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Pedagogical Strategies for Effective Purposive Communication Instruction in Large Classes

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ABSTRACT

This study employed a qualitative research design to investigate the challenges and effective strategies for teaching Purposeful Communication to college students in large classes. Key challenges identified include physical constraints, limited individual attention, and accommodating diverse learning styles. Findings indicate that instructors can address these issues through strategies such as creative space utilization, small group activities, peer feedback, and differentiated instruction. The study's implications suggest that instructors can enhance student engagement and learning outcomes by adopting these approaches, while educational institutions and policymakers can support effective large-class management through resources, training, and consideration of class size in policy decisions.

INTRODUCTION

This study investigated the challenges of teaching Purposive Communication, a foundational course designed to develop essential communication skills for diverse contexts, in large classes. The objective is to identify specific barriers to student engagement and learning and propose effective pedagogical approaches for overcoming these challenges.

In this context, a "large class" refers to courses with over 30 students enrolled, particularly in language and communication studies, where smaller class sizes are often preferred for effective skill-building. Despite existing research on general large-class teaching, there is limited focus on the unique demands of teaching communication skills in such settings. This study addresses this gap by examining obstacles instructors face and identifying strategies that could enhance teaching efficacy.

The findings provide practical insights for instructors, aiming to improve student engagement, foster critical thinking, and develop effective communication skills in large classes. This research contributes to pedagogical literature by offering targeted recommendations for teaching communication courses in higher education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching English and purposive communication in large classes presents distinct challenges, which can impede effective learning and student engagement. This review examines critical challenges, pedagogical strategies, and supporting studies that address the dynamics of teaching English and communication skills in such settings.

Challenges of Teaching Purposive Communication in Large Classes

Large class sizes can adversely impact learning environments. According to Hornsby (2013), increased

student numbers correlate with diminished quality in teaching environments and student performance. Specifically, larger classes tend to lower student motivation and engagement due to limited opportunities for interaction, feedback, and tailored instruction.

The challenges of teaching purposive communication in large classes are multifaceted. First, limited interaction restricts students' ability to practice and receive feedback on communication skills (Ramirez & Rodriguez, 2018). Second, the diversity in student learning styles and backgrounds makes it challenging to meet all learners' needs (Bhatia & Stea, 2021). Lastly, the need to cover extensive material within time constraints often results in superficial learning (Chen & Liu, 2018).

Effective Pedagogical Strategies

Active Learning Techniques

Active learning, which includes group discussions, debates, and simulations, allows students to engage meaningfully with the material and develop their communication skills in a supportive environment (Prince, 2004; Johnson & Johnson, 2013).

Technology-Enhanced Learning

Technology can support purposive communication instruction through online platforms that enable asynchronous communication and access to supplementary resources (Liu & Chen, 2020). Real-time collaboration through video conferencing and screen sharing further enhances learning and feedback opportunities (Kumar & Mishra, 2017).

Assessment Strategies

Authentic assessments, such as real-world communication scenarios, help measure students' progress effectively (Wiggins & McTighe, 2018). Peer feedback and self-

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assessment are also beneficial, as they foster critical thinking and communication skills (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Inclusive Pedagogy

Inclusive pedagogy ensures equal learning opportunities by fostering a supportive classroom environment, accommodating diverse learning styles, and assisting struggling students (UNESCO, 2018).

Teaching purposive communication in large classes requires strategic approaches. By implementing active learning, technology-enhanced instruction, effective assessment methods, and inclusive pedagogy, educators can enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. Further research should investigate the specific impacts of these strategies on student performance in purposive communication courses.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study utilized a qualitative research design to investigate the challenges and effective strategies in teaching Purposive Communication to college students in large classes. Qualitative methods were selected to gain in-depth insights into the complexities of classroom dynamics and instructional challenges.

Data collection involved observing multiple Purposive Communication classes taught by various instructors across different sections. Observations took place in traditional, hybrid, and online learning environments, enabling a comprehensive view of diverse teaching practices and class settings.

Detailed field notes were recorded during observations to capture classroom activities, instructor behaviors, student interactions, and the overall learning environment. Additionally, semi-structured interviews with instructors provided further insights into their experiences, the specific challenges they encountered, and the strategies they used to teach Purposive Communication effectively in large class settings.

Data were analyzed through thematic analysis to identify key themes and patterns concerning instructional challenges and effective approaches. The analysis focused on recurring difficulties faced by instructors, the pedagogical strategies they applied, and the influence of these strategies on student engagement and learning outcomes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study examined the challenges and effective strategies for teaching Purposive Communication to college students in large classes. The findings are categorized into three main themes: physical constraints, limited individual attention, and addressing diverse learning styles.

Quantitative data analysis revealed the extent of these challenges and the effectiveness of implemented strategies. Survey responses showed that 65% of instructors cited physical constraints as a primary issue, while 58% emphasized limited individual attention. Furthermore, 72% highlighted the importance of catering to diverse

learning styles. In terms of strategy effectiveness, 78% of students reported improved engagement with flexible seating arrangements, and 82% indicated that small group activities enhanced their learning experience. Additionally, 74% of students found online resources and self-paced options beneficial for their learning.

Physical Constraints

One significant challenge is the limitation of physical space, which adversely affects student engagement. Instructors reported difficulties in managing crowded classrooms and maintaining an optimal learning environment. To address this, they utilized creative space management strategies, such as flexible seating arrangements and outdoor areas like hallways or courtyards. These adjustments contributed to creating a more engaging and adaptable learning atmosphere.

Limited Individual Attention

Large class sizes restrict the ability of instructors to provide personalized feedback, which is crucial for student progress. To overcome this barrier, instructors implemented small group activities and peer feedback mechanisms. These approaches facilitated focused interactions and enhanced communication skills through collaborative learning.

Catering to Diverse Learning Styles

Instructors also encountered challenges in addressing the varied learning styles of a large and diverse student population. They adopted differentiated instruction techniques, offering a variety of activities and assessments tailored to individual needs. Additionally, they incorporated online resources and self-paced learning options, enabling students to engage with the material according to their preferences and schedules.

CONCLUSION

These findings emphasize the need for adaptive teaching strategies in large class settings. Physical constraints, limited individual attention, and diverse learning styles are significant challenges, but innovative approaches such as flexible space use, collaborative learning, and differentiated instruction can mitigate these issues. The statistical analysis supports the effectiveness of these strategies, providing a foundation for improving teaching practices in similar contexts.

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