

Discussion on English Teachers' Professional Development Based on Reflective Teaching

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Abstract: Reflection has an important role in promoting teachers' professional development. In order to obtain professional development, teachers must have a deep understanding of the meaning of reflection, understand reflective teaching, be familiar with the process of reflection, master the method of reflection and develop the habit of reflection. Taking the improvement of teachers' own professional quality and professional competence as the starting point, the article firstly elaborates teachers' self-development, reflective teaching model and the features of reflective teaching. On this basis, its features reversing to promote teachers' professional development are discussed. Finally, several ways of implementing reflective teaching are introduced in order to promote the professional development of senior high school English teachers.

1. Introduction

In the traditional English language teaching practice, all the activities of teachers revolve around "teaching" and all the activities of students revolve around "learning", and such teaching and learning activities end with the completion of teaching tasks and passing examinations(Meng Qingtao, 2019)[1]. Teachers should pay attention to the thinking and discussion of teaching methods and have the motivation and ability of self-development as well, and in the new era, the professional development ability of teachers has become a new and higher development goal for teachers. In this paper, we explore the application of reflective teaching in senior high school English language teaching to promote English teachers' professional development.

2. English Teachers' Self-development

According to Lange, "teachers' development" refers to the process of continuous growth in teachers' intelligence, experience, and pedagogical attitudes. Wallace (1991) suggests that teacher training and teacher education are provided and organized by others, whereas teacher development is an act of research that can only be carried out by teachers themselves and for their own needs[2,3]. It is clear that it is fundamentally different from teacher training and teacher education in the traditional sense. Teacher self-development is proactive, reflective and regulative in nature.

Many senior high school English teachers, however, place their further improvement and professional development on in-service training. However, conceptual explanations and

interpretations of those established teaching theories and methods do not directly translate into foreign language teachers' understanding and grasp of the complex process of foreign language teaching, let alone automatically internalize them into their professional practice skills. Therefore, reflective teaching based on teacher development provides assistance in promoting the professional competence of secondary school English teachers.

3. Reflective Teaching and Senior High English Teachers' Professional Development

As reflective teaching is a process of introspection and reflection on the problems that arise in the teaching practice, it seeks to find a method and strategy to solve the problems in order to achieve the purpose of self-development of teachers. Therefore, teachers should first be familiar with reflective teaching and understand its features which contribute to promote their own professional development.

3.1 Reflective Teaching Model

Reflection is the process by which teachers take their teaching activities as the object of reflection, examine and analyze their teaching behaviors, decisions, and the resulting outcomes, and take appropriate responses accordingly. It is a way to promote professional competence by improving the participants' self-monitoring abilities. In China, reflective theory and practice have also received more and more attention and have become a hot issue in teacher education and educational theory. Professor Xiong Chuanwu (1999), a scholar in China, proposes to combine learning “how to teach “with learning “how to learn “based on reflective theory, in an effort to improve the rationality of teaching practice and perfect teachers' professional development[4]. In addition to teachers' personal reflection, they should also change from individual reflection to group reflection and from superficial reflection to deep reflection through communication and cooperation with peers. In this continuous practice, reflection, re-practice and re-reflection, teachers can constantly adjust their educational and teaching ideas and methods, so that they can grow rapidly on the road of professional development of teachers.

In this context, how to use reflective teaching theory to promote the professional development of high school English teachers has become a very relevant study. The inherent drawback of the traditional "applied science-based" training model is that it is difficult to motivate teachers to be self-motivated and self-reflective. In his book *Training Foreign Language Teachers: a Reflective Approach*, Wallace (1991) proposes a reflective model for teacher professional development and education, as shown in Figure 1[2].

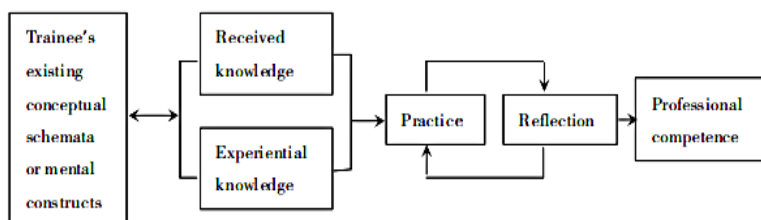


Figure 1: Wallace's reflective model of teacher professional development

In this model, professional knowledge and experiential knowledge are the core and theoretical basis of teaching practice and reflection, and the driving force of teachers' self-development. The cycle of practice and reflection is a process of continuous reflection on professional knowledge and experiential knowledge (Li Xiaorong, 2012)[5]. The cycle of reflection and practice is a process of continuous reflection and practice in order to achieve the desired professional competence. This

model fully illustrates the importance of foreign language teachers' practical experience and theoretical knowledge in their own development, as well as the fact that the cyclical process of teaching practice and self-reflection is a necessary part of achieving teachers' professional development.

3.2 Focusing on the Features of Reflective Teaching and Promoting Senior High English Teachers' Professional Development

According to this model, we will find that reflective teaching has some characteristics, and teachers should pay attention to these different characteristics in the teaching process, and return to promote teaching from the characteristics to promote their own professional development.

3.2.1 Initiative

The process of reflection is the process that teachers adjust and manage their own teaching practice independently and consciously. Teachers pay attention to their students, their learning emotion and learning process, pay attention to the effect of their teaching, and have the consciousness and requirements of constantly making progress and improving teaching. Without this, it is impossible for teachers to play their role as well pay attention to the teaching effect. "It is normal for professionals to reflect on their professional performance, especially good or bad" (Wallace, 1991) [2]. So, in this way, teachers can make more and better plans to teach practice and then adjust their own teaching process and assess the teaching results.

