

Research on the Blended Teaching Mode of College English Based on the ‘Unipus’ Platform

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ABSTRACT

The era of informatization and intelligence has provided new teaching methods, learning methods, and unprecedented rich resources for foreign language teaching. College English teachers should not only keep up with the times, and integrate information technology in the specific classroom teaching process, but they also need to innovate and practice online teaching modes and online and offline blended teaching modes in the traditional classroom. Given this, based on an in-depth study of the connotation and characteristics of blended learning, this article takes the ‘Unipus’ teaching platform as an example to conduct a series of teaching designs and practical research on students’ online self-learning, deep integration of teachers’ classroom teaching and the platform, and evaluation of students’ online learning effects, to inspire the reform of blended teaching in college English.

Keywords: ‘Unipus’ teaching platform, College English, Online and offline blended teaching.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the arrival of a new historical period, China has accelerated the pace of education informatization. The release of a series of documents such as the Ministry of Education’s “Thirteenth Five Year Plan for Education Informatization” and the “Ten Year Development Plan for Education Informatization (2011-2020)” has received positive responses from universities across the country, and education informatization has entered into a rapid development age. The “Guidelines for College English Teaching (2020 Edition)” specifically points out that the era of informatization and intelligence has provided new teaching methods, learning methods, and unprecedented rich resources for foreign language teaching. Because of this, based on in-depth research on the connotation and characteristics of blended teaching, this article takes the ‘Unipus’ teaching platform as an example, trying to explore the teaching designs and practices conducted on students’ online learning, the integration between teachers’ classroom teaching and the ‘Unipus’ platform, and the students’ online learning effectiveness.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent years, college English online and offline blended teaching has been widely promoted in various universities. However, the literature shows significant differences in the specific teaching design, teaching form, and teaching effect. The research on blended teaching of college English mainly focuses on the following aspects:

- Research on importance and necessity: Sun Xiaojie (2024), Wu Shaoyan (2024), and Jin Xiaoqi (2022) pointed out that society has put forward higher requirements on university English education, and college English teachers have explored new paths, new contents, and new forms of integrating ‘Unipus’ teaching platform and traditional classroom from the aspects of curriculum design, textbook construction, evaluation system, and teacher development. It is significant for promoting the reform of university English teaching, establishing the ideological and cultural battlefield of higher education, and vigorously promoting the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. Shen Xiaoyan (2022) explored the feasibility of blended learning in college

English and attempted to use the 'Unipus' platform to construct a flipped classroom that integrates "teachers, students, courses, and extracurricular activities" to promote college English listening teaching. Blended learning effectively combines the advantages of traditional education and online learning, allowing students to engage in interactive discussions with teachers and classmates in the classroom and engage in self-directed and collaborative learning through online learning platforms, fully unleashing their potential.

- Research on teaching mode design and implementation strategies: Zhu Hong (2024) proposed to divide the online and offline integrated college English teaching mode based on the 'Unipus' platform into three stages: pre-class teaching, integration of online and offline teaching, and offline teaching after class; Duan Xiaole (2022) explored the blended teaching mode of college English from multiple perspectives based on the characteristics of the course "College English Audio Visual Speaking". They investigated the effective ways of integrating 'Unipus' into the course from multiple aspects, such as teaching objects, teaching plans, and teaching processes; Du Linhong (2023), Yang Su (2023), and others discussed how to integrate the 'Unipus' teaching platform and the concept of 'curriculum ideology and politics' into the English courses.
- Research on teaching practice design: Many teachers (Xia Bing ,2023; Li Jing,2022; etc.), conducted practical exploration of "College English Audio Visual Speaking" based on different textbooks, integrating the 'Unipus' teaching platform into pre-class preview, in-class practice, and post-class consolidation in the process of college English teaching, fully utilizing the video displays, listening tests, and oral practices on the 'Unipus' teaching platform, guiding students to learn independently, and making reasonable use of fragmented time.

