

THE ANALYSIS OF THE INTEGRATION OF STUDENT-CENTERED AND  
TEACHER-CENTERED COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING IN CHINA

Approved by Tom Lo Guidice  
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By

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## **Abstract**

### **THE ANALYSIS OF THE INTEGRATION OF STUDENT-CENTERED AND TEACHER-CENTERED COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING IN CHINA**

Li Xiaoyan

Under the Supervision of Tom Lo Guidice, PhD

English, as a global language, plays an increasingly important role in the world. In China, the demand for people who can successfully communicate in English is becoming more important as the country faces more international investment opportunities. Therefore, all the colleges in China require students continue to learn English in order to meet the needs of the development of the country. Thus the college English comes in being. Language education for non-English majors involving millions of students is called College English.

There are two different teaching patterns: one is the teacher-centered and the other is student-centered. The traditional exam-oriented system makes former prevalent in China. The majority of the teachers are applying the teacher-centered method in college English teaching. It is a natural product of the deep-rooted examination-oriented education. However, now the new quality-oriented trend demands more people who can not only be good at taking examinations, but also can communicating freely in English. There is a strong argument on which teaching method is preferable.

This paper is a report on research on both teaching methods. They have their pros and cons respectively. Therefore, it is not advisable to go from one extreme to another. The students have to be able to apply their knowledge in a real-world situation related to the subjects presented in the course.

Teachers should try involving students in the teaching process. Success means slowly

Implementing new techniques and thereby adapting students so they would understand the lesson goals and objectives, value communicative tasks and activities, generate topics and choose materials, work cooperatively, and identify their own learning strategies and styles. An integration of both the teacher-centered and the student-centered teaching method is preferable.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

There is a strong argument between teacher-centered method and learner-centered regarding college English teaching in China. Teacher-centered strategy has had its dominant position in English educational and is widely view as the traditional Chinese way. In contrast to the traditional view, the reader is provided a review of quality and efficient teaching way by exploring some main features, advantages, and disadvantages of teacher-centered and student-centered strategies.

According to College English Curriculum Requirements (“College English curriculum,” 2003), the learning curriculum in Chinese classroom is a kind of proficiency-based curriculum mixed with communicative-based syllabi and structural syllabi. Teacher-centered English learning environment in Chinese classroom can be depicted as a picture of those teachers specifying class objectives, highlighting entry and learning behaviors, selecting and sequencing learning activities, and then evaluating the outcomes and behavior of students at the ending process.

In the student-centered mode, students will “actively seeking new information, integrating it with what is known, and have a chance to explain it to others”(Huba et al, 1999, p. 18). That means Students are actively involved and the emphasis of the class will be on using and communicating knowledge effectively to address issues and problems in real-life contexts.

However, learning is initiated by problems, which are based on complex, real-world situations. All information needed to solve problems is not initially given. Teachers should help students identify, find, and use appropriate resources. This piece of work will analyze the integration of teacher-centered method and student-centered to find an appropriate solution to the

college English teaching in China.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem to be addressed is how student-centered college English teaching is different from teacher-centered approach?

### **Method of Approach**

The primary search engine used to collect the literature was EbscoHost using the terms “student-centered”, “English teaching”, and “China”. The paper is organized as a review of literature followed by conclusions and implications for educators of English as a foreign language.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

With the economic development in China, there is an increasing demand for people who can use English. Therefore, there are a lot of the people learning English either as their major or just as a foreign language. It is not exaggerated to say that the whole nation is learning English. In China, students and teachers are used to the traditional teacher-centered teaching method, which puts teaches at the center of the class. However, nowadays more and more educators and researchers argue for the implementation of student-centered teaching approach in English language teaching because this teaching method puts students at the center of teaching process. The fact is both the teacher-centered and the student-centered teaching methods have their advantages and disadvantages respectively. In the real teaching process, not only one approach will be applied.

