

Strategies for Organizing English Classroom Teaching in Large Class Sizes: A Study Based on a Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract: With the deepening of the new curriculum reform, more and more teachers are aware of the importance of changing traditional classroom teaching organization strategies to improve the effectiveness of English teaching. The new classroom teaching organization strategies are most visible in interactive teaching and cooperative learning, as well as the transformation of teachers' roles. Therefore, this study analyzes the literature related to interactive teaching method, cooperative learning strategy, and teachers' roles in China through systematic literature review method, and summarizes the problems and solutions of interactive teaching method in oral English teaching, the differences of teachers' roles and transformation strategies, cooperative learning strategies in English speaking education of different levels, and explores the teaching organization strategies for different levels. To summarize, the purpose of this study is to investigate the problems and solutions of the interactive teaching method, the differences in teachers' roles and strategies for changing the role, and the inspiration brought to English teachers by teaching organization strategies

Keywords: English class, teaching organization strategy, primary and secondary school, teacher roles

1. Introduction

Classroom organization strategies are the basis for teachers' effective teaching of students [19]. The reason for this is that classroom organization strategies not only influence students' motivation and interest in learning, but they also limit the teaching effect [20]. However, English classrooms have different teaching objectives and methods. The purpose of instruction is to teach students not only theoretical knowledge, but also how to apply that knowledge in a real-world communication setting [21]. According to this teaching goal, teachers should change from pure lecture to "teaching + practice" mode in the class, creating more opportunities for practice and giving more time to students to learn by doing and improve by using. Therefore, teaching organization strategy is the basis of effective teaching and learning in English, and it has a pivotal position. Even so, English instruction in foundation education is ineffective for a variety of reasons. Among them, classroom teaching organization strategies are a significant influencing factor [22].

Classroom teaching organization strategies have gained teachers' attention as educational theories have evolved and have gradually become one of the criteria for measuring teachers' ability to organize the class [19], and various forms of classroom teaching organization have also been realized as

teaching methods have been continuously improved. The strategies have become one of the critical concerns of English teachers. However, there is a lack of systematic research on English classroom organization strategies in China. As a result, conducting a systematic literature review is required to gain valuable insights from it.

2. Research Design

2.1. Research Method

A systematic literature review is a highly applicable and standardized approach to literature research in which the researcher uses multiple databases and a variety of search and analysis techniques to systematically and accurately capture the progress of a research area, answer research questions, and validate conclusions. Its advantages of rigor, transparency, and objectivity overcome the problems of subjectivity and bias of traditional research methods, so this research method is gradually gaining international recognition and is widely used in different fields.

Although this method has not been used to investigate issues in the field of education for a long time, some researchers believe it is an excellent method for studying educational practices and is as valuable as any significant study. As a result, the systematic literature review method was chosen to carry out the research in this paper.

2.2. Research Questions

English is a subject as well as a communication tool. Therefore, spoken English is one of the key points of English teaching. However, in traditional teaching, teachers tend to over-emphasize the importance of grammar and neglect the teaching of speaking. This has resulted in a widespread phenomenon of "dumb English" among Chinese students. In 2017, the Ministry of National Education issued a new version of the English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education. The English curriculum has a new teaching philosophy in the context of the new curriculum reform, focusing on the process of learning as well as the application and practice of the language. The new standards reaffirm the importance of English language use and place higher teaching demands on English teachers. Teachers are the main body of teaching and learning, and the new curriculum reform will inevitably affect the way of teaching. This paper identifies the following research questions to investigate whether cooperative learning and interactive teaching are effective ways to organize English speaking teaching activities for cooperative learning and interactive teaching, which are embodiments of common new classroom organization strategies:

1. Problems and solutions of interactive teaching method in teaching oral English to different periods of students.
2. Based on different teaching strategies in oral English classes, teachers' role variation, and transformation strategies.
3. Differences in the application of cooperative learning strategies in oral English teaching.

