

Innovation of TESOL Teaching Mode Based on Modern Technology

Xiyao Ren^{1,a,*}

¹*School of Chinese Language and Literature, Xi'an University of Finance and Economics, Xi'an, 710002, China*

a. xiyaoren0116369@163.com

**corresponding author*

Abstract: Modern information technology provides TESOL teaching with rich resources and abundant tools, such as multimedia teaching software, online learning platforms etc., and thereby creating a more realistic, vivid and interactive environment for language learning. In terms of teaching approaches, personalized teaching can be achieved with the help of information technology. Teachers can innovate teaching plans and provide customized learning goals and strategies in accordance with every student's learning conditions; meanwhile, the ever-changing technology also provides the possibility for high cooperative learning to become a mainstream among students, allowing themselves to exchange perspectives with one another through online meetings, which is instructive to foster the enhancement of language proficiency and intercultural communication competence. Additionally, the transition of information technology leads to the alteration of the assessment approach of teaching. The innovation of TESOL teaching mode on the basis of modern information technology is conducive to promoting teaching effectiveness significantly, and thus cultivating more and more English teaching professionals with strong ability to innovate who are in line with the contemporary social demands. Nevertheless, challenges in cross-cultural understanding ought to be taken seriously. In response to the situation at present, the relevant theories and practices remain to be further explored and consummated.

Keywords: TESOL teaching, Information technology, Innovation

1. Introduction

In today's era of deepening globalization, the great necessity of English teaching as an international language has become increasingly prominent. There has been an ascending quantity of people from different ages and various backgrounds opting English as the key to the world. As is known to us all, TESOL has been devoted to supplying assistance to numerous non-native English speakers worldwide whenever they are afflicted with hardships in English-learning, and thus ensuring efficient learning. In the information age, knowledge is infinite. The progression of the technology is playing a non-negligible role in every aspect of people's lives, and the education is no exception. As one crucial branch in the field of education, TESOL embraces unprecedented opportunities, the teaching mode in TESOL has ushered in innovative opportunities. As far as the author concerned, the traditional TESOL teaching model has gradually shown its limitations in the face of widespread teaching needs and diverse learning expectations among students. While it is worth celebrating that

hope still exists. It is shown from online learning platforms that break down time and space constraints to VR technology that creates immersive language environments, from massive and easily accessible digital teaching resources of all sorts to learning analysis systems that achieve precise teaching, etc. All of these transformations have prompted educators to consider how to deeply integrate modern information technology with TESOL teaching in order to innovate teaching models, and further stimulate students' interest in English-learning, build up confidence, and eventually cultivate learners with excellent language learning competence and cross-cultural communication skills. Therefore, the research into the innovation of TESOL teaching models based on modern information technology is of great practical meaning.

2. Major problems in current English teaching

2.1. Weak learning foundation on different levels

In the actual process of English teaching, students' individual comprehension and basic pragmatic abilities vary from others. Some students may be equipped with a relatively solid foundation in English learning, while the majority people still encounter difficulties in learning from time to time. And this group often fails to develop feasible study habits, which leads to the limited mastery of English vocabulary and inadequate understanding of English grammar knowledge. If teaching practitioners just impart knowledge blindly according to unified standards, rather than providing differentiated teaching modes for individual students, greater discrepancy in English learning levels among students will become apparent, and thereby affecting the actual effectiveness of English teaching [1].

2.2. Singleton teaching pattern

The traditional teaching pattern places more emphasis on 'teacher' as the main body, while neglecting the subjectivity of 'student'. Specifically, in this so-called 'cramming' teaching mode, teachers tend to focus more on students' memory of vocabularies and the mastery of grammar points, while the assessment of students' true understanding and flexible application ability of the English knowledge acquired is far from sufficient. For instance, referring to teaching English writing, many teachers advise students to constantly memorize English writing templates in order to quickly improve their performance in exams due to the stereotype that a student tend to be judged by his grades. This undoubtedly hinders learners' personalized development, cultivation of innovative thinking, and progress of their overall English abilities. This singular teaching method easily leads to the English learning becoming colourless. If students are lack of interest in learning English, this situation lasts for a long term, and the effect of English teaching will inevitably be greatly reduced [2].

