# Research on the Construction and Application of College English Teaching Paths under the OBE Model

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***Abstract:*** *Outcome-Based Education (OBE), as an educational model centered on student learning outcomes, offers a viable framework to solve prevalent problems in current college English teaching—such as ambiguous objectives, disconnected content, and monolithic assessment methods. Based on the core connotation and educational philosophy of OBE, and in response to the contemporary demands and practical challenges in college English teaching, this study constructs a targeted and actionable college English teaching pathway from four dimensions: learning objective reframing, course content optimization, teaching method innovation, and assessment system refinement, and elaborates on the implementation strategies for the pathway through teaching practice cases, aiming to enhance the quality of college English teaching and cultivate interdisciplinary English professionals that meet the needs of social development.*

***Keywords:*** *Outcome-Based Education (OBE); College English; Teaching Pathway; Pedagogical Application; Talent Cultivation*

## 1.Introduction

Driven by the internationalization of higher education and the cultivation of application-oriented talents, as a foundational course integrating instrumental and humanistic value, teaching quality of college English directly affects students' comprehensive quality and development potential. However, in current college English teaching, there are still some problems, such as the disconnection between learning objectives and the needs of students and society, lack of practicality and relevance in course content, low student engagement due to teacher-centered teaching methods, and monolithic assessment methods that struggle to comprehensively reflect teaching efficacy, which constrain the full realization of college English educational value. OBE, as the mainstream educational model in international higher education sector in recent years, starts from students' desired learning outcomes, implements backward design in the teaching process and assessment methods, and emphasizes the actual attainment of students' capability goals [1]. It can effectively overcome the drawbacks of traditional teaching, enhance the quality and efficiency of college English teaching, and lay the solid foundation for students' professional development and lifelong learning to integrate OBE into college English teaching, and systematically constructing teaching pathways by defining the English proficiency and literacy that students should possess.

## 2.The Compatibility of the OBE Framework and College English Teaching

The instrumental value of college English courses determines that their teaching must be oriented towards students' practical English proficiency, and the core demands of OBE are highly consistent with this attribute. From the perspective of talent cultivation needs, the current societal requirements for college students' English proficiency have shifted from simple reading and writing skills to comprehensive English proficiency of "listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation", especially cross-cultural communication skills and professional English proficiency. OBE can make teaching more targeted by defining these specific outcome goals [2]. From the perspective of students' learning needs, the English foundation of college students varies greatly, and their learning goals show diversified characteristics. Some students hope to improve their academic English aptitude to support their professional learning,

while others focus on workplace English proficiency to enhance their employment competitiveness. Personalized cultivation philosophy emphasized by OBE can meet the learning needs of different students. From the perspective of teaching reform needs, the core direction of college English teaching reform is to enhance the practicality and effectiveness of teaching. The backward design ideas provided by OBE can help universities burst the restraints of the traditional curriculum system, build a new teaching system centered on competency cultivation, and achieve a systematic improvement in teaching quality.

## 3.The Basis for Constructing a College English Teaching Pathway under the Framework of OBE

### 3.1 *China Education Policy Orientation*

*The College English Teaching Guide* clearly states that college English teaching should "center on students' development, cultivate their English proficiency, enhance their cross-cultural communication awareness and skills, and develop their autonomous learning ability and improve their comprehensive cultural literacy" at the same time. This requirement is highly consistent with OBE philosophy. In addition, in the relevant documents of China Ministry of Education on deepening the reform of higher education, it has been repeatedly emphasized that a talent cultivation system oriented towards competencies should be established, with emphasis on the cultivation of students' practical and innovation ability [3]. These policies point out a clear direction for the implementation of OBE framework in college English teaching, and also offer policy basis for the construction of teaching pathways.

### 3.2 *Societal and Industry Demand*

With the in-depth development of economic globalization, all kinds of enterprises put forward increasingly higher requirements for the English proficiency of talents. They not only require employees to be proficient in using English for daily communication, but also need them to have the ability to apply English in professional fields, such as business negotiations, academic exchanges, and technical documentation translation. Research shows that enterprises pay more attention to the practical application effect of graduates' English proficiency rather than merely their test scores in the recruitment process. Therefore, constructing college English teaching pathways must start from societal and industry demand, and transform requirements of enterprises for the English proficiency of talents into specific learning outcome goals to ensure that students can quickly adapt to the job requirements after graduation.

### 3.3 *Students' Cognitive and Developmental Needs*

College students are in a mature stage of cognitive development, and have certain autonomous learning ability and critical thinking. Their learning needs have shifted from passive acceptance of knowledge to active acquirement of competencies. There are significant differences in the needs for English learning of students from different programs and with different foundation. Students majoring in science and engineering need to enhance their professional English reading and writing skills, while students majoring in liberal arts should pay more attention to improving their cross-cultural communication skills and English expression ability. Therefore, when constructing teaching pathways, it is necessary to fully consider students' cognitive characteristics and personalized developmental needs, and design stratified and classified teaching content and activities to arouse students' initiative and enthusiasm in learning.

