

Approaches to Formative Assessment Models for College English Courses

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Abstract: Teaching evaluation is an indispensable link during college English teaching. With the continuous improvement of teaching requirements and the change of teaching models, the single terminal assessment model has been difficult to meet the needs of current college English teaching. Therefore, it is necessary to combine the characteristics and functions of college English teaching and introduce formative assessment methods to organically combine teaching and assessment. Based on previous studies, this paper constructs a systematic and effective formative assessment model for college English and uses a diversified assessment system to improve the teaching model and teaching quality.

1. Introduction

Teaching evaluation, including formative evaluation and terminal evaluation, is one of the most important steps to realize the teaching objectives of college English courses. Formative assessment can take many forms, such as classroom and extracurricular activity records, online self-study records, learning archives, records, interviews, and discussions, to observe, evaluate, and supervise the learning process of students and promote their effective learning. The final assessment mainly includes the final course examination and the level examination. It is an important task in college English teaching to reform and improve the existing college English assessment methods. With the implementation of a new round of college English teaching reform, it is urgent to establish a scientific and standardized assessment model [1-2].

2. Problems Existing In the College English Course Evaluation System

At present, the main problem in college English teaching evaluation is that there is no perfect formative evaluation model and implementation standards. The main problems are as follows:

2.1. Single Evaluation Criteria

The recording of regular grades is equivalent to the formative assessment. The evaluation of students' learning process is still based on scores, homework, and attendance, which cannot fully reflect students' learning process and actual ability. They only pay attention to measurable external

behavioral goals, but do not pay attention to the evaluation of students' learning process. At the same time, such evaluation does not reflect the individual differences of students in terms of learning content, methods, and objectives, ignores the complexity and richness of students' personalities, and lacks consideration of the creativity and diversity of students' thinking, let alone personalized teaching [3-4].

2.2. Single Evaluation Subject

Formative assessment is a holistic concept, which reflects the important role of teachers, students, textbooks, courses, homework, and other aspects in foreign language teaching. For a long time, it has been incomplete only for teachers to evaluate students without students' self-evaluation and mutual evaluation. Some teachers are experimenting with a form of formative assessment, but the aim is to identify students rather than motivate them. In order to promote the all-round development of students, the formative assessment method must be perfected [5-6].

3. Characteristics of Formative assessment of College English courses

Table 1 shows the differences between formative evaluation and summative evaluation. A large number of relevant studies show that compared with the final assessment, formative assessment has many advantages. It can not only help teachers to obtain teaching feedback information, improve teaching management and teaching quality, but also help learners to adjust learning strategies, improve learning methods, and enhance learning efficiency [7-8]. Therefore, it is imperative to construct a formative evaluation system of college English courses that integrates the characteristics of diversity, integrity, and development. However, college English assessment system is not a simple judgment or detection mechanism, it needs to be based on the relevant theoretical framework of learning, adapt to the new teaching mode of college English, and can reflect the orientation of college English teaching reform. Therefore, the establishment of the college English formative assessment system is a complex systematic project. It exists in the specific educational environment and social environment, and coexists with the common terminal assessment, to constitute a comprehensive assessment system.

Table 1: Comparison between formative evaluation and summative evaluation

	Formative evaluation	Summative evaluation
Purpose of evaluation	Measure students' English ability to promote the development of teaching	Evaluate the teaching effect according to the final test results
Evaluation time	The whole teaching process	After teaching
Evaluation subject	Teachers and students	Teacher
Form	Multiple ways	Examination
Influence	Combine assessment and teaching	Focus only on scores and present results scores

In order to achieve the purpose of formative assessment, it is necessary to connect the internal and external of the assessment system, connect several elements to form an organic whole in the form of a scientific structure, combine the assessment system, elements and environment, and make it have the function of teaching and learning facilitation. The construction of the formative evaluation system should include knowledge and skill evaluation. Knowledge level assessment refers to the assessment of factual knowledge and conceptual knowledge of educational objectives, such as professional knowledge in a certain subject field, basic principles and concepts, specific elements and the relationship between various elements. Skill level evaluation refers to the

evaluation of procedural knowledge such as research and exploration methods, criteria, application skills, and procedure operation skills. Therefore, the formative assessment system of college English should not only include the evaluation of students' English listening, speaking, reading, writing, translation, and other language skills and communicative abilities, but also comprehensively identify and evaluate students' English and American literature, cultural accomplishments, as well as their mastery of language composition and rules of language application[9-10]. This is also in line with the purpose of college English teaching: while teaching students English knowledge points, it is also necessary to cultivate students' communicative abilities, learning ability, and practical ability in English language culture. Formative evaluation is a continuum, and multiple evaluations can occur independently or at the same time at any time and anywhere, as shown in figure 1, including standardized tests, what can be done tests, portfolio evaluation, scoring standards, informal feedback, peer evaluation, self-evaluation, etc.

