

Ideological and Political Teaching Practice for College English under the Instruction of POA

Yenan Li*, Wei Zhang

Rocket Force University of Engineering, Xi'an, China

*Corresponding author: liyanan1943@163.com

Abstract: This article is based on the teaching practice under the instruction of POA and aims to help students build their cultural confidence, learn more about Chinese culture, and try to promote Chinese culture to the whole world. Though the teaching procedure of motivating, enabling and assessing, the teacher plays the role of a scaffold to lead the students explore the culture connotation by themselves.

Keywords: teaching practice, college English, POA

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of our society, the coming of artificial intelligence and 5 G has had a great influence on people's ideology. People start to realize that information technology is playing a more and more important role in our daily life and almost no one can live without this modern technology. At the same time, there is a trend that the importance of humanities is being neglected [1]. However, it should be admitted that humanities, as the important part of human civilization, should still be highly valued, especially for the students major in natural sciences and engineering in modern times. They should not only master their professional skills and knowledge, but also be equipped with the ability of creativity. In addition, the critical thinking and international vision are also necessary for them. As a result, it is essential and urgent to highlight the improvement of college students' humanities quality in the college education. Therefore, college English, a comprehensive course which can be regarded both as functional and humanistic, should be put more emphasis on. With its comprehensive functions, it should play a more important role in students' life [2].

2. Brief introduction to the Productive-Oriented Approach

The Production Oriented Approach (POA) was a new teaching concept put forward by Professor Wen Qiufang and her research team based on the present situation of English teaching in China where the phenomena that the students' learning was separated with teachers' teaching has been existing. The core concepts for the POA are the combination of learning and applying, promoting students' learning by applying, as well as learning while applying and applying while learning. The purpose of these concepts is to realize the natural transition between learning and applying, that is, students can immediately apply the knowledge they have just learned. The POA has put forward three types of teaching hypothesis, which are input-driven hypothesis, output-driven hypothesis and selective learning respectively. In addition, according to the POA, there are mainly three teaching procedures: motivating, enabling and assessing. To be specific, during the procedure of motivating, the teacher should design a social situation suitable for the students and a task with some potential value for communication in order to arouse the students' interest and passion to fulfill this task. In this way, the students' motivation to study will be enhanced. During the enabling procedure, the teacher ought to provide the students with necessary input materials. Besides, the teacher should lead the students to select the materials they need and process these materials so as to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to fulfill their task, such as the information of language, content, passage structure, etc. The purpose for this procedure is to enable the students to fulfill their task [3]. During the assessing procedure, the teacher should assess the students' performance immediately in class and make some remediation if necessary. After class, the students should finish their task according to the teacher's suggestion. Finally, the teacher should assess the students' final performance.

While for the students who major in natural science and engineering, they are not good at the application of English as they may not spend much time studying English and for the little time when

they study English, the most common thing they do is memorize the vocabulary. In fact, they have no time to practice using their English [4]. As a result, the author tries to broaden the students' horizon and improve their ability by helping them improve their ability to use English and think in English with the help of the POA.

In this paper, the author takes Unit 5 of New Horizon College English (the third version), Book 4 as an example. In this example, the POA is used to expand the content of this text in order to improve the students' ability of critical thinking and cross-cultural ability.

2.1 Motivating

During the procedure of motivating, an interviewing video where foreigners are asked to have a comment on their impressions of Chinese people on the street was employed to introduce the students to the main topic. In this short video, it is commonly expressed by the foreigners that instead of going Dutch, Chinese people would pay for the bill secretly, and besides, they tend to say a lot of indirect words to dismiss others instead of directly pointing out their faults or shortages. As a result, these foreigners think that Chinese people are very modest, indirect and polite. At this instant, the teacher will ask the students whether they agree with what the foreigners think. And of course the students will disagree with them, as they are all Chinese and they know we Chinese are more than that indirect. And we have a lot of ancient poems that express the writer's feelings very directly. Besides, we also have various kinds of forms to express us, such as Peking Operas, etc. Also, we have our unique culture forms such as Chinese characters, Chinese festivals, Han Fu, etc. and it is very necessary for them to know us.

However, at the same time, the author of this text also points out, "Like a piece of bread, they are only the crust of the interaction, or what is said from the polite distance of social contexts: greetings, farewells, convenient excuses, and the like. This generalization, therefore, is not a true composite of Chinese culture but only a stereotype of our exterior behavior." This sentence means that without a close touch with Chinese culture, no one can truly understand Chinese people.

