Blended Teaching Application Research on the Classic Western Literature Course at the Yuketang Platform

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This study explores the effectiveness of blended teaching in the Classic Western Literature course using the Yuketang online platform. Through an in-depth analysis of course design, platform features, and interactions between students and teachers, we identify potential advantages of blended learning, such as enriching learning resources, emphasizing interaction and collaboration, and providing flexibility in learning time and space. The application of the Yuketang platform offers students a flexible, interactive, and enriched learning experience, enhancing their understanding and learning outcomes of classic literary works. Employing an empirical research approach, we evaluate the application's effects on the course using data from student feedback, teacher observations, and student performance. The results indicate that the blended learning model on the Yuketang platform provides students with more diverse learning opportunities but also faces certain challenges. In response to these challenges, the study proposes recommendations for improvement to optimize the blended teaching model and enhance student learning outcomes and engagement.

Keywords: blended teaching, Yuketang platform, Classic Western Literature, teaching effectiveness, student engagement

Introduction

Research Background and Significance

In recent years, the course of Classic Western Literature has garnered significant attention in the field of education, with its importance and popularity on the rise. Many educational institutions and researchers have started exploring the use of blended teaching methods to deliver this course. This paper aims to investigate the application of a blended teaching model on the Yuketang platform (https://www.yuketang.cn/) for teaching the Classic Western Literature course in ordinary universities in Zhejiang regions. It also aims to explore its potential benefits. The significance of the Classic Western Literature course is self-evident. Western literature carries rich humanistic spirit and historical culture, with extensive influence and profound significance. By studying classic works of Western literature, students can broaden their perspectives, cultivate critical thinking, literary appreciation skills, and enrich their humanistic qualities. Therefore, this course has been favored by students and educational institutions alike.

Blended teaching, as a teaching model that integrates traditional face-to-face instruction and online learning, has gained considerable attention in recent years. Research indicates that blended teaching can enhance students' learning outcomes and engagement, promote interaction and collaboration among students, and provide a more flexible learning approach. Educational institutions are gradually recognizing the potential of blended teaching and actively exploring its application in various disciplines.

This study chooses to apply a blended teaching model on the Yuketang platform to instruct the course Classic Western Literature, with clear background and motivation. The Yuketang platform, introduced by Tsinghua University, serves as an online education platform with excellent teaching resources and technical support, providing favorable conditions for blended teaching. By combining face-to-face instruction with online learning, students can engage in in-depth discussions of literary works in the classroom, while the online learning component offers additional learning resources and interactive opportunities. This blended teaching model is expected to provide students with a more enriching and comprehensive learning experience. The significance of the research is mainly reflected in the improvement of teaching effectiveness and increased student participation. Through the blended teaching model, we can make full use of the multimedia resources provided by the Yuketang platform, enriching the teaching content and helping students better understand and appreciate literary classics.

Objectives and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to explore the effectiveness and impact of applying a blended teaching model on the Yuketang platform to instruct the Classic Western Literature course. Specifically, the research will focus on the following questions:

Firstly, this paper will investigate how blended teaching enhances students' understanding and learning outcomes in the Classic Western Literature course. Traditional face-to-face instruction often struggles to cover all literary works and related resources, while online learning platforms can provide a broader range of learning resources, such as e-books, video explanations, and online discussions. Additionally, this study will explore how to cleverly integrate these resources in blended teaching to facilitate a deep understanding and comprehensive mastery of literary classics among students.

Furthermore, this paper will focus on how the application of the Yuketang platform in blended teaching promotes student engagement and interaction. The Yuketang platform provides various interactive tools and social features, such as online discussion boards, group communication, and instant messaging, facilitating communication and collaboration among students. We will explore how to leverage these tools and features to spark student interest, encourage active participation, and promote interaction and knowledge sharing among students.

Finally, this paper will examine how teachers can effectively utilize the functionality of the Yuketang platform to provide teaching support and resources. The platform offers features such as slide creation, online quizzes, and progress tracking, aiding teachers in organizing and managing courses more effectively. The paper will explore how teachers can flexibly use these features to provide personalized learning support for students, as well as how to provide timely feedback and assess students' learning progress through the online platform (Picciano, 2009).

