

Exploration and Reflection on Humanistic Spirit and Times Value of English Education

Keye Wu

Huazhong Normal University Affiliated Longgang High School, Longgang District, Shenzhen 518000, China

Abstract

Humanistic spirit is an important yardstick to measure the civilization of a nation and a region. The development of globalization, the rapid rise of the world's knowledge economy, as well as cultural conflicts and collisions among other countries all have posed great challenges to humanistic quality. How can humanistic education play an important role in education and how can modern English education cultivate humanistic quality and sound personality? These are the issues that will be explored and reflected in this paper.

Keywords

Humanistic Spirit; Times Value; English Education.

1. The Internal Relationship between Humanistic Spirit and English Learning

1.1. Nature based on English Learning

The subject nature of English learning shows strong humanistic characteristics. English learning cannot be separated from language learning, while language cannot be divorced from culture. Behind English learning is cultural learning, presenting humanistic characteristics. As both thinking and cognitive activities demand language as auxiliary, language is not only a medium of communication, but also a tool for the transmission of culture and knowledge. In particular national culture, language is also significantly reflected in this aspect and embodies rich cultural contents, humanistic traditions and ideas. Thus, the humanistic nature behind the language can be observed. Meanwhile, the core of humanistic nature is centered on the people-oriented concept, emphasizing the value of people, attaching importance to the cultivation of people's comprehensive quality and promoting their all-round development, which coincide with the core of humanistic spirit. As a result, when cross-cultural learning is stressed greatly in modern English learning, the integration of humanistic spirit into English has become an inevitable trend. English education requires students not only to master professional knowledge, but also to understand the culture of different countries, enhance their cross-cultural awareness and ability, and have the capacity to distinguish right from wrong when facing the cultural differences between China and foreign countries.

1.2. Functions based on English Learning

Culture is created and inherited by people. English learning has a humanistic function, which requires students to learn to seek common ground while reserving differences, treat foreign culture correctly and spread their own culture. Therefore, colleges and universities need to strengthen the cultivation of students' humanistic quality. The main purpose of education is to help the educatees perfect their personality and develop their ability. In the face of a wide range of Western culture and thought, students are susceptible to western bad values, and then blindly follow them. In this context, the core of people-oriented concept should be focused on

in English learning to manifest the humanities spirit fully and increase students' professional knowledge and humanistic quality, so as to perfect their personality, promote their personalized development, guide them to establish correct three views and national self-confidence, improve their ability of intercultural communication, and then give full play to the humanistic function of English learning.

2. Humanistic Connotation and Value of English Education

Humanistic quality is the research ability and knowledge level of humanities as well as the human-oriented and human-centered spirit reflected in humanities, namely the inner quality of human beings. The soul of humanistic quality is not "ability", but "human-oriented and human-centered spirit", whose central content is the concern for the meaning and value of human existence, which is "humanistic spirit". In fact, it is a kind of basic "virtue", "value" and "philosophy of life", including scientific spirit, artistic spirit and moral spirit. It advocates people to bravely pursue the beautiful artistic conception of life and society, praises people's perceptual consciousness and emotional ability, and emphasizes the diversity of people's imagination and life.

2.1. English Education Improves Cognitive Level and Thinking Ability

The English language shows the native English-speaking countries' experience, perception and exposition of nature, social perspective and spiritual world in the process of self-growth, social life and historical evolution, which is the essence of their achievements in understanding themselves and the world around them. In addition, the English language also represents a new way of thinking which is roughly different from Chinese in terms of conceptual categories, expressive logic and systems, providing learners with a way to understand the world from a differentiated perspective and a thinking tool to create new concepts and new knowledge. When students encounter completely different cognitive results and ways from their existing cognitive system in English learning, their inherent cognitive system will be greatly impacted and challenged. In the course of their trying to understand and adapt to the new spiritual results, along with the attempt to control and use the new cognitive system and tools, their internal cognitive structure will be constantly broken, adjusted and reconstructed, the openness and adaptability of their cognitive system will be improved, a more comprehensive and profound way of understanding the world, society and themselves will be shaped, and their rigorous and critical thinking will be deepened.

2.2. English Education Cultivates Sympathy and Understanding for Foreign Cultures

In English textbooks, there are substantial language materials about British and American history, geography, people, festivals, customs, religion and other cultural contents, which become an important channel for students to understand British and American culture. In the acquaintance and understanding of foreign cultures, students are bound to observe the differences and similarities between Chinese culture and English culture, so as to get a deeper insight into the extensive and profound Chinese culture and appreciate the subtlety of foreign cultures. This will facilitate students to understand the cultural knowledge about national psychology, life and history carried by the language, and cultivate their sympathy and understanding for foreign cultures.

