

Ecological Analysis and Countermeasures on the Dilemmas of College English Education in Our Country

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Abstract: It is a fact that the college education in our country still cannot cultivate English talents that can meet the very need of the quick development of economy and society. Based on the Theory of Educational Ecology, this paper is aiming to have a deep analysis on the dilemmas of our country's college English education and then trying to give countermeasures on the dilemmas and thus explore the direction for college English education.

For many years, though the Country has been actively advocating reform in college English education, still, the college education still cannot cultivate English talents that can meet the very need of the quick developments of economy and society. The reason behind this phenomenon is that in college English class, more stress is paid to reading and writing and less attention is paid to reading and speaking. In the year of 2007, Ministry of Education released *Teaching Requirement of College English Course* and set clear requirement for students' reading and speaking ability. This requirement was in accordance with the teaching goals raised by the Theory of Educational Ecology, because, based on the theory of educational ecology, the current dilemmas that college English education face are caused by the breaking of ecological balance.

1. Theory of Educational Ecology

The Theory of Educational Ecology was put forward by American Professor Cremin Lawrence in the 1970s. In his point of view, Educational Theory is a complex system and covers a range of fields, such as, educational theory, ecology theory and psychology and so on. Since the 20th century, as ecological consciousness of human beings became clear and clear, ecological theory has been widely used in the field of education. Exactly speaking, Educational Ecology is a new view of education research. It is trying to explore the status, law and effect of higher education development in education system by referencing ecology theory.

The ecological methodology and the harmonious values are of very appropriate for educational research. Through illustration and comparison on the life and social ecological principle and educational ecological principle, we can see that nature, society and educational system have their common ecological principle. In the light of harmonious values, ecological wisdom can be applied to educational research, and the ecological thinking mode itself is closer to educational form. Combining disciplinary characteristics of ecology and pedagogy, the analyzing viewpoint of ecological research in educational issues includes the aspects such as subject and environment, genesis and variation, balance and imbalance, symbiosis and competition etc..

In our country, the research of educational ecology was first put forward at the end of 1980s and developed very slowly for the next many years. In fact, the research of education ecology didn't flourish until the beginning of 21st century. That is because we Chinese people value more about the ecological development and we begin to introduce ecological theory into many relevant studies.

Generally speaking, in the past twenty years, the research of educational ecology has presented two features: from macroscopic to microscopic, and from theoretical study to practical analysis. At the same time, it has also showed four inadequacies: the first is the lack of deep understanding of the importance of educational ecosystem, the second is the lack of balanced study of the levels and structure of educational ecology, the third is the lack of enough attention paid to the historical change of educational ecology, and last but not least, the lack of accurate understanding of

ecological theory. In this sense, there is still a very long way for us to go to make the educational ecology a discipline.

2. Dilemmas of College English Education in Our Country

2.1 The resources of English course are non-ecological.

Teaching materials is an important part of ecologic education. It is surveyed that there is a rigid limitations on the choosing of teaching materials for teachers and students. And at the same time, the update of the teaching materials cannot keep pace with the social and economic development. For example, the articles of the textbooks are mainly chosen from foreign works and magazines from the 1970s to the 1990s of the 20th century. Such out-dated articles are hard to attract students' interest.

What's more, it is a common phenomenon that many majors share the same teaching books so the content of the teaching materials lack of practicality and pertinence and cannot meet the students' professional need, either.

2.2 The class teaching is non-ecological.

English teaching is a micro-ecological system. However, the micro- ecological system is broken by the imbalance of the subjects and environment. Ecological system of English teaching includes physical environment, social environment and value environment. And all of the three "environment" are non- ecological.

Physical environment consists of decoration, noise, color and comfortableness. In most of the cases, all the students of the same class have English class at the same time. So the noise would be big when carrying out class activity. It is difficult for English teacher to have an effective control of the class. Besides, the wall of the classroom is in white color and many students will think it dull and serious, which will also have a bad effect on class teaching.

