

Discussion on Construction Ideas of Teacher-Student Relationship in University English Classroom for Boosting Learning Motivation

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Abstract

One of the primary issues with teaching English in universities is that there is not enough motivation to study. Classroom contact is a crucial factor to adjust learning motivation, and the teacher-student connection is the main factor of classroom interaction. This article addresses the possibilities of enhancing learning motivation through optimisation of the teacher-student interaction. Combining the self-determination theory and relevant researches of foreign language learning motivation, the teaching observation of multiple universities and existing survey data, it analyses the current practical problems of the teacher-student relationship in the classroom, namely its detachment, one-way interaction and utilitarian orientation, and the indirect inhibitory effect on learning motivation caused by the dissolution of autonomy, competence and belonging. Based on this, the author proposes four principles for developing teacher-student connection, namely, respect and trust as the emotional basis, equality and discussion as the interaction criteria, guiding and support as the positioning of teachers and cohabitation and growth as the value orientation. Three elements of building of classroom environment, development of after-class contact channels and optimisation of evaluation and feedback system are developed as practical routes. The systematic reconstruction of the teacher-student relationship can help to construct a continuous support system for the learning motivation. It has some reference significance for improving the efficacy of university English instruction.

Keywords

Learning motivation, University English, Teacher-student relationship, Classroom interaction, Teaching strategies.

1. Introduction

The learning motivation is the internal drive of students' learning behaviour, and the level of learning motivation directly affects the students' learning commitment and academic accomplishment. University English lessons show this drop of motivation very well. Less total class hours contribute to the decline in classroom engagement, a more negative attitude toward learning and the utilitarian orientation toward goals, rising gaps in the starting foundation of students and distraction from mobile devices. Follow-up survey of 550 medical students demonstrated that learning commitment was not a stable individual property, but has obvious type difference and dynamic flow characteristics. The variable of sensitivity that shifts the learners from low to high commitment is the proximity or distance of the teacher-student relationship. It shows that the development of motivation can't only be achieved by alterations of teaching techniques and course contents, but rather the deep dimension of teacher-student relationship has to be integrated as a priority in the reform agenda.

The university English course includes a double feature of instrumental and humanistic. The success of the teaching process depends on the constant emotional engagement and co-

construction of meaning between teachers and pupils. Good teacher-student relationship can build up psychological security, lower the threshold for expression, let students be brave in making mistakes and engage, which can promote the learning motivation in the happy emotional experience. It makes children anxious and avoidant, less willing to generate words: the more distant or unfriendly the teacher-student connection, the more anxious and avoidant children are. Learning motivation is difficult to maintain.

In teaching practice, most teachers focus their efforts on organising material and presenting knowledge, while emotional connection is pushed to the background. Normally classroom interactions are reduced to question-answer control. This makes it difficult for children to have opportunities for actual engagement. Communication is cut off after class and teachers know nothing of student's problems and status. These elements interact, and at the same time limit the continuous development of the incentive to learn [1]. Therefore, this study aims to increase the motivation, explores the functional positioning and reconfiguration path of teacher-student interaction in university English teaching, so as to give reference for teaching reform.

2. Current Reality Examination of Teacher-Student Relationship in University English Classrooms

Classroom visit, talk and analysis reveal three key difficulties of the existing teacher-student connection in university English classroom.

One is the loss of the emotional connection between the teacher and the child. The classes for the university English lessons are rather large. One teacher. In front of dozens or hundreds of pupils. People don't communicate as much. It is usual that the instructor still cannot remember the names of most students after a semester of teaching, and students' cognition of the teacher is mostly limited to the teaching image on the podium [2]. The problem is a huge absence of extra curricular communication between teachers and students. A survey reveals that application-oriented undergraduate schools are suffering from a severe shortage of extracurricular communication between instructors and students, which is the main reason for bad teacher-student connection. The classroom lacks emotional engagement and psychological belonging, which implies that children cannot have a sense of closeness and identification, and consequently decreases learning motivation.