The 'Unipus' teaching platform can help college English teachers understand students' learning situations and difficulties, and provide personalized tutoring and guidance. This helped teachers adjust teaching strategies and content promptly, thus creating an efficient classroom. Based on online resources and big data, it was possible to observe students' learning processes and outcomes and provide effective suggestions and

opinions to improve the quality of education. Through literature review, the author found that the current research on blended learning of college English based on the 'Unipus' has the following shortcomings:

- The curriculum needs to be optimized and improved.
- The ideological content of the course needs to be enriched, and the difficult points of the course are not prominent;
- The course evaluation system needs to be improved, and the feedback on students' learning is not accurate enough.

How to solve these problems and efficiently integrate online and offline courses is an urgent issue that needs to be addressed in blended learning of college English. Therefore, this article intends to thoroughly explain how to improve blended learning in college English from the teaching content, teaching objectives, and reform plans, and implement the reform of college English teaching in practice.

3. METHODS FOR DESIGNING REFORM PLANS AND SOLVING PROBLEMS

Teachers play leading roles in the class by their words and deeds and serve as role models for students. Their high morality is also an important part of the construction of college English courses. College English teachers should not only be good at teaching skills, but they also need to shape students' characters. Through the infiltration of their examples, they help students establish socialist core values, and foster their exploring spirits, lofty ideals, and environmental protection awareness. College English teachers should regularly exchange teaching experiences with their peers. They can collectively write teaching plans and design teaching courses. By forming a teaching group, they can integrate teaching sources and generate innovative ideas. Through collaborative efforts, it is a powerful guarantee for the teaching group to discover, analyze, and solve problems.

Using the 'Unipus' teaching platform as a carrier, college English teachers design a blended teaching plan, select teaching content, and clarify teaching objectives. Based on the teaching book "New Horizon English", a combination of theme extraction and language integration are adopted to explore and extract cultural elements, life philosophy, and values in the text. By tracking

current hot topics or social phenomena, English teachers select the teaching content carefully and determine the teaching objectives for each unit. For example, the themes of war, technology, professions, globalization, and interpersonal relationships involved in the teaching content are correspondingly extended to include the spirit of the Long March, technological innovation, craftsmanship, model worker culture, cultural confidence, cultural outreach, equality and harmony, honesty and friendliness, outlook on life and values, patriotism, aesthetic humanities, and positive attitude towards life.

College English teachers should apply spiritual guidance, such as ideals and beliefs, to the teaching of language skills. In addition to finding highlights for “ideological and political” elements from these teaching materials, it is also possible to analyze them from a micro level, that is, from the perspective of linguistic points. When explaining language points, examples and materials related to “ideological and political” can be selected to truly integrate ideological and political education into the entire process of college English teaching.

College English teachers should determine the basic teaching process, integrate teaching resources, and integrate the ‘Unipus’ teaching platform throughout the entire teaching process. The blended teaching of college English mainly adopts a combination of online and offline studies, including three modules: pre-class, in-class, and post-class. Firstly, before teaching, teachers can use the “Homework and Testing” section of the ‘Unipus’ platform to publish pre-class materials for online classes, including audio and video, mini-lessons, and pre-class quizzes, to urge students to complete relevant learning content online through mobile phones or computers. The ‘Unipus’ has the function of real-time tracking of students’ online learning progress and it can also ensure the accuracy of completing tests. Teachers can view a student’s previewing progress and pre-class test scores through the teacher entry, and understand in advance the student’s doubts about the teaching content. This part of the content will be the focus of the next teaching content design and will be resolved in face-to-face classroom teaching.

