Analysis of Teacher's Questioning in Senior High School English Classroom Based on Corpus

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Abstract: Three high school English classroom teaching corpora are established by transcribing three high school English classroom teaching videos in case database of primary and secondary education, including Lesson 1, Lesson 2 and Lesson 3. T1, T2 and T3 represent the teachers of the three English classes respectively. The questioning skills of the three English teachers will be compared and analyzed. And the influence of teachers' questioning on teaching results will be reflected from three aspects: teacher's questioning form, teacher's questioning content, and teacher's questioning direction. At the end of the paper, some suggestions about teacher's questioning will be provided.

Key words: corpus; questioning form; questioning content; questioning direction

1. Introduction

As an important means of classroom teaching and an integral part of teacher's discourse, teacher's questioning has always been an important topic in classroom teaching research. The scholars divided teacher's discourse into three parts: teacher's explanation of the text, grammar, etc.; teacher's questions to students; teacher's feedback to student's answer. Penny (2000) believed that teacher's questioning is a heuristic trick used by them in the traditional IRF teaching model (Initiation-Response-Feedback) to attract students' attention, promote students' oral responses, understand and evaluate students' learning progress. The author transcribes three high school English teaching videos from the database, and analyzes teachers' questioning behavior from three aspects: questioning form, questioning content and questioning direction.

2. Teacher's Questioning and Its Classification

Cotton pointed out that teacher's questioning was mainly to convey the tasks and content to students, and guide the direction and method of the next learning. Domestic scholars generally believed that teacher's questioning is an effective way to guide students to learn new knowledge and train their thinking level in teaching activities, and it is a basic form to effectively organize classroom teaching. Regarding the classification of questioning, Barnes divided the questioning of middle school classroom teaching into factual questions, explanatory questions, open questions and social questions. Hakansson and Lindberg classified questions from four aspects: yes/no questions, alternative questions, Wh- and H- questions based on the form of the questions; questions that reproduced information or questions of convergent thinking. According to the communicative value of the questions, they could be divided into reference questions or display questions; according to the orientation of the questions, they could be divided into questions focusing on language and questions

focusing on real life content. The domestic scholar Wang Duqin (2002) divided questions into Yes/No type, choice type and Wh-type.

3. The Analysis of Teachers' Questioning Behavior

The teacher's questioning behavior will be analyzed from the following three aspects: 1) the teacher's questioning form; 2) the teacher's questioning content; 3) the teacher's questioning direction.

3.1 Questioning form

The author adopts Hakansson, Lindberg and Wang Duqin's classification of teachers' questioning, and divides it into the following five forms: 1) "Yes/No": Students just need to use "yes" or "no" when answering teachers' questions; 2) "Or": The teacher gives two choices, and students choose one of them to answer the question; 3) "Wh-": refers to the questions beginning with "when, where, why, what, which, how, how many, etc."; 4) "elicitation": The teacher says the first half of the sentence, which acts as a prompt, and guides the students to answer the questions in the second half; 5) "translation": The teacher asks students to translate a sentence or a word from Chinese into English or the other way around.

Table 1. Comparison of the questioning forms of the three teachers

teacher	Total No.	"yes/no"	"or"	"wh-"	"elicitation"	"translation"
T1	102	22	0	67	13	0
T2	95	13	3	51	27	1
T3	89	19	3	53	14	0

It shows that the teachers' questioning forms are concentrated in the "wh-" category, and the other four categories are relatively fewer in the three lessons:

1) The three teachers ask the questions in the form of "wh-" 67 times, 51 times and 53 times respectively. Teacher1 has less repetition when asking "wh-" questions. The teacher posing a question, if the students remain silent, the teacher will change the questioning format to guide the students to answer; if the students can answer the questions, the teacher will continue to ask questions to train students' responsiveness and language skills. Teachers 2 and 3 have higher repetition when asking questions in the form of "wh-", and they pose the same questions to students continuously. The reasons for this may be the teacher's daily speaking habit, or that the teacher does not design the questions from different perspectives.

2) When the three teachers use elicitation questions in class, the students spend a long time thinking about the problem in most cases. The teachers are eager to let the students deliver the answer due to the time limit of the class, so they deliver half of the answer, and guide students to deliver the complete answer following the teacher's prompt.