#### **Background of College English in China**

Language education for non-English majors involving millions of students is called College English. For these university non-English majors, a study of college English in accordance with the College English Teaching Syllabus (College English Syllabus Revision Team, 1986, 1999) for two years is mandatory. Students take a total of 280 teaching hours of English in two years (about 70 hours each term, 5 to 6 hours each week) in order to meet the basic requirements of the

Syllabus. To evaluate the learning of English, after the first two years of English study, students are assessed using a nationwide, standardized English proficiency test called the College English Test Band 4 (CET-4). For those students who pass the CET-4, the College English Test Band 6 (CET-6) can be taken after an additional year of study. The mandated CET-4 focuses on testing students' language proficiency in listening, reading, and writing. Most of the test items are in a multiple-choice format (Wang, 2009, p. 138).

Currently, educational experts are claiming to lay great emphasis on the development of students' communicative competence, the corresponding nationwide CET is not broadly evaluative of this desired competence (Wang, 2009). As the majority of college English students only take the compulsory CET-4 which does not include a speaking component, and as there are also strong pressures on teachers with regard to their teaching assessments by universities, department heads, and students based on their students' performance in the CET, it seems that the reform of the traditional teacher-centered method will have a long way to go.

English teaching is to help students use the language to communicate, instead of passing examinations. In my notebook, I jotted this sentence: "Education will be truly effective only when it is specifically designed to meet the individual needs and interests of each student." I came across this sentence several years ago when I went to attend a meeting for new teachers and regard it very inspiring.

Students are required to begin to learn English when they are in primary school, even in some kindergartens. However, for many students it is difficult to express themselves freely in English after learning English for so many years. When they listen to native English speakers, they will feel very painful. Even the university graduates often find themselves in embarrassing situations when they are required to speak in English or listen to native English speakers. They

often would not make a fluent and logical sentences, neither do they understand what is being said when they are using English to talk with others.

The main factors causing the problems are the following: Firstly, the English teachers put more emphasis on the examination. English teaching only serves the examinations only. The students and teachers stress on how to promote students skills in taking tests rather than in communication. Secondly, the students lack the skill of communication. The dull learning environment can't make the students study hard. Thirdly, English teachers lack the right to apply different ways of teaching. And lastly, students are getting used to be dependent on teachers: hoping teachers to tell them everything.

There are two different teaching patterns: one is the teacher-centered and the other is student-centered. The former is prevalent in China. The educators in China are asking such a question: the traditional exam-oriented system and the new quality-oriented one, which is preferable? It is very common to have a class of 50 or more students and teaching a foreign language effectively to a large class is really hard work. The author of this paper, a college English teacher, has more than 70 students in a class.

Large class sizes, limited authentic materials, and ill-equipped classrooms were symptomatic of the inadequacy of resource support in college English teaching and learning in China as Wang and Cheng (2009) found. In the study done by Wang (2009), it showed that about 89% of the teachers claimed that the size of their classes directly influenced their teaching.

In order to change the teacher-centered teaching model into the student-centered one, Teachers should keep students' needs, interests, and learning styles in mind, apply several kinds of teaching techniques, organize different classroom activities and encourage, praise and appreciate both students' success and learning process all the time. If teachers place more

responsibility in the hands of students, serve as “presenter or facilitator of knowledge” instead of “source of all knowledge” (Avard, 2010, p. 27), they can greatly motivate students to learn the language in a very active, cooperative and effective way. After all, people learn by doing, not only by watching and listening.

The differences between them are obvious. Most of the Chinese classes are teacher-centered. Students are always busy listening to their teachers and taking notes, while the teacher speaks almost from the beginning to the end in the class. “When information is presented to students, it goes into the working memory of their brain. But the information quickly fades away unless something is done to trigger its move into the brain’s long-term memory where it is stored and recalled later” (Page, 2010, p. 55).

Some people say that the prevalently teacher-oriented class is a typical traditional passive class. No doubt it is a natural product of the deep-rooted examination-oriented education. And there are several characteristics in this kind of class. To begin with, a teacher is the main actor on the stage and all the students are passive audience. Besides, he imparts knowledge to his students in the same way he pours water into a container, never bothering to ignite the sparks or enthusiasm in students.