Through researching these questions, this paper aims to reveal the advantages and potential of blended teaching for the Classic Western Literature course on the Yuketang platform. It seeks to provide effective teaching guidance and practical recommendations for educational institutions and teachers, thereby enhancing students' learning outcomes and experiences in Western literature.

Research Methods and Data Sources

This study will employ a mixed research method, combining teaching observations and student questionnaire surveys, among other data collection methods, to comprehensively understand the application effectiveness of blended teaching for the Classic Western Literature course on the Yuketang platform.

Firstly, teaching observations will be a primary qualitative research method. The researcher will actively participate in the teaching process of the Classic Western Literature course, conducting on-site observations of teacher activities, classroom interactions, and student engagement, collecting detailed data. Observation records will cover aspects such as teachers' course design and arrangement on the Yuketang platform, students' use of online learning resources, and interactions and collaborations among students.

Secondly, a student questionnaire survey will be utilized to gather feedback and opinions on blended teaching. By distributing questionnaires on the Yuketang platform, the researcher will collect data on students' experiences, learning outcomes, and participation. The questionnaire design will include both closed and open-ended questions to obtain quantitative and qualitative data (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). These data will provide insights into students' perceptions and evaluations of blended teaching, as well as their experiences using the functionalities and resources of the Yuketang platform.

The primary sources of data will be concentrated on course data and student feedback on the Yuketang platform. The platform will provide online learning resources, student interaction tools, and teacher support functionalities. By accessing course materials and student activity records on the platform, the researcher can collect detailed data on course design, learning progress, and student interactions (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). Additionally, the Yuketang platform will assist the researcher in obtaining questionnaire survey data from students and anonymized learning performance data, ensuring data reliability and privacy protection.

After the data collection, the researcher will organize and analyze the collected data. For teaching observation data, the researcher will conduct data coding and thematic analysis to extract essential information about teaching models, student participation characteristics, and interaction patterns. Regarding student questionnaire survey data, the researcher will perform statistical analysis and content analysis to understand overall feedback and opinions on blended teaching. Through comprehensive analysis of multiple data sources, the researcher will draw scientific conclusions about the effectiveness and impact of blended teaching for the Classic Western Literature course on the Yuketang platform. Figure 1 summarizes the satisfaction levels of students enrolled in the Classic Western Literature course, along with additional data related to attendance and perceptions of the teaching methods.
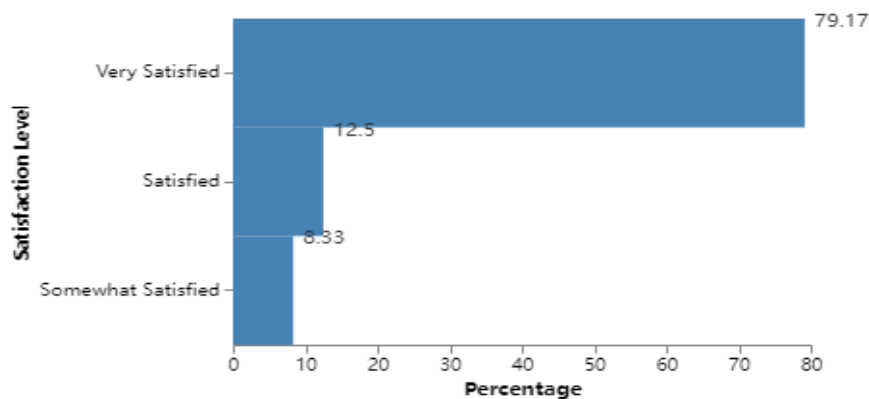

Figure 1. Student satisfaction and engagement report for Classic Western Literature Course (2019).

Other related data:
- Students diligently attend classes and submit electronic notes: 98%.
- Students find the combination of Chinese and English explanations in class, along with various video learning, to be effective: 98%.

