

Application Of Humanity Idea To Foreign Language Teaching

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Abstract. Via analyzing ideas related to humanity, this thesis makes reflection of humanity in our foreign language teaching clear, proposes the new thought that humanity idea is introduced to practice of foreign language teaching and discusses implementation strategies by which humanity idea is applied to foreign language teaching via many aspects, such as focusing on the principle ‘people first’ and cultivation and control of emotional factors, emphasizing development and utilization of course resources, advocating ‘task-based’ teaching and constructing course evaluation system that combines formation with finality.

Introduction

Language study cannot be separated from humanistic and cultural background behind language. Development of foreign language teaching must also attach importance to reflection and application of humanity idea to teaching and pay attention to cultivating students’ practical ability and innovation ability, making students establish their own values and adjust their attitudes and emotion better by learning foreign language knowledge and skills and enabling them to practice their communication and coordination ability by foreign language communication. In doing so, it aims at improving students’ comprehensive ability and quality to a larger extent. Realizing wide application of humanity idea to foreign language teaching and improving foreign language teaching level via humanity idea have become important research tasks of foreign language teaching at present.

Humanity idea and humanistic education

Humanity idea

Cicero, a famous philosopher in ancient Rome, translated *paideia* in Greek into *humanitas* in Latin, proposed the word ‘humanity’ most early and specifically explained it as: via education, i.e., cultivation about people and human nature, potential of human nature and people could be exerted sufficiently. The reason why people become human beings with human nature and real people is that there is such a cultivation process. Later, the Latin word *humanitas* was translated into *humanitas* in English. Thus, humanity idea or humanism in modern Chinese comes out. As an idea and spirit, the highest value pursuit of humanism is people’s comprehensive development and is comprehensive development under the background that people’s personality is valued.

Humanity idea and education

Educational activities guided by humanity idea are humanistic education. According to opinions of humanism, education should not depreciate personality or depreciate differences among people. As an internalization activity, education should have characteristics and integrate cognition and emotion. It is worth emphasizing that ‘people-oriented’ education mentioned here is not education of European renaissance but subjective education in modern significance and involves content in many aspects, including confirming people’s creative and dominant position, re-locating basic value orientation of education and reforming teaching methods and modes etc.

Humanistic education has its unique features, such as paying attention to development of personality in the aspect of training objective and respecting natural instincts and opposing asceticism in the aspect of teaching methods. The educational idea advocates that people can be remolded via postnatal education and nature and society can be reformed by this. At the same time, via this education, people can not only have robust body and animal spirits but also own abundant knowledge and participate in daily life.

Reflection of humanity idea in our foreign language education

Our humanism is reflected by the idea put forward in *Standard*, i.e., students' humanistic quality is cultivated. In addition, it also contains the following aspects: i.e., when teaching materials are formulated, the principle 'people first' should be followed, education in the aspects of human nature, emotion, freedom, responsibility, life and humanity should be highlighted, and foreign language teaching should adopt humanistic perspective and pay attention to people's demands and development.

'People first and governance for people' are ruling purposes that the Party and Chinese government advocate. Being enlightened by this, as a foreign language teaching working at the front line of teaching should carry out innovation and reform for foreign language teaching at colleges based on humanity idea, use humanistic teaching idea to guide foreign language teaching practice and deepen foreign language teaching reform when level and quality of foreign language teaching are improved.

New thoughts of humanity idea in foreign language teaching practice

Respect students' individual difference

The group that foreign language teaching faces should involve all students. It is essential for teachers to reflect humanistic care in teaching, respect and understand students, combine appreciation education with quality-oriented education, care for all students' emotional demands, arouse their learning interest, make them establish confidence in the process of foreign language learning, development their ability to apply language comprehensively and improve their practical ability and spirit of innovation.

Starting point and objective of colleges' foreign language teaching should be students' development. All aspects in teaching process, such as developing teaching resources and evaluating courses, should highlight student-oriented teaching thought. To some extent, the process in which students learn foreign language is a process in which they develop themselves with guidance of teachers, which not only contains knowledge construction and improvement in skills but also contains other aspects like will practice, personality expression, mental development and expansion of vision etc.

