

Students' Online Self-study in Computer Lab Combined with In-advance Web-appointed Face-to-face Classroom Lecture to Enhance students' English Listening and Speaking Abilities: a Case Study at a University in China

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Abstract

For decades, Chinese students' English listening and speaking abilities are negatively influenced to a great extent by the so-called National Entrance Examination to the College (Gao Kao in Chinese), which lays great emphasis on grammar check and reading check. No doubt, the above-mentioned social phenomenon results from the impossibility to carry out nation-wide test on students' English speaking and listening abilities due to the great mass of population, the lack of professional English teachers as examiners and inefficiency of necessary assessment equipment in some of the underdeveloped regions in China. However, this common social and educational "crisis", "mute English", is posing a great challenge not only to college English teachers but also to students themselves. Students' lack of confidence and sense of shame to speak out their "Chinglish" in front of their peers in the classroom makes teaching embarrassed. College English Teachers always complain about students' reluctance to cooperate, which inevitably pushes the classroom teaching to be teacher-centered again as in high school. Nevertheless, globalization requires students' to be open-minded and fully –equipped with world knowledge, which in turn demands Chinese students' to master English competently as a foreign language.

Under this national and international circumstance, to cope with the present English teaching and learning situation becomes both a challenge and a chance for educational authorities and English teachers to design a new method to help students to improve their speaking and listening abilities. This paper will present students' online self-study in computer lab combined with in-advance web-appointed face-to-face classroom teaching module in our university to indicate the importance of developing flexible teaching methods to cater to Chinese students' characters and their according English learning habits. Based on educational ecology, this paper will illustrate this teaching module and its subsequent achievements from a survey conducted in our university from the following aspects:

- theoretical scaffold for such a multi-party involved frame;
- allocation of learning resources in the computer software;
- web-appointed face-to-face classroom lecture as an extension to further students' study;
- positive learning achievements from students and teaching motivation empowered by students' web-appointment for teachers.

This paper will conclude in the end that by adopting flexible and fluid teaching methods and with supportive web and computer-based teaching facilities, it is not that difficult for Chinese students to get rid of "mute English" at all, thus fostering a comprehensive ability in reading, writing, speaking as well as in listening. Teachers, facing with the challenge of "to be selected or not" by students, will be motivated to improve their teaching style and method, and in turn to develop themselves. Globalization will be and surely be an opportunity for English learners in China to be competent in global competition.