The second difficulty is the shallow and one-sided involvement in the classroom. Most of the time it is instructor lecture and most of the students are passive listeners. Even interactive sessions can be limited to brief bursts of teacher questions and student responses with minimal thought content. This prevents any deeper language processing or true discourse from occurring. Studies have found that the abuse of multimedia tools will reduce the depth of teacher-student interaction and limit the space for emotional transmission. Students demand more freedom for self-expression and more opportunities for learning with each other. However, teachers often struggle to meet these expectations due to the pressures of time and pace. This eventually results in a decreased quality of involvement.

The third is the steady erosion of examination-oriented orientation of teacher-student interaction. In the strain of the CET-4 and CET-6 tests, a large percentage of students believe that English courses are a supplement to the test and that "English classes are not as good as turning them into exam tutoring classes". A pragmatic approach reduces the learning goal to striving for scores, and students' expectations of teachers focus on exam points and strategies, which is not favourable for in-depth learning. According to the evaluation system, some teachers change the focus of instruction to test skills training, and damage the thinking growth and humanistic cultivation. thereby the process of teaching is converted into a chain of task execution. And the spiritual communion and value transmission are constantly shrinking, thereby weakening the integrity of education [3].

The problems mentioned above are interconnected and constitute a loop of tired instructors in their lectures and passively coping students. It is important to start by addressing the structural adjustment of the connection teacher/student in an attempt to enhance this condition. But before this it is vital to assess the paths in which the teacher-student connection influences the motivation for learning.

3. The Internal Mechanism of How Teacher-Student Relationship Affects Learning Motivation

Why is the relationship with the teacher so important for motivation to learn? This question can be looked at from two sides: that of psychology and that of teaching. From a psychological perspective, the Self-Determination Theory is a rather straightforward analytic framework. This theory states that the stimulation and maintenance of intrinsic motivation depends on the fulfilment of the three prerequisites of autonomy, competence and belonging. In the university English classroom, the high-quality teacher-student relationship just satisfies these three needs, namely, students' sense of autonomy is supported when they are provided with an opportunity to express themselves, students' sense of competence is gradually developed when they are presented with moderate tasks and feedback, and students' sense of belonging is naturally built when they feel the teacher's sincere concern. A survey of 642 college students who were not English majors found that teacher support exerts a large positive predictive effect on foreign language learning engagement, and the mediation role of the emotions of pleasure and fear [4]. The teacher-student relationship regulates academic emotions and has a mediating effect on learning motivation.

The English theme, from the point of view of instruction, has instrumental and humanistic features. Learning a language is so much about psychological safety. Learning a language is not about memorising enormous vocabulary, but about daring to speak, not being afraid of making mistakes, and practicing again and again in real conditions of communication. This learning characteristic makes the psychological atmosphere of the classroom a critical aspect [5]. If the relationship between teachers and students is harmonious, students will not worry about criticism, and their willingness to participate will increase significantly; if the relationship is tense, anxiety will increase, silence will become the self-protection strategy of most students, interaction will become superficial, and motivation will weaken correspondingly.

The sociology of education shows us that teacher-student interaction is restricted by the rules of the classroom, but is rich with emotional connotations. Today's college students have an independent mind, a feeling of dignity, and they want to be treated seriously when they speak their minds. This is how teachers respond in a similar way kids feel identified as existing which creates an emotional attachment to English education. The aforesaid survey also demonstrates that the perception of teacher support is significantly positively correlated with learning engagement, and the pleasure emotion has a mediating role. The research again indicates the role of the teacher-student contact in the emotional pathways of learning motivation.

In a word, the effect of teacher-student connection on learning motivation is the combination of psychological need satisfaction, emotional environment construction and social identity accomplishment. Therefore, the formation of the teacher-student relationship is not seen as an additional teaching activity but should be emphasised as the major position to boost the learning motivation.

4. Basic Principles for Building Teacher-Student Relationship under the Orientation of Enhancing Learning Motivation

Previous research has highlighted the value of the teacher-student connection, but it has not addressed a normative question: What exact building criteria should be followed? The aforesaid investigation leads to the formulation of four concepts.

