

Research on the Training Mechanism of Business English Compound Talents in Higher Vocational Colleges under the Background of the Belt and Road Initiative

Huang Li *

School of Business Foreign Languages, Hunan International Business Higher Vocational College, Changsha 410200, China;

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Abstract. The objective in this report is to explore the training mechanism of business English talents in higher vocational colleges. We present an analysis of the status quo of the business English talents cultivation in higher vocational colleges. Our results show that the training mechanism of business English talents in higher vocational colleges should be in accordance with the Belt and Road initiative. Taking Hunan International Business Vocational College as an example, we explored a renovated path for cultivating business English compound talents. We suggest that the talents cultivating mechanism should take the regional economy into consideration, and be carried out from the following aspects: clarifying the orientation of talents cultivation, reconstructing training mode, upgrading curriculum setting, strengthening teachers' education, deepening the integration of production and education and promoting international corporation.

1. Introduction

The rapid development of the trade between China and other Belt and Road countries calls for language talents [1]. China not only lacks high level language talents, who are usually concentrated in certain special units, but also requires people who in addition also have professional skills. The business English compound talents, who are cultivated in the higher vocational colleges, therefore, are in great demand. In China, business English major has gone through more than ten years of development in higher vocational colleges and achieved a great success in cultivating professional talents. But in recent years, the process of the business English major has ground to a halt while the contradiction between the national economy and talents training mode emerges. The main problem is that many higher vocational colleges have unclear orientation to run school, which leads to students lack of professional skills and practical ability.

On the other hand, the exchange and cooperation among Belt and Road countries requires that higher vocational education must take the international mode of training talents. Thus, many higher vocational colleges begin to explore how to train talents through school-enterprises cooperation and transnational joint training. This is a new challenge as well as a good opportunity. It's urgent for us to find an effective way to improve the quality of cultivating talents so as to meet the requirement of students' self-development and the construction of Belt and Road.

2. The Status Quo of Business English Talents Training in Higher Vocational Colleges

Under the background of Belt and Road Initiative, business English major in higher vocational colleges is experiencing the throes of reform. Talent training and the Belt and Road Initiative can't effectively match, mainly in the following aspects:

2.1 The lack of accurate orientation

Many higher vocational colleges are in lack of accurate orientation in cultivating business English talents. Some investigations on the graduates' employment have indicated that the labor shortage and the talent panic coexist, which can be seen especially in many coastal areas in China. The big gap between companies' requirements and graduates' professional competence (shown in Table 1) have aroused attention of

decision-makers. The lack of the accurate orientation to cultivate talents is regarded as the main cause of lower lever of job competency and comprehensive literacy for graduates.

Table 1 Graduates' insufficient competence in view of companies

Items	Companies involved	Percentage
Business English skills	24	25.8%
Pracitcal business skills	13	13.98%
Business knowledge	16	17.2%
International competence	9	9.7%
Communication capacity	14	15.03%
Personal development	10	10.75%
Preofessional dedication	7	7.53%

2.2 The lack of appropriate talents training mode.

China government has advocated the policy of "combination of production and learning" for more than ten years, but many higher vocational colleges haven't found an effective way to cultivate students' general competence and professional competence. Conventional training mode is based mainly on the teaching of English language knowledge, a process that does not emphasize skills, individual growth and potential. Practical courses in school and internship in the enterprises are seldom offered to students which make them feel very hard to get in touch with the true and complete workflow. In a word, the scientific, standardized and practical training mode has not formed.

2.3 The lack of upgrading curriculum setting.

With the process of the Belt and Road construction, many urgent areas, such as rail transit, cross-border e-commerce, intelligent manufacturing, international tourism and hotels, are springing up. However, the curriculum setting of business English major still focuses only on the foreign trade without considering other burgeoning fields. Teaching content is lack of renewal and teaching methods is stereotyped. Students have less interest in class especially when the learning by rote still dominates the classroom. The evaluation of students' performance cannot dock with professional standards.

2.4 The lack of double-qualified teachers.

Teaching capacity is the foundation of talents cultivating. But teachers' professional development is usually confined to the preference of school policy. Some schools have no systematical and continuous mechanism to support teachers' professional and practical development, which made them lack of working experiences and international vision

In view of this, the business English major in higher vocational colleges is gradually marginalized. Some schools merge business English majors with other similar majors, such as international trade, e-commerce. Where is the outlet for business English major in higher vocational colleges? How to break the ice? It is a problem that we need to solve urgently.

