A Review of Da Liu. The Reform and Innovation of English Course: A Coherent Whole of MOOC, Flipped Classroom and ESP

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A Review of Da Liu

In her study, Liu developed a new model for English teaching, which is a combination of ESP, MOOC and Flipped Classroom. This novel model is named MFE, which stands for MOOC, Flipped and ESP. She concluded that there are three unique advantages of this model which are suggestions to the future education. There is a worldwide call for papers in ESP and the ESP courses are prevailing nationwide. Yet with the limitations of traditional teaching models as Liu puts it in this study the development of ESP has been blocked. TEFL is critically in need of methods, techniques and models such as MFE to bring theoretical methodologies into practice. As Brown [1] argued, ELT needs more practice than theory. The crucial role that appropriate teaching materials, teacher feedback, and learning strategies paly in classrooms have been the target of a large body of literature [2-7].

In this Paper, Liu Argues the need for MFE Model and Explains Four Reasons as the Causes for MFE:

- "Online learning is the new tendency and the only road for education. MOOC plays the leading role in this area.

- Online learning cannot develop well without the advantage of traditional universities. Universities play the irreplaceable role in education.

- "Flipped classroom" thrives nowadays with the great improvement of student learning, Khan School considers it the most important revolution in educating technology. It s also the best teaching style combining MOOC, "flipped classroom" and traditional education [8]

- This model is put into practice of ESP courses."

The MFE Model proposed by Liu is carried out according to the theory of constructivism in English learning. It includes in-class, outside, cooperation and materials. MFE exchanges the roles of students and lecturers. According to Tyler [9] the framework of one course contains four factors: purpose, content, teaching organization and teaching evaluation. MFE is implemented according to these four factors. This is one of the shortcomings of this model which the framework initially is based on a general, outdated framework, even though, a newer framework developed by Latu [10] considered seven factors to have significant correlations with the students' learning of English macro skills, they were: learners' ages; their perceived ability; frequency of use of English; use of English to read for enjoyment; use of English for communication at home; integrative motivation; and career aspirations.

Liu argued that MFE is not only for English learning, it mainly develops students' ability in language, major knowledge, learning skills, communication and so on. MFE intends to cultivate the "Excellent adaptable international talents", considering the high speed of word development. MFE contains both in-class and outside. The content contains four aspects: online platform, textbook, MOOC and self-supporting materials. The evaluation and scoring is not only depended on lectures, it is the combination of evaluation of students, lecturers and online. This is the second shortcoming of the model, as this is the era and area of specificity it is needed not to be general in outline and discipline. Even it is needed to be specific for TEFL or TESL [11].

She indicated for the organization of MFE, it contains three parts: self study, interactive section, evaluation and tutoring. For the course, in the first phase, students will master metallurgical words and basic knowledge; in the second phase, students do research of the area. Consequently, the effects of MFE are evaluated in three parts: the improvement of the score, the evaluation of the kearning strategies and feedback. The paper compares the scores of the experimental class of 35 students before and after MFE, and also makes the comparison of the scores between the experimental class and the control class. The results indicated that MFE helps students in tests. There comes the third shortcoming, as it is based on constructivism there is a necessity

for the consideration of self-direct and collaborative construction of knowledge and learning which involves problem solving [12], which problem solving is absent in this model.

MFE plays a significant role in improving students' strategy. The analysis of the effect of MFE is not only with the objective evaluation; it also contains the subjective evaluation. The paper shows the feedback of MFE and makes the reliability analysis. MFE improves students' score, and learning strategy with certain satisfactory degree, the paper makes conclusion and further suggestions in this area.

MFE has Three Suggestions

- "Practical, MFE learning is not only limited to textbooks and readings.

- Professional, English course was mainly about the common information, MFE is focused on the professional content in English, it both improves English ability and professional skills.

- Advanced, nowadays, there were few courses combined MOOC. "Flipped Classroom" and ESP, MFE explores the new area in English education and shows the practical way."

The fourth shortcoming is uttered by the author herself, "MFE also has its own shortcomings; it needs further improvement in the area of evaluation system, interactive communication, teaching design and self- study cultivation." The most important way of learning English is to make students involve in the English environment [13]. MFE makes the environment possible.

