

# *Research on the Construction of “Trinity” Teaching Mode of Eap Reading for Non-English Major Postgraduates Based on OBE --A Case Study of Postgraduate English Course*

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**Abstract:** Based on OBE and the English learning objectives and needs of non-English postgraduates, Postgraduate English Course, taking EAP(English for Academic Purpose) as reading materials and integrating traditional classroom teaching methods and modern educational information technology, builds a “Trinity” EAP reading teaching mode which aims to meet the psychological and language development needs of non-English postgraduates and finally improve students’ reading ability.

## **1. Introduction**

The postgraduate learning stage is the initial stage for students to start independent academic research. At this stage, students need learn to find and solve unsolved problems in some professional fields, and become elementary academic producers. In order to carry out academic research from a high starting point and understand the current situation of relevant research in a field at home and abroad, EAP reading ability is very important for non-English postgraduates. Only by carrying out a large number of EAP reading related to professional fields, non-English postgraduates can effectively improve their comprehensive academic ability, optimize their knowledge structure, and change their way of thinking [1], so as to carry out academic research in line with international standards and China's reality.

The concept of EAP (English for Academic Purpose) was first used in the minutes “Language Problems of Oversea Students in British Higher Education” of the University of Birmingham [2]. After this minutes was published with the title of EAP, the concept of EAP began to be widely used. EAP combines learners' professional knowledge and English language knowledge. EAP teaching should focus on the English language knowledge and skills required by learners' majors. EAP reading has been a major obstacle for many non-English postgraduate students to read academic literature because of its more rigorous expression and complicated logic. Improving the EAP reading ability of non-English postgraduate students is one of the urgent tasks faced by postgraduate English teaching in China.

In view of the above mentioned situation, Postgraduate English Course, as an important course to improve postgraduate students' English ability, has been widely criticized for a long time, for it is in the contradiction between high importance and low satisfaction [3]. In order to achieve high-level

and useful English teaching for non-English postgraduate students and help them effectively improve their academic ability, Postgraduate English Course should focus on the cultivation of students' EAP reading ability.

## 2. Current Situation and Demand Analysis of Postgraduate English Course

Jingdezhen Ceramic University (JCU) is the only multidisciplinary university named for ceramics in China. It is also an important base for ceramic talent training, ceramic scientific and technological innovation, and ceramic culture and art exchange across the country and even the world. The majority of postgraduate students in JCU are of Art majors and science and engineering majors. According to the English curriculum for postgraduate students in JCU, Postgraduate English Course is offered for one semester, lasting for 15 weeks. It is scheduled as 4 class hours per week, with a total of 60 class hours for the whole semester.

After teaching Postgraduate English Course for one semester, the research group conducted a questionnaire survey on “Satisfaction with Postgraduate English Course” with non-English postgraduate students of 2021. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed and 276 were returned valid. According to the survey results, more than half of the students said that the purpose of English learning at the postgraduate stage was enabling themselves to learn the theoretical knowledge of their majors better and improve their professional academic research level. Nearly half of the students were not satisfied with the current Postgraduate English Course. In the interview, some students mentioned that after becoming a postgraduate student, the mentor required them to read many English references, and even asked them to publish English papers, while the Postgraduate English Course still focused on general English and had little connection with professional knowledge”.

With regard to the question of “Can you read professional documents and papers in English”, more than 90% of the students said that they would encounter problems, more than half of the students admitted that reading professional documents and papers in English was difficult, and no students said it was easy. According to students, English references are with long sentences, complicated logical structures, many professional words, which are extremely difficult for them to understand. 85% of the students thought it was necessary to focus Postgraduate English Course on the teaching of EAP reading, and 62% of the students hoped to reform the current traditional teaching mode of Postgraduate English Course. The course should adopt the relevant EAP resource platform, establish an EAP online learning center, and analyze professional English references from vocabulary, sentence patterns, and structures, so as to help students really improve their EAP reading ability.

English Learning for non-English postgraduates is an advanced stage of English learning. If teachers adopt the same teaching content and mode as undergraduate English teaching, students are likely to lose interest and enthusiasm in English learning. The results of the questionnaire survey show that postgraduate students have a high demand for EAP. For postgraduate students, the purpose of English learning is not only to improve their language ability, but also to obtain the latest research information of their major; Compared with general English ability, students' EAP reading ability needs to be further improved. Moreover, the current traditional classroom teaching mode needs to be reformed and innovated. The current Postgraduate English Course is mainly aimed at general English learning, which is of some help to students, but it can not well meet the needs of EAP learning of non-English postgraduate students. Therefore, based on students' English learning needs, Postgraduate English Course should change its original teaching mode, keep pace with the development of the times, avoid the restrictions of traditional classroom teaching and achieve better teaching effect with the help of advanced network technology.

### 3. The Introduction of Obe Teaching Philosophy

OBE (Outcome Based Education) is a teaching concept oriented by students' learning results [4]. It believes that teaching design and teaching implementation should take students' final learning results as the teaching goal. According to the OBE teaching philosophy, teachers should clearly clarify the abilities students need to have in this professional field before teaching design, and then design teaching objectives, curriculum organization, curriculum teaching and curriculum evaluation system according to these specific abilities. The key to the success of OBE teaching philosophy lies in the correct construction of a successful blueprint and the creation of successful situations and opportunities [5].

