

# Research on the Integration Reform of College English Teaching and Professional Talent Training in Local Applied Universities

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**Abstract:** Against the background of the adjustment of China's higher education structure and the demand for compound talents in regional industries, local applied universities, as the main force of cultivating applied talents, are facing the problem that college English teaching is disconnected from professional talent training. Traditional college English teaching, which focuses on basic language knowledge, can no longer meet the needs of students' professional development and regional economic construction. This paper explores the integration reform of college English teaching and professional talent training in local applied universities, defines their core connotation, analyzes the current problems and their causes, puts forward targeted reform paths from the aspects of curriculum system, teaching mode, teacher team and evaluation mechanism, and summarizes the implementation effect and prospect through relevant practice. The research aims to provide practical reference for local applied universities to optimize college English teaching, enhance the supporting role of English teaching in professional talent training, and improve students' comprehensive competitiveness.

**Keywords:** Local applied universities; College English teaching; Professional talent training; Integration reform; ESP teaching

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Research background

In recent years, with the deepening of higher education reform in China, more local undergraduate universities have transformed into applied universities, focusing on serving regional economic and social development and cultivating applied, technical and compound talents. As a public basic course, college English plays an important role in improving students' comprehensive quality and cross-cultural communication ability, and is an important support for professional talent training<sup>[1,2]</sup>. However, at present, most local applied universities still adopt the traditional college English teaching mode, which is separated from professional training objectives. The teaching content is generalized, the teaching mode is single, and the evaluation system is imperfect, leading to the disconnection between English learning and professional learning. Students' English application ability in professional scenarios is insufficient, which cannot meet the needs of enterprises for compound talents with both professional skills and English ability.

At the same time, the national education policies clearly require that college English teaching should be integrated with professional education, highlight application and practicality, and serve the cultivation of applied talents. Under such a background, exploring the integration reform of college English teaching and professional talent training has become an urgent task for local applied universities to improve teaching quality and realize talent training goals.

## **1.2. Research significance**

The research on the integration reform of college English teaching and professional talent training in local applied universities has important theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, it enriches the research results of college English teaching reform in applied universities, expands the interdisciplinary research perspective of language education and professional education, and provides a theoretical framework for the coordinated development of students' language ability and professional ability. Practically, it helps local applied universities optimize the college English curriculum system, improve teaching effectiveness, enhance students' English application ability in professional scenarios, and thus improve their employment competitiveness<sup>[3]</sup>. In addition, it can also provide talent support for local enterprises to carry out foreign-related business and promote regional economic development.

## **1.3. Research methods and ideas**

This paper adopts literature research method, investigation and analysis method and case study method. Through literature research, it sorts out the relevant policies, theoretical results and research status at home and abroad on the integration of college English teaching and professional talent training. Through investigation and analysis, it understands the current situation of college English teaching and professional talent training in local applied universities, and grasps the existing problems. Through case study, it takes a local applied university as an example to analyze the practice effect of integration reform and provide a practical reference.

The research idea of this paper is as follows:

- (1) Clarify the research background and significance, sort out the research status;
- (2) Define the core connotation of local applied universities, college English teaching and professional talent training, and expound the theoretical basis of integration;
- (3) Analyze the current situation and existing problems of integration, and explore the causes of the problems;
- (4) Put forward specific paths of integration reform; finally, summarize the research conclusions and prospect the future research direction<sup>[4]</sup>.

## **2. Connotation and theoretical basis of integration reform**

### **2.1. Core connotation definition**

Local applied universities are rooted in regional development, oriented to industry needs, focusing on practical teaching, and taking cultivating applied talents who can adapt to regional economic and social development as their core goal. Different from research-oriented universities, local applied universities pay more attention to the practicality and applicability of talent training, and emphasize the connection between teaching and production practice.

The integration of college English teaching and professional talent training refers to taking the professional talent training objectives of local applied universities as the orientation, breaking the disciplinary barrier between college English and professional courses, embedding professional knowledge, professional scenarios and professional tasks into college English teaching, realizing the organic combination of language training, professional knowledge learning and professional ability training, and making college English teaching truly serve the professional development of students and the realization of talent training goals.