In contrast, a student-centered class is a kind of new active class, resulting from the quality-oriented education system. Naturally, it is a newcomer of the education reform. The main characteristic of this kind of class is that the teacher and students are all actors and all the students are actively involved in the classroom activities. Besides, the teacher always tries to instill a love of learning in students and stimulates their interest. As a result, students always find it a pleasure to sit in class, asking questions, discussing or even arguing with the teacher.

Therefore, currently, there are a lot of discussions about the reform of the traditional

English teaching method in China. English teaching reform has been carried out in schools, some teaching reform has been succeeded, but there are still some problems in English teaching. Of course, both the traditional teacher-centered method and the new student-centered one have their advantages and disadvantage respectively.

### **The Pros of Teacher-centered College English Teaching**

The truth is that most classrooms really are places created for the convenience of teaching and not as the best places to learn. Have you ever wondered why some schools move the students from room to room instead of the teachers? Or why the teacher's desk is at the front of the room and the seats in an austere row-by-column configuration? Everything about the typical classroom clearly is about the instructor-teacher and not the student-learner experience.

Teachers' conceptions of teaching will decide the approaches they apply. These teaching approaches will impact students' learning approaches as well as their learning outcome (Kember, 2009). Teachers' authority may be the main influence on students' English learning outcome. In the classroom, students have a tendency to perceive the teacher as an authority figure whose superior knowledge and control over classroom learning events. The students have been used to teacher-centered classroom teaching and learning.

The teacher is expected, as educators Polly and Hannafin (2010), claim, to lead from behind, to act more as adviser and to participate in the interactions if possible. The teacher should allow full scope for his students' spontaneous learning process and give more opportunities for the students to talk, perform and express their own ideas. In this way, the students will no longer feel inferior or intimidated. Gradually, they will form a positive attitude toward English studying. The proposed teachers' role in the classroom is significant not only for classroom methodological reasons, but also, as we shall see, for its effect on human relationships

in classroom. This relationship will contribute favorably to effective learning.

“Teachers play a key role in any curriculum implementation, as they determine whether or not curriculum innovation is successfully executed in the classroom as intended by policymakers” ( Wang , 2009, p. 136). Teachers are knowledge holders. It is the responsibility of teachers to guide the whole teaching process. They may tackle them from the aspects of choosing teaching materials, teaching methods and students’ learning strategies. Teachers should develop not only the students’ intellectual factors but also their non-intellectual ones, which are psychological factors. The teaching practice has proved that if teachers pay attention to psychological factors, they can activate the students’ potential motivation and highly motivate them. If so, teachers can help their students to overcome their harmful psychological obstacles and improve their study efficiency. Besides, teachers should help students to choose suitable learning strategies and tell them how to improve their study efficiency.

One researcher (Wang, 2009) found there are some factors from the teachers themselves that will influence the way the teachers teach. Those factors include teachers’ beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, and understanding of the curriculum.

In the traditional classroom, teachers are considered authorities and the learning environment is teacher-centered (Dunn, et al, 2010). In the traditional classroom, teachers are considered authorities and the learning environment is teacher-centered. As we all know that people’s attitude is very important.

If the students have a favorable attitude towards the speakers of the language they are learning, they are more likely to be motivated. Favorable attitudes will enhance their wish for more intensive contact with the second language community. And they will see communicative need more clearly. In situations where people of different first languages do not have to contact

each other, the learner's attitudes may determine whether to perceive any communicative need at all.

The above mentioned phenomena, to some extent, tell us the teacher-centered teaching method has its own merits. That is why it has been applied for so many years. In the big English class, the teacher is and should be obviously the most authoritative person. Students should always act according to what the teacher wants them to accomplish, not what they themselves want to accomplish, instead. And of course, students' motivation is of great significance. "Motivation is a term used to refer to some kind of driving force, either internal or external in human beings. Motivation, in psychology, consists of internal processes which spur us on to satisfy some need." (Knobloch, 2003, p. 24). Incorrect motivations and attitudes towards learning may produce negative effect on learning result. In that case, teacher should help their students to change their incorrect motivations and attitudes. Most teachers are doing their job very well.

