

On the Construction and Effectiveness of a College English Teaching Model Based on Teacher–Student Collaborative Assessment (TSCA)

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Abstract: As a core general education course in higher education, College English plays a crucial role in implementing the “student-centered” educational philosophy and cultivating practically competent and application-oriented talents. Guided by The Guidelines on College English Teaching (2020 Edition) and integrating Professor Wen Qiufang’s theory of Teacher–Student Collaborative Assessment (TSCA) within the framework of the Production-Oriented Approach (POA), this paper addresses several persistent issues in current College English teaching, such as one-way knowledge transmission, the imbalance between input and output, insufficient integration of ideological and political education, and the monotony of evaluation systems. Based on these challenges, the paper constructs a College English teaching model that combines reading and writing and promotes learning through assessment. The model integrates process writing pedagogy and TSCA into a closed-loop design that includes a detailed review of typical samples before class, collaborative assessment during class, and peer review and reflection after class. Ideological and political elements are also embedded throughout, supported by digital teaching tools that enable dynamic tracking and multi-dimensional evaluation across the learning process. The practice results show that this model effectively stimulates students’ motivation to learn English, enhances their ability to use the language in practice, and improves their intercultural competence. Furthermore, it provides a practical reference for the integration of ideological and political education into College English and for broader teaching reform under the framework of “New Liberal Arts.”

Keywords: Teacher–Student Collaborative Assessment (TSCA); Production-oriented approach (POA); College English teaching reform; Ideological and political education; Smart learning

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1. Introduction

As a key public foundational course in China’s higher education system, College English bears the mission of cultivating students’ language competence, intercultural communication literacy, and global vision. Following the release of The Guidelines on College English Teaching (2020 Edition) (hereafter referred to as the Guidelines) and the advancement of “New Liberal Arts” construction, College English has been endowed with new meaning; it now carries the dual responsibility of fulfilling the fundamental goal of moral education and cultivating practically competent, application-oriented talents. However, traditional teaching practices still reveal several persistent problems: the dominance of teacher-

centered instruction, passive student participation, ineffective feedback mechanisms, and a superficial separation between ideological and linguistic instruction. These issues significantly hinder the fulfillment of the course's educational objectives and the full implementation of the Guidelines. In response to these challenges, this paper adopts Professor Wen Qiufang's theory of Teacher-Student Collaborative Assessment (TSCA) as the central intervention strategy and applies it to a series of teaching innovations and classroom practices^[1]. The goal is to explore an effective path for College English reform that can improve teaching effectiveness, enhance student engagement, and promote the overall growth of learners.

2. Review of core problems in current college English teaching

Drawing upon the key revision points in the Guidelines and findings from teaching practice and classroom observations, this paper identifies four major problems that currently restrict the effectiveness and educational value of College English instruction.

2.1. Rigid teaching models and lack of student agency

In most classrooms, the teacher remains the central figure who controls the teaching process, while students are positioned as passive recipients of information. Instruction often focuses on surface-level comprehension and knowledge transfer, rather than deep engagement or active construction of meaning. This one-way transmission model contradicts the Guidelines' principle of "student-centered learning," impedes the cultivation of higher-order thinking, and fails to align with universities' objectives of developing "practically competent and application-oriented" talents.

2.2. Imbalance in skill development and weak output training

Due to the structure of textbooks and limited class hours, English instruction tends to emphasize input skills, mainly reading and listening, while neglecting output skills such as speaking, writing, and translation. Many instructors believe that completing reading instruction already consumes all available class time, leaving little room for productive language tasks. This imbalance creates a clear gap between actual classroom practice and the Guidelines' requirement, after integrating China's Standards of English Language Ability (CSE), for balanced development across all language skills.

2.3. Insufficient integration of ideological and political education

The Guidelines explicitly call for College English teaching materials to integrate socialist core values and elements of Chinese traditional culture. However, in practice, many teachers fail to identify and exploit the ideological and political dimensions of reading materials. Hidden ideological content remains underdeveloped, and explicit ideological instruction is often fragmented or superficial. This lack of depth prevents the course from forming a "whole-course moral education" framework capable of guiding students toward correct worldviews, life values, and moral outlooks.

