

Original Paper

A Study of College English Curriculum under the Guidance of the Core Concepts of Professional Certification —A Case Study of Baoding University

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Abstract

With the continuous proceeding of professional certification in colleges and universities, college English, as a compulsory course for almost all majors, is an indispensable part of the process. This paper discusses how college English should take advantage of professional certification and build a diversified curriculum system under the guidance of the three core concepts of professional certification: “student-centered”, “outcome-oriented” and “continuous improvement”, and actively carries out reforms from the aspects of curriculum objective setting, teaching objects classification, classroom teaching activity reform, quality control system building etc. It is expected to play a positive and supporting role in the professional certification of colleges and universities, and help each major to meet the standards in the normal major certification and engineering major certification.

Keywords

Core concepts of professional certification, College English teaching, talent training program

1. Research Background

In recent years, the Ministry of Education has taken a number of measures to carry out professional certification work in many fields, and actively promote the coordinated and orderly development of different professional certifications. The core concepts of “student-centered, output-oriented,

continuous improvement” in professional certification will also be implemented in all aspects of major construction and talent training. College English, as a compulsory course for general studies, plays an important role in college education. How to build a diversified curriculum system guided by professional certification is an urgent problem in the current college English curriculum reform.

In the face of the complex development and reform situation of colleges and universities, college English curriculum must be constructed in accordance with the student-centered, output-oriented and continuous improvement requirements proposed in the core concept of professional certification. College English should establish a diversified, multi-level and targeted curriculum system that adapts to the needs of different majors from the aspects of curriculum setting, teaching content, teaching syllabus, teaching methods and assessment methods in order to provide strong support for professional certification. As a compulsory general course, college English is closely related to the major construction, talent training program design and graduation requirements of each major. Therefore, college English courses need to meet the needs of students of all majors, adapt to the credit settings of talent training programs, and meet graduation requirements. Only in this way can the professional certification of all directions be successful. As well as improving the quality of teaching, making contributions to provide the necessary supporting data and materials for professional certification.

College English also shoulders the function of ideological and political education. It is pointed out in the report of the 20th Congress that it is hoped that the majority of young people will grow into socialist builders and successors with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, and labor, and take on the new era of the great task of national rejuvenation. Therefore, how to teach the basic knowledge and skills of English while cultivating students' dedication to work attitude and spreading Chinese culture and telling Chinese stories is also the focus of college English teaching and construction, which has great significance for cultivating high-quality professionals. College English courses need to form a complete curriculum system that adapts to various levels and needs. Only in this way can college English courses be endowed with the vitality of continuous improvement. Only in this way can college English teachers carry out targeted teaching practices under the support of the curriculum system, cultivate talents for different majors and individuals, and help professional certification.

In the process of literature collection and reading, the research team found that there were only more than 20 relevant papers on the paper retrieval platform using professional certification and college English as keywords, and most of these studies discussed curriculum construction from the perspective of a specific certification field or a specific industry talent training. However, there are relatively few practical studies on the overall structure of college English curriculum system. This research will take Baoding University as an example to explore how to construct a systematic and complete college English diversified curriculum system guided by the core concept of professional certification in

colleges and universities.

2. Current Situation of College English Curriculum Setting

College English course is a compulsory course for non-English majors at the university level stipulated by the Ministry of Education. Covering 2 to 4 semesters in the first and second years of most schools, accounting for 8-12 credits. In recent years, under the guidance of the College English Teaching Steering Committee, college English course has been reformed in terms of curriculum objectives, teaching system, teaching content and teaching methods. Especially since the promulgation of the College English Teaching Guide in 2017, the reform of college English has been greatly strengthened, and after the promulgation of the 2022 edition of the College English Teaching Guide, major universities have also adjusted the college English curriculum, which is mainly reflected in the following aspects: first, the decline of hours and credits. Before 2017, Chinese colleges and universities generally offered college English courses for four semesters, 256 hours, a total of 16 credits. In recent years, with the requirements of the Ministry of Education on the proportion of credits for public and professional courses, almost all colleges and universities have reduced the number of college English hours and credits. In the 2022 College English Teaching Guide, the university is required to build a dynamic, open, scientific and reasonable college English curriculum system that reflects the university's characteristics according to the school type, level, student source, educational orientation, and talent training goals. Therefore, according to the different requirements of the talent training program, the university offers college English courses with different contents for students of different majors according to the three levels of foundation, development and improvement. Therefore, in order to highlight the school-running characteristics and meet the professional needs of students, many schools set up English for special purposes and intercultural communication courses in the third and fourth grade to improve the English teaching system. The 22nd version of the Guide requires college English teaching to pay attention to cultivating students' ability of independent learning and cooperative inquiry, which should be reflected in the assessment plan of course content arrangement. Fifth, with the extensive application of new media technology in college English teaching and the practical application of new teaching methods, college English classroom teaching has become more abundant and dynamic.

