



The Combination of the Downward Shift of the Teaching Focus and the Sublimation of the Teaching Objectives

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Abstract. Current English class in China has gained great achievement, but there are still many problems in it such as the wrong emphasis of teaching focus and incomplete teaching objectives. In current English class, the teaching focus do not care about the personalized individuals' development, which lead to negative results of English teaching. Shifting the teaching focus down to the actual learning condition of every students can guaranty the learning quality of students in English class and change students' learning attitude for English to a positive direction. On the other hand, teaching objectives, now, are the language knowledge including vocabularies, grammar and so on, but they neglect the morality education which is significant to individuals and society. So the paper mainly focuses on the functions of the downward shift of the teaching focus, the sublimation of the teaching objectives and the combination of these two, and how to combine the downward shift of the teaching focus and the sublimation of the teaching objectives in English classes of senior high schools. First, the current problems of the teaching focuses and teaching objectives of English classes in senior high school are pointed out and proposed corresponding ways to solve these problems. Second, the view of the combination of the downward shift of the teaching focus and the sublimation of the teaching objectives is proposed including the benefits of implementing the view and the way to do it.

Keywords: English class · Senior high school · The downward shift of the teaching focus · The sublimation of the teaching objectives

1 Background of the Study

Since the founding of the New China in 1949, Chinese education has gained great achievements. However, facing rapid development of technology around the world and innovation of educational concepts and technology, the ministry of education proposed that educational reform should continue being deepened, and promote quality education in an all-round way. During the process of promoting new curriculum, English course of senior high schools not only has the function of accomplishing the content of text books, imparting language knowledge to students and making students' English level reach the standard of college entrance examination, but also effects on the

nurturing objectives which are demanded by new curriculum, the improvement of students' core competence and shaping students in all-round development into builders and successors of China.

However, in recent observation and research of English classes in senior high schools, we often found that it seems hard for teachers to shift the focus of teaching language knowledge down to personalized individuals, which neglects the effectiveness of students' learning in class, at the same time, it is difficult for teachers to sublimate the teaching goal of moral education to the teaching atmosphere of the whole class, which neglects to nurture students' global competence required by 21st century. In the English teaching of senior high schools, teachers neither can abandon nurturing students' basic language knowledge and skills nor neglect to build students' thinking quality and cultural character. How to combine downward shift of teaching focus in English class with the sublimation of teaching objectives is the content that English teachers and related educators need to explore and practice in the implementation of curriculum reform, and it is also the significance of the curriculum reform.

2 The Downward Shift of the Teaching Focus Means Focus on the True Performance of Individual Students in English Class

In English teaching of senior high schools, teachers often fail to implement the “the shift of teaching focus”. “Student-centered” means that teachers should pay attention to the students' “learning.” If the student does not study effectively in class, the reason is that the student does not listen to the class, not talk about, read, write, watch, translate or think about the teaching content nor to ask or answer any questions about the content. Teachers have to think about: How to test whether a class is successful, or not? There is only one standard that is whether students control the knowledge, or not. Then how do teachers know that whether students control the knowledge, or not? As far as English classes are concerned, teachers can use a variety of English activities to let students to listen to the class, to speak, to read and to write English. As Sato Manabu mentioned in his *“The Quiet Revolution”*, teachers and students need to create a communication in the class based on mutual listening. In the book, Mr. Lin, the leading character in the book, holds the view that to judge whether your work is good or not, the only way you can use is that look at the facial expressions of each student in the classroom, their attitudes of learning, and see if they continue to learn.

How to do it? First, the English instruction used by a teacher in teaching need to be clear and simple, so that the concept of English learning activities can be implemented in class, fully mobilizing students' eyes, ears, mouth, hands, heart and brain into the learning. For example, when a teacher asks a student to divide the textual text in the textbook into three paragraphs, it is not necessary to use the sentence that students can't comprehend easily like “Please divide the passage into 3 parts”, but the basic expression like “Please cut the passage in to 3 parts”. Thus, teachers can effectively communicate with students in class, guarantying the quality of English learning effectively and imparting language knowledge including English pronunciation,

vocabulary, grammar, and language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, reading and translating to personalized individuals of students.