2.4. Monotonous assessment system and weak formative function

Under the blended teaching model that combines online and offline instruction, the classroom focus should ideally shift toward feedback, reflection, and formative evaluation. However, most classes remain centered on teacher-led lectures and summative assessment. Students depend excessively on teacher grading and rarely engage in self- or peer-assessment, resulting in low evaluation efficiency and minimal learning promotion^[2]. Instead of motivating learning, such assessment practices often discourage students and undermine both efficiency and effectiveness.

3. Multi-dimensional innovation paths for college English teaching

To overcome the above challenges, this paper, guided by the Guidelines, introduces Professor Wen Qiufang's Production-

Oriented Approach (POA) and develops a systemic innovation plan from four dimensions: teaching content, assessment mechanisms, interdisciplinary integration, and technology empowerment ^[3].

3.1. Integrating reading–writing and ideological elements to build a comprehensive moral education system

Taking “curriculum-based ideological education” as the core, this paper develops an innovative model of ideological capacity building that forms a closed-loop mechanism of “research-driven teaching — teaching-driven learning — competition-driven research.” This structure ensures the simultaneous improvement of both teachers’ and students’ ideological awareness and pedagogical competence. In practice, each textbook unit serves as a thematic entry point, where the ideological direction is precisely identified. A “theme–ideology–activity” three-in-one teaching plan is designed, combining English learning with moral development. Various classroom activities, such as English speeches, case studies, mock trials, and thematic debates, allow ideological and political elements to emerge naturally during language learning. Through these activities, ideological education evolves from “mechanical insertion” to “organic generation,” cultivating students’ correct values, cultural confidence, and sense of social responsibility in subtle and authentic ways. This process helps establish an integrated “three-in-one” educational structure that combines moral development, intellectual growth, and language competence.

3.2. Integrating TSCA and process writing: Reshaping the writing teaching process

A central difficulty in College English instruction lies in students’ weak writing ability. To address this, the paper integrates process writing pedagogy with Teacher–Student Collaborative Assessment (TSCA) to reshape the entire writing process. “Teacher-Student Collaborative Assessment” originates from Professor Wen Qiufang’s “Production-Oriented Approach (POA).” POA is a teaching theory with Chinese characteristics proposed for the problems existing in China’s foreign language teaching. It emphasizes three core concepts: “learning-centered”, “integration of learning and application,” and “holistic education.” The teaching process of POA includes three key links: “motivation—facilitation—evaluation.” Among them, “Teacher-Student Collaborative Assessment (TSCA)” serves as a key evaluation method in the POA system and acts as a bridge connecting the “facilitation” and “evaluation” links. It is not a simple combination of “teacher evaluation” and “student evaluation”, but a collaborative process in which teachers and students, under the professional guidance of teachers, jointly examine, analyze, and improve typical learning samples. The core of TSCA lies in realizing “promoting learning through assessment” through collaborative evaluation. It not only gives full play to the leading role of teachers in guiding the evaluation direction and grasping the evaluation standards, but also fully reflects the subject status of students in participating in the evaluation process and improving their learning abilities. This provides a solid theoretical basis and a feasible practical model for solving the problems of low evaluation efficiency and poor evaluation effect in current College English writing teaching ^[4-6].

The operation framework of TSCA is divided into three stages: pre-class, in-class, and post-class, which perfectly matches the “process writing method.” This integration effectively solves the problems of insufficient output skill training and inefficient evaluation in College English writing teaching. In the pre-class preparation stage, the teaching activities are dominated by teachers. Before the writing class, students are required to complete the first draft and the revised draft of the composition according to the writing tasks assigned by the teacher. After receiving the students’ compositions, the teacher carefully reads and evaluates each composition and selects representative, typical samples. This pre-class preparation work enables the teacher to have a clear understanding of the students’ writing level and existing problems, laying a good foundation for the smooth development of in-class collaborative evaluation.

