

Article

The Application of Experiential Teaching Method in College English Teaching

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Abstract: The evolving demands of global communication necessitate innovative approaches in college English instruction. Traditional teaching models often struggle to engage students due to divergent thinking patterns, leading to reduced classroom efficiency. Despite increased attention to English education following curriculum reforms, an effective pedagogical strategy remains a critical gap. This study investigates the application of experiential teaching in college English, emphasizing practical activities that enhance language use in real-world contexts. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research examines its impact on students' language proficiency, engagement, and learning outcomes. Findings reveal that experiential teaching significantly improves students' language skills and classroom participation. The study underscores the importance of integrating experiential methods into English curricula to foster effective learning and better prepare students for global communication.

Keywords: Experiential Teaching Method, University, English Education Teaching

1. Introduction

English classes, which are considered to be fundamental courses in higher education, have introduced new requirements for students to demonstrate their knowledge. The needs of the market and the requirements for skills are always shifting, particularly in light of the orderly progression of the current marketization process. Learning the fundamentals of English while attending college is of utmost importance for one's continuing education and development. Therefore, in the process of teaching English in colleges and universities today, the traditional model of teaching English has become obsolete, and teachers ought to pay attention to the change and innovation that is occurring in the techniques of teaching English in colleges and universities.

When it comes to teaching English in college, students' thinking tends to be divergent, and it is challenging for students to concentrate their attention on a single English teaching style. This is one of the factors that contributes to the low efficiency of English classroom instruction. Students are guided to learn and utilize English in practical circumstances using a variety of teaching methods, and their overall English proficiency is improved through the use of the experiential teaching mode, which blends instruction with extensive practical exercises.

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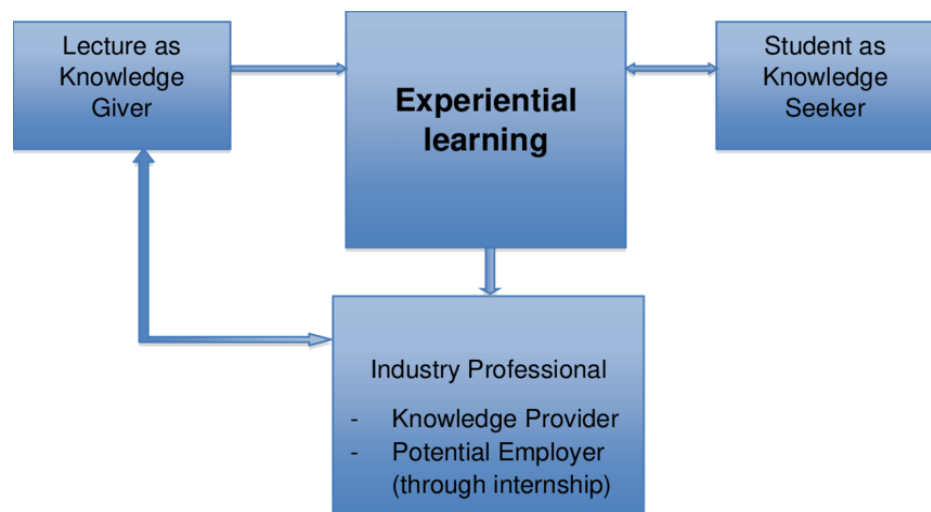


Figure 1. Experiential Learning Cycle. Source: Kozak (1999)

The difference between experiential English teaching and traditional English teaching

Experiential English instruction places a greater emphasis on student-centered language learning. Students' learning interest is not high, English teachers are also very tired, and the actual teaching effect is not good. In the past, traditional English teaching frequently adopted the traditional teaching method of teachers talking and students listening. This method is not conducive to the mobilization of students' enthusiasm in the classroom, and it is also not conducive to the actual teaching effect. In the context of English instruction, the implementation of experiential learning underlines the qualities of student-centered instruction.

The need of increasing the number of opportunities for students to practice English in class is highlighted. This is done to ensure that students are required to engage in active thinking, make use of their brains, and focus on asking and answering questions in English class. It is easier to mobilize the enthusiasm and initiative of students in English learning, and this process is conducive to the improvement of college English learning effect. As a result of this process, the majority of college English teachers have changed from the role of inculcator in the past to the role of guide and assistant of learning.

