

Cultivation of Humanistic Qualities in the Blended Teaching Model of College English

Jun Ren^{1,*}

¹Beijing Union University, Beijing, China

*Corresponding author. Email: ldtrenjun@bnu.edu.cn

ABSTRACT

A basic objective of college English teaching is to cultivate students' humanistic qualities. To achieve that goal, this paper puts forward the blended teaching model which combines classroom teaching with online teaching on different platforms. By exploring humanistic education in the course, this teaching model will help to incorporate humanistic qualities with the teaching process and evaluation of students' performance. At the end of this paper, some suggestions are made for teachers.

Keywords: humanistic qualities, cultivation, blended teaching model

I. INTRODUCTION

As a public elementary course, college English plays an important role in helping students to use English as a tool and developing their humanistic qualities. The teaching objectives of college English include cultivating students' competence in applying English, raising their cross-cultural communicative consciousness and communicative competence, developing self-learning competence, and fostering comprehensive cultural qualities, so as to enable them to effectively use English in the future and cater the needs of the individual, the university, the society and the whole country. Thus, during the course of teaching and learning, students are guided to form correct view of the world, view of life and view of values. They should be encouraged to make contributions to build a community with a share future for the mankind.

According to the guideline issued by the Ministry of Education in 2020, every course should play its proper role in educating people. To foster virtue through education requires integration of shaping values, imparting knowledge and cultivating competence. Therefore, all of the institutions of higher education and teachers should take the responsibility of educate them to be patriotic and systematically learn issues concerning law and regulations, psychological health and traditional Chinese culture, etc.

The outbreak of COVID-19 greatly affected the educational circle. Different kinds of teaching models boomed, and traditional classroom teaching was replaced by online teaching. In the Post-epidemic era, how can teachers cultivate students' humanistic

qualities through teaching? In this paper, the blended teaching model is proposed, that is, combining traditional classroom teaching with online teaching.

II. THE BLENDED TEACHING MODEL

This part focused on the contrast between online teaching and traditional classroom teaching, and introduced advantages of the blended teaching model.

A. Online teaching

In the delay of the spring semester of 2020, MOOC of college English is of great help. Students can preview the learning materials on the platform and learn by themselves. There were also other two major platforms: iSmart platform and WeChat. On iSmart platform, a lot of learning tasks were assigned, including oral and written exercises, which can meet students' need at different levels. Teachers can adopt various teaching forms according to their own needs on the platform, and the statistics of students' performance is easily available. On the other hand, it is also convenient for students to ask questions or present their learning outcomes via WeChat and iSmart. Teachers will check learning progress at the regular class time, answering questions or offering help.

B. Blended teaching

Traditional teaching has the advantages of face-to-face communication and effectively monitoring students' learning process, but it is confined to the classroom and is hard to be carried out after class. In contrast, time and place is no longer the barrier in the case of online teaching Learning can occur at any time anywhere. However, online teaching also has the disadvantages of lacking adequate face-to-face

*Fund: This study was supported by the Research and Innovation of Education and Teaching Project of Beijing Union University (JJ2020Q006).

communication among the teacher and students, and the teaching efficiency is not easy to get guaranteed.

It is a good practice to combine online teaching with classroom teaching in regular English teaching process. The blended teaching model is more flexible than offline teaching and it can dynamically monitor and facilitate students' learning, so as to better enhance their autonomous learning.

III. CULTIVATION OF HUMANISTIC QUALITIES IN THE BLENDED TEACHING MODEL

In the blended teaching model, teachers need to figure out what humanistic qualities can be explored in the course and what teaching activities and evaluating approaches better cultivate students' qualities.

A. Exploring humanistic education in the course

No matter what teaching model teachers adopt, it is of great significance to cultivate students' humanistic qualities in college English course. And a good command of English will greatly help students to better understand diverse cultures of the world. Teachers should contemplate what qualities they want their students to have, or what kind of people they want students to become. While imparting knowledge of English language, they need to integrate the following aspects with education, such as principles of how to behave in the society, ideals and responsibilities of realizing national rejuvenation, and Chinese traditional culture, etc.

Take the course book *Experiencing English 3* for example. It is divided into 8 units, covering different topics related to various aspects of society. These topics include environmental issues, Nobel prize winners, famous brand names, cloning and ethics, lifelong education, travelling, and drug abuse respectively. Before teachers design their teaching, they should figure out what humanistic qualities can be integrated into the teaching contents, and impart them to students implicitly, since learning by doing is better than learning by teaching. In addition to linguistic knowledge in these units, teachers need to arouse students' awareness of protecting the environment. Students should learn the spirit of scientific exploration and scaling new heights from Chinese Nobel prize winners, honesty and innovation when starting a business, and follow moral and ethical codes while developing technologies. It's never too old to learn. Cross-cultural awareness can be fostered, to name just a few. Good practice in China should be promoted and it is teachers' duty to guide their students to tell Chinese stories to the world and spread excellent World culture to China. As Fei Xiaotong, a renowned Chinese sociologist envisioned, we hope to live in world in which countries treasure their own distinct heritages,

appreciate other cultures and promote shared prosperity.

B. Teaching process

As is discussed above, the blended teaching model is composed of online teaching and classroom teaching. In the face-to-face classroom teaching, topics of different units are introduced to arouse students' interests as well as practicing their oral English. The goals of cultivating humanistic qualities can be achieved by activities including question and answer, pair work and group work. Depending on different topics, students will acquire knowledge of global warming, cloning, brand names, education and travelling, and raise awareness in relevant fields in the meanwhile, take Book 3, *Experiencing English* for instance. When students get involved in these activities, humanistic qualities will naturally get improved with oral language performance.

