

A Review of Education Policy on College English in China since Reforming and Opening up

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Abstract: Since reforming and opening up, college English teaching in our country has achieved remarkable progress, but its current situation and effects are far from meeting our country's social needs and the current international situation. To promote college English teaching in our country, we should comprehensively understand the nature, functions, and historical process of college English education policies since reforming and opening up, and conduct in-depth analysis and understanding of college English curriculum syllabus, textbook policies, teaching policies, and examination policies, which has practical and guiding significance for college English teaching.

1. Introduction

Since reforming and opening up, Chinese society has undergone earth-shaking changes, and the field of foreign language education has also been facing new opportunities for development. The development of society has put forward higher and newer requirements for foreign language education in China, and the development of practice inevitably requires a new discourse system corresponding to it. English education policy reflects what kind of English education the country needs, what kind of English talents should be trained by schools, and how China's English education should be reformed and developed. Therefore, the English education policy texts since reforming and opening up have become a mirror reflecting the practice of English education discourse.

Foreign language education is not only a cultural means, but also a cultural process, with obvious social and cultural intention and national policy orientation. It is not a scientifically neutral concept. As a part of higher education, college foreign language education is an activity to cultivate talents with specific professional knowledge and higher foreign language ability. The name of similar English courses offered by colleges and universities is mostly "public English", which is the predecessor of college English, and is gradually unified as "College English".

College English education policy belongs to both education policy and foreign language education policy. Education policy is a branch of public policy. According to Robert Aston, public policy is a kind of social relationship, that is, the relationship between policy makers and the policy environment. UNESCO believes that educational policy is a series of basic principles and selection methods to achieve certain educational goals and development directions. As far as its essence is concerned, public policy is a purposeful and planned activity process, which can regulate the social relations between people and realize the maximization of public interests through the distribution and adjustment of different interests. In order to solve the problems in the field of education in a certain period of time, education policy is an action criterion that the government adjusts the interests involved in various aspects to meet the needs of society and social development. Language policy refers to the relevant laws, rules and regulations formulated to enable human social groups to realize planned language changes in the process of using speech communication. College English education policy refers to the educational policy of college English. Generally speaking, policy is mainly presented in the form of policy text, which is an important object and basic source of policy research.

2. The Historical Course of College English Education Policy

The history of the research of college English education policy in China after the reform and opening up can be generally divided into three stages: restoration and consolidation period (1978-1986), exploration and adjustment period (1987-1996), and reform and development period (1997-present):

The year 1978 was a most extraordinary year in the history of China. With the convening of the third Plenary Session of the eleventh Central Committee of the Party, the order in education was gradually restored. The 13th Plenary Session focused on economic construction and in education, strengthening education was taken as an important content of the plan for national economic adjustment. Science congress pointed out that we should carry out the party's policy on education comprehensively and correctly, correct the direction, really do a good job in education reform, make the development of education undertakings have big improvement and ensure that the teacher's teaching activity time was enough. During this period, the chaos was put right in full swing, the educational field was cleared, English majors and courses in colleges and universities were gradually restored, and various policies were made step by step.

In 1992, the convening of the 14th National Congress of the CPC marked that China's reform and opening up and socialist modernization drive has entered a new stage of development. With the establishment of the socialist market economic system, higher education has entered a new period of development, and a tidal wave of higher education reform has also come. More and more scholars and researchers began to pay attention to the research of education policy. Specialized organizations related to the research of education policy were established one after another. The achievements of discipline construction such as "Education Policy" attracted the participation of many scholars, which once formed a comprehensive situation of interdisciplinary and cross-departmental participation. At this stage, English policy making also kept pace with the times and was making progress in exploration.

Since 1997, China's education has been advancing in an all-round way. With the further deepening of China's reform and opening up, China's economy has developed better, democracy has been sounder, culture more prosperous, society more harmonious, and people's life more substantial. China's higher education has also achieved great development. During this period, the strategy of developing the country was the basic state policy of our country. The party and the government proposed the grand goal of socialist modernization construction, and have made a comprehensive deployment for the implementation of science and education to rejuvenate the country.

