

# *Research on the Methods of Continuing Education of College English Teachers Based on Demand Analysis under “Internet Plus” Era*

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**Keywords:** teaching demands; higher education; English teachers; continuing education; selection of methods

**Abstract:** With the development of economy and society, the demand of English teaching in higher education is different from that in the past times. As faculty of Basic English courses in colleges and universities, the English teachers should effectively meet the needs of consolidating the fundamental position of English education and make it a positive role in overall education of colleges and universities. This paper will start the analysis from the current situation of college English teachers' continuing education, and explore the urgent needs for college English teachers to carry out continuing education. On this basis, this paper makes a thorough analysis of the development trend of college English teachers' continuing education, and finally puts forward several options of implementation models of college English teachers' continuing education, which could be used as a reference for the training of college English teachers, and to effectively adapt to the different needs of students, as well as to improve the teaching quality of English teachers and to deepen the reform of college English teaching.

College English, as a basic course in higher education, plays an important role in teaching and research. The level of professional knowledge of College English teachers plays a key role in the development of English teaching. Currently, students in colleges and universities in China have different demand for English basic courses, which requires English teachers to effectively adapt to the new situations and tasks, to grasp students' psychological awareness and interest in learning, and to constantly improve their teaching quality. At present, English teachers in colleges and universities in China are generally far beyond satisfaction. It is an urgent task for colleges and universities to strengthen the continuing education of English teachers.

## **1. Current Development of Continuing Education for English Teachers in Colleges and Universities in China**

Since the deepening of China's reform and opening up, especially in recent years, the emergence and application of new technologies, new media and new teaching methods, the position and role of English curriculum and English teaching in the basic curriculum education of colleges and universities have become significantly important. All of these have objectively put forward higher

requirements for the comprehensive quality of English teachers. According to a survey, many English teachers in colleges and universities take on- job training as a way of promoting their professional titles and obtaining higher degrees. The teachers often take part in other specialties on the basis of their previous undergraduate degrees, supplemented by one or several foreign language studies, so as to obtain masters or doctoral degrees and lay a foundation for their future career path expansion. The results are not obvious in improving the professional competence of the interdisciplinary talents and English teachers, which are urgently needed in higher education. Based on the problems existing in the on-job training or continuing education of college English teachers, the essence of continuing education should improve the comprehensive quality of English teachers in an all-round way according to the needs of social and economic development and towards the direction of cultivating comprehensive or specialized talents.

## **2. The Needs of Strengthening the Continuing Education of College English Teachers**

1) Currently, English teachers in Chinese colleges and universities are generally not satisfied with their teaching quality. They have urgent desires and needs to improve the professional competence through continuing education. Although English teachers have a high sense of responsibility with the profession they are engaged in, they are confused about how to further adapt to the needs of the new situation and how to improve teaching methods at the psychological cognitive level with lacking of concrete and feasible measures. According to the survey, nearly 20% of English teachers believe that they can successfully complete their teaching tasks as long as they have a good foundation in English language. While 68% of them believe that it is not difficult to teach and learn English well if they keep practicing speaking and listening. [2]

2) Objectively speaking, English teachers' professional needs and demands of teaching functions require them to improve their teaching level through continuing education, to constantly improve teaching methods, to realize teaching autonomy and professionalization, in order to better adapt to actual education needs. Only by constantly improving the existing teachers' continuing education and promoting the professionalization of English teachers could we continuously improve the quality of English education and teaching in colleges and universities. Thus, it is needed to improve the overall teaching faculty of English teachers and to better meet the practical needs of economic and social development. On the one hand, English teachers should actively adapt to the new situation and education requirements, to further strengthen theoretical knowledge learning and automatically update educational ideas and methods. On the other hand, English teachers should actively break through the limitations of traditional education and take continuing education as an indispensable method to realize the autonomy and professionalization of English teaching throughout the whole process of their own education and teaching jobs.

## **3. Analysis on the Trend of Continuing Education for English Teachers in Colleges and Universities in China**

### **3.1 Change from Focusing on Basic Talents Education to Inter-disciplinary Talents Education and Training**

Through continuing education, China has effectively solved the problem of the lag behind in basic skills of English education majors since the expansion of admission enrollment in higher education, and has created a group of excellent English teachers with rich theoretical knowledge and solid basic skills, thus to improve the quality of English teaching in colleges and universities in China. However, with the demand of new market economy and the creation of specialized majors, English teachers are required not only to have basic teaching quality, but also to have excellent

teaching capabilities. It is an inevitable choice to train inter-disciplinary talents through continuing education. Inter-disciplinary talents are the objective requirement of the development of the new century. With the development of economic globalization and integration, the new era requires more professional talents with strong adaptability and wide application ability. In order to adapt to the changing demands of the new era, colleges and universities should formulate development plans that are suitable for the teachers with the methods of continuing education. English teachers could choose suitable training schools or take international continuing education, so as to better adapt to the needs of practical teaching.

