



A Study on Corpus-Based Teaching of College English Vocabulary in Moral Cultivation

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Abstract

English vocabulary teaching is one of the key and difficult points in college English teaching. Scholars have conducted a series of studies such as lexical frequency, concordance/KWIC (key Word in Context), collocation and semantic prosody related to college English vocabulary teaching based on corpora, and have gained a lot of achievements. Under the concept of ideological and political education in courses, few scholars have conducted research on college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation based on corpora. This paper tries to explore the application of concordance/KWIC (key Word in Context), collocation, terminology, and allusions based on the multilingual corpus of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China” in teaching college English vocabulary courses in the moral cultivation, as well as the methods for evaluating teaching college English vocabulary courses in the moral cultivation, with the hope of promoting the improvement of the effectiveness of ideological and political teaching in college English vocabulary courses.

Subject Areas

Higher Education

Keywords

College English, Vocabulary, Corpus-Based Teaching

1. Introduction

Teaching and learning English vocabulary is an important part of college English. College English vocabulary learning is the focus and difficulty of college English learning. The improvement of college students' English listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating skills can hardly be separated from the improvement of English vocabulary. As the British linguist David A. Wilkins pointed out

“Without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed” [1]. There are clear requirements of English vocabulary for the teaching of basic and improvement goals in the College English Teaching Guide (2020 version) [2]. College English teaching should be integrated into the teaching system of college/university curricula in moral cultivation, so that it can play an important role in the realization of the fundamental task of strengthening moral education and cultivating people in colleges and universities [2]. The construction of curricula in moral cultivation is an important educational policy in China in the 21st century, which is related to the fundamental problem of “what kind of people to train, how to train people and for whom to train people” [3]. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: “All colleges and universities, all teachers, all courses should bear the responsibility of educating students to make all kinds of courses in the same direction with ideological and political courses, and unify explicit education and implicit education to form a synergistic effect in order to build a comprehensive pattern of education for all students” [4]. On May 28, 2020, *the Guidelines for Ideological and Political Construction of Curricula in Colleges and Universities* was issued by the Ministry of Education of China. According to *the Guidelines for Ideological and Political Construction of Curricula in Colleges and Universities*, ideological and political education was clearly integrated into the personnel training system, and the ideological and political construction of curricula in colleges and universities was comprehensively promoted. The teaching reform of college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation is an important part of the teaching reform of college English courses in moral cultivation. How to achieve the goals: teachers teach college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation well and students learn College English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation well? With the help of the multilingual corpus “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China”, the teaching goals of college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation can be realized.

2. Literature Review

Corpus, also known as a plural corpus in English, comes from Latin, meaning “body” and “trunk”. McNery, Xiao & Tono summarized the characteristics of a corpus as follows: 1) They are machine-readable electronic texts; 2) They are the actual language (spoken or written); 3) Language samples are strictly sampled (rather than randomly collected); 4) The purpose is to represent a language or language variant [5].

Scholars at home and abroad have conducted theoretical and practical research on English vocabulary based on corpora. The theoretical basis for corpus-based college English vocabulary teaching mainly includes schema theory, lexical block theory and lexical grammar theory [6]. Chinese scholars have conducted studies on the statistics of high-frequency words in corpora [7] [8], the compilation of word lists based on corpora [9], the introduction of retrieval software and the application of concordance in college English vocabulary teaching in corpora [10].

The research results of foreign scholars based on corpus are very impressive. Foreign scholars have conducted studies on the effects of using corpus in vocabulary teaching ([11]: p. 301), the application of collocations in vocabulary teaching [12], and the learning strategies of vocabulary collocation and association in corpora [13] [14]. To sum up, few scholars have carried out research on the teaching of college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation based on the corpus “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China”.

3. Multilingual Corpus Comprehensive Platform of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China”

The multilingual database comprehensive platform of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China” was developed by Professor Hu Kaibao’s team from the Corpus Research Institute of Shanghai Foreign Studies University [15]. The corpus, knowledge database, and document database were included in the multilingual database comprehensive platform of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China”. The corpus is composed of two choices: the teaching module and the scientific research module. Among them, the teaching module includes discourse presentation, and translation strategies and skills; the research module includes basic information, word frequency, KWIC/concordance, word families and collocations. The knowledge database consists of a terminology base and an allusion base. The document database has links to the literature. Three volumes of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China” were collected in the multilingual database comprehensive platform of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China”. The first volume “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China” was published in September 2014, the second volume was published in November 2017, and the third volume was published in July 2020. If the fourth volume of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China” published in June 2022 can be collected in the multilingual database comprehensive platform of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China”, the richness of the corpus of the multilingual database comprehensive platform of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China” will be enhanced and more abundant corpus resources for learning and research will be provided by the multilingual database comprehensive platform of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China”.

