

# The Effect of "Double Reduction" Policy on the Professional Identity of Pre-service English Teachers

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**Abstract:** Education is the foundation of national development, and the teacher is critical to education. Because of the double reduction policy and education reform, the Chinese government has increased demands for teachers. The government supports the training, attaches great importance to teachers' moral and spiritual formation, and improves their professional skills. Teachers are an essential factor in policy enforcement. For pre-service English teachers, the policy impacts their professional identity. This paper proposes ways to improve the professional identity of English teachers, reduce fatigue, and improve teacher well-being.

## 1. Introduction

The "double reduction policy" aims to ease the burden of excessive homework and off-campus tutoring for students undergoing compulsory education. According to Article 24 of the "Opinions on Further Reducing the Burden of Homework and Off-campus Training for Students in Compulsory Education," the government strongly opposed off-campus training. It advocates re-examining and registering existing discipline-based training institutions, phasing them out, and solving the problem of too many tutoring institutions.

In the context of "burden reduction," quality has become a top priority. The essence of "double reduction" is to create a good educational environment, establish a correct educational concept, and let students admire life. It can be analyzed from the two aspects. On the one hand, from the school's perspective, implementing a new policy can reduce the pressure on students.

On the other hand, from the teachers' perspective, teachers are responsible for implementing the "double reduction" policy. Therefore, parents and schools have higher expectations for teachers. Teachers' attitudes and identification directly affect the effects of policies.

To sum up, the "double reduction" policy and teachers' professional identity influence each other.

## 2. An Analysis of the Impact of the Double Reduction Policy on the Professional Identity of Pre-service English Teachers

Pre-service English teachers are prospective teachers who have formally entered the teaching field. The practice of the "double reduction" policy has a specific impact on the pre-service English teachers and their professional identity.

### 2.1 Positive Influence

#### 2.1.1 Enriching Knowledge Reserve

After the implementation of the "double reduction" policy, the school has formulated various teaching programs. For example, higher demands are placed on the design, preparation, and effectiveness of instruction in English classes. Therefore, teachers must enrich their knowledge reserves and improve their professional quality. Professional identity is the expression of individual teachers' activities, knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes related to their teaching. It is the continuous interpretation and acquisition of meaning for teachers' professional experience and values. Usually, schools will provide pre-service English teachers with the learning and practice of English theoretical

knowledge, professional knowledge, and English education practice. English teachers need to enrich English teaching methods and enhance their professional skills. In addition, they need to take the concept of "double reduction" into practice. Reflective learning and innovative learning are also required [1]. At the same time, pre-service English teachers should learn from excellent teachers, read books, understand the background of the "double reduction" policy, watch outstanding teachers' competitions, and share their experiences with others. Only by continuously enriching their knowledge reserves can they cope with the "double reduction" policy and improve their sense of responsibility and identity [2].

### **2.1.2 Training of Teaching Skills**

The "double reduction" puts forward higher requirements for pre-service English teachers. From content such as lesson preparation, design, and lectures, pre-service English teachers spend much time researching English teaching. Reviewing the literature, we found that if teachers have a positive cognition and identification with their profession and internalized roles, it will promote their self-development. For instance, with enthusiasm for the education industry, people will devote themselves to teaching work. Therefore, for pre-service teachers, professional identity will affect their career choices. In addition, teachers' satisfaction with these policies will affect their identification with the industry. It is fortunate that after the implementation of the "double reduction" policy, pre-service English teachers have a more profound sense of professional identity. Various activities, such as simulated classrooms, teaching research, and homework design, are conducive to the training of teaching skills [3].

### **2.1.3 Improvement of Professional Literacy**

First, pre-service English teachers must have English education literacy and solid teaching experience. It is necessary for them to understand the latest education policy of the country. In addition, it is necessary to acquire basic knowledge such as educational psychology and pedagogy. Several experiments in this area now confirm two relationships. Skinner and Leavey conducted a qualitative study on thirty-nine teachers and six school leaders. They found that the lack of support in the educational policy would decrease teachers' professional identity [4]. Yao Chong et al. used the questionnaire method to study 839 pre-service teachers. The study shows that satisfaction with educational policies positively predicts teachers' professional identity. After studying 743 pre-service teachers, Zhao and Zhang found that pre-service teachers' satisfaction with the policy was significantly positively correlated with professional identity.