The teacher-student connection is built on the emotional base of respect and trust. "College students are getting smarter and smarter and they care a lot about being treated fairly. Respect means recognising the diversity of students' English proficiency, and not discriminating or patronising those with weak foundations or immature expressions [6]; trust means that teachers should take a developmental perspective and believe that each student has the potential to grow. Research has suggested that the teacher-student relationship should be democratic, egalitarian and one where they encourage and develop each other mutually. Students sense respect and trust and their passion to study increases also.

The basis of the teacher-student interaction should be equality and communication. In traditional classrooms, teachers are often the authority of knowledge and pupils are in a passive position of receiving knowledge. The ideal teacher-student relationship is dialogical relationship. Both belong to the community of learning and exchange opinions. As pointed out by several experts, the authority of the teacher dominates the instruction in the traditional university English classroom, and it is hard for students to have an equal conversation with the teacher. Teachers should move away from being authoritarian and encourage students to question and produce with an open mind. The classroom should be a space to share ideas.

The essential duties of instructors are guidance and support. Equality in the teacher-student relationship raises the bar for the qualities of teachers. Teachers need to transition from being lecturers to being learning designers and growth partners. They should offer scaffolding support, emotional consolation and direction of procedure when students meet challenges at important points [7]. This idea is applied in one of the ways "task stratification: from easy to difficult". This gives the children a sense of achievement by advancing them step by step.

The value orientation of the teacher-student interaction is symbiosis and mutual improvement. Teachers and children must feed each other, and do each other. To teach English is not only to convey language content, but also to exchange emotions and collide thoughts. Teachers exchange feelings and experiences and grow together. Teachers share opinions and experiences Teachers learn by feedback; students learn by illumination. This bond not only strengthens the current motivation but also turns into a spiritual wealth in the long term.

The four principles form a complete logical chain. The premise is respect and trust; the path is equality and conversation; the practice is guidance and support; the destination is symbiosis and mutual growth.

5. Specific Strategies for Building Teacher-Student Relationship in Classroom Teaching

The principles provide a guide to direction but their value has to be realised in the practice of teaching. The classroom is the place where the teacher and the pupils meet most often. This is the first step to applying these principles. Classroom teaching should take three approaches to approach the building of effective teacher-student relationship: atmosphere, interaction and language.

The first step is to set the climate of the classroom. Teachers can start gently at the start of the semester and take a few weeks to create initial trust [8]. Creating safe classroom environments for youngsters can be achieved through simple self-introductions and non-judgmental warm-up activities. When starting the formal instruction, teachers should pay attention to the

emotional change of pupils. They should calmly encourage the students who are fearful or avoid interaction, rather than press them in public. Reduced anxiety considerably increases the desire to study. For this atmosphere, it is not necessary to apply sophisticated strategies, but only to pay sincere attention of teachers to the status of their students.

The second route is interaction design. The way is not only “teacher asking questions, students answering” in classroom conceivable; In the activities students can use language in a natural way, with group discussion, role playing, debate, cooperation in projects and other forms interspersed [9]. Activities, assignments which are tied to life, to work or to current hot topics could better stimulate the impulse to express. Teachers can also moderately assign pupils the right to ask questions and evaluate, encourage them to respond to the speeches of their peers, and transform the one-way flow of knowledge into a multi-directional flow. In the classroom, the teacher of Jilin University led the students to learn the history of terminology and cultural tales, encouraged students to “find mistakes”, which aroused the students’ critical thinking and enthusiasm of participation. It is aimed at transforming students from passive listeners to active constructors, from “I speak, you listen” relationship between professors and students to “joint exploration” one.

The third level is the instructor language. The way questions are posed, the method feedback is given, the way evaluation is done, all shape the teacher-student relationship without us realising it. We can use more inclusive language like “we” and “together”, and we can avoid using directive language like “you should”. Instead of a generic “good job”, give them precise, targeted feedback on their replies. When pupils make mistakes, do not correct them immediately, but use restatement or inquiry to help them find it themselves. Those simple language choices express respect and expectations. After a while the classroom will begin to feel emotionally different.

