

Exploration and Practice of BOPPPS Model in Enhancing Effective Teaching --Taking Business Communication as an Example

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Abstract: Aiming to assess the potential of the BOPPPS Model in enhancing effective teaching, the paper initially provides a comprehensive overview of Effective Teaching and BOPPPS Model, discussing their theoretical underpinnings and practical implications. It then demonstrates its application in Business Communication course by analyzing the challenges of course teaching and detailing a sample lesson design. It is found that the BOPPPS Model can significantly enhance effective teaching by setting clear teaching objectives, providing pre and post assessments, promoting participatory learning and recapping with a short summary. This study underscores the potential of the BOPPPS model as a highly effective and flexible teaching tool in Business Communication course teaching, and hopefully it will provide a reference for the teaching of other subjects.

1. Introduction

It is found by modern education researchers and scholars that the average span of students' full attention is about 15 minutes in the classroom, and classroom teaching methods need to be appropriately changed every 10 minutes to ensure teaching efficiency. The BOPPPS teaching model, which divides a teaching process into six stages, namely Bridge in, Objective, Pre-assessment, Participatory learning, Post-assessment, and Summary, was initially established and developed in the 1970s by the Canadian Teaching Skills Workshop with the aim of improving teachers' pedagogical skills and students' learning efficiency [1]. At present, BOPPPS model has been introduced and adopted in more than 33 countries globally, and recommended by more than 100 universities and industrial training institutions around the world. Notably, it has received widespread attention and compliment among teachers and researchers in China.

2. Effective Teaching

According to Wikipedia, "Effectiveness" is the capability of producing a desired result. Being "effective" implies that the desired or anticipated result is achieved, or it produces a deep, vivid impression." When it comes to "effectiveness", people typically tend to approach to it from the economic perspective. It was not until the early 20th century that the concept was incorporated into to the educational field, giving arise to the term "effective teaching", which attaches paramount importance in

ensuring that students gain the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed in their chosen fields. Hence, it involves much more than merely imparting knowledge, which was considered to be the core in traditional teaching; it also includes fostering a conducive learning environment, promoting critical thinking, and preparing students for future challenges and development [2].

As the main channel of education and the main battlefield for students' learning, classroom teaching has become a key issue in deepening education reform, and has received widespread attention and active exploration from educators and researchers. Scholars such as Dong Guiwei [3] and Liu Jinjun[4] believe that effective teaching should include: 1 To have clear teaching objectives; 2. While strengthening curriculum design and organizing and managing classroom activities, it reflects the subjectivity of students and the leading role of teachers; 3. Students should actively participate in the teaching process; 4. The basic characteristics of democracy, freedom, and safety in the classroom atmosphere and environment.

The quality of classroom teaching design significantly impacts the efficiency and outcome of teaching endeavors. Given the current age of information explosion, where the learning preferences of students are constantly changing and the sources of information is increasingly widening, it becomes crucial for teachers to adopt novel pedagogical approaches to cater to the varied needs of learners. BOPPPS prioritizes the effectiveness of classroom teaching, emphasizes the active and participatory learning of students and takes effective teaching design as the premise to guarantee effective teaching [5].

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3. Elaboration on the BOPPPS Model

The BOPPPS teaching model is a comprehensive teaching framework that has been widely accepted and used by teachers for its high efficiency and strong logic. This model, demonstrating a complete teaching process in six different stages, starts with creating a “bridge” between prior knowledge and new concepts, setting clear learning objectives, conducting pre-assessment to test students’ understanding, facilitating students’ participatory learning activities, evaluating with post-assessment to assess learning outcomes and ending the complete teaching process with a brief summary. It is clear that the teaching framework emphasizes students’ participation, sticks to the educational concept of “student-centered and teacher-led”, so as to achieve the purpose of effective teaching.

3.1 Bridge-in

The main purpose of this part is to “bridge” and “hook”, meaning to connect students’ existing knowledge with key teaching content and fully stimulate students’ interest and desire in learning. Various materials like videos and images, and methods like questioning and discussion on hot topics are employed to guide students to think, allowing them to focus on the core teaching content in the shortest possible time.

3.2 Objective

Reasonable teaching objectives should be presented to students, for they not only describe what teachers want students to know and be able to do by the end of the teaching process, but also serve as the bedrock of instructional design as they guide every other decision in the development of the course, hence producing transparency for both students and teachers. Teaching objectives are an instructional design tool, which allows creating meaningful assignments, and an instructional design element, that can precede a learning unit, e.g., as part of the syllabus in form of learning goals. It is a way for instructors describe their best intentions for the course [6].

In the 1950s, the psychologist Benjamin Bloom developed his influential approach to systemize teaching in a taxonomy. In 2001, Anderson and Krathwohl proposed a modified version of Bloom’s Taxonomy that comprises the following steps (ordered from basic to complex): Remembering, Understanding, Applying, Analyzing, Evaluating, Creating [7].

