

Views on Situational Teaching Method

Zixuan Shi

China West Normal University, Nanchong, 637000, China

Abstract

Situational approach is widely used in English teaching. Up to now it has great achievements in the English teaching of primary schools. Under the circumstances, based on a teaching experiment and a questionnaire survey, the author is to discover the main points we should pay attention to when applying the situational teaching method to English teaching in primary schools. Focusing on primary school English teaching, this study aims to explore how to create effective situational teaching approach in primary school English learning by creating effective situations, such as intuitive teaching method, the description method, the using of multimedia, the play method, the song method. The research results showed that situational teaching method is valuable to English learning and teaching.

Keywords

Situation Teaching Method; English Teaching; Primary School.

1. Introduction

Situational teaching method means the way that teachers create different situations according to textbooks, which makes students easily understand contents of textbooks and raise their interests of learning.

1.1. Background of Situational Teaching Method

Situational teaching method is an approach developed by British applied linguists in the 1930s to 1960s. It derived from Direct Method. The origins of this approach began with the work of British applied linguists in the 1920s and 1930s. The linguists, such as Harold Palmer and A. S. Hornby, are two of the most prominent figures in British twentieth-century language teaching. What they attempted was to develop a more scientific foundation for an oral approach to teaching English than was evidenced in the Direct Method. The result was a systematic study of the principles and procedures that could be applied to the selection and organization of the content of a language course.

1.2. The Definition of Situational Teaching Method

Situational Teaching Method is a teaching method in which teachers purposefully introduce or create vivid and specific scenes with certain emotional colors and images in order to arouse students' certain attitudes and experience. This helps students understand the teaching materials and develop their psychological functions. Situational teaching is also known as the Situational Teaching Method. It involves the teacher using a series of props and classroom decoration to simulate the real communication environment, so that students can use the students' words to reproduce the text of the plot to reduce of the scene. Situated learning environments place students in authentic learning situations where they are actively immersed in an activity while using problem-solving (critical thinking) skills.

2. The Basis Theories of Situational Teaching Method

There are two basis theories for situational teaching method, they are structuralism and behaviorist habit-learning theory.

2.1. Structuralism Theory

The structuralism theory sees Language as a linguistic system made up of various subsystems. Wang Qiang (2003) stated that the structuralism theory believes that to learn a language means to learn these structure items so as to be able to understand and produce language. According to the structuralism theory, speech was regarded as the basis of language, and structure was viewed as being at the heart of speaking ability. Pittman (1963) believed that our principal classroom activity in the teaching of English structure will be the oral practice of structures. This oral practice of controlled sentence patterns should be given in situations designed to give the greatest amount of practice in English speech to the pupil.

The theory that knowledge of structures must be linked to situations in which they could be used gave Situational Language Teaching one of its distinctive features. Many British linguists had emphasized the close relationship between the structure of language and the context and situations in which language is used. British linguists, such as J. R. Firth and M. A. K. Halliday, developed powerful views of language in which meaning, context, and situation were given a prominent place: "The emphasis now is on the description of language activity as part of the whole complex of events which, together with the participants and relevant objects, make up actual situations." Thus, in contrast to American structuralist views on language language was viewed as purposeful activity related to goals and situations in the real world.

2.2. The Behaviorist Habit-Learning Theory

The behaviorist habit-learning theory addresses primarily the processes rather than the conditions of learning. Palmer (1957) pointed out, there are three processes in learning a language receiving the knowledge or materials, fixing it in the memory by repetition, and using it in actual practice until it becomes a personal skill. French likewise saw language learning as habit formation. The fundamental is correct speech habits. The pupils should be able to put the words, without hesitation and almost without thought, into sentence patterns which are correct. Such speech habits can be cultivated by blind imitative drill.

Like the Direct Method, Situational Language Teaching adopts an inductive approach to the teaching of grammar. The meaning of words or structures is not to be given through explanation in either the native tongue or the target language but is to be induced from the way the form is used in a situation. Billows (1961) believes that if we give the meaning of a new word, either by translation into the home language or by an equivalent in the same language, as soon as we introduce it, we weaken the impression which the word makes on the mind. Explanation is therefore discouraged, and the learner is expected to deduce the meaning of a particular structure or vocabulary item from the situation in which it is presented. Extending structures and vocabulary to new situations takes place by generalization. The learner is expected to apply the language learned in a classroom to situations outside the classroom. This is how child language learning is believed to take place, and the same processes are thought to occur in second and foreign language learning, according to practitioners of Situational Language Teaching.

