Research on the Reform of College English Teaching Mode Based on the OBE Concept

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Abstract: With the development of globalization, enhancing the quality of higher education has become a critical issue. As an essential part of higher education, college English has a great impact on students' international communication capabilities and processional growth. The traditional teaching approach, however, lacks both comprehensive ability cultivation and practical application. To change this situation, this study suggests reforming college English teaching by applying the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) concept. It examines current challenges in college English education as well as the advantages of implementing the OBE concept in the college teaching model. Based on this analysis, we propose strategies for reforming the teaching mode: clarifying course objectives, restructuring content, innovating the teaching process, and establishing a multifaceted evaluation system. The OBE-based teaching model can effectively enhance the quality of college English instruction and students' English application abilities, providing new insights for college English teaching reform.

1.Introduction

With the development of economic globalization and international communication, enhancing the quality of higher education has become a global concern. As a foundational public course in colleges and universities, college English teaching directly affects students' international communication competence and career development potential. In the background of globalization and higher education reform, the objectives of college English education have shifted from single language knowledge transmission to the cultivation of students' comprehensive application ability and cross-cultural competence. However, students have found it challenging to convert knowledge into practical skills due to the shortcomings of traditional teaching paradigms, such as "emphasizing input over output" and "emphasizing theory over practice." how to establish a teaching model that can both enhance teaching effectiveness and meet students' individual needs has become an urgent problem to be solved. The OBE (Outcome-Based Education) concept, which focuses on learning outcomes and emphasizes reverse teaching design, provides a scientific path for the reform of

college English teaching. Based on the concept of outcome-based education (OBE), this study aims to construct a new model of college English teaching centered on learning outcomes.

2. The OBE Concept: Significance and Characteristics

The OBE concept originated in the United States in the 1980s and was initially applied to engineering education. Later, it gradually extended to other disciplines[1]. The Outcome-Based Education (OBE) concept highlights that education should clearly define students'learning objectives and teaching activities, and the evaluation process should be organized around these objectives. The concept of OBE mainly contains three key characteristics: outcome orientation, student-centered, and continuous improvement[2]. In terms of results orientation, it requires us to have clear learning goals when designing courses and conducting actual teaching, and these goals should be specifically measured. The student-centered approach stresses that teaching activities should be centered on students' learning needs and development. Continuous improvement means that data on students' learning outcomes was collected and analyzed throughout the teaching and learning process. timely feedback and making modifications ensure that each student achieves their learning goals, while their learning quality and personal ability can be continuously improved in the process.

3. Current Challenges in College English Education

The current college English education system is facing multiple challenges, mainly in the dimensions of teaching objectives, content construction and method implementation. The traditional teaching model overemphasizes the input transfer knowledge and neglects a clear output-oriented orientation, which leads to complexity in the quantitative assessment of students' learning outcomes. Specifically, under the traditional teaching framework, course design often focused on grammatical structures and vocabulary, while paying insufficient attention to the practical language application abilities. There is a significant mismatch between this content orientation and the needs of the society and individual students.

Lack of relevance is another problem with the college English curriculum. Existing content is typically broad and generalized, failing to give full consideration to the characteristics and needs of different majors. There are significant differences in the needs of students of different majors for English proficiency in their future career development. However, the existing curriculum design fails to make appropriate adjustments according to these differences in specialties. It leads to a gap between what students learn and what they need in their specialties. This mismatch fails to meet the practical requirements of both academic specialization and future career advancement. It also falls short of meeting the actual needs of professional learning and future career development.

Traditional lecture-based education is still widely used, but it lacks interaction and practical use. As a result, students' involvement and individual needs are often overlooked, especially when offering advice on effective learning strategies. Attention should also be paid to the use and integration of digital resources. Despite an increasing abundance of digital resources, online and offline integration is still insufficient. This shortcoming blocks the sharing of resources and reduces effectiveness. Attention should also be paid to the use and integration of digital educational tools. Despite an increasing abundance of digital resources, online and offline integration is still insufficient. This lowers the effectiveness of educational resources and restricts how they can be shared.