Remembering, e.g., know, define, identify, recall, relate, memorize, list, repeat, record, name, recognize, acquire

Understanding, e.g., exemplify, classify, summarize, infer, compare, explain, locate, discuss, report, illustrate, conclude, differentiate

Applying, e.g., execute, implement, organize, relate, present, practice, calculate, show, exhibit

Analyzing, e.g., compare, probe, inquire, examine, contrast, detect, report, deduce, categorize, survey, inspect, scrutinize

Evaluating, e.g., check, critique, recommend, predict, judge, argue, appraise, value, choose, decide

Creating, g., generate, plan, reorganize, assemble, arrange, write, construct, modify, plan, invent, formulate

The matrix “Teaching Objectives, Knowledge and Skills” combines objectives with different sets of competencies: Dealing with objects, dealing with other people and dealing with yourself. It offers exemplary verbs to describe each level. The rule for setting objectives is “SMART”, namely Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound.

3.3 Pre-assessment

Pre-assessment, sometimes referred to as diagnostic assessments, aiming to assess a student’s strengths, weakness, knowledge, and skills prior to the instruction, and test teachers’ assumptions of the what students know and activate their prior knowledge to help improve learning effect. If used correctly, pre-assessments can be of great benefits to both teachers and students. For teachers, it allows them to measure true learning of students and according to students’ performance, adjust the depth and progress of the subsequent teaching content to make the learning objectives and classroom topics more focused. For students, pre-assessment provides a preview of what is expected of them and draw on their own experiences to improve participation and engagement in the following teaching process. Teachers can use questions and answers, quizzes, anonymous voting, group discussions and other methods to understand students’ interest in this topic and prior knowledge.

3.4 Participatory learning

The word participatory comes from participation, which refers to the action of taking part in activities and projects, the act of sharing in the activities of a group. The process of participation fosters mutual learning. Participatory learning is “the body of the lesson, where learners are involved as actively in the learning process as possible. There is an intentional sequence of activities or learning events that will help the learner achieve the specified objective or desired outcome. Collaboration is a useful tool used within participatory culture as a desired educational outcome. Through various forms of “Teacher-student interaction” and “student-student interaction”, students can fully participate in classroom teaching, become the main body of the classroom, experience the joy of interactive learning, and improve self-learning efficiency. Highlighting participatory learning and emphasizing students’ dominant position in the classroom is the fundamental difference between the BOPPPS teaching model and traditional teaching models, and it is also the core link of the BOPPPS teaching model.

3.5 Post-assessment

After the participatory learning comes the stage of post-assessment, in which the teachers check the students’ mastery in this lesson by involving them in activities like

answering questions, quizzes, exercises, operating demonstrations and reporting, etc.[8] This stage not only helps students to consolidate their knowledge, more importantly, it helps teachers verify and test students' learning results and provides insights for the improvement and perfection of course design. The design of post-assessment must match the setting of the teaching objectives in the second stage.

3.6 Summary

A brief summary on the key knowledge and skills taught in the lesson should be made to strengthen students' impression. The teacher is supposed to use concise language, and highlight the teaching objectives, key and difficult points, and guide students to review by themselves.

4. Application of BOPPPS Model in Business Communication Teaching

Business Communication, a critical discipline that aims to equip students with essential communication skills to thrive in the future career, which involves various facets, including writing, negotiation, presentation, and intercultural communication, etc.[9]

However, the observation of the author reveals that the teaching of the course is confronted with several challenges:

Cultural Differences: In an increasingly globalized world, business communication often involves interacting with people from different cultures. This cultural diversity can make teaching business communication more complex, as teachers must incorporate lessons on intercultural communication and cultural sensitivity.

Practical Application: Limited exposure to international businesses can mean Chinese students lack the practical experience to apply business communication concepts in real-world settings. Students often struggle to apply theoretical communication concepts to real-world business scenarios. Teachers must, therefore, find ways to bridge this gap between theory and practice.

Student Engagement: Like in any course, maintaining student engagement can also be a challenge. This is particularly true given the abstract nature of some communication concepts, which students may find dull or difficult to grasp. More engagement is expected to achieve by participatory learning.

Technological Changes: The rapid pace of technological change can also pose a challenge. As new communication tools and platforms emerge, teachers must continually update their curriculum and teaching materials to ensure they are teaching the most relevant skills.

Assessment Difficulties: Business communication encompasses a wide range of skills, from writing and speaking to listening and non-verbal communication. Assessing students' communication skills can be subjective and complex. It can be challenging to develop fair and effective assessment methods that accurately gauge students' abilities.