The qualities of teaching activity are brought to light through the use of experiential English teaching. The three primary methods that are utilized in conventional English instruction are listening, watching, and meditating. College students are required to memorize a massive amount of information, despite having a low interest in learning and a high learning intensity. Because of these circumstances, the process of learning English in college is constantly in a relatively passive state. College students' knowledge of involvement and autonomy has been growing day by day, and this is a direct result of the acceleration of social development, which has led to an increase in the frequency of international exchanges.

As a result of these changes, it has been determined that English teachers should formulate and implement the corresponding teaching objectives in a scientific manner, take all favorable measures, assist students in operating English learning scenarios to the greatest extent possible, and take various forms such as organizational role play and discussion. Additionally, they should combine English grammar knowledge and social situation in an organic manner in order to realize college students' learning in communication, improve their communicative ability in learning, and fully experience and

reflect all kinds of fun in English learning. For the purpose of enhancing students' English skills in a holistic manner, the utilization of links between teachers and students as well as numerous extracurricular activities in the classroom has been further expanded.

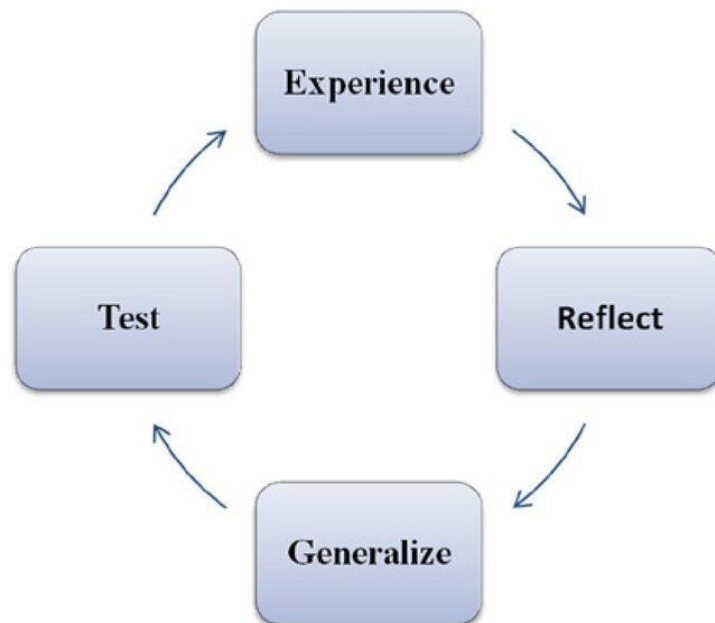


Figure 2. Experiential Learning Single Loop. Single-loop learning.
Source. Adopted from Kolb (1984). In: Albattat et al, (2013)

Instruction in English through experience is based on the substance of the materials used in instruction. In the past, the traditional method of teaching English in colleges and universities was frequently centered on the instruction of English grammar, with an emphasis on making sure that syntax and linguistic expression were accurate. One approach to teaching English that has its origins in cultural education is known as experiential English teaching. Its instructional requirements are founded on fundamental resources, with an emphasis on the utilization of language that is both natural and vivid. This language is more in tune with the emotions and life experiences of college students, and it is also more favorable to the college students' experience of their own sentiments and emotions in college English instruction. 4. It is more apparent that experiential English education is open to a variety of perspectives and experiences.

Historically, the majority of the conventional approaches to teaching English in colleges and universities were based on objective assessment, which placed an excessive amount of emphasis on the recognition of forms and frequently overlooked the examination of language application. We have just found a solution to this problem: experiential English teaching. Students in higher education can be effectively guided to engage in serious self-study and self-testing through the utilization of the advanced multimedia learning approach. For students to be able to completely experience the joy of achievement, for them to feel content with the success of finishing the task, and for their learning objectives to shift from simply coping with the exam in the past to focusing on application, their learning objectives should be changed.