3. Views on Situational Teaching Method

I think situational teaching method is very suitable for the current English teaching in elementary and junior high schools. In elementary and junior high school English teaching, teachers can use role-play, multimedia, games, language descriptions, and other methods to

implement situational teaching and promote students' learning. Firstly, role-play, Wang Jie (2019) holds that role-play is one of the most effective ways to present Situational Teaching Method in English teaching. Teachers often use role-play in the process of using situational teaching method. Under the guidance of teachers, students improve their understanding of reading texts by playing different roles, and in the process of role-play, their imagination and creativity can also be cultivated and improved. At the same time, through role-play, students' dialogue skills can be developed, and students' speaking levels can also be improved. Secondly, multimedia, in the process of English teaching, teachers can use multimedia to assist their teaching, including pictures, videos, projections, etc. Multimedia can help teachers better create situations and give students a more immersive sense of what they are learning. With more vivid pictures or videos than words in books, students can make a deep memory. The use of multimedia allows students to focus quickly in class and stimulate students' interest in learning English. Thirdly, game, for students, English is a boring language, and teachers in the classroom by designing games can increase students' interest in learning English. Using games to teach students English knowledge can allow students to truly integrate into the English environment, help students use English in real life, and cultivate students' autonomy and sense of competition in English learning. Finally, language descriptions, teachers can present the content or knowledge provided to students in textbooks through storytelling, and teachers' vivid words can form specific pictures in students' brains, cultivate students' imagination and creative ability, so that students can understand the textbook knowledge more effectively.

In elementary and junior high school English teaching, situational teaching method has many benefits for student learning and teacher teaching: Firstly, it can help students increase their interest in learning. Situational teaching method requires that the situation created by the teacher must be close to the real life of the students so that the students can understand what the teacher is going to teach well. And students can improve the sense of achievement of their learning, stimulate their interest in learning, and enable them to use their experience to solve problems. Secondly, it can cultivate students' key competence which includes language ability, thinking quality, cultural awareness and learning ability. The method creates different situations, which drives students to use their thinking abilities to analysis the situation and some experience they acquire in their daily life. During the process of learning, they will understand easily contents in their textbooks and acquire readily knowledge, which results in the cultivation of students' language ability, cultural awareness and learning ability. All of these can force students to be autonomic learners who have the ability of life-long education. Thirdly, it can cultivate students' autonomous learning ability. Situational teaching method changed the traditional teacher-centered approach to making students the center of learning. Teachers create situations in which students learn in context, such as role-play activities, where the teacher is only the instructor and the student is the master of learning. Through situational teaching method, students' autonomous learning ability can be improved. Fourthly, it can cultivate students' learning motivation. In situational teaching method, the situation created by the teacher is real and close to the students' real life, which helps the students to familiarize themselves with the content to be learned. When students are familiar with the content in the textbook, they will raise their learning interests frequently, which leads that they will have motivations to learn. Fifthly, it can active the classroom atmosphere. Traditional "chalk and talk" makes the classroom atmosphere boring, which leads to students feel boring towards their learning and they will lose their interests of learning. Situational teaching method uses multimedia and other methods to keep students fresh in learning, and a relaxed and active classroom atmosphere also plays an important role in promoting students' learning.

Absolutely, situational teaching method is still flawed. For example, time-consuming, students will be confused and puzzled if they cannot understand the situation. And in situational teaching method, students' mistakes cannot be tolerated. But I think on the whole, the

advantages of situational teaching method outweigh the disadvantages. Especially in primary and junior high school English teaching, situational teaching method should be used more often to help students learn.

4. Conclusion

Situational teaching method are beneficial to teachers and students.

For teachers, situational teaching method broadens the method of teachers teaching, and teachers' teaching is no longer just traditional "chalk and talk", which improves the quality of teachers' teaching and promotes qualities of teachers.

For students, situational teaching method vividly makes students understand the knowledge in the teaching materials, which is conducive to students' understanding of this knowledge. At the same time, it also stimulates students' interest in learning, mobilizes students' learning motivation, cultivates students' autonomy, creativity and imagination in learning, and makes students become the masters of learning.

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