Blended Teaching and the Yuketang Platform

Definition and Characteristics of Blended Teaching

Blended teaching is an instructional model that combines elements of traditional face-to-face teaching and online learning. By organically integrating classroom instruction and online learning, it offers a more flexible and diverse learning experience. The characteristics of blended teaching include:

(1) Integration of Face-to-Face and Online Learning

Blended teaching combines traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning platforms. This allows students to engage in face-to-face interactions with teachers and classmates in the classroom while also having the flexibility to engage in online learning at their chosen time and place (Dziuban & Moskal, 2011).

(2) Diverse Learning Resources

Through blended teaching, students gain access to a variety of learning resources, including slides, video explanations, e-books, and more. These resources offer comprehensive and multi-perspective learning content, enriching students' overall learning experiences.

(3) Interactive and Collaborative Learning

Blended teaching advocates for interaction and collaborative learning among students. Through features such as discussion boards and group communication on online learning platforms, students can share their insights, participate in discussions, and collaborate on projects, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of their learning (Means et al., 2009).

Overview of the Yuketang Platform

The Yuketang platform is an online education platform that provides abundant learning resources and teaching tools, suitable for implementing blended teaching. The platform features:

(1) Multimedia Learning Resources

The Yuketang platform offers diverse multimedia learning resources, including course videos, e-books, and teaching demonstrations. Students can access a variety of learning materials in different formats through the online platform, enriching the learning content.

(2) Interactive and Social Functions

The platform incorporates interactive and social functions such as discussion boards, group communication, and online messaging. Students can interact and communicate with classmates and teachers, share learning experiences, discuss problems, and promote collaborative learning and knowledge exchange.

(3) Teacher Support and Monitoring Features

The Yuketang platform provides teachers with support and monitoring features, including course management and student performance tracking. Teachers can dynamically organize and manage courses, gain timely insights into students' learning progress, and offer personalized learning guidance (Siemens & Tittenberger, 2009).

Relationship Between Blended Teaching and the Yuketang Platform

Blended teaching and the Yuketang platform are closely interrelated, mutually reinforcing and enhancing the effectiveness of teaching. Blended teaching, by combining traditional face-to-face instruction with the Yuketang platform, offers a more flexible and diverse learning approach. The Yuketang platform provides rich learning resources and interactive tools, making teaching more engaging and interactive.

Through the Yuketang platform, teachers can better organize and manage courses, offering personalized learning support. The platform's multimedia learning resources enrich teaching content, while its interactive and social functions facilitate collaboration and knowledge sharing among students. Additionally, the platform equips teachers with features to monitor student learning progress and assess outcomes, providing timely feedback and evaluations.

In conclusion, the integration of blended teaching and the Yuketang platform creates a more enriched and flexible learning environment for both teachers and students. Their combination effectively improves student learning outcomes and engagement, driving innovation and development in education.

Characteristics and Teaching Challenges of the Classic Western Literature Course

Analysis of Course Content and Objectives

The Classic Western Literature course is designed with the overarching goal of introducing and exploring the timeless works within Western literature, spanning from the ancient Greek and Roman periods to the complexities of the modern era. This comprehensive journey through literary history serves a tri-fold purpose. Firstly, the course navigates students through the diverse epochs and cultural milieus, fostering an understanding of the evolutionary trajectory and development of Western literature. Through a meticulous examination of works ranging from the epics and dramas of ancient Greece and Rome to the intellectual and artistic achievements of the medieval, Renaissance, Enlightenment, and modernist periods, students gain insights into the rich tapestry of Western literary traditions. Secondly, the Classic Western Literature course delves deep into classic literary works, unraveling their core themes, stylistic intricacies, and profound meanings. Students are not merely recipients but active participants, learning to decipher and analyze intricate plots, character dynamics, symbolic nuances, and the nuanced narrative techniques employed by authors. This process not only enhances their interpretative skills but also cultivates a profound understanding and analytical prowess in approaching literature. Lastly, the course places a significant emphasis on fostering critical thinking and nurturing literary appreciation skills. Students are guided in articulating compelling arguments and viewpoints, honing their ability to assess the quality and value of literary works through a lens of critical scrutiny. By engaging in critical reading and analysis, they learn to evaluate the intrinsic logic, emotional expression, and societal significance embedded in literary works. This, in turn, instills in them the capacity for independent thinking and evaluation (Moore, 2019), enriching their appreciation of literature.

