

# A Brief Discussion on General Education in College English Teaching

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**Abstract**—General education strategy of College English is the focus of foreign language teaching in China. General education has been paid much attention by all walks of life with its humanistic thought, good divergences and comprehensive thinking. Although General education of college English in China has achieved a lot, there are still problems such as unclear concept, narrow scope and relatively monotonous form. In order to solve these problems, this paper puts forward some strategies to develop General education of college English in the aspects of the advancement of the educational system, the expansion of teaching content, the promotion of enjoyment of teaching and the strengthening of teaching interaction so as to provide some reference for the development of the general education of College English in China.

**Keywords**—general education of college English; strategy

## I. INTRODUCTION

General education of College English plays an important role in the current teaching reform and quality education. It is also the focus of attention and debate in the education field. How to promote and deepen the teaching of English? How to carry out general education of College English and how to grasp it? How to guarantee the core status and development of our own language and culture while popularizing general education? Questions above are hot issues in the general education of College English, which can be analyzed from the following aspects.

## II. GENERAL EDUCATION OF COLLEGE ENGLISH

General education of foreign language is a new thing in our education system. It is also an important guiding and driving force in the reform of College English education. The author believes that the general education of College English, the student-oriented education, is a kind of combination of English language learning and learning on the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences in English-speaking countries when implementing College English teaching activities. With more flexible and diverse teaching forms and teaching methods, such education is to mold and nurture well-rounded individuals who relatively have a good command of English language and have extensive knowledge related to English. As far as China's education is concerned, College English teaching is an integral part of

general education in college. General education of College English is a significant direction for the reform and development of College English.

The development of general education of College English in China is based on the implementation of the current teaching requirements. According to the requirements of teaching requirements, the teaching of College English needs to be carried out in the following aspects.

(1) The application of knowledge skills and divergent abilities should be included in training objectives. Students' comprehensive ability and general ability should be emphasized as well.

(2) Attach importance to the people-oriented teaching concept and emphasize the cultivation of students' autonomous learning ability.

(3) Improve the examinations and assessments model of College English teaching. The *formative assessment* and *finality assessment* models should be combined together in order to change the status of the students' learning situation gradually in which students' achievements are valued by the single test only.

It is not difficult to learn that the concept of general education has been highly valued by reading the core content of the *teaching requirements*. The thought of general education has gradually improved or even replaced the present college English education. It also essentially promotes the advancement of the students' English level from many aspects, such as skills, thoughts, comprehensive abilities and general abilities.

## III. CURRENT PROBLEMS IN GENERAL EDUCATION OF COLLEGE ENGLISH IN CHINA

### A. *The Concept of General Education Is Not Radically Established*

Although our colleges are becoming aware of general education of College English teaching at present, most of them have not used the general education as the title, and they have not fundamentally established the concept of general education. They tend to simply teach English majors and nonprofessional students the General Education in a

simple way. The concept of general education is not integrated into the teaching of College English yet.

#### *B. The Scope of General Education Is Limited*

In order to instruct English teaching with the idea of general education, it should be deeply diverged to all aspects of teaching. In China, the current English general education is basically confined to the link of teaching while colleges carry out the general education of College English through the differences and selectivity of teaching materials, exercises and teaching resources. This model has great limitations. First, it does not reflect the integrity of the teaching system and peels out teaching from the system, which makes the scope of the general education relatively narrow. Secondly, there are many other links in teaching testing, feedback, communication, evaluation and so on, which do not reflect the awareness of general education well. Colleges implement the above activities based on the traditional examination mode and scoring mode as before which is not consistent with the principle of humanism and broad sense and general knowledge in general education.

#### *C. The Form of Teaching Is Relatively Simple*

General education can be realized with a variety of forms of teaching. In general education of college English, due to its wide coverage, flexibility and practicality, the subjective initiative of both sides of teaching and learning should be fully mobilized. At present, the teaching form of general education of foreign language is relatively simple in China, which is basically consistent with the English teaching form in English majors, only with some differences in the allocation of resources and the requirements of teaching. Non-English majors have not paid enough attention to English. They have a certain sense of resistance and lax while the single form of teaching will further intensify this phenomenon. At the same time, models of CET 4 and CET 6 for all non-English majors are also relatively single, lacking general knowledge and flexibility.

### IV. THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF GENERAL EDUCATION OF COLLEGE ENGLISH

#### *A. Establish and Perfect the General Education System of Foreign Language*

Establishing and perfecting the general education system is the basis of the development strategy of general education in College English. Colleges should guide and reform the teaching design with the concept of general education, and establish a general education system to match with the teaching design. Generally speaking, the general education system of College English should include the following aspects:

##### *1) Education System*

The design and implementation of teaching links are the basis of general education.

