

The Causes and Strategies of “More Time Less Efficiency” of College English Teaching in Private University

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Abstract—Recently, a series of reforms in college English have made remarkable effects, but the problem of “more time less efficiency” still exists and has been one of the heated topics in teaching. This paper analyzes the causes from the perspectives of social environment, teacher and student, then puts forward the strategies and solutions to improve students’ English in private colleges and universities.

Keywords—private university; English teaching; more time less efficiency

I. INTRODUCTION

With the development of economic globalization, English teaching has been playing a more and more important part in China. The demand of foreign language talents is increasing and has higher criterion in level and quality. Though the reforms of college English have made remarkable effects, there are some problems which lag behind the times apparently. Among these problems, “more time less efficiency” is the most serious one, especially in private universities.

II. THE CAUSES OF “MORE TIME LESS EFFICIENCY” OF COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITY

In view of the present situation of College English Teaching in private colleges and universities, the reasons of “more time less efficiency” can be analyzed from the perspective of social environment, teachers and students:

A. From the Perspective of Social Environment

1) *The lack of the application language environment leads to deaf and mute English and useless English.* The ultimate goal of learning a language is to use, which is the biggest motivation for students to learn English. In China, in spite of the upsurge of learning English, it’s too late to learn. And unlike Singapore, India, Malawi and other countries which have two language acquisitions, Henan province is located in Central China, has less foreign investment enterprises, and is lack of application of English environment. Most English learners learn English from primary school to middle school, even in colleges and

universities, and they have no experience of communication in English. Even if there are English corners and foreign teachers in colleges and universities, the opportunity to communicate in English is very little. The lack of language environment resulted in the study of English for nearly ten years but still unable to communicate with the deaf and mute English phenomenon and the useless English.

2) *Primary and middle school English education is seriously out of the College English education.* The current university, middle and primary school teaching materials are lack of coherence, there are many repeated contents, and each stage of the teaching center of gravity is different. And the division of labor is not reasonable, primary and middle school English teaching and College English teaching are lack of reasonable and orderly convergence. From the perspective of cohesion, the Chinese primary and middle school and college English teaching in the aspects of knowledge, quality and quantity, has become a major obstacle to improve the quality of College English teaching.

3) *Teaching contents lag behind, and are not practical.* The latest edition of the university English textbooks for intensive reading books 1 – 4 is the same as usual. Texts are rarely updated. The reason is that many of them are selected from famous persons, are tried and tested, and are the readers’ favorite texts. The pursuit of teaching content can be taught and learned, while ignoring the practicality. Many students learn English for more than ten years, but they can only read some simple books, and it’s difficult for them to read English newspapers and find information in the library. Some students even can’t say the English names of courses they learned. In the foreign companies, they do not understand English letters and cards when they are faced with a variety of forms to fill out. Some daily English can not be spoken in their daily life. These are caused by impractical English.

4) *Language assessment system is not perfect; the phenomenon of widespread examination of foreign language education still exists.* Despite of years of foreign language teaching reform, middle school pays attention to

the exam results, high school focuses on college entrance examination results, the university students are eager to pass CET4 and CET6. Language assessment system is not perfect, many colleges and universities still consider the CET score as an important standard to evaluate English teaching. Many companies in the recruitment require that the students must pass CET4 and CET6, thus so many students learn English to cope with common national examination.

B. From the Teacher's Point of View

1) *Teachers need to improve their teaching level.* In Henan Province, take Huanghe Science and Technology College as an example, before 2006, the university English teachers mostly have Bachelor's degree. Since 2006, the college has introduced a large number of English majors, and undergraduate education teachers have successfully got Master's degree. But even today, there are no Doctor's degree among them. Only in foreign teacher's classes, students can directly get original English, so the qualification of College English teachers is also very weak.

2) *Teachers' teaching tasks are enormous.* Take Huanghe Science and Technology College as an example, the school in Zhengzhou has north and south campus, as well as campus in Jiyuan City, the amount of the task in each semester is 192 class periods, 12 class periods a week on the average. For freshmen, because of two weeks' military training, 12 class periods a week is not adequate. Teachers' teaching tasks are too heavy, they are busy in teaching classes, so they have limited time to reflect their teaching.

