

Research on the Training Mode of English (Cross-border E-commerce) Talents in Application-Oriented Colleges and Universities

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ABSTRACT

Cross-border E-commerce is a business activity developed from the rising Internet economy. The past two decades witnessed the vigorous development of cross-border E-commerce, and the cultivation of high-quality cross-border E-commerce talents for the society became an important issue for application-oriented colleges and universities. Some universities combine cross-border E-commerce major with English major, which provides a better idea for cultivating cross-border E-commerce talents. This paper will analyze the current situation of English (cross-border E-commerce) talent training, point out the training objectives, methods and approaches, and discuss the future direction of the English (cross-border E-commerce) talent training mode, in order to provide some suggestions and solutions for the training of English (cross-border E-commerce) talents in Colleges and universities.

Keywords: Cross-border E-commerce, English, Talent training, Methods and approaches.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the further development of the Internet economy, cross-border E-commerce is developing rapidly, and the market demand for talents of cross-border E-commerce is increasing sharply. Cross border E-commerce talents should not only have adequate business knowledge, but also have a high proficiency of foreign language. Therefore when cultivating cross-border E-commerce talents, some application-oriented universities combine English major and cross-border E-commerce major to cultivate high-level “English + cross-border E-commerce” compound talents with all-rounded ability, basic English skills and cross-border E-commerce knowledge. After four years of undergraduate study, students can have a solid foundation in English language, master relevant

knowledge and skills such as linguistics, literature and translation, and be familiar with cross-border E-commerce operation theory, economics, law and other relevant knowledge; Students can master the construction and management methods of overseas business platform, be familiar with website planning and promotion strategies, master cross-border trade operations, and fluently use English to engage in foreign exchange, E-commerce, management, finance and other work, so as to become high-quality application-oriented talents with good moral accomplishment, financial and business literacy and pioneering and innovative spirit, so as to adapt to the developing society, booming economy, and advancing culture to better serve the country and the people.

2. CURRENT SITUATION ANALYSIS

For now, application-oriented universities have made some beneficial explorations in the training of cross-border E-commerce talents, and vigorously promoted the training of compound talents. Some colleges and universities combine cross-border E-commerce major with English major, while some colleges and universities combine cross-border E-

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commerce major with economics, management, accounting and other majors. These practices help to better cultivate “wide caliber and high-quality” talents. However, there are still some deficiencies in the specific implementation of training programs and curriculum plans. To some extent, the combination of cross-border E-commerce and language or economic majors is not close enough, and this combination is prone to a sense of separation. As cross-border E-commerce is a newly established major, students have little knowledge of this major, their acceptance being not high enough, and the curriculum scheme is not recognized by students. In addition, there are still a series of problems in the current training mode, such as inadequate amount of teachers [1], lack of e-commerce practices [2], single training method [3], insufficient practices [4] and so on. In the training of cross-border E-commerce English talents, these problems should be paid special attention to.

2.1 Inadequate Amount of Teachers

At present, the training of cross-border E-commerce talents in application-oriented colleges and universities is still in the exploratory stage. Some colleges and universities set the major of cross-border E-commerce in the School of Foreign Languages, combining it with English major as the major of English (cross-border E-commerce). The training of English (cross-border E-commerce) talents is mainly completed by professional English teachers. However, most of these English teachers do not have the experience of operating cross-border trade themselves, let alone the experience of teaching the course of cross-border E-commerce, so it is difficult for them to be qualified in teaching students. Some teachers even teach themselves because they have never been exposed to E-commerce knowledge. They begin to teach students after a short time of self-study or participating in some short-term training. These teachers themselves do not have a thorough grasp of the overall knowledge of cross-border E-commerce, which leads to many problems in the teaching process and causes great trouble to students’ learning effects. In addition, as a new specialty, both teachers and students pay little attention to cross-border E-commerce. The amount of existing teaching materials on the market is insufficient, and the quality of these teaching materials is not satisfying, which cannot meet the needs of the undergraduates, causing a certain amount of pressures on the implementation of the talent training mode.