The current evaluation system ignores the accurate assessment of students' comprehensive language proficiency. It heavily relies on standardized test scores. The absence of process-oriented and formative evaluations makes it difficult for teachers to form a comprehensive and in-depth

understanding of students' actual language abilities.

4. Advantages of the OBE concept in the College English Teaching Model

4.1 Enhancing Teaching Relevance

The OBE concept enhances the precision of college English teaching through differentiated instruction, making teaching objectives clearer, curriculum design more precise, and competency cultivation more focused. The fundamental goal of college English is to develop students' application ability in English, which is highly consistent with OBE's emphasis on competency-oriented education. Before designing teaching activities, teachers can refine English competency standards according to professional requirements, such as focusing on technical communication for engineering majors and strengthening business negotiation skills for business majors. In the actual teaching practice, content should be task-based, and real-world scenario tasks should be set up based on the needs of students from different majors, such as simulating international conferences, writing English resumes, writing academic English papers, etc. These tasks enhance teaching practicality and ensure English learning is closely linked with professional demands.

4.2 Enhancing students' autonomous learning drive

Under the OBE framework, college English teaching can stimulate students' autonomous learning motivation through goal-oriented task design. The student-centered approach emphasized by OBE aligns is in line with the principles of language acquisition. Language learning is essentially an active construction process that requires learners' engagement and practice. The OBE model in college English teaching can better stimulate students' learning initiative and provide more opportunities for language practice[3]. For example, students can observe firsthand how their skills have improved through project presentations, practice reports, and stage-by-stage assessments. Students can adjust their learning pace based on their interests or areas for improvement through graded reading and modular courses. Students receive dynamic feedback by combining AI-assisted analysis with teacher comments. This creates a positive feedback cycle of "learning-improvement-relearning" and moves them from "passive input" to "active exploration," which boosts their self-motivation and goal-management skills.

4.3 Promoting Interdisciplinary Competence Integration

Under the guidance of the OBE concept, college English teaching can foster competence integration through interdisciplinary tasks. For example, in the "Academic English Writing" class, the teacher will assign a very practical task: to write an English literature review related to their own specialties. Students need to choose a research topic in their own field, such as computer science, environmental engineering, material science, etc., and then read international journals to find those high-quality papers. Then they will analyze the strengths and weaknesses of these papers, and finally write a review that conforms to academic standards. It only their critical thinking and information retrieval skills. Even better, students can perfectly combine professional knowledge with English proficiency, becoming "professional + English" compound talents, which greatly enhances their competitiveness in employment.

4.4 Optimizing the evaluation system

The OBE concept has completely transformed the way college English teaching is evaluated. It is no longer confined to a single examination, but adopts a multi-dimensional and dynamic evaluation system to truly reflect students' abilities. This change breaks the traditional pattern of "one exam determining everything" and makes the evaluation more comprehensive and objective. The competency-oriented OBE model makes the evaluation criteria more diversified. The evaluation methods are more diversified, and the feedback mechanism is more efficient. It pays more emphasis on process evaluation, such as teamwork, verbal expression and logical thinking ability, rather than just pursuing scores. This evaluation method is mainly concerned with helping students to truly improve their abilities, rather than the level of test scores. In the teaching process, teachers will evaluate their progress by observing the actual situation of students' learning, and then adjust the teaching strategies at any time according to these situations. This creates a cycle of "evaluation-feedback-optimization". It promotes the continuous improvement of teaching quality, but also makes the teaching process more flexible and efficient.

5. Strategies for College English Teaching Mode Based on the OBE Concept

5.1 Clarifying Teaching Objectives

Under the OBE framework, the teaching objectives should be directly connected to the actual needs of specific disciplines. For example, according to the Chinese English Proficiency Scale and the Professional Talent Cultivation Program, we can break down the language application skills into several practical dimensions: communicative practice, academic writing, and cultural critical thinking, etc. The advantage of doing so is that it can better develop students' comprehensive abilities in cross-cultural communication, information processing and critical thinking. Especially for students in science and engineering, this course places more emphasis on the reading of technical literature and basic writing skills. For instance, students majoring in computer science need to learn to understand technical documents, master those technical terms, and can write operation steps in English. In class, teachers can use product manuals as teaching materials, so that students can do fill-in-the-blank exercises or describe the operation process, which can help them grasp the key content.

