



# The Study on the Application of the OBE Concept in Comprehensive English Teaching

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**Abstract:** This thesis explores the implementation of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) in comprehensive English teaching in higher education. Emphasizing a student-centered approach, the OBE concept focuses on achieving specific outcomes, personalized assessments, practical application of knowledge, and adaptability for future life. The study identifies issues in traditional English teaching, such as a focus on test-taking over practical skills and outdated teaching models. Integrating OBE addresses these issues by enhancing language application, improving teaching quality, and creating more learning opportunities. The proposed teaching model under the OBE concept includes setting course objectives, designing aligned teaching content, and evaluating learning outcomes through formative and summative assessments. The thesis also discusses challenges in applying the OBE concept and suggests solutions like establishing OBE promotion organizations, providing relevant training, enhancing inter-university communication, and improving feedback mechanisms.

**Keywords:** Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), comprehensive English teaching, student-centered learning, practical language application

## 1. The connotation and requirements of the OBE concept

### 1.1 The connotation of OBE concept

The OBE concept, namely Outcomes-Based Education, is an applied education concept that emphasizes the actual output of the education process [1]. In colleges and universities that attach great importance to teaching quality, we can have a deeper understanding of the connotation of the OBE concept. First, the OBE concept emphasizes that students in colleges and universities must maintain the belief in success. The result of higher education is to enable students to realize their self-worth, and there is no absolute sense of success or failure. Second, the OBE concept emphasizes personalized assessment of students, formulating personalized teaching plans based on the individual differences of each student, and highlighting students' actual work and learning abilities. Third, the OBE concept emphasizes proficiency in teaching content, that is, the final result of teaching is that students are proficient in the subject content and can apply what they have learned. Fourth, the OBE concept emphasizes performance responsibility. Colleges and universities attach importance to learning effectiveness and are responsible for subject construction, they need to provide specific basis for evaluation and improvement. Fifth, the OBE concept emphasizes the importance of students' abilities. Education should provide students with the ability to adapt to future life. Educational goals should list specific core abilities. Each core ability should have clear requirements. Each requirement should have detailed corresponding courses [2].

### 1.2 Requirements of OBE concept

#### 1.2.1 Education process must be clearly focused

Clear focus is the most important and basic principle among the OBE implementation principles. It requires that the educational process of colleges and universities should always clearly focus on the final learning results that students can achieve after they complete the learning process and practice the teaching content. It also requires students to focus their learning goals on their own professional skills. Teachers must clearly explain and devote themselves to expanding students' professional knowledge and practical abilities throughout education process, and they should also clarify students' development paths to achieve the ultimate goal of higher education.

#### 1.2.2 Education and teaching standards must be improved

On the one hand, colleges and universities and subject teachers should raise expectations for student learning, formulate challenging implementation standards to encourage students' in-depth and practical learning. On the other hand, they should also work out high implementation standards to encourage students to complete the basic learning process and then move on to higher-level standards, such as adding high-level courses to expand students' knowledge base.

#### 1.2.3 Learning opportunities must be created for students

The ultimate goal of the OBE concept is to realize the actual output of education, which requires colleges and universities to fully consider the individual differences of each student in curriculum design and teaching, and to ensure that each student achieves learning outcomes in terms of time and resources. Colleges and universities and subject teachers should adapt to students' individual requirements in a more flexible manner, giving students the opportunity to demonstrate their learning results.

## 2. Existing problems in comprehensive English teaching

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### **2.1 Focusing on test-taking and despising practicality**

Strengthening the teaching of theoretical knowledge and how to deal with various English exams are what traditional comprehensive English classes pay more attention to. Teachers integrate and sort out theoretical knowledge such as English language logic and English grammar, and use the classroom to instill knowledge into students, laying the foundation for students to effectively deal with the corresponding examination, which is the final teaching goal of the course. In addition to professional teaching, comprehensive English is responsible for undertaking related work in high school English teaching ideas and models. College students have already experienced intense college entrance examination review before entering campus, so their enthusiasm for learning English continues to decrease after coming to college. When faced with the same indoctrination teaching method in comprehensive English classes, they lack enthusiasm for learning in this area. The current comprehensive English teaching still retains the original teaching model, and in the teaching, it fails to increase the training of students' language and communicative skills. Students are still relatively good at English written examinations but are full of anxiety and fear about daily applications and training. This situation leads to the contradiction between comprehensive English teaching and the educational essence of applying what you have learned.