The effectiveness of teaching techniques is not determined by the number of approaches but by whether teachers organise the stages from the pupils’ point of view. The teacher-students relationship can only be built up via daily contact.

6. Construction of Teacher-Student Relationship in After-Class Communication and Evaluation Feedback

Classroom teaching is the platform for the day-to-day development of teacher-student connection. But the connection growth is still bottlenecked by the short classroom hours. Further develop participation outside the classroom and integrate it to evaluation procedure. Communication and feedback on evaluation post-class extends the two-dimensional space of teacher-student contact to the three-dimensional realm of emotional connection and institutional design. One is about keeping the connection, the other about optimising the rules. In the after-class communication, the information technology tools extend the communication channels between professors and students. Teachers can use online platforms like class groups and learning communities to release resources, answer questions and provide guidance, but avoid one-way information transmission, guide students to ask questions actively and participate in discussions, making online communication a natural extension of classroom interaction [10]. Individual talks are also useful for kids with learning difficulties or emotional problems. Informal contexts are more likely to help students drop their psychological shields and reveal their learning doubt, which allows teachers to precisely identify the root of the problem and develop bespoke remedies, while continuously observing their following changes. In evaluative feedback, the summative assessment tends to strengthen the confrontation between teachers and students; students passively accept the score, and there is no interaction. The direction of improvement is to increase the proportion of process evaluation, focusing on classroom participation, project completion and progress; to introduce self-evaluation and peer

evaluation, allowing students to participate in the evaluation process; to replace delayed scoring with immediate feedback, so that students can promptly understand their performance and turn evaluation into a tool for promoting learning. At now, certain colleges and universities have adopted the assessment model of "process" and "final" results, and other teachers have explored specialist strategies, such as the creation of student growth files and the design of peer evaluation scales. Some institutions have also sought to set up a collaborative evaluation system involving teachers, enterprise mentors, peers and groups. The original one-way teacher judgement has been transformed into a multi-party involved diagnosis process. When students feel that evaluation is for their growth and not just to measure superiority or inferiority, trust in teachers will build. The contact between teachers and students will lessen emotional resistance and improve willingness to contribute, so that the evaluation may actually assist the long-term growth of pupils [11].

After-class contact and evaluation feedback are mutually dependent. The post-class communication can obtain specific information about students' learning, and the assessment findings can offer guidance for students' after-class learning and teacher-student interaction. These two forms of connections are related to classroom instruction, and they combined constitute the full chain of teacher-student interaction, which extends the teacher-student relationship from a single classroom encounter to a continuous connection before class, during class and after class.

7. Conclusion

Studies show that the modern trends of teacher-student interaction are mutually reinforcing and structural characteristics that impede the learning motivation: detachment, one-wayness, and utilitarianism. The teacher-student connection affects learning motivation in multiple ways: the satisfaction of psychological needs, the creation of a safe atmosphere, and social recognition. The operational value framework for relationship development is built on four principles of respect and trust, equitable communication, guidance and support, and symbiosis and mutual growth. The main way to achieve the following is classroom teaching, interaction after class and feedback from assessment.

This study largely adopts literature and theoretical analysis, especially the refining of concepts and the construction of path. There is a lack of rigorous empirical verification, and there may be disparities between types of institutions and between different student groups that have not been carefully separated in this study. Further study can incorporate specific teaching scenarios, such as questionnaire survey, case monitoring, etc., to further test the applicability and effectiveness of the concepts and techniques offered in this paper.

As part of the complete deep reform of education, university English teachers should actively modify their position in teaching practice, gradually transition from the dominant position of knowledge impartation to the position of relationship construction and learning facilitation. They should develop a more egalitarian and open form of interaction between academics and students, within and outside the classroom. Meanwhile, the enrichment of teacher-student interaction requires institutional support at school level and the active participation of the students. Without the joint efforts of numerous partners, enhancing learning motivation is not sustainable. Future research might further focus on the particular demands of students in different grades and different levels of English proficiency, examine enhanced techniques for creating teacher-student relationships and make theoretical discussions and practical improvements interact more closely.

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