After that, the teacher will lead the students to wonder on the reasons for these misunderstandings. After the students' answers, it will be concluded that the real reason for the misunderstanding is that the foreigners do not truly understand Chinese culture. In this way, the students will be led to realize the importance of advocating Chinese culture and make it known to the whole world. The purpose of this process is to stimulate the students' desire to finish the task of this class, which is to introduce the content of *The Analects* in English. In the process of learning how to introduce *The Analects*, the students will be able to understand *The Analects* further and at the same time, their English ability of expression will be enhanced. As a result, the students' cross-cultural awareness will naturally be cultivated and their cross-cultural ability will be greatly improved.

During the procedure of motivating, the role of the teacher is like a scaffold. The teacher is supposed to construct the frame for knowledge for the students and provide them with related input materials. In this way, the students can be led to give full play to their ability and express them freely in order to finish the task as well as practice their English speaking. Therefore, it is of great importance to select the proper input materials for the students.

Just in the case of this unit, in order for the students to complete the task of introducing *The Analects* in English, the focus is as follows: on the one hand, they should fully understand the content of *The Analects*; on the other hand, they should get familiar with the expressions in this book in English. As a consequence, in this unit, the teacher will focus on the instruction and analysis of the content and lead the students to further understand the connotations of the book. In addition, the teacher will help the students to associate with their daily life to ponder on the significance of Confucius' ideas in the modern society. In this way, the students are led to realize the importance of *The Analects* in this fast paced society and thus the cultural confidence is built.

2.2 Enabling

The procedure for this enabling is as follows:

First, the teacher will provide the students with some articles introducing Confucius and *The Analects* for them to get some information about *The Analects*. The students will be asked to read them before class and find some key information, such as what was Confucius' job, when he was born, why he traveled around and what was the relationship between Confucius and *The Analects*. And the students could find the answers in the articles.

In the class, the teacher will lead the students to ponder on the connotations of Confucius' core concepts, namely, ren (benevolence) and li (propriety), on the foundation that they have ready grasped the basic information about Confucius and The Analects. Next, to lead the students further explore the connotations of benevolence and propriety, the teacher will assign a task of matching for them, that is, some representative sentences in Chinese from The Analects are chosen and students are asked to match their corresponding sentences in English to know some of the English expressions and also to analyze them further.

For example, the sentence "A moral person, wishing to make success by himself, seeks also to help others make success; wishing to develop himself, seeks also to help others develop." is a representative sentence in The Analects, which can interpret the connotation of benevolence. In Analyzing this sentence, the teacher will lead the students to interpret this sentence in their own words and try to realize the significance of it. Then the teacher will expand the content by association it with the saying "Caught in difficulties, one should still hold himself to a high standard; when illustrious and influential, one should contribute to the well-being of all." by Mencius. In this part, the teacher will lead students to think of some examples, such as Da Yu who controlled the flood, Fan Zhongyan who considered the world as the most important, Yuan Longping who contributed his whole life to make people get rid of hunger, and Tu Youyou who made a great contribution to the medicine field. All of them are good examples of "a moral person".

In addition, the teacher will also lead the students to analyze the sentence: "To have love for parents and respect to elder brothers is the trunk or essence of all benevolent actions", which tells the importance of filial piety in Chinese culture. After analyzing the meaning of this sentence, the teacher will lead the students to associate it with stories happened in Chinese history or in the modern times about filial piety, such as the story of Wang Xiang who lied on ice to get carps for his mother in winter, the story of Kong Rong who gave the bigger pear to his elder brother and he could only ate the smaller one, etc. These stories are cited to arouse students' empathy as well as enable them to think whether they are a person with filial piety. And they are encouraged to share their own story of filial piety or their plan to act according to filial piety.

As for the sentence "Do not look at what is contrary to propriety; do not listen to what is contrary to propriety; do not speak of what is contrary to propriety; do not take any action which is contrary to propriety.", the teacher will lead the students to discuss in groups what we should do and what we should not do in our daily life.

Through the analysis and interpretation of typical sentences in The Analects from the perspective of the society and individual, the teacher will conclude the idea of "putting oneself in other's place" and lead the students to ponder about how to achieve benevolence in real life. As to the topic of achieving benevolence, the teacher then will introduce the concept of propriety in The Analects. To achieve benevolence you have to restrain yourself and observe propriety. By relating to the behaviors and words in the text, the students can understand the connotation of The Analects better. Also the teacher will lead the students to associate with their daily life and experiences to talk about how they behave according to the propriety and thus achieving benevolence.