##### *2) Autonomous Learning System*

Guiding and standardizing students' autonomous learning, changing their passive learning into active learning, and

regarding stage learning as life-long learning are the important guarantee and impetus for general education.

##### *3) Communication and Feedback System*

We should communicate with each other and give feedback on the stage learning so as to sum up experience and find out and correct deficiencies.

##### *4) Assessment System*

In respect of examination and assessment system, general education on college English should gradually abolish the mode of "scores on mid-term examination and final examination", and adopt a more humanized "formative assessment" model to give more weight to the students' interest, the normal learning situation and their comprehensive application ability.

#### *B. Expand the Content of Teaching*

The teaching content of general education on college English should reflect the openness and divergence of general education, and strive to expand students' views on general knowledge and enhance their comprehensive ability. In this respect, it is necessary to expand the existing teaching contents and combine the English teaching with different kinds of specific practical situations of humanities, society, science, nature and communication. In this way, students can master the practical English abilities such as speaking and writing through general education of college English, and at the same time promote their communication attainment and improve their comprehensive quality of the humanities and Social Sciences. In terms of teaching, the content of English teaching can be divided into two levels; one is the explicit level and the other the invisible level. The explicit curriculum should be arranged with the basic knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, sentence pattern and so on while a variety of colorful teaching activities should be carried out in the invisible course. For example, a variety of English communication environments can be simulated in the form of interesting elective courses to enable students to master the most practical and useful English knowledge by simulating various English communication situations, which, in turn, has a good effect on the consolidation and promotion of the basic knowledge of English. In the selection of teaching materials, general education can, combine the popular news, international and domestic activities, Star Sports and other topics of interest as the teaching materials instead of the established teaching materials, and regularly carry out the English film exhibitions, English corner and other activities.

In addition, the Hierarchical teaching method can be adopted to carry out different teaching activities according to the differences of students' majors, interest and self-orientation. Different teaching levels have different teaching resources and setting up the ladder of teaching goals can make the general education resources more effective.

Through the hierarchical teaching, the teaching resources can be allocated more reasonably; students can also be more in line with their own nonprofessional English teaching levels. Colleges can expand the scope of teaching and make

students use English knowledge to read, write, consult and communicate at their own level.

### *C. Try to Enhance the Interest of Teaching*

The interest of teaching is an important guarantee for stimulating students' enthusiasm and establishing the thought of humanistic teaching in general education. In view of the characteristics of non-English majors, colleges should vigorously promote the open teaching mode, gradually break away from the fixed teaching materials and combine teaching with their majors. It should be noted that although general education advocates breaking professional restrictions and rigid divisions, we can still promote teaching by means of students' majors. For example, we can refer to the students' teaching materials to arrange the corresponding English original books or similar books to students. The accumulation of their own major can make the students easier to grasp, and consider carefully then speculate words, phrase and sentences more effectively. In addition, you can arrange a few minutes in class to make the students to take a lecture. The subject should not be limited. The English story can be told, and the English songs can be sung. In order to show good performance, the students often browse a lot of English materials, so that their general education and self-learning ability can be well trained. Teachers can get important information through their performances. Teachers always find Students' shortcomings or mistakes through their performances, which will also be beneficial to the improvement of follow-up teaching. In addition, we can also carry out role playing activities in the teaching, simulate business talks, hospitals, stations and other situations. Students have their own design scenes and lines, so that they are involved in more different fields which help to improve the quality of general education, such as the "simulation United Nations" and other activities, which can be well trained and distributed the general education of the students.

### *D. Strengthen the Interaction and Communication of Teaching*

The interaction and communication of teaching is very helpful to the promotion of autonomous learning, and this is an important driving force for general education. In this respect, we should draw on the European model and strive to develop the independent learning center and the network communication platform. The independent learning center and the network communication platform are the teaching and service center of general education of College English which is built by the network. In the autonomous learning center, teachers can assign self-study tasks to each group through the pattern of grouping, and each group carries out self-knowledge learning. In this process, on the one hand, students and teachers can interact and communicate through the network platform. Teachers can also publish courseware, multimedia data and other English related resources regularly through this platform. At the same time, the students' self-learning progress can be detected. However, in the autonomous learning center, the abundant teaching resources can be matched to meet the general and individual needs of students.

## V. CONCLUSION

General education is the most humanized and comprehensive education model in the world. It has received relatively good teaching results in the teaching practice over the world for many years, and it is of great significance for reference and practice in College English Teaching in China. The general education of College English in China is still in its infancy, and there are still many problems in the teaching concept and teaching mode. As long as colleges try their best to actively explored and innovate under the premise of combining the actual teaching of China, it is sure to promote the higher development platform for the general education of College English in China.

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