

# The Integration of Teaching and Learning in English Courses for International Students: a Case Study of Shanghai Polytechnic University\*

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**Abstract**—In the rapid development of society, economy and Internet technology environment, how to improve the quality of foreign students' English courses has received wide attention in universities. Taking Shanghai Polytechnic University as an example, this paper discusses the importance of English teaching and learning for foreign students and how to achieve mutual integration. In the current educational environment, teachers must actively carry out teaching reform, create environment and guide students to learn. International students must correct their learning attitude, actively integrate into China's educational environment, and use all kinds of resources to help themselves learn. The key to the success of teaching effect lies in the integration of teaching and learning, which can be realized by increasing the cost input, setting up the concept of international students' learning and development as the center, and setting up a platform for the integration of teaching and learning.

**Keywords**—*integration; learning and teaching; English course; international students*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching in both mother tongue and English or all-English is common in many countries. The use of English as the medium of instruction attracts many students from different countries and regions with a certain foundation of English. For international students in Shanghai, they are attracted by the advantages of higher education, but often give up because they don't know Chinese. The full-English program eliminates the language concerns of foreign students and enhances the school's international visibility and attractiveness. In order to cultivate talents with good foreign language ability and professional skills, and to improve the quality of teaching and the competitiveness of domestic and international universities, many universities have begun to try to build bilingual or full English courses.

Teaching and learning are the two core elements of talent cultivation and the basic problem of education. Teaching and learning, which is more important, is a hot issue in the

educational circles, but also the starting point and foothold of the reform of education and teaching. At present, teaching and learning are always separated and managed in university teaching [1]. Teachers mainly solve the content and method of teaching, and pay less attention to the content and attitude of students [2].

Which is more important in teaching and learning English? From the knowledge that people need, there is a lot to be learned by students themselves, so students are often thought to be able to make progress imperceptibly in universities. However, the study found that some necessary knowledge in the curriculum, in the form of infiltration learning behavior will not happen at all. For example, in terms of moral education related to professional ethics, students need teachers' education [3]. Teaching is for the sake of no need of teaching. No need of teaching is the high goal and the high level [4]. There is no need to teach which means that the learner can walk by himself and gain more self-affirmation. From this point of view, teaching is very important.

The mission of the curriculum is not to guide, but to cultivate each student in any way to obtain better learning and work ability. The purpose of teaching is not to transmit knowledge, but to create an environment and initiate learning, leading students to discover and construct knowledge themselves [5]. From this perspective, learning is also very important. In fact, students' active participation in classroom teaching is the core of the realization of student centered teaching [1].

## II. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF ENGLISH TEACHING FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN SHANGHAI POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

Since 2011, Shanghai Polytechnic University has developed the education of international students. At present, it has basically stabilized the composition of Diploma students, exchange students, language students and short-term project students. According to the latest statistics and estimates in September 2018, there will be more than 300 international students studying in SSPU this year. There are more than 20 countries international students who are mainly

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from Zimbabwe, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Laos and so on. The exchange students are mainly from Germany, Finland, Belgium, and France and so on. And short term projects are mainly from Korea and Australia. Among these students, the students who need to be taught in English are mainly Diploma students, exchange students and short-term project students. English is a supplementary language for teaching in the primary Chinese class. So far, the total number of these four parts will exceed 200, reaching 70% of the total number of international students.

Compared with Chinese students, international students come from different countries, and there are differences in social, cultural, educational background and many other aspects, but also some similarities. All international students are active in thinking in class, showing more self-confidence, independence, highlighting personality, full of curiosity for the broad and profound Chinese culture, for a problem can think from many angles, and from their own perspective to understand different things. In teaching activities, they have a good interaction with teachers, and the classroom atmosphere is very active. At the same time, teachers can feel that the objective attitude of all English students towards teachers in class teaching. They treat the teacher as a friend.