The in-class implementation stage is completed through the cooperation of teachers and students, and the whole class is carried out around the typical samples selected in the pre-class stage. First, the teacher conducts a demonstration evaluation of the typical samples. By analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of the samples in detail, the teacher guides the students to understand the evaluation standards of the composition (such as content completeness, logical

clarity, language accuracy, etc.). Then, students are divided into groups of 4–5 people to carry out peer review activities. In the group discussions, students focus on the “editing stage” of writing, that is, checking and correcting detailed errors in the compositions, such as capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and word usage. This in-class collaborative evaluation link corresponds to the “revision” and “editing” stages of the process writing method, which is of great significance for improving the readability and logicity of students’ compositions.

The post-class reflection stage takes the students as the main body. After the in-class collaborative evaluation, students sort out the evaluation feedback obtained from the teacher and group members, and conduct a second revision and polishing of their own compositions according to the feedback. During the revision process, the teacher encourages students to write reflection logs, in which students record their gains and insights in the writing and evaluation process, analyze the problems existing in their compositions, and put forward improvement plans for future writing. Finally, students submit the revised final draft of the composition, and the teacher selects excellent compositions to compile into a class anthology or display them on the online teaching platform, realizing the “publication” of the compositions. This process not only greatly improves the effect of College English writing teaching but also significantly enhances students’ enthusiasm and initiative in participating in writing learning^[7,8].

Through this integrated framework, TSCA and process writing complement each other, TSCA provides the collaborative evaluation mechanism, while process writing offers the pedagogical sequence for iterative improvement. Together, they transform writing instruction from a summative, product-oriented approach into a formative, process-based, and student-centered model.

3.3. Promoting interdisciplinary integration through “New Liberal Arts” construction

Anchored in the university’s goal of cultivating “practically competent and application-oriented” talents, the paper incorporates the features of New Liberal Arts (comprehensiveness, interdisciplinarity, and integration) into English teaching practice. The model encourages the blending of English language instruction with students’ disciplinary knowledge, promoting authentic and meaningful language use in professional contexts. For instance, in the “Youth and Financial Literacy” unit for law majors, students participate in English mock trials where they analyze financial dispute cases using legal reasoning and English communication. This task-based learning not only enhances their professional English skills but also sharpens their ability to apply legal knowledge in bilingual environments. Similarly, for economics and business students, “Business Communication” units include training in English negotiation and cross-cultural communication. By situating language learning within real professional scenarios, students develop both linguistic competence and disciplinary literacy. This approach aligns with the New Liberal Arts principle of “integration of general education and professional education,” and effectively bridges the gap between English instruction and future career application.

3.4. Leveraging smart teaching technologies for dynamic process tracking

The paper also integrates modern information technology to create a digitally supported teaching ecosystem that enables real-time tracking and multidimensional assessment throughout the learning process. By utilizing MOOC and WE Learn platforms as online learning hubs, together with various digital tools such as QQ for assignment submission, X-Mind for mind mapping, Questionnaire Star for student surveys, and Pigaiwang for automatic writing evaluation, the entire process of instruction, from pre-class preparation to post-class assessment, is digitized and visualized. These digital tools not only enrich teaching forms and interaction patterns but also enable a three-tier evaluation system that integrates diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments. Consequently, teaching becomes more precise, adaptive, and data-informed. Students transition from “passive learning” to “active learning,” while teachers shift from knowledge transmitters to facilitators and learning partners^[9].

4. Analysis of teaching effectiveness

After one semester of implementing the TSCA-based College English model, significant pedagogical improvements were observed. The teaching reform accomplished a comprehensive transformation—from “teacher-centered transmission” to “teacher–student co-learning,” from “reading-dominated instruction” to “integrated reading–writing practice,” and from “traditional classroom teaching” to “smart, data-supported learning.” These outcomes correspond closely with the First-Class Course standards, emphasizing “high-level, innovative, and challenging” teaching.

