

Exploration on Teaching Reform of English Children's Literature in Vocational College Based on OBE Theory

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Abstract

This paper reflects on the shortcomings of traditional English literature teaching, and illustrates the inspiration of OBE theory for the teaching reform of English children's literature in higher vocational colleges in China. Traditional teaching lacks the cultivation and promotion of students' practical application ability, vocational skills, thinking ability and other aspects, and less help for students' future employment and further study, so it is difficult for students to have a sense of learning achievement and enthusiasm. The teaching of the English children's literature course for Applied English majors of higher vocational colleges has its particularity. The reform of the course under the guidance of OBE theory, making the course improve students' humanities accomplishment, Outcome-Based Education can promote the sustainable development of the students. With Integrating vocational skills, thus more conducive to the construction of a more scientific and efficient teaching model.

Keywords: Outcome-Oriented Education (OBE), the teaching reform, English children's literature

1. An Analysis of the Current Situation of English Children's Literature Teaching

Traditional English literature courses follow the basic teaching model of literature theory courses, with the theoretical mastery of subject knowledge as the basic goal, and the teaching content mainly consists of literary history and selected literature readings, which are mainly taught by teachers, and the paper scores are the main criteria for evaluating students. This conventional model can not meet the demand for high-quality talents in the new era and the reform direction of curriculum ideological and political proposed by

the Ministry of Education of China, nor meet the training direction and requirements of applied talents in China's higher vocational colleges, and can not adapt to the increasingly severe situation of student graduation and talent market demand.

This paper focuses on the study of English children's literature courses in Applied English majors in higher vocational colleges set up by Zhejiang Yuexiu University. This course is taught to students in the direction of English education. The length of schooling for higher vocational students is three years. This course is offered in the first semester of the third year. Before learning

this course, students who choose the direction of English education have learned major courses such as English Teaching Methodology, Child Educational Psychology, English Classroom Activity Design and Stick Figures and English Teaching, etc. In the second semester of the third year, some students will enter the society to take internships and seek jobs. They can engage in teaching practice according to their major direction. Another part of the students will take part in the competition of the upgraded examination and have obtained a higher undergraduate degree. In the future, some students will continue to study and take part in the postgraduate entrance examination. The study of English literature courses is also of great significance to these students.

Based on OBE theory, this paper argues that the implementation of teaching activities must consider whether the learning outcomes of the course are of practical help and significance to the future development of students. If the course of English children's literature can cultivate students' humanistic qualities and integrate vocational skills, at the same time, learning this course can be a good opportunity and entrance for students to develop vocational skills. Many teaching materials and themes in English education can be used for reference from English children's literature. It is very necessary for both young English learners and adult English learners to learn language and cultural knowledge from excellent English children's literature. However, the teaching mode of traditional literature course has been restricting teachers' teaching thinking, and some teachers think it is unnecessary to introduce teaching skills into literature teaching. This paper argues that introducing teaching skills can be a breakthrough to carry out the teaching reform of English children's literature, and the author has also made practice and exploration in teaching practice.

2. Relevant Concepts on OBE and Its Inspiration to Teaching

OBE (Outcome-Based Education) was proposed firstly by American scholar Spady (1982) and was applied efficiently in the area of engineering education. After Spady put forward OBE theory, it has had a great impact on education and the other fields both at home and abroad. The following relevant concepts on OBE have important

inspirations and references for the field of English teaching.

According to Spady (1994), it is necessary to follow these four principles in order to implement OBE:

- 1) Ultimate learning outcome should be emphasized on when students accomplish the process of learning, and teachers should guide students to focus learning aims on learning outcomes in the whole teaching process.
- 2) Every student equipped with individual difference, to which teachers should give full consideration. Furthermore, teachers need to ensure students' opportunity for the purpose of achieving learning outcome by providing sufficient learning resources and time.
- 3) In the course of teaching, challenged standard should be set for the encouragement of students' learning in depth and the achievement of more successful studying. It includes three points, first, raise standards of implementation to promotestudents to achieve a higher level. Second, remove the difficulties related to success toencourage students to make a better performance. Third, provide high-level course toguide students to make effort to achieve a higher standard.
- 4) Teachers guide students to make the final objective as a start, design down teaching to implement teaching activities.