3. Problems in the Curriculum Setting of College English Teaching under the Background of Professional Certification

The previous section summarizes the achievements of college English teaching reform in recent years. However, with the gradual spread of professional certification, college English reform is not only the reform of teaching content and teaching methods, but also the construction of a comprehensive and

diversified curriculum system from curriculum setup to classroom teaching, guided by the core concept of professional certification. Before the reform, the research group conducted a survey on the current problems and difficulties faced by college English teaching. After visiting relevant university and 14 non-English colleges of Baoding University and fully understanding the English needs of students in each college, certification needs and language ability requirements in talent training programs, the research group found that college English is currently facing the following problems:

1) Professional certification requires college English teaching to be classified according to the teaching objects and teaching objectives

At present, various universities have basically set up various kinds of colleges, covering a variety of related majors. According to their own professional characteristics and graduation requirements, each major has different credit settings and course needs. College English needs to end the previous state of unified class hours, credits and textbooks, and change the unified curriculum Settings cannot meet the different graduation requirements and talent training needs of each major and college. In this process, under the leadership of the Academic Affairs Office, how to coordinate the course arrangement plan and meet the needs of students and majors as much as possible is a very complicated process.

2) Professional certification requires the reform of college English teaching mode

In current college English classroom teaching, some teachers still do not change the “teacher-centered” teaching mode. The design of classroom activities and the selection of teaching contents are all shifted by the will of teachers, and students are in a relatively passive learning position with low learning efficiency.

The core concept of professional certification requires that teaching should be “student-centered” and adhere to “output-oriented”, which requires teachers to set students as the main body of the class, and closely link the knowledge learned by students with their future employment needs in the course content design. POA, flipped classroom and other advanced teaching methods are used to put students in the center of classroom teaching. It is necessary to fully mobilize students’ learning enthusiasm through colorful classroom activities, enhance students’ awareness of independent learning, improve classroom teaching efficiency, inspire students’ in-depth exploration of learning, and reflect the advanced nature of the course. Deliver college English courses well with fewer hours but no less content.

3) Professional certification requires strengthening the ideological and political education function of college English

At present, the state vigorously promotes ideological and political education to enter textbooks, classrooms, and minds, and the graduation requirements for professional certification also require students to establish cross-cultural communication awareness, broaden international horizons, learn advanced international experience, and carry out international communication and cooperation. College

English, as a compulsory course for general studies, should not only teach language knowledge and improve students' listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, but also play the role of ideological and political education at a higher level. Through the updating and optimization of teaching content, the knowledge structure of college English is expanded, a platform is built for students to learn multi-culture and spread Chinese culture, and support is provided. The teaching content should get rid of the shackles of traditional thinking, ensure that the teaching content is adapted to the professional talent training plan according to the English needs of students, and the teaching goal of telling Chinese stories to the world is deeply implemented in the teaching process. Cultivate a young generation with an international perspective.

4) Update the assessment methods and contents of college English required for professional certification

The third point of the core concept of professional certification is "continuous improvement", so that all disciplines should establish an evaluation—feedback—continuous improvement teaching quality monitoring system. The latest edition of College English Teaching Guide has made new requirements on the evaluation methods and contents of college English, which should focus on students' English application ability rather than mechanical memorization of basic English knowledge. College English has always been faced with such practical problems as large class capacity and difficult process assessment involving many majors. The final assessment still occupies a relatively large proportion in the college English assessment system. How to better balance the proportion of formative assessment and final assessment? A major problem facing college English at present is the creative design of formative assessment methods, the comprehensive use of teacher evaluation and classroom evaluation methods such as peer evaluation, the design of evaluation standards with high reliability and validity, and the final establishment of an effective quality control system.

5) Professional certification requires that the course objectives of college English meet the needs of talents.

Whether it is normal certification or engineering certification, the purpose of professional certification is to strengthen the characteristics and standardization of the major. Professional certification has more professional characteristics and more specific requirements for the formulation of talent training programs. It requires that the courses offered and the contents taught should match the major characteristics to meet the needs of major students. It is one of the urgent problems to set up targeted courses, which can not only meet the needs of various majors to the greatest extent, but also be realized in the actual operation of course arrangement.

4. College English Curriculum Reform Measures

The setting of college English courses should take students' ability as the starting point, pay attention to

the needs of students, and cannot ignore the requirements of students' work and further study after graduation. Construction should be carried out according to the talent training objectives and graduation requirements of different majors, and it should not be a one-size-fits-all approach. College English curriculum construction should be based on the ability of students to divide the direction of students, to break the professional restrictions, students should be divided into different types of teaching, set up classroom teaching for students with similar ability and similar needs into the same type of teaching class, try to construct diversified curriculum system. The core concept of professional certification emphasizes the student-centered education concept and the output-oriented education system. The student-centered education just reflects the learner-oriented education emphasized in the analysis of students' needs. Through the investigation of learners' needs and according to their own situation, the courses tailored to students' ability level and needs. The output-oriented concept not only reflects the needs of students and careers, but also reflects the diversified current situation of college English, including the diversity of curriculum subjects, curriculum content and curriculum needs. Taking Baoding College as an example, the college has established five kinds of college English teaching system for different talents training needs and different students' abilities.