Social environment refers to class scale, layout of classrooms, gender ratio, linguistic environment and the second curriculum. Let's take the layout of the classroom for example. In most cases, the platform is in the front of the classroom and the desks and tables are listed in row. When giving classes, teachers are standing platform and students are sitting in their own seats. Under this layout, it is difficult for students sitting in the back of the classroom to hear the teachers clearly. At the same time, it is impossible for teachers to learn every student's feedback on the class and adjust the teaching pace accordingly. In the long run, such a lay of classroom will damage the students' dominant role in the class.

Besides, some students argue that they don't have enough chance to English atmosphere after class and that college should create more opportunities for students to practice English.

Value environment contains the students' interest, class atmosphere, and teacher-and-student relationship, which will also cause a bad effect on English class if not properly dealt with.

2.3 Students' performance assessment is non- ecological

In the aspect of performance assessment, the result is mainly decided by the score that students gain in the written exam at the end of each term. Teachers are still playing the main role in the performance assessment and students cannot play the dominant role as it should be. Besides, the written exam cannot have a thorough check on students' comprehensive ability in English, which is also opposite to the ecological theory.

3. Implications and Countermeasures

3.1 Optimizing the course resources.

First, in the aspect of teaching materials. The teaching materials should be in accordance with students' practical level and should keep pace with the economic and social development. The teaching materials should contain the hot topics that students focus on, and also should include the

works of the best-seller authors.

Besides, it is common that as the compulsory course in the college, students of different majors use the same teaching textbooks. For example, students in Tourism management and engineering should not adopt the same textbooks. It is difficult to imagine that such an arrangement will receive satisfactory results. As a matter of fact, the teaching department of the college should choose different teaching textbooks for different majors to ensure that the knowledge that students learn are what they really need. By doing so, students' interest will be aroused and the teaching can get the good results.

In addition, the teacher should bear in mind that learning should not be confined to the classroom. On the opposite, the teacher should create more opportunities for students to learn from extra curriculum. Students can learn the basic and fundamental knowledge from class, and they can learn more from activities. As a matter of fact, learning from activities is an interesting and meaningful way for students to learn. The teacher often asks the students to study hard to prepare for their future. But students sometimes cannot understand the meaning of their learning. Some of them even think that the knowledge they learn in class are useless. As a matter of fact, that is a common phenomenon among college students. Let's take students of tourism management for example. They will have a better understanding about what they have learned if they have a chance to visit a travel agency or work in a travel agency for a short time. It can be sure that after the visit or short-time work, students will become more active in class and they will be eager to the new knowledge because they will find that the knowledge that the teacher conveys to them in class is really useful and meaningful and will help them to work better when they begin to work.

At the same time, as China becomes more and more open and plays a more and more important role in the world stage, many foreign people want to learn more about China, Chinese people and its history and culture. This sets new requirement for the college English education. In the sense, the teaching materials should also contain Chinese traditional culture, thus improving students' ability of propagating Chinese culture to the world using English language. After all, English is the official language in the world.

Second, in the aspect of teaching tools. The 21st century is an information century. High technologies have been developed and put into use in our daily life. Especially, the use of computers has become popular in the world. So, when giving lessons, English teachers should try to make full use of modern technology like computers, network, cell phones, ipad, to attract students' learning interest and make students study actively. MOOCs have become popular in the educational field and will make students get enough practice after class.

One thing worth of special attention is the use of cell phones. Many teachers and parents complain that the popularity of cell phones pose a great threat to students' study, because, it is a common thing that college students play cell phones deep into night and even in class. Everything coin has two sides and cell phones are of no exception. In fact, it is the teacher's duty to think of ways to make cell phones benefit for students' learning. After all, cell phones can help students to gain a lot of knowledge. For example, the teacher may send the homework on the cell phones and ask students to show their homework on the QQ, wechat, for example. What's more, cell phones will also make the communications between students and teachers easier. They can send messages quickly and talk frankly on the phone.

Third, in the aspect of teaching design. Teachers should try to stir students' interest in class, for example, asking students to make relevant preparations before class by surfing materials on Internet and give a presentation at the beginning of the class. In this way, students will develop good learning habits and their oral English and comprehensive ability will also be improved. The teacher can also ask students to make morning report at the beginning of each class, through which students' oral English will be greatly improved. Besides, the teacher can also help students to develop the habit of keep diary in English.

