Research on the Construction of Blended Teaching Mode of College English Based on “Internet Plus”*

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Abstract—The Internet tide is booming, integrates with and brings opportunities for the development of all walks of life in our country. China’s education should make full use of this trend of Internet informatization development to promote its own reform and innovation. Blended teaching mode is the product of the deep integration of Internet and education, which integrates online teaching and offline teaching, changes the traditional teaching mode and makes up for the shortcomings of traditional teaching. It has been proved by practice that the blended teaching mode is applied to the college English teaching to construct the multivariate blended teaching mode of “Internet plus Mooc plus micro class plus flipped class plus mobile WeChat”, to create a “ubiquitous learning” environment of college English and to change the evaluation criteria for students' English score. At the same time, it combines the leading role of teachers with the main role of students and gives full play to students' autonomy and enthusiasm in English learning so as to improve the teaching effect of college English. Blended teaching is an inevitable trend in the development of college English teaching in China. The extensive application of this teaching mode will certainly combine with more college English network teaching resources, promote the cooperation of English teaching among colleges and universities, and bring about revolutionary changes to college English teaching in China.

Keywords—Internet plus; College English; blended teaching mode; construction research

I. INTRODUCTION

In November 2012, Yu Yang, the founder of Analysys International, first put forward the concept of “Internet plus”, which emphasizes that the Internet should be combined with China's current products and services. In March 2015, Premier Li Keqiang put forward the “Internet plus” action plan in the “government work report”, which emphasizes the deep integration of the Internet and traditional industries, and makes the Internet infiltrate into medical, financial, educational, household and other industries, thus promoting the structural adjustment of the industry. In May 2015, President Xi mentioned that in the congratulatory letter at the international conference on educational informatization we should unswervingly promote educational informatization, rely on information technology to train innovative talents, and build a digital, networked, lifelong and personalized learning society. National leaders have raised the development of Internet technology to the height of national strategy and attached great importance to its impact on education. Despite the rapid development of Internet technology with each passing day, it brings convenience to people's life, work and study and promotes the development of all walks of life: however, the role of Internet technology in promoting education is not very obvious. Under the general trend of information technology in today's society, Internet information technology must assist the development of education, accelerate the reform and innovation of education, expand the coverage rate of educational resources, and promote education equity and narrow regional disparities.

Under the background of the vigorous development of the national Internet and information-based trend, the Outline of the National Medium and Long Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020) issued by the Ministry of Education clearly points out that the process of education informatization should be accelerated, and puts forward that education informatization should be acted as an important strategic guarantee for the realization of the development goals of future education reform in China. On April 28, 2018, the Ministry of Education issued the Action Plan for Teaching Informationization 2.0 proposing that education informationization should be transferred from 1.0 to 2.0. It emphasized the leading and supporting role of informationization in the development of modern education in China, and advocated that it should be taken as an opportunity to promote the reconstruction of educational ideas, teaching modes and teaching systems in order to give full play to the leading position of Chinese education in the world and contribute China's program and wisdom to the development of education in the world.

As a public basic course in university, college English has the characteristics of wide coverage, large capacity and few class hours. Meanwhile, the phenomenon that students' learning enthusiasm is not high, learning effect is not good, and they are tired of coping with the homework is common. How to take full advantage of the development of Internet information technology, realize the organic combination of both, accelerate the innovation of teaching mode and the change of teaching concept is the key to settle the bottleneck

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of college English development. In explaining the teaching methods and means of college English, the revised Guidelines for College English Teaching in 2015 emphasizes that “college English should vigorously promote the integration of information technology and course teaching, and continue to play the important role of modern educational technology, especially information technology in foreign language teaching” (Wang Shouren, 2016). Blended teaching mode emphasizes the combination of online learning and offline learning. Students study independently online through Internet resources and teachers guide students to discuss in offline classroom teaching. The blended teaching mode based on constructivism, cognitivism, behaviorism and second language acquisition theory makes up for the shortcomings of traditional college English classroom, effectively integrates network learning and classroom teaching, combines various kinds of teaching resources and media, and creates a “ubiquitous learning” environment where students are free from time and space constraints, which is the inevitable trend of modern college English teaching.

II. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF BLENDED TEACHING MODE

A. Blended Teaching Mode

As for blended teaching mode, different scholars at home and abroad have different definitions. Especially in foreign countries, many scholars have different definitions of blended teaching(Yin Ling, 2008). Blended teaching is a way of integrating traditional face-to-face teaching and online teaching, and teaching activities include classroom and network and the latter is the natural extension of the former (Collis and Moonen, 2001). Driscoll (2002) believes that blended teaching includes four aspects: the realization of integrating network technology into teaching objectives; the best learning effect after combining with educational technology; the combination of educational technology and face-to-face teaching and the combination of educational technology and practical teaching tasks. Although foreign scholars have different definitions of the concept of blended teaching mode, they all highlight the importance of applying network technology to education.

B. The Development of Blended Teaching in China

Domestic scholars such as He Kekang, Li Jiahou, Huang Ronghui, Wang Zhuli, Du Shichun, Dong Jianqiao and Li Kedong have carried out more in-depth research on mixed teaching. In particular, Professor He Kekang wrote two articles of “Looking at the New Development of Educational Technology Theory from Blending Learning” (Part I and Part II) in 2004 on “China's Audio-visual Education” and “Research on Audio-visual Education” that introduced in detail the meaning of blended teaching and its influence on the transformation of educational ideas in China, and analyzed the theoretical basis and historical development of mixed teaching, which shows the importance of the application of information technology to education and teaching. Professor He’s two articles are the ground-breaking work of blended teaching in China, which lay a solid foundation for the theoretical development and practical application of blended teaching in China. (see “Table I”)

In the past ten years, the research on blended teaching has a vigorous development trend in China, and the related articles have been growing geometrically. A total of 2716 entries are obtained by inputting the keyword “Blended Teaching Mode” into CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure). The following chart describes the development and changes of blended teaching research in China in the past 10 years with the number of journals and thesis and dissertation.

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Let’s reduce the scope and see how the blended teaching mode is applied in college English teaching. A total of 447 results are obtained by inputting the keyword “Blended Mode of College English” into CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure). The following figures summarize the relevant publication of journals and thesis and dissertation in the past ten years. (see “Table II”)

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In the past four years, there has been an obvious increase in the research on college English mixed teaching, but there are not many related researches on the whole, especially there are few related researches on thesis and dissertation. From the
content of the thesis and dissertation, it can be divided into the following types:

- The application of blended teaching model to the research of a certain aspect of college English, such as the cultivation of a certain English ability such as audio-visual oral, spoken language, writing, reading, etc.
- The application of blended teaching model to the research of English learners’ learning styles and learning evaluation and others, such as learning strategies, learning motivation, critical thinking ability, assessment reform, etc.
- Research on the construction of mixed college English teaching mode in various types of colleges and universities: local universities, higher vocational colleges and key universities.
- Research on the blended teaching mode of college English based on Mooc, flipped class, Wechat and SPOC under the background of Internet.
- The application of the blended teaching mode to the research of a certain course, such as Business English, Architectural English, New Edition of Advanced College English, etc.

By sorting out the research contents of mixed College English teaching mode, we can see that the exploration and research of mixed college English teaching mode has gone deep into most aspects of English teaching, and brought a spring breeze of reform to college English teaching. The blended teaching mode with the combination of face-to-face teaching and online teaching is an inevitable trend in the development of teaching in the Internet era. This teaching mode has been applied in some colleges and universities in China, but its application scope is mainly limited to some first-class universities in China, such as Tsinghua University, Nanjing University, and Southeast University and so on, and it is still in the stage of exploration and practice, and is not very mature. For some application-oriented secondary colleges, due to the limitations of teachers, students and various conditions, the application of blended teaching mode is not very extensive.

In order to explore the innovative research of mixed teaching, it is necessary to analyze the past practice of college English blended teaching mode of colleges and universities in order to draw lessons and provide reference for the follow-up blended teaching practice.

