A Brief Discussion on the Reform of Vocational College English Teaching Based on the MOOC Mode

Xia Ying

Suzhou Vocational Institute of Industrial Technology, Suzhou, Jiangsu, China

Abstract: In recent years, as an emerging online teaching model, MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) have received widespread attention and are highly regarded by numerous learners. The emergence of MOOCs has also exerted a profound influence on the reform of English teaching in vocational colleges. This paper will focus on discussing the main characteristics of MOOCs and their positive effects on the reform of vocational college English teaching.

Keywords: MOOC; Vocational College English; Teaching Reform

1. Introduction

In recent years, with the continuous advancement of science and technology and the maturation of internet technology, a new online teaching model has emerged: the MOOC. The full English name of MOOC is "Massive Open Online Courses," meaning large-scale, open online courses, abbreviated as MOOC. The Chinese term (Mùkè) is derived from the phonetic translation of its English acronym. The emergence of MOOCs has pointed a new direction and broadened new horizons for vocational college English teaching, which is at the forefront of educational reform. Based on my research, I will discuss the main characteristics of MOOCs and their positive role in the reform of vocational college English teaching.

2. Main Characteristics of MOOCs

2.1 Large-Scale Beneficiary Group

Learners of different ages and from different social strata around the world can study the same course through the same MOOC platform from different locations. Relying on the MOOC platform, high-quality teaching resources and excellent teaching staff from various regions can be shared. Thousands of English learners can access courses from prestigious universities without leaving their homes. This is the power of the internet and the charm of MOOCs.

2.2 Diversified Teaching Resources

The MOOC platform effectively integrates and optimizes various advanced social network communication tools and digital resources, forming diversified MOOC learning tools and a rich array of course materials. These learning tools are similar to the social software we use daily, making them easy for learners to operate and use.

2.3 Diversified Teaching Formats

Learners can freely select courses they like on the MOOC platforms. After enrolling in a course, students can attend lectures online, participate in online discussions, submit assignments, take online exams, and ultimately earn course certification. Online courses on MOOC platforms are meticulously produced, incorporating various animations, short videos, micro-lectures, and mini-quizzes. This infusion of high-tech elements makes course content more vivid, three-dimensional, and substantial, which also helps to stimulate students' learning enthusiasm.

2.4 Effective Interactive and Collaborative Teaching

MOOC platform courses incorporate various interactive tasks and tests throughout the teaching process. This not only connects teachers and students but also allows learners of different levels to communicate, collaborate, and cooperate while completing the same learning tasks. Through the MOOC platform's learning forums or online learning communities, teachers and students can interact and communicate anytime and anywhere, with teachers answering students' questions. Furthermore, students can also use various online social tools on the platform to find study partners, engage in collaborative learning, share knowledge, and complement each other's strengths, significantly enhancing learning outcomes.

3. The Positive Effects of MOOCs on the Reform of Vocational College English Teaching

3.1 Innovation in Teaching Models and Transformation of Teaching Roles

In recent years, with the deepening of educational reform in vocational college English, the long-criticized traditional didactic and rote-learning teaching model has gradually been replaced by heuristic and exploratory teaching models. In offline classrooms, the typical model is "pre-class preview + in-class lecture + post-class homework." With the integration of MOOCs, the model shifts to "pre-class learning + in-class inquiry + post-class extension." The teacher's role also gradually transforms from a knowledge transmitter and classroom leader in traditional settings to a learning facilitator and supervisor. However, in traditional offline classrooms, this transformation of the teacher's role is not instantaneous and often experiences reversals. The emergence of MOOCs undoubtedly provides a good opportunity for this role shift. The teacher's identity on the MOOC platform becomes more diversified. At times, they are the director and lead actor of online teaching videos; at other times, they become designers of online learning resources and participants in teaching interactions. Teachers also act as moderators of online learning forums, answering various student questions, and simultaneously serve as managers of the online learning platform and maintainers of technical support. As the teacher's role transforms, the student's role in MOOC-based teaching also changes accordingly. Students become the (subject) of learning, engaging in autonomous learning under the teacher's guidance and supervision. MOOCs provide the optimal stage for students to take initiative in their learning.

3.2 Optimized Curriculum Design and Innovative Teaching Methods

The primary teaching goal of vocational college English courses is to impart English language knowledge, cultivate students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, and develop their comprehensive ability to apply the language. This aligns with the goal of vocational education to cultivate compound-skilled application-oriented talents. However, in actual course design, due to constraints of class hours and the fixed duration of traditional classes (typically 40-50 minutes), the theoretical component of language knowledge transmission occupies a larger proportion, while the practical component for skill application is relatively smaller. Theoretical knowledge can be learned collectively, but skill development is better suited to individualized approaches. With MOOCs, students can learn language knowledge in advance through the platform, allowing teachers to dedicate more classroom time to practical skill-building activities.

As the proportion of curriculum components changes, teaching methods should also be adjusted accordingly. The MOOC platform provides rich extracurricular learning resources. Teachers can have students learn language knowledge points in advance via MOOCs. Course designs can incorporate various interactive and testing segments to help students organize key and difficult knowledge points, instantly assess self-learning effectiveness, and assign reporting tasks such as video production or PPT creation. In offline classrooms, students can present their learning outcomes, raise questions for discussion, while teachers primarily focus on correcting errors, answering questions, testing, and providing evaluation feedback. By relying on the MOOC platform and fully integrating online and offline teaching resources, task-based teaching methods can be used as the main approach. Students can complete various learning tasks on the MOOC platform and in offline classrooms through autonomous learning, cooperative learning, experiential learning, and inquiry-based learning, thereby enhancing their various English language skills.

3.3 Networked Teaching Methods and Diversified Teaching Evaluation

The sudden emergence of MOOCs was not accidental. It originated from the long-popular distance education and video open courses but represents a higher level than ordinary distance education and video open courses. As Huang Zhen, Vice President of Shanghai Jiao Tong University, stated, "Video open courses are only the 1.0 version of online courses, while MOOCs represent a completely new 2.0 version." Elite university video open courses merely provide course resources, whereas MOOCs enable full participation throughout the entire teaching process. This functionality is made possible by

"rich media" technology support. Rich media refers to information dissemination methods with animation, sound, video, or interactivity, incorporating one or a combination of several common forms: streaming media, audio, Flash, and programming languages such as Java, JavaScript, and DHTML. MOOCs can use online video tools like YouTube and Youku, as well as chat and communication tools like Facebook, Twitter, and WeChat, to facilitate interaction between students and teachers. After enrolling in a course on the MOOC platform, students can participate in the entire process, including attending classes, interacting and communicating, posting opinions, completing assignments, taking tests, earning credits, and obtaining certificates. The emergence of MOOCs requires vocational college English teachers to not only possess solid professional skills but also master various modern educational technologies demanded by information-based teaching.

The teaching evaluation methods based on MOOCs also differ from those in traditional classroom teaching. Compared to the single teacher-evaluation model in traditional classrooms, MOOC evaluation criteria are more diversified. First, relying on the big data of the MOOC platform, teachers can more intuitively grasp each student's learning situation. Combined with the staged nature of MOOC learning, teachers can provide more objective and scientific process-based evaluations of students' learning effectiveness. Second, peer assessment in MOOCs not only allows students to discover their peers' strengths and weaknesses from a student's perspective but also strengthens interpersonal communication and teamwork skills. Finally, the self-assessment component gives students the opportunity to examine their own learning situation and effectiveness. Only by correctly recognizing and objectively evaluating their own learning status can students formulate more targeted plans for their next stage of learning.

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