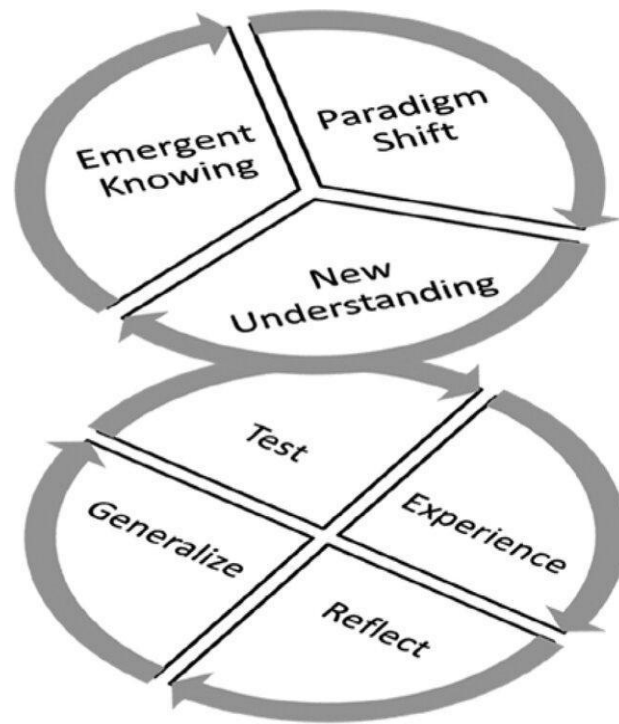


Figure 3. Double-loop learning. Source. Adopted from Kolb (1984), In Albattat et al, (2013)

Application Strategies of Experiential Teaching Method in College English Teaching

Ensure that the kids' enthusiasm in learning is fully stimulated. The experiential teaching method needs to give full play to the autonomy that students have in learning; therefore, it is vital to encourage their interest in learning and allow them to participate in the teaching system on their own volition. There are two different approaches that teachers might take in order to pique the interest of their students. In order to effectively enhance students' interest in subject learning, teachers should, on the one hand, actively interact and communicate with students during regular school hours, clarify their interest points in English content, such as English films and television shows, English songs, and so on, and link these interest points with teaching knowledge and introduce them into the classroom environment. Teachers, on the other hand, should also pay attention to identifying the reasons why students dislike studying English and have a poor interest in learning, and they should also make necessary modifications in the process of teaching students after they have stopped learning English.

Establish a setting in which students can acquire English language skills. The technique of experiential teaching requires teachers to pay attention to the creation of an environment for English learning. This environment should be designed in such a way that students can unconsciously accept the knowledge that they have gained during the course. On the one hand, teachers have the ability to create situations that are more powerful than language. These situations can be static, such as physical objects, tables, or images; dynamic, such as role play, sketch performance, situation simulation, research learning, inquiry activities, and so on.

Additionally, teachers can create some dialogue scenes that match teaching knowledge, such as shopping malls, film and television scene restoration, in order to optimize their English learning environment. On the other hand, educators should also pay attention to the introduction of western cultural content, as well as pay attention to the essential content of cross-cultural communication, and integrate some examples of

classic communication in order to explain it. In addition, educational institutions like colleges and universities have the ability to incorporate components of English into the atmosphere of the campus, such as by developing an English corner. As a result, students are able to continuously experience and build their English language skills in real-world scenarios, which ultimately helps them improve their English level.

Assist pupils in engaging in intimate communication and interaction with one another. In the form of instruction known as experiential learning, teachers should maintain close communication and engagement with students, clarify the psychological changes that occur in students while they learn English, and have a comprehensive understanding of the various challenges that students face while learning English. Teachers can also guide students to gather in a reasonable manner and obtain better results in the process of cooperative learning in order to improve the effectiveness of experiential teaching.

When teachers employ the method of experiential learning, they should also allow students to fully participate in the situational environment that has been developed by teachers, and they should also allow students to summarize the results of their own experiences in order to improve their English language skills. Additionally, in order to broaden the scope of the experience, it is important for every student to independently reflect on and summarize their own learning, as well as cultivate effective learning habits.

Change your teaching approaches in an active way. When it comes to the current context of teaching English at colleges and universities, there are a few difficulties that prevent the experience teaching model from being implemented in a comprehensive manner. One of the most significant reasons is the issue with the methods of instruction (TA). It is therefore important for all teachers to make use of a variety of new teaching methods in a flexible manner during the subsequent teaching process. They should also pay particular attention to the design and utilization of experience situations, and they should employ more positive language in order to encourage students. Additionally, they should assist some students who have poor performance and general learning motivation in order to build confidence and improve the overall teaching results.

2. Materials and Methods

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. The primary aim was to explore the effectiveness of experiential teaching methods in college English instruction. Data were collected through surveys, classroom observations, and performance assessments to ensure comprehensive and reliable results.

Study Population and Sampling

The study targeted undergraduate students enrolled in college English courses at selected universities in China. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select four universities that had implemented experiential teaching methods. From these universities, 200 students and 20 English instructors were randomly selected to participate.

Data Collection Instruments

Surveys:

Student Surveys: Questionnaires assessed students' perceptions of experiential teaching, engagement levels, and perceived improvements in language skills.