The OBE theory emphasizes the reverse design of talents cultivation plans and cultivation processes starting from students' learning outcomes. What should students learn? Why do they learn? How to learn? What are the learning outcomes? It requires the construction of cultivation objectives according to the graduation requirements, and then the construction of curriculum system to guide the teaching contents, and finally the formation of continuous improvement of closed-loop teaching quality assurance system to promote the continuous improvement of talents cultivation.

3. Exploration and Application of Teaching Reform Based on OBE Theory

In the media age with increasing opening to the outside world, information explosion and various cultures at different levels, college students'

thoughts and concepts are directly impacted and influenced by foreign culture and information in the process of learning foreign languages. If they do not know how to take its essence, abandon its dross, blindly accept the information and culture they come into contact with, and even lose their health in spiritual consciousness, deny the excellent culture of our own nation, and are confused and decadent in thought, then talent cultivation will be completely meaningless.

3.1 Shifting Fixed Mindset to Clarify Teaching Objectives

In the discussion of foreign language teaching reform in Chinese colleges and universities, the status of literature courses has been hotly debated, and the voices for reform have been constantly raised. In the 1980s, with China's reform and opening up, there was a time when everyone on university campuses loved, read and studied foreign literary masterpieces. And as China's market economy development, applied graduates are preferred by employers and higher education was once rife with utilitarianism. Literature courses once became the representative of "useless to learn" courses. Some colleges and universities even regarded courses such as British and American literature as white elephant and ignored their humanistic education function, making literature courses become language skills courses based on literary texts. Wang Shouren once put forward that "When teachers deal with these selected readings, they spend most of their time on explaining the meaning of sentences and words, and literature class becomes an intensive reading class" (Shouren Wang, 2002, 10). Fortunately, the field of foreign language education in Chinese colleges and universities has reconsidered and put forward that foreign language should not be regarded as a tool major, and its humanistic connotation should not be ignored. Foreign language majors should not weaken the teaching of foreign literature, but also make efforts to develop this resource and make it the real backbone of foreign language teaching.

As a matter of fact, foreign language courses have dual characteristics, namely instrumental and humanistic, and students can best absorb these two nutrients when learning literature courses. English literature course has the characteristics of professionalism in language learning and

inclusiveness and subjectivity in cultivating students' emotion and thinking ability. Literature students have an open mind in the process of learning literature. By reading British and American literary works, students actively participate in the process of finding, discovering and creating the meaning of the text, and gradually develop a keen feeling ability, master rigorous analysis methods, and form accurate expression methods. This ability of feeling, analysis, and expression, which can elevate rich perceptual experience to abstract rational understanding, will benefit students infinitely. Teachers should study teaching models to guide students to output learning outcomes and encourage students to express their personal views and opinions, so as to finally form the ability of multiple thinking.

The above points of view focus on the teaching of undergraduate English literature courses, and also have a lot of reference and warning for the English literature courses in higher vocational colleges. The course of English literature in higher vocational colleges has its particularity. By absorbing the educational concept of OBE, more perfect and efficient teaching reform can be carried out. Teachers must shift fixed mindset, according to the characteristics of higher vocational students, to find the correct path of reform. Pradhan (2021) mentioned that OBE aims to ensure that learners are equipped with knowledge, competence and positive attitude after graduation. Higher vocational colleges offer English literature courses. Taking the college in this paper as an example, students' major direction is refined for English education. Classic British and American children's literature from the 18th century to the 20th century is selected as the textbook, which makes a preliminary preparation for teaching reform. Based on the concept of OBE, the talent cultivation objectives of this course are finally set into three dimensions: the cultivation of English children's literature literacy, the improvement of multiple thinking abilities, and the expansion of English teaching skills and classroom activity design based on children's literature.

3.2 Specific Implementation Key Steps

The macro teaching dimensions must be implemented into the specific teaching content,

teaching design and strategy, and finally achieve specific teaching objectives. Based on the concept of OBE education, the following key steps should be paid attention to in the implementation of higher vocational English children's literature teaching: identifying the learning outcomes, identifying the teaching strategies, and constructing the teaching evaluation system.