2.2 Inappropriate Curriculum Setting

As cross-border E-commerce is a new form of trade with the advancement of Internet economy, it is the product of scientific and technological progress and economic development. As an emerging major, there are some shortages in curriculum setting, textbook compilation and teachers’ qualification. The key is to make suitable teaching plans for students and reasonably allocate courses. A reasonable curriculum setting that can highlight advantages and characteristics of the major is essential to the successful implementation of talent training program. It is obvious that training cross-border E-commerce talents according to the traditional curriculum of School of Foreign Languages obviously does not meet the needs of students. Moreover, for some universities that have provided cross-border E-commerce courses, most of which are Business English, International Trade, Fundamentals of Economics and other courses, and there are few lectures on the Construction and Operation of Cross-border E-commerce Platforms. At current, cross-border E-commerce major has just started, and many aspects still need to be further developed and improved. The curriculum setting and planning are not mature, for example, there being few applicable teaching materials, teachers lacking practical experience, etc., which lead to the backward curriculum setting of cross-border E-commerce major and students’ weak foundation, thus it is difficult to meet the needs of social development and talents cultivation.

2.3 Lack of Practices

Practical teaching is an important part of the training of cross-border E-commerce professionals. Many colleges and universities have not yet established a well-rounded practical teaching system. The cultivation of students’ practical ability only stays in form and lacks in-depth and effective guidance. Although some colleges and universities actively seek to cooperate with enterprises, build training bases and hire enterprise teachers to teach students, this form of cooperation is often superficial and does not get access to the core businesses of the enterprises. Because the training of cross-border E-commerce talents is featured with large investment and small income, many enterprises are often reluctant to open their customer resources for practical training for students, and only allow students to operate through some simulated accounts, which make students not get real training in the practice and only learn some

theoretical knowledge. Their understanding of cross-border E-commerce is not deep enough. Due to the rapid development of E-commerce industry and the alternation of foreign trade market, students need to constantly learn the latest import and export rules and apply them in practical operation, so as to better understand these rules and keep up with the development of the industry. According to the current situation of school--enterprise cooperation in cultivating cross-border E-commerce talents, it is far from meeting this requirement.

3. TRAINING OBJECTIVES

As cross-border E-commerce is an interdisciplinary subject, it is necessary to cultivate professional talents as well as compound talents. They should not only master the relevant knowledge of international trade and E-commerce, but also master a certain foreign language and have barrier free communication with overseas customers. Therefore, when training cross-border E-commerce talents, the combination of English and cross-border E-commerce is a very common practice. When cultivating cross-border E-commerce English talents, we should focus on improving knowledge, ability and quality, and make corresponding plans for undergraduate curriculum and class hours.

3.1 Knowledge Requirements

The knowledge requirements for students include not only the learning of language knowledge, but also the learning of cross-border E-commerce and trade knowledge. In terms of language knowledge, students are required to master the basic knowledge of linguistics, literature, translation, country and region. In linguistics, students are required to have standard English pronunciation, rich vocabulary and accurate grammar, be able to use the linguistic knowledge to analyze the text, understand the context, and be exposed to the latest foreign linguistic research theories, methods and future development trends. In literature, students are required to have the ability to appreciate British and American poetry, short stories and prose, learn to appreciate famous works, understand the theoretical development of British and American literature and representative works and ideology, and understand the local customs of British and American countries through literary works. In terms of translation, students are required to have basic English-Chinese translation theory and knowledge, understand the

differences between English and Chinese, learn some business related knowledge, and master business English interpretation and translation skills. In terms of national and regional knowledge, students are required to have a global vision, a heartfelt love of one's home and country, a deep understanding of the economy, culture, science and technology and trade of British and American countries. Teachers should introduce China's national conditions and economic and cultural development to students, and guide students to better understand the differences and characteristics of Chinese and foreign business culture in foreign trade and transnational exchanges. In international trade, students are required to master the theories and knowledge of economics, international trade theory and practice, marketing, management, commercial law and finance. In terms of cross-border E-commerce, students are required to master cross-border new media technology and be able to use new media technology to deal with various problems in the process of cross-border E-commerce. Master the operation of cross-border new media, including the construction and operation of overseas business platform, the planning and promotion of non-common foreign language websites, the promotion, operation and monitoring of overseas new media, overseas new media advertising, and cross-border distribution and so on.