4.1. Enhanced student motivation and engagement

Survey and interview data indicate a marked increase in students’ enthusiasm for English learning. They reported greater interest, engagement, and satisfaction in class activities. Notably, the previously widespread sense of passivity and anxiety (such as fear of making mistakes) was significantly alleviated, as students gradually perceived English learning as a meaningful, practical, and interactive process rather than a mere exam-focused task ^[10]. The collaborative nature of the TSCA approach, particularly its structured opportunities for students to assess peers’ writing with clear rubrics and discuss authentic language problems (like real-life conversation dilemmas), effectively fostered a stronger sense of ownership over their learning and greater agency in shaping class activities.

4.2. Significant improvement in English writing ability

A comparative analysis of pre-reform and post-reform writing samples revealed noticeable improvements in students’ language output, including fluency, grammatical accuracy, and organizational logic. Students demonstrated greater awareness of audience, tone, and coherence, which are key indicators of advanced writing proficiency. The combination of process writing and TSCA provided iterative opportunities for revision and feedback, leading to sustained improvement.

4.3. Strengthened critical thinking and reading depth

The integrated reading–writing model encouraged students to approach texts not merely as linguistic input sources but as materials for in-depth analysis, logical argumentation, and creative transformation. Reading thus became a solid foundation for structured writing, while writing tasks, such as summarizing or responding to texts, reinforced reading comprehension and critical thinking. When students engaged in collaborative evaluation of each other’s work, they learned to clearly identify textual strengths (e.g., coherent logic) and weaknesses (like vague evidence), thereby internalizing evaluation criteria and gradually developing analytical literacy.

4.4. Deepened ideological awareness and cultural confidence

By embedding targeted ideological and political elements in English thematic learning tasks, such as analyzing stories of Chinese role models or traditional cultural texts, students gained a more profound understanding of the moral and cultural dimensions within English materials. Post-task classroom discussions and reflective writing assignments revealed a stronger sense of national identity, heightened social responsibility (e.g., caring about community issues), and increased cultural pride. When interpreting Chinese values (like “harmony”) in English and comparing them with diverse global perspectives, students not only deepened language application but also significantly enhanced their intercultural communication competence and rooted cultural confidence.

4.5. Optimized assessment ecology and teaching efficiency

The introduction of TSCA shifted assessment from a summative, score-oriented activity to a formative, learning-oriented process. Teachers and students co-constructed evaluation standards, jointly identified learning gaps, and collaboratively explored solutions. This approach strengthened the “learning through assessment” mechanism and fostered a reciprocal teaching–learning relationship. Overall, the reform established a positive feedback ecosystem in which assessment drives learning, learning informs teaching, and teaching refines assessment. The dynamic data gathered from smart teaching

platforms further enabled precise monitoring of progress and differentiated instruction, enhancing both teaching efficiency and student learning outcomes.

5. Conclusion

This paper demonstrates that constructing a College English teaching model centered on Teacher–Student Collaborative Assessment (TSCA) provides an effective strategy for addressing the core challenges of current English teaching and fulfilling the requirements of The Guidelines on College English Teaching (2020 Edition). By integrating TSCA with process writing pedagogy, ideological education, and smart technologies, the model successfully realizes a seamless fusion of language skill training, value cultivation, and technological empowerment. It promotes active student participation, reinforces formative assessment, and fosters the holistic development of learners. Future research can extend this model to longitudinal studies across multiple institutions, exploring its adaptability in different disciplines and proficiency levels. Quantitative methods such as pre- and post-test comparisons or corpus-based writing analysis may further validate the model’s effectiveness. Additionally, the integration of AI-based assessment tools can be explored to refine real-time feedback and support individualized learning.

In summary, the TSCA-based College English teaching model represents a promising and practical pathway for advancing College English reform in China. It aligns with the goals of the New Liberal Arts initiative, embodies the principles of the Guidelines (2020), and demonstrates how teaching theory, technology, and ideology can converge to foster high-quality talent development in the new era.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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