Teachers' perceptions of students impact their classroom decisions and therefore are of importance in considering how to meet the needs of students (Kember, 2009). College English teaching is, to a great extent, applying the traditional teaching method.

High-stakes tests and examinations exert considerable impact on what and how teaching and learning are conducted in the classroom. (Alderson & Wall, 1993; Cheng & Watanabe with Curtis, 2004). This "washback" effect, as claimed by Alderson and Wall (1993), leads teachers to "teaching to the test, with an undesirable narrowing of the curriculum" (p. 118), which is a situation well documented in the College English context (Jin, 2007; Qi, 2005). Chapman and Snyder (2000) also observed that teachers tend to teach what is tested. More often than not, utilizing tests as a catalyst for change may not necessarily bring about had mental changes or the improvement in teaching

methods to be expected from teachers in a revised curriculum (Cheng, 1998) (Wang, et al, p. 140).

Is it not odd that we prepare for a career in an office by taking classes in a classroom? In fact, contextualizing what we learn is an enormous problem. Many students simply cannot apply what they learned to real-world phenomena (Zaiser, 2010). Teachers are teaching students the structure of knowledge and students should practice by themselves.

Experienced teachers possess a richer knowledge base and deeper understanding of their students and student learning, thereby being more capable to help students solve problems, and thus more likely to carry out their teaching objectives. Teachers can try to apply some approaches to encourage students learn more, that is to improve the comprehensive language ability, such as valuing fluency over accuracy, using collaborative activities and audio-visual materials, and avoiding use of the mother tongue in class (Wang, 1999, p. 140).

### **The Cons of Teacher-centered College English Teaching**

During the teacher-centered class, teachers do not give students enough opportunities to practice their own learning. In such cases, what they do is passively wait to be taught. The students tend to see knowledge as something to be “transmitted” by the teacher rather than “discovered” by themselves as learners.

However, currently in China, some people strongly argue that students should become the focus for teacher to teach. Teachers should change their teaching methods in accordance with their students’ learning psychology.

Teachers, who adopt the traditional method of teaching, neglect the ability of students’ listening and speaking. Now the teachers have faced with the problem of improving the students’ ability of listening and speaking. But now we lack the environment of studying foreign language,



and our English lessons are limited. Under these circumstances, communicative approach is a good method to improve the students' ability of listening and speaking.

Traditionally, teachers will adopt the teaching method that they are turning a language class into a lecture on grammar. It is still very common that the teacher explains every language point in detail, with students taking notes all the time. Secondly, culture is neglected in English teaching. Some outdated materials and a great deal of grammar exercises in the book mislead students to pay too much attention to separate words and grammatical rules. Finally, test-oriented education, in a sense, leads astray language teaching in China.

The teacher does most of the talking and always has the whole class under his or her strict control by lecturing, questioning, correcting students and often supplying correct answers to the exercises.

Only when students can use the language, the learning process is really taking place (Widdowson, 1978). However, a lot of the students in China can not use English to communicate in English after having been learning for so many years. This phenomenon tells us that teachers, to some extent, fail to do their job successfully. Teachers should apply methods to make students find proper learning approaches, trying to keep focus on the students instead of the teachers themselves and encouraging students to communicate among themselves. Good teachers are good role models for students. Students will learn from their teachers.

In the Chinese context, for many years, human resource support for teachers tended to be the most seriously deficient of the various resources. Wang disappointedly found out that “there are simply not many teacher training programs available [particularly] to those who teach non-English majors because such teaching has long been considered secondary in importance [when compared with English- major teaching]” (Wang, 1999, p. 49).

Another researcher (Ruth 1997, p. 1) claims that, while a medical doctor from the previous century would not recognize the technology in today's hospital, a college professor from that era, would see virtually no change in the tools of education. Even though we do not fully agree with the rather stark conclusion of Ruth, we do agree that teaching methods need to be examined and developed and that there definitely are lots of alternatives to stereotype lecturing in academic institutions (Claes, et al, 2010).