3. Modern technology empowers educational transformation

Since the advent of the information age, a plethora of digital, intelligent, and virtual information technologies have emerged consecutively. With the integration of AI-assisted foreign language learning and the utilization of various cutting-edge multimedia devices in frontline teaching, digital empowerment of TESOL has already become a reality. The ample learning data as well as advanced analysis tools now make it possible for educators to conduct data analysis on the basis of students' learning performance and feedback, truly achieving 'personalized teaching support and guidance' for each individual [3]. In today's highly developed Internet era, the luxuriant and diverse learning content coupled with immersive interactive learning experiences have significantly piqued students' enthusiasm in learning, and thus highlighting the 'teaching in fun' concept in English education.

3.1. Out of the constraint of time and space

The online teaching form breaks the dual constraints of time and space in knowledge acquisition. Firstly, the time and duration of English learning are no longer fixed, and students are capable of making certain adjustments based on their own learning needs. After completing specific course learning tasks, if students encounter areas where they do not fully understand, they can consolidate their knowledge points by watching replays. Simultaneously, locations for learning are also very mutable, as long as there is Internet available and devices such as a mobile phone or a laptop. Students are able to engage in learning and research anytime and anywhere, and make up for any gaps in the knowledge as well.

3.2. Deal with differences in students' English learning foundation

Applying modern information technology to TESOL teaching is conducive to solving the problem of differentiation in students' English-learning foundations to some extent. It has come into reality that students engage in personalized learning missions of all sorts stemming from their specific circumstances online. As far as people are concerned, with the speedy popularity of AI, nowadays, a unique learning plan for TESOL learners has been designed by testing the users' vocabulary, grammar, and other aspects. (Even though the technology is still premature) For example, it can arrange special courses and exercises for weak points in grammar. Aimed at identifying strengths and weaknesses, better heightening their English proficiency, the English material can be selected compatible with the customized studying schedule separately. Besides, AI plays the indispensable role as an intelligent language tutor. In particular, AI possesses the capability of answering students' questions about several basic points, word usage, sentence grammatical structure included. in real time. Checking grammar, spelling errors in writing, yielding polishing suggestions are among the representative advanced version tasks that AI are proud of [4].

3.3. The Diversified teaching materials

Modern information technology provides a variety of teaching resources for students, making their learning experiences no longer limited to the textbooks, but greatly expanded. In TESOL, English learning is not just about getting prepared for examinations, but more about meeting their learning requirements and striving to shape them into comprehensive international talents. Therefore, during the teaching process, instructors not only explain everything contained in textbooks to learners, but also attach great significance to extending extracurricular knowledge, leading them to expand their English horizons.

3.4. Establish a sense of autonomous learning

Nowadays, in the teaching practice of TESOL, teachers are expected to take much more notice of the role of students as the main body in class. Here, the so-called 'Role Conversion' is what people in this new era have been appealing for accompanied by changes in educational concepts. Students are encouraged to become the masters of English classes, and teachers take the responsibility of adhering to the role of guides in teaching activities. Whenever students are resorting to academic assistance, teachers should be ready to provide timely and accurate guidance to fully mobilize their subjective initiative. In addition, for sophisticated learning stages, there can be numerous and complicated English knowledge points, and it is far from enough for students to rely solely on finite class-teaching time to learn English. Therefore, the fact puts higher demands on students' ability to learn independently, and students ought to make the attempts to cultivate excellent habits of searching for abundant resources outside of class [5]. Indeed, modern information technology brings about the

convenience at a great deal, granting students with sufficient liberty to independently plan their English learning and seek suitable methods and techniques for learning with a higher efficiency, which means a lot for enhancing students' awareness of self-regulated learning.

