

Research on the use of discourse markers in college English classrooms

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Abstract: In the context of higher education, English, as a crucial subject, plays an immensely significant role in cultivating students' language abilities and is also pivotal in fostering the growth and development of college students. In the segments of English teaching in higher education institutions, educators should opt for appropriate teaching methods to enhance students' English expression abilities and promote a comprehensive improvement in their English proficiency, which lays the foundation for students to complete their studies and improve their overall qualities. The use of discourse markers in current English classroom teaching in higher education institutions enhances the efficiency of classroom instruction, thereby aiding in raising students' interest and proficiency in English learning.

Key words: teacher discourse; discourse markers; discourse generation; discourse comprehension

1 Introduction

In the teaching segments of college English classrooms, the application of discourse markers is indispensable, which is also a significant area of research in the current linguistic community, and has achieved notable success. It can meet the requirements of teaching in various stages. Employing discourse markers in teaching activities plays a crucial role in cultivating students' English language intuition and interest in English learning, and it also helps improve students' English expression abilities. Currently, the use of discourse markers in college English classroom teaching stages creates favorable teaching contexts where students can better understand the meaning of English, and also constructs discourse contexts that are congruent with actual communication. It ensures coherence between semantics and actions, thus promoting the enhancement of students' English application abilities.

2 The significance of discourse markers in college English classroom teaching

The application of discourse markers in daily communication can attract others' attention and indicate the transition of conversation turns, thus facilitating smoother communication. The use of discourse markers enhances communication efficiency and fluidity [1]. Therefore, in college English classroom teaching, it is significant to fully utilize discourse markers to enhance the correctness, appropriateness, and richness of language use, which ensures the smooth conduct of classroom teaching and fosters students' strong interest in English learning, thereby promoting smooth communication in the classroom and positively impacting the enhancement of students' English expression abilities [2].

3 The current situation of discourse markers in college English classroom teaching

At present, in the link of classroom teaching in college English education, discourse markers, as a vital part of classroom teaching and a crucial term for teachers to complete their teaching activities, not only improve students'

understanding of English conversation but also equip students with strong communicative ability in English. The use of discourse markers is increasingly widespread in teaching both domestically and internationally, with research progressively deepening. They play a positive role in various stages of teaching activities. Analyzing past teaching practices, the application of discourse markers in college English classrooms enhances students' listening comprehension abilities, especially for those with relatively weaker listening skills. This continual improvement in comprehension abilities positively impacts their proficiency in English language usage [3]. Integrating discourse markers with listening teaching comprehensively cultivates college students' English listening and comprehension abilities, thereby promoting an increase in students' interest in learning.

4 The analysis of misapplication of discourse markers in college English classrooms

4.1 The overuse of discourse markers

Currently, many college English instructors tend to use discourse markers excessively during English classroom teaching, particularly with a high frequency of certain common markers. This excessive usage hurts the conduct of college English teaching activities. Some college English instructors exhibit a strong preference for certain words during classroom instruction, resulting in their frequent use [4]. Failure to rectify this tendency will inevitably hinder the smooth progress of teaching activities. Discourse markers serve as powerful tools in classroom teaching, as they alert students' attention and help them grasp English knowledge more quickly. However, excessive use of certain words during teaching can often evoke resistance from students and adversely affect various teaching activities conducted in the classroom.

4.2 The misuse of discourse markers

The erroneous use of discourse markers is quite common in college English classroom teaching, leading to certain hindrances in teaching activities and resulting in students' misunderstanding of semantics and context. For instance, "besides" is primarily used to emphasize an existing assumption and create a strong contextual effect. When used, it provides additional information to the preceding sentence and reinforces the context [5]. However, some instructors misuse this word by using it in contexts where there is no relevant connection between the preceding and subsequent discourse or where the connection is weak. It often leads to students' misinterpretation during the comprehension process [6].

4.3 Limited variety in the use of discourse markers

Despite the prevalent use of discourse markers by college English instructors in teaching, investigations reveal that many instructors tend to rely on only a few types of discourse markers. Moreover, there are significant differences in the frequency of use among these markers, which affects the teaching process. Some discourse markers have subtle differences in meaning, with similar functional uses, leading to students' frequent misinterpretations during lectures. Additionally, certain discourse markers can be interchangeable without affecting the meaning of the discourse [7]. However, due to insufficient understanding on the part of instructors, incorrect applications often occur in teaching situations.

5 The exploration of discourse marker utilization strategies in college English classrooms

5.1 Constructing discourse functions

College English classrooms are characterized by clear objectives and directions. Therefore, instructors utilize discourse markers to create conducive teaching contexts, enabling students to understand the content more rapidly and enhancing teaching effectiveness. By employing discourse markers to construct classroom discourse, emphasis is placed on establishing communicative contexts, leading to a deeper understanding of classroom content and active participation in various teaching activities by students. In this application phase, discourse markers are used to help students grasp the structure of discourse and guide them in understanding the meaning of context, facilitating quicker comprehension of English information. Within this context, discourse markers serve functions such as cohesion, transition, and explanation,

enabling students to gain a profound understanding of the context meaning in teaching segments, both for listening comprehension or reading comprehension [8]. Additionally, discourse markers also serve a summarizing function, emphasizing the consolidation of knowledge during teaching, thereby enhancing students' learning enthusiasm and oral communication skills.

5.2 Constructing classroom situations

To enhance the teaching standards in college English classrooms, emphasizing the construction of classroom situations is particularly crucial. It involves using discourse markers in communication, which not only fosters students' acceptance of the classroom environment but also encourages active participation in various teaching activities. As an essential means of information exchange, discourse markers facilitate the transfer of discourse rights and guide students' attention, thus encouraging their active involvement in classroom teaching. Currently, in the context of constructing classroom scenarios in college English classrooms, emphasis is placed on the linguistic activities of teachers, guiding students to actively engage in practical activities, which also promotes the enhancement of interaction between teachers and students, attracts students' attention, facilitates effective communication, and ultimately improves teaching efficiency [9].

5.3 Highlighting modal teaching through discourse markers

Mood refers to the speaker's ability to accurately assess the effectiveness of their speech, a factor that cannot be overlooked by both teachers and students in college English classroom teaching. From an educational perspective, one of the factors affecting students' learning effectiveness is their emotions during the learning process [10]. Therefore, in English teaching, it is crucial to pay attention to the adjustment of teachers' tone and modality to ensure that students focus on classroom learning and acquire information and knowledge. Different discourse markers convey different meanings, and their use can make language more forceful, highlighting the key points of speech. By applying this method, students follow the teacher's language, and their attention is drawn to the class. This significantly improves the efficiency of knowledge acquisition and enhances students' interest and enthusiasm for learning. Discourse markers such as "hey", "come on", "why not", etc., encourage students to think actively, overcome shyness, and boost confidence. Therefore, enhancing students' English expression abilities not only encourages active participation in classroom learning but also improves their English proficiency, contributing positively to their future English learning and overall development.

6 Conclusion

As an internationally recognized language, English holds paramount importance in college classrooms. Currently, discourse markers play a crucial role in facilitating communication between teachers and students in college English classrooms. This emphasis on discourse markers ensures the smooth conduct of English classroom teaching, thereby enhancing students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities. Ultimately, it contributes to the improvement of students' English proficiency and professional competence.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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