

A Study on Professional Development of EOP Teachers in Colleges and Universities

Yuan Kong
Jining Medical University
Jining, China

Ya Kong*
Qufu Normal University
Qufu, China

Abstract—This paper discusses the basic problems of EOP teachers' professional development in colleges and universities, and clarifies its development direction. It studies the professional theories, practical abilities and teaching methods that college English teachers should master from the aspects of academic qualification, ability, achievement, leadership and other professional connotation and professional knowledge, professional practice, professional culture and other aspects. It defines the connotation of the professional development of EOP teachers in colleges and universities to solve the problem of what is the professional development of EOP teachers. Through a questionnaire survey on the professional development of EOP teachers in 20 colleges and universities in Shandong province, it has an in-depth understanding of the current sources of EOP teachers in colleges and universities as well as basic information, such as actual teaching and scientific research. Meanwhile, it analyzes the existing problems and their roots in the professional development of teachers to solve the problem of why EOP should be carried out in colleges and universities. In view of the problems, an effective way was proposed to optimize the professional development of EOP teachers in colleges and universities and to solve the problem of how to realize the professional development of EOP teachers. It has certain guiding significance for enriching and developing the theoretical system of EOP teachers' professional development as well as provides reference and guidance for colleges and universities to promote the professional development of EOP teachers.

Keywords—colleges and universities; EOP; teachers' professional development; strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, with the all-round development of economic globalization, the export of labor services is expanding, and correspondingly, international exchanges and cooperation are becoming more and more frequent. Colleges and universities shoulder the mission of the cultivation of specialized personnel of the type of "professional skills and language knowledge". These talents must be highly skilled and applied ones who are facing to production, construction, service, management, the first line of need [1]. But in the course system of higher education, EOP, as a media of professional knowledge and information transfer, has a pivotal role. In June 2010, the ministry of education clearly proposed that English teaching in

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Corresponding author: Ya Kong, Email: kongy_1116@163.com

colleges and universities should be divided into two stages, namely, basic English stage and ESP (English for special purpose) stage. The content of the basic education in English, of course, may be related to that of the ESP teaching or in the process of teaching.

EOP (English for Occupational Purpose) originates from ESP, and refers to the relevant English skill teaching content combined with students' major, which is complementary to basic English. The course features: the teaching content is closely around the external communication requirements of the industry and enterprises; the teaching method follows the market closely, and strengthens the employment-oriented and competency-based orientation while combining with the actual situation of students. The EOP in this study refers to the English training of students' English application ability in specific workplace environment based on the actual requirements of enterprises or industries [2].

II. CURRENT SITUATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EOP TEACHERS IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The investigation is conducted in 20 colleges and universities in Shandong province. In addition to the teachers who have been engaged in EOP teaching, some of the teachers who participated in the questionnaire may become EOP teachers (according to the teaching and curriculum reform and development needs of the college). A total of 100 questionnaires were sent out, and 100 questionnaires were collected (most of which were sent via the Internet), with a recovery rate of 100%, 99 valid questionnaires and an effective rate of 99%. In order to avoid the one-sidedness of the survey, this research not only conducted a questionnaire survey on front-line teachers, but also interviewed several leaders in charge of teaching.

A. Main Problems

1) *The knowledge structure of EOP teachers is unreasonable*

Since the EOP course was developed gradually in the past decade or so, many teachers who serve as EOP teachers have not experienced systematic professional training. The diversity of EOP teachers' sources highlights that the knowledge structure of EOP teachers is unreasonable. The biggest advantage of EOP teachers who are transformed from public English teachers is that they have a solid knowledge of linguistics, but relatively weak professional knowledge in the

workplace. They can organize the language and the class well, but the explanation of professional knowledge is a little weak, and the knowledge of guiding students' practical training is not enough. In terms of knowledge, the greatest advantage of EOP teachers is that they have a thorough understanding of relevant professional knowledge, which is helpful for students to demonstrate and explain professional knowledge. However, the processing of language points is relatively weak. The organizational form of the class is relatively simple. The emphasis on knowledge explanation ignores language learning. The biggest advantage of this part of EOP teachers from the front line of enterprises is that they have front-line working experience, which is of great significance to students' operational learning. They have a certain language foundation and relatively skilled professional skills, but they may pay too much attention to the value of the application of language in the process of teaching to provide students with a solid knowledge base.

2) *The lack of EOP teachers' professional development planning*

The lack of the planning for the professional development of teachers in institutions of higher education is manifested mainly in two aspects. One is the lack of EOP teachers' own career planning. Some teachers are not adapted to the curriculum structure in the reform, and are unwilling to take the initiative to learn and improve some knowledge and abilities needed to teach EOP courses. The investigation revealed that from the level of management of institutions of higher education, planning is not enough, and EOP teachers have more than 12 class hours per week on average. In addition, the time for instructing practical training and conducting scientific research is very limited. However, colleges and universities are helpless in this situation, because the number of EOP teachers is very limited. In addition, there is a lack of scientific guidance and overall arrangement in the training for EOP teachers. Sometimes, due to the changes in professional enrollment, some professional EOP teachers are in short supply, so they can not train all the teachers on duty systematically. As a result, teachers are basically in the state of teaching while learning and learning while teaching.