2.3. Sample Selection

Based on the three research questions, the author retrieve three academic databases of China National Knowledge Infrastructure, Wanfang Database, and China Science and Technology Journal Database with "Primary School English and Interactive Teaching, Middle School Oral English and Interactive Teaching Method, High School Oral English Teaching and Interactive Teaching Method, Cooperative Learning and Oral English Teaching and (Full Text: Middle School Teaching), Cooperative Learning and Oral English Teaching and Elementary School Students, Teacher Role and Middle School English Class, Teacher Role and Teaching English in Primary Schools, Classroom

Role and High School English Teacher” as keywords. There are 376 pieces of literature obtained in total.

The literature must be screened again to remove irrelevant material. The following inclusion criteria were developed for this paper to ensure the accuracy of the literature:

1. Literature of survey research or empirical research
2. The type of literature is primary and secondary school basic education journal papers, dissertations, or survey reports
3. The types of classrooms discussed in the literature are primary and secondary schools or basic English classrooms

After eliminating research literature that was purely online education, lesson plans, no theoretical basis, articles less than two pages in length, and no references, the author read the full text. Finally, 15 papers have been included in the scope of this study.

Table 1: Article Key Information Description.

Number	Author	Year	Journal Source	Database Sources
[1]	Jiang Xiaoling	2011	Nanjing Normal University	Wanfang Database
[2]	Liu Yang	2014	Qufu Normal University	CNKI
[3]	Han Lijuan	2013	Fujian Normal University	CNKI
[4]	Dong Qiujing	2018	Hebei Normal University	CNKI
[5]	Gu Ruqun	2011	Zhejiang Normal University	Wanfang Database
[6]	Yin Lulu	2017	Harbin Normal University	CNKI
[7]	Lu Honglan	2012	Shanghai Normal University	CNKI
[8]	Wang Chunxiu	2004	Liaoning Normal University	CNKI
[9]	Gong Tengfei	2010	Sichuan International Studies University	CNKI
[10]	Ren Yuanxing	2019	Ningxia Normal University	CNKI
[11]	Lu Rui	2014	Hebei Normal University	Wanfang Database
[12]	Xiang Qin	2010	East China Normal University	CNKI
[13]	Zhang Ruifang	2016	Qinghai Normal University	Wanfang Database
[14]	Li Changjia	2013	Chongqing Normal University	CNKI
[15]	Huang Tingting	2015	Yunnan University	CNKI

3. Research results

3.1. The current situation of teaching oral English in Chinese primary and secondary schools

Among the 15 pieces of literature, studies on teaching English in elementary school accounted for the least number. Still, these papers describe the current state of teaching and learning in this school section. Huang [15] points out that the deficiencies of the current primary English class are mainly one-way class activities, abstract teaching contents, and single teaching activities. Teachers emphasize language knowledge, grammar explanation, and training in listening, speaking, reading, and writing [8]. At the same time, they neglect students' emotions and personality development, language learning strategies, and promotion of cultural awareness, thus causing students to lose interest in English [8]. Additionally, Dong [4] believes that students do not have enough to practice speaking. Students' low speaking level is caused by a lack of vocabulary, poor communicative skills, and a lack of an authentic English learning environment.

According to one-third of the studies, even though junior high school students have some basic knowledge and English learning experience, most still find it difficult to speak English and do not

know how to improve that ability [1]. Therefore, their English speaking level is low. Low speaking ability is attributed to a lack of attention to students' English speaking training, as evidenced by the fact that many schools do not arrange speaking classes for foreign teachers; teachers intersperse speaking training with vocabulary, grammar, and other topics; and the majority of students do not have the habit of practicing English speaking after class [12]. One-third of the studies show that high school students spend a lot of time and effort learning vocabulary, sentence patterns, and grammar, so there is a severe lack of language practice, which causes students' interest in speaking to fade [3]. By senior year, some teachers had almost stopped scheduling oral training sessions in classes, resulting in students' speaking skills not improving as their knowledge increased [6].