### **2.2 Teaching concepts need to be updated**

Traditional teaching concepts still exist in comprehensive English teaching, and many colleges and universities and subject teachers have insufficient awareness of updating their concepts. In teaching, teachers have always adhered to middle school teaching concepts and failed to use unique teaching concepts. In this case, teachers still use backward methods to teach. There is also insufficient innovation in course teaching links, such as study preview, teacher explanation, and after-class practice. Moreover, many teaching links are repeated, such as text analysis and grammar explanation. Usually, the teaching process is dominated by one subject teacher giving the main explanation, and the students just follow the teacher to learn relevant knowledge. The final effect of this method is that the students lack enthusiasm for active learning. In a single teaching method, teaching is mainly combined with subject examination-oriented education, and students can only gain some theoretical knowledge and question-answering skills but cannot truly and effectively master a foreign language. Subject teachers lack initiative awareness in the process of updating teaching methods and continue to use rigid teaching methods. There is insufficient positive interaction between teachers and students, and they are unable to obtain better teaching feedback. This creates a vicious cycle over a long period of time, which directly leads to the decline of teaching quality.

### **2.3 The teaching model is relatively simple**

In comprehensive English teaching, the main instructor is still the subject teacher, and the students passively accept the transfer of knowledge, whereas the teacher's teaching time is relatively short. Teaching is usually carried out in the form of large class lectures combined with this method, so that the teacher cannot effectively understand the individual learning situation and differences among students. Moreover, teachers rely more on teaching time in this method of teaching. Generally, they prepare teaching content according to the level of students. However, for students with weak foundation, such learning is very difficult, and some students with good English foundation cannot be reasonably expanded, thereby affecting students' actual learning effects. When teachers evaluate course quality, they focus on test paper scores, which is not conducive to reflecting the true situation of students' language application abilities. Many teachers lack the application of current teaching methods and have not combined OBE concepts and teaching models to carry out all-round teaching for students, thus affecting the actual teaching effect and adversely impacting the cultivation of students' various abilities [3].

## **3. The importance of introducing OBE concept into comprehensive English teaching**

Since the OBE model is based on the educational concept of "being student-centered and output-oriented", it is very different from the traditional educational model, such as different course objectives, different arrangements for teaching results, and different teaching evaluations [4]. Therefore, its introduction has injected new vitality into comprehensive English teaching, resulting in the following changes.

### **3.1 Improving the practicality of English language application**

Comprehensive English teaching aims to cultivate students' comprehensive language application ability. However, in the long-term practice of English teaching, teachers often focus on cultivating students' reading, writing and translation abilities, and neglect the cultivation of listening and speaking abilities, resulting in students' inability to communicate orally in English. Through the OBE model, teachers can adopt various teaching activities to guide students to display their learning outcomes in the form of oral expression, such as presentation, group discussion, debate, and situational performance, so as to improve the practicality of language application.

### **3.2 Improving teaching quality**

The rise and development of the Internet and the prevalence of the OBE concept have provided new opportunities for the development of comprehensive English. The OBE concept always revolves around the core idea of being output-oriented. To enrich the teaching content, teachers will make full use of the Internet to collect many high-quality resources, expand classroom knowledge, and increase students' opportunities to learn English, so that students can better output learning results, thus further improving the quality of teaching.

### **3.3 Creating opportunities for students to learn**

The OBE concept emphasizes that every student, no matter what level he is at or what method he uses to learn, can achieve learning success. Its ultimate goal is to encourage students to produce and manifest their learning results, which undoubtedly creates learning opportunities for students.