## **2.2 Negative Influence**

### **2.2.1 Aggravated Learning Task**

The "double reduction" policy puts forward higher requirements on the professional level and teaching of pre-service English teachers. To achieve the teaching goal, teachers need to enrich their knowledge and carry out systematic learning from preparation, teaching, and reflection. The study of pre-service English teachers includes professional skills, educational laws, and educational professionalism. The "double reduction" policy requires teachers to streamline the class, which also brings difficulties to the teaching work of pre-service English teachers.

### **2.2.2 A State of Exhaustion**

The "double reduction" policy also harms pre-service education. While it provides space for teachers to learn, it also creates stress. For teachers, this means increasing planning assignments and improving teaching. The increased workload and training tasks have increased the psychological pressure on teachers. When teaching results are poor, teachers will experience severe stress. Then, with strict limits on student assignments, they could not assign assignments that complied with the policy. In general, the pressure comes from two aspects. First, teachers are concerned about unfair assignments of homework. Second, the amount of homework is small, and the students' review effect needs to be more satisfactory.

### **2.2.3 Increased Satisfaction**

As we all know, various factors affect pre-service teachers' professional identity. Among them, satisfaction includes internal, external, and overall satisfaction. We mentioned that heavy learning tasks and physical fatigue would reduce teachers' sense of professional identity and affect their judgment of professional value. In addition, factors that reduce teachers' sense of professional identity include heavy educational workloads and low salary levels.

## **3. Give Play to the Role of the Double Reduction Policy and Reduce the Work of Pre-service teachers**

Pre-service English teachers are transmitters of knowledge and individuals with independent personalities. Therefore, to improve English teaching, the country needs to improve the happiness and satisfaction of pre-service English teachers. This paper suggests three aspects to increase satisfaction: simplifying teacher tasks, improving teacher training and management, and stimulating teachers' work motivation.

### **3.1 Streamlining the Tasks of Pre-service Teachers**

The "double reduction" policy mainly affects the pre-service teacher's lesson preparation activities, assignments, teaching, and research in a simulation. These are primarily preparatory rather than teaching contents. It requires schools to clarify the primary and secondary training, streamlining unnecessary learning tasks. The government's document, "Teacher Workload and Working Hours Policy," states clearly: "Lesson preparation for pre-service teachers need not be complicated. Individualized learning and lesson should be practiced." Therefore, in the practical activities of pre-service English teachers, managers should reduce unnecessary and cumbersome assessments and unnecessary meetings. These measures reduce the psychological pressure on English teachers during the learning and training process, help strengthen their professional identity, and enable them to enjoy the benefits of being an English teacher. In addition, they will be more satisfied with their profession [6].

### **3.2 Improvement of Training and Management**

To improve the professional ability of pre-service English teachers, the school has increased the training of pre-service English teachers. Scientific and practical pre-service education training can improve the ability of English teachers. Its purpose is good, and it will help pre-service English teachers get rid of confusion and better devote themselves to teaching. However, in implementation, the distribution of tasks is unbalanced, resulting in harm to the professional identity of pre-service English teachers [7].

Given the above problems, school administrators should improve the management of pre-service English teacher training and well formulate training plans. The plan can be carried out in the following steps. First, pre-service English teachers have a basic understanding of educational policies and their professional development. Then, the school conducts knowledge training. This initiative is conducive to helping pre-service English teachers better understand their work, arrange education and teaching, and increase their recognition.

### **3.3 Stimulation of Teachers' Working Motivation**

The professional identity of pre-service English teachers depends on teachers' motivation and development force. Mr. Pan believes that the work motivation of pre-service English teachers can be divided into external and internal motivation. The "double reduction" policy mainly affects the external motivation of teachers, that is, non-material rewards and punishments, the development of English education, training assessment, salary, and social evaluation. Based on the self-actualization motivation in the famous Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, internal motivation is direct work motivation. The school environment, training activities, and colleague relationships have greatly stimulated pre-service teachers' work motivation and professional identity. As a result, combining the double-reduction policy and English teaching work has improved teachers' sense of efficacy.

#### 4. Conclusion

In summary, pre-service English teachers are an integral part of the school teaching team and a great talent. Teachers' professional identities need to be strengthened. In implementing the "double reduction" policy, English teachers should consider many factors. In short, the Double reduction policy has more strengths than weaknesses in terms of its impact on English teachers' professional identities. As pre-service English teachers in the new era, only by acknowledging their identity can they take on the task and responsibility of teaching, love learning, and making progress in their education.

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