

Teaching Reform and Practical Analysis of Academic English Reading and Writing Course with OBE Concepts

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Abstract: This study addresses the challenges present in the current teaching of academic English reading and writing courses by implementing the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) concept. The approach adopted is student-centered and focuses on achieving learning outcomes. By defining clear course objectives, designing content aligned with these objectives, and establishing a comprehensive evaluation system, the study aims to enhance students' ability to apply their language knowledge to real-world problems while mastering academic English reading and writing skills. Various teaching methods and approaches, including blended online and offline teaching and course clustering, are employed to facilitate this process. The findings indicate a significant improvement in students' independent learning abilities, as evidenced by the attainment of course objectives. Furthermore, this study offers innovative ideas and strategies for other institutions seeking to undertake teaching reforms in academic English courses.

Keywords: OBE; Academic English reading and writing; Teaching reform; Practical analysis

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1. Introduction

Outcome-Based Education (OBE) represents a contemporary educational framework that prioritizes learning outcomes, places students at the core of the instructional process, and is guided by specific learning objectives. The primary goal of OBE is to enhance students' abilities by ensuring that the entire teaching approach is student-centered, with the ultimate aim being the achievement of predefined learning outcomes. The core principle of OBE emphasizes that teaching should be designed for the benefit of students, focus on their needs, and culminate in the accomplishment of their educational objectives. Under the OBE framework, instructional practices must prioritize "learning outcomes," emphasizing the establishment of clear course objectives. Knowledge and skill transfer are achieved through the deliberate design of targeted, high-quality course content ^[1]. Research conducted on the teaching practices of academic English reading and writing courses within the OBE framework has demonstrated significant effectiveness, notably enhancing students' abilities to apply language knowledge in addressing practical problems.

2. Problems in Teaching Academic English Reading and Writing Course

(1) Unclear teaching objectives

Firstly, due to the widespread use of the Internet and communication tools, new types of texts are emerging in great numbers, such as microblogs, emails, WeChat, and resources on various websites. This means that the demand for reading and writing is no longer limited to paper-based texts, but to mastering diverse and complex chapter

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structures, technologies, and digital media, i.e. multi-level reading and writing skills. However, traditional reading and writing instruction has been limited to text study in textbooks, supplemented at best by graphic, visual, and other curricular introductions. This approach towards reading and writing limits students' capacity to integrate diverse digital information and hinders their ability to construct and articulate novel knowledge using English or other symbolic resources.

Secondly, traditional foreign language teaching tends to emphasize the two most important factors of "input" and "output". Input is "knowledge" and output is "action". Language teaching is a highly practical subject, which necessarily requires the unification of "knowledge" and "action". In university English listening, reading and writing classes, reading is a way to get information, and writing is a way to convey information and express thoughts. The traditional language input-oriented reading and writing teaching neglects the process of guiding students to transfer their knowledge to the practical application of their abilities, and the complex PPT and the teacher's output have extinguished the students' enthusiasm for language expression and use of language ^[2].

Thirdly, traditional foreign language teaching focuses on mechanical thinking, both teachers and students focus on learning specific language forms such as vocabulary, grammar and syntax, with repetition, memorization and imitation as the main focus, ignoring the comprehensive quality of students in terms of their creativity, independent learning ability and critical thinking ability, which can help to stimulate students' motivation and creativity in learning.

(2) Vague positioning of the course

The positioning of the course is to cultivate students' academic English reading and writing ability as the main purpose, however, in the actual teaching process, some teachers are not clear about the positioning of the course, and are unable to effectively integrate it with other professional courses, which leads to students' resistance during the learning process, thus affecting the teaching effect. In addition, in the traditional teaching mode, teachers focus their attention on the content of the textbooks and neglect the cultivation of students' abilities, which leads to the ineffective enhancement of students' academic English reading and writing abilities. In addition, some teachers only focus on explaining the reading skills of academic English in their teaching, but neglect the cultivation of students' thinking ability and language expression ability, which leads to students' fear of difficulty in the learning process.