The main shortcoming goes to the complementary explanations and descriptions essential to this model which were not presented in the study, as it is illustrated in the section below the model is bare from any thorough and supplementary information. And does not provide instructions to guide the reader how this is to be applied. The paper also suggests universities should improve the evaluation system based on the new technology, and the lecturers transfer its role from the leading to the supporting role but with more advanced abilities, such like mastering new technology, informative source application, interactive communicating ability and comprehensive knowledge network (Figure 1).

Moreover, the new model of education is not only about the transformation of students, lecturers, learners, learning materials and online resources. It also needs the involvement of universities, enterprises and public resources. The course like MFE will make the connection with the resources outside school and keep in line with the social development. This kind of education is suggested to develop on the road to the general positive circulation of the whole society. Teachers dealing with models as MFE need take into account problems of technology and distance learning. Accordingly, So and Brush [14] argued there are some barriers to distance learning, tight timeline, workload, poor software interface, slow access, no synchronous communication, unclear expectations from the instructors.
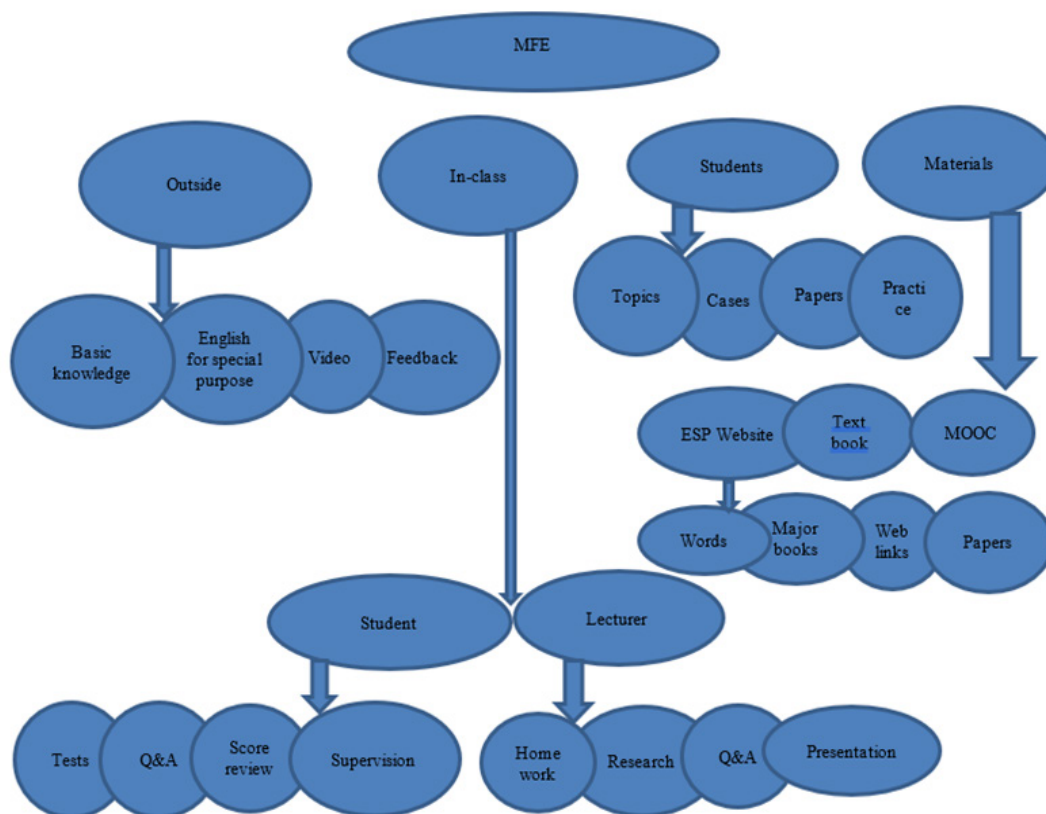

Figure 1: The Framework of MFE from Liu.

ELT definitely is in need of such models as MFE, and Liu's work is so adorable, yet as it is known prominently it all adds up and there are a lot of heads to be put together and cast the light of science more vastly. To this aim, more research is needed to insert individual factors, modes of feedback, learners' exposure and experience to language and cultural differences into this model by scholars from different parts of the world.

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