4. The Application of Corpus in Teaching College English Vocabulary Course in Moral Cultivation

The teaching of college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation based on the multilingual database of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China” can be divided into two parts: the teaching contents of College English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation and the evaluation of College English vocabulary course in the moral cultivation.

4.1. Teaching Contents

The teaching contents of College English Vocabulary courses in moral cultivation

include four parts: concordance/KWIC and College English Vocabulary course in the moral cultivation, collocation and College English Vocabulary course in the moral cultivation, terminology and College English Vocabulary course in the moral cultivation, and allusions and College English Vocabulary Course in the moral cultivation.

4.1.1. Concordance/KWIC and College English Vocabulary Course in Moral Cultivation

Concordance, also known as Word index, or Key Word in Context (KWIC), refers to the use of the search function to present a word and its context in the text line by line to facilitate the observation of a large number of language use examples [5], which helps us to master English vocabulary even English through the observation of a large number of language use examples. Thanks to the option Key word in context (KWIC) in the research module of the multilingual database of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China”, college English teachers could carry out teaching college English vocabulary courses in the moral cultivation. After entering the scientific research module in the corpus of the multilingual database of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China”, College English teachers click KWIC and input the college English words that need to be taught into the keyword box, English selected as the language, then click “Query” to obtain a series of sentences containing the entered keywords displayed in red color and in the center of the sentences or sentence fragments. For example, the topic of Unit 3 Book one of the English textbook: New Start College English Course is “education”. If college English teachers want to teach the word “education”, after entering the scientific research module in the corpus of the multilingual database of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China”, click KWIC, then input the word “education” in the keyword box, and many sentences or fragments containing education will be displayed. The first English sentence with “Education” presented is: They want to have better education, more stable jobs, more income, reliable social security, better medical and healthcare, improved housing conditions and a beautiful environment. Under the guidance of the teacher, students observe what English verbs co-occur on the left side of the word “education”? The English verbs such as strengthen, enhance, improve, receive, start, take, combine, develop can be found by students themselves. English adjectives co-occurring with education can also be found on the left. This teaching method of observing concordance line (KWIC) not only helps students to learn English vocabulary course in moral cultivation, but also promotes the development of students’ independent learning and personalized learning.

4.1.2. Collocation and College English Vocabulary Course in Moral Cultivation

J.R. Firth, founder of the London School, raised collocations to the linguistic level for the first time [5]. Firth ([16]: p. 7) believed that the complete meaning of a word is always contextual, and no study of meaning apart from a complete context can be taken seriously. Firth ([17]: p. 11) “You shall know a word by the company it keeps”. Collocation is the occurrence of two or more words within a short space

of each other in a text ([18]: p. 170). Mutual information is one of the commonly used algorithms to calculate the collocation significance of large corpora. During the teaching of college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation, in order to let students understand the collocation of English vocabulary, teachers can input English vocabulary into the box (node word) of the collocation option in the scientific research module of the multilingual corpus “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China” and carry out corresponding operations to present English vocabulary collocation information. Lexical collocation information such as vocabulary collocation visualizations centered around node words, mutual information, totals, etc. are viewed and provided for reference and use by teachers and learners. “What is Carbon Pricing?” is the first text in Unit 1 Book two of the English textbook “New Start College English. The teacher can take the word “carbon” as an example and input carbon into the box after the node word of the collocation option in the scientific research module of the multilingual corpus “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China”. The left and right intervals were selected as 2, 5 was selected for the sub-node boxes, and the sorting was selected as MI. The picture of two English words (low and development) obtained with carbon as the central point was viewed. The MI values from high to low were cycling (13.66), emission (12.66), low (12.54), transportation (11.66) and parks (11.66). The students know that carbon can be combined with circling, emission, low, transportation and parks with high collocation intensity.