III. ANALYSIS OF PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF BLENDED TEACHING MODE OF COLLEGE ENGLISH

Through the research on the current situation of college English teaching in some universities in Shandong Province, it is found that there are a few colleges and universities that apply the blended teaching mode to college English teaching. Even if colleges and universities that have already applied the blended teaching mode, there are also all sorts of problems in the specific teaching practice. Through in-depth investigation, the problems existed in practice are summarized as follows:

- Because online teaching does not extend to offline teaching, and it cannot achieve the effective combination of online and offline teaching. Online teaching merely focuses on formality, and there is no real interaction between teachers and students. Teachers post topics online in order to discuss, while students engage in insipid discussions to accomplish the discussed tasks. The interaction between teachers and students is too little, and students discuss passively, which eventually leads to teachers who become the active discussion roles (Zhao Dan, Liu Guiyun, Yu Haihong, 2016). In this way, the original intention of blended teaching is distorted. The blended teaching in the context of “Internet plus” is not only the addition of network and classroom teaching in a simple sense, but emphasizes the deep integration of the two, that is, both are intertwined and boost each other.
- Because of relying too much on and neglecting online teaching, offline teaching is often neglected. Online teaching is the extension of offline teaching and cannot replace offline teaching. Some English teachers will rely too much on network technology, upload a large number of teaching resources to the Internet to replace the knowledge originally used in classroom teaching instruction with online teaching, which results in students developing the habit of “fast-food learning” that swallows a date without understanding, learns plainly, not understand the knowledge they learn, and is tired of coping with the completion of tasks. As a result, it cannot achieve good learning results (Hu Lele, 2015).
- Lack of supervision, inspection and guidance for online teaching. In the survey, it is found that some teachers, in order to implement the requirements of blended teaching mode, assign teaching tasks to students on the Internet. However, they seldom supervise and urge and check the completion of tasks of students, do not timely answer the questions raised by students on-line, and do not give feedback to students’ on-line homework. In the classroom, teachers do not discuss and explain the tasks assigned online, which makes online and offline teaching disconnected. Over time, students’ enthusiasm for online learning has been frustrated, which makes blended teaching become a mere formality, and cannot receive due effect.
- Indifference and alienation of teacher-student relationship. Internet-based online teaching reduces face-to-face interaction between teachers and students, which results in fragile and weak teacher-student relationship. College English classroom is a sort of classroom where teaching benefits teachers as well as students and improve each other by active discussion. It is particularly important that the emotional communication and collision between teachers and students can gain inspiration and generate new knowledge. College English is a humanities subject with both instrumental and humanistic characteristics.
Therefore, College English shoulders the responsibility of teaching and educating people, and it should pay more attention to the interaction between teachers and students. Under the background of mixed teaching, we should explore new ways to develop teacher-student relationship so as to avoid its adverse hindrance to teaching exploration.

- The teaching design is not scientific and reasonable enough. Teaching design is a key link in the implementation of mixed teaching, which requires college English teachers to make great efforts to dig through teaching materials, fully integrates advanced teaching methods and concepts, and collects excellent teaching resources on the Internet with the help of modern network teaching platform in order to stimulate students' autonomy and enthusiasm in English learning. However, due to the unscientific teaching design, there are many cases that online and offline teaching cannot promote and integrate each other. Network-based teaching puts forward higher requirements for English teachers' professional quality and requires them to master modern educational technology at the same time. However, English teachers' relative competence in many colleges and universities is unsatisfactory. Under the blended teaching mode, English teachers must renew their teaching concepts, flexibly use advanced teaching techniques and assist the reform of college English teaching mode.

Based on the investigation and research on the implementation of blended teaching mode in colleges and universities in Shandong province, we find that the application of blended teaching mode in practice is still in the primary stage and not very mature. At the same time, we focus on the analysis of the problems existing in practice, and seek the root causes in order to find the essence of the problem. There are also some successful examples in mixed teaching, such as the introduction of SPOC teaching platform in Chongqing University that promotes and applies online courses on a large scale, and that boosts the intensification of the construction of Mooc and two Moocs have won the first and second prizes of the most beautiful Mooc in Chinese universities in November this year. As an application-oriented secondary college in Shandong Province, the University will draw lessons from successful examples combined with the actual situation of the University and referred to the problems existing in the practice of mixed college English teaching in colleges and universities in Shandong Province, and actively explore the application of blended teaching mode to our college English teaching practice.