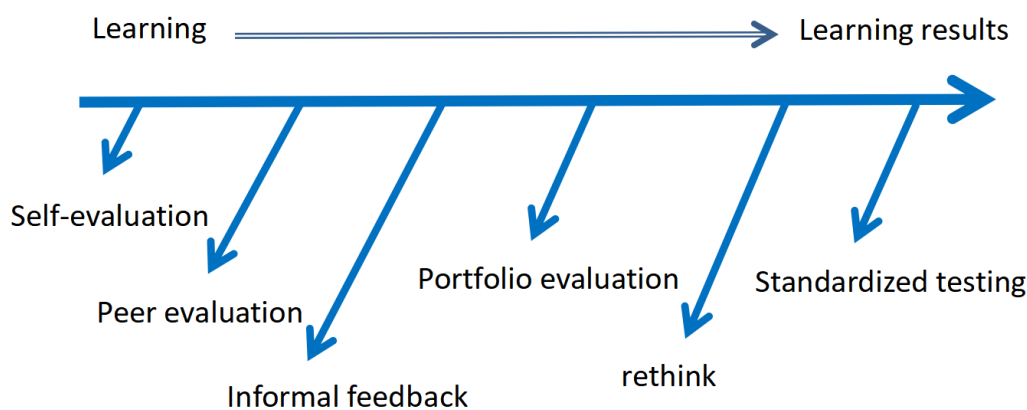


Figure 1: Evaluation continuum to promote learning.

In addition, in the learning process, there are always a variety of emotional factors, such as students' learning attitude, learning anxiety, learning motivation, value judgment, and so on, and good emotions, positive attitudes and correct values have a positive transfer effect on college English learning. Therefore, these emotional factors of students should be predicted and evaluated in the formative assessment system of college English, so that teachers can give positive guidance in the process of English teaching. Of course, the formative assessment system of college English should also include the assessment of students' metacognition and the application of learning strategies, such as students' cognition of English learning tasks, self-cognition, and the appropriate use of different learning strategies in the process of English learning [11-12].

4. The Implementation of the Formative Assessment Model of College English Courses

4.1. Students' Self-Evaluation and Mutual Evaluation

Student self-assessment and mutual assessment means that students evaluate their learning outcomes and the performance of other members of the group at each stage, or in the form of filling in self-assessment forms and mutual assessment forms. Through self-assessment and mutual assessment, students understand the course requirements and learning objectives of college English. Through the reflection and summary of their own and peers' learning process, they are encouraged to understand the main problems in their English learning and set goals to achieve independent learning, to improve learning efficiency [13-14]. Student self-assessment includes students' determination, evaluation and monitoring of their own learning process, especially the reflection of

their own learning motivation and attitudes, as well as the evaluation of their academic performance and progress in each stage. Only when students participate in self-monitoring and self-evaluation can the evaluation be effective and students' autonomous learning ability be improved, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Example of student self-assessment

STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT					
Name:					Date:
	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
Volunteer in class					
Demonstrate appropriate hall behavior					
Help teacher when asked					
Respectful toward others					
Pay attention in class					
Accept extra duties in class					
Use lavatory time properly					
Do what I'm told					
Have all materials for class					
Seek help when needed					

Students' self-assessment not only maintains their self-esteem and enhances their self-confidence, but also enables students to make accurate judgments on their English language abilities, strengths, and weaknesses, as well as progress, and cultivate their self-evaluation ability. Student mutual evaluation is a supplement to student self-evaluation. It can reflect how students understand independent learning, view the learning process, and other related factors. Mutual assessment includes the assessment of other groups' completion of tasks, team members' participation in group tasks, and other aspects, which is the current trend of emphasizing students' cooperative learning ability in English teaching. Peer evaluation has a great influence on English learning. Mutual assessment not only cultivates students' ability of cooperation, organization, and oral expression, but also enables students to learn from each other's successful English learning experience and adjust their learning strategies. Therefore, students' self-assessment and mutual assessment forms can be used as the first source of qualitative data in formative assessment.

4.2. Learn Portfolio Evaluation Methods

Learning portfolio, also known as "student growth record bag", is a dynamic evaluation way to promote the development of students, as shown in figure 2.

EXAMPLE OF PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENTS

The collection of monthly products

Subject :

Competency :

Class/semester:

No/ students' names	Daily work					Daily assessment			Summative	Mean	Comments
	1	2	3	4	...	1	2	...			
Sara	8	9	7	8	...	8	9	8.17	Good
Bobo	7	6	5	5	...	5	6	5.67	Fair

Explanations: Include written tests, observations/actions.