3.2.2 Feedback

Reflective teaching is characterized by the inseparable feedback of information, which is to review and examine the actual process of teaching in order to obtain various kinds of information as the basis of reflection. Reflective teaching requires teachers to continuously obtain information about the changes in their own practice and to examine and check the effects of their own practice. In order to review and give feedback on their own practice, teachers have to pay attention to two aspects: the teaching activity itself and the students.

3.2.3 Adjustment

In reflective teaching, teachers often take appropriate measures to correct and adjust the expected teaching objectives and next teaching activities according to the feedback, such as the establishment of teaching objectives, the formulation of teaching plans, the selection of teaching methods and problem-solving strategies, the arrangement of teaching contents and steps, and the inspection and evaluation of teaching effects. This series of measures are actually teachers' adjustment activities to the problems encountered in their teaching practice according to their own professional knowledge and existing experience.

4. The Practice of Reflective Teaching

Teachers should first understand the process of reflective teaching and master different methods to practice it as a way to promote English teachers' professional development.

4.1 The Process of Reflection in Teaching Practice

Barrlett (1900) sees reflection as a cycle of reflection consisting of a set of activities. The process of reflection in teaching practice consists of the following components: observation——

interpretation—introspection—questioning—consideration of alternatives—adaptation of instruction(Richards Jack C, 2000)[6]. Observation is the beginning of the reflective activity, which mainly refers to teachers observing and recording their own or their colleagues' teaching activities. Interpretation is about exploring the pedagogical theoretical basis of the recorded classroom activities. Introspection is teachers' rethinking of the inherent concepts that have been formed in their long-term teaching practice. Questioning is about seeking inconsistencies or contradictions between theories and practices. Consideration of alternatives is that teachers combine theoretical knowledge with empirical knowledge through teaching practice to develop a deeper understanding of existing teaching theories and find better ways to replace ineffective teaching behaviors in practice based on their deep understanding of teaching theories. The teaching practice is to find better ways to replace the ineffective teaching behaviors. Adaptation of instruction is that in the process of constantly searching for teaching behaviors that work better, the experimental program is constantly adjusted, as in Figure 2.

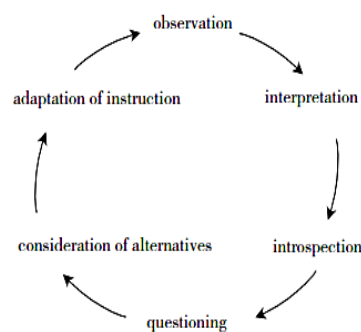


Figure 2: Reflective process in teaching practice

4.2 Different ways to practise Reflective Teaching

Therefore, according to this reflective process and the research on reflective teaching by Winter (1989), Parkinson & Richardson (1989), Nunan (1990), Bailey (1990), Wallace (1991, 1998), Brocketal (1993), Fanitini (1993), Pineino (1993) and Woodward (1997), reflective teaching can take many forms and means to achieve, and teachers can adopt different methods according to their teaching conditions[2,7-9].

4.2.1 Teaching Journal Keeping

After a day's work or a lesson, teachers use the form of a teaching journal to write down their feelings and experiences about the classroom teaching process. This is the basis for reflection. Teachers can discuss with their colleagues on this basis. The teacher can analyze the causes of the problems, propose solutions, and the measures to be taken in the next teaching. At the same time, according to discussion, each teacher can not only get lots of information from other teachers but also get a lot of knowledge and experience from other teachers.

4.2.2 Observation

This is mainly in the form of listening to other teachers' lessons, observing and analyzing colleagues' teaching activities. Teachers can listen to each other's lessons, learn from each other, observe whether the teacher is a reasonable arrangement of the teaching process. It's vary from the traditional form of listening, not teaching inspection, evaluation, rather through the form of listening, teachers observe each other's classroom teaching, while noting the observed scenario, the problems found, and then exchange views objectively with each other, to put forward improvement measures

to achieve common improvement, common development purposes.

4.2.3 Teacher Assessment

This type of assessment is similar to listening to a lesson, requiring the listener to focus on the whole process of classroom teaching. In the post-lesson exchange of opinions, the focus is on the teacher's behavior throughout the teaching process, rather than on the question of whether teaching is right or wrong. This is a cycle of reflection, analysis, synthesis and practice, the purpose of which is to help teachers improve their teaching, and to facilitate future development. Fantini (1993) synthesizes six elements in the evaluation of teachers: (1) interpersonal relations; (2) cultural and cross-cultural knowledge; (3) knowledge of language and linguistics; (4) language acquisition and language learning; (5) language teaching; and (6) professional awareness.

4.2.4 Action Research

Since the process of teaching practice is a process in which teachers independently and consciously engage and manage themselves, the teaching activities of teachers are based on the premise of personal motivation and initiative. The so-called teaching action research is to ensure the success of teaching and constantly active planning, evaluation, feedback, inspection, control and improvement of the behavior process. This is the reflection and “self-improvement” of teachers in their teaching activities. Teachers analyze and summarize their teaching successes and shortcomings through careful analysis. By studying them, teachers can increase their consciousness of self-development.

5. Conclusion

It is an effective way for all the teachers to develop themselves with the Reflective teaching. Reflective teaching places requirements on senior high school English teachers who are eager to promote self-development as well as professional development. First, reflective teaching model emphasizes the initiative of teachers, establishes the main position of teachers in teaching research, and encourages teachers to present and summarize their personal educational insights in practice. Second, a high degree of consciousness of reflection and the ability to observe and analyze are important conditions for teachers' professional development (Chen Yusong, 2020) [10]. Third, only teachers who are highly responsible and fully committed to their careers are able to take the initiative to relentlessly study problems in teaching and have a strong sense of self-development and an intrinsic motivation to improve their professionalism.

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