

A Smart Blended Class Design of the Course of Basic English I in Outcome-Based Education¹

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Abstract— A smart blended class is designed to develop students' critical thinking and multiliteracy. Based on OBE theory, the essay outlines the expected learning outcomes of Basic English I in Smart Classroom. Autonomous learning is stimulated to catch the basics of language and culture in discussion, group work reporting or individual presentation before class. Discussion and presentation around the focused topics fully spark and mobilize the enthusiasm of students to think critically in class, and after class. And extended reflection is arranged to stimulate deeper practice in multiliteracy. Students participate in the evaluation of class performance by self-evaluation, peer evaluation and group evaluation, highlighting the main role of students in the evaluation and focuses on the individual development process of students.

Keywords— OBE theory; expected outcomes; multiliteracy; Basic English.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the age of digital information, everything has been digitalized, including classroom teaching. In Smart Classroom knowledge and skills seem to be at the touch of the key, and the responsibility of teachers tend to be reduced to push the button and then transfer knowledge or impart skills or simply let students try themselves. Yet the technology in smart classroom itself is not education. Real education is the awakening of the soul, enlightening students to know and think about the world with the help of smart technology. And foreign language teaching is responsible for cultivating foreign language talents to adapt to the future society.

II. SMART CLASSROOM

Smart Classroom is a comprehensive reform of classroom teaching in teaching content and teaching means, based on data analysis in decision-making, instant evaluation feedback, and three-dimensional interaction in mobile learning terminal. Originating from smart technology in the early twenty-first century, smart classroom teaching has developed into its 3.0, with the following features:

Firstly, Smart Classroom supports students' personalized learning. It highlights student-centered teaching and learning, focusing on the growth and development of individuals and promoting the transformation of knowledge into wisdom. Data processing technology is applied to retrospect and analyze both the teaching and learning process, changing the system function from supporting classroom teaching to supporting students' personalized learning.

Secondly, Smart Classroom makes learning intelligent and efficient with the use of intelligent information technology. The core supporting system of "cloud-and-end", an intelligent service platform empowers teachers to create an interactive and intelligent learning environment with big data network to track individual learning.

Thirdly, Smart Classroom provides an optimized and upgraded smart teaching ecosystem. AI empowers the cloud learning platform with intelligent cloud service, changing it from cloud server to classroom intelligent platform, from mobile terminal to intelligent terminal; from information service to intelligent service.

Though Smart Classroom offers efficient, optimized, and personalized learning is, yet the use of Smart Classroom doesn't mean teaching has been smart unless teacher have a smart design of the class.

III. BLENDED COURSE DESIGN IN OUTCOME BASED EDUCATION

Outcome-Based Education (OBE) advocates the goal of instructional design and implementation as the learning outcome (output), and that is what is to be achieved by students through the educational process. OBE prioritizes the actual needs of the society for talents, emphasizing that teaching time and teaching resources should be designed reasonably around learning output. The implementation of OBE mainly follows four principles: clarity of focus on culminating of significance, expanded opportunity and support for learning success, high expectation for all to succeed, and design down from the ultimate culminating outcomes. OBE is believed to have an expected output, flexible teaching methods, comparable learning outcomes, and active participation of all members. Blended teaching can effectively broaden the access and coverage of teaching, optimizing teaching content and providing a convenient path for the bidirectional exchange of teaching and learning. The designing of blended teaching has its unique peculiarities. Blended teaching in outcome-based education outlines a clear expected ultimate outcome for each course and leads learners to progress towards it in each class. Firstly, blended teaching designs the teaching and learning process before, during and after class, making learning a spiral-rising continuum. Before coming to the class, students complete the learning of the established teaching content