4. Innovation of TESOL teaching mode corresponding to modern technology

4.1. Design of online and offline hybrid teaching mode

The hybrid teaching mode combines advantages of online education and the traditional one. Through the organic combination of teaching organization forms, learners can be guided to start from learning relatively simple knowledge and gradually enter deep learning. In the 'online + offline' hybrid teaching mode, the explanation videos recorded by the teacher in advance could be published to learners or directly apply online learning information, and invite students to preview before class to help students understand the knowledge framework beforehand and clarify the knowledge concepts [6]. In this way, students put the previewed knowledge in good use to interact with classmates and teachers in class to further deepen the internalization of the previewed knowledge. The core concept of the teaching pattern is to help students mainly conduct in-depth thinking, discussion as well as knowledge application exercises during class. It can also reduce the time spent on explaining conceptual knowledge, and gradually promote the overall English learning quality and effect while giving priority to improving students' learning initiative. At present, the hybrid teaching mode has been widely put into practice and promotion in college English teaching. Teachers can publish teaching information and learning resources through online platforms, organize online discussions and task completion, and conduct learning supervision and other teaching activities. Students can learn course content, complete learning tasks, and participate in online interactions through online platforms. To fully leverage the advantages of the blended learning model of online and offline, it is necessary to comprehensively consider the teaching content, learning situation, and teaching resources obtained through the two channels, fully utilize the advantages of the information platform, and effectively integrate online and offline.

4.2. Exploration of Immersive Teaching Mode in Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality(VR/AR)

On Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are two emerging technologies, both of which are the product of a certain level of technological development. Virtual reality (VR) is a fully immersive digital environment technology. Through devices such as head-mounted displays, user's vision and hearing are surrounded by virtual scenes, as if they are completely in a computer-generated world. Augmented reality (AR) superimposes virtual information (such as images, videos, 3D models, etc.) on the real world environment. For example, when a user scans a street using a mobile AR application, additional information about nearby stores, such as discount information, historical introductions, etc., may be displayed on the phone screen. [7] In TESOL, virtual reality and augmented reality immersive teaching modes have demonstrated unique charm and have achieved remarkable consequences.

4.2.1. Create realistic language situations

Teachers use VR and AR technology to simulate real English communication scenarios, such as restaurants and campuses abroad. Students feel as if they are in an English-speaking environment. They can experience in the flesh and use English naturally for daily communication such as asking for directions and ordering food. This undoubtedly greatly enhances the sense of immersion and practicality of language learning.

4.2.2. Upgrade interactive learning experience

Teaching activities are carried out in the form of interactive games or group cooperation tasks. For instance, in a virtual adventure game, students need to communicate about strategies and solve puzzles in English with others. This "interactivity" effectively stimulates learning passion and student participation, while training students' collaboration skills, promoting the English communication level as well.

4.2.3. Personalized learning path

VR/AR system can intelligently push appropriate learning content and tasks after evaluating each one of the students' learning progress and competence. For students with weak foundations, basic vocabulary and simple sentence consolidation exercises are provided; for students with higher levels, complex debate or academic discussion scenes are arranged to achieve teaching in accordance with students' aptitude and meet students' personalized learning demands.

4.2.4. Real-time feedback and error correction mechanism

When students are practicing oral expression or writing, the system monitors and offers timely feedback in real time, pointing out grammatical errors, pronunciation problems, etc., and provide correct demonstrations and improvement suggestions to help students correct errors in time and optimize learning effects.

5. Implementation process and effect evaluation of innovative TESOL-class teaching model

5.1. Implementation process

5.1.1. Demand analysis and model selection

A comprehensive analysis on students' demands should be conducted covering language proficiency, learning goals, interests, hobbies as well as cultural background. The author will take 'questionnaires' as one example here, which are distributed to find out students' emphasis on listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, and some certain language application scenarios that they believe they must get familiar with, such as business communication or daily social interaction. Based on the results of the needs analysis, the appropriate innovative teaching models are carefully designed, such as project-based learning, flipped classes, or multimedia-integrated teaching etc.

5.1.2. Teaching preparation

According to the selected teaching mode, teachers start to prepare rich and diverse teaching resources. Taking multimedia-integrated teaching to be an example, teachers are obliged to gather English original videos, audios, animations and other materials closely related to the teaching topic. At the same time, they make exquisite electronic courseware and integrate interactive exercises and tests.