Instructor Surveys: Questionnaires gathered instructors' perspectives on the effectiveness of experiential methods, challenges faced, and observed student progress.

Classroom Observations:

Structured observation checklists were used to evaluate student participation, interaction patterns, and the implementation of experiential learning activities.

Performance Assessments:

Pre-tests and post-tests measured students' English language proficiency in four key areas: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Intervention: Experiential Teaching Methods

Experiential teaching activities implemented in the study included:

Role-Playing Exercises: Simulated real-world scenarios such as job interviews, business meetings, and cultural exchanges.

Group Projects: Collaborative tasks requiring research, presentations, and peer feedback.

Field Trips and Cultural Experiences: Visits to English-speaking environments like international companies, language expos, and cultural centers.

Language Workshops: Interactive sessions focused on problem-solving, debates, and case studies.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Data:

Descriptive statistics (mean, median, and standard deviation) were computed for survey responses.

Paired-sample t-tests compared pre-test and post-test scores to determine language proficiency gains.

Qualitative Data:

Thematic analysis was applied to classroom observation notes and open-ended survey responses.

Emerging themes related to student engagement, learning motivation, and instructional effectiveness were identified.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the participating universities' ethics committees. Participants were informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and their right to withdraw at any time. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity.

By employing a comprehensive methodological approach, this study aimed to provide robust evidence on the efficacy of experiential teaching methods in enhancing college students' English language proficiency and classroom engagement.

3. Results and Discussion

English classes, deemed essential in higher education, have implemented new standards for pupils to exhibit their expertise. The demands of the market and the requisite abilities are continually evolving, especially due to the systematic advancement of the ongoing marketization process. Acquiring the fundamentals of English during college is essential for further education and personal development. Consequently, the conventional paradigm of English instruction in colleges and universities has grown outdated, necessitating that educators focus on the evolving methodologies and innovations in English teaching within these institutions. In college English instruction, students often exhibit diverse thinking, making it difficult for them to focus on a singular teaching

approach. This is a contributing element to the low efficiency of English classroom instruction. Students are instructed to acquire and use English in practical contexts through several pedagogical approaches, enhancing their total competency via an experiential teaching model that integrates education with comprehensive practical tasks.

Experiential English instruction prioritizes student-centered language acquisition. The students exhibit low interest in learning, the English teachers are fatigued, and the overall teaching effectiveness is subpar. Historically, conventional English instruction often employed a didactic approach characterized by professors lecturing and pupils passively listening. This strategy does not foster student engagement in the classroom and is detrimental to effective teaching outcomes.

The application of experiential learning in English training emphasizes the characteristics of student-centered teaching. The necessity of augmenting opportunities for kids to practice English in the classroom is emphasized. This is implemented to mandate that students engage in critical thinking, utilize cognitive processes, and concentrate on formulating and responding to inquiries in English class. Mobilizing students' interest and initiative in English learning is more straightforward, facilitating the enhancement of college English learning outcomes. Consequently, most college English instructors have transitioned from the position of inculcator to that of a guide and facilitator of learning.

The attributes of teaching are illuminated through experiencing English instruction. The three principal approaches employed in traditional English instruction are auditory engagement, visual observation, and contemplation. College students must commit to memory a substantial volume of material, despite exhibiting minimal motivation in learning and experiencing elevated learning intensity. Due to these circumstances, the process of learning English at college remains predominantly passive. The awareness of involvement and autonomy among college students has been progressively increasing, attributable to the rapid advancement of social development, which has resulted in a heightened frequency of international exchanges.

Consequently, it has been concluded that English educators must systematically devise and execute appropriate teaching objectives, adopt all advantageous strategies, facilitate students' engagement in English learning environments to the fullest extent, and employ diverse methods such as organizational role play and discussion. Furthermore, they ought to integrate English grammar proficiency with social contexts organically to enhance college students' communicative competence, enrich their learning experience, and completely engage with the diverse enjoyment of English acquisition. To enhance students' English skills comprehensively, the connections between teachers and students, along with various extracurricular activities in the classroom, have been significantly broadened.

Instruction in English through experiential learning relies on the quality of the instructional materials employed. Historically, the conventional approach to English instruction in colleges and universities predominantly focused on teaching English grammar, prioritizing the accuracy of syntax and linguistic expression. A method to English instruction rooted on cultural education is termed experiential English teaching. Its educational prerequisites are based on essential resources, emphasizing the use of language that is both authentic and evocative. This language aligns more closely with the emotions and life experiences of college students, and it also enhances their engagement with their own feelings and emotions in college English training. 4. Experiential English education clearly accommodates many ideas and experiences.

