

## A Study on Moral Education Oriented Student-Involved College English Online Classroom Assessment

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### Abstract

Based on disciplinary location and instructional objective, College English curriculum bears high expectations and important responsibilities in "Building Morality and cultivating talents". However, for a long time, College English curriculum has attracted much attention due to its lack of realizing its educational function. By analyzing its current weaknesses, this paper explores the theoretical grounding of student-involved college English online classroom assessment, and then puts forward suggestions on college English online classroom assessment implementation, so as to facilitate realization of its function of "collaborative education" in the process of curriculum ideological and political implementation.

### Keywords

College English, student-involved classroom assessment, curriculum ideological and political education, collaborative education.

### 1. Introduction

In January 2017, China State Council issued the *13th five-year plan for the development of national education*, which clearly stated that "to give full play to the guiding role of education assessment in effective moral education, to promote all-round development of students and adapt to economic and social development, which should be set as the fundamental criterion for evaluating the quality of education". Moral education orientation of education assessment was further defined. Based on the hypothesis of "students as concrete people, people in relationship, and people in development", one of the conditions of education assessment is that students' subjectivity is fully respected.

Since student-involved classroom assessment highlights students' subjectivity in assessment and learning from value orientation, under the conception and background of "assessment for learning" and "assessment as learning", the significance of student-involved classroom assessment has been advocated by many researchers and teachers at home and abroad. They hold that students' involvement in classroom assessment can provide them with direct, coherent and personalized feedback, which is conducive to students' more active participation in learning activities, promoting achievement of learning goals and helping to achieve the goal of moral education.

College English, as one of the main basic courses in colleges and universities, has received wide attention from society because of its long duration, large proportion of class hours and wide attendance of students. Due to outbreak of COVID-19, college English class takes a different form at present. In response to the national call of "teachers stop on-site class teaching but continue with on-line teaching; students stop on-site class learning, but continue with on-line learning; teachers and students take joint efforts to win epidemic prevention and control together", currently, college English classes mainly take on-line teaching mode.

For a long time, traditional College English classroom teaching has attracted much attention due to its crisis of "students' lack of interest in learning and its absence of moral education function"(Yu Liming etc.2005; Feng Yan, 2006). Under current situation, College English class mainly takes the form of online teaching, which brings greater challenges for English teachers and opportunities as well for reflection on its weaknesses and exploration for countermeasures. Hence, it is both a policy orientation and a realty call to explore how to maintain college English's "channel" of ideological and political education of college English curriculum, cultivate college English's "responsibility field" of building morality and cultivating talents, and then realize the "coordinated education" through student-involved college English online classroom assessment.

## 2. Dilemmas of College English Classes in Reality

### 2.1. Imbalance of Classroom Ecological Environment

For a long time, "college English classroom teaching has taken a prevalent autocratic mode"(Jiang Bo, 2002). Teachers and students lack cooperation and communication in spiritual realm, psychological state, value orientation and behavior norms, and lack democratic, understanding, trustworthy and friendly relations (Zhang Lili, 2010). Imbalance of classroom ecological environment leads to serious management tendency of college English classroom assessment. The relationship between teachers and students shows a hierarchical relationship between the assessor and the assessed, between the manager and the managed. In general, teachers assess students simply and mechanically according to preset assessment standards, and students are usually excluded from assessment process. However, there is no feedback and guarantee measures on whether students' learning objectives are appropriate or clear, whether meaningful learning is carried out in class, and how to achieve learning objectives etc..

### 2.2. Distorted Value Orientation

*College English Curriculum Requirements* makes clear that the new trend of college English assessment is to pay attention to assessment of learning process, and the purpose of assessment is to promote development. However, in practice, college English assessment methods are monotonous. Moreover, school-based student assessment just follows external assessment, which mainly adopts summative assessment based on written test, and the types of questions are fixed. Even if formative assessment is carried out in one or two universities, in process of formative assessment, usually, teacher assessment takes up the larger part while students' self-assessment and peer assessment are ignored (Zhang Lili, 2010). In terms of assessment domains, students' knowledge and skills are over-emphasized, while assessment of students' emotions, attitudes and values are ignored, as well as some higher-level thinking and abilities indispensable to students' future development, such as critical thinking, innovative thinking, cooperation ability, communication ability, learning ability and morality etc.. This kind of assessment practice leads to test-orientation of college English, which is characteristic of "teachers' teaching for test" and "students' learning for test" and dumb English characteristic of "high marks but low competencies".