At the end of 1998, the Ministry of Education issued an "Educational Promotion Action Plan for the 21st Century", putting forward comprehensively promoting the reform of education policy and improving the grand goal of the whole nation quality and innovation ability in countries in order to meet the increasingly development of economy and the needs of the development of education in the new period. The disciplines and specialties had been reformed gradually. This is another historic leap in the understanding of the strategic position of science, technology and education in the new era by the entire party and society.

3. Brief Introduction of College English Education Policy in China Since Reforming and Opening Up

3.1 College English Syllabus

The English Syllabus formulated in 1980 was the first formal syllabus tried in colleges and universities for four-year undergraduate on science and engineering. With the development of society, the demand for foreign languages in all walks of life is heating up. Therefore, the State Education Commission issued the College English Syllabus for Science and Engineering Undergraduates in 1985, and the College English Syllabus for Arts and Sciences Undergraduates in 1986. To meet the challenges of the 21st century, college English teaching should reach a new level, thus opening the prelude to the revision of college English Teaching Syllabus. The 99 College

English Syllabus was born since then.

3.2 College English Textbook Policy

In 1980, the Ministry of Education established the Foreign Language Data Center on Science and Technology in Tsinghua University and Shanghai Jiao Tong University respectively. In June of the same year, the compilation and review committee of university science and Engineering Textbooks was established and the foreign language teaching syllabus of science and engineering (draft) was re-approved. Since the autumn of 1986, a new generation of college English textbooks has been published. In 1994, the State Council promulgated the Regulations on Rewards for Teaching Achievements, which encouraged the production of more high-quality teaching materials and promoted the publication of a number of key teaching materials at the national and provincial levels. In April 1995, the State Education Commission issued the Opinions on the Construction and Reform of Teaching Materials for Ordinary Higher Education during the ninth Five-year Plan period. In 1996, measures for assessing the work of teaching materials and a system of indicators were introduced, as well as measures for the project approval of key national teaching materials during the ninth Five-Year Plan period. On March 6th, 2001, the Ministry of Education issued the Circular “Opinions on the Construction and Reform of Teaching Materials for Ordinary higher education during the Tenth five-year Plan period”, which detailed the guidelines, objectives, tasks and main measures for the construction of teaching materials for ordinary higher education during the tenth Five-year Plan period.

3.3 College English Teaching Policy

The basic contents of the teaching requirements of college English course include :(1) strengthening listening and writing skills, further improving the comprehensive application ability, especially listening and speaking ability; At the same time, enhancing students' independent learning ability and improving their comprehensive cultural literacy;(2) Emphasis on autonomous learning ability. It takes the enhancement of students' autonomous learning ability as the teaching goal, highlights the subject status of students' learning, advocates the mode of autonomous learning, and pays attention to students' subjectivity and subjective initiative.(3) Making full use of the network platform. The multimedia teaching model based on computer and classroom is constructed to promote the modernization of the curriculum with informationization, and at the same time, it is student-centered and emphasizes students' personalized learning.

3.4 College English Test Policy

The file on CET-4 and CET-6 first appeared on February 9, 1985. The Ministry of Education issued a document No. 004 (85) which mentioned that the college English course is divided into six levels, and a unified standard test will be conducted for students who have completed the fourth and sixth levels of study. In September 1987, the State Education Commission launched the COLLEGE English Test Band 4 for the first time, marking the official establishment of the College English Test system (CET). In January 1989, college English Test Band 6 began to be implemented. In 1999, the Ministry of Education issued the new College English Syllabus. In response to the changes in the teaching objectives and requirements of the syllabus, the CET-4 and CET-6 have also been adjusted accordingly: the use of new question types, the use of average points to report scores, and the minimum score for composition. In May 1999, the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education issued Document No. 53 of 1999. The document proposed that some colleges and universities should try to carry out oral English examinations for colleges and universities. In November of the same year, the scale was expanded to the four cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing and Wuhan. In 2000, the spoken language test was expanded to colleges and universities in 19 provincial capitals and surrounding areas, and finally expanded to colleges and universities in municipalities and all provincial capitals and surrounding areas in 2001. On September 4, 2001, the Department of Higher Education issued Document No. 148: *Notice on Printing and Distributing 'Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting and the First Working Meeting of the University Foreign Language Teaching Steering Committee of the Ministry of Education in 2001-2005'* The Notice