## 2.2. Theoretical basis of integration reform

The integration reform of college English teaching and professional talent training is based on multiple theories, which provides a solid theoretical support for the reform practice<sup>[5]</sup>. For instance:

- (1) The OBE (Outcomes-Based Education) concept: This concept takes students' learning outcomes as the orientation, reversely designs teaching objectives, teaching content, teaching methods and evaluation systems, emphasizing that all teaching activities should serve the realization of talent training objectives. The integration reform takes the professional ability needs of students as the starting point, which is consistent with the core idea of the OBE concept;
- (2) The constructive learning theory: This theory holds that students are the main body of learning, and they actively construct knowledge and ability in specific scenarios and task-driven processes. The integration reform embeds professional scenarios into English teaching, guides students to learn and apply English in solving professional tasks, which conforms to the law of constructive learning;
- (3) The ESP (English for Specific Purposes) theory: ESP is a branch of applied linguistics, which focuses on cultivating students' English application ability in specific professional fields. The integration of college English teaching and professional talent training is essentially the practice and development of ESP theory in local applied universities, which emphasizes the pertinence and practicality of English teaching.

## 3. Current situation and problems of integration of college English teaching and professional talent training

### 3.1. Current situation of integration

With the promotion of higher education reform, some local applied universities have begun to explore the integration of college English teaching and professional talent training, and have made certain progress. On the one hand, some universities have set up professional English courses for different majors, such as business English for economic management majors and engineering English for engineering majors, trying to connect English teaching with professional learning<sup>[6]</sup>. On the other hand, some universities have carried out teaching mode innovation, such as introducing situational teaching and project-based teaching, and guiding students to apply English in professional scenarios<sup>[7]</sup>.

However, on the whole, the integration of college English teaching and professional talent training in local applied universities is still in the initial stage, and there are still many problems. Most universities still follow the traditional teaching mode, and the integration is not in place, which cannot meet the needs of professional talent training.

### 3.2. Main problems

#### 3.2.1. Disconnection between teaching objectives and professional training objectives

Most local applied universities still take the improvement of students' basic English ability (listening, speaking, reading and writing) as the main objective of college English teaching, ignoring the connection with professional training objectives. The teaching objectives do not highlight the professional applicability of English, leading to the disconnection between English learning and professional learning.

#### 3.2.2. Unreasonable curriculum system

The current college English curriculum system of most local applied universities is relatively single. The main courses are general English, and the proportion of professional English courses is small. The teaching content is generalized, lacking professional elements and practical scenarios, which cannot meet the needs of students' professional development. In addition, there is no effective connection between general English courses and professional English courses, forming a "two skins" phenomenon.

#### 3.2.3. Single teaching mode

Most universities still adopt the traditional teacher-centered teaching mode, focusing on the explanation of language

knowledge such as vocabulary and grammar. The teaching method is single, lacking interaction and practical links. Students are in a passive learning state, and their enthusiasm and initiative in learning are not high. At the same time, the application of modern educational technology is not in place, and the online and offline blended teaching mode has not been effectively popularized<sup>[8]</sup>.

#### **3.2.4. Imperfect evaluation system**

The current college English evaluation system of local applied universities is mainly based on final examination, focusing on the assessment of students' language knowledge, ignoring the assessment of their English application ability in professional scenarios. The evaluation subject is single, mainly through teachers' evaluation, lacking the participation of professional teachers and enterprises. The evaluation method is rigid, which does not comprehensively reflect students' comprehensive ability.

#### **3.2.5. Insufficient strength of teaching staff**

Most college English teachers in local applied universities have a single knowledge structure, only mastering language knowledge, lacking professional background and industry practice experience. They cannot effectively integrate professional knowledge and English teaching, and it is difficult to design teaching content and tasks closely related to professional scenarios. In addition, the training mechanism for teachers is not perfect, and the ability of teachers to carry out integration teaching needs to be further improved<sup>[9]</sup>.

### **3.3. Causes of the problems**

The main causes of the above problems are as follows:

- (1) The backward teaching concept: Some English teachers and school managers still adhere to the traditional teaching concept, emphasizing the instrumentality of English, ignoring the connection between English teaching and professional talent training;
- (2) The lack of collaborative mechanism: There is a lack of effective communication and cooperation between the English department and professional colleges, leading to the disconnection between English teaching and professional teaching;
- (3) Insufficient resource investment: The school's investment in college English teaching resources (such as textbooks, teaching platforms, practice bases) is insufficient, which restricts the development of integration reform;
- (4) The imperfect teacher training mechanism: The school does not pay enough attention to the training of college English teachers, and there is a lack of targeted training programs for teachers' professional ability and integration teaching ability.

## **4. Paths of integration reform of college English teaching and professional talent training**

### **4.1. Reconstruct the teaching objectives based on professional needs**

Taking the professional talent training objectives of local applied universities as the orientation, reconstruct the college English teaching objectives. According to the characteristics of different majors, formulate hierarchical and targeted teaching objectives. On the basis of improving students' basic English ability, focus on cultivating students' English application ability in professional scenarios, such as professional document reading, professional oral communication, professional translation and other abilities. At the same time, combine the needs of regional industries, embed the professional post ability requirements into the teaching objectives, so that the teaching objectives are closely connected with the professional training objectives and post needs.

