

# Implementation and Strategies of English Major Teacher Autonomy Development

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## Abstract

Autonomous development is the core of teacher's professional growth, it emphasizes the teacher's subjectivity in professional growth, so that teachers become the master of their own professional development. In the field of English education, the development of teacher autonomy is particularly important, because it is not only related to the personal growth of teachers, but also affects the learning effect of students. This paper will explore in depth the importance, challenges, strategies and practices of the development of English teachers' autonomy, in order to provide useful references for the professional development of English teachers.

## Keywords

Learner Autonomy; Teacher Autonomy; Professional Development.

## 1. Introduction

Teacher autonomy is a derivative of learner autonomy, and learner autonomy has long been the focus of education. Under the guidance of constructivism theory, a large number of educators have practiced the learner-centered teaching principle in their teaching practice, committed to fully mobilizing learners' subjectivity and strengthening the educational concept of students' lifelong learning. In this process, through teaching reflection and teaching analysis, teachers themselves are constantly conducting self-assessment, and on this basis, they carry out targeted self-adjustment and independent learning. Therefore, teacher autonomy is actually an extension of learner autonomy and an important part of learner autonomy. Teachers themselves are both teachers and learners. Basically, teacher autonomy can be understood as teachers guiding and cultivating students' learner autonomy through continuous self-directed development. In other words, teacher autonomy can be basically understood as teachers' self-development and self-enterprising under the inspiration of their own sense of responsibility. It should be emphasized that, however, teacher autonomy is not completely unrestricted autonomy. Teacher autonomy is limited autonomy under certain ideology and restricted by educational policies and systems.

## 2. The Importance of Autonomy Development for English Major Teachers

The English major has its own particularity. Since most of the English major teachers in China are non-native speakers, there is a huge difference between the second language and the mother tongue, and the conflict between the Western culture carried by English and the Eastern culture of Chinese is intense, the importance of the independent development of English major teachers is more prominent.

### 2.1. Requirements of Curriculum Reform on the Autonomy Development of English Major Teachers

Under the current international political background, to deepen the ideological and political education of college students, we must base on the educational essence of moral cultivation,

firmly grasp the central link of curriculum reform, combine professional knowledge teaching, actively exert the education function of classroom teaching, fulfill the responsibility of teachers, and realize the organic combination of education and talent. Curriculum reform means the change of educational structure, curriculum thinking and politics are committed to the construction of professional knowledge, the shaping of students' outlook on life, values and world outlook, and the cultivation of students' autonomous ability, so that the three are no longer in a separate state, but organically integrated together, forming a teaching pattern of all teaching staff, all subject courses and all teaching processes. Therefore, the combination of education and talent, moral education and intellectual education are related, is the general direction of teacher autonomy development.

## **2.2. The Innovation of Educational Technology to the Independent Development of English Major Teachers**

With the rapid development of science and technology, technologies such as Web2.0, Web3.0, Bluetooth, 5G, virtual reality and Internet + , they are changing with each passing day. These technologies not only enrich the cultural life, but also promote the innovation of educational technology by leaps and bounds. In fact, since the advent of radio, telephone, television and computer, science and technology have been the driving force for the advancement of educational technology and have made great contributions to the enrichment of teaching methods and the improvement of teaching standards. In the face of such rapid development of science and technology, if teachers want to keep up with the tide of scientific and technological progress, it is obviously unrealistic to completely rely on the training of schools, society and the state, because not only the investment cost is high, but also the training cycle is too long. Teachers can only keep up with the pace of The Times through independent development.

## **2.3. The Promotion of Independent Development of English Major Teachers in the New Era**

In the past, due to the number of teachers in our country, the high cost of teacher education and the scarcity of educational resources, the construction of teacher teams can only be strengthened step by step. In the new era of Internet + , the cost of development and construction of resources is getting lower and lower, and education resources have entered the era of abundance. The state policy has clarified the importance and requirements of the Party and the state on teacher education, and made it clear that comprehensively strengthening the construction of teachers is a major political task and a fundamental livelihood project.

## **3. Challenges in the Development of English Major Teachers' Autonomy**

How to realize the autonomy development of English major teachers efficiently and scientifically is an important topic in front of educators. In fact, the current situation of the development of English major teacher autonomy in our country has not reached the expected result, which is caused by both the teacher's own factors and the external factors of the objective environment.

### **3.1. Learning Concept**

Despite the rapid development of The Times, the learning ideas of some English major teachers are still stuck in the traditional stage. Many people believe that the further development of teachers should be the overall planning of the state, education commissions at all levels, schools and departments, and individuals only need to obey the arrangement and participate in professional training, which is to do their duty. Therefore, as learners, in terms of learning and career development, many English teachers can't talk about learners' autonomy at all. They are used to passive acceptance, lack of learning motivation and lack of subjective initiative.

