

# *The Multiple Goals of College English: Intercultural Communication, Moral Education Penetration and Elite Consciousness*

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**Abstract:** On the occasion of the new round of "College English" teaching reform, based on the reflection on the single teaching goal of English language skills, this paper believes that "College English" should set multiple goals: "cross-cultural communication" as the language teaching goal, "humanistic spirit" as the quality education goal, and "elite consciousness" as the belief cultivation goal. In the education of "humanistic spirit", "College English" should not only cover the content of humanistic education, but also carry out the consciousness of moral education infiltration. In the perspective of multiple objectives, "College English" can really become "an integral part of higher education". It can not only cultivate learners' intercultural communication ability, but also improve their humanistic spirit and become real talents with a sense of national responsibility.

## **1. Introduction**

A new round of college English teaching reform is in full swing. Reducing course hours and course credits seems to have become a mandatory strategy for this reform[2]. The reason for this round of college English teaching reform almost invariably points to the teaching effect of college English, continuing the enterprise operation gimmick of "Crazy English" that year: college English is a failure, with much input, little output, dumb English problems, etc. The "Crazy English" of that year "shocked" the English teaching in Chinese colleges and universities[6-7]. All kinds of accusations against college English teaching led to the so-called "application oriented" turn of college English. However, to this day, most of the "experts" who are not engaged in English teaching still take "spoken English" as their size. We will not discuss the rationality of the evaluation of "teaching effectiveness" and the scientific measurement of "spoken English". However, in the exploration of college English teaching reform, few people think about a fundamental question: Is "College English Teaching" or "College English Education[5]"? Different thoughts on this issue directly affect our understanding of the "College English" curriculum, determine the direction of college English teaching reform, and influence the goal setting of college

English. On the occasion of the new round of college English teaching reform, this paper attempts to reflect on this issue and ask Fang for advice.

## **2. The Language Teaching Goal of College English: Cross-Cultural Communication**

The word "education" originates from the Latin word education, which means "leading out". It refers to the initiation of something hidden in the body and mind through certain means[1]. "Education" refers to the cultivation of education, teaching people with existing experience and knowledge, explaining various phenomena, problems or behaviors for them, not only imparting specific knowledge, information, skills, etc., but also a kind of thinking impartation, helping the educated to obtain rational self and thinking cognition. Therefore, college English, which focuses on language skills, obviously fails to achieve this educational goal[14-15].

"Intercultural communication" involves both cross-cultural awareness and intercultural communication[3]. Cross-cultural awareness is the foundation of cross - cultural communication. Like two sides of a piece of white paper, language and culture cannot be separated[13].The use of English in international communication is not only a transformation between different languages, but also a leap between different cultures. Therefore, in English teaching practice, if you leave the specific cultural context, the so-called "language points" are just a pile of broken bricks and tiles. Not for the purpose of cross-cultural communication, the so-called English "language point" learning is more a shot in the dark. Only with intercultural communication as the teaching goal, can "language point" play its communicative function[9]. Therefore, "intercultural communication" should be the goal of college English teaching. Only based on this kind of cognition, can college English textbooks, teaching strategies and evaluation methods really improve its "teaching effectiveness". When the boring language learning is integrated into the rich and colorful cross-cultural cognition, and when the monotonous skill training is transformed into the specific and effective cross-cultural communication training, we can correctly read and understand the meaning of discourse in cross-cultural communication, and we can correctly express our meaning in international communication[11-12].

At present, college English still attaches one-sided importance to English language skills, neglects the cultivation of cross-cultural communication awareness and ability, and the teaching input of western culture and western historical context is obviously insufficient in many aspects, such as the compilation of English textbooks, the arrangement of course contents, and the organization of teaching and training[8-9]. If cross-cultural communication is the teaching goal of college English, college English should not only pay attention to the cognition and cultivation of communication input, but also pay attention to the awareness of communication output. The key lies in the cross-cultural awareness in the communication process, including respect for Western culture and self-trust in Chinese culture. Taking "intercultural communication" as the teaching goal can not only stimulate learners' learning motivation, but also make various "language points" no longer exist as fragments, and return to the essence of discourse communication, effectively improving the "teaching effectiveness" of college English[7].

