

# **Reform Strategies for the Application of OBE Concept to College English Teaching**

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**Abstract:** In order to produce talents required by modern internalization, college English teaching mode needs to be changed and innovated according to the actual teaching environment. College English teaching based on OBE concept plays an important role in improving students' comprehensive quality. This paper introduces the OBE concept, analyzes the current situation of college English teaching and puts forward corresponding strategies for the application of this effective teaching mode in university English teaching.

## **1. Introduction**

In recent years, the trend of internationalization in China has become increasingly obvious, and international economic exchanges have become closer. Therefore, there is a strong demand for English professionals. As an important educational organization for training specific professionals, universities should strengthen undergraduates' English proficiency to meet the basic needs of current national development. With the gradual popularity of OBE concept, college English teaching stains to give priority to the training direction of professionals, clarify the educational goals, actively adopt effective teaching methods, and enhance the comprehensive English professional capacity of college students. This is also an important fundamental guarantee for the trend of internationalization.

## **2. The Concept of OBE and its significance in College English Teaching**

OBE is short for Outcome-based Education, which is a teaching philosophy aimed at teaching design and process, providing educational guidance for students and helping them achieve the final learning outcomes.

### **2.1 The Concept of OBE**

The OBE concept is an educational mode based on the premise of the results. It aims to set reasonable teaching objectives, and help students achieve the expected teaching outcome in the process of education with reference to current education policy, the specific actual development of the university, the level of teachers and the characteristics of the students. To better adopt this teaching concept, first of all, the final result of education must be profoundly and clearly recognized. Secondly, according to the educational results as a premise, the specific work arrangements of the curriculum and teaching methods should be designed to promote the realization of learning objectives. In the whole process, the basic requirements of the OBE concept must be guaranteed: ensure that all students can achieve the desired results, determine the learning objectives between different students, fully motivate students' enthusiasm, and achieve the ultimate triumph in learning<sup>[1]</sup>.

This teaching concept is more advanced and has five implementation steps: decide on learning effectiveness, curriculum design, teaching practice, student assessment, and outcome evaluation. These five steps have important guiding functions for the realization of teaching objectives, which

can effectively promote college English teaching, and at the same time establish a student-oriented teaching method to effectively achieve teaching goals.

## **2.2 The Significance of Applying OBE to College English Teaching**

Since there are many forms in OBE mode, the university can effectively introduce the OBE concept to English teaching and fundamentally cultivate the interdisciplinary talents with comprehensive English proficiency and independent learning ability. In view of the fact that many college students lose interest in English learning, college English teachers should use the OBE concept to formulate specific teaching plans, pay attention to the final learning outcomes, develop a teaching plan to cultivate students' subjective initiative, and cultivate students to learn on their own as well as reflecting on the learning effectiveness. In addition, the OBE concept can promote the reform of the evaluation mechanism and improve the establishment of student performance evaluation system. With the application of OBE, it can change the mechanical learning situation of cramming, help set different teaching directions and objectives for different learning periods, and promote learning through step-by-step teaching methods. The academic performance of each stage is beneficial to the teachers to find the shortcomings in time, and realize the ultimate learning goals of college students.

## **3. The Current Situation of College English Teaching**

Despite the continuous reform of teaching concepts, teaching methods and curriculum in recent years, there are still many problems in the overall situation of English teaching in Chinese universities. Although the OBE educational concept has been accepted and widely applied, there are still many problems that hinder its implementation and effectiveness.

### **3.1 Inappropriate Curriculum**

As for the curriculum, the main direction of university teaching is about the professional courses, while English teaching is confined to general knowledge or elective courses, and will give way to the major courses. Basically, there are at most two classes every week in most universities, which makes the teaching periods very short and limited. By contrast, in the context of OBE concept, the main consideration of the curriculum is the cultivation of students' abilities and qualities<sup>[2]</sup>. In the process of training, the consistency of learning is emphasized. Therefore, the existing curriculum does not allow students to maintain continuous input and systematically generate knowledge systems, let alone cultivating the comprehensive English proficiency.

### **3.2 Inflexible Teaching Method**

As for the teaching methods, although the OBE concept has been introduced into the university's English teaching system, the teaching method is still based on the traditional teacher-centered mode. English learning does not only require the input of textbooks, but need the opportunities for language use and interaction in the classroom; otherwise, it will violate the communicative nature of language. Besides, the boring and single textbook cannot fully reveal the culture background of the language and its flexible use in daily life, which is not conducive to the cultivation of students' interest and the maintenance of the long-term language study.