### **3.2 The Trend of Intensifying Teachers' Professional Specialization and Improving Professional Quality**

In the current situation of new educational needs, the comprehensive quality of college English teachers includes not only the improvement of professional subject ability, but also the improvement of teachers' professional quality. However, the current level, scale and structure of talent training in China are relatively simple. The concepts of professional specialization education and vocational quality education are often confused. Fundamentally speaking, there are obvious differences between the two. Professional specialization education mainly refers to the teaching quality and research ability of English teachers. Teachers' professional quality is a systematic concept, including the coordinated development of professional ethics, teaching spirit, cultural quality, research ability, psychological quality and vocational skills. [3]

## **4. The Choices of Methods of Strengthening the Continuing Education for English Teachers in Colleges and Universities in China**

### **4.1 Teacher-student Cooperative Education Model**

The traditional cooperative teaching model has a long history in higher education. Although it has its limitations, the model is still widely used in education. Under this method, the trainees acquire new knowledge by receiving teacher's guidance and training. From the current situation of the development of English teachers' continuing education, this model is no longer applicable, but the teaching concept of this model is still applied to the cooperative education between teachers and students. Under this model of education, teachers not only teach students theoretical knowledge, but also teach new ideas and learning methods, so that students could achieve dynamic learning process in static teaching model and could obtain greater results and improvements in theoretical knowledge learning and other aspects.

### **4.2 The Applied Education Model of the Transfer of Theoretical Knowledge**

This type of education method aims at the students' professional characteristics and their own learning demands. It focuses on teaching theoretical knowledge to the students, and combines practical application to achieve the organic combination of theory and practice. Therefore, this kind of education model is also called pure theoretical learning-based education model. Fundamentally speaking, it is also a traditional education model which has many similarities with the first type, and is also a commonly used education model. The main reason why this model is widely applied is that it could test the effect of education and teaching more objectively and fairly. On this basis, teachers will impart relevant knowledge to students or make appropriate adjustments in the process of teaching knowledge according to the actual situation. For a special major, only when students have a real understanding of the theoretical knowledge taught by experts and are recognized by experts in

the learning process, could they achieve sound results in education and training. As a basic course for freshmen and sophomores in higher education, English teachers in colleges and universities need to possess excellent professional theoretical knowledge, which is the basic premise to meet the effective teaching demand. Practice has proved that the model of theoretical knowledge imparting has gradually become the mainstream method of English teachers' continuing education and has been widely used in the current training of English teachers.

### 4.3 Case Study-based Education Model

Case study teaching is an educational method often used in continuing education, including discussion and analysis. The characteristic of this method is to summarize general characteristics of discipline and specialty through a typical specific case analysis. Case teaching has the characteristics of concrete image. It summarizes the general abstract theoretical knowledge through practical case analysis. However, in general, case teaching has not been promoted in the training of teachers for many reasons. The important point is that the combination of specific cases and classroom teaching is not very relative. As a case study, it should include three parts: the beginning of the case, the middle part and the end of the case, and contain the problems that should be solved. But relative to the case study of teachers, the middle part of case should include what teachers think, understand and get to learn from the case study. It is an important link for teachers to improve their teaching ability to make a thorough summary and analysis of teaching practice. As a college English teacher, it is necessary to combine the experience gained from teaching and relevant viewpoints in teaching practice to establish a typical case study method. With the actual needs of economic and social development, it is very meaningful for college English teachers to apply case-based teaching method in continuing education, which will greatly promote the learning of students' professional knowledge. But this teaching method has very limited effect on the improvement of teaching skills and auxiliary teaching techniques.

### 4.4 Comprehensive Education Model

As could be seen from the above three methods of continuing education, any single model of education has its own shortcomings and limitations. It is impossible for students to acquire more systematic and complete basic knowledge by relying on only one model in continuing education for college English teachers, and the effect of education will be greatly reduced. Therefore, to enhance the effect of continuing education well, teachers should base on the current situation to combine the three education methods organically, and to learn from each method's advantage and complement each other. Thus, students could acquire basic professional knowledge during training, and to further enrich their theoretical knowledge, as well as to transform teaching methods, skills, experience and related knowledge into their own skillsets. This kind of education method is called comprehensive education model. Comprehensive education model is a systematic method of continuing education and training for college English teachers. It enables students to acquire relevant knowledge in a short time through specific activities and personal experience, which is conducive to the improvement of teaching quality and plays an important role in continuing education training. By drawing lessons from the ideas of foreign teachers' education, teachers could think deeply about their own teaching shortcomings, to realize the limitations and to actively improve them. English teachers in higher education should constantly renew and enrich the teaching practice and content, and to improve teaching theory, professional knowledge, teaching skills, communicative skills, contingency decision-making and situational knowledge and so on.

## Acknowledgements

This work is supported by Educational Commission of Jilin Province of China (Grant No. JJKH20190782SK) and supported by Project on Vocational Education and Adult Education Reform, Educational Commission of Jilin Province of China in 2018 (Grant No.2018ZCZ022)

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