3.2.1 Identifying Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are both the starting point and the end point of OBE teaching design. Students' learning outcomes are always consistent with teaching objectives. According to the principle of reverse design in the concept of OBE, learning outcomes should be determined from the beginning of the course. Students' actual learning basis and ability should be considered, and corresponding learning materials extended to after-class should be provided, as well as some templates or models. Learning outcomes include knowledge, emotion, thinking ability and skills. The skills developed in the course of English children's literature should focus on the training of students' relevant teaching skills for future English teaching. The specific requirements of learning outcomes can be as follows: making courseware and introducing the author's life, story outline and plot of literary works in English, designing or adapting the author's profile and story of literary works into mind maps with stick figures, recording a literary work or author's story into an audio or short video suitable for children, adapting literary works into short plays suitable for children, etc. Therefore, at the beginning of the course, students should be instilled with ideas, determine the form of learning outcomes, lay out specific requirements and details, and adjust according to students' feedback at any time.

3.2.2 Identifying the Teaching Strategies

Teaching strategies include various teaching methods or teaching models. The concept of OBE also puts forward some requirements for the transformation of the teaching implementation process, which has a good guiding significance for this course, as follows: teachers should strive to change the traditional indoctrination class into a dialogue class, the closed class into an open class, and the knowledge teaching class into an ability training class; teachers should pay attention to

students' thinking ability, and whether students are willing to learn and able to learn.

Therefore, teachers should truly take students as the center in all teaching links. Specific teaching methods, such as task-based teaching, project-based teaching, theme-based teaching and discussion method, are more suitable for children's literature courses in English. The class can be divided into small groups to complete the learning results, which is also helpful to cultivate students' teamwork spirit. The teaching of theoretical knowledge related to literature courses can be assigned to students in advance to complete self-study or preview with the help of flipped classroom, micro-course and related teaching platforms as learning tasks. Teachers should pay attention to the improvement of students' self-learning consciousness and ability, save more time in class, leave the stage for students to show their learning achievements, let students get more opportunities for exercise and sense of accomplishment, so as to train students to pay more attention to the process of self-learning.

3.2.3 Constructing the Teaching Evaluation System

The evaluation system of English children's literature includes students' self-evaluation and teaching evaluation. Teaching evaluation based on the concept of OBE focuses on students' learning outcomes, advocates the diversification, three-dimensional and hierarchical sense of evaluation, emphasizes the connotation of learning outcomes and individual learning progress, does not emphasize the comparison between students and individual excellent students, attaches importance to teaching evaluation results to promote continuous improvement of teaching quality. Student-centered education is the most penetrating and guiding principle in the concept of OBE. The specific meanings include the following four points: One is that every student can succeed; Second, considering the actual situation of students; Thirdly, starting from the development potential of students; The fourth, arranging the study schedule according to the students' study situation. Therefore, teachers should design students' self-evaluation questionnaire, establish students' self-evaluation portfolio, make relevant observation, interview, and survey, obtain scientific feedback and data,

understand students' specific course learning situation in stages, so as to discover problems in time, understand students' status, solve problems, and promote the development of teaching.

Teachers' teaching evaluation should follow the combination of process evaluation and summative evaluation and treat students from the perspective of development. Whether it is process evaluation or summative evaluation, the final output of students' learning outcomes is not achieved overnight. Based on the educational concept of OBE, the teaching evaluation of English children's literature courses accounts for 40% of the summative evaluation and 60% of the process evaluation. Teachers can also divide the learning process of students into different learning stages and make process evaluation according to the learning effect achieved in each stage. Each learning outcome output in the process evaluation is actually based on whether the students really achieve the three teaching objectives, namely, whether they really understand the literary elements of English children's literature, whether they exercise certain thinking ability, and the ability to use the learned literature to carry out certain teaching design. According to the evaluation results, teachers can make better learning strategies for the next step of students' learning.

4. Conclusion

1) The inspiration of English children's literature for students and the promotion of new technology for student's learning of English children's literature have achieved a win-win situation. Students should be encouraged to learn and output creatively combining their knowledge, emotion and skills. In the era of new media, with the help of the latest network technology, mobile technology and artificial intelligence technology, students have long been more than just making a PPT to participate in class presentation. Some students can use some software and related network platforms or even AI technology to record audio and video by themselves and make short videos for children's English teaching; some students can use other relevant software to draw English mind maps, posters, small comics, small picture books and other forms of learning outcomes according to their knowledge of English children's literature. While experiencing the charm

of literature, they also spread English children's literature and prepare themselves for possible future teaching jobs.

2) Based on the concept of OBE, it is a beneficial and innovative attempt to explore the teaching reform of English children's literature in higher vocational college. In the future, the reform will continue to improve. As educators, we should continue to pay attention to new technologies and new educational ideas. We should also be full of trust in students.

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