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## **FACTORS FOR THE FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN CHINESE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

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## **ФАКТОРЫ СТАНОВЛЕНИЯ И РАЗВИТИЯ ИНОЯЗЫЧНОГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ В УВО КИТАЯ**

Foreign language education has become increasingly important in China's higher education system over the past few decades. This trend is driven by several factors, including globalization, economic competition, and the need for international communication. In this article, we will explore the key factors that have contributed to the formation and development of foreign language education in Chinese higher education institutions.

The modernization of China's higher education system began in the late 20th century, particularly after the economic reforms initiated by Deng Xiaoping in 1978. This period saw a significant expansion of universities and colleges across the country, leading to an increased demand for qualified faculty members who could teach subjects other than traditional Chinese disciplines [1].

One of the earliest responses to this need was the introduction of English as a mandatory subject in secondary schools. This move laid the groundwork for the subsequent emphasis on foreign language education at the tertiary level. As China opened up to the world economically, the importance of language skills became more apparent, driving the growth of foreign language programs in universities.

Government policies have played a crucial role in shaping the landscape of foreign language education in Chinese higher education institutions. Several key initiatives have been implemented:

The “Project 211” (1995-2050): This ambitious program aimed to strengthen about 100 universities and key disciplinary areas as a national priority. It included a focus on improving foreign language teaching capabilities.

The “Project 985” (1999-2050): Building upon Project 211, this initiative further emphasized internationalization, including the enhancement of foreign language instruction.

The “Double First-Class Initiative” (2015): This comprehensive plan aims to establish world-class universities and disciplines. Foreign language education is considered essential for achieving this goal.

The “Language Support Program”: Launched in 2007, this program provides financial support to students studying abroad, with a focus on improving their language proficiency [2].

These government initiatives have significantly influenced the development of foreign language education in Chinese universities, driving investment in language programs and encouraging universities to compete for international recognition.

Economic factors have also played a crucial role in shaping foreign language education in Chinese higher education institutions:

1. Globalization. As China integrates into the global economy, the demand for individuals with strong language skills has increased dramatically.

2. International trade. Companies operating in China require employees who can communicate effectively in multiple languages, creating a high demand for graduates with language proficiency.

3. Tourism industry. The rapid growth of China's tourism sector has led to an increased need for hospitality professionals who can interact with international visitors.

4. Scientific collaboration. China's participation in international scientific research projects necessitates researchers who can communicate effectively in English and other languages.

These factors have driven universities to expand their foreign language offerings and improve the quality of instruction to meet industry demands.

Technology has significantly impacted the delivery and effectiveness of foreign language education in Chinese higher education institutions:

1. Language learning apps. Platforms like Duolingo, HelloTalk, and Youdao have become popular among students, supplementing traditional classroom instruction.

2. Online courses. MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) and other online educational platforms offer flexible language learning options, catering to diverse student needs.

3. Virtual reality and augmented reality. Some universities are experimenting with immersive technologies to enhance language learning experiences.

4. Artificial intelligence. AI-powered language learning tools are being developed to personalize instruction and improve language acquisition outcomes.

While these technological advancements present opportunities for improvement, they also pose challenges in terms of maintaining academic standards and ensuring effective integration with traditional teaching methods.

The formation and development of foreign language education in Chinese higher education institutions have been shaped by a complex interplay of historical, policy-driven, market-driven, and technological factors. As China continues to integrate into the global community, the demand for high-quality foreign language education is likely to grow, driving further innovations in teaching methodologies and curriculum design [3].

Universities will need to adapt to emerging trends in language learning, such as the increasing importance of soft skills and intercultural competence alongside linguistic proficiency. They will also need to balance the need for standardized curricula with the desire for personalized learning experiences.

As the landscape of higher education continues to evolve, one thing is clear: the ability to communicate effectively in multiple languages will remain a valuable asset for graduates entering the global workforce.

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