5.1.3. Classroom teaching implementation

This part takes the flipped classroom as an example. Before class, the teacher will upload carefully-recorded micro-videos such as grammar explanations and vocabulary expansion to the learning platform, and require students to watch and study independently and complete pre-study homework, such as writing short articles and answering some relevant questions. The teacher monitors the students' learning progress and accuracy rate of their answers in real time through the platform. During the class, the teacher organizes students to have group discussions, conduct in-depth

exchanges on the difficulties and doubts in the pre-study, and encourage students to share their views and ask questions. The teacher will circulate guidance among the groups, give inspiration and help when appropriate as well. Afterwards, practical activities such as role-playing and English debates are carried out to allow students to apply what they have learned in real situations and improve their comprehensive language application ability. After class, the teacher assigns extension homework such as project report-writing and English micro-film production. They require students to submit homework through the learning platform to facilitate teachers to correct and give feedback.

5.2. Effect evaluation

5.2.1. Assessment on students learning outcomes

A variety of assessment methodologies are used to comprehensively examine students' learning outcomes. Traditional paper-and-pencil tests are still the most common assessment methods used to test students' grammar knowledge, vocabulary, reading comprehension and writing skills. All at once, the proportion of oral tests is increased, and students' oral expression fluency, pronunciation accuracy, pragmatic appropriateness, etc. are assessed through one-on-one interviews, group discussion recordings, etc.

5.2.2. Teaching process evaluation

The surveys centering on the students' feedback on the teaching process is anticipated to be conducted on a regular basis, in order to understand students' satisfaction and suggestions on teaching models, teaching methods, teaching rhythm, and teacher guidance. For example, through online questionnaires, students can rate the level of 'fun', 'challenge', and 'practicality' of teaching activities and put forward suggestions of value for further perfection. At the same time, peer teachers are organized to observe teaching activities, evaluate and exchange perspectives with each other from multiple dimensions such as teaching goal achievement, teaching method application, class management, and student participation, jointly discussing the advantages and disadvantages of the teaching process, and put up with targeted improvement measures to guarantee the continuous upgradation of teaching quality [8].

6. Challenges and Strategies in Cross-cultural Understanding in TESOL

At present, with the rapid development of technology, although the future innovation of TESOL is promising, undeniably, the relationship between culture and language is complex. As a tool of communication, language is a part of the culture because it reflects people's mental activities, such as their way of thinking, local customs, and practices. Meanwhile, language can also preserve and spread culture, due to the culture lies in the use of language. In terms of this comprehensive connection, Lankshear proposed that language functioned as 'a precondition and a medium and a broker' of culture. Therefore, learning a language is not a single action, but it is about knowing the culture lying behind the language. "TESOL teachers are the mediators to make English learning distinct from 'language training' and make English learning more meaningful, interesting, and effective". In the tendency of globalization, intercultural communication is of vital importance among various countries to interpret each other, so it is necessary to combine language teaching with culture spreading. According to a survey conducted at two language institutes in Dublin, Ireland, it is mutual responsibility to gain intercultural understanding in order to ensure effective teaching and learning results. Teaching practitioners ought to develop awareness of the learners' culture of learning including various aspects-their needs, capacities, potentials and learning style preferences to meet learners' expectations and to stimulate their style-stretching under guidance [9]. It takes China and

the US as an example here. As people all know, China and the United States attempt to use language teaching as a mediator to interact with each other.

6.1. Reasons for the Challenge in Cross-cultural Understanding

Even though language teaching can make a difference in culture dissemination, it is not so simple to get the culture accepted by people from other countries. The reason why foreign learners have difficulties in understanding distinct cultures is that they do not share the same “cultural gene” with natives. “Cultural gene” is that people know about their national culture very well and it is engraved in their memory. This memory of culture is passed down from generation to generation just like genes. Native people consistently live in a certain cultural context from a very young age, so they are extremely familiar with their national culture. However, foreign learners have access to exotic civilizations merely by learning in class but not experiencing them personally. Besides, the cultural contexts between foreigners and natives are sometimes quite diverse so it is hard for a foreigner to interpret other cultures. This phenomenon is also applicable to explain the cultural diversity between China and the US.