The participation of international students in teaching activities is very active, which puts forward higher requirements for teachers who should be able to grasp the students ideas and guide them well, not only to know what is going on, but also to know why. This also really reflects the teaching mutually. Of course, in class teaching, teachers also encounter some confusion. Firstly, international students will ask questions at any time in the classroom which relate to the knowledge points of other courses associated with them which involve a wide range of subjects. Teachers must use other knowledge to explain and analyze them. As a result, the progress of classroom teaching is not easy to control. Secondly, the knowledge level of these students is quite different, and English is also the second language of some students. The students will have some difficulties in listening to the class and need a process to understand the knowledge. Besides, most teachers' English is not native language. How to balance these problems is the key to improve teaching efficiency.

### III. INTEGRATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ENGLISH COURSE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

#### A. *Teaching Method: for Teachers*

There are two teaching orientations in Curriculum Teaching: knowledge transfer and learning promotion. Teaching guidance will affect the quality of curriculum design, teaching method application and learning tasks [6]. Teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning will affect their teaching orientation and behavior [7]. Research shows that the teacher regards the teaching as a way to transfer knowledge and methods to students, whose teaching strategies are usually teacher-centered. And the teacher regards the teaching as a way to help students develop and change their minds, and learning as a way to develop and

change the students minds, often use student-centered teaching strategies [7].

The first task of teaching in English is to understand what students know, what they can do, what are their interests and enthusiasm. Only by transforming knowledge into teaching content, students can understand and accept easily and teachers can let students understand what they mean [8]. The form in which universities teach is even more important than what they want students to learn [9]. The inculcation-oriented teaching method has always dominated the university curriculum in China which is difficult to arouse students' curiosity, imagination and inquiry desire, and difficult to develop students' creative and critical thinking mode. The management also thinks that it is urgent to reform teaching method and give full play to its educational value and function. Taking Shanghai Polytechnic University as an example, teaching reform is required in teaching management funds every year. In order to arouse students' enthusiasm, teachers are encouraged to make use of various teaching methods and means to stimulate students' enthusiasm and initiative in learning, such as autonomy, inquiry, cooperation, heuristics, discussion, project orientation, case analysis, etc. Teachers are encouraged to build or introduce network resources to enrich electronic courses and provide convenience for students to learn after class. But the overall effect is not ideal, only the application for reform and construction funds of the professional or curriculum effectiveness has been improved; the demonstration effect radiation to the whole curriculum process is still very slow.

#### B. *Learning Method: for Students*

The concept of students' learning proposed by researchers mainly includes learning as a quantitative growth of knowledge, learning as a memory, learning as the acquisition of practices and methods, which can be retained and used in practice, learning as an abstraction of meaning. Learning is the process of understanding reality, and learning changes with the changes of people. These learning concepts are important because they have a great impact on the way students learn for specific tasks. Individual differences of students play a central role in education, including online learning [10]. High quality learning results are related to deep learning concepts and constructive approaches [11]. Foreign students are always expected to be able to actively study, because good learning attitude is an important condition for the sustainable development of learners, is the fundamental driving force for learners to learn actively, and is also an important factor affecting the effectiveness of learning[12]. After correcting learning attitude, international students should actively use the resources outside the classroom to help themselves learn, such as the network platform of the school and the practice opportunities of the enterprises. In Shanghai Polytechnic University, international students who can make full use of all kinds of resources, study hard and take an active part in all kinds of activities have achieved good results.

### C. Achieving the Integration of Teaching and Learning

After defining how to teach and learn, the most important thing is to realize the integration of foreign students' teaching and learning, so as to produce the best teaching effect.

