**Exploration and Practice of Blended Teaching Reform of Advanced English**

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**Abstract.** Because traditional "Advanced English" teaching mode runs counter to the "Syllabus for English Majors in Colleges and Universities", it is far from the talent training objectives of English majors, the needs of the talent market and the cognitive characteristics of college students in the self-media environment. It is necessary to innovate the teaching concept of "Advanced English", advocate foreign language teaching concept of four-dimensional function (communicative, cognitive, emotional and humanistic parenting functions) and follow the teaching principle of emphasis on subject, openness, activity and process. The teaching process of self-learning before class, classroom discussion and post-class extension, and the evaluation of students' learning by the combination of formative and final evaluation are encouraged and conducted.

**Introduction**

Advanced English, as the core main course of the senior year of English major, is opened in almost all English major, translation and business English, etc. Advanced English continues the basic training of students' listening, speaking, reading and writing skills training tasks, and at the same time undertakes the task of laying the foundation for the follow-up courses of intercultural communication, English translation, linguistics, English and American literature, and academic paper writing. The status of advanced English teaching is so important that the teaching quality of this course largely determines the quality of teaching in English major.

**Current Situation and Problems of "Advanced English" Teaching**

**Current Situation of Advanced English Teaching**

Traditionally "advanced English" is viewed as a language course. In the past decades, most universities in China have opened English major. The content of advanced English is mainly about the author's introduction, the related cultural background, the main idea and structure of the text, the usage of vocabulary and phrases, and interpretation and analysis of the long sentences and complex sentences, identification of rhetorical devices and handling of after-school exercises, etc. The teaching mode is mainly for students to consult dictionaries for the usages of the new words, understanding the meaning as well as the words and sentences and the structure of the text. The teacher teaches the above content with the aid of PPT, interspersed with some questions and interactions, and the students listen and take notes, do exercises after class, teacher checks or gives reference answers. The assessment method is the final closed-book exam. The exam questions are mainly from the textbook exercises, including vocabulary, rhetoric devices, sentence interpretation, translation, reading comprehension and writing. The final evaluation is the main form, with some colleges and universities taking the students' usual attendance, classroom and assignment performance as the basis of usual time learning achievement.

**Existing Problems**

Traditional teaching mode is that students passively accept what teachers have taught. The assessment is to assess how much language knowledge the students have accepted. The disadvantages are obvious, paying attention to the teaching of language knowledge, neglecting the
cultivation of students' practical ability and innovative ability, ignoring the improvement of students' humanistic quality and the cultivation of positive emotions. The assessment method focuses on students' language knowledge, mainly on the level of words and sentences. Summative evaluation rather than formative evaluation is adopted, focused on learning outcomes rather than paying attention to the learning process.

Contrary to the provisions of the English Majors Syllabus for Colleges and Universities. The "Syllabus for English Majors in Higher Education" (revised edition 2000) stipulates that Advanced English is a course that trains students in comprehensive English skills, especially reading comprehension, grammar, rhetoric and writing skills. Through reading and analyzing a wide range of materials including famous works in politics, economy, society, language, literature, education, philosophy, etc., expand students' knowledge, deepen their understanding of society and life, cultivate their ability to analyze and appreciate famous articles, and think logically and consolidate and improve students' English language skills. However, traditional Advanced English teaching and evaluation model focus on language knowledge transfer and students’ skill training, especially the language training of words and sentences, which cannot expand the knowledge of students. The lack of shared resonance between teachers and students' emotions and experiences cannot deepen students' understanding of society and life. Learning mode of students passively accept knowledge is unable to cultivate the logical thinking and independent thinking ability. Therefore, the Advanced English teaching mode, whether it is the traditional Grammar Translation method, or the popular Discourse Analysis method in the past ten years runs counter to the provisions of the English Majors syllabus for Colleges and Universities, so it is impossible to achieve the training objectives of the course.

Not Matching the Cognitive Characteristics of Contemporary College Students in the Internet Age. The characteristics of contemporary university students’ learning are very different from those of the predecessors. First is the reduction of dependence and enhancement of consciousness. College students are no longer waiting for teachers to impart knowledge, but are the main body of learning. Autonomy is the primary feature of college students' learning. The second is an enhancement of cooperation. Different from previous accepted, passive and independent learning methods, contemporary college students tend to learn in ways of collaboration, dialogue and cooperation, and then establish a “learning community” of openness, mutual assistance and sharing. The third is openness. With the development of network technology and the rise of Internet plus, the university classroom has undergone fundamental changes. From the original limited space to infinity, the fixed-time and fixed-space teaching methods have gradually been replaced by life learning, networked learning and personalized learning.

Concept and Strategies of the Advanced English Blended Teaching Reform

Innovative Foreign Language Teaching Concept

Authoritative person of Canadian second language teaching research, famous English teaching method expert H. H. Dr. Stern, based on the classification theory of educational goals proposed by American scholars, proposed a four-dimensional target system composed of communicative goals, cognitive goals, emotional goals and humanistic education goal.

