

Evaluation and Reflection on Situational Language Teaching Method

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Abstract

Situational language teaching is one of the more common methods in English classrooms. It is to create authentic situations for students to make connections in the process of acquiring knowledge, allowing students to naturally work through their prior knowledge and life experiences. Although this teaching method has certain advantages, there are limitations in its application, and it is challenging to use it flexibly to achieve teaching objectives in the background of the English new curriculum standard in China.

Keywords

Situational Language Teaching; English Language Teaching; Application; Limitations.

1. Basic Definition of Situational Language Teaching Method

1.1. Situation

A relative or combined situation of a situation within a given period of time. "Situation" refers to the intertwined factors that make up and implicate situations and their relationships with each other. "Context" can often be seen as the background in which things or the environment in which they occur are linked to things. Teaching situation refers to the learning environment with learning background, scenarios and learning activity conditions that can be actively and constructively studied according to the content of teaching, set for the implementation of teaching objectives, suitable for learning subjects and acting on learning subjects, and producing a certain emotional response.

1.2. Definition of Situational Language Teaching

The situational language teaching approach refers to a teaching method in which the teacher intentionally creates images for students in the classroom, gives them certain emotional attitudes, provides them with vivid attitudinal experiences, helps them to enrich their life experiences while understanding knowledge, and enables them to develop their mental functions. This method was developed by British applied linguists from the 1930s to the 1960s. For example, in the English classroom, pictures and music are used as an introduction so that students can mobilize their prior knowledge to create some interest in the new knowledge. Teachers often create typical scenarios to stimulate students' interest in learning, combining emotional and cognitive activities in which students encounter real-life events and problems that require the use of knowledge to solve problems. The use of situational language teaching method cannot be achieved without several important factors: the teaching content, the creation of the context and the students' emotional experience. American constructivist school scholars believe that contextual teaching is to apply learning to a specific scenario, creating a realistic and complex learning environment for learners. The most distinctive features of this teaching method are: 1. The authenticity of the teaching situation is reflected in the content and form, the whole process of discovering and solving problems. 2. The richness of the teacher's role, the transformation of the teacher's role from a provider of information to a participant in student learning. 3. The flexibility of the teaching process, its teaching objectives are relatively open, the teaching process and links can be adjusted at any time. According to Richards and

Rodgers (1986), the main characteristics of the contextual approach are: 1. Language teaching comes from oral teaching, where the language material is presented in the form of words after the teacher has described it orally. 2. The target language is also the classroom language. In the English classroom, the language of instruction is also the language that students need to master in the classroom. If students encounter difficulties in the learning process, the teacher can also use Chinese to supplement the explanation. 3. The teacher uses situations to teach and practice new language knowledge. In the contextual approach, language can only be understood by learners in real-life situations, and learners are more likely to master grammar rules and expressions in real-life situations created by teachers.

1.3. Identification of Scene Teaching Method and Situational Language Teaching

The scene teaching method is mostly used in the direction of studying language learning and refers to the creation of specific scenarios by teachers in order to accomplish teaching objectives and allow students to gain knowledge. In contrast, situational language teaching, especially in English language teaching, refers to the use of situational dialogues or specific examples to help students master a complex sentence pattern, for example, so that they can better understand and internalize the knowledge. In this regard, Chen Meiqi and Gong Lihong (2018) argue that scene teaching method is language learning, made for practice, and responds to knowledge level teaching objectives. Situational language teaching is more of a pedagogical theory that corresponds more to the pedagogical goals of the literacy level.

2. Related Literature Reviews

From the 1920s to the 1960s, British linguists proposed the contextual approach, which suggests that situational language teaching is a more oral mode of instruction in which teachers set up a series of interactive sessions and teaching environments to increase students' language output and improve their speaking skills in authentic settings, thus helping students to improve their English longitudinal language skills. Scholars Brown, Collin, Duguid (1989) and others recognize that they believe that knowledge only has meaning in the social context in which it occurs and is used, that knowledge cannot be separated in the context in which it is itself located, and that the best way to learn knowledge is to do it in situation.

Situational language teaching method has been implemented in China for nearly forty years, and it meets the new requirements of the new curriculum reform. According to Wei zhicheng (1996), in the situational language teaching method, teachers need to consider both the actual classroom teaching and students' needs, and provide students with life-like situations or scenarios so that students can develop both emotionally and cognitively. According to Cheng liyuan (2014), teachers use different teaching aids such as multimedia, objects and audio in the classroom, and use group games and interactive role plays to integrate knowledge into teaching and learning and to develop students' English listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. According to He Xu (2010), it is necessary to reform English grammar and create language communication situations that reflect real life, so that the boring classroom teaching atmosphere becomes more dynamic. At present, there exists a certain number of domestic studies on the application of situational language teaching method in English classroom, but there are fewer empirical studies combined with the background of the new standard, most of which are related to elementary school English and relatively few involving middle school.