Despite the rich content and diverse skill development goals of the Classic Western Literature course, it also faces several teaching challenges. The course encompasses a broad spectrum of literary works and genres, presenting a challenge for teachers to make balanced selections within the constraints of time and curriculum. Ensuring diversity across different historical periods, cultural backgrounds, and literary genres is crucial to delivering a comprehensive and enriching learning experience. Moreover, the course introduces complex literary theories and analytical methods, which can pose challenges for students in understanding and application. Teachers play a pivotal role in appropriately introducing these theories and methods during instruction, providing

necessary support and guidance to help students grasp these intricate concepts and skills. Another challenge lies in the differences among students' literary backgrounds and interests. Some students may lack interest or find difficulty in understanding specific literary works. Teachers need to be flexible in adjusting their teaching methods and strategies to cater to the diverse needs of students, aiming to ignite their interest and engagement in classic literary works.

To address these challenges effectively, teachers can employ interactive teaching methods, guided discussions, and personalized learning strategies (Picciano, 2009). These approaches are designed to enhance student participation and understanding. By overcoming these teaching challenges, the Classic Western Literature course can offer students a rich academic experience and cultivate a profound understanding and appreciation for Western literature.

Teaching Challenges and Limitations of Traditional Teaching Models

In the context of teaching the Classic Western Literature course, traditional teaching models encounter various challenges and limitations that include: The abundance of course content poses a significant challenge as the Classic Western Literature course comprises numerous works and literary genres. Traditional face-to-face teaching finds it difficult to cover this extensive content within limited time constraints (Dziuban & Moskal, 2011). Consequently, this limitation may compromise the depth and breadth of instruction, hindering students from gaining a comprehensive understanding and mastery of the classic works included in the course. Furthermore, the unidirectional nature of traditional teaching, relying primarily on teacher lectures and passive student reception, proves to be a limitation. This conventional approach lacks the necessary opportunities for active student participation and interaction, thereby restricting the development of students' deep understanding and critical thinking skills. Students may find themselves merely recipients of information, missing out on the chance for in-depth reflection and discussion of literary works. Geographical restrictions represent another challenge of traditional face-to-face teaching. The necessity for students to be physically present in specific classrooms or schools limits flexibility and convenience. This constraint is particularly burdensome for students located at a distance from the campus or those facing time and space limitations, posing difficulties in their participation in the course (Graham, 2013).

To address the challenges and constraints inherent in traditional teaching models for the Classic Western Literature course, the adoption of a blended learning approach emerges as a solution, promising an enhanced teaching experience and increased learning opportunities. This approach involves the implementation of online learning platforms, exemplified by platforms like Yuketang. These platforms create a more expansive learning environment, allowing students to engage in self-directed study based on their individual schedules (Shea & Bidjerano, 2010). The accessibility of course materials, reading resources, and learning tools at any time and from any location broadens the horizons of learning, overcoming the limitations imposed by traditional constraints of time and geography. Moreover, the blended learning model encourages interaction and collaboration. Through features such as discussion boards, online forums, and group projects on the digital platform, students actively participate in classroom interactions and collaborative endeavors. These interactive opportunities facilitate communication and intellectual exchange among students, thereby deepening their understanding and exploration of the course content. A crucial aspect of the blended learning model is its ability to offer personalized learning experiences (Picciano, 2009). Utilizing learning tracking and providing personalized feedback through the online platform, teachers can deliver targeted guidance and support tailored

to individual students' learning performances and needs (Picciano, 2009). This personalized approach aids students in better comprehending and mastering the content of the Classic Western Literature course.

In summary, the introduction of a blended learning model has the potential to overcome the limitations inherent in traditional teaching methods. This approach provides a learning experience that is not only more flexible and interactive but also personalized (Siemens & Tittenberger, 2009), fostering a deeper understanding and encouraging critical thinking within the Classic Western Literature course.