Teacher-centered classroom environment can promote students' self-regulated learning. Learners exposed in a long listening environment as listener rather than participants will feel bored, fatigued and even sleepy. The current teaching methods don't emphasize the real world situations and fail to cultivate students' spontaneity. Artificial conventions and mechanical question-and-answer sequences fall short of the flexible, spontaneous kind of communicative interaction required for performing a task with the context of situation relevant to the real world. Such classroom teaching forces learners to talk about things that are not of their own choosing and not based on their actual needs. Instead, they are provided with a rigid set of guided structures in isolation. Taught in this way, the learners frequently fail when they are faced with the need to produce the language related to a specific situation.

On the other hand, students view on education is not once and for all fixed, but instead constructed in relation to the learning context (Claes, et al, 2010). Currently, not only educational experts in China, but a lot of the students also claim that the focus of classroom should be shifted from the teacher to students. The present teaching in China, however, is just the opposite; the class is just mainly teacher-centered.

Such kind of teachers' role, in fact, encourages the students to depend too much on teachers without thinking independently. So it appears that sometimes, even if the students have

understood the text they are reading, they do not have the courage to speak out when called upon, for fear that they may not be right. As a result, the long-term practice of teacher-centeredness in education has actually lessened the opportunities for the students to analyze and judge things for themselves, and it has possibly encouraged the students' laziness in thinking. Giving up their natural instincts for active thinking, they may spend most of their time copying from the blackboard, following the teacher's talk and taking the note. Too much of this will harm the students' initiatives and reduce their enthusiasm in study.

Furthermore, many teachers think that they have taught the basic knowledge of the language to students; it is simple enough for the students to use the knowledge, later, to communicate. However, it is wrong to think that knowledge of how sentences are used in communication follows from knowledge of the correct way to make them. Wang (1999) states that investigating the education of foreign languages in some other countries, we can find that the teachers never divide the four abilities in their teaching. They always put the training students' speaking ability at the first place; they drill the students' listening ability in the whole communicative process. So our teachers face with the problem of changing our teaching methods to improve the students' ability of listening and speaking.

In short, teachers need to adjust teaching methods in different conditions according to the needs of students and the society. Teachers should motivate and guide students.

### **The Pros of Student-centered College English teaching**

People learn better when they feel comfortable. In the student-centered class, the teacher is essentially an organizer, not the one who does all the talking, the student is learning through their contribution.

This kind of learning environment is very beneficial for those students who are too shy to

Speak in front of the whole class and directly to the teacher for fear of making a fool of him or her self. They can join in the discussion without so much fear of making mistakes and if mistakes do occur, classmates or the teacher can correct them directly. The prospect of standing up in front of everyone and saying something in a foreign language really is a terrifying prospect for some students and it is no wonder that they say “I’m sorry”, “I don’t know”, when the teacher asks them in front of the whole class.

After all, people learn by doing, not only by watching and listening (Bruner, 1996). Every student has millions of bits of information available to him or her, but can only focus on a little at a time and associate it with his or her existing information. The role and relationship between the teacher and students are fixed by the students-centered principle. It is to say that the students are the main part in communication, while the teacher helps the students to communicate. The teacher can play several roles in the class: he directs the class activities, designs the scene of communication, and also he is a consultant: guiding the communication and solving the problems in communication. At the same time, the teacher should be a partner of communication: he takes part in the students’ communication. Of course, the students should throw themselves into communication actively. They can learn the target language through communication, and improve their listening and speaking ability through communication.

By situated learning within social and cultural contexts the individual is continuously involved in constructing knowledge through direct experience of social practice (Claes, et al, 2010).

So in the teaching process, it sets up some language models which can be used in the real communication. Its focal point is to train the students to use the language in communicative circumstance. It helps the students to develop the skill of listening and speaking. It gives the

students the chances to participate in the teaching activities.

For those charged with improving the quality of teaching and learning in universities, an abiding concern has been trying to persuade academics to shift from teacher-centered forms of teaching towards more student-centered approaches. Commonly used textbooks for teaching in higher education are consistent in taking a positive view of active forms of learning (Kember, 2009).

Everyone has different strengths when it comes to learning. If we want to learn something, we should learn the phenomenon in its real-world context all at once with all its complexity (Zaiser, 2010).

