

Research on the Reconstruction of Teaching Content in University from the Perspective of Training Excellent Teachers Taking the Course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools* as an Example*

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ABSTRACT

Teaching content is an important carrier to achieve the course teaching objectives, and the training of excellent teachers cannot be separated from high quality teaching content. The course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools* was taken as an example to discuss the theoretical basis of the optimization and reconstruction of teaching content in universities. Practice has proved that the reconstructed teaching content in the course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools* not only effectively improved the teaching quality of the course, but also significantly improved students' ability of solving problems.

Keywords: Excellent teachers, University, Teaching content.

1. INTRODUCTION

On August 22, 2018, Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China issued "Notice on Promoting the Implementation of the Spirit of the National Conference on Undergraduate Education in the New Era", which clearly pointed out that "colleges and universities should comprehensively research the teaching content of each course, eliminate the 'Slack Class' and produce the 'Golden Class'..." [1] In a short time, the construction of "Golden Class" with teaching content reform has immediately become the top priority of education and teaching in universities. On September 17, 2018, Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China issued "Opinions on the Implementation of the Excellent Teachers Training Plan 2.0", which clearly pointed out that, "Through five years' efforts, a number of high-level and distinctive teacher education institutions will be well established, the curriculum system and

teaching content will be significantly updated, and the quality of practical teaching will be significantly improved..."[2] Therefore, it can be seen that comprehensively updating and optimizing teaching content has become the natural requirement for the training of excellent teachers and the comprehensive creation of "Golden Class" in the new era. This research took the course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools* as an example, reconstructed and explored the teaching content of this course from the perspective of training excellent teachers, which can provide some reference for the in-depth study of the teaching content of this course from both theoretical and practical levels.

2. BASIC LOGIC OF THE RECONSTRUCTION OF TEACHING CONTENT

The following three questions have to be answered first in the process of the reconstruction of teaching content: Firstly, what is the basic connotation of teaching content? Secondly, why the teaching content has to be reconstructed? Thirdly,

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what are the bases for the reconstruction of teaching content?

2.1 Basic Connotation of Teaching Content

If teaching connotation is taken as an exact definition to be examined, then a lot of understanding has been given from different perspectives in the academic circle. "Teaching content is also called curriculum, which is the synthesis of knowledge and skills that schools impart to students, the ideas and viewpoints that are instilled, the habits and behaviors that are cultivated"[3]. "Teaching content refers to the sum total of knowledge, skills, thoughts, viewpoints, concepts, principles, facts, problems and habits that teachers and students work together to achieve teaching objectives in teaching activities"[4]. "Teaching content is the important basis for teachers and students to conduct teaching activities, and the main object for students to understand and master, which is manifested in facts, viewpoints, concepts, principles and problems in various subjects"[5]. Generally speaking, due to people's different understanding of the relationship between curriculum and teaching for a long time, the academic circle has not reached a consensus on the interpretation of the basic connotation of teaching content. The teaching content in this study specifically refers to the teaching content of the course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools*, and generally refers to all the contents that teachers and students work together in the classroom teaching.

2.2 Necessity of the Reconstruction of Teaching Content

2.2.1 Internal Needs of the Development of Each Course

Balzac, the founder of European critical realism, once said, "The perfection of everything comes from the proper reform." In order to improve the quality of the course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools*, appropriate reform is also needed. We know that the construction of teaching content is neither achieved overnight, nor immutable, it needs to be gradually changed by teachers in the continuous teaching practice, constantly iterating, so as to achieve the continuous improvement and development of the course. Therefore, the course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools* needs to be optimized and

reconstructed teaching content scientifically, so as to realize its own development and improvement, which is the internal demand for the continuous development of the course itself.

2.2.2 Times Demand for Teachers' Education

The cultivation of excellent teachers is the basic requirement for teaching staff construction in the new era. As is known to all, the cultivation of teachers in China has been completed by schools for a long time, and the training of teachers in schools is mainly implemented through a variety of courses. So, the cultivation of excellent teachers requires excellent teaching content, and the quality of teaching content will directly determine the quality of the cultivation of normal school students. Therefore, under the times demand for the cultivation of excellent teachers, the updating and improvement of teaching content in the course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools* is undoubtedly an inevitable choice to meet the times demand.