Potential Advantages of Blended Learning

Blended learning, particularly on the Yuketang platform, unfolds numerous potential advantages for the Classic Western Literature course. The platform's wealth of learning resources, spanning e-textbooks, course videos, and literary critiques, empowers students to navigate their educational journey autonomously, fostering enhanced efficiency and quality in their learning endeavors.

Furthermore, the emphasis on interaction and collaboration is a hallmark of blended learning. The platform's interactive and social features, such as discussion boards and group exchanges, facilitate student engagement. This collaborative environment encourages the sharing of perspectives and questions, nurturing profound academic communication and intellectual exchange. The flexibility offered by blended learning in terms of time and space is pivotal. Students can actively participate in face-to-face interactions with teachers and peers in the traditional classroom setting, complemented by the autonomy to engage in independent online learning (Moore, 2019). This flexibility enhances convenience and accommodates diverse learning styles.

In summary, the potential advantages of blended learning in the Classic Western Literature course transcend traditional teaching models. The approach, characterized by its richness, interactivity, and flexibility, contributes significantly to students' enhanced understanding and improved learning outcomes in the realm of classic literary works.

Application of Yuketang Platform in the Classic Western Literature Course

The Yuketang platform, serving as an online learning tool, seamlessly integrates with the instructional framework of the Classic Western Literature course. Boasting a plethora of features, this platform facilitates a dynamic and enriched learning experience for students. In the realm of course management and content delivery, teachers leverage the Yuketang platform to publish course outlines, lecture notes, and assignments. This enables interactive engagement through features like online discussions, Q&A sessions, and quizzes. Moreover, the platform's capabilities extend to progress management and learning tracking, allowing instructors to stay abreast of students' advancements and offer timely guidance. The Yuketang platform becomes a nexus for student participation and interaction in the Classic Western Literature course. Through collaborative tools such as online discussions and group projects, students actively communicate, sharing perspectives and fostering a vibrant academic community (Shea & Bidjerano, 2010). The online Q&A feature provides a platform for students to pose questions, initiating valuable discussions with both educators and peers, thereby deepening their comprehension of literary works.

One of the platform's standout features is the seamless integration of course design and teaching activities. Teachers can efficiently disseminate course materials, maintain an ongoing dialogue with students, and implement diverse teaching strategies. The platform's support for course progress tracking ensures instructors can monitor students' learning journeys, allowing for responsive adjustments to optimize the learning experience.

The utilization of online resources and teaching support on the Yuketang platform plays a pivotal role in the Classic Western Literature course. Teachers harness the platform's resource library to share a myriad of materials, from e-books to journal articles, enriching the array of learning resources available to students. Furthermore, the platform facilitates personalized learning through online tutoring and teaching support, providing avenues for individualized guidance and problem-solving (Siemens & Tittenberger, 2009).

In summary, the integration of the Yuketang platform in the Classic Western Literature course provides a flexible, interactive, and resource-rich environment. The platform's multifaceted functionalities empower educators and students alike, enhancing the overall learning experience and fostering a deeper understanding of classic Western literary works.

Empirical Research on the Application of the Yuketang Online Platform

Research Design and Methods

In conducting empirical research on the application of the Yuketang online platform in the Classic Western Literature course, the researcher employed the following design and methods. Firstly, the goals and research questions of the study were established, outlining the specific teaching effects and student participation to be evaluated (Moore, 2019). Subsequently, a mixed research method was adopted, combining the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data could be statistically analyzed using course data and student performance data from the Yuketang online platform. Qualitative data, on the other hand, could be gathered through student feedback and teacher observation records for content analysis.

Collection of Student Feedback and Opinions

In order to understand students' experiences and opinions regarding the application of the Yuketang online platform, the researcher collected feedback and opinions from students. This could be achieved through methods such as online surveys or focus group discussions. Students could share their evaluations of the platform's features, their experiences with interaction and participation, as well as their feedback on understanding course content and learning outcomes. These insights and opinions will serve as crucial references for the researcher to assess the effectiveness of the Yuketang online platform in teaching.

