

The Management of College English Teaching Reform Project

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores how to effectively carry out the reform of college English teaching from the perspective of management. It analyzes the status quo of college English teaching reform project management. Effective distributed management, improvement in the mechanism of teaching management and so on are proposed. The paper aims to make the fellow college English teachers aware of the existing problems in the management of college English teaching reform and engage them in the discussion on the topic so as to seek effective solutions to addressing the challenges to the reform of college English teaching

Keywords: *College English teaching reform, Management, Distributed management, Teaching management mechanism.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the Ministry of Education initiated the project of College English Teaching Reform in 2004, there has been a wide participation of various universities in attempting to carry out teaching reform. As a result, college students' proficiency in English is generally improved. However, various problems have emerged in the process, which is deeply rooted in management. How to strengthen the management of reform project and accelerate the process of reform is an urgent problem to be considered and dealt with.

As the general office of the ministry of education pointed out: "College English teaching reform is a systematic project, involving every aspect of higher education system. The evaluation and measure of reform is an important indicator for the quality of university teaching performance. [1]", the reform of college English is a comprehensive project, which needs scientific planning and organization management to achieve the ideal effect and the educational reform goal. Thus it can be seen that management is of vital importance in the reform of college English teaching.

This paper will analyze the existing problems in the management of college English teaching reform and put forward some practical proposals. The reform of college English teaching is a systematic project. Only the

collaboration of every department of a school can ensure the success.

2. THE EXISTING PROBLEMS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF COLLEGE ENGLISH REFORM

Administrative management and teaching management are the two important parts of the management of college English teaching reform. It takes great efforts to apply the two parts in facilitating the reform [2].

First, the school management doesn't have sufficient knowledge of college English teaching, taking the reform as something that can be pulled off by the foreign language department itself. There is no adequate financial support and corresponding policy to help with the reform, making it difficult to proceed with the reform [3]. The management is not aware of the challenges the reform is faced with and does not realize that there is a long way to go to achieve the expected result. As a consequence, no efforts have been made to carry through the reform on the level of management. The vision of reform is unclear so that every unit concerned is at odds with each other, confused about what is the right thing to do.

Second, English teachers are still stuck in an old teaching mode, lacking the initiative to update teaching methodology. Senior teachers refuse to learn the new

methods that could be used to enhance teaching, while new teachers are not experienced enough to optimize teaching effects even with the help of modern teaching technology.

Third, students find it hard to switch their old way of English learning by cramming to the autonomous way of learning. Most of them have no self-discipline to learn by themselves, feeling at loss when there's no one pushing them to learn [4]. They spend less time on English in that they are not used to taking initiative to learn. College English is for non-English major students, whose main focus is their own major. They will struggle to allocate sufficient time for English if they are not good at time management. School management is supposed to lay down regulations and take measures to supervise students' autonomous learning process.

3. THE APPROACHES TO ENHANCING THE MANAGEMENT OF COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING REFORM

Firstly it is important to distribute the leadership in the process, making every level of the concerned departments responsible for part of the reform so that they can be fully engaged in the management of the reform. Secondly teaching itself should be managed by the involvement of teachers and students. They are the key players of the reform. It's crucial for them to realize what they can do to push the reform in the right direction.

3.1. Leadership Distribution

To distribute leadership, a special agency that monitor and guide the reform should be founded on the level of school management. Then the agency delegate the mission to College English Department, making it enforce the reform. Specific group of leaders that is responsible for the reform in the School of Foreign Languages should be established as well. This group will delegate the mission to the several teaching and research offices under it. And each office will have a leader to organize the work and delegate it to every teacher who's in the frontier of the battle. When mission is delegated down the levels, everyone is included. There emerges the mutual accountability, which can inspire everyone's initiative and creativity in coming up with good ideas for the reform.

Distributed leadership can help spread decision-making ability throughout a team, particularly to those on the front lines of the operation.

On the level of school management, a special reform group of leaders headed by a vice-principal of teaching should be founded, including the members from different related departments. In the meantime, a group of teaching reform organized by College English Department and office of academic affairs should take the initiative to carry out different tasks to fulfill the goal of the reform.

The two groups are supposed to meet regularly to lay down the guiding principles and policies, coordinate every department to support the reform both financially and strategically. Whenever there are any problems and setbacks, the two groups work together to come up with solutions. The existence of the special reform groups can guarantee an effective and fruitful result.