#### **4.2. Optimize the curriculum system**

After that, establish general plus professional plus practical, a three-level curriculum system. The first level is general English courses, which mainly improve students' basic English ability and lay a solid foundation for professional English learning. The second level is professional English courses, which are set up according to different majors, such as engineering English, business English, tourism English, etc., focusing on cultivating students' English application ability in professional fields. The third level is practical English courses, including cross-cultural communication, professional English practice, enterprise internship, etc., which strengthen students' practical ability through practical links.

In addition, strengthen the connection between general English courses and professional English courses, and embed professional elements into general English teaching. For example, in the general English reading course, select reading materials related to the major; in the writing course, guide students to write professional documents. At the same time, update the teaching content in a timely manner according to the development of the industry and the needs of posts, and increase the proportion of practical and professional content.

#### **4.3. Innovate the teaching mode**

The traditional teacher-centered teaching mode should be abandoned and replaced with a student-centered teaching approach. The application of situational teaching, project-based teaching, and task-driven teaching methods should be promoted. Professional scenarios can be integrated into the design of teaching tasks, such as simulating international business negotiations and professional technical exchanges, enabling students to apply English while solving professional tasks.

In addition, the online and offline blended teaching mode should be vigorously promoted. Modern educational technology should be fully utilized to build a digital teaching platform and provide online learning resources, such as professional English videos, case materials, and online tests, thereby realizing the organic integration of online autonomous learning and offline interactive teaching. At the same time, cooperation with enterprises should be strengthened by introducing enterprise projects into the classroom and allowing students to participate in actual foreign-related enterprise projects, so as to enhance their practical abilities.

#### **4.4. Improve the evaluation system**

A diversified and process-oriented evaluation system should be established. The single final examination evaluation mode should be reformed by combining process evaluation with result evaluation. Process evaluation may include classroom performance, homework completion, group work, and practical tasks, accounting for 50%–60% of the total score. Result evaluation may include final examinations and professional English application assessments, accounting for 40%–50% of the total score.

In addition, the evaluation subjects should be expanded by involving professional teachers and enterprise tutors in the assessment process. Professional teachers can evaluate students' English application ability in professional scenarios, while enterprise tutors can assess students' performance in practical tasks and internships. At the same time, various evaluation methods, such as oral defense, practical operation, and project reports, should be adopted to comprehensively assess students' English application ability and professional quality.

#### **4.5. Strengthen the construction of teaching staff**

A "dual-qualified" teacher team should be established. College English teachers should be encouraged to participate in professional training and industry practice in order to enhance their professional knowledge and industry experience. For example, teachers can be organized to undertake internships in enterprises, participate in professional academic conferences, and cooperate with professional teachers in carrying out teaching and research projects.

In addition, cooperation between English teachers and professional teachers should be strengthened to form a teaching team with complementary advantages. Professional teachers can be invited to participate in the design of college English teaching content and teaching tasks and to guide students' professional English learning. At the same time, industry experts and foreign teachers with professional backgrounds should be introduced to enrich the teaching staff and improve the

overall level of integrated teaching.

## 5. Conclusion

The integration reform of college English teaching and professional talent training is an inevitable requirement for local applied universities to adapt to the development of the times and realize the goal of talent training. It is also an important measure to improve the quality of college English teaching and enhance students' comprehensive competitiveness. This paper studies the integration reform of college English teaching and professional talent training in local applied universities, clarifies the core connotation and theoretical basis of integration, analyzes the current situation, problems and causes of integration, and puts forward specific reform paths from the aspects of teaching objectives, curriculum system, teaching mode, evaluation system and teaching staff. The integration reform is a long-term and systematic project, which requires the joint efforts of schools, teachers and students. Local applied universities should update their teaching concepts, establish a collaborative mechanism, increase resource investment, and provide a guarantee for the smooth progress of integration reform. College English teachers should actively improve their own quality and adapt to the needs of integration teaching. Students should change their learning concepts, actively participate in practical activities, and improve their English application ability in professional scenarios. In the future, with the deepening of higher education reform, the integration of college English teaching and professional talent training will be further promoted. We can further explore the integration path under the background of digital intelligence, strengthen the construction of teaching resources, and improve the long-term mechanism of integration reform, so as to make college English teaching better serve the cultivation of professional talents in local applied universities.

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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