First of all, increase the cost input of the integration of teaching and learning in the curriculum in English. According to the logic of the teaching paradigm, if output is to be increased, costs must be increased, because any increase in output without increasing resources is a threat to quality. If a university tries to increase its productivity by increasing the size of foreign students or the workload of teachers, the teaching model will soon have an inevitable negative impact on the quality of education. At present, the main learning environment for international students in Chinese universities is mostly passive listening to classes or lectures, which violates the principle of the best setting for students to learn [5]. Traditional classrooms are no longer effective for the new generation, and international students need to thrive in informal and stimulating learning environments that promote social cooperation. The demand for a more formal and informal more flexible and attractive learning environment is on the rise [13]. Therefore, whether in the construction of teaching connotation or in the improvement of hardware conditions, universities should increase the cost of integration of teaching and learning. The diversification of teaching resources is mainly reflected in the introduction of different learning materials, including English journals and magazines, English videos, cases and so on, in addition to the original English books. Teachers should collect knowledge, information and intelligence through multiple channels and pass them on to students; while the diversification of teaching tools is mainly reflected in the application of multimedia teaching. For example, the playback of teaching related videos requires the support of multimedia teaching tools. And case teaching, discussion teaching and other advanced teaching methods also need to use appropriate material. Therefore, multi-channel collection of teaching resources ensures the effective implementation of various teaching tools and means. Teachers should also make lectures, exercises and knowledge development intertwined to avoid long-term maintenance of a teaching state, try to stimulate the brain of international students at different stages and levels, so as to help them master and consolidate the knowledge they have learned.

As far as the management is concerned, it is necessary to strengthen the teachers training and implement the lifelong promotion plan of teachers' language and professional competence through overseas visits and language training. At the same time, university should intensify the introduction of overseas talents, so that the internationalization process of domestic universities can be implemented.

Secondly, highlight the concept of learning and development of international students as the center in the relationship between curriculum teaching and learning. The curriculum design should focus on the improvement of students' learning style, means and sense of acquisition. The curriculum design, the selection of teaching materials, the construction of teaching methods, the design and

organization of teaching resources should fully embody the requirement of international students. The focus of classroom teaching evaluation should be changed accordingly: from knowledge-centered to student development-centered, from teachers to students, and from teachers' teaching to students' learning. The basic idea of classroom teaching evaluation should be changed from teacher centered to student oriented [14]. To carry out the student-centered teaching, we must deal with the teaching content and problems first. Teachers should constantly correct students' wrong understanding of the teaching content and cultivate students' innovative thinking in class teaching. The active attempt to flip the classroom in universities is to change the role of students from the information recipient in the traditional teaching mode to the classroom participant in the flip classroom teaching mode [15].

Finally, create a platform for the integration of teaching and learning offering for all English courses. With the advent of "Internet + education", the role of teachers will change accordingly. More and more educators hope to use various technology-based tools, such as digital learning resources and courseware, participate in online discussions and collaborative creation. The University of South Queensland, Australia, has highlighted the importance of community of practice, providing teachers and staff with safe space, collaborating, and reflecting on teaching and learning practices. The University of North Carolina has also launched a system for learning technology sharing, making it easier for teachers on campuses to buy Internet-specific tools. At the same time, students also have online learning platform as a supplement, can achieve real-time interaction with teachers. In this situation, the proportion of knowledge content teaching in classroom teaching will gradually decrease, and the following is the increase of practical operation and discussion courses, especially the large increase of discussion teaching, interactive learning and research learning [1]. In addition, the development of the Internet of Things (IOT) allows connecting devices to collect learning data, to help teachers better understand student progress, to help students understand their learning trajectories, and to inform students of the direction of curriculum planning. Artificial intelligence can provide more direct feedback to students and attract them to participate in learning, thus enhancing online learning, adaptive learning and scientific research [16].

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In short, the number of foreign students classes is relatively small, small classes of all-English teaching activities can carry out more discussion-based, interactive teaching methods. The course in English teaching should make students change from the listener and passive receiver of knowledge to the seeker of knowledge, so as to improve the teaching and learning effect. Teachers should not only enhance their ability to teach in English, but also actively consider how to integrate teaching and learning so as to improve the teaching effect of the course in English for international students. Management should actively implement the overseas talent introduction and training

program, provide financial support for the promotion of the level of courses teaching, and promote the process of International Education in universities.

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