2.2.3 Inevitable Requirements for the Creation of "Golden Class"

"Golden Class" is not only a hot word that the education and academic circles in China pay close attention to, but also the basic orientation and ultimate goal of the course reconstruction in Chinese colleges and universities. "Innovation, advanced nature, challenge" is the basic characteristic of "Golden Class". "Innovation" requires the teaching content of a course should contain the frontier knowledge. "Advanced nature" emphasizes the need to develop students' comprehensive ability and advanced thinking to solve complex problems through the study of advanced knowledge. "Challenge" means that the teaching content of a course must be difficult enough to be attained. To sum up, the reform and update of the teaching content of the course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools* has become an inevitable requirement for the comprehensive creation of "Golden Class".

2.3 Basis for the Reconstruction of Teaching Content

2.3.1 Serving the Personnel Training Program of a Major

Personnel training programs in universities clearly stipulate the personnel training results for each major, and clearly plan out the curriculum system needed to achieve the goal of personnel training. Many kinds of courses jointly support this system, and the specific teaching content of each course directly determines the final quality of personnel training. Therefore, the teaching content of a course is bound to carry on the necessary and timely reform and adjustment closely around the personnel training program. Under the multiple background of training excellent teachers and the construction of “Golden Class”, the personnel training program has made necessary scientific adjustments in line with the development of times. Therefore, the teaching content of the course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools* must be based on the adjusted personnel training program and make a deeper and more comprehensive reform, in order to better achieve the goal of personnel training.

2.3.2 Response to the Teaching Objectives of a Course

Although many scholars at home and abroad have given lots of different explanation to the basic connotation of teaching objectives, no matter how to understand, scholars have basically reached a consensus on the view of “Teaching content must serve the attainment of teaching objectives.” That is, the choice of teaching content must be conducive to the achievement of the teaching objectives as the basic premise. Therefore, in the process of the reconstruction of teaching content, we focused on the support from teaching objectives of the course to the personnel training objectives and made the systematic selection and optimization to the teaching content, which ensured the reconstructed teaching content effectively and provided high-level support for the personnel training objectives.

2.3.3 Study on Learners Themselves

To put it simply, teaching is to pass the essence of human knowledge to the next generation effectively through teaching content. Therefore, it can be said that “The starting point of all teaching is learners. Learning cannot happen without

learners, and teaching cannot happen” [6]. “Only when the information about learners is compared with some concepts of ideal standards, accepted norms, can the study of learners be used to derive educational objectives, so that we can identify the differences between the current situation of learners and accepted norms. This ‘difference’ or ‘gap’ is what we usually refer to ‘need’” [7]. The reconstruction of the teaching content in the course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools* must be based on the study of learners themselves. Therefore, on the basis of comprehensive analysis and research on learners’ learning ability, learning interests, learning needs, learning methods, learning styles, learning habits, etc., we scientifically selected the appropriate learning materials and comprehensively optimized and reconstructed the existing course teaching content.

2.3.4 Research on Teachers in Primary Schools

In order to make the scientific reconstruction of teaching content, it is necessary to carry on a deep research to the talent demand specification in primary schools and the present situation of education and teaching in primary schools. In general, on the one hand, the curriculum reform of basic education in the past 20 years has greatly improved the construction of hardware and software for basic education in China. At present, the basic education has higher requirements for the quality of new teachers. Therefore, only on the basis of fully studying the requirements and specifications of basic education talents, and timely reconstructing the teaching content of the course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools*, can we train qualified primary school English teachers who meet the needs of basic education. On the other hand, in order to make college classroom teaching not ignore some knowledge which is very important in the current English teaching in primary schools, to make the teaching content in colleges is not only able to keep pace with times, more can realize a leading, we have to give a comprehensively and thoroughly study on the current actual situation of English education in primary schools and the development requirements.