Secondly, in class, teachers can use the paper version of the textbook and the real-time display or playback function provided by Unipus. During the teaching process, teachers can visualize the paper version of the textbook and attract students’ attention. In addition, the Unipus also has some

designs that intrigue the students, such as voting functions, where teachers conduct real-time voting on the topics taught in the unit, understand students’ views and positions on the unit topics, and conduct classroom discussions based on this. This not only exercises English speaking and listening skills but also integrates ideological and political elements, providing students with a spring breeze and rain-like ideological and political education. This online and offline integrated intelligent teaching can not only leverage the advantages of traditional classroom face-to-face communication of information and emotions between teachers and students but also combine online resources to enrich classroom content.

Finally, after class, teachers can use the ‘Unipus’ platform to assign homework or use the built-in test question bank to conduct online assessments of students’ learning knowledge, to timely understand their learning situation. On the one hand, online testing, based on the powerful question bank of the Unipus, can more scientifically assess students’ true level; On the other hand, the online assignment and testing mode reduces the workload of teachers in grading homework and quizzes, allowing them to focus more on instructional design.

4. BUILDING AN EVALUATION MECHANISM THAT MATCHES EACH PART

The teaching evaluation adopts a dual-track system of formative evaluation and summative evaluation, consisting of three parts: individual student evaluation, inter-group and intra-group mutual evaluation, and teacher evaluation. At the same time, online and offline evaluations are adopted, and peer evaluation and teacher evaluation methods are used to evaluate the overall performance of students offline.

Based on the ‘Unipus’ smart teaching platform, blended learning is carried out, and the learning process consists of two parts: offline self-learning and online classroom learning. Traditional assessment mechanisms are no longer able to detect students’ mastery of the knowledge they have learned. Therefore, a new process evaluation mechanism should be established to organically combine the completion of tasks such as online preview, classroom discussion, and post-class review, and to strengthen the management of the learning process by detecting students’ learning time and efficiency through real-time data from the

'Unipus' backend. At the same time, a peer evaluation mechanism is introduced, allowing students to evaluate the assignments and group reports of other students both online and offline, and the evaluation results are included in the process evaluation. From this perspective, this teaching model has increased the proportion of process evaluation in daily life, urging students to pay attention to daily previews and reviews. Diversified evaluation methods not only test students' mastery of teaching knowledge points, but also cultivate their spirit of objectivity, diligence, and cooperation with peers. The form of the evaluation process is also a manifestation of moral education elements.

Besides the evaluation system, the 'Unipus' platform also provides rich sources for traditional courses on ideological and political perspectives. Before starting the new unit learning, teachers will release targeted ideological and political education learning resources, and assign learning tasks. Teachers will encourage students to learn independently and have a preliminary understanding and recognition of the new unit on the 'Unipus' platform. Teachers can also provide personalized teaching guidance for students with learning difficulties through the online communication function of the 'Unipus' platform, and jointly complete pre-class preparation. At the same time, teachers should increase the assessment process for students' language knowledge and ideological dynamics.

As a network platform for blended learning, 'Unipus' has achieved the very important goals of blended learning mode, providing new ideas and methods for ideological and political education in college English courses. On the one hand, teachers rely on the 'Unipus' platform to create a three-dimensional ideological and political education environment around teaching themes and objectives, organically integrating in-class and out-of-class teaching resources, and ensuring that educational activities run through pre-class, in-class, and after-class. On the other hand, teachers use the 'Unipus' self-learning and testing platform to grasp students' learning characteristics, carry out personalized teaching, help students improve their learning strategies, achieve a combination of knowledge cultivation and value guidance, and reshape a new model of digital curriculum education.

5. INNOVATION POINT

The research combines online teaching platforms with traditional classroom teaching and explores a new approach to evaluate college English teaching under a blended learning mode. The blended teaching mode of college English listening and speaking courses has greatly promoted and propelled teaching quality with significant results. Using 'Unipus' as an online teaching platform, teachers collect, organize, analyze, and provide feedback on learning data based on student's actual learning situations, including student learning duration, the accuracy of various questions, completion of assignments, attendance data, grade records, and rankings. Based on these data and statistical results, teachers can independently set the dimension of grade statistics, establish an effective formative evaluation system, provide feedback on teaching effectiveness, and implement effective teaching interventions.