IV. PRACTICAL EXPLORATION OF BLENDED TEACHING MODE OF COLLEGE ENGLISH IN SHANDONG AGRICULTURE AND ENGINEERING UNIVERSITY

A. The Current Situation of College English Teaching in Shandong Agriculture and Engineering University

Shandong Agriculture and Engineering University (hereinafter referred to as “the University”) is an agricultural undergraduate university. The students' English foundation is relatively poor, their English learning enthusiasm is not high, and the basic skills of English listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation are unevenly developed: especially their listening and speaking ability is much weaker. At the same time, the number of undergraduate English class hours is less, basically the class hours are on Thursday in the freshman year, the class hours are on Tuesday in the sophomore year, and optional English courses are offered in the junior and senior years with the class hours of Tuesday. However, the content of college English is too much to complete the teaching task in such a short time. At the same time, due to the relative lack of English teachers, our school implements different professional students that are taught in the same class, the number of students in the class varies from 70 to 100 and the interaction between teachers and students is less, so the effect of classroom teaching is not ideal.

The problems in English teaching in the University mainly focus on the following aspects:

1) From the perspective of students' English learning, English learning resources are less, teaching contents are limited, and students' autonomous learning ability is poor at the same time: At present, English textbooks and electronic courseware related to book knowledge are the main resources of English, which leads to the single and lack of learning resources, at the same time, the electronic, network and digital resources are insufficient, and the implementation of online learning is not practical. However, the learning resources are mainly based on reading materials, so while emphasizing students' reading ability, other abilities of listening, speaking, writing and translation cannot be exercised. Students' ability to learn English actively after class is poor, and their knowledge gained in class cannot be effectively practiced.

2) From the perspective of teachers' English teaching, English teaching mode is single, teaching methods are restricted, teaching design is absent, teaching environment is sole, and teaching channels are few: Only in the time of face-to-face classroom teaching and with the teacher-centered teaching mode, teachers impart knowledge with impunity without the understanding of students, which leads students to passively accept knowledge and students' active learning ability is poor, so it can not improve the learning effect of students. In addition, there is little interaction between teachers and students, so teachers cannot dynamically control students' English learning.

3) Backwardness of evaluation mode of college English teaching: The evaluation mode that focuses on summative assessment cannot dynamically reflect the students' English learning situation. The final examination mainly focuses on written examination, that is, examining students' reading ability, which ultimately leads to the short of students' practical ability to use English. In the era of big data, the situation of online learning cannot be reflected in the final English score. As a result, students' overall English learning enthusiasm is not high and their learning attitude is negative.
B. Multivariate Exploration of Blended teaching Mode of College English in the University

Through the research of the gains and losses in the practice of blended teaching of college English in our province, combined with the existing problems in college English teaching in the University and other actual circumstances, this paper explores the application of blended teaching mode in the practice of college English teaching in order to innovate our college English teaching model in the University and provide reference and guidance for blended teaching of other subjects.

College English undergraduate teaching in the University adopts the method that combines graded teaching and phased teaching. Graded teaching is applied horizontally, and students are divided into three levels: A, B and C. Phased teaching is implemented longitudinal, the lower grade mainly focuses on the teaching of English general knowledge and cross-cultural knowledge, the higher grade carries out ESP that is professional English teaching.

The experimental class and the control class are set up to record the data of the teaching experiment at any time in our school, with the non-English major undergraduates of grade A of grade 2018 as the object of teaching practice. Before the teaching experiment at the beginning of the semester, a questionnaire survey is conducted on the students' English learning status through the "Questionnaire Star" and the first-hand information is formed through interviews. In the teaching experiment, our school has formed a teaching system integrating with teachers are the leading force, students are the main body, promoting online autonomous learning, online testing assessment, online quality monitoring, and deep learning offline, which has constructed a multivariate and blended teaching mode of “Internet plus Mooc plus micro class plus flipped class plus rapid E-learning plus mobile Wechat”.