Figure 2: Example of portfolio assessment.

English teachers require students to put every homework, quiz, and student book report after the course has been corrected into the archive. The archive also contains audio reports made by students in English, videos of performing English melodramas, and evaluation opinions of groups and teachers in different periods. As well as teachers' observation, records of students' classroom performance and other relevant materials reflecting students' personal personal-ized learning. The contents of the portfolio record the whole process of students' English learning, reflecting the students' learning purpose, degree of investment, academic performance, and progress. Its main purpose is to affirm students' learning achievements, at the same time, enable students to timely summarize the learning situation according to the record of the portfolio, adjust the learning strategy, realize the evaluation to promote learning, and play an incentive role. It is carried out in several steps: collection, reflection, evaluation, selection of learning works, thinking, and evaluation [15].

4.3. Record the Learning Process of the Study Group

Constructivist theory holds that teachers should use real tasks and some daily activities or practices within the learning field in classroom teaching. These close to life, complex tasks integrate multiple content or skills that help students apply what they are learning in a real way, while also helping students realize the relevance and significance of what they are learning. This is especially true of language learning. Group cooperation enables students to encourage and supervise each other in the learning process, while mutual evaluation among study group members enables students to examine the learning content from another angle and achieve the purpose of internalizing language knowledge. Figure 3 shows the formative assessment cycle in the learning process of the study group.

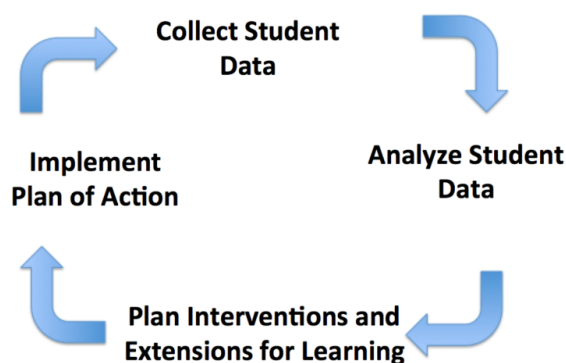


Figure 3: Formative assessment cycle.

The record of the learning progress in a learning group can be filled out by students in turn upon the completion of phased learning. The record content can include the record of learning group activities, the condition of learning group members' periodical learning ability, and relevant suggestions.

4.4. Interview and Questionnaire Survey

Student interviews can be divided into one-to-one interviews between teachers and students and group interviews between teachers and a group of students. Before the interview, teachers should make a detailed interview outline, and the interview can be in the form of open or semi-open questions. Interviews in the formative assessment of college English enable teachers to have a more comprehensive understanding of students' learning process and reflect students' English learning

strategies and common problems in English learning. This is not only helpful for teachers to timely adjust college English curriculum settings and teaching methods, but also to supervise and guide students' learning. The purpose of the questionnaire surveys is to help teachers have a more comprehensive understanding of students' English learning process, promote teacher-student communication, and enable teachers to adjust teaching content and methods in time to improve teaching quality. Therefore, the purpose of the interview and questionnaire surveys is similar, and they are generally conducted before the formal start of the assessment and after teachers give specific feedback to students. The results will not affect students' overall English scores.

4.5. Evaluation Methods of English Teachers

Teacher evaluation is the most important aspect of formative evaluation. In the implementation of the formative assessment, teachers are not only the designer of learning objectives, the organizer of learning tasks, the observer of the learning process, and the evaluator of learning performance, but also the participants and instructors of learning. Teacher evaluation is no longer just a simple score or qualitative evaluation of students' English level, but also a comprehensive, scientific and effective descriptive and developmental evaluation of students' learning motivation, learning strategies, and learning effects, to stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning English and promote their independent learning. It can be seen that the formative assessment system of college English is mainly based on constructivism, learning theory, and humanism, and aims to evaluate the development of students' performance, emotions, attitudes, learning strategies and other aspects in the process of English learning as well as their achievements. It is characterized by formation, openness, and flexibility, and is a kind of developmental evaluation. Its purpose is to guide and promote college English teaching and learning. Formative assessment has an indisputable effect of promoting learning. Students who use this assessment system are significantly better than those who simply use the traditional assessment system in terms of academic performance, motivation, application of learning strategies, cooperative learning, autonomous learning, and other aspects.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, various forms of formative assessment can provide teachers and students with frequent and rapid feedback information, which is conducive to teachers' adjustment of teaching strategies and students' improvement of learning methods. Our discussion on the concept, requirements, and operating principles of formative assessment of college English courses will make more teachers pay attention to the important part of the teaching process, promote the continuous reform and development of college English courses, have far-reaching significance for improving the teaching quality and teaching effect of college English courses, and contribute to the ultimate goal of improving college students' English application ability.

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