## 4.Constructing a College English Teaching Pathway under the Framework of OBE

### 4.1 *Reframing Outcome-Centered Learning Objectives*

Reframing learning objectives is the cornerstone for the implementation of the OBE. It needs to integrate national requirements, societal demand and students' developmental needs to define clearly the specific learning outcomes that students should achieve. The learning objectives of college English should be divided into three levels. The first is the basic competency objectives, which includes mastering certain vocabulary and grammar knowledge, possessing basic English listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, and being able to conduct simple daily

communication and information acquisition. The second is the applied English competency objectives, requiring students to be proficient in using English for information retrieval, literature reading, and report writing relevant to students' academic disciplines, and possess cross-cultural communication skills to handle English communication scenarios in workplaces. The third is the comprehensive quality development objectives, which is to cultivate students' autonomous ability and innovative thinking in English learning, and enhance their cultural confidence and international perspective [4]. When setting objectives, it is necessary to ensure that they are measurable and achievable, and avoid vague and general expression. For instance, "improving listening skills" should be specified as "being able to understand English news reports and lectures relevant to students' academic disciplines and accurately obtain core information".

### 4.2 *Optimizing Outcome Objective-Aligned Course Content System*

Course content serves as the vehicle for achieving learning objectives and needs to be optimized and integrated around the preset learning outcomes, breaking away from the traditional textbook chapter-based content organization. The first is to construct modular course content, dividing it into foundational module, application module and extension module. The foundational module focuses on consolidating the fundamental knowledge and skills of English, including vocabulary, grammar, fundamentals of English listening and speaking, etc. The application module sets content in Business English, Academic English, scientific English, and others in line with the demands of different programs.  For instance, it can offer courses like Foreign Business English Correspondence and Cross-border E-commerce English for students majoring in international trade, and professional literature reading and scientific English report writing for students majoring in science and engineering. The extension module focuses on the cultivation of cross-cultural communication skills, including Western cultural custom, cross-cultural communication techniques, and English expression of Chinese culture, etc. The second is to integrate with life-like and occupational teaching materials, and select cases, dialogues, articles and other materials that are close to students' life and future workplaces, such as job interview scenarios, business negotiation cases, and English work mails, to enhance the practicality and fun of the content [5]. The third is to lay emphasis on the hierarchy of the content, and design different levels of learning content for students with different foundation. For instance, in reading teaching, short passages with annotations can be provided for students with weak foundation, while original English literature can be offered for those with better foundation, meeting the personalized learning needs of students.

### 4.3 *Generating a Pedagogical Framework that Promotes Outcome Attainment*

The traditional teacher-centered teaching method struggle to arouse students' enthusiasm in engagement, which is not conducive to cultivating the applied English competency of students. It is necessary to innovate teaching methods, and build a student-centered teaching model in combination with OBE philosophy. The first is to adopt the project-based learning, and design projects around specific learning tasks to enable students to fulfil the project tasks in groups. For instance, teachers can assign a project titled "Planning a Cross-border Cultural Exchange Event", and ask students to fulfil tasks, such as writing the event planning, making English promotional materials, and communicating with others in English at the event site through group collaboration, enhancing their applied English competency and teamwork skills during the process of fulfilling the project. The second is to use the contextual teaching method to create authentic English-speaking scenarios, such as airport pick-up, business negotiations, academic conferences. Through role-playing, simulation dialogues and other methods, students can use English to solve practical problems in the authentic contexts, enhancing their sense of immersion and practice in learning. The third is to employ the flipped classroom to place the knowledge-transference stage before class, enabling students to independently study the foundational knowledge through micro-lesson videos, online learning resources, etc. The class time is mainly used for answering questions, group discussions, practice and exercises, and other activities, giving full play to students' agency. Furthermore, information technology can be utilized to build online learning platforms, providing abundant learning resources and interactive tools, such as online tests, English corners, and

virtual simulation dialogues, to expand the teaching space and enhance teaching efficacy.