Nevertheless, the current situation of oral teaching in Guangdong Province has greatly improved since the implementation of the Adjustment Plan for the Reform of College Entrance Examination. English listening and speaking has been counted as part of the college entrance examination results since 2011. It not only helps to shift the focus of teaching toward English speaking in this context, but it also changes students' attitudes toward learning it.

3.2. Problems and solutions of interactive teaching method in teaching English for different periods of students

3.2.1. Problems in using interactive teaching method in oral English teaching

In primary school. For a long time, English classroom activities in China's elementary schools were monotonous; cramming and one-way communication-based teaching methods resulted in an insufficient application of interactive teaching methods [15]. Meanwhile, teachers' over-reliance on textbooks and teaching reference books [15], and their lack of initiative to explore new teaching methods and contents also hinder the implementation of the interactive method.

The difficulty of interactive teaching activities makes it difficult for students to integrate into them. The results are specified as follows. First, students have a weak English foundation and can interact and communicate less through English. In Dong [4]'s research, 61% of students are afraid of being laughed at by their classmates or criticized by their teacher if they make mistakes. Second, students are introverted and not good at communicating, making them feel anxious and nervous when interacting [12,13,15].

In middle school. Although teachers can actively use interactive teaching methods in speaking lessons, the results fall short of expectations. As a consequence of students' knowledge and receptivity varied, some students could benefit from the interactive teaching activities, while others could not keep up with the teacher's pace. According to Lu [11], large class sizes make it impossible for the teacher to ensure that every student can participate in the interaction. Even when they do, many students are unable to take the teacher's request to interact seriously. According to Xiang's [12] research, 40% of students do not know how they should participate in activities, and nearly 42% are unable to express their ideas in English. As a result, only a few students can genuinely interact and benefit from the exercises, implying that interactive teaching methods are ineffective.

The interaction context in the classroom is not well designed [11,12]. Students report that classes are rarely set in authentic contexts, which makes it difficult for them to apply what they have learned in authentic contexts. Worse, unfavorable contextual interaction design will reduce their desire to interact. The results of interaction will then be like water off a duck's back, doing little to improve speaking ability.

In high school. The interactive teaching method is not fully implemented and can't play its role. Li finds that the time of English class in high school is tight, and the interaction time is compressed to complete the teaching tasks on time, which makes it difficult for students to give full play to their

central role. What's more, due to the heavy academic load, students do not have time to complete the preparation tasks set by the teacher for interaction before class, resulting in poor interaction.

The interactive teaching method is not actively cooperated by students. According to Zhang [13], most students are found to be reluctant to speak English in class and not willing to participate in interactions. Influenced by multiple emotions and concerns, the individual can actively cooperate with the teacher's interaction, but many students only respond when the teacher calls their names. They frequently remain silent in student-student interactions, making it difficult to carry out. They would rather the teacher explain knowledge directly and give them more time to do exercises

3.2.2. Solutions

First of all, teachers should learn about advanced teaching concepts and recognize the importance of interactive teaching methods in the process of implementing new curriculum standards, change traditional teaching methods, form a student-centered concept, interact with students in a two-way communication process, and increase the freedom of classroom interaction [14,15].

Second, teaching content based on the textbook, but not limited to the textbook [11]. Huang[15]'s study points out that interactive activities should adjust the difficulty according to students' English proficiency. Moreover, the teaching content should not only adhere to the teaching objectives, but should also continue to discover new interactive activities and contents from it. That is, teachers are required to be flexible in their teaching methods and use a variety of interactive activities [14].

Third, teachers must consider students' preferences, age characteristics, and other factors, and create interactive contexts that are relevant to students' life experiences and can be demonstrated in daily life [12].

In all 15 documents, they all mention that students generally have some anxiety about speaking English and participating in speaking activities. As teachers, it is critical to encourage students to speak up and practice more, as well as to implement a reward system [6]. As a result, a comfortable and enjoyable learning environment is created. Not only that, the teachers but also pay attention to the emotional interaction with students, establish an emotional bond with them, help them solve the problems that arise in the process of interaction, and evaluate and guide them after the interaction [12,13,15].