Second, teachers can create an effectively learning atmosphere, however it is only based on the establishment of a harmonious teacher-student relationship. A harmonious teacher-student relationship helps to create a harmonious class's atmosphere, which requires teachers to make positive efforts subjectively. Teachers should be the intimate people of students, to understand their psychological characteristics, to care about their learning, physical and mental health, to understand their difficulties in learning English, to respect the students' ideas, and to be adept at spurring them. For example, when a student's mood is low, the teacher can help the student to dispel the smog of the soul by simply saying "I like your big smile".

In addition, only teachers respect the actual cognitive level of students, they could ensure that students learn effectively. In the actual teaching process, the knowledge content provided by teachers and teaching materials may not be experienced by students. Therefore teachers should respect students' actual cognitive level to adjust the progress and difficulty of teaching in time, so that the effectiveness of knowledge learning can be guaranteed. For example, as teaching the unit whose theme is *Travelling Abroad*, teachers have to realize the fact that senior high school students may not have the experience in traveling abroad. In this case, teachers can display photos of their overseas travels to students, or graft relevant English expressions to some tourist attractions that students are familiar with.

At the same time, it is also essential to stimulate students' interest in learning and to maintain effective and subjective learning. To make students learn well and to make learning become interesting, as a teacher, it is necessary to fully explore the interesting factors of the teaching materials, so that students are interested in English class and change their negative attitude for English learning. For example, in the teaching process of the unit *First Aid*, teachers can encourage students to play a lively short English sitcom. Only liveliness can attract the attention of students; only vividness fits the psychological characteristics of students, so that they could feel the joy of learning.

3 The Sublimation of Teaching Objectives Means Explore the Important Role of Educating People in Teaching Content

Students not only should pay attention to the learning process and methods while developing basic knowledge and basic skills, but also develop emotional attitudes and values, and finally achieve the improvement of language ability, learning ability, thinking quality and cultural character. *China Student Development Core competence* proposes that education should be based on the nurture of "all-round development", which can be divided into three aspects: cultural foundation, independent development, and social participation. The comprehensive performance is six qualities which are humanistic, scientific, learning, healthy living, responsibility, practice and innovation, and they could be specifically refined into 18 bases such as national identity and so on. In 2017, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of

the State Council issued *Opinions on Implementing the Inheritance and Development of Chinese Excellent Traditional Cultural*, which mainly talked about: culture is the blood of the nation and the spiritual home of people, cultural self-confidence is more basic and more deep, more lasting power, and the unique concept, wisdom, tolerance, and the charm of Chinese culture will add the confidence and pride of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation.

So, firstly, teachers need to set high-level teaching objectives before teaching, and can not only focus on teaching the knowledge points presented by the teaching materials. For example, before teaching the unit *Nelson Mandela*, teachers should design the teaching objectives for the students' thinking quality and cultural character after designing the teaching objectives for language knowledge and learning ability. The class can be designed like this. Let the students analyze what quality makes Mandela become a great person through analysis and inference. It is good for students to form a unique way of thinking and thinking ability. They can also learn to think and solve problems from different aspects. And through learning the life and history of former South African President Mandela, students are able to understand the emotional attitudes and values of other ethnic groups, and form their own emotional attitudes and values through the analysis and induction of the quality of great men.

Secondly, teachers should encourage students to tell Chinese stories in English. For example, teachers can integrate the content of traditional Chinese culture elements such as Chung Teung Festival into the unit *Festivals around the World* to guide students to show respect and filial respect to the old, or Dragon Boat Festival which reflects the great love and spirit of Chinese poet Qu Yuan for his motherland also can be integrated into the theme to guide students to think deeply about life and personality.

In addition, teachers should be good at using the textbook, the carrier of teaching content, to make secondary exploration and sublimation of its educational goal in educating people to achieve different effects although using the same textbook. For example, when teaching the unit *Friendship*, the teacher not only let the students control the vocabularies that describes personality characteristics, but also can add these words into the vocabulary table such as "responsible", "humorous", "patient", "generous", "honest" and "diligent". Let students discuss which words can describe the qualities that their ideal friends must possess, then ask students to discuss which words can describe the quality that are not available for themselves, and finally reflect on how to correct their shortcomings.