C. From the Point of View of Students

1) *Students in private colleges and universities are uneven.* Private colleges in Henan Province are mainly divided into two kinds, one relies on the famous universities, such as Shengda Economics, Trade and Management College; another is independently established colleges and universities, such as Huanghe Science and Technology College. Because of the national enrollment, the level of students is uneven, especially in English. During teaching, the teachers find that English level of some students which come from Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia is very low. Though the total score of College Entrance Exam is high, the score of English is quite low. The uneven English level of students greatly influences the teaching efficiency and effects.

2) *Effective learning time is insufficient; the ability of autonomous learning is poor.* After observation and research, some foreign language educators find that for students who learn a second language, if you want to reach the intermediate level (assumed to pass CET6 or TEM4), an average of 2500 hours are needed on the average. While the Chinese students learn English for nearly ten years, but only in the limited classroom, effective learning time is far less

than 2500 hours, and the ability of the autonomous learning is poor, the students depend on teachers heavily.

III. THE STRATEGIES OF "MORE TIME LESS EFFICIENCY" OF COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITY

In view of the above reasons, the author puts forward some countermeasures and suggestions to improve college English teaching:

A. To Create an Ideal Environment for English Learning, Enhance the Practicality and Operability of the English Language

Optimize the campus environment, create a strong atmosphere of learning English, and strive to build the campus environment into a rich English learning environment. The campus culture, architecture, scenic spots and indoor and outdoor layout all use English to do identification card. Blackboard classes require a lively English content, campus radio, television broadcast play English songs, stories, humor, television, and so on. The introduction of western customs, Anglo American countries and cultural knowledge are widely publicized. In this way, the students in campus can feel the English language at any time, anywhere, so they can take the initiative to learn English through a good campus English environment.

B. Scientifically and Reasonably Deal with the Connection Between the Teaching Sections; Improve the English Education System and Examination System

In universities, middle and primary schools, different stages of English teaching can make a reasonable division of labor in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste, at last to improve the problem of "more time less efficiency" in college English teaching. At the same time the English education system and the examination system should be improved. The current CET4 and CET6 are important means of college English teaching evaluation instead of the only means. They have applicable scopes and targets in the process of reform and development, and are complementary and mutual with other forms of English studies. In order to make up CET4 and CET6, each university should be based on the school's training objectives and the actual situation, combined with the students' English and the professional requirements, so as to make a comprehensive evaluation of English proficiency test and evaluation, and to construct a multi evaluation system of college English test.

C. Adjust and Optimize Foreign Language Teaching Team and Structure, Improve the Level of Teachers, and Lighten the Teacher's Burden

In private colleges and universities, teachers should increase the opportunities to study and go out for further study. In a number of academic achievements the senior professional personnel should lead the research group to study teaching methods, and the research results then be applied to teaching. At the same time, colleges and universities should reduce the burden of teachers, reduce the task of classes, so the teachers in the class have time to

engage in scientific research, and constantly reflect on their own teaching, so they can improve their teaching methods and means, as well as the quality of teaching.

D. Promote College English Reform and Implement Graded Teaching, Meanwhile Improve Test Methods and Contents

Private colleges and universities can evaluate the English level of the students, and may take the following two schemes. First, divide them into two kinds of classes based on the students' test scores. After the enrollment, the students are required to take English exams to judge their English level. According to their scores, they go to quick classes or slow classes. They have different learning materials which are fit for their English learning. Second, divide them into different classes according to the level of their listening and spoken English. Even some students get high score in English exam, they can't speak fluent English and the listening is quite poor. So according to their level of listening and spoken English, they can be divided into different classes. In each kind of class, they can make up their limitations. Thus the comprehensive English level and ability of the students can be improved.

E. College English Teachers Should Guide Students to Correct Their Learning Motivation, Adjust Their Learning Methods, and Cultivate Their Own Learning Ability.

In the course of teaching, students should be encouraged to develop their own learning plan, to cultivate their cooperative learning ability, so that students can learn from each other and improve themselves. At the same time, we can sum up their own learning methods and experiences, analyze the problems in the study, and formulate their own learning strategies and learning objectives. Teachers should optimize the cooperative environment, so that students are glad to learn. Interest is the best teacher, once the students have the interest in learning; they will spontaneously and actively learn. The optimization of evaluation method makes the students good at learning. They should make the students become active participants in the learning process, and exert their subjective initiative, keep them in a sustainable way. And a reasonable method of teaching evaluation should be adopted. After class, they can use the advanced multimedia technology and rich network resources to continuously expand their own learning material sources, and increase the effective learning time in English.

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