(3) Students' weak foundation

From the orientation of the academic English reading and writing course, the course is mainly to help students improve their academic English reading ability and academic English writing ability, but in the actual teaching process, it is found that many students lack the necessary basic knowledge of English, and when they are doing English courses, they tend to start with simple words and sentences, but these basics are relatively simple for the students, and they need teachers to guide students to read ^[3]. In addition, in terms of students' learning objectives, due to the influence of the college entrance examination system and other factors, many students lack sufficient attention to the academic English reading and writing courses. Therefore, in the process of teaching, there are problems such as emphasizing skills but not quality, emphasizing form but not content, emphasizing language but not thinking, etc., which seriously affect the teaching effect of Academic English Reading and Writing course.

(4) Lack of teaching resources

Currently, there exists a noticeable shortage of teaching resources for academic English reading and writing courses within Chinese colleges and universities. Consequently, instructors face challenges incorporating diverse teaching materials in their classrooms and delivering targeted learning content during lectures. Additionally, students' limited learning abilities hinder their effective absorption of classroom instruction, ultimately impeding their desired learning outcomes. Furthermore, teachers are often unable to offer effective guidance to students, which hampers students' active participation in the course and significantly detracts from learning efficiency. In

addition, in the process of teaching, teachers are unable to carry out targeted teaching for the specific needs of students. Therefore, in order to improve the teaching quality of academic English reading and writing courses, it is essential to continuously improve the teaching level and professionalism of teachers and actively promote the creation of related teaching resources.

(5) Teaching mode is backward

At present, China's teaching mode is still teacher-oriented, in the traditional teaching mode, teachers usually teach according to their own ideas and plans, while students are too passive to accept knowledge, and lack subjective initiative. Teachers can't really understand the needs and specific conditions of students in the teaching process, and they can't teach according to students' needs^[4]. Due to the lack of personalized teaching, students may feel tedious in the learning process. In the traditional teaching mode, teachers usually adopt the teaching method of "filling the classroom", and students only passively accept the knowledge. In the long run, students are prone to boredom and lack of independent learning ability and innovation. Therefore, only by changing the traditional teaching mode and actively applying the new teaching mode can we improve the teaching effect of academic English reading and writing courses.

(6) Poor teaching effect

At present, many colleges and universities in China are not ideal for teaching academic English, and many students are "bored" with learning. Teachers in the academic English teaching, students in the classroom is difficult to really integrate into the classroom atmosphere, less interaction between teachers and students. The main reason for this is that teachers lack understanding of students, and they can't fully grasp the students' learning situation. Therefore, when teachers carry out academic English teaching, they must understand the learning situation and learning needs of students and adopt personalized teaching. At the same time, teachers should cultivate students' academic English ability. This cultivation should be student-oriented and focus on improving students' comprehensive ability. When carrying out academic English reading and writing courses, teachers need to choose appropriate teaching methods and approaches according to the needs and actual situations of students at different levels.

3. The Application of OBE Concept in Teaching Academic English Reading and Writing Course

This paper is based on some problems in the teaching of college English reading and writing courses at present, on the basis of which, a teaching model based on OBE is proposed. The core of OBE education is three aspects: what kind of learning effect should students achieve? How can you best help your students reach their goals? How can you know if your students are reaching their goals? Based on these three questions, this paper clarifies the three aspects of "expecting learning output", "using efficient teaching methods" and "building a scientific and sustainable assessment system". Teaching reform goals.