In classroom teaching, teachers can utilize various teaching materials, such as course books, teaching aids and multimedia facilities to promote teaching, and students also can get prompt feedback. Humanistic qualities education is carried out in every teaching link. Students need to preview before the start of every new unit, and review what they have learned, which train them to develop good learning habits and learning qualities.

Time is limited for classroom teaching. To achieve good teaching and learning efficiency, some work can be accomplished online after class. In previous teaching practice, iSmart platform and U campus platform played a crucial role during the COVID-19 pandemic. All of the teaching and learning tasks are accomplished via the two platforms. In the post-epidemic era, these two platforms can also be fully utilized. Teachers can choose whatever they want from the exercise database on the platforms with abundant listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation exercises based on their own teaching objectives. They also can assign some tasks which needs group cooperation and collaboration. Based on topics given by teachers, mini video and audio clips produced by groups are uploaded to the platform for all the class to share, for example, they make a speech in English to fight against the pandemic and call for people all over the world to be united. Students' learning autonomy will be enhanced. For some classes, flipped class mode can be adopted, if most of the students have a relatively good command of language.

Assigning writing tasks is helpful in improve students' comprehensive abilities on one hand, and on the other hand, writing can reflect people's thoughts explicitly. Therefore, well designed writing assignments can instruct students to be a better one. As a part of offline teaching, writing tasks are closely

related to every unit, which include discussion of causes and effects of hazy weather and how to improve air quality, sharing the stories of Chinese Noble prize winners Mo Yan and Tu Youyou, and writing a letter to foreign friends to share knowledge of epidemic prevention, etc. To do these writing tasks, students need to think deeply about some qualities like patriotism, devotion, innovation, responsibility, moral codes, empathy and so on. The blended teaching model is student-centered and objective-based. These online tasks are beneficial to students' critical thinking and cultivation of humanistic qualities.

C. Evaluations

Evaluations of blended teaching are composed of two parts: evaluations of classroom performance and online performance. Formative assessment is combined with summative assessment, during which students' humanistic qualities are cultivated.

In classroom teaching, teachers can observe and record students' attendance, their participation in classroom activities, and performance in quizzes. The formative assessment is what most traditional classes are doing and makes up a high proportion. Honesty and serious learning attitude is advocated. Students also learn to cooperate with others and share their unique viewpoints with peers.

Online teaching is more flexible, and requires students to think independently. They have to arrange time properly and finish tasks before deadlines. The evaluation mainly include online learning time span, completion of tasks on schedule and quality of these tasks. Evaluating presentations of introducing culture or social hot issues to the whole class in English are helpful for students to understand the culture of different countries and build up confidence in language learning. They will try to conquer stage fright and present their best to their classmates. To get high scores, students also need to be self-disciplined and learn to utilize learning materials and search for resources by themselves, which enhanced their independence and spirit of exploration.

IV. THE ROLE OF TEACHERS

In the blended teaching model, the concept of students-centered is highly advocated, so teachers are the instructors of the whole teaching process who design activities and facilitate learning. With the wide use of modern information and technology, besides resources in the course books, they provide students with high quality resources such as Chinese College MOOCs, TED talk, Mini Lectures, short video clips, etc.

Teachers are the organizers of the teaching process, therefore, their teaching approaches and wisdom play a

crucial role in cultivating humanistic qualities. Besides what have been discussed in the teaching model, extracurricular activities organized by universities and colleges are advocated, which will arouse students' interest in English, and give full play to their potentials, initiative and creativity. English language and culture festival with well-chosen topics and diverse forms can be organized, for instance, English speech contest, English singing contest, English debating competition, English drama festival, to name just a few. Teachers can make full use of these activities and provide guidance where necessary to enhance students' communicative and cross-cultural competence. And these activities can be considered as rewards for their formative assessment.

To cultivate humanistic qualities, teachers should enhance their professional competence and innovative competence. They need to update teaching notions and do their utmost to explore how to incorporate quality cultivation into teaching and learning process. Nowadays it has been more convenient for students to obtain vast amounts of information, hence teachers should take the responsibility to help them judge whether those resources are appropriate and guide them to set up correct values and outlook on life.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper has explored how to cultivate humanistic qualities in the blended teaching model and further analysis has been made concerning the whole teaching process. It still has a long way to go to fully explore humanistic education in college English teaching and learning. It is hoped that more detailed approaches can be taken in this model and problems arisen from carrying out the blended teaching model can be resolved.

References

- [1] He Lianzhen. New Requirements of College English Teaching in the New Era: The Basis and Key Points of Revision in the Teaching Guideline of College English Teaching[J]. *Foreign Language World*, 2020(4):13-18.
- [2] Cai Jigang. FLT in the Age of Globalization: Developing Humanistic Qualities or Serving as a Tool[J]. *Journal of Foreign Languages*, 2010(6):33-40.
- [3] Lan Ying. *Models of Teaching*[M]. Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 2014.
- [4] Li Meizhen & Qi Zhanyong. Changes and Prospects of Humanistic qualities Education Policies in Colleges and Universities[J]. *Higher Education Development and Evaluation*, 2020(1):59-68.
- [5] Wang Shouren. Interpretation of the Guideline on College English Teaching[J]. *Foreign Language World*, 2016(3): 2-10.
- [6] Yang Fang, Wei Xing & Zhang Wenxia. An Exploration of Blended English Teaching Model. *Technology Enhanced Foreign Language Education*, 2017(1):21-28.