### 2.3. Unsatisfactory Assessment Implementation

Due to students' lack of previous assessment experience, when they participate in classroom assessment, the reliability and validity of their self-assessment and peer assessment in classroom are often questioned by teachers, peers and even themselves. Based on the questionnaire survey of students and teachers, Ren Qingmei et al. (2011) and Falchikov N. (2013) found that in using student-involved classroom assessment, students tend to have negative emotions on classroom assessment, such as anxiety, and fear, etc. due to lack of assessment expertise. Meanwhile, they will be ashamed when they report their weaknesses, and will be hit by themselves when they get low scores.

College English teachers are supposed to build "scaffolding" for students to participate in classroom assessment, such as providing clear assessment criteria, appropriate assessment tools, and effective feedback. To a great extent, all these depend on teachers' professional assessment literacy. According to the survey (Zhang Chunzhen 2014, Xu Ying et al. 2016, Chen Yan 2017, Kou Ping 2019), at present college English teachers' assessment literacy is far from being satisfactory, which is manifested in lack of assessment knowledge, low assessment skills, monotonous assessment methods, serious assessment bias, inadequate understanding of assessment etc. As a result, teachers often face many difficulties in organizing students to participate in classroom assessment. Often, the student-involved classroom assessment organized by teachers is only a form of "false concern" and "superficial concern" for students' development and moral education.

### 3. Theoretical Grounding

The motivation theory put forward by American psychologist Ausubel provides theoretical support for student-involved college English classroom assessment. The theory holds that cognitive drive, self-improvement drive and accessory drive constitute achievement motivation in school context. Specifically, it includes the need to know and understand the surroundings, the need to master knowledge, the need to systematically elaborate and solve problems, the need for individuals to win the corresponding status according to their own competence or work ability, and the need to do a good job in order to maintain the approval or recognition of the elders (such as teachers, parents) or the collective. Motivation can affect the result of meaningful learning, the maintenance of acquired meaning and the extraction of knowledge. Because students' involvement in assessment "contributes to students' control, choice, autonomy and self-esteem of their own learning" (Brookhart, S. etc. 2004), facilitating students' involvement in assessment can "provide students with greater learning autonomy, greater enthusiasm for learning, and more use of high-level thinking" (Campbell, D. etc., 1998).

In addition, social ecology, Total Quality Management (TQM) and the fourth generation evaluation theory provide useful reference for moral education oriented online classroom assessment of college English. American scholar, Brown Finn Brenner put forward the idea of social ecology, which emphasizes the importance of interaction between human and environment. He holds that there is a close relationship between the cognitive development process of human and its dependent environment, and the classroom ecological environment of equal consultation can have a positive impact on classroom assessment. TQM theory and the fourth generation evaluation theory take into account of students, emphasizing involvement of students. The theory of TQM holds that students must actively participate in and construct quality evidence in the process of receiving teaching services from schools and teachers in order to realize continuous improvement of teaching and learning. According to the fourth generation of evaluation theory, evaluation is a process that teachers and students construct together, in which consensus can be reached through consultation. With the goal of respecting, satisfying and achieving the development of learners, teachers should constantly adjust the

relationship between the assessment elements to achieve the maximum joint force and promote the maximum development of learners in teaching and learning context.

## 4. Approaches

### 4.1. Students Participate in Class Assessment Environment Construction and Create A Good Education Ecology

At present, college English online classroom is an important place for College English teachers to cultivate their students. At the beginning of the establishment of the online class community, students are invited to participate in making rules for class community and the learning group. The rules, functions, communication methods, important information release channels and learning planning requirements of class groups and learning groups are described in detail. The common value orientation and goal pursuit establish an equal and trustful dialogue platform for the assessor and the assessed. Both sides of assessment communicate and negotiate with each other in a harmonious and democratic environment, which makes the assessment process become a kind of communication between the two sides as “human being” in life and creates an open and harmonious space for the freedom of “human being”.

Students' involvement in construction of college English online class community and group will help students form a sense of equality and democracy, promote the formation of their sound personality, build a democratic and harmonious class group assessment ecological environment, lay a solid foundation for realization of fast and efficient classroom assessment, and make college English online class become the development place for students' acquisition of language knowledge and self-improvement of personality, thus realize recessive moral education effect.