Teacher Teaching Experience and Observation Records

The researcher will also gather teachers' experiences and observation records during the teaching process. Teachers can document their teaching practices on the Yuketang online platform, including observations on teaching design, interactive activities, and student performance. Teachers' observation records can provide a deeper understanding of the practical effects and impacts of the Yuketang online platform application, guiding subsequent improvements in teaching.

Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness and Student Performance Analysis

Lastly, the researcher will assess the impact of the Yuketang online platform application on teaching effectiveness. This can be achieved by comparing indicators such as students' academic performance, participation rates, and satisfaction before and after the platform's implementation (Means et al., 2009). The researcher can conduct statistical analyses on students' academic performance to determine the enhancement effect of the platform application on learning outcomes. Additionally, surveys and analyses on student participation and satisfaction can provide insights into their perspectives and evaluations of the platform application.

Through this empirical research design and methodology, the researcher can comprehensively evaluate the application effects and influences of the Yuketang online platform in the Classic Western Literature course, providing a scientific basis and guidance for teaching practices.

Results and Discussion

Practical Application Effectiveness of Yuketang Platform in the Course

The research results indicate that the practical application of the Yuketang platform in the Classic Western Literature course has achieved positive outcomes. The rich teaching tools provided by the Yuketang platform, such as multimedia resources, online discussions, and assignment submission features, effectively enhance students' understanding of the course content and improve learning outcomes. Through online discussions and interactive activities, students can engage in deeper exchanges and reflections with teachers and peers, strengthening their understanding and analytical skills in classic literary works.

Student Participation and Satisfaction

Under the application of the Yuketang platform, there is a noticeable increase in student participation and satisfaction. Analyzing student learning activity data reveals that students are more actively involved in online discussions, group projects, and collaborative activities. Additionally, based on feedback surveys, the majority of students express satisfaction with the Yuketang platform. They appreciate its features and find it beneficial for their learning experience, indicating an overall positive sentiment towards the platform.

Through the comprehensive assessment of the Yuketang platform's application in the Classic Western Literature course, these results provide valuable insights into the effectiveness and impact of the platform in teaching practice.
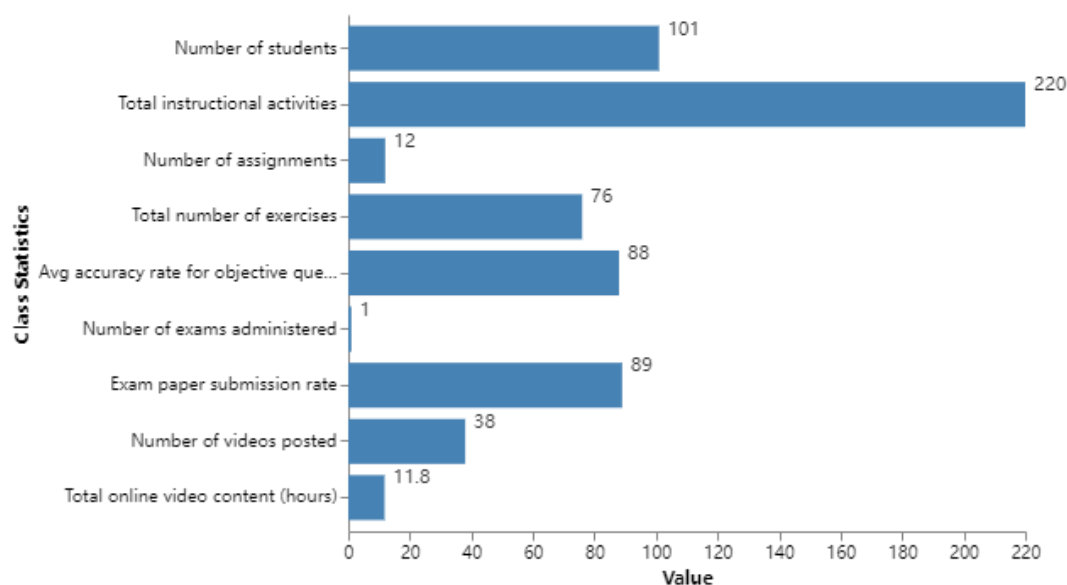

Figure 2. Class statistics for the 23-24-1 Semester in Classic Western Literature Course (2024).

