

Research on the Teaching Reform Strategy of *History of Foreign Literature* Against the Background of Big Data

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ABSTRACT

In the era of big data, there are many opportunities for the reform of traditional teaching mode, and teaching model with new pattern can effectively improve teaching effect. Based on teaching examples of History of Foreign Literature, this paper is carried out from the following aspects: micro-lessons, flipped classroom, text-based drama, classroom report, online communication platform construction, transformation and innovation of practical classroom model, to move the teaching reform to a new stage in the background of big data.

Keywords: *big data, micro-lessons, flipped classroom, text-based drama, classroom report, online platform*

I. INTRODUCTION

The era of big data witnesses daily changes in people's traditional way of thinking. Nowadays, with the popularization of Internet technology and the widespread penetration of multimedia into front-line teaching in colleges and universities, how to make good use of digital resources to better serve education and teaching is an urgent problem to be solved for college educators in the new era.

II. ANALYSIS ON THE FEASIBILITY OF BIG DATA RESOURCE APPLICATION

A. The teaching status of *History of Foreign Literature*

At present, classes involving foreign literature are faced with two major flaws. The first one is spoon-feeding education. The traditional classroom with teachers as subject follows the unidirectional teaching, in which teachers mainly instill textbook knowledge to students through explanation, and students lack the opportunity and enthusiasm for active participation. Second, despite students are encouraged to put what they have learned into practice and apply the critical methods learned into the practice of textual criticism, unidirectional teaching cannot provide effective guidance and demonstration, leaving practice-based teaching empty talk. The opportunity and means to subvert traditional education model can be seen in the era of big data, so that students enjoy access to actively participate in classroom. Among them, micro-lessons, flipped classroom, text-based drama, classroom report and online communication platform are all effective means to achieve the goal.

B. Analysis on the feasibility of teaching reform

Micro-lesson teaching employs online streaming media to produce video, focusing on a certain teaching key or difficult point, and presenting a 5-10 minute teaching content in a complete way. Thanks to its openness, online micro-course resources can be directly applied to classroom teaching, providing an open entrance for classroom teaching, diversifying classroom teaching and capsizing the monotonous mode of traditional teaching. Flipped classroom based on micro-lesson allows students to feedback the problems they encounter in micro-lesson in time. In this way, traditional unidirectional teaching mode is overturned, realizing the transformation from "teacher-centered" to "student-centered", and from spoon-feeding education to problem-based education, fully mobilizing the enthusiasm and initiative of students to participate in class, and cultivating their creativity and problem-analyzing. Text-based drama teaching is a new attempt that allows students to make individualized adaptation of classics in literature in the form of multimedia. Students can present pre-recorded videos in class to adapt and understand the works, and at the same time conduct a new round of interpretation, understanding and mining through class evaluation. Classroom report can be taken as a variation of flipped classroom, allowing students to take the lead in class and demonstrate project report on a particular issue in the course. Online communication platform represents the establishment of study groups on some famous websites to extend the classroom space and make the understanding of course content convenient and profound.

III. THE APPLICATION OF BIG DATA RESOURCES IN THE COURSE OF *HISTORY OF FOREIGN LITERATURE*

A typical example is *History of Foreign Literature* written by Ma Gongcheng and edited by Higher Education Press. When explaining the medieval literature, teachers can employ micro-lesson introducing the "decisive role of Christianity in medieval culture" on the Internet, allowing students to understand the basic background and characteristics of medieval culture. Flipped classroom can be adopted to study Dante, the representative writer of the Middle Ages. Students can ask questions in the classroom and interpret the issue "why is *Divina Commedia* the last one of the Middle Ages and the first of the New Age (Renaissance)?" from multiple perspectives.

Micro-lesson should not only be applied to the introduction of background material. Any content to be taught in class can be demonstrated in various forms through a variety of network resources. Micro-lesson video contributes to students' preview before class. As micro-lesson is flexible in transmission, introductory content can be made into micro-lesson and put on specific learning platform for students to share. Such micro-lesson video covers the key and difficult points of this class and gives students enough time to think, so as to extend the class time.

