

# A Probe into E-Learning and Its Application in College English Teaching

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**Abstract:** In the new information era, the form of e-learning has been widely used in every sectors of education, attracting great attention from the academic circles. At present, many universities and teachers have recognized the superior teaching and guiding effects of the e-learning mode in cultivating students' independent learning and promoting their effects of learning, and begin to apply it in various fields of higher education system. Under the influence of this new trend, we take advantage of this form to explore efficient design for college English teaching, and to seek for more innovative online ways to boost development and improvement of education.

## 1. Introduction

With the continuous deepening of the educational reform in China, researchers and educators have been exploring new concepts and methods in recent decades to improve the teaching effect of class teaching. Through innovative ways of teaching, students are hoped to quickly and thoroughly master the knowledge and accordingly acquire the ability to apply what they've learned in practical context. Based on network technology, a new way of learning emphasizing the learning process is about to become the dominant learning mode for college students in the new era. Through the deep analysis of online learning, this paper will offer a profound understanding of this innovative educational mode. It first, introduces network teaching and learning. Then, it set forth different patterns of e-teaching. Finally, much elaboration is put on current state of college English teaching and the procedures of course-setup based on the form e-learning.

## 2. Background of e-learning

The traditional e-learning mode is a network system usually built within the teaching institution according to the learning needs. This mode is complex and requires funds and technology to support the construction and maintenance of software and hardware, hence setting great obstacles to the ample application of the Internet learning mode. The cloud-based network learning mode, however, breaks through the limitations and brings something applicable and practical. Cloud computing decomposes huge data computing processing programs into countless small programs through the network "cloud", and then processes and analyzes these small applications through a system composed of multiple servers. The program gets the processing result and returns it to the user. Learning users can build a learning system through a web platform provided by cloud computing providers with strong network technologies. Those platforms are generally able to operate more stably and securely, and can also meet the diverse needs of users in functional design. In addition, the computing services and storage costs of cloud platform are low, making it accessible to most e-learning users. From the operational mode, cloud computing has got rid of the shortcomings of traditional network teaching. The data of users is not stored locally, but uploaded to the network data center; related applications run directly on the Internet server, saving cost of storage and software operation. Meanwhile, users can flexibly use learning resources anytime, anywhere, regardless of the limitations of location and hardware.

### **3. Modes of e-learning**

#### **3.1 Peer-to-peer (P2P) mode**

Teachers and individual students communicate through sending online messages or real-time messages. In the classroom under the traditional teaching mode, since teachers have to consider the overall learning ability of all the students, it's hard for them to fully take into account the individual differences in students' learning. While, the peer-to-peer network learning mode, as opposed to classroom learning, is an extension and supplement to the traditional rituals. Based on the educational principle of teaching students in accordance with their aptitude, teachers can fully grasp the learning situation and level of students by using this online mode to help individual students address their doubts in an instant, thus further strengthening the learning in the original class so that students can have a better command of the knowledge imparted.

#### **3.2 Independent-learning mode**

Great emphasis is always placed on students' independent learning process in the field of education, be it with the form of learning online or offline. Students make an exploration of knowledge through independent learning, and thus get those problems quickly solved. Their self-learning can be carried out in a more flexible way in the modern information-teaching mode based on the network environment, in which they can arrange and complete learning tasks as to their learning environment, time, schedule and needs. In the process of independent learning, students can use a wealth of platform learning resources to enhance the efficiency of independent learning, boost the digestion and absorption of knowledge, and promote the rapid transformation of knowledge input to output. The high-performance of the online platform learning mode is also in line with the learning characteristics of modern college students—they can skillfully operate electronic devices such as computers and smart phones, and can quickly interpret the requirements of learning tasks; meanwhile, they are more likely to be attracted by fresh and stimulating things. Therefore, the independent-learning mode based on network, compared with the traditional and single ways of learning grounded in classroom, can better accord with students' own learning characteristics, so as to drive their motivation on learning.