### 3.2. Educational Concept

Even with the deepening and development of the teaching reform in colleges and universities, some teachers still adhere to the traditional teaching concept, thinking that teachers are the absolute authority in the classroom, and students are passive knowledge recipients, with insufficient understanding of students' subjectivity. Therefore, the improvement of students' English communicative ability and the cultivation of their critical thinking ability are seriously insufficient. As a result, students' interest in the curriculum is getting worse and worse, and teachers' motivation for teaching knowledge is getting lower and lower, so they become more and more anxious and slack. As a teacher, the lagging education concept will seriously affect the future career development.

### 3.3. Teaching and Research Level

Some English major teachers are unable to meet their professional needs in terms of educational theory. Besides language expertise, many teachers lack knowledge of other relevant subjects, teaching theories and teaching strategies, and pay insufficient attention to teaching and research. They can only carry out basic theoretical research without statistical knowledge and cannot provide data support for research. Their practical ability is determined by their theoretical level. Lacking in theoretical level, these teachers naturally do not know how to integrate teaching and teaching research organically, and it is impossible to promote teaching with teaching research.

### 3.4. Educational Technology

Technological progress has always been a powerful driving force to promote the reform of teaching mode. From the four treasures of the Study to movable type printing, from chalkboards to copier projectors, from radio telephones to television computers, throughout human history, every technological progress has brought important innovative ideas to the teaching concept. But there are still some teachers think that these are just flashy things, the teaching process can not play a substantial role in improving, not only rarely introduce new teaching technology in teaching, teaching software familiarity is low, the degree of attention to multimedia teaching seriously insufficient. In fact, with the development of The Times, both online and offline hybrid teaching has gradually become popular and normalized. If English major teachers fail to fully grasp the necessary teaching technology, not only will the teaching mode become more and more single, but also the teaching quality will be affected.

### 3.5. Environmental Factors

The teaching goal of English majors is to cultivate students' language quality and communication ability. However, at present, both schools and employers mainly rely on the scores of TEM-4 and Translation Qualification examination to assess students' English proficiency. This results in the disconnection between the English teaching environment, the English assessment environment and the English use environment. Under the restriction of such contradictory environmental factors, English major teachers are often confused in the process of independent development, thus losing the direction of career development.

### 3.6. Institutional Factors

Although China encourages teachers' independent development in the general direction, teaching is often not paid enough attention to in the specific system of colleges and universities. The most typical example is the evaluation of professional titles in colleges and universities, which only focuses on scientific research and ignores teaching. To a large extent, the system plays an important guiding role in the professional development of teachers, and the lack of relevant system will play a misleading role.

## **4. Strategies and Practices for the Independent Development of English Major Teachers**

### **4.1. Policy Support and Resource Construction**

The government and relevant departments should play an active role in promoting the autonomous development of English teachers. Provide policy support and resource guarantee, such as setting up special funds for teachers' professional training and academic exchanges; Encouraging schools to provide teachers with space and time for independent study and research; And inspire teachers' willingness to develop independently through such means as project guidance.

### **4.2. English Teaching Concept**

The low level of teaching can be continuously improved through study and practice, but the lack of teaching concepts will bring serious obstacles to the professional development of teachers. Therefore, teachers of English majors should first establish the student-centered teaching concept and establish the dominant position of students in teaching. The teaching concept's cognition of English professional knowledge and teaching will directly affect the important factors such as how teachers position themselves and how to grasp the position of students in teaching. Students are not passive receivers of knowledge, but have initiative and exploration spirit. The role of teachers is to stimulate students' learning motivation and help them build professional knowledge system in the process of communication and cooperation. In this process, teachers must abandon the traditional idea that they are the absolute authority in the classroom and the disseminator of knowledge, and actively learn without interruption to achieve independent development.

Due to the particularity of the subject, English majors are at the junction of the conflict of Eastern and Western cultures and the great integration of nationalities. English teaching is bound to touch the Western cultural system and ideology. It is the duty and obligation of every English teacher to deepen curriculum reform and actively carry out ideological and political education while teaching knowledge for English majors. In order to cultivate qualified foreign language talents for the country, English major teachers should constantly innovate their teaching concepts and deepen ideological and political education, so as to improve their ability of educating students and talents.

### **4.3. Improve the Scientific Research Level**

Many English major teachers are afraid of teaching scientific research and think that their level is not competent, which is actually a misunderstanding of scientific research. To carry out scientific research, we can not only explore the general direction from the macro level, but also verify small details from the micro level. For the new teaching theories at home and abroad, we can actively carry out further empirical research, apply them to teaching, and make statistical analysis of relevant data, and finally form our own scientific research results. This kind of research is not very difficult, and it is very operable. Interactive teaching and research is an embedded learning method, which means learning in research. It can help teachers achieve scientific research in teaching, study in research and improve in study. Such a virtuous circle is bound to greatly strengthen the scientific research level and teaching ability of teachers, and truly achieve a qualitative leap in the development of teachers' autonomy.