At the same time, teachers should actively develop curriculum resources that can achieve educational goal in educating people to form a unique school-based curriculum. For example, teachers often ignore the elements of "emotion" and "culture" in daily teaching, and these factors precisely are the points of English college entrance examination in recent years. Such topics as "Chopsticks Culture", "Visit Panda", "credit management" and "importance of environmental protection" are all presented in the papers of English college entrance examination. If students lack contact with these topics in English learning process, they will lose points in the college entrance examination. Based on this, teachers need to search for texts that have relevant topics on the Internet and adapt them to form school-based textbooks.

4 The Downward Shift of the Teaching Focus Does not Contradict the Sublimation of Teaching Objectives

“After being properly educated, people can become a person.” According to the principle that education adapts to nature, in the “Great Teaching Theory”, Comenius said that “to compare the psychology of people coming to the world to a seed or a grain of rice is very legitimate.” The educational goals proposed by Comenius have three levels: “study,” “morality,” and “belief.” China’s educational goals also range from “two bases” to “three-dimensional goals”, and finally to “six competences” in the reform and development. Both of them reflect a profound understanding of the nature of education. Only after the scientific educational goals are clarified, the teaching activities of the schools have a direction, and the professional work of teachers has a soul.

We could imitate this great educator to compare the educated young children to the saplings that have been germinated by education. When he reaches the first level of educational goal, he can grow long branches, so that people can recognize that he is a tree (an educated person), but this tree has no leaves, flowers or fruits, and the bare branches make his life not full, lacking vitality. Just like Comenius said: “the vines that have not been cultivated well can’t produce good grapes”. Young children who have not reached the second-level educational goal will not be able to produce green leaves, beautiful flowers or tasty fruits on the branches. According to the third-level educational goal, the “root” of person who receives education should be deeply rooted in culture and faith, which is similar to “belief” called by Comenius. Only after the educated person has the “belief”, the people would evaluate him as a tree that stands tall (a well-educated, ideal, ethical, cultural, and disciplined person).

Therefore, every educator should bear in mind that the fundamental task of education in China should be “moral education”. A tree with long branches, green leaves, beautiful flowers and tasty fruits will make people recognize immediately even in a long distance because he is a precious tree (a well-educated person), and people can’t help running to him enjoying the cool under its shade. But if the tree does not have a deep root in the ground, people can only describe him just as “beautiful”, and when a strong wind blows, he will be swept away.

If the students do not learn, do not speak, talk, read, write, translate, think, ask anything about English, the basic knowledge and skills that students have learned will not be improved, the process and methods of learning will not be practiced, emotional attitudes and values will not be developed, and core competence will be impossible to be achieved. However, if teachers can promote the teaching goal on this basis, promoting “teaching” by “educating people”, let the class be full of cultural atmosphere, and irrigate the “roots” of students’ growth, thus students will have the motivation to learn, and ultimately achieve the development of language ability, learning ability, thinking quality and cultural character. Therefore, actually, teachers play a role as a bridge for the downward shift of the teaching focus and the sublimation of the teaching objectives in English classes of senior high schools. Teachers should fully effect on teaching language knowledge, learning skills, learning process, learning method, right emotion, positive value, profound culture, the sublime belief, and nurturing students as true “people”, comprehensive “people”, rooted “people”. Teachers not only need to

ensure that the selected teaching steps, teaching methods, and others are based on the actual condition of the individual students, but also need to ensure that the designed teaching content, teaching objectives and others are consistent with the overall cultural beliefs of the human being.

All in all, in the teaching process, English teachers of senior high schools should pay attention to the students' reactions at any time, such as a student's eye contact, an action, a frown, a grin, and so on to adjust their teaching plan in time according to the student's reaction. They also need to start from the actual English level of students to stimulate students' interest in learning, and when students' attention is not concentrated on class, they would give some time to students to relax rather than continuing the class. Last but not least, when students do not understand the problem, they are not recommended to talk about another problem. In the process of teaching design, teachers should break the barriers of traditional English class and teaching materials, opening up the culture and belief space of teachers and students, and rooting the cultural self-confidence of our country in the hearts of student, and open up the ideas of nurturing the quality of students to develop students' multiple intelligence and to pay attention to the overall development of students, and they also should promote the comprehensiveness of teaching, focusing on nurturing students' global competence in the 21st century as well as pay high attention to the development of students' emotions, attitudes, values and core competence. By doing a good job of these two aspects, we can achieve the goal of shifting the focus of teaching in English class of senior high schools and sublimating the teaching objectives.

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