3) *The lack of institutional settings for the professional development of EOP teachers*

At the moment, the professional development system of many other disciplines is relatively mature. For example, there are a lot of teachers who have national or industry-wide "national training" or "provincial training" programs every year, with special time arrangements, systematic curriculum resources and experienced instructors to carry out various forms of training. There are also the matching assessment mechanisms and some evaluation and encouragement mechanisms, which will make these teachers getting a great guarantee. However, there was little institutional guarantees for the professional development of EOP teachers. In addition, Higher Education Publishing House and Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing House organize some profitable training all over the country every winter and summer vacation, and they also organize some special thematic discussions and training in Beijing every other time. But these are mainly for the development of scientific research,

especially for the undergraduate colleges and universities. But for ordinary colleges and universities, there are fewer thematic forums.

B. *The Analysis of Influencing Factors*

According to the research results, the factors that affect the professional development of EOP teachers in colleges and universities are basically consistent with the research results of Glatthorn, which can be summarized into three different aspects.

1) *Social and environmental factors*

From the survey results, it can be seen that there is no uniform standard for EOP teachers' admission requirements in colleges and universities. Public English teachers have been on duty through certain industry knowledge training. Staff from the front line of enterprises can directly enter the ranks of EOP teachers, just because they have a certain language foundation and front-line work experience [3]. Most of them do not even have a degree in teaching. The qualification certificate is not even obtained by most of them. This also reflects the factor that affects the social environment of EOP teachers' professional development in colleges and universities, that is, the professional training of EOP teachers in colleges and universities is deficient.

2) *Teachers' own factors*

It is found in the survey that EOP teachers themselves are also one of the factors affecting the professional development of EOP teachers in colleges and universities. First of all, EOP teachers from the transfer of public English teachers lack the overall and systematic professional knowledge, and the part-time professional teachers who teach EOP lack systematic knowledge of English language theory. EOP teachers from the front line of enterprises lack relevant theoretical knowledge of pedagogy and psychology. That is to say, from the level of knowledge literacy, the current EOP teachers need to be strengthened. Secondly, from the overall group of English teachers, the psychological burnout prevails in some aged groups of teachers, which leads to the lack of self-improvement enthusiasm of EOP teachers. And to a certain extent, it has a negative impact on the teachers' professional development.

3) *Evaluation and incentive factors*

In addition to the social environment and teachers themselves, the lack of evaluation and incentive is also a factor affecting the professional development of EOP teachers in institutions of higher learning. The study revealed that this was mainly in the form and content. From a formal point of view, the form of evaluation of teachers is relatively single, and students' test scores are often used as the only reflection of teachers' teaching ability. That is why a lot of institutions of higher education focus on examination passing rates. It has a great influence on EOP teaching, because EOP teaching requires a high level of practical training. And there is no scientific standard to measure the students' practical ability and level, and the teaching ability of English teachers in the corresponding industries can not be truly evaluated. From the point of view of content, teachers of other disciplines can obtain certain professional qualifications through some professional examinations, so as to prove their own ability and

quality. Some professional teachers can get certain honors by coaching students to participate in some provincial and national industry competitions, so as to prove their own ability and quality. And some teachers can participate in some by themselves. Teachers will get some substantial rewards or policy support besides getting affirmation through these ways. Some of them have preferential policies in salary or title promotion. However, the evaluation and incentive mechanism of EOP teachers in colleges and universities is relatively much less [4].

III. COUNTERMEASURES TO OPTIMIZE THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EOP TEACHERS IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

A. Teachers Themselves: Seeking Effective Ways of Professional Development

1) To strengthen the reserve of industry knowledge

The survey found that 60% of EOP teachers are transformed from in-service public English teachers. The main obstacle to education is the lack of professional skills. It is urgent to supplement industry knowledge. We can strengthen the reserve of industry knowledge through the following ways. Accumulation of knowledge points through books is a relatively flexible and effective way to internalize knowledge through the study and research of professional books, and to supplement industry knowledge through the use of network resources. The information age is characterized by the existence of a larger network of knowledge systems. Teachers can acquire their EOP industry knowledge through the network, and then carry out screening learning, which can realize the supplement of industry knowledge. Through mutual learning, we can get the expansion of industry knowledge. For example, teachers who are transformed from public English teachers can learn from professional teachers and teachers from the front line of enterprises modestly. Their knowledge of industry knowledge is relatively broad, and they can learn some industry knowledge directly from them. And they can achieve industry knowledge through some practical learning or participating in some professional training. It is more intuitive and effective to acquire skills.