“English language teaching should be made of communication by communication and for communication.” “Motivation in foreign language learning may be thought of as the incentive, the need, or the desire that the learner feels to learn the foreign language.” ( Knobloch , 2003, p. 24). China’s foreign language teaching has been used to explain by the teachers, the students listen, and practice, supplemented by the teaching model that lead to students’ mechanical imitation, lack of autonomy, or even lead to students’ weariness (Wang, 1999).

A successful learner-centered environment also requires frequent student feedback. During student-centered learning, the individual assumes responsibility for determining learning goals, monitoring progress toward meeting goals, adjusting or adapting approaches as warranted, and determining when individual goals have been adequately addressed.

“When information is presented to students, it goes into the working memory of their brain. But the information quickly fades away unless something is done to trigger its move into the brain’s long-term memory where it is stored and recalled later” (Page, 2010, p. 55).

Contexts may help students to identify learning goals, form and test hypotheses, and situate

learning in authentic experiences. Knowledge is constructed while individuals engage activities, receive and provide feedback, and interact within the learning environment. When authentic, active engagement enables learners to gain access to the ordinary practices of a culture from a real-world perspective.

Student-centered learning environments often provide authentic experiences or realistic vignettes to facilitate interaction and learning. In this pattern, what students aim at is no longer their academic performances, but their practical abilities.

Both the teachers and students are all actors and all the students are actively involved in the classroom activities. This can be regarded as an active process where students are seeking information related to the task and the given context, and testing this within the context formed by the task and the environment. The students hoped to exchange knowledge; i.e. learn from peers as well as make new friends. The new contacts would also make it possible for them to assess their own level of knowledge within the field in comparison to their peers.

### **The Cons of Student-centered College English Teaching**

Student-centered teaching is more time-consuming and unpredictable for task completion than teacher-centered approaches. Since this type of change is also new to many students, more guidance and structure from the course directors are needed to encourage the interactions, help students to understand the teaching objectives.

However, it is not practical to design the education just by meeting the individual needs and interest of each student in China. If the teacher requires the student to discuss most of the time during the class, it can appear to be game-playing rather than learning and teacher seen as not doing their job.

Without adequate background knowledge and support, students may fail to detect inaccurate

information or reject erroneous hypotheses in the face of contradictory evidence. I totally agree that individual needs and interests of students are a necessary consideration. But we cannot go to the extreme that just meeting the needs and interests is the only consideration. It is reasonable to give students more choices. By doing so, education may be truly effective.

According to Wang (2009), from the students' attitude, the teacher is consistent with high status and commands deference. The rights and the obligations associated with the teacher and the student roles are fixed and non-negotiable. The interaction itself is tightly controlled, and only the teacher has the right to initiate exchanges. Students accustomed to this kind of relationship are not value of their initiative or of engaging freely in the learning procedures. Students seem to do what they think is asked of them, using techniques to learn as much factual knowledge as possible, or they are interested in the subject in a way where understanding and comprehending course material is the focus. Most of the students aren't aware of their responsibility for taking charge of their own learning.

Teaching a foreign language is difficult because the teacher is trying to teach in the classroom something which is normally learnt outside and used outside the normal range of experience of the classroom. Thus in the classroom the teacher and students have to try to create similar conditions to those outside the classroom in order to facilitate the learning process.

From some aspects, we can say in the communicative activity, the process is more important than the result. So the teacher must arouse the students' enthusiasm to the rein of their subjective initiative completely. It can not only avoid the drawbacks of grammar translation methods but also eliminate the ignorance of the students' listening and speaking ability (Wang, 2009).

The students who have had several years of training in English are still unable to actually

use the language. For example, the students can't understand what the teachers have said and they can't express themselves freely, their ability of listening and speaking is not up to standard. They can't communicate with others in English. What they have learned is only used in examination. Many people believe that is because the teachers do not do their job properly. Actually, it is not the fact that the teachers ignore the importance of the students' ability of listening and speaking. It is the fact that when students are asked to give responses during the class, a lot of the students will keep silent. Some students even think that the teacher is trying to embarrass them. These are based on my own experience of college English teaching.