3. Reasons for the Lack of Humanistic Quality in Modern English Learning

From the perspective of the history of English education development in China, the educational concept of emphasizing test scores over humanistic connotation has always been dominant.

Humanistic education knowledge is an important supplement to English learning, while humanistic courses and teachers' investment are few. Humanistic education curriculum is not aimed at fostering humanistic spirit, but focuses on the teaching needs of practical purposes, resulting in problems such as the lack of humanistic spirit.

For a long time, increasing attention has been paid to practicability and marketability of English education, with the cultivation of humanistic quality neglected, and people even fail to know the meaning of humanistic quality. English education has always been based on the results of the college entrance examination, CET-4 and CET-6 tests, and accordingly English teaching content and teaching methods are restricted by these examinations. Also, the teaching and learning of English knowledge have become only exam-oriented education, while ignoring quality training and application ability training. The examination-oriented education and the excessive assignments tactic have greatly dampened students' learning enthusiasm and constrained the development of their personality. Teachers' educational concepts are outdated, and students lack motivation to learn. In consequence, neglecting humanistic quality education ultimately gives rise to high score in English but low ability of students, as well as serious deficiency of Chinese and western cultural quality. Although students will score well in English exams, they will be embarrassed when communicating with foreign teachers. The weak concept of humanistic education has long been an important reason that restricts the development of English education in China.

4. The Path Exploration of Cultivating Humanistic Quality in English Education in the New Era

Language is the carrier of human culture, and the relationship between language and culture is inseparable. Language is not only a system of symbols, but also the form of language expression is subject to the social customs, way of life, way of behavior, values, way of thinking, religious belief, cultural psychology and personality on which language depends. Therefore, to learn a language, not only should the structure of the language be mastered, but also the cultural background of the language should be understood, so as to broaden students' cultural vision and enrich their cultural background. This requires English learning to be combined with the language and cultural background, achieving the two synchronous development. At the same time, teachers should adopt the method of comparison and combine the content of language learning, to timely introduce the differences between Chinese and English culture in value orientation, national character, etiquette and customs, family mode and so on, so as to improve students' cultural quality. In the meantime, colleges and universities should integrate the cultivation of students' innovation ability into the daily curriculum and make it the main content of quality education through the method of combining theory with practice. In classroom learning, teachers should strive to create a free, equal and harmonious atmosphere, fully study and discover the scientific rationality and humanistic spirit in the learning content, convey their own understanding of the teaching material and inner feeling throughout the whole teaching process, and combine the profound, difficult and abstract professional knowledge with the background of contemporary economic, cultural and social development, to make it lively, easy to understand and scientific and cultural knowledge applied in practice. In addition, in classroom teaching, teachers should change the traditional teaching method of "giving students a fish", train the ability of college students to understand, find and actively solve problems, and teach them the method of solving problems independently, so as to achieve the purpose of "teaching students how to fish".

As an important place for spreading advanced culture, school is directly concerned with to the cultivation of students' humanistic spirit. Therefore, to realize the cultivation of humanistic quality, the construction of campus culture should be strengthened to influence students'

values and value orientation in a subtle way. Firstly, the school should invite celebrities and famous teachers to hold lectures and talks on literature and art, philosophy and history, human geography, science and technology, etc., to help students improve their humanistic quality. Secondly, a variety of campus cultural activities should be carried out, such as cultural performances, Chinese and English speech contests and other activities containing humanistic quality. Thirdly, the construction of associations and student union groups should be strengthened to encourage students to actively participate in English singing, English broadcasting clubs and other associations, and constantly improve their own comprehensive quality, so as to achieve the purpose of promoting the overall development of students.

5. Conclusion

With the development of globalization, modern English learning needs the revival of humanistic spirit. As the soul of a nation, humanistic spirit embodies national civilization to a certain extent. In order to improve the overall quality of Chinese people and provide more English talents with cross-cultural communication skills to the international competitive arena, humanistic spirit education should be emphasized in English learning, and a variety of ways should be adopted to give full play to the advantages of humanistic spirit in English learning, so as to improve students' humanistic quality and comprehensive ability, as well as promote the international competitiveness of Chinese English talents.

References

- [1] Arnold, J. *Affect in Language Learning*[M]. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 2000.
- [2] Lihua Liang. Humanistic value and radial thinking of English teaching in middle schools[J]. *English Teacher*, 2020, 20(17):174-175,178.
- [3] Jing Yuan. Connotation and Analysis of the Current Situation of Humanistic Value of English Language Teaching in Basic Disciplines [J]. *Journal of Jialing University*, 2015, 33(10):75-80.
- [4] Hui Liu. The Value of TED Talks in Cultivating College Students' Humanistic Spirit [J]. *Journal of Xianyang Normal University*. 2021,36(04):107-110.