3. The Basic Characteristics of Business English Compound Talents in Higher Vocational Colleges under the Background of the Belt and Road Initiative

3.1 Solid english skills and business skills

Listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation are the basic skills for English learners. They are also the ways and means for business English students to communicate with the outside world. Besides, students should master certain business skills and business knowledge, including the knowledge of international trade, marketing, e-commerce, business contracts, business negotiations and so on. Moreover, students are also required to master the necessary professional knowledge and professional qualities concerned so that they can get easier access to the future business work.

3.2 An International Perspective and Intercultural Communicative Competence

Students must have an international vision, a wide range of knowledge as well as cross-cultural communication skills. Some realms and industries required that students should have preliminary understanding of the languages, cultures, customs, economy and trade about the Belt and Road countries. The

ability of cross-cultural communication and analyzing the external world may help students quickly adapt to the regional economy development and meet the need of their personal achievements.

3.3 Innovation & entrepreneurial capabilities

Business English students should have the experience of participating various social practice activities and social public welfare activities. Entrepreneurial incubator base, entrepreneurial salon and entrepreneurial skills competition are good choices. In the process of participating in these activities, students may gradually understand the spirit of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial methods and laws, and experience the entrepreneurial process first-hand, [2] and then they can develop a good sense of independent entrepreneurship and employment.



Fig. 1 Business English compound talents

4. Exploration of the Mechanism of Cultivating Business English Compound Talents in Higher Vocational Colleges under the Background of the Belt and Road Initiative

The Belt and Road initiative has exerted a tremendous impact on talents knowledge structure and the comprehensive quality, causing the change in the talents training mode. To achieve the goal, Hunan International Business Vocational College took the regional economy into consideration and actively explored the path for cultivating business English compound talents in terms of training objectives, training mode, curriculum setting, faculty training, quality assurance and evaluation system. These beneficial attempts have set a good example for us to build up a talents training mechanism, a blueprint that gives priority to professional development and bridge the gap between school orientation and regional economy.

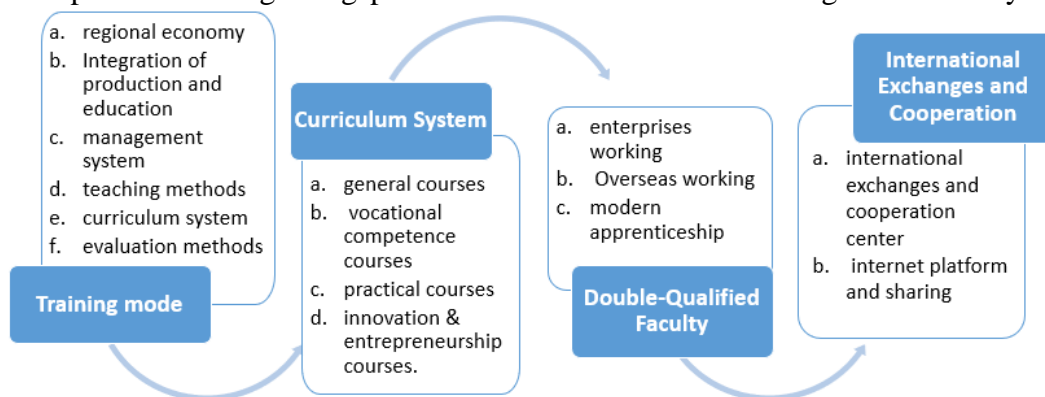


Fig. 2 Mechanism of compound talents cultivating

4.1 Innovating the talents training mode to promote integration of production and education

As an important sector of the Rise of Central China Strategy, Hunan Province contributes a lot to the international economy and trade. Most export commodities produced in Hunan Province have broad markets along the Belt and Road countries, which demands for more and more business English talents in higher vocational colleges. Hunan International Business Vocational College seizes the opportunity of development and actively innovates the training mode by integrating business English into other traditional dominant majors such as international trade, e-commerce, international tourism & hotel and so on. In this training mode,

local governments, schools and enterprises work together to build and implement talent training programs, evaluate and supervise the level of talent training.

The College has signed a talent joint training program with 34 excellent local export-oriented enterprises, and strived to dock the following five aspects with each other: docking professional setup and curriculum design with enterprise needs and talent standards, docking employment practice with foreign trade process, docking school teachers with enterprise experts, docking scientific research with enterprise innovation and development, docking school teachers and business mentors. By implementing a flexible credit system, students can give full play to their subjective initiative and rationally select and arrange courses which are suitable for their professional development. [3] In addition, new curriculum setting has been set up. Cross-border e-commerce training courses, information-based teaching method, online open courses and enterprise practice courses are available for students. Various competitions on business English skills and colorful practice activities have improved students' social integration. New evaluation system by the joint efforts of the College and enterprises, which comprehensively, continuously and dynamically evaluates the training quality from the evaluation concept, index, method and implementation, ensures the training mode go forward.