## **3. The goal of Quality Education in College English: Humanistic Spirit**

At present, college English courses in many colleges and universities still focus on the training of language skills, supplemented by western cultural cognition, and ignore the cultivation of cross-cultural communication ability[11]. This phenomenon obviously deviates from the setting of the educational goal of college English: "College English is not only a basic language course, but also a quality education course to broaden knowledge and understand the world culture, which is both instrumental and humanistic". Obviously, college English curriculum requires not only

mastering English language skills, but also improving students' humanistic spirit. On the occasion of the new round of college English teaching reform, it is urgent for us to reflect on the educational objectives of college English.

### 3.1 Humanities Education of College English

To reflect on the goal of college English education, we must trace back to the idea of college. Karl Jaspers believes that "the idea of the university obtains the impetus for its educational activities from the basic will of human beings to seek knowledge. This idea not only provides educated people with a persistent belief in their goals, but also teaches them a very humble mind". In other words, the goal of the university mainly focuses on two aspects: specialized knowledge and skills and noble humanistic spirit. However, observing the numerous explorations of college English teaching reform in recent years, no matter its guiding ideology, teaching philosophy, content selection, and effectiveness evaluation, most of them focus on language cognition and skill training, and there is little attention to the education of humanistic spirit. In short, the current college English lacks its educational responsibility of humanistic spirit. In essence, it is a lack of adequate understanding of the humanistic education responsibility of college English. Neither the English textbooks nor the syllabus have much to do with humanistic spirit and moral education.

Karl Jaspers believes that "the training of language skills is necessary for humanistic education". [1]As far as the educational goal of English language learning is concerned, the metaphysical goal is to promote the humanistic spirit. In this regard, the educational goal of college English should obviously be much higher than the teaching goal of "language skills training", which is obviously an "education project" that cannot be outsourced. College English should be responsible for its humanistic spirit education. So, what role can college English courses play in college humanistic education?

The core of humanistic education in universities lies in the cultivation of students' humanistic spirit[10]. Humanistic spirit is not only a concern for human dignity, value and destiny, but also a high concern for various spiritual cultures accumulated by human beings, emphasizing the all-round development of ideal personality. In a sense, the reason why people are the spirit of all things lies in the unique humanistic spirit. As mentioned above, college English is not only the learning of English language skills, but also the cognition and absorption of western culture. The comparative cognition of Chinese and Western cultures and the deep interpretation of multiculturalism can not only cultivate learners' cross-cultural awareness, but also expand learners' horizon of thinking. In a larger thinking space, we should consciously stimulate learners to pay attention to individual social values and spiritual pursuit. The significance of humanistic education in college English lies in that through the cognitive learning of western culture, we can obtain or experience the value concept of rational thinking and multiple identification from multiple perspectives, so as to obtain relatively perfect humanistic quality, overcome narrow cultural arrogance, effectively absorb human cultural accumulation, and "adapt to the needs of China's social development and international exchanges"[7-8].

### 3.2 Moral Education Penetration of College English

When we reflect on the humanistic education requirements of college English, we should also reflect on the moral education function of college English[1]. The goal of a university is not only to improve the knowledge and skills of the educated, but also to cultivate their noble sentiments. In other words, college English teachers should have the awareness and function of moral education infiltration when helping students learn English language and understand western culture, and

effectively carry out the education of socialist core values. This is not only a necessity to cultivate the humanistic spirit of learners, but also an indispensable part of cultivating truly useful talents.