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through chapter learning, thinking about and discussing the topic, and finally forming their personal views. In class, they confront with ideas through group and collective discussion, sparking thoughts and forming a multi-angle and comprehensive understanding of problems. After class, they broaden their knowledge through extended topic discussion and extended reading tasks, sorting out their ideas and improving their critical thinking ability. Secondly, blended teaching provides learners with a communication platform for language output, making static language learning a dynamic cultural two-way exchange. Language is the carrier of culture, and cultural thinking displayed in discourse learning is bound to form a collision and impact on learners' cultural thinking, which is internalized into the language communication ability of words and deeds. At the same time, through work display and topic discussion, learners have the opportunity to express their views and comments with personal experiences, which dynamically generates new teaching content, that is, the learning content of the course is not only the planned content of the chapter, but also the symbiotic corpus of perspectives, opinions and judgments generated dynamically by learners in the learning process. Finally, blended teaching initiates the agency of students to learning. From pre-class preview to class discussion and presentation, and then to after-class extended reading and mutual task valuation activities, learners can build their own autonomous learning all the time. At the same time, by conversing with the learning group in peers, students gain insight into themselves, reflecting and growing in mutual learning.

IV. SMART CLASSROOM A SMART BLENDED CLASS DESIGN OF THE COURSE OF BASIC ENGLISH I

The Course of Basic English I is a basic core course for English teaching major in China. This course aims to systematically teach basic English language knowledge (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary function, etc.), train basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, translating, etc.), enrich knowledge of English literature and culture, and cultivate students' comprehensive use of language knowledge and skills for language communication.

Based on OBE, a blended class in Smart Classroom is design from the following aspects including expected learning outcomes.

A Expected learning outcomes

The course study seeks such expected outcomes as expressed in the following teaching objectives:

Outcome 1: Master the basics of English pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar, grasp the basic English sentence patterns and syntactic structures, understand grammar rules, and enrich the knowledge of English literature and culture.

Outcome 2: Students are able to use correct and appropriate language forms to express their thoughts in both oral and written form, and translate between English and Chinese.

Outcome 3: Students should be able to use the knowledge and skills they have learned to think critically, discussing practical problems or hot topics in real life and expressing opinions.

Outcome 4: Students are able to learn cooperatively, improving communication skills and enhancing teamwork spirit in the participation of class discussion, debates, writing and other activities.

This course of Basic English I cultivates learners' intracultural ability during language skill training, maintains Chinese and English bilingual cultural communication in realistic operation tasks. It is to realize the cultural thinking in the target language in on-going discourse analysis and discussion, comparing the logic of mother tongue thinking, understanding the commonality of culture as well as differences in communication.

B Teaching methods

This course adheres to the concept of "student-centered and teacher-led". Starting from students' existing language skills and knowledge, it guides them to actively explore their unknown part of language and culture.

The course adopts the teaching mode of online and offline blended flipped classroom. Before class, the previewing content, such as supplementary reading and audio-visual teaching materials, is released through the Chaoxing Learning platform to encourage students' autonomous learning of the basics of language and culture. In class, discussion focuses on Group work reporting and individual presentation. Discussion and presentation around the focused topics fully spark and mobilize the enthusiasm of students, stimulating the needs of applying language in specific situations, and improving the comprehensive application ability of language in application. After class, extended reflection is arranged to stimulate deeper reflection, either some topics suitable for discussion, or debate or some suitable for topic expansion through extended reading, comparative reading, or some plot conflicts that are suitable for role play and complement paralinguistic information during verbal communication, such as voice, intonation, tone, body language, and eye contact.

C Activities for the course

The activities for the course mainly include autonomous learning activities before class, discussion and sharing in class and extended reflection after class.

Autonomous learning activities before class: The basics of the learning chapter, including the text audio, background information introduction, text analysis (structure, theme), language analysis (wording, syntactic structure), and writing characteristics, is set in reading or videos available for students to learn at their own paces. The course uses a large number of online free resources, including 1) course audio and videos, such as text audio, basic English audio-visual resources; 2) listening and reading resources, such as English classics listening, English prose and poetry, special English listening (200 lectures), BBC6 Minutes English (300 episodes), English classic movie recording clips; 3) English reading resources, such as science and technology essay reading, English short story collection; 4) Writing resources, such as English vocabulary, grammar and writing, English writing skills; 5) Grammar resources, such as Khan Academy English grammar class (122 lectures), basic English grammar exercises; 6) Speech resources, such as the Art of English Speech, TED

Institute Lecture Collection (200 episodes). The use of online resources makes course learning no longer limited to a textbook, information sources no longer limited to the words of a teacher, students compare in learning, learn by comparison, and practice critical thinking skills.