3.2 Building ecological class teaching.

First, improving the physical environment. For one thing, teachers can ask students to create

English atmosphere together. For example, teachers can ask students to make English Cultural Wall in the blackboard at the back of the classroom. The content of English cultural wall can be an introduction of cultural customs of British and America, for example, festivals, idioms, famous persons and their outstanding events, and so on. This will help students to have a better understanding of English culture. For the other thing, teachers can also set up an “English Corner” in the classroom and place some newspapers and magazines for students to read in the spare time to broaden their vision and widen their knowledge.

Second, adjusting the social environment of the class. The teacher can divide the students of the whole class into several small learning groups. The so-called learning groups are dynamic. It can effectively solve the problems that the big class brings, stir every student's interest in learning, and cultivate students' cooperation awareness.

The teacher can also change the traditional lay-out of the desks and chairs. The ideal layout of the classroom is that the teacher is in the center of focus and students are sitting in a circle. By doing so, the teacher can take good care of every students and gain feedbacks from them quickly and then take response to the students' feedbacks.

Besides, the teacher should adjust their roles in class. The teacher should bear in mind that students should play the active and dominant role in class and teachers are just the coordinator and organizer of the class. What's more, besides paying attention to students' learning, the teacher should also think of ways to create equal and harmonious teacher-and-student relationship to make sure that the teaching process is under comfortable atmosphere.

3.3 Stressing value environment of the class.

Let's take the performance assessment for example. According to the theory of ecological education, in order to make sure of the scientification of the results, multi factors should be introduced into the students' performance assessment. In other words, the teacher should introduce multi-assessment system to make sure that the students' performance is comprehensively assessed.

What is more, the assessment system should not only contain the teachers' assessment on students, but should include the students' assessment also, as they are the dominant of the class. For example, in daily classes, the teachers may introduce students' assessment to help students to learn self-assessment and mutual assessment and to find out the shortcomings of themselves. The teacher should also encourage assessments between students and between groups to arouse students' interest and help students develop confidence in English learning. As a matter of fact, students have a customary rely on the teachers' assessment. So, the teachers' assessment doesn't have an effect on the students as imagined. On the opposite, students' mutual assessment will make a difference on students themselves because they tend to value their peers opinions a little bit more.

In a word, it is well accepted that the final result in a thorough and comprehensive assessment system should be made up of daily class assessment (group discussion, class performance, etc.), extra curriculum assessment (post-class homework, activities, etc.) and paper examination at the end of each term.

In short, the success of the ecological teaching is based on the learning and control that the teacher has on the students. In the process of reform, the teacher should not be anxious to get the result and should keep a quiet mind. After all, Rome was not built in a day. So does the reform of college English teaching.

Apart from the performance assessment system, the teacher should also convey correct social values to the students. By saying this we mean that the teacher should tell the college students that language and culture is equal. We cannot say which culture is superior and which one is inferior. Every culture has a glorious history for us to learn from. We learn English because the world is becoming a small global village and English is the most widely used language in the world as well as the official language of the small village. We learn English and English culture is because that we China want to learn more and have a closer connection with the outside world. And at the same time, we can use English to propagate our glorious Chinese culture to make more and more foreign people know China, Chinese people and its culture as well as its history. We learn English because

Chinese young people should work together with young people from other countries to make the world a better place, a more harmonious place for human beings to live in.

In a summary, from the perspective of ecology, students-oriented, interactive and sustainable development class is expected to set up. Under the guidance of ecology theory, college English class anticipates the abandon of homogenized, standardized and dogmatic model of teaching, and replaces it by an ecologic, multi-polarization and interactive one. The emergence of college English classroom studying from the perspective of ecology not only caters to the trend of modern education requirement, but also it is quite necessary for the uniqueness of foreign language teaching. Therefore, it is worthwhile for foreign language teachers to attach great importance to the ecology of classroom.

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