

Study on the Training of College Students' English Speech Ability based on Toastmaster Model

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Abstract. The students were trained to improve their speaking ability in the form of cooperative and interactive group on the basis of TM training mode, TED and other speaking platforms. We found out that the students' interest in learning level, speaking level and writing ability were improved significantly through questionnaire survey, reflection log and interview.

Keywords: TM training; English speaking ability; Cooperative interaction group.

1. Introduction

“College English teaching guide of China” points out that college English teaching is oriented by the actual use of English and focuses on cultivating students' English application ability. English application ability refers to the ability to communicate in English in studying, daily life and working experience in the future. Due to the long-term influence of exam-oriented education in primary and secondary schools, the phenomenon of dumb English is still very common in most colleges. They only focus on learning the language and spend a lot of time in improving their listening, reading, writing or translation skills. However, they cannot speak or dare not speak English in class or at public meetings, and they lack the ability to use English in practical communication.

After practicing it in class for two years, the author found that students' English speech ability are improved a lot through applying Toastmaster International (TM) speech training model to college students' English speech training by the way of teamwork and personal practice.

2. TM Speech Training Model and its Characteristics

The meaning of Toast is congratulation. It is often seen that someone will bring out a glass of wine and offer a toast to all the guests in foreign banquets. So the meaning of Toastmaster can be understood as master of toasting or master of speech. TM was founded in California, USA. 1924. It is a non-profit organization that aims to help others learn how to speak, listen, think even the oral presentation skill. It has 16,000 member organizations throughout the world.

Firstly, comparing with the traditional speech training, TM speech training model advocates “learn by doing” and focuses on improving performance and speaking ability in continuous practice. Training content is detailed and unique, first of all, When TM members join into groups, they will firstly get two of this manuals namely the speech manual and valuable handbook of leadership, the focus of two manuals are different, the former is to train the members how to introduce him or herself, how to show arguments, how to use body language and voice changes such as visual AIDS to transmit power to encourage the audience. The purpose of the latter is to pay more attention to train students' ability of leadership, The training content mainly includes how to listen, think critically, manage time effectively, plan and execute, encourage and guide others and related team building. Secondly, TM training has various training forms including keynote speech, impromptu speech, scene simulation, etc. Most of the class time is used for students' speech in order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to perform on the stage, and the speech theme is close to life, which can effectively stimulate students' enthusiasm for speech. In addition, TM training attaches great importance to students' control of time. There are clear time requirements for students' speech and evaluation, and each student must fully express his or her own opinion within the specified time. Finally, TM training attaches great importance to teamwork, and each activity has a clear and detailed division of labor, students put themselves in the expression of their own views through the

roles like “whole host”, “time officer”, “language”, “language judge” and other 10 different types of roles.

3. The Concrete Application of TM Speech Training Model

In view of the fact that most students have a fear of English speech, the writer mixes TM speech training model into college English courses and carries out students' English speech training in combination with TED and other speech platforms so as to help students express their own thoughts in English confidently and freely in public places and show their own thought and talents. Specifically, it is mainly carried out according to the following links:

3.1 Ten Roles in TM Training Process

There are 10 roles in TM training process. Based on the time allocation of the course and students' abilities, the author changed the multi-role task in TM into a four-person group mode. Each group took turns to select speakers, timekeeper, evaluator and grammar judge. The distribution of group members should be as homogeneous as possible between groups and as heterogeneous as possible within groups. The group members have different personalities and uneven oral English level, but the group members are a complete learning community, the team's members can share all sorts of study resource, get a better learning experience, build up impact for each other, mutually promote the interpersonal contact through class and extracurricular cooperation communication. This model is not only more conducive to teaching organization but also can effectively ensure the participation for each student.

3.2 The Purpose of Courses Training

The purpose of courses training is to make the students know more clear for the English speech recognition, the author taught the students some of the basic content of the speech at the beginning of the training, including the basic form of the speech, common speech structure, the basic skills of speech and "sandwich" evaluation strategy, and let the students feel the charm of the speech in order to motivate them to improve the speech confidence by sharing TED speech cases such as “Try Something New For 30 days” whose purpose is to make members accumulate into great change by trying new things and accumulating small changes so as to guide students to evaluate speech from two aspects of content and presentation. In addition, some students were encouraged to imitate the speech clips and present themselves in front of the whole class. The teacher used the "sandwich" principle of praise-suggestion-praise to make on-the-spot comments.

3.3 Factors in Excellent English Speech Process

The author provides students with a number of topics for performance, each small group designs the content of the speech according to the corresponding requirements. Generally speaking, there are two key factors in excellent English speech process:

3.3.1 The Writing of Speech Papers

Each small group must be reasonable when analyzing the purpose of the speech, make sure if the speech is persuasive, ceremonial or prescriptive, choose the title which is new and fresh to attract the audience, reasonably arrange the presenting way of discourse structure and theme of manuscript, pay attention to the diversity of sentence patterns and the clarity of word selection, take good use of the rhetorical methods such as similes, metaphors, and alliteration to strengthen the artistic appeal of speech.

