese teachers will unify the examination questions and grading criteria, such as formats, question

types, test content, etc. with the foreign teachers who teach the same grade and the same course.

E. The students' English vocabulary and grammar knowledge should be improved, and their cross-cultural awareness will be enhanced so that their oral English teaching efficiency can be improved.

F. Developing students' self-confidence in learning English.

Since students have been influenced by Confucianism, some students are not willing to speak English in class and are afraid of making mistakes. Measures can be taken in two areas. On the one hand, Chinese teachers help foreign teachers to understand the real levels of the students' oral English, more accurately grasp the content and difficulty of teaching tasks, so that the students think that they can improve their confidence in learning English by trying to accomplish their tasks successfully. On the other hand, the lectures on learning English strategies and cross-cultural knowledge can be held in the School of Foreign Languages.

V. CONCLUSION

According to the interviews with the foreign teachers, the questionnaire survey conducted by 100 undergraduates in the second grade of English major and the random interviews with the students. It can be concluded that foreign teachers' being proficient in English and Anglo-American culture advantages, being good at designing classroom teaching activities, creating a relaxed and pleasant learning environment and rich nonverbal communication skills are worthy of the Chinese English teachers to learn and draw lessons from. However, it is necessary to get the help of Chinese teachers to understand the students' actual English proficiency and grasp curriculum setting, teaching content and system. But this survey is limited to a new Newly - established undergraduate college, and how to give full play to the role of foreign teachers in college English teaching, such as how to effectively integrate the foreign teaching resources of Chinese and foreign teachers, and how to realize the complementary advantages of Chinese and foreign teachers in teaching need further research from educational researchers.

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