(1) Desired learning outcomes in academic english reading and writing

The idea of OBE is to focus on students' results, and all teaching activities should be centered on students' results to achieve the greatest effect. On this basis, this project intends to understand students' expectations of the course through questionnaire surveys, carry out teaching and research and seminars of the course team, summarize years of teaching experience, comprehensively consider the coordination between the course and other courses, and finally construct a curriculum based on Bloom's taxonomy of objectives from the three dimensions of "knowledge-competence-literacy". Three levels of "knowledge-competence-literacy" are designed accordingly. The first level is the knowledge level, which requires students to have a certain understanding of basic linguistic knowledge, and make full use of multiple forms of resources, such as words, images, sounds, actions, media tools, etc. to acquire,

transmit and receive information, and construct semantics through a multimodal approach, so as to acquire a variety of reading and writing skills^[5]. The second level is the competence level, which requires students to learn how to apply their acquired linguistic knowledge to their work and analyze and solve problems, thus enabling them to move from answering questions with fixed answers to open-ended questions. The qualitative level is the third level, which emphasizes high-level competence and the ability to express oneself in challenging work, especially in group work. Students develop higher-level competencies such as cooperation, critical thinking and creative thinking through reflection, questioning, research and decision-making.

(2) Course implementation of academic english reading and writing

On this basis, this paper reforms the classroom teaching method by combining online and offline. On this basis, the concept of "hybrid education" is proposed. Before the class, we adopt a more relaxed online teaching mode, so that the students can adjust their course progress according to their own habits. Teachers upload teaching resources such as micro-lessons and courseware to the Integrated Learning Platform to enable students to master their language knowledge, and also design corresponding online exercises and quizzes to reinforce what they have learned. In addition, the integrated learning platform provides a communication platform for students, where they can post comments, discuss with teachers, communicate with classmates, and share their language learning resources and experiences.

In the classroom, the teacher's job shifts from imparting knowledge to using it. Teachers create language-using situations centered on a certain topic in the classroom, design tasks based on language knowledge or language skills through language games, group discussions, mind maps, research papers, etc., and instruct students to improve their language-using skills while completing the tasks.

At the end of the course, students are given the opportunity to apply the language knowledge and skills they have learned on the Internet and in the classroom. Outside the classroom, students can be provided with realistic and concrete language learning activities such as video production, poster design, case studies, oral presentations, etc., through a project-based learning approach, so that students are free to choose and use the learning resources, thus enabling them to actively explore their knowledge and apply what they have learned to real-life problems.

The blended teaching mode has changed the traditional teacher-oriented teaching method to a guidance-oriented teaching method. This role change allows teachers to get rid of the tedious explanation of theoretical knowledge, so that teachers have more time to observe the learning process of students, have a clear understanding of their learning status, and can help them achieve the intended learning goals through guidance and feedback. The model adheres to the idea of "learning by doing", takes students as the main body of learning, trains them to be active constructors of knowledge, and guides them to acquire and apply knowledge in actual operation through online learning, discussion and exchange, group work and other methods. Changes in teaching methods have greatly improved students' self-learning and collaborative abilities.

(3) Establishment of a sustainable assessment system

A good assessment system can not only check the learning effect of students, but also make adjustments to one's teaching on the basis of assessment, strengthen the construction of teaching, and make teaching more effective, so as to achieve the purpose of teaching. OBE-based learning assessment is focused on the final learning outcome of students, and diversified assessment methods should be used in the evaluation of students. Based on the OBE teaching concept, the evaluation system of English reading and writing teaching in colleges and universities is constructed, focusing on the three levels of evaluation content (what to evaluate), evaluation method (how to evaluate), and evaluation subject (by whom to evaluate) to build a scientific evaluation system.

In terms of assessment content, the course breaks through the current situation of one-dimensional assessment of knowledge in the classroom, takes students' performance in daily learning as the main assessment index, and

combines it with online learning, attendance, classroom seminars, and extracurricular practice, as a means of evaluating the competence that students possess at each stage that matches the course objectives.

In terms of assessment methods, we will no longer use question papers and test papers as the only assessment criteria, nor will we use final grades as grading criteria. It is a course that integrates formative and summative assessment, emphasizing the learning process and daily achievements of students while taking into account individual differences. It is also the first course to have an open-ended assessment at the end of the semester to minimize the mental burden on students and allow them enough time to complete the quizzes to maximize the breadth and depth of the learning outcomes.