### 4.4 *Refining the Multidimensional and Tridimensional Assessment System*

The core of OBE assessment lies in the comprehensive assessment of students' learning outcomes. It is necessary to break away from the traditional monolithic assessment model centered on final exams and build a multi-dimensional and three-dimensional assessment system. Firstly, the assessment entities should be diversified. Besides teacher assessment, student self-assessment and peer assessment should be introduced in the assessment system, allowing students to participate in the assessment process. Through self-reflection and peer assessment, they can enhance their initiative in learning and self-management ability. At the same time, enterprise experts and industry professionals can be invited to engage in assessment, especially in the assessment of students' professional English proficiency and workplace English proficiency, to ensure the objectivity and practicality of the assessment results. Secondly, the assessment content should be comprehensive, requiring not only to assess students' mastery of basic English knowledge, but also to pay more attention to evaluating their applied English competency, cross-cultural communication skills, self-study ability, etc. For instance, students' practical English proficiency can be assessed through project reports, situational simulation, oral defenses and other methods; students' autonomous learning ability can be evaluated through learning logs, self-study plans, etc. Thirdly, process-oriented assessment should be adopted, incorporating regular performance into the assessment system, including classroom engagement, the quality of homework completion, group project performance, online learning situation, etc. The proportion of process-oriented assessment score should account for no less than 50% of the total score. Through continuous progress monitoring and assessment, students' learning trajectories can be captured in real time, providing basis for teaching improvement. Fourthly, assessment results should be fed back without delay. A regular assessment feedback mechanism should be established. For the problems identified during assessment, teachers should communicate with students promptly and offer improvement suggestions, and optimize teaching content and methods based on the assessment results to form a closed-loop system of "assessment → feedback → improvement".

## 5.Practice of the College English Teaching Pathway Under the Framework of OBE

### 5.1 *Practice Subjects and Preparation*

Two classes in the second year of university were selected as the practice objects, among which one class was the experimental class, and the OBE teaching pathway was adopted for it. The other class is the control class and adopts the traditional teaching model. Before the practice, through questionnaire surveys and English proficiency tests, the English foundation, learning needs and learning habits of the students in the two classes were understood to ensure that there were no significant differences between the students in the two classes in terms of English proficiency learning interest, and other aspects. Based on the preset learning outcome objectives, a detailed teaching program was made for the experimental class, including modular course content, project-based learning activity arrangement, diversified assessment schemes, etc., and an online learning platform was built to upload relevant learning resources.

### 5.2 *Practice Process*

The practice period was one semester, and the specific process was divided into three stages. The first stage was the consolidation stage of basic competency, mainly adopting flipped classroom. Students learned basic knowledge, such as vocabulary and grammar, through the online platform before class. In class, they consolidated their learning outcomes through group discussions, fundamental training and other methods. Teachers focused on answering questions and providing guidance. The second stage was the applied English competency improvement stage. It adopted a combination of project-based learning and contextual teaching. The students in the experimental class were divided into several groups. Each group centered on the project of "Cross-border E-commerce Product Promotion" to learn. Students needed to fulfil tasks such as writing English introduction to products, making English promotion videos, and communicating with customers on a simulation cross-border e-commerce platform. Teachers

provided guidance on ideas and language support during the process. At the same time, authentic scenarios, such as business negotiations and job interview, were created, enabling students to engage in role-playing to enhance their ability to apply workplace English. The third stage was the comprehensive quality development stage. Through activities, such as cross-cultural theme seminars and English speech contests on Chinese culture, students could enhance their cross-cultural communication skills and cultural expression ability in practice. Throughout the whole practice process, multi-assessment methods were adopted to regularly assess and provide feedback on students' learning outcomes, and then teaching strategies were adjusted in time.

### 5.3 *Practice Efficacy*

After the practice, the practice efficacy was assessed through English proficiency tests, questionnaires, interviews and other methods. According to the test results, the comprehensive performance of the students in the experimental class have significantly improved compared to those in the control class, especially in listening and speaking, with the average score being more than 15% higher than that of the control class. In the professional English proficiency tests, students in the experimental class were able to fulfil the tasks of reading professional literature and writing reports more proficiently. According to the results of the questionnaire survey, over 80% of the students in the experimental class believed that the teaching content is highly practical and can meet their own learning needs. Their learning interest and engagement have significantly improved compared to before. Most students indicated that through project-based learning and situational simulation, their applied English competency and teamwork skills have been effectively enhanced. According to the interview results, teachers generally believed that the OBE teaching pathway is able to grasp the learning objectives more clearly, and has stronger teaching pertinence, and students' learning initiative and classroom engagement are significantly better than those under the traditional teaching model.

## 6.Conclusion

OBE centered on students' learning outcomes provides scientific educational philosophy and methods for the reform of college English teaching. To construct the college English teaching pathway under the OBE framework, it is necessary to start from four dimensions: reframing the learning objectives, optimizing the course content system, generating a pedagogical framework, and refining the assessment system, and be guided by national policies and based on societal demand and students' developmental needs to ensure that teaching activities always revolve around the cultivation of students' competencies. Teaching practice has shown that this teaching pathway can effectively enhance students' comprehensive English proficiency and autonomous learning ability, arouse their interest in learning, improve their engagement, and enhance the quality of college English teaching. During the implementation of the teaching pathway, it is necessary to strengthen the construction of the faculty team, refine the safeguard system of teaching resources, and establish a continuous improvement mechanism to provide support for the effective implementation of the teaching pathway.

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