5.2 Restructuring Course Content

Modularization should be used to reorganize course material to satisfy national requirements as well as student needs. A wide range of courses, such as Academic Writing, Academic Presentation Skills, Research Methods, and Report Writing, are available in the EAP program, which is designed according to the needs of students. It ensures that students with different professional backgrounds and career plans can find a learning path that suits them. Through the use of corpus technology, the course integrates a variety of authentic materials such as industry reports, academic papers and intercultural communication cases. These resources not only bring a wealth of material for language learning, but also help students keep up with the latest research and industry developments. This teaching mode combines the language ability with the learning of subject knowledge, and promotes the close integration of the two. More importantly, this model has a far-reaching impact on students. It fosters students' critical thinking and interdisciplinary innovation skills, giving them an edge in their academic and career paths.

5.3 Innovating the teaching process

To be innovative, college English programs have to make students more engaged and learn better. For example, Pre-class preparation involves releasing self-study tasks and online tests through smart teaching platforms. Teachers recommend videos, micro-courses and professional articles based on the test results to establish personalized learning paths for each student. Additionally, innovative teaching strategies are needed in class. Digital technology should be used to simulate academic conferences and business negotiations. PBL and TBL methodologies should be applied in class.Through project reports, oral presentations, role-playing, discussions, and interactive evaluations, students engage in deep learning. These tasks are designed to be both innovative and challenging, helping students achieve their intended learning outcomes. Post-class learning involves establishing a ubiquitous learning ecosystem that includes both online and offline components. Online seminars with professional themes are organized, and virtual reality technology is used to create immersive English settings, such as simulated international academic conferences and business negotiations. This design aims to improve students' English expression skills in specific professional contexts. Cooperation between schools and enterprises should be strengthened. Practice bases are jointly built with enterprises, communities, and cultural institutions. Through projects like multicultural experiences and social practices, students' innovative application capabilities and global perspectives are enhanced.

5.4 Establishing a multifaceted evaluation system

The college English evaluation system based on the OBE concept emphasizes learning outcomes. The evaluation system adopts a multifaceted approach, with process evaluation as the main part and online evaluation and summative evaluation as supplements. Clear evaluation criteria enable accurate measurement of students' performance in language skills, cultural understanding, and critical thinking[4]. The evaluation criteria are systematically structured across three distinct phases: pre-class preparation, in-class engagement, and post-class consolidation. Process evaluation focuses on continuous assessment of students' learning, including classroom participation, assignment completion, and contributions to group collaborative learning. Advanced artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, particularly voice recognition systems, are used in online assessments to evaluate students' speaking skills. The key evaluation metrics are pronunciation accuracy, fluency, and lexical appropriateness. Measuring learning outcomes is often summarized through standardized tests and program assessment results. However, our goal is to create a more comprehensive evaluation system. This system, supported by artificial intelligence, allows for a combination of teacher assessment, student self-assessment, and peer assessment to provide more immediate and dynamic feedback. This diverse feedback mechanism not only covers learning progress, but also promotes continuous formative assessment. With a system centered on a closed loop of assessment-feedback-improvement, the assessment is no longer just a mere summary, but becomes part of learning[5]. This change ensures that students' language proficiency and professional needs are always in sync, helping them better achieve their learning goals. This three-dimensional assessment approach gives education greater flexibility and adaptability. It provides stronger support for students, both in terms of language learning and professional competence development. It also reminds us that assessment should not just be an end, but an important part of the learning journey. Such an approach ultimately contributes to the successful realization of educational goals.

6. Conclusion

It is indeed beneficial to apply the OBE concept in college English teaching. It is helpful for

education and useful in practical teaching. This teaching mode allows students to be more willing to take the initiative to learn, and they will participate more actively in various English activities, so that fostering a positive classroom interaction atmosphere. More importantly, it builds a good bridge between curriculum teaching and talent cultivation, helping to establish a dynamic teaching system focused on ability cultivation. Teachers can systematically plan course content and optimize teaching methods, making the teaching system more flexible and focused on cultivating students' practical ability.

Funding

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