mentioned Cooperation with the examination committee to further reform and improve the fourth and sixth level examinations, thus it is more conducive to the improvement of students' foreign language practical ability. On December 29, 2003, the Ministry of Education issued No.10[2003]file--*Notice of the General Office of the Ministry of Education on the Incident of Missing Secret Questions in the College English Test Band 4 and 6 on September 20, 2003*. It would report on the process and handling of the incident of leaking CET-4 in that year to strengthen the examination work and fully understand the importance of examination confidentiality. On March 18, 2005, after discussion, the Ministry of Education drafted and promulgated the No. 2001 Document of the Education and High Education Department: "Notice of the General Office of the Ministry of Education on Printing and Distributing the National College English Test Band 4 and Band 6 Reform Plan (Trial)". The document clearly pointed out that one of the important measures to be taken in the near future for the fourth and sixth level examinations is to reform the scoring system and performance reporting methods. The CET-4 and CET-6 examinations have changed from the original 100-point system to the 710-point scoring system. There is no passing line, no certificate of passing, and only transcripts. The reformed CET-4 was fully implemented in January 2007; the reformed CET-6 was fully implemented in June 2007.

4. Reflections on College English Education Policy in China Since Reforming and Opening Up

4.1 College English Education Policy is Forward-Looking

College English teaching mode keeps pace with The Times.

The college English teaching model has been thoroughly reformed from the early classroom teaching organized by the use of audio, video, television, film and other teaching methods to the current "computer + classroom" model, which not only realizes the learner-centered teaching concept, but also exerts the powerful advantage of computer technology and uses the Internet to create a virtual language learning environment to improve the effect of university English teaching. At present, the vigorous MOOC classes, micro-classes and other classroom models that improve teaching effects are also further innovations and applications of the "computer + classroom" concept.

4.2 Some Contents of College English Education Policy Are Distorted

Each edition of the Compendium clearly stipulates that college English, as a "compulsory basic course", occupies a place in higher education. College English plays an important role in higher education because it plays a key role in talent training. Even if the talents trained by higher education are equipped with English listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating skills, they will be able to "meet the needs of China's social development and international communication" in the future. However, the gap between reality and ideal breaks through the popular imagination. Facts have proved that the college English teaching in the past 30 years has been criticized, and most of the talents can only learn One-way communication in English, far from meeting the needs of international communication. This result puts college English teaching in a very awkward position, but it also indicates that cultivating college students' English listening and speaking ability will be an important part of the new college English syllabus.

4.3 College English Education Policy in China Attaches Too Much Importance to Examination-Oriented Education

The link between CET-4 / CET-6 and degree has made college English education towards exam-oriented education. After 1990s, the vast majority of colleges and universities in China linked the cet-4 with the undergraduate degree, and some schools linked the CET-6 with the master degree. In addition, even if employers in the society have nothing to do with English, they often require CET-4 or CET-6. Under the heavy pressure of these two aspects, our English education policy has once again introduced English education into the quagmire of test-oriented education. Its disadvantages are mainly reflected in two aspects: First, it has impacted the education of

professional courses to a large extent. Second, it interferes with normal English teaching and restricts the learning of English language ability.

4.4 The Current English Education Policy in China Appears the Phenomenon of Target Loss

English education policies gradually guide English as a second language education, leading to the loss of teaching objectives. English can only be a foreign language, and the goal of learning should be placed on its instrumental properties. People learn English in order to communicate with subsequent English speakers of their own nationality and export their own national culture and import foreign advanced culture, so that people can transcend regions and seek common development. English cannot become an official language or a common language in our country. Therefore, we cannot expect all learners in our country to master English. We can only let learners learn English skills and contents according to their needs, so that learners can master English learning methods in the later learning stage. Furthermore, the overemphasis on English education leads to the decline of national culture. English education policy in China pays too much attention to English education, which expands the erosion of English to a certain extent. English education policy forces Chinese students to give up more opportunities to learn traditional culture, and their traditional cultural knowledge is getting weaker and weaker. The current English education policy in China leads to the decline of national culture to some extent.

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