### **4.4. Improve English Network Intelligent Teaching Ability**

The development of many educational technologies can not only help teachers learn and practice courses independently through mobile learning, but also help students realize learner autonomy through mobile teaching. Teachers can use the network teaching platform to build an online learning community with students, so as to create a good atmosphere for learning

and communication, improve the effect of independent learning, not only allow teachers to learn and teach online, but also realize the modular customization of learning resources, instant push of teaching content, and build a dynamic and diversified teaching evaluation system. Smart phones also enable teachers and students to realize the fragmented needs of online learning. Various network intelligent teaching platforms have completely broken the shackles of classroom teaching and reduced the restrictions of time and space on teaching to the lowest point.

It can be seen that the improvement of teaching by educational technology is multi-dimensional and all-round. From the presentation of teaching content to the upgrading of educational concepts, from the organizational form of teaching to the development of teaching evaluation, the role of educational technology is getting bigger and more obvious. If teachers fail to keep up with the pace of The Times, timely grasp the relevant educational technology and apply it to teaching, It will sooner or later affect the overall teaching level of colleges and universities.

Therefore, English major teachers must, according to the characteristics of English majors and the teaching needs, independently choose the science and technology that can promote foreign language teaching for in-depth understanding and deepening learning, enrich online teaching methods, develop online teaching resources, form a foreign language learning community, construct a virtual scene of foreign language practice, and mobilize the enthusiasm and initiative of students in independent learning. Thus, the independent ability and level of students and learners can be improved at the same time as the independent development of teachers.

#### **4.5. Constant Teaching Reflection**

Wallace describes the process of teacher development as a continuous cycle of teaching practice and reflection. Teaching reflection is the primary link of teachers' independent development, and it is teachers' self-criticism of their own teaching, their speculations on teaching, and their self-evaluation of teaching. The purpose is to finally achieve the sublimation of teaching through scientific adjustment and systematic learning. Benefiting from the development of multimedia technology, teachers can convert their own teaching process into video materials, carry out all-round and multi-dimensional reflection on teaching anytime and anywhere, analyze the teaching content, teaching links, teaching organization, teaching strategy, teaching activities and teaching evaluation of each lesson, and find out the problems and then solve them. The reflection on teaching is a circular process of practice-reflection-readjusting-practice, which gradually realizes the improvement of teaching ability and teaching level.

After teaching, students' feedback opinions on teaching can be understood through anonymous questionnaire survey or marking sheet, etc. Students are the real subject of teaching, and they have the most say whether teachers teach well or not. Through the feedback of students, teachers can easily find the most prominent problems and advantages in their own teaching.

In addition, the teaching videos can also be provided to other English major teachers who teach parallel classes, and even to foreign schools and foreign experts for observation and evaluation. Teachers can gradually form their own teaching concepts and teaching styles through positive feedback and criticism from peers.

#### **4.6. Improve Relevant Systems**

Building a good management mechanism is an important guarantee for the effective implementation of the teacher self-development training mode. Ministries and commissions at all levels of the state and colleges and universities have always paid attention to the formulation of education systems and teaching regulations. With the deepening of education reform, various rules and regulations, including the evaluation system, have been constantly improved. More and more attention has been paid to teaching and relevant investment has been increasing. The

improvement of the relevant system will greatly mobilize the enthusiasm and initiative of teachers' independent development.

#### 4.7. Successful Experience

There are many successful cases of English teacher autonomy development at home and abroad, such as the growth experience of a famous English educator and the reform of English teaching in an international school. From these successful cases, we can learn advanced teaching concepts and methods, and at the same time learn how to overcome difficulties and challenges in career development. By learning from successful experiences, teachers can make fewer detours and faster to achieve personal and professional development goals

On the one hand, education and teaching system is a constraint on teachers, on the other hand, it also points out the direction of professional development for teachers. Teachers must give full play to their autonomy and organize English teaching flexibly on the premise of not violating the relevant system. The teaching content is limited, but teachers have full autonomy in how to present the teaching content, how to help students build professional knowledge structure, and how to assess and evaluate.

### 5. Summary

The independent development of English major teachers is the key factor to improve their personal quality and professional competitiveness. As an extended concept of learner autonomy, teacher autonomy has become an important part of educational philosophy. In order to achieve their own professional development, English major teachers should not only constantly reflect on themselves throughout their life, constantly improve their own quality and constantly improve their teaching level, but also constantly reform and innovate their teaching concepts under the guidance of teachers' independent educational concepts, so as to help students cultivate and improve the ability of learners to be independent. To form a virtuous cycle of continuous development and improvement of teachers' and students' autonomy. English major teachers must attach great importance to the educational concept of teacher autonomy, and realize the development of teacher autonomy through multiple channels and approaches in an all-round way, so as to realize the organic combination of personal career development and the overall improvement of English major education. At the same time, teachers should pay attention to the future trends in the field of education, and constantly update their own knowledge system and teaching concepts, so as to make contributions to the cultivation of internationally competitive English talents.

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