2) To strengthen the investigation of enterprise demand dynamics

The needs of enterprises are crucial. Why are teachers from the front line of enterprises so popular? Because they represent the corporate culture. Students can see the needs of enterprises and their own career development direction, so students have the motivation to learn in the learning process.

If we want to develop the competence of EOP teachers in colleges and universities, we must consider the dynamic demand of enterprises. Always let enterprises lead the nose of college teaching, which will cause the lag of college teaching arrangements. Therefore, we should start to seek the direction of development, adjust the teaching objectives, make teaching plans, prepare reasonable teaching contents and methods, arrange effective training and so on through the dynamic investigation of enterprise demand.

3) To strengthen the cultivation of practical ability of EOP Teachers

The practical ability of EOP teachers in colleges and universities can only be reflected through practical activities, such as teachers' ability to design and guide the practical training of courses. To realize the professional development of EOP teachers in colleges and universities, it is necessary to strengthen the cultivation of teachers' practical ability from the following aspects.

a. Change ideas and work out some practical learning plans. Compared with other traditional disciplines, as a new discipline, EOP teachers' professional development is not very mature. Many teachers' educational institutions have been influenced by traditional educational ideas, "emphasizing theory teaching, neglecting practice operation", which hinders the professional development of EOP teachers to a certain extent [5]. Therefore, it needs to strengthen the practical ability of teachers, change attitudes and establish programs of learning.

b. Break through oneself and carry out bold teaching innovation. With the change of students in colleges and universities at present, the quality of students is relatively declining, while the requirements of enterprises for graduates are getting higher and higher. Traditional teaching has been difficult to cultivate high-quality talents needed by enterprises. While training and revising the talents plan in colleges, EOP teachers should make bold breakthroughs, innovate in the process of teaching practice, enrich their own teaching experience and improve their ability to solve practical problems.

c. Participate actively in various types of industry training at all levels. Through research and development, it is found that EOP teachers in colleges and universities still have the opportunity to receive continuing education and training. Although many of the training is still in the state of attaching importance to theory rather than practice, many of the training is not very targeted. And some of the training is not for English teachers. But for EOP teachers, such training is also helpful to improve their professional practice ability.

4) To strengthen the improvement of teaching ability

According to Guilin Wang, there are four orientations to improve teaching ability: "academic-rational" orientation, "skills-proficiency" orientation, "practice-reflection" orientation and "culture-ecology" orientation. Different orientations have different ways to improve teaching ability. For EOP teachers in colleges and universities, all the four orientations are conducive to improving their teaching ability.

a. With regard to the "academic-intellectual" orientation, it mainly refers that teachers learn from experts before or after service to meet the job requirements, so as to acquire knowledge of relevant disciplines. As EOP teachers in colleges and universities, they can further their study after pre-service academic education, such as on-the-job academic education in some professional teacher education institutions, pre-service training organized by government agencies or colleges and universities, and visiting study in some famous professional schools at home and abroad.

b. With regard to the "skills-proficiency" orientation, the necessity of it should be made clear first, because the first "academics-rationality" orientation only solves the problem of knowledge foundation, but lacks practical operation. As EOP teachers in institutions of higher learning, they should not only familiarize themselves with the knowledge of pedagogical principles, but also grasp and apply the skills required by teachers' profession. That is to say, EOP teachers in institutions of higher learning should not only master professional knowledge, but also understand the basic links of teaching activities and the skills needed between various links of teaching [6].

c. With regard to "practice-reflection" orientation, the embodiment of the teachers' teaching ability is not dependent on training or teaching experts, but depends on the teachers' personal exploration and discovery. Thus, it can be seen that this orientation stresses the teacher's personal autonomy and subjectivity. That is to say, the improvement of teaching ability is not uniform, but the formation of each teacher through "practice-reflection", which is personalized growth. That is to say, EOP teachers should not only have professional knowledge and skills, but also be able to pay attention to their own experience and accumulation of practical knowledge, and to the formation of self-monitoring ability.

d. With regard to "culture-ecological" orientation, the biggest feature of which is to combine the improvement of teachers' teaching ability with the environment in which they live. Teachers should be able to find the dynamics of their career in the environment. That is to say, teachers should learn to learn from others around them when improving their teaching ability, form certain teaching cultural characteristics, and promote the comprehensive improvement of teachers' teaching ability.

We can come into a conclusion from the analysis of these four directions. For improving the teaching ability, it is needed to have professional knowledge base, solid and excellent skills, be able to accumulate self-reflection and learn from the surrounding environment.