## **4. Design of comprehensive English teaching model under the OBE concept**

### **4.1 Determining course objectives**

The course teaching objectives should be determined in combination with the research on the enterprises' and universities' talent training objectives as well as students under the framework of national guiding documents. In order to ensure the learning effect, comprehensive English can be taught in different levels according to the students' English foundation and learning ability, that is, one course can set multiple teaching objectives [5].

### **4.2 Determining the teaching content**

After determining the teaching objectives, the teaching and learning content should be designed accordingly. The teaching content must support the teaching objectives so that students can apply the teaching content to accumulate knowledge and improve their abilities. If the course sets teaching objectives with different levels, the teaching resources must also be designed accordingly to ensure the learning effect of students.

### **4.3 Designing teaching methods and classroom activities**

An effective comprehensive English teaching model is to organically combine online self-learning, peer learning, and teacher classroom teaching and guidance. Relying on modern educational technology, traditional teaching methods will also be more efficient and produce better results. However, the development of teaching activities under this model must first rely on students' better self-learning results and teachers' more efficient teaching activity design. In the process of teaching design, teachers must fully consider how to combine high-level, innovative, and challenging teaching content. In addition, interactivity, fun, and timely evaluation feedback are also necessary requirements for teaching activity design.

### **4.4 Providing teaching support resources**

In order to better support the goals of teaching and learning, teachers must provide students with sufficient learning resources. These resources should include but are not limited to teaching plans, self-study guides, courseware, knowledge point micro-classes, assessment and evaluation questions, and supporting self-study platform systems. These resources should be classified according to the students' foundation and goals as well as essential resources and expansion resources, so that students can conduct self-study based on their own needs.

### **4.5 Evaluating course learning effects**

The evaluation of course learning effects should include formative evaluation and summative evaluation [6]. Formative evaluation should be designed to evaluate students' daily learning performance and learning outcomes. Formative evaluation can not only evaluate students' learning effects, but also serve as a tool for teachers to supervise students' learning process and encourage students to improve their learning effects to ensure the achievement of the final teaching objectives. Summative evaluation must correspond to the teaching objectives. As an important part of the OBE teaching model, the evaluation of the final learning effect should be based on the learning effect of the knowledge points. The assessment method is designed for the learning effect of specific knowledge points in the teaching objectives, and the results can be used to evaluate the final learning effect of students and make sustainable improvements to the teaching process.

## **5. Course design sample**

The comprehensive English teaching process is mainly divided into three stages: before class, during class and after class. In the pre-class stage, students only need to complete the self-learning content of the course according to the teacher's arrangement. According to the course teaching content, it generally includes self-learning of words, grammar, vocabulary, micro-class learning of writing knowledge, text reading, and marking and recording of difficult and good sentences. In this process, the teacher will monitor the students' online learning time, learning progress, self-learning effect and collect students' questions through the teaching platform. With these questions, the teacher conducts classroom activities. Classroom activities may include vocabulary testing, difficult sentence analysis, viewpoint expression, oral dialogue, etc. Through classroom activities, teachers test students' self-learning effects, solve key points and difficulties, promote the transformation of knowledge into skills, and give play to the mechanism of peer evaluation to stimulate students' learning enthusiasm, and finally complete the teaching objectives of the class. During the course teaching process, the teacher, as the organizer and manager of classroom activities, will moderately hand over the role of the main speaker to the students, and the students will express, explain, ask questions and evaluate, and the students' main position will be prominent. The teacher, as the commentator, gives the final evaluation and feedback. After class, students complete homework as required and preview the content of the next class. In this closed-loop process, the content learned by students is highly consistent with the teaching objectives, and is constantly reinforced through classroom activities and homework, thus finishing the complete learning process of previewing, reinforcing, internalizing and forming skills.