3. RECONSTRUCTION OF TEACHING CONTENT

3.1 Fully Updating and Deeply Expanding the Teaching Content of the Course

Focusing on the teaching objectives of the course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools*, we reconstructed the teaching content from the following four dimensions: knowledge exploration, ability building, personality development and value guidance, striving to highlight the guidance of “student-centered, thinking cultivation, learning for practice and ability improvement”. In the process of the reconstruction of teaching content, we not only removed some old and low-level knowledge, but also added some cutting-edge knowledge in the research field of English instructional design in primary schools, such as task-based teaching method, discovery learning, etc., to comprehensively optimize the teaching content of the course. Compared with the original teaching content, the reconstructed teaching content has made a great breakthrough in both breadth and depth, and has obvious epochal characteristics, realizing the organic integration of knowledge, ability and quality. In addition, we also integrated ideological and moral education into the teaching content and it is proved in practice that students’ educational feelings have been significantly enhanced.

3.2 Introducing a Large Number of Excellent Teaching Cases and Deeply Analysing Them

The course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools* is a course with strong theoretical and practical characteristics. In view of students’ lack of the relevant theories of instructional design and the practical experience of instructional design, we made full use of the classroom teaching time and boldly introduced some excellent English teaching examples from primary schools as the auxiliary content of classroom teaching. On the one hand, it tries to lead students to comprehensively analyze teaching cases from the theoretical level by using the relevant theories of instructional design, so as to deeply understand the relevant theoretical knowledge learned. On the other hand, based on the theoretical analysis, it tries to lead students to optimize the deficiencies in the teaching cases selected with a heterogeneous way, so as to

enhance their teaching ability. As the selected teaching examples are excellent teaching cases from the front line of primary schools, it also invisibly improves the innovation, advanced and challenging degree of the teaching content, making the characteristics of “Golden Class” be obvious.

3.3 Teaching Videos Made by Students Are Fully Transferred to the Classroom

In the process of teaching content reconstruction, we always adhered to the basic guidance — “student-centeredness, thinking cultivation, ability improvement”. In practice, we boldly took the teaching video clips recorded by students themselves as an important part of the course teaching content. In the class, the instructor led students to analyze their teaching videos, which highlighted students’ subject status, effectively cultivated students’ thinking ability and practical ability, and promoted the improvement of their teaching ability. It has been widely recognized by students, the main reasons are as follows: Firstly, due to the limited classroom teaching time, students don’t have many opportunities to appear on the screen and they cherish the opportunity to be in the camera, so they will devote themselves to the teaching videos recording. Secondly, the teacher will lead all students to make case analysis of the teaching videos submitted by them in class. Therefore, every student will carefully prepare the teaching examples, which effectively improves the quality of the teaching videos. Thirdly, it is a rare opportunity for the students to get comments from teachers and all the students, and the help from so many teachers and prospective teachers. So everyone prepared the teaching videos carefully. Taken together, although it will spend a certain amount of time for teachers and students analyze the self-made teaching videos together, practice shows that students benefit a lot from this kind of analytical activity. Therefore, it is certain that teaching videos made by students can and should become an important part of the teaching content of the course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools*.

4. CONCLUSION

Against dual background of training excellent teachers and “Golden Class” construction, we reconstructed the teaching content of the course *English Instructional Design for Primary Schools* according to the characteristics of normal school students and the requirements of talent training.

The practice has proved that through the study of this course, students not only have understood the meaning and function of each element of English instructional design for primary schools, have mastered the common methods of English teaching in primary schools and a variety of teaching skills, but also can better analyze and solve the specific problems of English teaching practice in primary schools. At present, the vast majority of students are able to scientifically design and implement all kinds of classroom teaching, and they have formed a certain English teaching ability in primary schools. In addition, students also have a preliminary understanding of the cutting-edge knowledge and development trends in the field of English instructional design research in primary schools, which lays a solid knowledge and ability foundation for their future growth as an applied primary school English teacher.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

This paper is independently completed by Cong Qi.

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