4.2 Reforming the curriculum setting to achieve intensive connection

The College has reconstructed curriculum setting which includes general courses, vocational competence courses, practical courses and innovation & entrepreneurship courses.

General Courses: By introducing online open general courses and offline lectures, the College has provided more opportunities for students to gain access to the recognition of language and culture of Belt and Road countries. Those lectures and courses are designed to help students know more about the strategic layout, trade contacts and foreign investment cooperation, which may cultivate students' awareness of employment and expand their career management. Through the compilation and introduction of general English teaching materials based on the Belt and Road Initiative, the College has succeeded in the cultivation of service awareness of the students.

Vocational Competence Courses: In order to ensure the coordinated development of English application skills and business skills, the College, following Hunan regional economic development and the needs of enterprises, has gradually set up vocational competence courses about cross-border e-commerce, international hotel & tourism, international trade and international logistics. However, overemphasizing the basic English skills but neglecting the training and cultivation of business skills is still a common problem in many higher vocational colleges. [4] English application skills can be acquired relatively easily after learning and training in schools, but business skills are more dependent on the actual working environment, and it is more difficult to obtain from schools and books. So, the College has attached great importance to the development of business skills courses covering the knowledge of management, trade, law, accounting, etc. By strengthening cooperation with enterprises, following the norms of business activities, introducing the actual process and real cases of business activities, the College has successfully solved the problem of insufficient business skills of students.

Practical Courses: The College and enterprises have cooperated to build practical teaching platform, and actively explored modern apprenticeship. Practice courses are offered during each semester, including on-campus and off-campus practice as well as graduation practice. Due to the particularity of the work-study combination for business English major and the lack of the "double-qualified" teachers, practical courses are often formalized, which makes it difficult for students to get in touch with the actual tasks and process of business activities. So, it often results in the superficial cognition about the related business activities for the students. In order to solve this problem, the College has experimented the "Double Tutors" and "Double Subjects" mode, which clarifies the management form, operation mode, the responsibilities, rights and interests of the school-enterprise cooperation. These measures have guaranteed the enthusiasm and sustainability of enterprise participation and protected the legitimate rights and interests of students, which ensures the effectiveness and continuity of practical courses in and out of school.

Innovation & Entrepreneurship Courses: Innovative spirit, entrepreneurial awareness and the innovation & entrepreneurship ability are important indicators to evaluate the quality of talents training. The College

offers innovation & entrepreneur courses for different students to help them avoid blind start-ups. At the same time, through school-owned, off-campus cooperation, venture capital and other channels, the College has also raised funds to support students' innovation and entrepreneurship. Through the innovation and entrepreneurship incubator platform, the College has ensured the time, venue and effect of the innovation and entrepreneurship courses. Besides, business experts and off-campus entrepreneurial talents come into the campus to jointly develop innovative entrepreneurship courses.

4.3 Forging a "double qualified" faculty and exploring modern apprenticeship

Teachers' professional development is the key to the talent training. It is an arduous and far-reaching project to train "double-qualified" teachers, which refers to those who have both academic competence and practical experience in enterprises. With the support of local policies, the College has sent teachers to the enterprises concerned for practice every year. Overseas training is another essential way to improve teachers' competence. Since 2010, the college has sent more than 100 teachers to some advanced countries, such as Germany, Australia, the United States, to learn the advanced teaching theory and practical teaching methods. Meanwhile, the College has invited nearly 200 outstanding enterprise employees to provide practical guidance at campus. The modern apprenticeship system thus then has gradually formed. A series of practical and effective policies ensure that enterprises are willing and dare to participate in the training of future enterprise employees. In turn, students have the dual identity of students and apprentices, which enhances their sense of belonging and responsibility.

4.4 Enhance international exchanges and cooperation

Leadership decision-making, sustained follow-up projects, win-win cooperation foundation, and efforts to integrate resources are the keys to effective international exchanges and cooperation. [5] Local government policy and financial support help the College establish an international exchanges and cooperation center, which has provided the foreign aid training for more than 30 Belt and Road countries. Business and trade management, construction machinery, agricultural technology, film and television media, medical equipment, clean energy, light industrial technology, automobiles, non-ferrous metals are all involved in the foreign aid training program. Graduates and teachers then have chances to work overseas and broaden their horizon, which is also an important way to evaluate the quality of talents training.

5. Conclusion

The construction of One Belt One Road requires a large number of business English talents with high skills and high quality. The improvement of the training level of business English talents in higher vocational colleges will help to deepen the integration of production and education, serve the development of industries, enhance the students' professional ability and quality. Therefore, students can get more employment opportunities and serve the Belt and Road construction well. However, the concrete implementation still needs more policy guidance and support, and requires the concerted efforts of government departments, industries, enterprises and schools.

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