The introduction of problems in flipped classroom is very critical. In order to get rid of the shackles of textbooks and carry out diversified interpretation of texts, instructive questions must be proposed. For example, students should be encouraged to drum on the reason why did Gregory's metamorphosis happen overnight when learning *The Metamorphosis* by Kafka, so that they can pay full attention to the details, leading to further thinking. In addition, the question of why is there no day and night in hell and no one ever sleeps can be proposed when teaching *Confinement*, existentialist circumstances play by Sartre, allowing students to reflect the symbolic implications of extreme situations. The second part of flipped classroom is to assign classroom tasks and group tasks, which includes discussion of questions mentioned in preview as well as new questions about teaching content. Preliminary conclusions can be drawn through group discussion. Teachers should control the overall situation in student discussions, participate in each group and give effective guidance, so as to make discussions innovative and profound. Such discussions can help students internalize what they have learned.

The introduction of text-based drama is another benefit brought by multimedia technology. Many excellent and interesting story fragments from classic texts in *History of Foreign Literature* are cut out for adaptation. Students can also make personalized

adaptations of the plot, such as setting the historical background in the contemporary era, changing the ending and direction of the story, reinterpreting a classic character image, and exploring deep psychological motivation. Creative adaptation should be based on the reading of complete text, which virtually promotes the development of students' reading activities after class. The literature of the 19th century is the best one to be presented and understood through text-based drama. For example, one group wrote sequel for Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, answering the question proposed by Lu Xun: What would happen if Nora ran away? In the text-based drama, instead of falling into decadence or returning back home, Nora tries hard to find a job like Mrs. Lin Dan, hoping to stand on her own feet in the society and realize personal dignity and value. Other team members with creativity put many tragic women in the same play, allowing the audience to reflect the same objective and subjective factors that caused their suffering and the commonness of the characters in a certain era through comparison. Similarly, the Young Careerist Series covers characters including Julien, Rastignac, and Trowa in the 19th century, asking the question: Why do some perish while others thrive? Some students allow a character in the novel to analyze his own inner world, or retell the story from the angle of supporting characters, so as to unfold varied stories, which undoubtedly provided a new pattern of interpretation. *The Great Gatsby* written by Francis Scott Fitzgerald, representative of lost generation, has also been adapted. Daisy, who is "demonized" in the novel, can express her inner monologue, revealing that Gatsby's vanity is to be blamed for the tragedy. This contributes to objective interpretation of Gatsby's image and deep understanding of Fitzgerald's "blonde girl complex". Another group of students put two different gypsy girls: Esmeralda and Carmen together, and tried to make them meet and tell their own tragedy, so as to understand the writer's thinking about gypsy nationality when he created the characters. The gypsies depicted by Hugo represent the symbol of anti-civilization, demonstrating absolute virtue, so Esmeralda is an idealized figure. While the gypsies narrated by Merimee is a symbol of "absolute freedom", thus leading to public reflection on the boundaries of freedom. Such antagonistic representations in the same play are extremely dramatic and provoking. The shooting of text-based drama also enhanced students' ability of exposition and practice.

As for text-based dramas, not only can they be adapted and filmed to achieve learning function, but the broadcast in class can also trigger discussion. Students can express their opinions on the pros and cons of adaptation, which is also an opportunity for reinterpretation. The depth of criticism leads to a more open, pluralistic and deep understanding of the work.

So far a whole set of operation mode for text-based drama has been formed: reading, adaptation, interpretation, shooting, and evaluation.