Table 1. College English Curriculum Classification

Type	Objectives	Description
Type A	Regular undergraduate student	This category is for Regular undergraduate students with good English ability and need for English grade examination or postgraduate study. After two semesters of basic English courses are offered in the first year to consolidate the foundation, English extension courses including academic English writing, academic English listening and speaking, cross-cultural appreciation and other content can be offered in the second year.
Type B	Regular undergraduate student	This category is for students who want to focus on basic English learning, and have no special requirements for language communication skills in the graduation requirements, and complete general studies in the freshman and sophomore semesters.
Type C	Regular undergraduate student	For some ordinary undergraduate students who have special requirements for college English credit setting, they can choose comprehensive or listening and speaking courses with emphasis on the basis of investigating the needs of students.

Type D	Art undergraduate students	Undergraduate art students with strong English ability can choose suitable courses according to the needs of students.
Type E	Regular undergraduate student and Art undergraduate students	Art students as the main body, other undergraduate major English foundation is poor or graduation requirements are not high students can choose less difficult teaching courses to study.

1) A diversified college English teaching goal system guided by the core concept of professional certification:

All kinds of college English courses set their own goals according to the core concepts of student-centered and output-oriented, combined with the content of textbooks, students' specific needs and graduation requirements. Among them: On the basis of learning the four basic English skills, Class A focuses on cultivating students' ability to use academic language for cross-cultural communication in their professional fields; Class B emphasizes on cultivating students' professional quality and communication ability; Class C focuses on the cultivation of written or oral expression ability and critical thinking ability according to professional requirements. Class D and Class E focus on improving basic language ability and appropriately add ideological and political education goals. According to the requirements of the concept of continuous improvement, the setting of college English teaching goals for each session will be appropriately adjusted on the basis of summarizing the experience of the previous session and fully considering the needs of students and professional certification standards.

2) A diversified college English teaching content system guided by the concept of professional certification:

According to the student-centered teaching concept, different types of college English courses will select appropriate teaching materials and sort out the teaching materials on the basis of the investigation of students' ability, so as to ensure that the teaching content is detailed, appropriate and prominent. According to the outcome-oriented teaching system and the blended teaching form, a rich online resource library is established. The physical classroom textbooks take a long time from compilation to official release. Therefore, the textbooks are classic in content, but the timeliness is not strong, and they cannot meet the individual needs of different majors. In this case, online resources can become an effective supplement to classroom teaching content with its timely and flexible characteristics. For different majors and different categories of students, to provide a variety of levels, various levels, full and comprehensive learning resources to meet the needs of talent training programs. According to the concept of continuous improvement, college English teaching content will keep pace with The Times, pay attention to increasing ideological and political education content in the classroom,

cultivate students' attitude of love and dedication, shape students' excellent will quality, and improve students' ability to tell Chinese stories and spread Chinese culture.

3) Diversified college English teaching system guided by the concept of professional certification:

At present, college English needs to balance the contradiction between the continuous reduction of credit hours and the complexity of teaching content brought about by the diversified demands of students. According to this situation, college English tries to adopt a mixed teaching mode of online and offline teaching. By increasing online learning time, it provides students with opportunities to choose learning content according to their own needs, and further cultivates students' self-learning ability. Under the guidance of the output-oriented concept, by providing a wealth of professional-related online expansion materials as a powerful supplement to offline courses, it highlights the diversified characteristics of college English to help professional construction. The timeliness and convenience of online content can be updated and modified at any time according to the actual situation, which reflects the progress of college English curriculum construction and continuous improvement.

4) A diversified College English evaluation system guided by the core concept of professional certification:

At present, the formative evaluation reform of N+1 is being carried out in college English and has achieved some results. College English learning cannot be accomplished overnight. As a required general courses for four semesters, college English courses pay more attention to students investing enough time and energy in a long learning process to gradually improve their basic listening, speaking, reading and writing skills as well as higher-level communication, thinking and cross-cultural communication skills. Therefore, the reliability and validity of the process evaluation are much higher than that of the summative one-time evaluation. Under the guidance of student-centered and output-oriented concepts, college English assessment content of various categories will pay more attention to practicability and process, provide students with better practice opportunities with the help of various learning platforms, guide students to pay attention to daily practice and accumulation, and practice language skills down to earth. On the existing basis, this topic will try to discuss the feasibility of further improving the proportion of formative assessment, such as adding oral test with the help of learning platform for class A and B students, abolishing the final listening test and replacing it with comprehensive evaluation of stage test in the learning process, etc. The reform of evaluation method is to better meet the needs of students and meet the certification standards of various majors. To realize the role of college English in supporting the training of professional talents.

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