Therefore, some of the students are asking for a more traditional approach to teaching and learning, with hard facts communicated through traditional lessons. There were also students who experienced difficulties in taking a greater responsibility for their own learning, as well as in making personal reflections on their own learning.

### **The integration**

English teaching reform is carried out on a national-wide scale. Changing established teaching and learning experiences is a slow and long-term project. The teacher should just organize and guide the students to have the communicative activities. "In English learning, as in every other field of human learning, motivation is the crucial force that determines whether a learner embarks on a task at all, how much energy he devotes to it, and how long he perseveres" (Knobloch, 2003, p. 24).

The aim of teaching English is to develop the student's ability of using language communicative ability. It requires the stress of listening, speaking, reading and writing. It also emphasizes the meaningful real communication.

To some extent, the process of teaching is the process of communication. It is unwise to say



one teaching method is better than another or stop using one completely.

In a class with more than 80 students becomes a congregation rather than a class, and the teacher must become a preacher: lecturing, writing notes on the board for students to copy, and hoping that at least some of the students will learn something. This is the very situation of college English environment in China. Therefore, it is not possible to substitute one teaching method for another one which has been existed for a rather long time complete.

Our increasing awareness of the limitations of traditional methods convinces us that we need to develop and explore alternative strategies of teaching and learning. Such strategies should include active participation from students concerning their own learning, new technology, distribution forms and problem based learning where students need to search, evaluate and adapt knowledge and skills in real world settings.

More work is needed to develop a positive relationship with the student. If the uninterested student doesn't like his teacher, it is hard to get the student to work toward any achievement goals. Show patience, but be determined to help the student and push for steady progress in spite of setbacks or resistance.

All theories of learning are based on assumptions concerning the individual, the world and the relationship between the two. Learning is mostly the result of social processes that require problem solving and negotiation with others and results from engaging in difficult issues and dilemmas (Claes, 2010). Therefore, only one teaching method is not enough.

Students should reflect on their own learning and be aware of possible applications of the knowledge they acquired (Claes, 2010). Therefore, when it comes to college English teaching in China, an integration of both the teacher and the students will be practical. It is not preferable to apply only one teaching method since both of them having their own pros and cons respectively.

Taking into consideration the long-existing and deep-rooted traditional teacher-centered teaching reality, it is not possible to change abruptly from one extreme to another. Students will not be able to adjust themselves to the new teaching method in China.

Thus, the approaches applied should not either be teacher-centered or student-centered. Teachers will guide the flow of the teaching process. Meanwhile, students will have more time to reflect and participate in the class activities. Only in that way, the present teaching mode: Teachers as preachers and students as passive listeners will be changed. Students will think initiatively and participate actively in the teaching process.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is of course not advisable to claim that one teaching method is better than another, because it depends on so many variables and the context in which it is used. Clearly there is growing professional agreement that new and more student-centered teaching needs to be developed and acknowledged in higher education. Instead, traditional teaching methods have focused on lectures that have served the interests of teachers more than they have served the interests of students. What contribution new technology can make to the improvement of the standard of higher education and to student learning also needs to be explored (Claes, et al, 2010).

The Chinese government is making every effort to reduce the emphasis on exams because it is believed that China must foster creativity and innovation to compete in the global economy. Create a relaxed and pleased study environment. Expectations are subtle and sometimes unconscious. Teachers may not realize that they hold different expectations for their students. With awareness and effort, teachers should do their best to maintain appropriately high expectations for all students, not only the high achievers.

Students should be intentionality and have a willingness to be open to new experiences. Taking interest in that which is “different” means respecting customs and mores for what they

are; recognizing not only the relativity of culture, but also the individual identities that compose those cultures when learning English.

Teachers will act more as learning coaches and tutors to help students find the learning approach that makes the most sense for them. Teachers should try involving students in the teaching process. Teachers and students should cooperate and interact with each other in order to improve the learning efficiency of students in English.

It is not wise to go from one extreme to another. Both the teacher-centered teaching method and the student-centered one have their advantages and disadvantages respectively. It is suggested to make use of the two teaching method all together to make the teaching more effective.

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