Discussion and sharing in class: The class mainly focuses on students' inquiries and analysis discussion. The following are main topics, article structure design (what content the article wants to express, what materials are rejected, how, writing logic, intra - and extra-verbal behavior), text theme discussion (genre, narrative or discourse Angle), discourse analysis (cohesion, coherence, rhetoric), comparative analysis of similar texts (Angle, tone, theme, cultural thinking).

D Performance assessment

This course is worth 3 credits and grades are given based on a combination of formative evaluation and summative evaluation, with attendance, class performance, homework accounting for 60% and the final exam 40%. The final exam paper mainly assesses students' language skills in vocabulary, language structure, reading comprehension, writing, and translation.

Classroom attendance is required and performance was evaluated by online interaction (20%) and face-to-face communication in class (80%). All online interactions are automatically scored by the learning platform, and class communication depends mainly on the completion of the task, which is divided into four levels: excellent, medium and pass,

corresponding to 91-95, 86-90, 81-85 and 76-80. Each task was scored separately and the average score was taken. Online homework (40%) is marked online, and the score is accumulated on the platform. Offline (60%) assignments were marked by teachers, and each task was scored separately and averaged.

Grading	Final Exam	Regular Performance		total
		Class Attendance & Performance	Assignments	
Proportion (%)	40	30	30	100

Fig. 1: Performance assessment of Basic English I

Students participate in the evaluation of class performance by self-evaluation, peer evaluation and group evaluation, which highlights the main role of students in the evaluation and focuses on the individual development process of students.

E A case design of the blended online and offline Smart class

The following is a sample teaching design of Basic English I for the blended class in Smart Classroom with a clear illustration of aims and the corresponding evaluating ways (Fig. 2). As shown in the chart, Smart blended class prioritizes critical thinking by encouraging students to relate to their own lives and share with peers. Evaluation of performance is clearly set and each individual is actively involved as an evaluator in the assessing stage, bringing agency and equity.

1	Teaching steps (online)	<p>Another School Year ---What For ? (Warm-up activities)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Listen to one or two of your favorite speeches made at college and discuss the theme and features of them. 2. Cite the most impressive sentences from them and share with your classmates. 3. Compare your chosen speech with the one in the textbook and explain how they are alike and how they are different. 	<p>Aim 1: Be open to popular views and sayings in college speeches.</p> <p>Aim 2: Students are spired to relate the speech to their own life.</p> <p>Aim 3: Students are encouraged to think critically and share openly.</p>	Online understanding and view presenting and sharing (posting, agreeing and disagreeing), with responses credited.
2	Teaching steps (offline)	<p>Structure analysis & Language points (Group discussion and presentation)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze the organization of the speech and disuss why you think it goes that way. 2. Analyze the language features with cited examples share with your classmates. 3. Choose your favorite paragraph and paraphrase it. 	<p>Aim 1: Evaluate the organization of the points.</p> <p>Aim2: Appreciate the features of English.</p> <p>Aim 3: Students are stimulated to relate and think critically.</p>	Face-to-face sharing and discussion (showing, proving and illustrating), with feedback and responses credited by peers and teachers.
3	Teaching steps (offline)	<p>Theme and Writing Features (Debate and individual presentation)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you think of the theme of the speech? How much do you agree with the author? 2. In your opinion what makes a good speech? Design a speech with application of more than 3 modes. 3. Does speaking in public differ in different cultures? Use specific example to prove your point. 	<p>Aim 1: Think critically.</p> <p>Aim 2: Students are spired to reflect and conclude.</p> <p>Aim 3: Students are encouraged to think critically and share openly.</p>	Face-to-face view sharing and presenting (sharing, proving and illustrating), with insights, feedback and responses credited by peers and teachers.

V. CONCLUSION

Smart blended class cultivates critical thinking and cultural communication in real communicative context. It prepares

students to cope with the challenge of the diversity of world culture and the multi-modal expressing of information.

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