Some experts emphasized that university moral education leads the direction of university education[2-3]. If we take this view, we can easily find that today's college English has no function in moral education infiltration. In college English teaching, teachers should, in a sense, bear part of the responsibility for the loss of college students' values due to the inappropriate praise of western culture in the compilation of textbooks and the excessive promotion of western values inadvertently in their lectures. In recent years, it has been found that the enhancement of college students' English language ability has not correspondingly enhanced their national self-esteem and patriotism. So, what role can college English courses play in college moral education?

If we say that "college moral education must be considered in the context of globalization", college English can obviously play an important role. Learning a foreign language is like opening a window[4]. For college students who have mastered English, "globalization" is not only a social feeling, but also a language feeling and cultural feeling. In this regard, college English is indispensable for cultivating college students' global vision. However, our college English teachers should reflect on whether they are aware of this "indispensable" in our teaching? Can we consciously guide the value orientation of learners?

In college English teaching, our teachers must fully understand that western culture not only contains the content and characteristics of western history, society, politics and economy, but also contains the western value system. The value cognition of western culture is not only the necessity of understanding the connotation of language, but also the basis of understanding western culture[6-7]. Therefore, in English teaching, western cultural cognition is by no means a simple introduction to western culture, but should go deep into the values and soul of western culture. The interpretation of Western culture from the perspective of cultural comparison is not only interpreted in the horizontal comparison of Chinese and Western cultures, but also examined in the vertical comparison of Chinese and Western cultures. Only by placing the cognitive object in a broader perspective and questioning it in a multidimensional perspective can our cognition be closer to reality. In the perspective of cross-cultural comparison, through the restoration of the historical context of values, we can not only more comprehensively understand the true meaning of western concepts such as "freedom", "democracy" and "human rights", and more appropriately understand the historical significance of these concepts, but also more profoundly identify and criticize the connotation variation and ideological bias of these concepts in contemporary western discourse[14-15].

#### **4. The Goal of College English Belief Cultivation: Elite Awareness**

College English should not only train learners' intercultural communication ability and improve their humanistic spirit, but also consciously cultivate their "elite consciousness": national elite consciousness, national elite consciousness and human elite consciousness. "Elite consciousness", that is, in terms of self-role orientation, sense of responsibility, social contribution, etc., it reflects more self-consciousness than ordinary people, and has transcendental humanistic feelings and sense of responsibility.

The cultivation of the belief of "elite consciousness" mainly lies in consciously improving the social and historical role orientation of individual self, and consciously forming their own national or national responsibility consciousness[4]. Now, more and more colleges and universities are trying to start various "special subjects" (College English courses with specific subjects as the teaching content), replacing the traditional "college English" courses with "special subjects". On the one hand, they focus on the use of English in the context of specific subjects, and on the other hand,

they focus more on the cognitive interpretation of Western culture. If this kind of special subject course can integrate students' belief cultivation into its teaching content as its educational goal, then not only the depth and breadth of the course can be greatly expanded, but also the goal meaning of the course will be greatly improved, to a certain extent, it will gradually change the belief state of many college students. For example, in the cognition and interpretation of western culture, we help students understand the current complex international situation and individual social responsibility on the one hand, and interpret the way of thinking and social responsibility of western national elites on the other.

In the multicultural context, in the complex and changing international situation, the construction of national culture as the main body and the realization of the Chinese Dream all need the awareness of national elites[8-9]. Only in this way can college students more consciously cultivate their independent thinking and rational spirit, consciously assume social responsibility and make contributions to the country in the future.

As college English teachers, we must fully understand that the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication is closely related to cross-cultural cognition, which is closely related to the ethical position, values and world outlook of the cognitive. Therefore, in the process of college English teaching, the education of humanistic spirit quality should be included to improve the humanistic spirit quality of students. On this basis, learners' future cross-cultural communication will have the bearing, confidence and calm of the educated. College English integrated with humanistic spirit education and college English with elite consciousness as the goal of belief cultivation will become an effective path for moral education penetration and an effective channel for socialist core values education[11].

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