3. Advantages and Limitations of Situational Language Teaching Method in English Classroom in the Background of New Curriculum

In the 2022 English new curriculum standards, the previously relatively loose content is integrated into six elements: theme, discourse, language knowledge, cultural knowledge, language skills, and learning strategies. The main purpose of the current curriculum is to develop students' key competences in English, including the five aspects of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing. The new curriculum reform especially emphasizes the "student view", that is, student-centered, students are people in continuous development, and students' development has its own order and law, and the teaching process should be student-centered. Li Meixia (2018) considers that the teaching mode of situational language teaching method is to individualize the abstract general concepts and to show them in vivid images with the help of language, pictures, videos, performances and life scenes, so that students can perceive English more easily and stimulate the thinking ability of English language. The changes in the cultivation objectives of the English curriculum also require teachers to change the classroom teaching mode according to the actual situation of students. Compared with the use of communicative teaching method, the use of situational language teaching method is less, but the situational language teaching method has its unique advantages.

3.1. Advantages of Situational Language Teaching Method

First of all, the situational language teaching method can promote the development of students' ideology and morality, and improve the intercultural communicative ability of English. As a basic subject, the educational aspect of English teaching must be closely integrated with the intellectual aspect. The English subject also needs to interpenetrate with Chinese culture, for example, many classrooms now also integrate telling Chinese stories in English and introducing Chinese culture in English, which involves the cultural function of English. The situational language teaching method is more diverse in that the classroom allows students to shape the correct values, outlook on life and worldview by creating real life situations.

The situational language teaching method allows students to engage multiple senses. In the process of developing English thinking, students' visual, auditory, and sensory senses are engaged in the text, especially in English reading classes. Through a lifelike approach, students can improve their aesthetic skills, feel the emotions of the characters, the author's intentions, and the main idea of the text, so that they can feel the charm of the English language in the context and gradually improve their aesthetic skills.

Finally, situational language teaching method is conducive to the implementation of the new English curriculum standards. English textbooks are rich in genre types including narrative, argumentative, application and explanatory essays, etc. The difficulty of the text is also difficult for students to understand, because most of the text is an abstract summary of the essence of things and summaries. situational language teaching method not only promotes students' mastery of basic English knowledge and skills by creating situations and integrating knowledge into them, but also plays an important role in realizing the new English curriculum reform and cultivating students' English key competences.

3.2. Limitations of Situational Language Teaching Method

Firstly, its overemphasis on language form tends to neglect the development of communicative competence. In daily English teaching teachers tend to neglect to emphasize overall structure perception and comprehensive training, neglect analysis and explanation of language knowledge, and may lack the link of knowledge overload. Secondly, its over-emphasis on overall structure tends to neglect pragmatic analysis, explanation and training. Thirdly, although the contextual approach uses situations as a clue to select and arrange language materials, the design of situations is often fictitious because the discourse in the situations does

not maximize the actual needs of students' language communication. Teachers in the creation of situations to integrate emotions, but also to allow students in the situation of a good emotional experience, in order to play the advantages of situation teaching. In practical teaching, teachers need to pay attention to understanding the contents of textbooks, linking the actual life of students, play a positive function of situational language teaching.

4. Conclusion

It is of concern that when using the situational language teaching approach, English teachers should guide students to focus on the object of learning and should not pay too much attention to the details of the instructional material. This requires teachers to provide appropriate additional explanations of the situations during the lesson in order to maximize the mobilization of students' existing life experiences and to link them closely to the new knowledge. In addition, in addition to adding background knowledge, teachers can also use problem chains to drive students to think about the situation and clarify the learning objectives of the lesson.

Besides, teachers need to learn to deliberately use multiple forms to create situations. This is because situations determine the meaning of language expressions. Language needs to be understood in real situations, and can be appropriately introduced through certain data, tables, and diagrams as a way to speed up the process of memorizing and communicating knowledge to students.

To sum up, since the situational approach was introduced and used in China, it has played an important role in teaching English in China because it can create a good language environment for students, acquire relevant perceptual materials, and mobilize other non-intellectual factors so as to exercise their comprehensive English skills.

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