



The Cultivation of Innovation Ability of English Majors for Comprehensive English Course in Colleges

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Abstract. Contemporary college students are living in a rapidly changing society. They have to get ready for adapting to this rapidly changing world. Cultivating contemporary college students' innovation for professional knowledge and social problems is helpful to deepen their understanding and rational use of professional knowledge and help themselves to adapt to the society faster and better.

Keywords: College students · Innovation · Comprehensive English course

1 Introduction

The era of continuous development and progress puts forward new requirements for contemporary college students, especially for their innovative consciousness and abilities. Innovation consciousness and innovation ability are one of the core qualities of college students, which are the embodiment of their comprehensive ability, and one of the core qualities of college students to survive in the changing society. The cultivation of innovation consciousness and innovation ability requires college students to constantly improve their comprehensive professional quality, profound and broad humanistic quality, and personalized expression and noble ideological realm. This requires college students not only to consolidate their professional knowledge, but also to cultivate their humanistic feelings and improve their personalized vision and ideological realm. And they can't get them in a separate way; instead, they should integrate them organically [1]. Taking the Comprehensive English course as an example, this paper discusses the cultivation of College English Majors' innovative abilities.

2 Introduction of the Comprehensive English Course

English learning includes the learning of five skills which are listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation. Comprehensive English course, as its name suggests, is a course for learning comprehensive English skills, that is, the five skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation. There are specific listening courses for the cultivation

of listening skills; there are specific oral courses for the cultivation of speaking ability. For the cultivation of reading skills, there are intensive reading courses and extensive reading courses. There are specific writing courses for the cultivation of writing ability, and there are also specific translation courses for the cultivation of translation ability, including English-Chinese translation and Chinese-English translation [2]. Comprehensive English course is actually intensive reading course, but in the name of the course, teachers use comprehensive English course instead of intensive reading course. Compared with the extensive reading course which emphasizes the breadth of reading, the intensive reading course emphasizes the cultivation of students' quality and the integration of knowledge and skills [3]. It can be said that intensive reading is both the basis and the main body. In order to enjoy and appreciate these selected texts, first of all, teachers need to know enough relevant background knowledge, writing theme, structure, style, specific word and sentence selection, rhetoric and so on. Secondly, after understanding the article, you should also have your own ideas and views on the theme of the article, and can express them in a convincing way. Every article in Comprehensive English is carefully selected and has a topic that is either at the forefront of the times or controversial. Making full use of these topics can cultivate students' innovative consciousness and ability.

Comprehensive English courses are generally offered among first-year college students. Taking Sichuan Minzu College as an example, comprehensive English courses are offered in freshmen and sophomores' years with a total of four semesters and four classes per week. Except for legal holidays and review at the end of the term, the class time of each semester is about 15 weeks, covering one unit every three weeks, so five-unit topics are studied every semester. While learning each unit, the modular teaching mode adopted by the author's college ranges from free discussion related to the unit theme, detection of words and preview, introduction of background knowledge, learning of writing techniques, structure splitting of chapters and paragraphs to between lines, appreciation of word selection and sentence structures, consolidation of after-school practice, especially the free play of speaking part. All of them reflect the instrumental practice of students' learning English, as well as the cultivation and promotion of humanistic quality and innovative consciousness.

3 The Necessity of Cultivating College Students' Innovative Ability

The development of human civilization has been the innovation by generations of predecessors. To maintain, develop and prosper this civilization, future generations must constantly innovate.

3.1 Innovation in Concept

Contemporary college students live in a rapidly changing society. All kinds of daily necessities related to themselves are updated very quickly. If they still hold a conservative concept, they will be easily out of date in this era. Therefore, contemporary college students should have a sense of innovation in concept, have an open-mind that embraces all, and be able to find a unique way in the accumulated knowledge, and have their own views and innovation, so as to stand out and survive themselves in this world.