OBE teaching philosophy was first proposed by Spady, an American educator, in 1981 and has become the mainstream concept of the current education reform in the world. However, Shen Tian'en pointed out in *On the Teaching Philosophy of Outcome Based Education* that although traditional OBE is widely used in the United States, Canada and other countries, the achievements are only internal and narrow learning achievements. Firstly, the course content and learning achievements are classified with traditional disciplines, which are out of touch with real life; secondly, students' best performance is limited to individual courses or a small part of teaching activities; thirdly, students' final achievements is only measured with academic ability, but not all-round development; fourthly, OBE teaching is only in the way of classroom teaching, which is separated from real life and real environmental context.

According to the research results, China, as a large educational nation rather than a powerful educational nation, should overcome the disadvantages of traditional OBE on the basis of experiments in other countries, and seek OBE teaching philosophy that are more suitable for the current situation of China's education to realize the reconstruction of China's educational philosophy, teaching ideas and teaching design. Since China joined the Washington Agreement in 2013 and began to widely promote the concept of OBE teaching, China has made many research achievements on OBE teaching.

### 4. “Trinity” Teaching Design of Eap Reading for Non-English Postgraduates

In order to realize the effectiveness of EAP reading teaching mode for non-English postgraduate students, we plan to adopt “Trinity” Teaching Method in Postgraduate English Course, on the basis of OBE. “Trinity” teaching method organically combines the three - classroom teaching, auxiliary platform (online guidance center) and reading platform (academic journal paper database). The three are closely and effectively integrated into “one”, forming a joint force of in-class and out-of-class, online and offline teaching, so as to meet the needs of non-English postgraduate students, enhance the internal motivation of students' English acquisition, and then improve the EAP reading level of non-English postgraduate students.

#### 4.1 Course Introduction

In the first two weeks of the course, teachers firstly introduce students to the basic structure of English academic literature and make content analysis of model texts in the way of classroom teaching, and then offer students the main reading platforms with academic English reading materials.

The literature structure mainly includes title, author's name, author's affiliations, abstract, introduction, literature review, research methods, findings, conclusion, acknowledgments and references, which are similar to the structure of undergraduate thesis. It is easy for students to understand, which can effectively enhance students' EAP learning enthusiasm.

Teachers mainly recommend free databases in the electronic resources of the school library for students to meet the needs of postgraduates from different majors. Elsevier foreign language journal database SD (ScienceDirect) covers 24 disciplines, mainly discussing the research in the field of science and technology. At present, there are more than 2000 high-quality academic journals; SpringerLink foreign language database includes periodicals, books, series, reference books, protocol and other publications; The Art Museum Image Gallery provides rich electronic art resources for cultural research, regional research, archaeology, history, religion, social science, literature, drama research, drama costume, etc.. ACM digital library database currently contains about 590,000 full-text articles including journals, conference proceedings, bulletins, etc., and is constantly updated with a frequency of about 20,000 articles per year, aiming to provide professionals and non professionals with a window to understand resources in the field of computer and information technology; The IEEE all society periodicals package provides access to more than 190 core technical journals published by IEEE technical associations, covering electrical and electronics, computers, communications, automation, energy and power, space technology and bioengineering.

#### **4.2 Platform Learning Tasks**

After the classroom demonstration and explanation, students are required to set up EAP learning groups according to their research direction, with about 5 members in each group and about 10 groups in each class. Each EAP group looks for English academic literature in relevant fields on the reading platform recommended by teachers, and selects a paper every two weeks for reading. Each group should send the chosen English academic papers to the auxiliary learning platform (WeChat group), regularly update the proper nouns and academic concepts related to the completed reading part, as well as the difficulties encountered when reading. Teachers will help students clarify the content and functions of the academic paper on the online auxiliary learning platform and answer questions.

Through the online auxiliary platform (WeChat group), teachers can timely know students' reading process and learning effect, and provide reading guidance, so as to supervise and urge students' autonomous EAP reading.

#### **4.3 Classroom Presentation and Comments**

Every week, each group reports their reading process and understanding of the selected papers in the classroom with PPT. The reporting time for each group is about 10 minutes. The reporter can introduce and evaluate the research theme, research background, research content, research methods, research results, innovation and other aspects of the paper. After the group's report, other groups will make peer comments and raise questions related to the report, which will be answered by the members of the reporting group.

On the basis of each group's report and peer review, the teacher will point out the advantages of the report and the shortcomings that need to be improved. After class, groups are required to make a written report, and finally send the written report and the original text of the paper to the teacher for review.

### **5. Summary**

OBE is mainly carried out around “defining the expected learning output - realizing the expected learning output - evaluating the learning output”. It has the advantages of clear objectives, flexible process and standard comparability. It emphasizes “learning” as the teaching center, pays attention

to the improvement of students' ability, and takes ability as the effect orientation, which provides a guarantee for the quality of course teaching. The “Trinity” teaching mode can effectively realize the organic combination of teaching input and output, so that it can closely and effectively integrate three ways into “one”, realize the correlation, promotion and balance between the three, and thus form a joint force of teaching in and out of class, online and offline.

Repeated EAP reading training with this “Trinity” teaching mode can help postgraduate students form an effective thinking mode, that is, to raise questions, analyze problems and solve problems. On the road of future academic research, this thinking mode can help postgraduate students quickly analyze the structure of papers, obtain important information and understand the content of English references, which helps to achieve better academic research results. Therefore, “Trinity” teaching mode of EAP reading based on OBE is conducive to improving the EAP learning interest and motivation of non-English postgraduate students, promoting the accumulation of professional knowledge, and finally improving the innovation ability of non-English postgraduate students.

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