#### **3.3 S-ISAL mode**

S-ISAL is the abbreviation for Space-based Information Search and Analysis Learning. "S" represents the cloud space of network learning for resources' building and sharing. ISAL stands for the learning-centered teaching method based on the teachers' long-term teaching practice. Relying on personal learning space, this mode of leaning carries out learning interactions through information search and analysis, so as to achieve the goal of solving problems. Acting as guides in the learning process, teachers use task-driven methods to direct students to fully utilize self-learning initiative through the application of online platforms. In the teaching activities, the S-ISAL teaching method realizes a variety of information interactions beyond time and space through the exchange of network learning space, and fully records the innovative teaching ideas of deep integration of "knowledge" and "information technology" under the educational background of "Internet +".

#### **3.4 Network-broadcast mode**

With the large-scale popularization of the Internet and the rise of the network broadcast mode in entertainment, all major online platforms have fully utilized this function to attract target objectives. This web-based teaching mode, which highlights a real-time interaction across space, can to some extent simulate traditional classrooms and achieve better teaching results than other modes mentioned above. This live teaching mode realizes synchronous teaching in different places, so that students will be pooled together at the same time without geographical restrictions, and enjoy the superior network teaching resources together, and can also explore and communicate with each other about the contents they share. However, due to various factors such as the limitation of the configuration of multimedia tools, the wide-ranged application of the network broadcast teaching mode is still confronted with difficulties.

#### **4. Current state of college English teaching**

College English is an important and basic compulsory course for undergraduates in higher education, with the teaching goals of developing students' language application ability according to actual needs, meanwhile cultivating their independent learning ability and improving their comprehensive cultural attainment, which enable their effective communication in English in the domains of study, life, social interaction and future occupation to meet the needs of the development of our nation, society and individuals. College English Course of the undergraduate level covers a wide range of students. It is an important course that students must complete in their freshman and sophomore year in university. In addition, its importance is also reflected in the aspect of range of application. Under the current trend of global integration, the practice of any subject and profession in social work cannot be completely separated from foreign language knowledge. From the perspective of graduation employment, students with higher grades of CET-4 and CET-6 can perform more competitively in the intense and harsh employment process. Although College English Course has played a central and indispensable role in the higher education stage, from the current tendency of education reform, the course has been confronted with the problems of cutting class hours and adjusting the distribution of credits, which have also made it hard and challenging for teachers to carry out the effective teaching in class.

#### **5. Preliminary procedures of course-setup based on e-learning**

Based on the powerful functions of online learning and the current status and practical needs of college English teaching, we extend the range of teaching and learning to the domain outside the traditional classroom and explore the combination of online and offline learning to promote the improvement of teaching effect. This innovative course-setup is generally carried out in the following three steps:

##### **5.1 The first stage**

The teachers involved in the teaching course set up a project-construction team and carry out detailed task division and formulate complete teaching documents before the start of each semester (syllabus, teaching calendar, courseware, and exercise library, etc.) for uploading; they integrate and collect auxiliary resources and materials concerning English learning suitable for the level of college students, and record videos to cover the difficulties and key points in the teaching process.

##### **5.2 The second stage**

While getting the prepared public learning resources uploaded on an authorized platform of Internet, teachers promote and popularize the online learning platform in school and each class to boost interest and attention among students. In the meantime, they arrange online learning programs according to the learning situation and characteristics of their respective classes to regularly track the situation of learning, and accordingly adjust the content of learning based on the feedback offered by the students.

##### **5.3 The third stage**

Teachers display students' online learning results on the platform, and summarize the performance of online learning in this period of study. Referring to the results of formative assessment and summative assessment, they can evaluate the learning outcomes of students in a comprehensive, objective and accurate way.

#### **6. Conclusion**

In summary, this paper applies the currently popular e-learning mode to the research and analysis of College English Course to guide the construction of college English teaching system in the new era. Taking into consideration what have been mentioned above, it can be significantly pointed out that the exploration and application of e-learning will contribute positively to the improvement and revolution of college English teaching. In the context of higher education reform, with urgent

appeal for innovative teaching modes, the effective application of modern technology and online means to change the traditional teaching ways and improve the quality of teaching also conforms to the trend of educational development. In the future, not only higher education, any level of teaching will be inseparable from the support of online learning. Given all this, as teachers in this field, we will strive to explore more about the combining forms of online and offline learning, which will definitely be of great significance for education.

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