## **6. Evaluation of learning effect**

Under the OBE concept, the output of the learning effect is the most critical link. In order to obtain satisfactory learning effects, the course objectives, teaching process, learning resources and assessment mode should be designed and implemented in an integrated manner. The content taught by teachers, the content learned by students, and the content of exercises and assessments must be highly consistent. As the last link of teaching, the evaluation system of the course is also crucial. In order to stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning and be able to evaluate teaching objectives in multiple dimensions, it is necessary to design a multi-dimensional evaluation system. This system should include formative assessment and summative assessment systems. Formative assessment can use big data to evaluate students' learning process, including the evaluation of stage learning outcomes. Evaluation data can come from records of the system platform and stage tests. Through formative assessment, not only can feedback be given on the achievement of stage goals, but also the achievement of some soft teaching goals, such as learning attitude, critical thinking ability and other goals.

The summative assessment is mainly based on ability testing, and test questions are designed according to knowledge points. It can also directly feedback the achievement of knowledge points by using data analysis to provide quantitative and qualitative analysis and guidance for students' learning effects.

### 7. The challenges and the corresponding solutions of the application of the OBE concept in the comprehensive English teaching.

In recent years, the OBE concept has had a huge impact on comprehensive English teaching. With the continuous attempts of a large number of teachers, the OBE concept seems to have been "effectively" applied to some aspects of comprehensive English teaching. However, in essence, there are many problems in the current teaching reform based on the OBE concept. Below I will analyze these problems from the relevant aspects of the OBE pyramid structure (Figure 1).

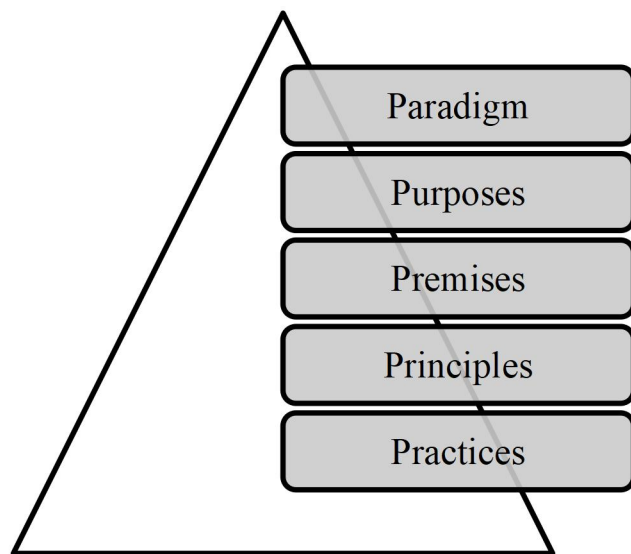


Figure 1: OBE Pyramid Structure

#### 7.1 Challenges in the application of the OBE concept in comprehensive English

First, the incomplete establishment of the premise of the OBE concept leads to uncertainty in the results of talent training. The application of the OBE concept is based on a premise, which is that every student has talent, learning is a cooperative process rather than a competitive one, and the role of schools and teachers is to find a way for students to succeed. The methodology involved in the OBE concept is extended based on this premise, so are it good promotion and application. Only when teaching resources and students' subjectivity are coordinated with each other can its ideal results be achieved. However, this premise will not be fully established in reality due to reasons such as insufficient resources, inadequate coordination of various parts, and students' ideological awareness not meeting the standards. Ultimately, the promotion of the OBE concept cannot be accurately positioned, precisely measured and comprehensively evaluated from the beginning. Therefore, the results of the application of the OBE concept have a certain degree of uncontrollability, and whether it is successful in the cultivation of applied talents is also uncertain.

Second, the difficulty of measuring some specific abilities of students under the control of OBE implementation vision and framework leads to the incoordination of various links in the course construction of comprehensive English. In the construction, the teaching team formulates teaching objectives, conducts teaching design, organizes teaching process, etc. around the cultivation of students' specific abilities as well as runs teaching evaluation according to pre-established standards. However, due to the diversity of students' abilities, among which many abilities, such as logical and abstract thinking, are difficult to accurately evaluate, so it is difficult to determine whether students have met the standards of applied talents through learning during the teaching process. In the end, the various links in the course construction of comprehensive English will be unbalanced due to the difficulty in controlling some links, which will hinder the promotion of the OBE concept.