In terms of the subject of evaluation, this course is diversified in that it adopts three approaches: teacher assessment, student assessment, and teacher-student assessment, thus achieving a scientific and effective assessment of students' teaching.

In addition to the positive assessment mentioned earlier, this course also introduces a kind of reverse assessment. Through research on students' satisfaction with teaching and students' self-satisfaction, the evaluation system is appropriately improved on the basis of feedback to ensure that students can maximize the benefits of learning.

4. The Effect of Teaching Reform from the Concept of OBE

Although the Academic English Reading and Writing course is an important basic course, the lack of sufficient learning motivation has led to many students' little interest in it and unsatisfactory teaching quality. The introduction and implementation of the OBE concept has achieved better results.

First of all, the course has been recognized by students. In the classroom, both the desired aims to be achieved and the teaching assessment guidelines were presented to the students so that they understood the importance of the course, thus increasing their confidence in learning. Satisfaction with the learning assessment process has increased significantly from the previous level to 95%.

Secondly, the cooperative spirit of students has been strengthened. Student-student mutual assessment in the assessment system not only strengthens group cooperation, but also promotes mutual reinforcement among classmates and ensures participation in group activities.

Fourth, it strengthens the cooperation with other disciplines. The university English listening, reading and writing class has introduced the OBE idea, which emphasizes the synthesis of knowledge rather than isolation. A number of students said that what they learned in the classroom and what they had learned could be applied to other courses.

IV. Reflections on Curriculum Teaching Reform from OBE Ideas

Through the in-depth study of the OBE idea, we can see that to make full use of the OBE idea is like being familiar with various elements of a new product, fully recognizing its meaning and following its rules. The following are some principles that this paper summarizes some OBE ideas should follow in practice.

The first point is to increase expectations. Krashen, an American applied linguist, put forward the concept of "i+1", where i stands for the learner's current level and 1 stands for a slightly higher language knowledge than the current language level. OBE-based educational goals should not be too low, but should be set at a "leap to" level. Therefore, in the classroom, teachers should constantly raise their expectations of students and design challenging lessons to bring students' potential into full play, so that they can make continuous progress and achieve greater success.

Second, expanding opportunities: OBE education emphasizes expanding opportunities, that is, taking into account the individual differences of each student, allowing each student to learn, and ensuring that each student is well-equipped to achieve the learning outcomes they want. While expanding the opportunities, it also requires an

open and flexible teaching methodology, which requires teachers to use their own learning outcomes as a guide, and based on the results of the assessment, to constantly modify, adjust and improve the teaching content and teaching methodology, so that they can flexibly meet the individual needs of students.

The third is collaborative teaching. the idea of OBE is to let students create a harmonious and win-win cooperative learning relationship, motivate them to achieve the final learning outcome through teamwork and cooperative learning, and turn the competition among classmates into their own competition, so that those with the strongest learning ability can be promoted and those with poor learning ability can be promoted.

The fourth is personal experience. According to the American educator Prof. Dale's "tower of experience", students' learning experiences can be divided into concrete and abstract. It is in line with the law of human cognition that education and teaching should start from concrete experience and then gradually rise from abstraction. Therefore, learning outcomes should be linked to the actual learning experiences of students, and the outcomes should be integrated with the important contents and skills in life, and attention should be paid to its practicability, otherwise, it will become information that can be easily forgotten, or only part of the knowledge.

5. Conclusion

OBE represents a significant direction in contemporary educational reform. This paper examines the implementation of OBE principles and methodologies in college English instruction. Practical evidence indicates that the integration of OBE concepts has improved the alignment of course objectives, the effectiveness of teaching methods, and the diversity and objectivity of course assessment. Nonetheless, further research and practice are needed to explore the comprehensive application of OBE principles in college English reading and writing courses moving forward.

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