Historically, most traditional methods of teaching English in colleges and universities relied on objective assessment, which disproportionately emphasized form recognition while sometimes neglecting the analysis of language application. We have recently discovered a solution to this issue: experiential English instruction. Students in higher education can be effectively directed to participate in rigorous self-study and self-assessment through the application of modern multimedia learning techniques. To enable

students to fully experience the satisfaction of accomplishment, to get contentment from work completion, and to transition their learning objectives from merely passing exams to emphasizing application, their educational goals must be revised.

Maximize the children's enthusiasm for learning. The experiential teaching technique must fully leverage students' autonomy in learning; thus, it is essential to foster their interest in education and enable voluntary participation in the teaching framework. Teachers may adopt two distinct strategies to engage their pupils' interest. To effectively augment students' interest in subject learning, educators should actively engage and communicate with students during regular school hours, elucidate their areas of interest in English content, such as films, television shows, and songs, and integrate these interests with instructional knowledge within the classroom environment. Educators should also focus on discerning the causes behind students' aversion to studying English and their lack of enthusiasm in learning, and they must implement required adjustments in their teaching methods after students have ceased their English studies.

Create an environment conducive to the acquisition of English language proficiency for students. The method of experiential teaching necessitates that educators focus on establishing an environment conducive to English acquisition. This atmosphere should be structured to facilitate the subconscious assimilation of knowledge acquired by students throughout the course. Teachers possess the capacity to generate circumstances that surpass the efficacy of language. These scenarios can be static, including real objects, tables, or photographs; or dynamic, encompassing role play, sketch performances, situational simulations, research learning, inquiry activities, and similar endeavors.

Furthermore, educators can develop dialogue scenarios that align with instructional content, such as shopping malls and film and television scene recreations, to enhance the English learning environment. Conversely, instructors must focus on incorporating Western cultural content and the fundamental aspects of cross-cultural communication, while integrating examples of classic communication for elucidation. Furthermore, educational institutions, such as colleges and universities, possess the capacity to integrate elements of English into the campus environment, for instance, by establishing an English corner. Consequently, students can consistently engage with and enhance their English language abilities in practical contexts, so facilitating their overall proficiency in English.

Facilitate students in establishing deep conversation and interaction with one other. In the framework of experiential learning, educators must sustain effective communication and engagement with students, elucidate the psychological transformations that transpire during English acquisition, and possess a thorough comprehension of the diverse challenges encountered by students in the process of learning English. Educators can also direct students to collaborate effectively and achieve superior outcomes during cooperative learning to enhance the efficacy of experiential instruction. Teachers utilizing experiential learning should enable students to engage comprehensively in the constructed situational environment and facilitate the summarization of their experiences to enhance their English language proficiency. Furthermore, to enhance the breadth of the experience, it is essential for each student to autonomously contemplate and encapsulate their learning, while also fostering effective study habits.

Revise your pedagogical methods proactively. In the present environment of English instruction at colleges and universities, several challenges hinder the widespread implementation of the experiential learning approach. A primary explanation is the problem with the instructional methods (TA). Consequently, it is essential for all educators to employ a diverse array of innovative teaching strategies flexibly throughout the ensuing instructional process. They should focus on the design and implementation of experiential situations, utilizing more affirmative language to motivate pupils. Furthermore, they ought to support students exhibiting subpar performance and low learning motivation to enhance their confidence and elevate overall educational outcomes.

4. Conclusion

English instruction that is based on experience has the potential to more effectively permeate the cultural information being taught, so making English instruction more knowledgeable and fascinating. College students have the opportunity to more directly experience nature, experience society, experience life, and experience the English language through experiential English teaching, which serves to comprehensively promote the effect of English learning. In China, the experiential teaching approach has the potential to be widely promoted in a variety of colleges and universities, and it can be effectively implemented in the English teaching system at colleges and universities. Students are guided to develop a sense of team spirit through experiential learning, and they are encouraged to address practical problems through communication. The primary goal of experiential teaching is the development of students' practical abilities. When it comes to teaching English in college, experiential learning has its own unique characteristics. It is necessary for teachers to fully incorporate the characteristics of college students into the actual teaching process, to develop content that corresponds to experiential teaching, to ensure that the experiential teaching mode is utilized throughout the entirety of the process of teaching English to college students, to continually stimulate the learning enthusiasm of college students, and to improve their English language skills.

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