B. Colleges and Universities: Optimize the Growth Environment of EOP Teacher

1) To establish EOP teachers' evaluation system

There are unified teacher evaluation systems in every college and university, such as salary performance evaluation system, title evaluation system, teaching quality evaluation system, year-end evaluation priority system and so on. Under the restriction of these unified systems, a centripetal evaluation system of college teachers has been formed. However, due to the different characteristics of teachers in each subject, there exists a "one size fits all" evaluation model. Some drawbacks may even arouse contradictions or lead to job burnout of some teachers. Based on the characteristics that EOP teachers have developed in recent decades, there are no written regulations on the professional standards of EOP teachers so far. Therefore, colleges and universities can formulate different evaluation systems according to the characteristics of EOP teachers, and give some guarantees in the system, such as some material or spiritual rewards for EOP teachers who participated in the

curriculum reform, in-service title evaluation or in-service title evaluation. The first one is to give more affirmation to the outstanding person of EOP teaching. To a great extent, it can mobilize EOP teachers' enthusiasm for professional development.

2) To establish EOP teachers' collaborative development mechanism

Collaborative development can be achieved through two ways. First, colleges and universities should provide conditions and guarantee for EOP teachers to carry out collaborative learning. Second, colleges and universities should carry out collaborative innovation and establish effective development mechanism to promote the professional development of EOP teachers.

As for collaborative learning, it means that in order to accomplish a common learning task, learners give full play to their own characteristics. And through discussion, division of labor and cooperation, they will deeply understand the learning content, and form the ability of communication and coordination, so as to realize the construction of the knowledge they have learned.

In the survey, it is found that EOP teachers in colleges and universities mainly come from three different sources. Teachers from these three different sources have different knowledge and abilities. If colleges and universities can stand at the level of overall planning, provide them with some corresponding institutional guarantee and organize the cooperative learning of these three types of teachers, the professional development of EOP teachers will be greatly improved.

3) To establish the EOP teacher school-based training plan

Teacher training is a training that aims to improve the level and skills of the teachers. The schools are developing programs to meet their own needs and policies of higher education. Institutions of higher learning can establish school-based training programs for EOP teachers at the college level, which is the institutional guarantee for the professional development of EOP teachers. There are many forms of school-based training under the guidance of research programs. For example, through pre-service training, also known as pre-job training, the basic teaching theory and skills of teachers are strengthened. Through the "old with new" or "tutorial system", excellent old teachers are given guidance to young teachers. And it is systematized so as to standardize its operation and improve the teaching ability of young teachers. Through the regular competitions, the training is promoted. In this way, all the teachers participating in the training can have the urgency and enthusiasm so that the effect of school-based training can reach the best state. Through watching and listening to classes, teaching seminars and other forms, in-depth learning between each other is promoted [7].

C. Government Departments: Establish EOP Teacher Training System

1) To establish the short-term education system for EOP teachers

In the whole system of teacher training in colleges and universities, many teachers of other disciplines have perfect training and refresher system. For example, every year the government invests a lot in the "provincial training" and "national training" programs, and also in the annual "visiting scholars" training programs of professional colleges and universities at home and abroad. Every year, many teachers benefit from these training systems and grow into professionals. However, there is no such training for EOP teachers at present. The government may establish a system of short-term training for EOP teachers step by step, such as short-term training abroad during holidays, and unified training for teachers in the same profession at home. In addition to providing policy support, the government may also give some financial support accordingly for these training, which will be more effective to promote the training exhibition and ensure the training effect.

2) To establish the practice system for EOP teachers

Regarding the professional practice of EOP teachers, the government may closely link industry, university and research, and establish a complete system of industrial practice. Strengthening the cooperation between colleges, optimizing the allocation of resources of institutions and enterprises in the form of government-led, and forming a trinity EOP teacher training mechanism of "government-university-enterprise" have a very positive role in promoting the professional development of EOP teachers.

3) To establish the teaching competition system for EOP teachers

The teaching competition is an advisable way to enhance teachers' occupational development. The competition is an integrated manifestation and evaluation of the teaching capability and level of teachers. Teachers' basic teaching function has been greatly strengthened. In the process of preparing for the competition, teachers' educational experience,

teaching art and teaching skills will be greatly improved. Competition can make the teaching ability outstanding. Through observation and learning exchanges, the peers can learn a lot of direct experience in peacetime teaching practice exploration and will take fewer detours.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study is carried out in the context of the development of higher education. It regards the professional development of EOP teachers as the research object, combines the existing literature and scientific research results, expounds and demonstrates the professional development of EOP teachers in colleges and universities. Through the investigation of 100 English teachers in 20 colleges and universities in Shandong Province and interviews with several leaders in charge of teaching, this paper discusses the current professional development of EOP teachers. At the same time, this paper analyzes the current situation, the problems and the root causes. And it raises the question of establishing the target and finding out the ways. It has also introduced three measures to optimize EOP teachers' professional development in colleges and universities.

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