3.2 Capability Requirements

After four years' undergraduate study, students should have the ability of cross-cultural communication, be able to understand the politics, economy, culture and customs of western countries, critically absorb the essence of world culture, and spread Chinese culture and Chinese voice at the same time. When communicating with foreign customers, students can skillfully express their ideas and thoughts, deal with complicated relationships, and communicate with people all over the world, so as to successfully complete their work tasks. The biggest advantage of combining cross-border E-commerce with English major is that students can have proficient language skills and can skillfully use English and Chinese to engage in translation. At the same time, cross-border E-commerce talents should also have knowledge of cross-border marketing and international trade, and cultivate a series of abilities through systematic learning of relevant knowledge of economics, such as network marketing, market research, data processing, copywriting, customer management,

product promotion, etc. [5]. Cross border E-commerce talents should have strong ability to obtain and process information, innovate and entrepreneurize, research and practice. Through systematic study during the undergraduate course, students should have rich marketing knowledge, excellent network platform operation skills, advanced sales concept and good professional ethics. It can be seen that colleges and universities have higher requirements for the training of cross-border E-commerce English talents, and the training methods are more diversified. In the current international trade environment, compound cross-border E-commerce talents with both trade knowledge and good foreign language level can better meet the requirements of cross-border E-commerce enterprises. Therefore, it is urgent to cultivate high-quality and compound cross-border E-commerce talents.

3.3 Quality Requirements

In addition to having rich knowledge and excellent ability, cross-border E-commerce English talents should also have high moral quality, love the motherland, have a sense of social responsibility and discipline themselves. Students should have high comprehensive humanistic quality. They not only are familiar with the geography, history, social development, cultural traditions and customs of English speaking countries, but also think independently about social and humanistic issues, and have the ability of critically absorbing the essence of world culture and inheriting China's excellent cultural traditions. In addition to professional knowledge and skills, cross-border E-commerce talents should also have team spirit and innovative consciousness. They can apply what they have learned to practice, and have a certain ability of independent learning and innovation, thus they are able to make achievements in professional fields by using the knowledge and skills they required. Eventually, they are sound in mind and strong in body, so as to become an excellent talent with all-rounded development.

4. METHOD AND PATH

According to the current development situation, there are some problems to be solved in the training mode of English (cross-border E-commerce) talents. In view of these problems, application-oriented colleges and universities must clarify their ideas, find the correct positioning and direction, explore the methods and paths of cultivating

English (cross-border E-commerce) talents and establish a more perfect talent training mode according to social development and market demand.

4.1 Increasing Investment in Teacher Training and Building a "Double Qualified" Team

Teachers play an important and leading role in the training of English (cross-border E-commerce) talents. Therefore, these application-oriented colleges and universities need to pay attention to the construction of teaching staff, increase investment in teacher training, improve the comprehensive quality of teachers, focus on training "double qualified" teachers, and train excellent cross-border E-commerce teachers from the school's own teaching staff. At present, most English teachers have rich experience and excellent teaching skills in imparting English professional knowledge. However, due to the lack of understanding of cross-border E-commerce and international trade, some teachers will inevitably explain the relevant knowledge of cross-border E-commerce incompletely and have deviation in understanding. In order to solve this practical problem, we can learn from the practices of some higher vocational colleges. Yu Yang (2021) pointed out that higher vocational colleges can hire enterprise experts or professional technicians to teach students and guide students in the practical operation of cross-border E-commerce. Teaching by external professionals can improve the effect of practical teaching [6]. Xu Shen (2021) pointed out that higher vocational colleges should actively organize young teachers to study in cross-border E-commerce enterprises, go deep into the front line, master the operation process and management requirements of cross-border E-commerce, and truly understand the current situation and development trend of cross-border E-commerce [7]. It can be seen that when building an English cross-border E-commerce teaching team, application-oriented universities should combine "bringing in" with "going out". They should not only hire professional senior talents and principle technicians to join the teaching team or work part-time in Colleges and universities, but also encourage in-service English teachers to break through discipline barriers, strive to learn relevant knowledge of cross-border E-commerce and become a all-rounded English teacher. The cultivation of English (cross-border E-commerce) talents is inseparable from the support of new teaching methods and

teaching technologies. In the actual teaching process, teachers should not stick to the traditional teaching methods, such as case study, group discussion and classroom presentation, but should pay attention to students' innovation ability, excavate entrepreneurial materials, guide students to form entrepreneurial teams, prepare business plans, and organize activities, etc. For example, during the implementation of entrepreneurship projects, teachers can guide students to register stores, select goods, set logistics mode and carry out store operation, so as to improve students' practical level and lay a good foundation for independent entrepreneurship in the future.

