

# An Investigation of College English Teaching Reform in the Non-governmental Colleges under the Background of “One Belt and One Road”

Taking Nan Chang Institute of Science and Technology as an Example

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**Abstract**—As a compulsory course in China, College English has become relatively mature in the last thirty years. However, there are still some problems in teaching College English effectively, especially in those non-governmental colleges in the period of transformation. This paper aims to analyze the current situation of College English teaching and learning in China and tries to give some suggestions concerning the reform of College English teaching and learning.

**Keywords**—Non-governmental colleges; College English; reform

## I. INTRODUCTION

English, which is universally used in international communication around the world, has been taught as a second language in China in the last thirty years. Since the strategic conception “One Belt and One Road” was proposed in 2013, more and more cooperation has been expected between China and other countries in the world. Therefore, it is essential to guarantee the effectiveness of college English teaching and the realization of the target that graduates’ comprehensive language ability will be well developed, their cross-cultural awareness will be cultivated in order to adjust to society needs and to fulfil successful international communication[7].

## II. CURRENT SITUATION

### A. Course Orientation and Teaching Materials

Considering the fact that what the non-governmental colleges train are the application-oriented talents to keep competitive, more and more attention has been paid to college English teaching and learning. Apparently, the course of college English has been well promoted so that it has its own teaching materials, period and credit arrangement, and full-time teachers to implement the course, yet some problems remains to solve. As a result, we find it significant to find out the problems in college English teaching and learning and to advance the teaching quality. The current situation will be mainly analyzed here in two aspects, i.e. the course itself and major participants in class.

When it comes to the concept of English for liberal education, it is controversial whether priority should be given to the teaching of English for general purpose (EGP) or that of English for specific purposes (ESP). Some insist upon the teaching of EGP[3] while others argues that we should focus on ESP[1][2], which can be further divided into English for Academic Purposes (EAP) English for Occupational Purposes/ English for Vocational Purposes (EOP/ EVP) [4]. Accordingly, the debate results in the uncertainty of course orientation.

On the other hand, the teaching materials for college English are supposed to be a platform for our students to understand the western culture and recognize the differences between Chinese and western culture with the aid of computer and multimedia. However, some teaching materials put far more emphasis on western culture and values. Instead, few involves the Chinese culture or celebrities in China, which may leads to the students’ blind yearning towards western culture and eventually endanger the safety of Chinese culture and language.

### B. Major Participants in Class

Apart from the course itself, we should also deal with the issues concerning the major participants in class discreetly. Although college English is universally a compulsory course for undergraduates in China, students have not attached sufficient importance to it. Some students believe English is hardly relevant to their majors and consider it unnecessary to make as many efforts in English proficiency as in their major courses. It shows that 54.4 percent students are barely satisfied or dissatisfied with current English teaching [5].

Besides, many college students have no solid English foundation, which is especially true of non-governmental colleges including Nan Chang Institute of Science and Technology with minority students in China enrolled. Students tend to have insufficient confidence in learning English and seldom participate actively in class. Meanwhile, some college students are not skilled in autonomic learning and thus inevitably affect the efficiency in class.

As for the structure of teaching force, there are far more female college English teachers than male ones and they are mostly in youth. For example, there are at present 27 full-time college English teachers (female: 25, male: 2) in the Department of Foundation Studies in Nan Chang Institute of Science and Technology, only three of whom are vice professors. Young college teachers are normally more enthusiastic in teaching. Nevertheless, compared with those vice professors, they have relatively inadequate teaching experience and find it less efficient to carry out scientific research as required.

### III. SUGGESTIONS ON COLLEGE ENGLISH REFORM

With the above current situation taken into consideration, some suggestions are proposed here for the enhancement of college English teaching and learning in non-governmental colleges. Initially, on the basis of the unique characteristics of non-governmental colleges, I maintain that it is advisable for us to stick to EGP with ESP as a complementary component. EGP provides the cornerstone for students' further learning while ESP enables them to become qualified for future occupation. Specifically, mental development of college students can be achieved through English teaching [8]. Rather, with the help of EGP students will be capable of understanding western culture better and disseminating Chinese culture and civilization [9], which makes it possible to cultivate more international talents and promote communication and cooperation between Chinese people and people all around the world.