3.3. Based on different teaching strategies in oral teaching classes, teacher role differences, and transformation strategies

3.3.1. Based on Bruner's strategy of concept formation

This teaching method starts with examples, continues to derive its concepts, and finally presents the relevant examples to students to consolidate the concepts [16]. Teachers serve as the primary knowledge transmitters, interpreters, and controllers in this teaching strategy.

To effectively play the roles of knowledge transmitter and interpreter, teachers must be able to switch roles based on the needs of the teaching content [10]. For example, the teacher could deliver more lectures on theoretical and conceptual knowledge points that can only be fully comprehended through detailed explanation. While for those strong exploratory knowledge points, students should be guided to independent inquiry learning, to develop their thinking skills, observation skills, and other abilities [10].

To be a suitable controller, the teacher needs to hold the degree of control. There should be a lively atmosphere without a loss of discipline in the class. When students are engaged in activities, the teacher should be aware of the time and rhythm of the activity and be able to quickly direct students who have "derailed" [7].

3.3.2. Based on Piaget's Cognitive development strategy

Piaget believes that cognition comes from action, knowledge comes from activity, and activity is the need of human nature. Therefore, cognitive development strategy emphasizes the importance of the dynamics of cognitive activity, the subject's initiative, and the interaction with the environment [17]. It values heuristic teaching, practice, and collaboration. As a result, teachers play the roles of organizers, prompters, facilitators, participants, and advisors in this strategy.

The organizer shifts the emphasis from the teacher's "teaching" to the students' "learning," creating rich teaching situations, stimulating students' learning motivation, cultivating learning interest, and fully mobilizing students' learning enthusiasm [9]. Prompters and facilitators require teachers to reasonably grasp the timing and methods of prompting, learn to inspire and motivate, guide students to think, and facilitate their integration into class [8]. In addition, teachers should not stand upon their pantofles but construct learning with students.

Teachers, on the other hand, should not participate in order to demonstrate their English skills and put pressure on students. Teachers should not do everything for students and should not lose sight of the fact that students are the main character of the activity. Instead, they should act as a role model for the students during the activity so that the students' language skills can continue to improve. To be a good advisor, teachers should engage in discussions with students, provide information to students, and consult with other teachers of related subjects as needed [7].

3.3.3. Based on Ausubel's advance organization strategy

An "advance organizer" can draw out already formed cognitive structures based on prior experience. It helps to form organic links with current learning material and provides appropriate links to the learning material to be easily integrated with existing knowledge structures in the early stages of learning [18]. Teachers are primarily facilitators, resource providers, interpreters, curriculum developers, and decision-makers in this strategy.

Unlike the facilitator in the cognitive development strategy, the facilitator in this strategy is more concerned with providing useful information that assists students in making connections between old and new knowledge and in forming a new knowledge system. As a result, one of the primary responsibilities of teachers in the modern era is to provide students with effective learning methods [10].

Lu [7] says, as an interpreter, the teacher should be familiar with the main content of teaching. Moreover, he/she has to process the content, guide students in an accessible way, and stimulate their thinking and learning. Expected to make appropriate choices about the content of the textbook according to the actual situation of the students, the teacher can add additional curriculum resources if necessary [10]. This concept enriches the teacher's role in the new era, enabling the teacher to take on the role of curriculum developer and decision-maker.

3.4. Differences in the application of cooperative learning strategies in Oral English Teaching at different periods

3.4.1. In primary school.

Although there is little research on the use of cooperative learning strategies in elementary English speaking lessons, many teachers recognize the benefits of these strategies and can use them to teach speaking [4]. Due to the relatively young age of elementary school students and their lack of independence and self-management, pure group work does not suit them [5]. This is why the strategy places more emphasis on the role of the administrator and supervisor.