1) The relation between micro class, Mooc, flipped class and rapid e-learning: Micro class is a digital learning resource kit that was first known for one-minute video produced by Davis Penrose, an American scholar. Micro-class is a video class last about 10 minutes long that introduces a certain knowledge point in the course, with clear goal and short and concise content (Jia-Hou Li, 2018). Micro class includes micro-video and micro-teaching resources. The latter includes micro-teaching plan, micro-courseware, micro-exercises and micro-reflection etc. Flipped class was introduced to the world by Salman Khan at TED conference in 2011, and since then has attracted the attention of educational workers. Flipped class has overturned the traditional classroom teaching mode. Students have changed from doing homework after class to watching teaching video to learn independently. Teachers’ lectures in class have changed into discussion and knowledge internalization. Mooc (Massive Open Online Course) is a “large-scale open online course”. Downes believes that learners can learn online resources free of charge, freely and openly through a certain online learning platform, which is an inevitable trend of the development of modern social education in the context of rapid Internet development. A large number university in the United States has set up free online learning platforms to open to learners and provide free online courses. EdX, Udacit and Coursera are three well-known course providers. Rapid E-learning is a technology of rapidly making courseware based on templates and suites, and it is not course.

Micro class itself is a new design scheme of course. Flipped class is the organizational form of classroom under the mixed teaching. Mooc is a new online course based on micro class design, and rapid E-learning is a self-assistance technical scheme that teacher make micro classes and deliver Mooc and organize the use of flipped class. These four classes are an organic unity, which effectively serves all aspects of mixed teaching. In short, micro class is a point that represents the remodeling of teaching contents. Flipped class is a line that refers to the innovation of teaching methods. Mooc is a plane that represents the innovation of teaching mode. Rapid E-learning is the design scheme, micro class is the teaching courseware, flipped class is an intramural mix, while Mooc is open online, and “the integration of four lessons” constitutes the organic unity of mixed teaching.

On the basis of the four classes, the construction of the multivariate and blended teaching mode in our school that starts from the representation of teaching content, the means of teaching dissemination, the organization of teaching process and the detection of teaching results constructs a comprehensive, three-dimensional and unique blended teaching mode.

2) Blended teaching mode of “internet plus mooc plus flipped class”: English teachers in our school take full advantage of the role of the Internet platform, carry out the editing and screening of the vast amount of teaching resources provided by the Internet, closely adhere to the content and requirements of the unit, and build an online teaching resource pool according to students’ English learning level. A New Edition of Advanced English, published by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Publishing House, is an experimental textbook of blended teaching for undergraduates in the University. Accompanying class App in this book is accompanied by some teaching resources matching with textbook for students to preview before class and consolidate after class. Teachers can publish tasks on this APP and check the completion of students' homework, and the function of automatic marking makes the teachers more clear. At the same time, teachers can give full play the students' autonomy, encourage them to invest in the construction of resource pool, and ultimately form optimized teaching resources. Before class, teachers issue learning tasks to enable students to watch course videos or other teaching materials on the online platform and complete language input learning. In class, the teacher let the students to report the learning results and guide the students to discuss the contents of online learning so as to consolidate and internalize knowledge. After class, teacher timely feedbacks the learning results and prompts students to improve learning strategies.
The blended teaching mode of “Internet plus Mooc plus flipped class” can help students learn free from time and place, and can watch high-quality videos repeatedly, thus forming a ubiquitous learning environment. Online discussion, classroom teaching and timely feedback form a seamless docking to closely enhance the two-way communication between teachers and students, which is an optimizing teaching means to achieve win-win between teachers and students.

3) Blended teaching mode of “internet plus micro class plus flipped class”: Micro class is an important part of flipped class, the premise of flipped class to flip and the starting point of mixed teaching. Micro class is a short and concise video that explains a certain knowledge point with the characteristics of interestingness and flexibility, and expands the time and space of English learning. College English teachers in our school prepare lessons collectively, and divide micro class production into mandatory module and optional module. The mandatory module refers to the lock of the key and difficult points of each unit, which is divided into five aspects from listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating. At the same time, it is decomposed into tasks of making micro class one by one and assigned to each teacher at the same time. In this way, teachers can take responsibility respectively and each teacher is only responsible for the production of micro-class with one key and difficulty, which can ensure the quality of micro-lessons. Optional module refers to the micro class recorded by teachers guided by cross-cultural communication according to their hobbies and knowledge reserve with the topic of this paragraph as entry point, and combining with the development of the times and the needs of students' knowledge.