With regard to course setting, we can increase different types of courses so as to enhance the course appealing for college students and ensure that the courses meet the requirement of the students for their professional development and interaction ability. For instance, there are generally two kinds of English courses in Nan Chang Institute of Science and Technology, namely, compulsory course and optional course. For the purpose of staying dynamic and competitive as a non-governmental college in the period of transformation, it is sensible to provide featured course for college students in line with its exceptional features.

Meanwhile, teaching materials need to be more informative and diversified. Instead of merely focusing on western culture, it is more reasonable to combine both western culture and Chinese culture in the teaching materials of college English. For example, we can enrich the content of the teaching materials by adding some celebrity stories in China (e.g. the stories of Yang Liwei and TU Youyou) to the teaching materials. By learning from these celebrities, students will be encouraged to foster their senses of national identity and pride gradually and make contributions to their own country voluntarily.

In order to make the teaching materials of college English more diversified, colleges' own major characteristics, society needs as well as the rules of language learning can be taken into account [6]. The original editions of textbooks in foreign languages and duplicate of foreign textbooks can be adopted as the teaching materials [10] for their advantages of authentic language and systemic knowledge. In the meantime, the choice of teaching materials should start from the analysis of the

students. College English teachers should make preparation for class appropriate for students at different English proficiency levels.

One's success mainly depends on his or her attitude. When one is highly motivated in English learning, he or she is likely to learn English well. Accordingly, students should modify their attitude towards English learning if necessary. It has been advocated to adhere to the learner-centered teaching and learning while teachers work as facilitators in class. In order to become qualified talents, students need to pay sufficient attention to English learning, which is both instrumental and humanistic. In other words, English will not only be a useful tool for them to have a better understanding of their major knowledge but also help them be aware of cultural differences in the aspect of work and life.

Besides, it is essential to promote students' ability of automatic learning. With automatic learning, students will acquire knowledge actively and improve their learning efficiency dramatically rather than completely become listeners and wait for teachers' analysis and explanation in class. In addition, due to the fact that a period of 90 minutes is far from adequate for successful language learning, students will never learn English smoothly if they depend on English learning in the classroom completely. With the skills of automatic learning, they can learn English by themselves even after class under the guidance of their teachers and make it possible to turn themselves into talents with a good command of English.

As for teachers, it is strongly suggested to make full use of different teaching and learning methods to present more vigorous class for college students. Meanwhile, most of the students are likely to participate willingly in class with well-designed activities. We can integrate college English teaching and learning with computer and multimedia so that students' learning interest and enthusiasm will be remarkably improved in modern English class. A variety of materials in English and all sorts of information on the Internet can enrich their English learning as well.

Moreover, great efforts should be put into the structure of teaching force. Specifically, experienced teachers are to be preferred to some extent during the hiring process aiming at promoting the rationalization of the teaching force structure and enhancing teaching and scientific research proficiency of college English teachers. Hence the advancement of teachers' professional competence and comprehensive vocational ability will contribute to corresponding progress in the quality of college English teaching and learning, which in turn yield well-qualified international talents with competitive advantage.

Additionally, it is significant for young college English teachers to improve themselves as soon as possible. We will save time in the long run and improve the quality of our work by investing our time in self-improvement. Induction training is usually conducted by universities or colleges, during which one can get to, know the college history, main responsibilities, and teaching and scientific research requirements for them and so on. Besides, young teachers can learn from experienced professors in teaching as well as in scientific research by forming pairs. Through forming pairs, the combination of observation and comments on class evaluation will help young

teachers reflect on their own performance and fulfill the teaching and scientific research tasks excellently.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

What measures are to be taken on the reform of college English teaching and learning is mainly based on the social requirements for graduates. Therefore, with an overall consideration of the social needs and college resource the cultivating objective of non-governmental colleges is the application-oriented talents training. In the process there are some primary problems including the ambiguous positioning of college English course, the overemphasis of western culture in teaching materials, students' weakness in English foundation and their lack of automatic learning and the inappropriate structure of teaching force. After the analysis of current problems, it argues that we should stick to EGP with ESP as a complementary component while different species of courses are to be set up for professional development and communication ability. Moreover, informative and diversified teaching materials need to be prepared for English learning. The acquirement of the ability of automatic learning is a prerequisite for students to improve their English learning efficiency. On the other hand, the structure of teaching force should be enhanced for the sake of teaching quality and scientific research ability.

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