The communicative function is mainly reflected in the learners' mastery of a certain level of foreign language through systematic study, and through various practical foreign language activities. Cognitive function, language learning is a cognitive process, which is mainly accomplished through cognitive activities such as feeling, perception, thinking, imagination, attention, and memory. The emotional function of foreign language teaching lies in the relationship between teaching activities and the mental state of the learners and the motivation of learning. It is necessary to make the language learning “stimulating pleasing, and passionate”, so that the students can learn from each other and learn from the literature. Foreign language also embodies a humanistic spirit, and has its special educational function, that is, humanistic function.
Constructing a Blended Advanced English Teaching Mode

Advanced English Teaching Objectives: Communicative, Cognitive, Emotional and Humanistic Functions. In the process of advanced English teaching, we should pay attention to the communicative function of "language as a communication tool", cultivate students' basic skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translating, and be able to use foreign languages to conduct various foreign-related activities. The cognition of foreign language teaching requires that the teaching of Advanced English should enlighten students' minds and cultivate their critical thinking and innovative ability. The emotional nature of foreign language learning requires Advanced English teaching to develop students' interest and positive attitude towards English, English society and culture, and English learning. The parenting of foreign language teaching refers to the role of foreign language teaching in broadening the mind and diluting the mind. Therefore, Advanced English teaching promotes harmonious and comprehensive development through the training of learners' thinking, cultivation of sound personality, and improvement of comprehensive quality and train them to become people who are compatible with a high degree of civilization.

Advanced English Teaching Principles: Emphasis on Subjects, Openness Activity and Process. The “emphasis on subject” is to give full play to the students' enthusiasm for learning. It plays a major role in the autonomous learning before Advanced English class, classroom discussion and after-class extension. It is manifested in the full autonomy, practicality, participation and experience of students throughout Advanced English teaching process. “Emphasis on opening” is reflected in the extension of Advanced English teaching time and space to after class, and the expansion of teaching content to networks, libraries, social media, audio and video files, etc., and it also encourages students to open their minds and to ingest nutrition from rich teaching resources, constructing their own knowledge and value system and forming their own ideas. “Emphasis on activity” is reflected in the students' main activities such as speculation, discussion, reading report, research presentation, topic interview, impromptu speech, courseware production and other activities in which teachers participate just as guide.

Advanced English Teaching Process: Self-learning before Class, Classroom Discussion and Presentation, and Extension after Class. Before class, the teacher carefully designs the teaching videos, and makes the basic knowledge such as words and sentences and text into a pre-class teaching video of about fifteen minutes. To help the students digest what they see, the video also designs questions for consideration, task of consulting the reference books, and asks the students to complete self-learning tasks including previewing vocabulary, text reading, stylistic rhetoric, etc. At the beginning of the class, a five-minute quiz on the knowledge point video is conducted to check the completion of the self-learning tasks before class, the teacher answers questions about the students' difficulties and doubts, and then students do group activities such as dialogue, discussion, negotiation, debate and so on to exchange of knowledge learned before class, explore the problems encountered, sort out the knowledge in fragmentation of the pre-class videos through classroom discussion and exchange, summarize the understanding of the text, internalize the knowledge, and save the results in word form as the basis for review. Then, the relevant scientific humanities knowledge involved in the text, such as the famous scientists, writers, educators, politicians, and other ideological doctrines, is extended in the common sense to deepen the students' thinking, stimulate their interest in learning, and consolidate the involved language knowledge and skills.

Evaluation of Advanced English Teaching Combination of Formative Evaluation and Final Evaluation. On the one hand, we use regular assessment methods such as unit test, mid-term exam, final exam or professional grade examinations to assess students' learning. On the other hand, through multi-agent measurement tools, such as individual, group, teachers, social activities, competition and so on, then timely comprehensive, multi-channel collection of information on various aspects of students' in-class and out-of-class and teaching process is carried out and individual students’ study case are established. At the end of the semester, comprehensive, dynamic and multi-domain evaluation of students' academic performance at a certain weight is conducted. The combination of the two teaching evaluation forms makes it more comprehensive.
and objective. On the other hand, it also provides valuable feedback for teachers to reflect on self-teaching gains and losses and improve the teaching.

Summary

The traditional scholastic Advanced English teaching mode of students' listening to teachers, taking notes, and reviewing is contrary to the provisions of the "Syllabus for English Majors in Colleges and Universities", fails to meet the needs of talent training for English majors and the needs of the talent market. It does not match the cognitive characteristics of contemporary college students who have grown up in the network environment. Therefore, we must thoroughly change the advanced English teaching model. First, we must innovate the teaching concept of "Advanced English" and advocate the four-dimension functional foreign language teaching concept, including the communicative, cognitive, emotional and humanistic parenting function. Of foreign language teaching, follow the teaching principles of emphasis on subject, openness, activity, and process. We need to take the teaching process of pre-class self-learning, classroom discussion and post-class extension and adopt formative evaluation combined with final evaluation to assess students’ learning.

References