### 4.2. Students Participate in Setting of Assessment Standards and Defining Learning Objectives

It is pointed out in *College English Curriculum Requirements* that assessment subjects can be “administrative officials, experts and direct participants in teaching activities such as teachers and students”. To promote college students to participate in college English online classroom assessment, teachers and students can jointly construct assessment objectives and assessment standards in reference to the competence description in *China Standards of English*, and specify the requirements and assessment standards of students' individual English presentation and preview before class, group activities and individual participation in class, notes after class and learning journal and reflection. Students can realize “informed learning”, construct evidence of learning achievements in learning process, and then undertake their own learning responsibility. On this basis, students can become self-responsible learners (Man Jing et al. 1993). Teachers also provide continuous feedback for students on this basis, integrate formative assessment into the whole learning process, focus on detecting problems in students' learning, and seek solutions to achieve the purpose of promoting students' development.

The assessment criteria that students co-set with teachers is an organic part of the learning activities of college English online classroom, and it is a process to ensure that learning activities and learning objectives are accepted by students. With consideration of students' learning attitude, learning effort and achievement of learning objectives, the assessment criteria are feasible, appropriate, multidimensional and dynamic. In addition, corresponding adjustments and changes can be made according to growth and changes of students in teaching situation, so as to ensure that the assessment criteria can comprehensively take into account of college English online classroom teaching situation, meet different needs of teachers and students in the situation, and adapt to diversified developments of students.

Through student involvement in setting College English classroom assessment standards, taking full account of the needs and development of students in the education situation, and focusing on the development status of students, tools are provided to evaluate student growth and setting goals for the future" (Wells, R. 1998), quality standard in students' mind, student active involvement in classroom assessment, and student realization of development goals can be facilitated.

### **4.3. Students Participate in Construction of Multiple Classroom Assessment System to Facilitate Meaningful Learning**

College English course, as an organic part of China's higher education, embodies the needs of social development and the goal of talent cultivation, which is the carrier and important guarantee to achieve the national education objective. The ultimate goal of college English curriculum education is to help realize "all-round education", which is determined by the instrumentality and humanity of college English curriculum. Therefore, in process of implementing student-involved college English online classroom assessment, not only the way and improvement of students' language skills, but also students' emotional experience and spiritual perception should be taken into account.

In online teaching, through the implementation of students' just-in-time self-reflection, just-in-time peer assessment and just-in-time teacher assessment, the assessment domain does not only cover assessment of students' memory and cognitive ability, but also the status of affective abilities, such as emotion, attitude, values, the ability to cooperate with others, and the ability to participate in social activities, etc. In terms of assessment methods, new assessment methods, such as curriculum embedded assessment, portfolio and performance assessment are adopted. Students participate in the making of their own college English e-portfolio to make it a learning file of students' language, record teaching feedback and students' development, and provide continuous descriptive feedback in learning process; teachers are advised to teach students to conduct self-assessment, and set learning objectives for the next steps. Besides, teachers design focused teaching, provide practice and corresponding feedback, and also provide opportunities for students to track, reflect and share their learning progress (adapted from Chappis, 2015:11). In the process of students' participation in establishment of multiple classroom assessment system, provide students with necessary emotional support and strategic guidance in time, stimulate students' desire for knowledge, enhance students' learning confidence and then help them obtain learning satisfaction. "Learning without thinking is useless, thinking without learning is perilous". In the process of students' conscious and active reflection and assessment, new knowledge is incorporated into students' cognitive structure. The original cognitive structure has been enriched, transformed and reorganized, so as to promote the development of students' thinking, morality improvement and spiritual growth.

## **5. Conclusion**

*China 13th five-year plan for the development of national education* puts forward "taking students as the main body, teachers as the leading role, innovating education mode, renewing education concept, innovating education mode and comprehensively improving education level". Through involvement of students in construction of a democratic consultative online classroom assessment environment, students participate in construction of learning objectives, implementation of classroom assessment, and construction of a college English online classroom monitoring and improvement system based on education, learning process and learning improvement, which goes beyond the traditional assessment of "nothing to do with students" instrumental rationality. It is a challenge to traditional classroom assessment in being able to integrate students' learning, class ecological environment, learning objectives and education objectives together and maintain attention to students' learning and personal growth,

which is conducive to the realization of college English teaching objectives and the return of education orientation, and truly meets the guarantee of college English classroom teaching quality and the important core of moral education responsibility.

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