After that, the teacher will conclude what we have learned about benevolence and propriety and raise a question for the students to think about the significance of them in the modern society. As they were put forward by Confucius, who lived more than 2000 years ago, are they still of significance to us in the 21st century? Are they outdated? The students will be divided into groups to discuss the question in English. In the discussion, the students are encouraged to associate this question with aspects of their own life and with the world today. Through discussion, the teacher and students will get the conclusion that it is necessary for the whole world to learn about The Analects today to realize a community with a shared future for mankind.

As only with the conception of ren and li, we are able to think about others when we make some decisions and do some things. And only with a considerate heart for others and filial piety, can we behave ourselves and avoid making mistakes. Only in this way, the officials can serve for the people with all his effort. And there will be no bribery. The teacher and students will think more about each other so that the class will be harmonious. There will be no theft or robbery. Furthermore, if we see some old people lying on the ground, we will take no hesitation to help him or her. If we see a little child asking for help, we will resolutely give our hands to him or her.

All in all, the society will be a definitely better one and that is what Confucius' concept of ren and li all about. That is also what our core values of socialism all about. In that instant, the teacher will put

forward the core values to remind the students, that is prosperity, democracy, civilization, harmony, freedom, equality, justice, democracy, patriotism, devotion, integrity and kindness. It is just because of these values that there are so many medical workers, volunteers and heroes from other professions can act heroically in the fight with COVID 19. It is because of these values that soldiers can devote themselves to the protection and defense of their country. It is because of these values that people from all walks of life can do their best to make a contribution. And when all people in the world can achieve these values, the world will definitely become a community of shared future for all mankind. That is the significance of Confucius in modern times. So At the end of the class, the assignment is to make a short video to introduce The Analects.

2.3 Assessment

In this part, the teacher will assess the students performance immediately in class and after class the teacher will also give a comprehensive assessment to their performance and let the students to assess their works mutually. Through the analysis of the connotations of ren and li, most students can interpret them correctly. In consequence, it is easy for them to relate them to their daily life. But in terms of language, there are still many mistakes, such as the correct usage of vocabulary. Also they are liable to make some mistakes on grammar. For example, Some students want to express that “we should respect the aged and take good care of children. We should not turn a blind eye when we see an old man lying on the ground waiting for help”. However, some expressions such as “respect the aged and take good care of children”, “turn a blind eye” are unfamiliar to them and difficult for them to express. They may make some mistakes when expressing this idea. At this time, it is necessary for the teacher to give them immediate help for them to expand their mind and try to broaden their vocabulary so that the students can make full use of their vocabulary to describe their ideas.

Furthermore, the teacher will let students to submit their assignment to the We-chat to enable them to assess their assignment mutually. As a result, the students can not only find their own mistakes but also learn from others. And through discovering others’ mistakes, they can improve themselves so that they won’t make the same mistake in the future.

3. Reflection

This class is an expansion on the basis of the text in order to improve the students’ cultural quality and English ability. Through POA, the students are driven by tasks to learn the connotations of The Analects and express them in English so that they can act actively in class and participate in the activities. In addition, in this class, The Analects is associated with real life so that the students can understand the abstract concepts better, which is quite practical. In this way the purpose of moral education can be achieved. But for the assessment part, the criteria is not clear enough as students can not comment the videos properly. So in the future, the teacher should take all aspects into consideration and set a clear criteria for the assessment and motivate the students to perform better.

4. Conclusion

According to POA, the teacher should set a relatively challenging task which must also be familiar to the students to motivate the students. In the enabling process, the teacher should act as a scaffold to lead the students to explore the knowledge themselves in order to improve their learning abilities as well as their English competence. In addition, POA also aims to improve students’ cultural awareness and comprehensive ability and also help them build a correct perception of the world and life. Through the practice of this class, the students can grasp the basic expressions about The Analects, have the ability to tell stories about Confucius’ doctrines, and have a correct view on socialism and harmony. The objectives are basically achieved. But for the better effects in the future, the teacher should pay more attention to the setting of the standard of the assessment so that the students can be better motivated.

References

- [1] Wen Qiufang. *A frame work of integrating moral education into college foreign language teaching [J]. Foreign Languages in China, 2021, 18(2): 47-52.*
- [2] Du Gangyue, Sun Ruijuan. *Methodology research of “ideological and political theories teaching”*

in college English course [J]. Journal of Yan'an University (Social Sciences Edition), 2019, 41(4): 122-126.

[3] Song Chengyun. A study on the practice of POA-based hybrid English teaching in universities [J]. Journal of Jilin Engineering Normal University, 2022, 38(6): 35-39.

[4] Cai Jigang. Exploration of the connotation of curriculum ideology politics and moral education [J]. Foreign Language Research, 2021, 187(3): 52-57.