Third, the subjectivity of students and the variability of the environment may cause the pre-established teaching strategies and self-evaluation systems to fail to adapt to the current teaching needs, resulting in the failure to achieve the expected teaching effect. Guided by expected results, OBE's educational philosophy encourages reverse teaching design based on expected results, clearly defining teaching results, clarifying teaching strategies, and setting up a self-reference evaluation system in advance. However, in the entire process of pursuing expected results, students may deviate from the teacher's preset teaching process due to their subjective initiative. If some teaching strategies are not adjusted in time, there is a risk that they may not be suitable for teaching at the current stage. Even changes in the environment and the growth of students' ideological cognition will affect the teaching process and evaluation system [7]. All of the above risks will lead to the failure to fully achieve the expected teaching results.

#### 7.2 Solutions to the challenges

In view of the problems existing in the OBE concept in comprehensive English teaching, I think the following countermeasures should be taken.

First, a special OBE education concept promotion organization should be established to be responsible for the overall design, promotion and coordination. The promotion and application of the OBE concept has a great positive effect on the cultivation of applied talents. However, it is also a systematic project, requiring a full investigation on the school itself and the external environment during the promotion. An application model with its own characteristics according to the school's own situation and the current situation of our country's education system should be designed. This is not something that can be accomplished by a teacher, a major or a department, the cooperation of various administrative departments and teaching departments is urgently needed. Therefore, a special promotion organization is particularly important.

Second, before promoting the OBE concept, relevant training should be provided to students and teachers. The promotion of the OBE concept is to promote the transformation of the teacher-centered education model to the student-centered education model. In this process of transformation, teachers need to fully understand the true connotation of the OBE concept, so that they can design their own classes according to the overall curriculum system, encourage and guide students to exert their subjective initiative in the classroom, and truly return time to students. At the same time, students are also required to be talented and have a strong spirit of active learning. Therefore, before the OBE concept is truly promoted, teachers and students need to be specially trained. The main contents of teacher training include the connotation of the OBE concept, the main details and key indicators in the implementation of the OBE concept, and the control methods of uncertain factors in the implementation of the OBE concept [8]. The main purpose of student training is to enable students to understand the teacher's teaching process and encourage students to give full play to their subjective initiative and actively integrate into the self-centered classroom.

Third, enhancing communication and cooperation between colleges and universities to achieve resource sharing. The environment in which each school is located is different. This difference will also lead to the commonality of each school in the reform of comprehensive English teaching with other schools, as well as its own characteristics. The comprehensive English teaching reform under the OBE concept will have different performances in different schools in our country, so colleges and universities should strengthen mutual communication and exchanges, being able to achieve resource sharing and complete it together. The promotion and application of the OBE concept in various colleges and universities will promote the development of English education in our country. Of course, while learning from each other, colleges and universities should also pay attention to their own characteristics, capable of adjusting strategies that are not suitable for their own development in a timely manner to achieve the reform of the comprehensive English education model under the OBE concept with their own characteristics.

Fourth, colleges and universities should improve the promotion mechanism of the OBE concept, dredge feedback channels, and enhance their resilience in the reform of the OBE education model. A perfect promotion mechanism will help enhance the coordination between relevant departments, simplify the administrative process during the reform process, and improve the efficiency of the reform. Smooth feedback channels will help to timely discover and solve problems at all stages of the comprehensive English teaching reform, which can help solve problems that are off track and ensure the realization of the expected teaching effects.

## 8. Conclusion

The thesis talks about the problems with the contemporary comprehensive English teaching model and the necessity and ways to carry out the OBE concept in comprehensive English teaching. Also, the challenges and corresponding solutions of applying the OBE concept in comprehensive English teaching are elaborated. Apart from these aspects, we can still delve deeper into the OBE concept concerning such topics as the combination of technology and the OBE concept, training of students' cross-cultural competence, integration of the OBE concept with different disciplines and balance between localization and globalization.

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