The research explores the development of subsequent courses such as writing and speaking on the 'Unipus' teaching platform. The learning of college English itself is a process of leading students to engage in cultural exchange. However, in the real-time teaching process, teachers often focus more on guiding students to learn and understand English reading and writing skills and Western culture but neglect the connection and guidance of students' listening, speaking, and writing skills. In the normal teaching of college English, students' reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities show an uneven development tendency. Although the teaching activities involve practicing students' listening and speaking abilities, because college English is generally taught in large classes with few class hours, it is difficult to take a long time for students to practice in the classroom. Through the 'Unipus' teaching platform, students can use their after-school time to practice independently and initiate discussions online, making it more convenient to receive feedback from classmates and teachers.

Introducing the 'Unipus' platform into the traditional class has changed the students' passive listening in traditional classrooms, allowing students' initiative to be fully utilized. Firstly, in terms of the teaching effectiveness of listening and speaking courses, the passive situation of teachers speaking and students listening has changed, and the classroom atmosphere is more active. Teachers can flexibly grasp the progress of classroom teaching based on the pre-class preview situation of

students on the 'Unipus' platform, taking into account both the needs of students with weak English foundations and those with better foundations to improve their listening and speaking skills. Secondly, students' enthusiasm for self-directed learning has been significantly improved. Because platform learning scores are proportionally included in the final grade, pre-class preparation and post-class assignments need to be submitted on the 'Unipus' learning platform within the specified time, objectively constraining students' time allocation for learning English outside of class. With the increase of time invested in English learning, most students have gained more confidence in improving their English listening and speaking abilities. They have gradually shifted from passive listening and speaking to actively trying to express themselves in English and showcase their talents in class.

6. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

Firstly, blended teaching of college English based on the 'Unipus' can cultivate students' autonomous learning ability. Since entering the 21st century, Internet technology has entered a new era of blowout development. All walks of life have benefited from the innovation of Internet technology, and the education industry has also been greatly impacted. Teaching means, teaching methods, and teaching concepts have been constantly reformed and improved. In the era of 'Internet plus', students also broke through the shackles of traditional classrooms and began to use computers and smartphones for intelligent learning. In this situation, college English teachers should timely utilize these new technologies and models to adapt to the development of intelligent teaching in the new era. Among various new intelligent English teaching platforms, the 'Unipus' platform stands out with its rich learning resources and personalized teaching customization, thus it becomes a new teaching aid chosen by many college English teachers. The 'Unipus' platform not only meets the needs of teachers and students for intelligent teaching and learning of college English but also actively influences students' foreign language learning motivation and strategies, thereby achieving good learning outcomes. The 'Unipus' platform is of great significance for implementing blended learning in college English classes.

Secondly, college English teaching based on the 'Unipus' is conducive to stimulating students' creativity. In today's highly integrated era of

information technology and education, traditional classroom teaching based on teacher face-to-face instruction, fully leveraging the advantages of online resources and online learning, the two complement each other and can enable students to achieve the best English learning outcomes. Introducing the 'Unipus' teaching platform into college English teaching practice has changed the traditional relationship between teaching and learning. Students have a certain degree of autonomy in their choices and are no longer in a completely passive position. Through the supervision of online platforms, students are more actively involved in teaching activities, unleash their creativity, and independently arrange learning activities. At the same time, teachers should correctly inspire and guide students in teaching activities, and monitor the entire teaching process in real time to avoid students' sluggishness and stimulate their enthusiasm and creativity in participating in teaching activities.

7. CONCLUSION

Based on the 'Unipus' blended learning model for college English, the online teaching platform is integrated with English classroom teaching, fully leveraging the role of the English classroom as the main battlefield with advanced educational concepts and diversified educational methods. Offline classrooms drive online classrooms, while curriculum ideology promotes the teaching and education role of English teaching, truly achieving the goal of combining knowledge education with moral education.

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