3.2 Innovation in Practice

Once an idea or theory is isolated from the soil of reality, it can only be an empty talk without any significance. Therefore, contemporary college students should not only have innovative consciousness and spirit in theory, but also put it into practice. They should cherish and reasonably arrange and use their school time. Unfortunately, many college students' spare time on campus has not been used reasonably and effectively. Many students spend a lot of their spare time in games or social media such as Tik Tok. Even many students are playing games or doing some other things while they are in class. The time spent on learning, developing their horizons and enriching themselves is cut off by such a little bit. This way of learning in school, let alone develop their innovation abilities, can not even meet the basic requirements for being a qualified college student. Therefore, contemporary college students should learn to resist temptation, put down their mobile phones, pick up books, and continue to learn and innovate. As an English proverb says, practice makes perfect. Only in continuous practice can people innovate and become better and perfect.

4 Strategies for Cultivating College Students' Innovative Ability in Comprehensive English Course

There is an old Chinese saying. It goes like this, walk the walk is much more important than talk the talk. The followings are the cultivation strategies for college students' innovative ability in the Comprehensive English course.

4.1 Fully Grasping the Part of Free Talk Before Each Unit

The textbook used in the Comprehensive English course is Modern College English, edited by Yang Limin and published by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. The full set of teaching materials consists of six volumes, each volume has 16 units, of which 14 units are texts and 2 units are review questions at the middle and end of the term. The college where the author teaches selects four of them as intensive reading books for freshmen and sophomores. Each unit of this set of textbooks has a theme. For example, the third unit Message of the Land in Volume 1 is selected from the well-known Thai writer Pira Sudham. From the title of the unit, it is not difficult to see that this article is about the information transmitted by land to us. So what is this message? This is a problem that needs to be solved by our readers. As the guide of teaching activities, teachers can guide students while setting the topics for free talk. For example, while setting the topic of this unit, the teacher can start from the students' memory and recall the students' memory of the land by displaying a picture of rural work. Like Thailand's national conditions described in the article, China is also an agricultural country with a large agricultural population. Many college students come from rural areas, so they have their own memories of rural areas. Although other students live in cities, many students' parents or grandparents once lived in rural areas. When they were children, they had been inevitably lived in the countryside with their grandparents during the holiday. Therefore, for them, rural life is also a very important and precious family memories on their way of

growth. Presenting such a picture can let students spontaneously develop their empathy. At this time, teachers can realize the cultivation of students' innovative thinking through questions from shallow to deep, easy to difficult.

4.2 The Explanation of Background Information from Passive Reception to Active Search

The author believes that if you want to have a more complete and in-depth understanding of an article, you must understand the background of the author's writing this article. Nowadays, many students are relatively realistic while reading articles. They feel that as long as they can answer the questions, they will achieve their goals. They are unwilling to spend more time on appreciating the author's choice of words and sentences, let alone dig into the author's implied meaning. This purposeful learning method, which only pays attention to instrumental learning and ignores humanistic learning, can not ensure students to master knowledge in an all-round way and is difficult to achieve their all-round development. While explaining background information, in the past, while dealing with this part of the content, the author mostly taught it by himself, and the students received it passively. But most of the time, it is only in for the left ear and out for the right ear, and the teaching effect is poor. In order to turn passivity into initiative and make students change from a passive receiver to an active participant, the author changed the content of this part into a task-based teaching by assigning tasks to students, so that students can plump the author and other historical figures or historical events in the text from an abstract name or symbol to a concrete person or thing, with flesh and blood. Students can learn about the background information related to the theme of this article through searching on the Internet media or reading literature, and then show it to everyone through personal presentation. If it is not complete, other students can supplement it, so that each student can participate in this activity to various degrees. Change themselves from a passive recipient of information to an active participant, which greatly improves the effectiveness of teaching and learning. It is commendable that students can also have their own ideas and views on controversial issues in this process and cultivate their sense of innovation. For example, while teaching unit 9 of Volume 4, the *Damned Human Race* written by the famous American writer Mark Twain, students heard different voices and saw different expressions while looking for author's information on the Internet. Some people say that the author wrote this article with the good intention of "frighten to enlighten" and used some sharp expressions to kindly remind human beings to reflect on their wrong behaviors and rewrite their good nature [4]; Others say that the reason why the author wrote this article in the way of blindly expressing the bad of mankind and ignoring the great civilization created by mankind is that he has experienced the pain of losing his favourite wife and daughter, in conjunction with economic bankruptcy. These blows had plunged him into darkness and what he saw was only darkness. The two statements hold different opinions. What kind of comment should students make in this situation? The author's principle is that students can express different opinions, but they must be reasonable and convincing. They can't talk casually. They cannot be controlled by their own feelings or their own preferences. This is an effective innovation.