3.3.2 The Scene Plays of the Speech

The scene plays of the speech, including the speaker's changes of voice ray, the pattern of expression of body language and the corresponding auxiliary equipment etc., the author takes multiple communicative ways like QQ group, cloud APP, WeChat chat software to push each team member to fully participate in the interaction of each section of the speech in order to make each

team to achieve the best state, and does necessary guidance and polishing to each team's speech manuscript, reminds each team to learn to combine speech PPT, Video and other technical means by using the computer and multimedia technology so as to bring the audience a unique visual and auditory feast.

3.4 The Speech Rehearsal

The members of the speech rehearsal group rehearse and modify the content, tone of the speech, limb language and so on in a cooperative and cooperative way by assigning different roles. In this process, students get rich oral practice. Students with a good English foundation provide useful Suggestions and opinions to speakers with a poor English foundation through playing the role of evaluator, which greatly promotes the improvement of the latter's comprehensive English ability. During the rehearsal, the group members make up for the missing and encourage each other, which not only deepen the friendship between them, but also create a strong learning atmosphere, which greatly stimulate their learning motivation and arouse their enthusiasm and initiative to participate in the speech.

3.5 Show of the Speech

The author will spare 6 minutes for each group into the scene demonstration of the speech content in a week, then invite other group members to evaluate this speech by taking sandwich assessment strategies, the author then does overall evaluation, the interactive evaluation between students and teacher can be realized in this way, degree of class participation is improved, this method not only increases the attention degree of the speech from the other group members, but also makes the speaker receive more comprehensive feedback and makes the speaker know the future direction of himself.

4. Feedback of TM Speech Training Mode

At the end of the semester, the author investigates students' feelings about this speech training mode through questionnaires, interviews, reflective logs and other methods, and the results are as follows:

4.1 Atmosphere of Classroom is More Active

After the whole training, what the author felt most was that the class was more active and the students were more engaged. When a boy was giving a speech of Why I Want To Be A Teacher, his humorous language and rich physical expression made the author and the audience enjoy it very much and got unanimous praise. The student wrote in his diary: "this feeling is really wonderful. It turns out that I could also express myself fluently in English!" The author also obviously felt the change of classroom atmosphere in the class. In the previous semester, there were always many "bow heads" in the class, who were either using WeChat chat tool or playing mobile game. However, in this semester, they were gradually willing to take the initiative to step onto the platform and expressed their personal feelings in English to participate in classroom evaluation. In the questionnaire survey at the end of the semester, people also gave positive comments on TM speech training mode

4.2 Change from "Dare to Speak up" to "Speak Well"

The author required each group to submit and gave out grade for each speech draft. All the speeches were submitted by each group throughout the semester, and the average score was shown clearly. It can be clearly seen that the quality of students' speeches is better each time, which also reflects the positive role of course training and classroom evaluation in guiding students. Students used to think that the most important thing in English speech was the sound and intonation. Later, students realized that a successful speech not only includes the pleasant pronunciation, but also the content and expression of the manuscript after learning about the scoring principles of professional

speech competitions. Students said in the class evaluation section: “the presentation and structure of the argument is more reasonable this time”, “alliteration and parallelism make the speech more beautiful”, “confident smile and appropriate body language make the speech more expressive”.

4.3 Promotion of Benign Interaction in and out of Class

The rotation of roles among group members makes everyone take his own responsibility. The group members learn from each other, encourage each other and make progress together. The classroom evaluation provides opportunities for different groups to exchange and learn useful experience. The evaluation strategy of sandwich namely “three rules of wisdom” has effectively promoted the good interaction in and out of class so that students can improve their critical thinking ability and comprehensive English application ability in the continuous speech training, as well as laying a solid foundation for becoming a professional expert in the future.

5. Conclusion

The improvement of speech ability is definitely not achieved overnight, it needs a definite process. The author finds that the best way to cultivate and acquire speech skills is to practice through the two-year speech training experience, which is advocated by TM club itself. The cooperative and interactive team, the clear learning objectives, the presentation platform and the immediate and effective feedback, all above enable students to overcome their nervousness, bravely express themselves, and show their best state in front of the audience, which virtually improves their interest and motivation in learning English. The positive interaction in and out of class makes the college English class full of vitality, the students' emotional connection is closer, and the relationship between teachers and students is more harmonious. In the future teaching, the author will continue to optimize the existing model, gradually improve the effectiveness of speech teaching so as to make students learn something more useful and adapt to the future society better.

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