Paying attention to constructing evaluation system

Objective of colleges' foreign language teaching is expressed by this: students' ability to use foreign language comprehensively is cultivated by developing students' language skills, knowledge learning, emotional attitudes, cultural consciousness and learning strategies, especially their ability in the aspects of listening and speaking. Therefore, in order to ensure foreign language teaching obtains good effect, teachers should carry out teaching step by step and realize effective connection with requirements of foreign language teaching.

In teaching, teachers should establish new evaluation system, including formative evaluation and summative assessment to arouse students' learning interest and independent learning ability. Formative evaluation should be a subject of evaluation, by which students' enthusiasm for learning can be aroused and their confidence can be cultivated. Summative assessment aims at promoting development of students' healthy personality, ability to use language comprehensively, improvement in teachers' teaching level and development of foreign language teaching. Thus, when evaluation is implemented, it is essential to pay attention to detection on students' ability to apply language and their comprehensive language skills.

Paying attention to introducing task activities and opening courses

As an effective teaching mode, task-based teaching mode should be advocated by teachers. The mode deems that teachers should guide students to realize learning objectives by many methods like perception, experience, practice and cooperation, adjust students' learning strategies and emotion in learning process and improve their learning enthusiasm and ability to apply language.

In colleges' foreign language teaching, course resources should be developed and applied reasonably. By using approaches like TV, books, videotape and network, teachers may provide recourses that approach life and the era and have practical, abundant and healthy content and

encourages students to participate in development and utilization of teaching resources.

Implementation strategies about application of humanity idea to foreign language teaching

Respecting students' individual difference and insisting on 'people first'

In recent years, international education idea has changed. One of the important signs is that it establishes students' subject consciousness and builds students' independent personality. The teaching method 'centering on learners' draws more and more attention from all educational ideas. People increasingly realize that learners themselves are basic subjects deciding learning results. In education, especially successful education, personality characteristics of the subject students is critical.

Differences among learners begin to draw much attention from people, learners' personality is different and their learning motivation and styles are also different. Expression of learners in classroom will be affected by their personality. In foreign language teaching, the key point that teachers consider should not be what and how they will teach but. Instead, they should focus on looking for conditions that facilitate foreign language learning and how to create such conditions in teaching. Teachers' responsibility is to teach students knowledge and the ability to obtain knowledge. There is an old saying 'it is better to teach people how to fish than give them fish', so we should pay attention to teaching people 'how to fish' in teaching process, i.e., arouse students' learning subjectivity and teaching them learning methods and strategies.

Paying attention to cultivating and controlling students' emotional factors

Humanity idea advocates that teachers should adjust students' emotion and learning strategies in teaching process. Emotional control is a quite important reason affecting learning effect. To learn a foreign language successfully, the role of nonintellectual factors goes even farther than that of intellectual factors. In teaching practice, we can find that people who think they have open, friendly, democratic, thoughtful, happy, clever and logic spirit have larger possibility to achieve successful learning compared with people without such spirit. In foreign language learning process, learners many have emotion like anxiety and agitation when they are affected by external factors.

Therefore, foreign language teachers should pay attention to learners' emotion and adjusts their emotion and learning strategies in time. According to spirit of humanity idea, teachers should actively advocate participation, experience, communication and cooperation in the process of foreign language teaching and encourage students to use foreign language to communicate actively. Communication is essence of foreign language teaching. It is essential to reform students' learning methods to some extent and emphasize their participation, experience, communication and cooperation to a larger extent. Rock a famous linguistcian proposes 'the reason why people learn language is that they want to be able to communicate with others about their thoughts in life and work. Except for this, there is no other use for it'. Currently, foreign language environment is relatively lacked. Under this background, foreign language teachers should create such a kind of environment actively and make students use foreign language for communication in relaxing and lively environment via role play and games. This can solve students' problems that they encounter in learning. In addition, by this interaction, students can feel foreign language in interesting activities and thus their language sense can be cultivated. In doing so, their knowledge is consolidated and their ability is developed as well.