4.2 Attaching Importance to Practical Teaching and Improving Students' Practical Ability

Practical teaching is not only an important part of English (cross-border E-commerce) talent training, but also an important feature and prominent advantage of cross-border E-commerce talent training. The training goal of cross-border E-commerce talents clearly points out that it is necessary to cultivate talents with professional knowledge, practical ability and comprehensive quality. In the undergraduate study, while paying attention to cultivating students' theoretical knowledge and literacy, application-oriented universities should also cultivate students' practical ability and operational ability, provide students with practice places, establish practice bases, and apply their own theoretical knowledge to practices, so as to realize the seamless connection between talent training and industry needs. Some colleges and universities strive to promote the reform and innovation of practical teaching, and actively introduce school enterprise cooperation projects, such as the introduction of campus cross-border E-commerce projects, so that students can improve the online operation and store operation ability of cross-border E-commerce in actual projects, and improve students' enthusiasm and innovation and entrepreneurship through cooperation modes, for example, offering students' stock share [8]. The cultivation of English (cross-border E-commerce) talents is inseparable from the strong support of enterprises. Therefore, application-oriented colleges and universities should strengthen school-enterprise cooperation, further promote the deep cooperation between schools and enterprises, build training bases, arrange students to stay in the training bases in an organized and orderly manner, participate in the business of cross-border E-

commerce, study marketing mechanisms, and learn to operate trade platforms, so that student can be familiar with the organizational structure and related systems of the platform. The application-oriented universities should take the opportunity of school-enterprise cooperation to change the concept of talent training, promote the reform of teaching objectives, teaching means and teaching methods, and increase the training of innovative talents. For the cultivation of English (cross-border E-commerce) talents, schools should pay more attention to English learning, so that students can lay a solid foundation in English. Students should learn relevant knowledge and practical operation of cross-border E-commerce while mastering the common language of English, so as to become compound cross-border E-commerce talents. In term of the new training mode, students should try their best achieve excellence in the academic learning and professional training, cultivate their innovative abilities, and have more thoughts on their compulsory courses and entrepreneurial practices, extending their professional value and possessing core competitiveness.

4.3 Building a Perfect Curriculum System and Enriching Teaching Content

In order to achieve the talent training goal of English (cross-border E-commerce), it is necessary to further enrich and improve the curriculum system, integrate advantageous resources and create a distinctive feature. First of all, in the curriculum setting, the School of Foreign Languages can break the discipline barriers, exchange needs between schools and departments, and students can choose courses across different majors. Some courses are related to cross-border E-commerce, such as macroeconomics, microeconomics and international trade practice, so students should be allowed to take elective courses in other schools and departments, or hire teachers from the school of economics to teach them. In this way, teachers from different schools and departments can be fully utilized to integrate educational resources and optimize teaching contents. Secondly, for some courses, such as introduction to cross-border E-commerce, cross-border E-commerce marketing, construction and operation of overseas business platform, teachers from enterprises can be hired to teach courses in colleges, because these courses are highly practical. Only teachers with several years of cross-border E-commerce practical experience can explain the courses more thoroughly. In addition, College English teachers should also update their

teaching ideas. They should not only require students to master certain language skills and theoretical knowledge of cross-border E-commerce, but also pay attention to training students' practical operation ability and innovative ability. Through the study of a series of courses, students can communicate with customers in fluent English, understand the customs, cultural background, social regulations, religious beliefs, consumer demand and other relevant knowledge of different countries, and be able to carry out commodity marketing, advertising strategy, product promotion and so on. For the operation of cross-border E-commerce platforms, students can also master practical skills such as picture processing, store decoration, commodity display, preferential activities and so on. By improving teaching methods, enriching teaching contents and updating teaching ideas, we can establish a more perfect teaching system, make the training of English (cross-border E-commerce) talents more open, innovative and independent, and cultivate comprehensive cross-border E-commerce talents.

5. CONCLUSION

At present, the exploration of English (cross-border E-commerce) talent training mode in application-oriented universities is still in its infancy. There are various problems, such as lack of teachers, lack of curriculum resources and insufficient in-depth cooperation between schools and enterprises. In order to solve these problems, it is necessary to increase investment in teacher training and create high-quality courses. Colleges should also hire enterprise teachers to work part-time and guide students to conduct more practices, cultivating students' innovation and entrepreneurship. These measures can promote the innovation of English (cross-border E-commerce) talent training mode in Colleges and universities, promote the transformation of English (cross-border E-commerce) talent training from extensive to intensive, and from training single English talents to compound "English + cross-border E-commerce" talents. With the development of economy and society, when formulating talent training programs, application-oriented universities should pay more attention to cultivating undergraduates' professional ability and innovation ability, so that students not only have excellent language skills, but also have the practical operation ability and innovative thinking ability of cross-border E-commerce, so as to promote the

reform and development of application-oriented universities.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

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