4.1.3. Terminology and College English Vocabulary Course in Moral Cultivation

The terminology database, a sub database of the knowledge base of the multilingual database comprehensive platform “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China”, is one of the valuable resources for the college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation. This terminology database consists of four pages, with 20 terms per page, totaling 80 terms. College English teachers can choose terminology terms from the terminology database to conduct college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation based on the actual needs of teaching college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation. For example, the theme of Unit 3 Book one of the English textbook is: Education. Teachers may select terminology terms such as “the Two Centenary Goals,” “the Core Socialist Values,” “the System of the Core Socialist Values,” “the Primary Stage of Socialism,” “Scientific Socialism” and other terminology terms’ English translation as examples to carry out teaching college English vocabulary courses in the moral cultivation, The ideological and political elements are organically integrated into college English vocabulary teaching. The English words of the highest frequency in these five examples (“the Two Centenary Goals,” “the Core Socialist Values,” “the System of the Core Socialist Values,” “the Primary Stage of Socialism,” and “Scientific Socialism”) are the core, socialist, values, and socialism. The English words core, socialist, values, and socialism can be used with high frequency in college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation. Learning these high-frequency college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation will enhance college students’ memory of English

vocabulary related to courses in moral cultivation, and help them construct college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation. These real terminology examples from the terminology database of the multilingual database comprehensive platform “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China” not only contribute to the teaching of college English vocabulary courses in the moral cultivation for college English teachers, but also facilitate the learning of college English vocabulary courses in the moral cultivation for college students.

4.1.4. Allusion and College English Vocabulary Course in Moral Cultivation

The excellent traditional culture of China is the crystallization of the wisdom of the Chinese people. Allusions are an important part of the excellent traditional culture of China, and also a valuable resource for ideological and political courses. On August 21, 2018, General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out at the National Conference on Propaganda and Ideological Education that “excellent traditional culture is the root of the Chinese nation, and its thoughts and humanistic spirit have important value in solving human problems. Its essence needs to be refined and displayed” ([19]: p. 5). The allusion database in the multilingual database of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China” is a sub database in the knowledge database of the multilingual database of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China”. There are a total of 60 allusions in this allusion database. Teachers can incorporate English translations of allusions into college English vocabulary courses in the moral cultivation. If it involves ideological and political education in vocabulary courses related to education, we can choose the following allusions to carry out teaching English vocabulary courses in the moral cultivation. 1) Allusions are to the relationship between learning and thinking. For example, reading without thinking makes one muddled; thinking without reading makes one flighty. 2) Allusions are to moral education. For example, if a man does not keep his word, what is he good for? When we see men of virtue, we should think of equaling them; when we see men of a contrary character, we should examine ourselves. Don’t do unto others what you don’t want others to do unto you. A man of high moral quality will never feel lonely. 3) Allusions are to the way or importance of learning. There is nothing that cannot be accomplished through hard work. Regarding knowledge, those who are devoted to it learn better than those who are aware of it, and those who enjoy it the most are the best students. A jade uncut will not be a useful vessel; a man without learning will not know the way. Teachers can integrate the above Chinese allusions into teaching college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation, not only allowing students to learn the application of English vocabulary in allusions, but also helping them review excellent Chinese allusions, thereby achieving an organic unity of value shaping, knowledge imparting, and ability cultivation.

4.2. Teaching Evaluation

Teaching evaluation is an important part of teaching process. How to evaluate the

ideological and political teaching effect of college English vocabulary course is an important part of the ideological and political teaching activities of college English vocabulary courses. The main methods of teaching evaluation include process evaluation, terminal evaluation, timely evaluation, teacher-student evaluation and student-student evaluation. While teaching college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation, teachers may conduct a process evaluation, timely evaluation, teacher-student evaluation, and student-student evaluation of the effectiveness of college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation based on corpora. Vocabulary multiple-choice questions can also be created based on the multilingual corpus of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China” for use in class, and the learning effectiveness of students’ vocabulary courses in moral cultivation can be evaluated in a timely manner or evaluated by teachers and students or students. For example, teachers may choose the words (the core socialist values) for students to translate from Chinese into English. After the students finish the translation, teachers and students may give the evaluation of the students’ translation. Teachers can use different teaching evaluation methods or combinations of teaching evaluation methods to promote the improvement of teaching effectiveness in college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation.

5. Conclusion

Teaching college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation is an important part of teaching college English courses in moral cultivation. The multilingual corpus of “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China” is an important and valuable resource for college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation. Teachers can use concordance, collocations, terminology databases, and allusion databases to carry out college English vocabulary courses in moral cultivation, achieving an organic unity of value shaping, knowledge imparting, and ability cultivation.

Fund

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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