4.3 While Interpreting the Text, Doing a Good Job in Paraphrasing and Building an Innovative Consciousness of Target Language Thinking

When many students study English, the purpose is very obvious, that is to pass CET-4 and CET-6 or CET-4 and CET-8. They will memorize a lot of words or questions to prepare for exams at all levels, but they are unwilling to spend time and energy on enjoying the choice of words and sentences. They only care about instrumentality and ignore humanism. After all, the training goal of universities is different from that of technical schools. It not just focuses on the practice of skills, but cultivating contemporary college students in all-round way [5]. While learning English, many students like to translate it into Chinese at the first time in order to facilitate their understanding. In the long run, it is difficult to develop the ability of thinking in English. Therefore, in the teaching process, especially while teaching the text, the author likes cultivating students' ability by paraphrasing. What is paraphrase? In short, it is the ability to understand English in the English way, especially the ability to understand complex English in simple English. Many students have a teaching reference book of the comprehensive English textbook, in which there are detailed explanations of words, articles, exercises and so on, including the Chinese translation of the text. While learning a whole new unit, some students directly check the Chinese translation without understanding the article by themselves, and feel that they can master an article in this way. This approach is really undesirable. Reading is a process of understanding the material by simplifying it in the first place and then enriching it again. In other words, in the process of reading, you should use your own words to understand the selected text in the target language, that is, simplifying the ideas delivered by the author, then add your own understanding, and then expand it to fullness, that is, enriching the reading material, so as to improve the ability of reading in English and develop the thinking ability during the process of simplifying and enriching. And there is no such information in the student's reference materials, so students can't be lazy and they cannot just pick up ready-made references. They have to rely on their own understanding to form their own expression in this way. Therefore, in the process of paraphrasing, they can improve their innovation abilities.

4.4 Paying Attention to the Speaking Part of After-Class Exercises to Greatly Strengthen Students' Innovative Ability

In the college where the author teaches, some teachers do not pay enough attention to the speaking part of after-class exercises while taking comprehensive English courses, and some teachers will cut this part off directly. The author thinks that people can make full use of this part to cultivate students' innovative thinking and innovative ability.

There are at least three types of oral expression training questions in the exercises for each unit, such as role-play, retelling the text, asking questions and answers for the content of the text, or making their own comment on some controversial statements [6]. Among these exercises, the last one is an excellent opportunity to train students' innovative thinking. In addition, there are no reference materials for this part of the exercises. For both teachers and students, there are no reference materials even in the teacher's teaching reference books. Therefore, doing this part of the exercises is a great challenge for both students and teachers. In this process, teachers should not only be a

listener, but also actively participate in this activity, give timely and effective feedback to students' oral expression, let students feel the joint participation of teachers, and turn the whole activity into a virtuous circle for teachers and students to deal with challenges and jointly cultivate innovative thinking.

5 Conclusion

Every coin has two sides. Living in this rapidly changing society, with the cyber technology and various conveniences from the advanced science and technology, people are enjoying the benefits from them, while on the other hand, they are suffering a lot from them too. And for the current college students, there is no exception. They can make full use of the apps to support their study, while on the other hand, some of the students have already developed some bad habit of downloading information from the internet directly instead of working it out on their own. Over time, they'll lose their ability of thinking not to mention to improve it. Therefore, it's high time that people took some actions to improve their innovation ability, and Comprehensive English Course gave us the opportunity to conduct it.

Authors' Contributions. This paper is independently completed by Xiaoyan Li.

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