The teacher determines group leaders based on grades or personalities, then sets group rules, and assigns tasks such as puzzles, role plays, group discussions, etc. [4]. During group work, the teacher not only guides the students in problem solving, but also assists the student group members in developing self-confidence and fostering relationships among the group members [5]. In turn, students are responsible for taking on different roles and performing the functions of group members [4]. Only then can everyone participate in the cooperation. Following the activity, the teacher served as an evaluator, assessing the students' performance in a timely and varied manner. The results are then given back to parents, and parents are also encouraged to take the initiative to assist their children in learning oral English outside of class [5].

3.4.2. In middle school

A Cooperative learning strategy at this level is more demanding and elaborate for each session. Jiang[1] takes into account all aspects of the study and concludes that the neighborhood seating combination is appropriate for the first year, the heterogeneous and balanced combination is appropriate for the second year, and the independent party combination is appropriate for the third year, and various cooperative learning groups are regrouped once a semester.

Selecting group leaders, teachers will democratically vote for permanent group leaders according to the wishes of the students, and the rotating group leader system allows group members to take turns as group leaders so that each student can be given full play [2].

Cooperation activities are more complex and require a high level of competence. For example, there are speeches and debates, surveys and reports, oral reports, etc. [1,2,7]. The communication requirements are also increased during the activity, as students are encouraged to communicate in English as much as possible [1].

3.4.3. In high school

Cooperative learning strategies are similar to those applied in middle school. But high school students are more independent, have the most English knowledge, and have the highest relative overall ability in the three academic levels. Thus, the activities are the most complex.

This model emphasizes the learner's self-directed personal development, individuality, intrinsic motivation, sense of cooperation [3]. Hence, the teacher tends to be more inclined to assign the task and then leaves it to the students to arrange the completion of it by themselves. Of course, the teacher will also offer help and guidance to students.

4. Discussion

4.1. In primary school

Teaching methods should not stick to tradition but should be explored continuously to achieve effective reform [23]. The traditional indoctrination teaching style and philosophy can ensure the implementation of teaching content. However, from the perspective of the student, "dictatorial rule" will not only frustrate students' enthusiasm and interest in English, but will also deprive students of the opportunity to output in class, which is detrimental to the development of comprehensive English abilities.

In the context of English curriculum reform in elementary school, the teacher realizes the importance of changing classroom organizational strategies to improve the effectiveness of teaching English. Therefore, more and more teachers are applying interactive teaching methods, cooperative learning strategies to their classes, changing the role of class leaders as usual, and getting good teaching results from them.

Even though the application interactive teaching methods and cooperative learning strategies in large class sizes will be influenced by several objective conditions, the benefits of the organization strategy can be maximized if the teacher adjusts the teaching organization strategy according to the actual situation.

4.2. In middle school

As junior high school students gradually increase their independence, autonomy, and knowledge, teachers can change the traditional classroom teaching organization strategy. For example, they could encourage students to take more initiative; fully exploit students' subjectivity; encourage students to complete their learning tasks through cooperation, interaction, and inquiry; and encourage students to learn and grow through various forms of teaching methods.

However, effective classroom organization strategies require good discipline and students' self-monitoring. Therefore, when a teacher explores how to integrate different classroom organization strategies with teaching, he/she also needs to strengthen the management and supervision of students' classroom performance. Moreover, because middle school students are in adolescence, teachers must engage in more emotional communication with them and understand their psychological state in order to better implement classroom organization strategies.

4.3. In high school

Faced with the pressure of college entrance exams and the tension of the curriculum, teachers, and students will spend more time and energy on writing, grammar, and vocabulary. Nevertheless, they should not neglect the teaching and learning of speaking, not to mention the cultivation of interest and the improvement of self-confidence in speaking English.

According to the findings of this study, interactive teaching methods and cooperative learning strategies are effective ways to promote speaking proficiency and motivation to learn oral English. Therefore, teachers should apply classroom organization strategies such as interactive teaching methods and cooperative learning strategies to get rid of the traditional didactic classroom model, thus transforming students' motivation to learn English.

To sum up, it is not practical to conduct many classroom activities and switch too many organizational strategies. Still, teachers can reduce the frequency of use while maintaining the quality of class activities and organizational strategies.

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