On the level of the department management, College English Department is the sector to enforce the reform, for example, making reform plans, analyzing existing problems, learning latest trends in English teaching reform, experimenting on reform programs, researching on factors affecting the results of reform and so on. So it is critically important for the department to have an efficient management mechanism. The leaders of different parts of the school can get together to form a group of leaders to push for the reform. Those leaders of the group will have to conduct meetings periodically to discuss, supervise and inspect the process of the reform. Under the group is affiliated with different units to put the reform plans into application and explore for better schemes to improve the results. Special teaching groups and research groups are there to combine the practical teaching with scientific research so that they can promote each other in the process. The enhanced college English teaching quality can be achieved when the latest research findings can be put into practice to test its feasibility and the actual effects can in turn help the research find better solutions.

On the level of teaching and research office, the fundamental unit of the reform, it is to follow the scheme designed by the department and take specific steps to reform college English teaching. The same structure of distributed leadership can be established by having levels of different groups. Deans of different teaching and research office act as the organizer.

Model teachers act as the central role in the reform. Under their leadership is the different groups in charge of different areas of the reform such as module teaching group, Powerpoints design group, after-class teaching group, test bank group, etc. There will be someone in each group to divide tasks into smaller ones and assign them to every teacher. In this way, all the teachers will be clear about what the goal is and what they are supposed to do. A team of vision, energy and innovation will thus come into being.

3.2. A Sound and Complete Teaching Management Mechanism

Teaching management mechanism is the management on how teachers teach and how students learn. The mechanism is to strengthen good management on teaching, stabilize the order in teaching, control the quality of teaching through a series of regulations and rules. All the teaching faculty, students and administrators

should abide by those rules. The rules will help transform people's idea about reform and monitor the process of the reform.

3.2.1. The Engagement of Teachers

Teachers have to be trained and well organized to optimize the effect of the reform. They work at the frontier of the reform. Their performance determines the success of the reform. There are 3 things to do to make sure they deliver. First, teachers' teaching philosophy should be challenged to suit the new demand. Make teachers aware of the context, content and goal of the reform by means of discussion and lecturing. It is of great importance to align teachers with the vision of the school in the reform. To do so, the school should explain the challenges that face the school to its teachers and then ask the teachers to offer solutions after putting themselves in the shoes of the school. Their proposals for the reform usually correspond with the school's knowing about the context. The point is to make them feel that they have the ownership of the idea. Once they think so, they would be more actively involved in the process of reform. For those who do not share the same vision and do not want to reform, the school can ask them to leave. The ones left are sure to engage fully in the reform so as to achieve expected result concertedly. Teachers need to shift from teaching language knowledge and language skills to cultivating students autonomous learning ability and language application. That is to say, they'll have to embrace a brand new mode of teaching. Second, training teachers in their all-around abilities related to teaching should be focused. For instance, teachers can promote teaching skills through teaching contest. They can learn from model teachers by attending those teachers' classes. They can learn various kinds of information technology to assist effective teaching. The school can also supply teachers with opportunities for overseas training so that they can get to know the latest teaching philosophy and experience. Last, introduce rewarding policy to encourage good performance and recognize teachers' efforts. Include demonstration class and collective teaching preparation into the policy of school so that teaching process could be standardized and evaluated.

3.3. The Engagement of Students

Students as the other end of the spectrum should also be taken into account in the reform. The school can guide students to change their idea about learning, making them realize that they are the subject of teaching, enhance their consciousness of independent learning, and gradually adapt to the new teaching mode. Management on students' learning should be personalized and humanized. For example, strengthening the guidance and management of students' autonomous learning online, using online learning platform for students to provide guidance and monitoring of learning tasks so as to know each student's

learning progress and help them grasp the effective autonomous learning strategy. The school will reform the evaluation system for students' performance, pay more attention to the process evaluation, and seek the effective combination of the process evaluation and the result evaluation [5]. Process evaluation better reflects the students' performance on a daily basis, including this part of performance into the final evaluation. And it plays down the role of the final exam, and changes the situation in which failure in one exam will ruin a student's future. In addition, students are encouraged to participate in all kinds of English competitions and extracurricular classes related to English, and their participation in those activities will be included in the final evaluation in a certain proportion.

4. CONCLUSION

College English teaching reform is a huge systemic project. It must be equipped with a leading group to organize the whole process and push for the reform no matter what challenges are. The school should set up relevant departments involved in the reform. These departments will have to hold regular meetings to discuss the problems emerging in the process of the reform and offer solutions. As the specific implementation department of the reform, College English Department should also set up a relevant reform leading group and working groups. The tasks will be carried out by the English teaching and research offices of various schools. Departments at all levels need to abandon the outdated ideas about College English teaching, so do the teachers. The school can apply practical strategies to align teaching faculty's vision on the reform. Students involvement in the reform can not be ignored as well. The reform of College English teaching is implemented through distributed leadership [6] or management.

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