The college attaches great importance to the production of micro class, and has formed a professional micro-class production team with “the president as the leader, the director of teaching and research office as the supervisor, the laboratory providing equipment guarantee, the computer technicians assisting in the whole process, the fast lesson as the technical support, and each teach with a clear division of labor to record lessons”. English teachers in our school make full use of the technology of rapid E-learning production to make courseware quickly in the course of recording micro classes. There are various forms of micro class, which integrate teaching, problem-solving, question-answering and experimental types and others, and tries for excellence in terms of design content, form of manifestation and script production. Practical results show that students like to make excellent micro class, which improves the efficiency and effectiveness of English learning. The micro class recorded by English teachers in our school has formed a complete course system that is published on the Internet to make it more public, which produces better Mooc resources.

4) Blended teaching mode of “Internet plus mobile Wechat plus flipped class”: The development of Internet technology makes the appearance of “smart-phone addiction” in the classroom, and the phenomenon of students playing with mobile phones in class is in repeated emergence. How to make this unpopular “third party” in learning to promote students' learning, rather than make students indulge in the network and cannot extricate themselves, is also a major problem facing university teachers. English serves as a language, we can find a large number of English learning resources and learning websites on smart phones, such as Keke English, Himalayan English, Washington Post, China Daily, Correction Network, Netease Youdao Dictionary and other ways of English learning, including the accompanying classroom APP we choose that matches with teaching materials is also inseparable from mobile phones. Wechat is a free application launched by Tencent in 2011, which is popular for its easy operation. There are also many English learning platforms in Wechat that offers a large number of English learning resources, such as Chinese Bilingual Newspaper, English Liulishuo, English interesting dubbing, Cai Lei English and air class and so on. All these offer facilitation for English learning.

Our school has already realized the whole campus coverage of wireless network, which provides convenience for mobile Internet access. Our teachers actively guide students to learn English from mobile phones and Wechat. At the same time, teachers set up class Wechat group, interact with students in the group, understand the latest progress of students' English learning, explore the methods of English learning, and deliver English learning resources. In addition, we can set up Wechat English learning platform to realize the sharing of resources and transmission of data, which is in line with the learning characteristics of modern students and helps students learn English in fragmented time. As a result, it is very popular among students.

5) Multidimensional teaching evaluation mode: Under the traditional teaching mode, students' scores are “one examination paper deciding the whole life of students”, and the final paper-based examination accounts for an absolute large proportion of the total scores. Under the blended teaching mode, it is necessary to change the evaluation criteria towards students, including the evaluation towards students based on the online teaching module because online learning has a record of students’ learning that includes learning content, learning progress, and the results of online testing at ordinary times and so on.

Our school's assessment of students' English achievement has expanded the proportion of online learning score to 60% under the blended teaching mode, while the final score has dropped to 40%. The evaluation orientation of score will surely lead the healthy development of blended teaching mode.

V. CONCLUSION

Since the implementation of the multivariate and blended teaching mode of college English in the University, it has exerted a significant effect on the improvement of students' English ability. The experimental results show that although there are some ups and downs in the reform of college English teaching in the University, good performances still have been achieved. The key to the implementation of blended teaching
mode lies in teaching design, and the key to teaching design lies in teachers. Under the tide of informationization, college English teachers must become high-quality teaching body with “professional English knowledge plus advanced teaching skills” that is clearly reflected in the Guidelines for College English Teaching. The guideline requires college English teachers to keep pace with the times and reasonably incorporate information technology elements into their teaching design: “Encourage teachers to construct and use MOOCs and micro-classes, and make use of high-quality educational resources on the Internet to reform and expand teaching content. At the same time, teachers should implement blended teaching mode, such as flipped classroom, based on classroom and online course”, which enables students to develop in the direction of active learning, autonomous learning and personalized learning. (Wang Shouren, 2016)

Although there are various problems in the implementation of mixed college English teaching, its mainstream scores cannot be ignored. In the future development, cooperation among colleges and universities should be strengthened; a broader online teaching platform should be created; and the boundaries between schools should be broken through. At the same time, the sharing of teaching resources should be realized, and teachers should communicate with one another in depth, so as to promote the reform of college English teaching mode and to innovate the cultivation of college English talents.

REFERENCES