Advantages and Disadvantages of Blended Learning

The research results also reveal distinct advantages and disadvantages of blended learning in the Classic Western Literature course. The advantages include the extension of learning space and time, allowing students

to engage in learning from any location and at any time. Blended learning fosters personalized and autonomous learning abilities, enabling students to tailor their learning pace and focus based on individual preferences. The richness of multimedia resources enhances the vivid presentation of literary works and related background knowledge. However, there are also disadvantages, such as the requirement for students to possess certain technical and self-directed learning skills. Additionally, technical issues related to internet connectivity and platform usage may pose challenges. From Figure 2, it can be observed that, in a class of 101 students, the total duration of online instructional video viewing is only 11.8 hours. This indicates a potential lack of self-directedness in students' online learning activities.

Impact on Student Engagement and Interaction

The application of the Yuketang online platform has facilitated student participation and interaction, enhancing communication both among students and between students and teachers. Through forms like online discussions, group projects, and interactive assignments, students actively engage, sharing perspectives and experiences, stimulating in-depth reflections and discussions on literary works. The interaction and collaboration among students have also elevated the learning atmosphere and effectiveness (Means et al., 2009).

Insights and Improvement Suggestions for Traditional Teaching Models

Based on the research results, some insights and improvement suggestions for traditional teaching models are proposed. Traditional teaching models can draw inspiration from blended learning concepts and methods by introducing online learning platforms and multimedia resources to increase student engagement and interactivity. Additionally, emphasis should be placed on fostering personalized learning and critical thinking, encouraging students to think critically and pose questions. Moreover, teachers should adopt the roles of guides and facilitators, providing effective teaching support and resources to help students better understand and apply acquired knowledge.

In summary, the application of the Yuketang online platform in the Classic Western Literature course has yielded positive results, providing an excellent platform for student participation and interaction in the blended learning model. However, blended learning also faces challenges and limitations that require further optimization and improvement. For traditional teaching models, integrating the advantages of blended learning and making corresponding adjustments can enhance teaching effectiveness and improve the overall learning experience for students (Means et al., 2009).

Conclusion and Outlook

Research Summary

This study, by exploring the blended learning application of the Classic Western Literature course on the Yuketang online platform, has revealed the advantages and potential of this teaching model. The Yuketang platform provides students with abundant learning resources and interactive opportunities, effectively promoting an enhanced understanding of classic literary works and improved learning outcomes. The blended learning model breaks through the limitations of traditional teaching methods, creating a more flexible and convenient learning environment for students.

Research Contributions and Limitations

This study provides empirical research support for the application of blended learning in the Classic Western Literature course and discusses the impact of the features and functions of the Yuketang online platform on

teaching effectiveness. The research results have certain reference value for educational practices and curriculum design. However, the study also has limitations, such as the limited sample size and time constraints. Further research may be needed to expand the sample size and extend the research duration for more comprehensive and accurate results.

Future Research Directions

Future research can explore the following aspects:

(1) In-depth research on the application effectiveness of the Yuketang online platform in other literature courses, comparing the differences and commonalities of blended learning in various course contexts.

(2) Further exploration of the impact of the Yuketang online platform on student learning motivation, learning effectiveness, and learning experience to deepen understanding and application of blended learning.

(3) Optimization of teaching design and resource support based on data analysis from the Yuketang platform and student feedback to enhance the effectiveness of blended learning and student participation.

(4) Exploration of the application of other online learning platforms and technological tools in literary education to expand the possibilities of blended learning.

In conclusion, through the study of blended learning in the Classic Western Literature course on the Yuketang online platform, we recognize the potential and advantages of this teaching model. However, further research is needed to refine and optimize the blended learning model to improve student learning outcomes and participation. Future research should continue to explore the application of blended learning in literary education and delve into the potential of online learning platforms and technological tools to provide better support and guidance for educational practices.

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