The BOPPPS model can potentially address these challenges by promoting active learning, tailoring lessons to students' needs, and integrating assessments into the learning process. For instance, the "Bridge-in" can be used to connect the new topics with real-life business scenarios, making the lessons more relevant and engaging; "Objectives" provides a clear roadmap for both teachers and students about the expectations on the outcomes.[10]

The BOPPPS Model's application in Business Communication teaching also fosters creating an environment where students can enhance their communication skills through participation and engagement to ensure a more profound understanding of the concepts, ultimately leading to the production of competent and skilled business professionals.

5. Case Study-A Class Design

The following lesson plan on the topic, "Business Meeting", is made according to the BOPPPS Model to serve as an example to illustrate the efficacy of the model in ensuring effective teaching.

Bridge-in

The stage aims at capturing students' attention and preparing them for the new knowledge.

Start the lesson by engaging the students in thinking about the meetings they have ever attended and exchange opinions (in a group of four) on the question: Do you like attending meeting? Why or why not? (Most answers will be "NO")

Then, play a video of a meeting (a poorly managed one), and engage students in a brief discussion about their observations and evaluation on the success of the meeting, which will help grab their interest and prepare them for the following learning tasks.

Objectives

The objectives outline what students are expected to understand or accomplish by the end of the lesson.

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to name the purpose of and different roles in a business meeting; evaluate and justify the success of a meeting, prepare an effective meeting notice and agenda, exhibit active listening and speaking skills to facilitate communication in a meeting.

Pre-assessment

This stage is designed to test students existing knowledge about the topic, and it either provides references for the teacher to adjust the following teaching process to meet the needs of students or presenting the students with the expectation from the teacher.

Students firstly brainstorm for the different types and purposes of business meetings. Then work individually and tick the items that lead to the failure of the meeting on the evaluation form (Table 1) based the video.

Participatory learning

This is the "heart" of the BOPPPS Model, in which various techniques are applied to increase students' engagement and participation in active learning.

I. Students work in groups (4-5 students) to finish the following tasks:

- a. discuss on the common complaints about

meeting shown in the video,

- b. anticipate and brainstorm for other complaints
- c. try to figure out solutions

Table 1. Meeting Evaluation Form

Evaluation on the meeting			
Successful		YES()	NO()
1. Tick the following items that lead to the success or failure of the meeting			
2. Examples in the video			
Preparation ()	Leadership ()	Participation ()	Outcomes ()
e.g. meeting room too small	e.g. chairman domineering	e.g. participants not listening actively	e.g. discussion went off topic, no outcome

- II. When one group reports their findings in turns, the other groups act as a judge and the teacher make positive comments when necessary.
- III. The teacher and the whole class work out the checklist of a good meeting (Table 2) based on the previous findings.

Table 2. Checklist of a Good Meeting

Full preparation	Effective participation	Good communication
Meeting notice and agenda	Chairperson	Atmosphere
Equipment	Spokespersons	Equal chance
Refreshment	Secretary	Listening
...	Participants	Meeting minutes

- IV. Students watch another video of a meeting (a well-organized one) and check if the items match the checklist they worked out in the previous stage.
- V. Students read two meeting notice and agenda samples, and summarize the key information in these two documents and the most important language features. The teacher explains and highlights tips for meeting notice and agenda preparation.
- VI. Role play: Students work in groups to simulate a meeting discussion (3 mins) and roleplay the discussion in front of the whole class in turns. It should be noted that the key outline of the discussion and important sentence structures are provided on the slides to facilitate students' discussion. When one group come to the stage to perform, and other groups make comments. The teacher provides assistance to facilitate the whole process: e.g. provide instant and positive feedback, correct some language errors, if there is any, etc.

Post-assessment

This stage aims to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning process.

Students fill in the blanks of a sample meeting notice and agenda. Watch a video about business negotiation and fill in the blanks to review the key expressions and structures of business meetings.

Summary

The 'Summary' stage provides an opportunity for the teacher to reinforce the key points and address any remaining questions. It allows students to consolidate their learning and provides closure to the lesson.

A recap of the key points discussed in the class is presented in a mind map on the blackboard. The teacher provides the structure, and the students are invited to provide the details.

6. Conclusion

The BOPPPS model, as a proactive approach to learning, provides a structured framework that integrates lesson objectives, content delivery, and evaluation to ensure better student learning outcomes and effective teaching.

The authors' exploration and practice have shown that the BOPPPS model is an efficient and effective teaching model for Business Communication. It encourages active engagement, motivates critical thinking, and promotes better understanding of the course content. In particular, the BOPPPS model has been instrumental in bridging the gap between theory and practice, allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world business communication scenarios.

For the optimal execution of the BOPPPS model to achieve effective teaching, it is recommended that teachers employ a wide range of teaching techniques flexibly, foster comprehensive multi-channel communication, and create a harmonious and positive learning environment.

Acknowledgement

This research paper is supported by grants from the Key Teaching Reform Project in Xianda College of Economics and Humanities, Shanghai International Studies University (NO A3102230802).

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