3) The three teachers use the form of "yes/no" questions to check whether students know the word or something that appears in class, such as "Do you know this word 'peak'?"

3.2 Questioning content

Long and Sato divided teacher's questioning into open questions and closed questions according to the content of the answers. The former refer to the questions, to which there are no definite answers, and students can express their own opinions freely; the latter refer to the questions, to which the answers are unique and certain, and the students are asked to say the established answers.

Table 2. Comparison of the questioning contents of the three teachers

teacher	Total No.	open Qs	closed Qs
T1	102	38	65
T2	95	11	84
T3	89	18	71

From Table 2, it can be seen that the three teachers tend to ask closed questions as to the questioning contents. If the teachers ask the students to imitate the content of the text and read out the given answers, students often copy the text mechanically without thinking deeply. To some extent, it limits students' creative thinking. In addition, from the perspective of communication, closed questions lack "information gap", and the dialogue between teachers and students in classroom teaching lacks authenticity. Therefore, when asking questions, teachers should pay attention to inspiring students to use the knowledge they have learned for creative thinking, and increase the authenticity of dialogue.

3.3 Questioning direction

In middle school English teaching, teacher's questioning directions are as follows: answering individually; answering collectively; answering voluntarily; answering by teacher himself/herself.

Table 3. Comparison of questioning direction of three teachers

teacher	Total No.	individually	collectively	voluntarily	self-answering
T1	102	51	31	7	13
T2	95	35	48	1	11
T3	89	31	34	15	9

It can be seen from Table 3 that:

1) In T1's class, the proportion of students' collective and individual answering accounted for 80% of the total, the proportion of T2 was 87%, and the proportion of T3 was 73%. Answering collectively by students is time-saving and allows introverted students to speak, but these questions are usually mechanical and affect the independent thinking of some students. If teachers specifically designate students to answer individually, it will give students the opportunity to participate and think independently, which can check whether students have mastered the knowledge, and train students' language ability.

2) The frequency of students answering questions voluntarily is low in the class of three teachers. The reasons may be: first, the teachers and students who participated in the enrollment are from different schools, so the students do not have enough trust in teachers; secondly, after asking questions, teachers are more inclined to designate students to answer, leaving less time for students to think about questions and less opportunities to answer voluntarily.

3) The three teachers answer the questions on their own in class, which appears 13 times, 11 times and 9 times respectively. This type of questioning refers to a situation, in which the teacher explains to the students a word, expression, or thing that appears in the teaching process.

4. Suggestions for Teacher' Questioning

The New Curriculum Standard puts forward detailed requirements for students' English language ability, emphasizes the main role of students, allows students to actively participate in classroom activities so as to cultivate their thinking ability and innovation ability. Based on the analysis of the three English teaching courses, the following teaching suggestions on classroom questioning are proposed:

4.1 Diversify the questioning forms according to the teaching content

Before the formal implementation of classroom teaching activities, teachers should have an in-depth understanding of the teaching content of this class, clarify the teaching objectives, teaching difficulties, etc., and design teaching problems based on this. If the repeated questions do not help students to answer, teachers need to adjust the questions. The actual teaching environment is complex and changeable, teachers should plan alternative forms of the questions in advance.

4.2 Optimize classroom questions based on the actual life of students

Teachers can design problems based on the actual life of students, so that students can think about questions based on their own experience and hobbies, so as to form a better understanding of knowledge. In this way, teachers can connect the

content of the discourse with the real life of students, which not only allows students to actively participate in classroom activities, but also trains students' language organization and expression skills.

4.3 Create a reasonable situation to encourage students to voluntarily participate in questioning and interaction

Reasonable questioning is an important way for students to output language. Teachers can use the method of creating situations to carry out teaching, clarify the basic situation of students, and consider the questions raised from different perspectives, so as to encourage students to voluntarily participate in questioning and interaction.

5. Conclusion

By transcribing the three high school English teaching videos in the case database, and setting up a high school English teaching corpus, the author compares and analyzes the teacher's questioning in video courses, from questioning form, questioning content and questioning direction. The three aspects reflect the influence of teachers' classroom questioning on teaching outcomes. And in the end, some suggestions on teacher's questioning in high school English teaching are proposed, hoping to improve the teacher's questioning skills in English teaching.

Conflicts of Interest

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

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