### **3.3 Exam-oriented Learning**

Many universities do not have a rigid requirement for the teaching of English. Many college students believe that the purpose of college English learning is mainly to pass the test of CET-4/6, but such simple test-oriented learning cannot cultivate students' comprehensive language ability. More importantly, an applied course such as English requires a constant combination of input and output, which finally leads to a solid grasp of English. Under the circumstances, although students have been learning English for many years, the level of English is still in the stage of "dumb English", and it is impossible to achieve free communication in English. Therefore, college English

teaching should clarify its specific teaching objectives, and strike a balance between the input and output in the class.

#### **4. Strategies for the Application of OBE**

College English teaching based on OBE concept needs to actively seek the transformation of teaching thought and practice, perceiving students as the center and language application as the goal, carrying out an in-depth reform from different aspects.

##### **4.1 Focus on Innovation and Guide Students to Establish Self-learning Style**

Based on the OBE teaching philosophy, teachers should help students to foster new learning concepts and cultivate their innovative consciousness. The outcome-based tasks set according to real teaching should be challenging to stimulate learners' desire for knowledge in the process of autonomous learning, and achieve the teaching goals through innovative self-learning style<sup>[3]</sup>. Of course, when setting the tasks, teachers should recognize the differences of students' learning abilities to set up different-level teaching tasks, so that students can build their own learning styles in the process of completing the learning tasks. For example, some students are very good at English vocabulary and grammar, some are keen to reading comprehension of English articles, and others are good at oral English expression and English writing. Based on OBE teaching mode, teachers should target different students to help and guide them to establish a learning style that is suitable for them.

##### **4.2 Optimize College English Teaching Contents**

In order to target the learning outcome, college teachers should change the past cramming teaching method that focused on vocabulary explanation and adopt this individual-oriented method, emphasizing English comprehensive capacity and problem-solving skills, and optimizing English teaching contents. For example, distributed practice will be integrated into daily teaching, allowing students to improve the vocabulary and deepen the understanding of key points through short and frequent exercises<sup>[4]</sup>. Another case is that teachers can first introduce the relevant literary knowledge and background before dealing with the text. This can not only arouse students' passion, but also serve useful purposes for comprehension of the passage. Plus, the teaching design should involve vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, speaking, listening, etc. These elements should be arranged reasonably to provide a multi-level and in-depth content framework for students. At the same time, students should be invested with sufficient learning materials and resources, so that students can be guided to learn independently, and form a more complete knowledge system.

##### **4.3 Make Optimum use of Modern Educational Technology**

The development of computer technology has brought innovation to the methods of college English teaching. The new trend is to combine multimedia technology with teaching and using mobile apps as a means of assisting teaching. This teaching mode can bring more vivid teaching content to students and interact with students more efficiently and effectively through diversified methods. Through the use of new media such as APPs, students can learn English and communicate with others in English anytime and anywhere. Plus, the learning record on the Internet allows teachers to understand the learning situation of students in time, and make corresponding adjustment. On the other hand, teachers can also answer questions through online interaction, thereby improving the efficiency and flexibility of English teaching<sup>[5]</sup>.

##### **4.4 Improve the Evaluation Mechanism of English Teaching**

The traditional evaluation method tends to rely on the final exam, which is too monotonous and one-sided. The process evaluation can be added, which includes students' academic performance and progress of online self-learning, the performance of students' in-class and out-of-class activities, the completion of assignments, attendance, the results of periodic and final tests. Sources of evaluation consist of self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and teacher evaluation. This dynamic and

diversified assessment method can truly mirror the students' learning outcomes, maintain the passion for continuous learning and witness the progress of the students' growth. In this way, the OBE concept can yield amazing benefits in real English teaching.

## **Conclusion**

Teaching is never a one-way process, college English is no exception. To truly apply the OBE concept to the reform of college English teaching requires the joint efforts of both teachers and students. In addition to deeply understanding the essence of the OBE concept, teachers need to constantly learn new teaching methods to stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm for learning. On the other hand, students need to continuously improve their independent learning ability and sample widely to challenge themselves in fulfilling tasks. This will effectively promote the reform of college English teaching and improve the teaching quality to produce a generation of intelligent thinkers and problems solvers with a good command of English.

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