Classroom report means that students in a class are divided into several study groups, and the group members choose the topic report they are interested in. Students should be encouraged to be diverse and creative in project presentations. For example, some groups introduce short plays or live performances into the project reports to enrich the form, which not only realizes flipped classroom with students as the main body, but also enhances students' research ability and expression ability. During a lecture on the 19th century French novelist Balzac, some students in group gave a lecture on the theme "Criticism of money in Balzac's novels". During the 20-minute report, the plot of Balzac's novel *Le Pere Goriot* is interpreted in the form of a short play. A courtroom drama was added, allowing Vautrin to defend himself in court. The deductive analysis concludes that in 19th century, money not only corroded human nature, but also all kinds of human relationships. Others chose the question from Stendhal's novel *The Red and the Black*: "What is the root cause of Julien's tragedy?" In the class report, character monologue is first employed to analyze Julien's psychology. In-depth analysis and excavation reveals that the tragedy of Julien can be explained by not only the times and general environment, but also his longing for shortcuts, quick success and quick benefit. This involves the existential proposition of the choice of life path. In view of the fact that people are responsible for their own choices, Julien's tragedy is composed of subjective and objective reasons. College students at a critical time in their lives are also warned that life choices matter. The course report also forays into EQ education, which proves the rich and profound capacity of reports. While doing so, students' ability of independent thinking, problem solving and practice is also sharpened. Family issues in Tolstoy's masterpiece *Anna Karenina* are also covered to explore ideal family model. In the end, the conclusion is similar to that in Tolstoy's novel, only couples who are blessed by the people around them and in love can build a happy family. This raises the question of how to choose a suitable partner in love and achieve happiness in life.

Online communication platform is an effective extension of classroom teaching. The diversification of terminals in the data age enables students to log on to the learning platform through mobile phones and realize instant communication. What's available on online platform includes micro-lesson videos that have been recorded and broadcast, a variety of network materials, as well as study groups. The resource exchange in the group is quick and immediate. Students can raise any questions about course content, starting further discussion among students and teachers. Due to the openness and arbitrariness of network platform, the

issues to be discussed can be broader and even connected with trends, so that the teaching content can be applied in reality. For example, when discussing one of the themes of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novel *Crime and Punishment*, namely the plight of the urban poor in Russia at that time, a hot event can be proposed for comparison and discussion, that is, a female college student in Kunming committed suicide because of economic burden in 2018. This has triggered heated discussions among students on the Internet. Poverty is also a problem that cannot be ignored in contemporary China, how to effectively solve it, and how young people should live a strong life in difficult situations worth mentioning. The discussion is no longer confined to the textbook, so that students pay attention to the development of emotional intelligence, which can be said to be another harvest in addition to classroom teaching. As for *Don Quixote*, some students hold that Quixote is in fact a "delusional" person who has difficulty in drawing the line between reality and imagination. There are also many quixotic people in reality. For example, Yang Lijuan, a fan who pursued Andy Lau crazily several years ago, insisted on meeting him because she believed that if Lau saw her, he would fall in love with her and marry her. It is also a sign of paranoia, the inability to distinguish between one's imagination and reality. The difference is that Don Quixote's delusions are tinged with compassion, whereas Yang Lijuan is easily ridiculed by the media and the public for her own selfish ends. This incident also reflects the current Chinese media's neglect of humanistic care, the pursuit of hot points, while ignoring the central figure of the event. The online discussion has extended to many aspects, prompting students to think about their own situation. How to avoid falling into similar blind spots and dilemmas is a lesson that can be drawn from both fictional characters and real events. Another example is the discussion of Chekhov's novel *The Death of a Civil Servant*, when students confided their own cowardly psychology. How to conquer oneself and servility is exactly what Chekhov wants to remind readers through his works. The connection and interpretation of personal experience gave students a deeper understanding of the characters in the novel and themselves.

IV. CONCLUSION

The era of big data has promoted the diversity and openness of teaching. Instead of dwelling on existing research results, it's a must to fully tap the potential of big data, to create novel form, such as rain classroom, that is, big data is adopted in class to analyze and process students' homework, and give immediate feedback, making problem-solving fast, convenient and impressive. At the same time, new teaching mode in the data age requires more for teachers' innovation, and many new problems are imposed. For example, the improvement of efficiency of study group and the

supervision of pre-class preparation all require new models and new methods.

The era of big data provides sufficient hardware convenience for education and teaching, and the drive to turn the advantages of hardware into actual teaching advantages is no easy job, which requires more innovative spirit and practical courage.

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