6.2. Strategies in Dealing with the Difficulty in Cross-cultural Understanding

There may be some strategies to deal with this problem. Since culture consciousness is one of the core competences in language learning, it is significant to develop learners’ awareness to know about diverse cultures. The vast group of TESOL teachers play a crucial role in this mode of teaching because they serve as a mediator to promote cultural communication. They also need to seek the commonality of the two cultures to the greatest extent and find out students’ ideas hidden in their minds, for example, they do not like some kind of cultural pattern which may make them uncomfortable. At the same time, teachers should guide students not only to respect and learn about the benefits of different cultures, but also to develop a sense of cultural confidence. In an interview, Professor Hirvela says that if English can be connected with Chinese characteristics, Chinese people will feel proud and receptive for the reason that they are creating and speaking English in Chinese edition but not a foreign language [10].

7. Conclusion

This paper also tells the significance and outlook of modern technology for innovating the TESOL teaching model. In summary, Modern information technology holds substantial significance for the innovation of TESOL teaching models and offers vast prospects for future development. Multimedia resources such as videos, audio, and animations transform abstract linguistic concepts into vivid and comprehensible content, making them easier for students to grasp and retain. Online teaching platforms eliminate constraints of time and space, allowing students to organize their study schedules and progress at their own pace based on individual needs and circumstances. Leveraging big data and artificial intelligence (AI) technologies allows educators to collect and analyze learning data such as progress tracking, homework scores, and test results to identify students' unique learning characteristics and special needs. Admittedly, Challenges in Cross-cultural Understanding do exist. Nonetheless, information technology will further enable worldwide collaboration in TESOL education. Students can engage with peers from different countries via the Internet, collaborate on joint learning projects, expand their global perspectives, and enhance cross-cultural communication competencies in the future.

References

- [1] Chen, X.Y. (2022). *The Impact of Modern Information Technology Applications on the Reform of English Teaching*. *Campus English*, 2022(19), 13-15.
- [2] Yang, Y. (2024). *Using effective feedback from teachers to enhance the teaching effectiveness of formative assessment and the active role of students*. *Chinese Journal of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology*. <https://doi.org/10.13865/j.cnki.cjbmb.2024.11.1217>
- [3] Ye, X.J., et al. (2024). *Intelligent English Learning and Teaching: Research on Personalized Learning and Precision Teaching Driven by the Four Major Engines*. *Proceedings of the Fourth China Basic Education Forum and the 36th Academic Annual Conference of the China Education Society*, 2024(2), 118-123.
- [4] Lin, J.R. (2024). *Development and Research of Personalized Innovation Education Platform for College Students Based on AI Technology*. *Science and Innovation*, 2024(22).
- [5] Wang X. H. (2024). *Practical Strategies for Formative Evaluation of College English Autonomous Learning in the Network Environment*. *Journal of Shenyang University*, 2024(5), 55-61.
- [6] Qu, X.L., Luo, H.M., Gao, Y.Y. (2024). *Application of Hybrid Teaching Mode Based on "Online Teaching" Platform in "GSP Training" Course*. *Trace Elements and Health Research*, 2024(41), 93-95.
- [7] Li, Y. (2024). *Design of Online Teaching System for College English Reading Based on VR Technology*. *Computer Knowledge and Technology*, 2024(20), 47-49. doi: 10.14004/j.cnki.ckt.2024.0869.
- [8] Niu, Y. (2024). *Research on the Construction of Blended Teaching in College English Empowered by Digital Media*. *News Research Guide*, 2024(15), 172-176.
- [9] Xiao, L.X. (2024). *Bridging the Gap Between Teaching Styles and Learning Styles: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*. *TESL-EJ*, 2014(15).
- [10] Feng, Y.K. (2023). *Challenges and Strategies of Language Teaching in China and the United States: A Cross-cultural Perspective*. *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Educational Innovation and Philosophical Inquiries*. doi:10.26914/c.cnkihy.2023.106333.