Constructing course evaluation system that combines several evaluation methods

According to new ideas, evaluation should help students cognize themselves and establish confidence, assist in cultivating effective learning strategies and promote improvement in students' learning level. Thus, it is essential to construct course evaluation system that combines several evaluation methods.

First of all, introduce strength of several parties to take part in evaluation. To give objective and comprehensive evaluation on whether students make progress or not and respect whether there is difference among students, we should not only emphasize students' dominate position in evaluation but also realize diversification of subjects of evaluation and actively advocates students, teachers and parents participate in evaluation activities.

Secondly, adopt the method that combines several kinds of evaluation. In the process of evaluation, we should adopt the method that combines several kinds of evaluation, such as combining formative evaluation with summative assessment, combining qualitative evaluation with quantitative evaluation, combining comprehensive evaluation with single evaluation and realizing combination between self-evaluation with others' evaluation. We should not only pay attention to students' learning achievements but also care for their learning process. Contribution of formative evaluation is that it breaks the method that evaluation on students was carried out via examination scores only in the past, makes evaluation system have basic functions like examination and selection and also enables it to have some new functions, such as feedback regulation, positive guidance and demonstration encouragement etc.

In order to promote development of students' language ability, summative assessment reforms final and graduate examinations and proposes that related examinations should contain content in many aspects, such as listening, written examinations and oral test. Besides, it puts forward specific suggestions about how to make test questions about listening and written examinations, i.e., listening should not only be limited to simple tonal discrimination questions but also combine with language environment to test students' ability to comprehend and obtain knowledge; and written examinations should increase subjective questions appropriately, reduce objective questions and add some practical questions with language environment but should not check grammatical knowledge only.

Taking task-based teaching mode and cultivating students' ability to apply language

In the 20th century, researches of foreign language teaching proposed a new language teaching mode based on lots of researches and practice, i.e., Task-Based Learning (TBL for short), which had much influence. Here, 'task' refers to the process in which communication is carried out to realize a certain objective or purposeful communication activities are carried out. When such a kind of teaching activities is designed, teachers should follow two principles:

Firstly, when activities are designed, they should be graded and layered. In the process of design, the principle they should follow is that they should start from the easy to the difficult and from the simple to the complicated and look for old so as to learn the new. In new activities, we should reflect knowledge and skills we have learned, connect the former with the latter, deepen them layer by layer and make activities continuous, more systematic and more layered.

Secondly, learn knowledge in dynamic situations. In the learning mode, the process in which students learn language is the process in which they finish tasks. To realize specific language objectives, they learn. When they finish tasks, they obtain related knowledge and accumulate experience, which not only enhances their learning interests and initiative but also makes them enjoy delight brought by success.

Advancing with the times to develop teaching resources and arousing students' learning motivation and initiative

With development of informatization, traditional teaching methods are reformed. As a result, original teaching materials, blackboard and chalks become history. Development of network technique and educational technology carries out innovation for foreign language teaching methods.

Humanity proposes that teachers should achieve two aspects in teaching process. Firstly, they should make full use of schools' teaching resources like multimedia and TV etc., build good language learning environment and enhance audio-visual effect of foreign language study. Secondly, they should excavate teaching resources outside schools widely, such as museum and exhibition hall etc., and broaden language learning environment.

Besides, they should arouse students' language learning enthusiasm and initiative by many approaches like establishing foreign language corner, setting up foreign language newspaper and making pen pals with foreign students whose mother tongue is foreign language, and take part in development and utilization of course resources. By extending classroom teaching, they may enhance students' learning interest, cultivate their ability to apply language and give full play to their potential.

Conclusion

Nowadays, as an important information carrier, foreign language's importance in work, study and transaction processing is more and more obvious. Up to now, it has become a language with the widest application in all fields. Colleges pay attention to develop foreign language teaching and they should attach importance to introduction of humanity idea, apply humanity idea to reform foreign language teaching, carry out innovation for foreign language teaching modes and methods, give full play to the important role that humanity idea plays in cultivating students' flexible application of language knowledge and skills and improving students' cross-cultural communication capability, and cultivate more high-quality applied talent for the society.

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