

Study on the Integration of Curriculum

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Abstract—The curriculum must meet the requirements of the training goal. It is the concentrated expression of the training goal of a certain school in a certain curriculum plan, and the course setting must be integrated. Based on foreign-related majors, in particular Business English major, this paper puts forward the concept and teaching mode of “two-skill integration, three-link mutual penetration”, including two aspects: the integration of English knowledge and skill and business professional knowledge and skill; the mutual penetration of the three teaching links of knowledge and skill, simulation training and graduation practice.

Keywords— *curriculum, English knowledge and skill, business knowledge and skill, integration, mutual penetration*

I. INTRODUCTION

The combination of integration and mutual penetration means simply being completely understood and mastered, referring to the fact that knowledge and skills and principles in all aspects can be mutually penetrated so as to get a thorough and systematic understanding. In theory, the curriculum’s being completely understood and mastered can be achieved by first integrating English language skill into business professional skill and then mutually penetrating three links of skill, training and practice. In other words, students can integrate two kinds of knowledge into one, make knowledge generate skills, and use knowledge and skills to guide the simulation training; then through simulation training students can accept the test of graduation practice; finally, feedback to knowledge and skills to form a run-through cycle process.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

At present, many colleges and universities have Business English (BE) majors, and the candidates who apply for the examination each year are in the top position in the major rankings of colleges and universities. This shows that the BE major is indeed popular with the candidates, and it seems that there is no trend of cooling down. J. Y. Yu and F. G. Liu believe that the study of BE curriculum in academic circles has experienced the stage of pre-discipline and the initial stage of discipline, and now it is at the initial stage[1]. The pre-discipline stage includes the analysis of the ESP (English for Special Purpose) expansion model of English (business direction) (Model One) and the model analysis of the entire English simulation-business education model (Model Two), and the initial stage refers to the course model of BE (Model Three). These three models have made an indelible contribution to the development of BE. However, these three models are still flawed, especially the current Mode Three can be further improved.

Looking at the current curriculum for BE in various institutions of higher learning, we find that curriculum is indeed based on Mode Three. There must be three links: theoretical knowledge and skill, simulation training and graduation practice. However, most colleges and universities only pay attention to the features of the surface content of the three links, without careful consideration of the internal integration characteristics of the three modules; thus many students finish the theory courses, but still cannot carry out real training and practice. Based on this phenomenon, we put forward the concept and teaching mode of “two-skill integration, three-link mutual penetration”, i.e. using the integration of English knowledge and skill and business professional knowledge and skill to achieve the mutual penetration of the three teaching links which are BE knowledge and skills, simulation training and graduation practice.

III. INTEGRATION OF PROFESSIONAL CURRICULUM

A. *Integration between Business and English Knowledge and Skills*

1) *Internal integration of English knowledge and skill courses*: The knowledge and skills of English in BE major are different from those in English major. The volumes of English knowledge and skills of the traditional English majors (mainly referring to those students who study the directions of literature, language teaching, translation, etc.) are larger than those of the BE majors (here referring to those students who mainly learn knowledge and skills concerning the five basic language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translating). Therefore, the latter have stronger language communicative competence than the former. There seems to be some truth in this point, and it doesn't need to be addressed more. However, if we can integrate all the internal links in English knowledge and skills, BE majors can also exercise their language communicative competence. Hence, when courses are set up, it is necessary to consider whether the students can be truly integrated within the five basic knowledge and skills of the language and whether they can completely understand and master the five basic skills. English courses cannot be set up simply according to the traditional English major, but according to the student pool. Course time and difficulty should be paid attention to.

It must be pointed out that in the course of curriculum provision, many colleges and universities have considered the curricula of different postgraduate directions after graduation. Needless to say, this is a must, but there is no need to give full consideration to it. Otherwise, the English curriculum of BE

will become the one for postgraduate entrance examination. Therefore, such courses can be set up as elective courses but do not need to be set up as compulsory courses. Practice has proved that if postgraduate-direction courses are set up as compulsory, the teaching effect of such courses is poor, and final examinations in them are always a considerable failure. As a result, it is impossible to achieve internal integration and penetration of English knowledge and skills.

2) *Internal integration of business knowledge and skill courses*: The establishment of business knowledge and skills (i.e. discipline knowledge and skills) in BE should also reflect the integration concept of its various knowledge and skill systems. Business knowledge and skills are multifaceted, such as business management and marketing knowledge, theoretical knowledge of international business, relevant policies and regulations and international practices, and international trade operation processes, as well as marketing communication skills, market research skills, data processing skills, copy writing skills, customer management skills, product promotion sales skills, and so on. It is almost impossible for the above knowledge and skills to be fully integrated and grasped in the course of 4 years of undergraduate education in China. Firstly, therefore, it is necessary to embody the core position of a certain knowledge and skill in the course setting, so as to promote the continuous integration of the various knowledge and skill points, and ultimately integrate. Secondly, business knowledge and skill courses should be systematic. Systematicness can guarantee the overall structure of knowledge and skills, and facilitate students' understanding of them. In addition, the gradual development of curriculum should be reflected. Simple courses are set up first, then complex; easy courses are established previous to difficult ones; and accordingly students can learn profound business theories in simple terms. The gradual development of curriculum is beneficial to the students' integration of business knowledge and skills, and is beneficial to the mutual penetration of the three links in the later period (BE knowledge and skills, simulation training and graduation practice).

3) *Integration of knowledge and skills between English and Business*: The research group on BE theory of University of International Business and Economics and Z. C. Zhang have a unified understanding of the discipline orientation of BE, pointing out that BE major is a new subject intersecting from foreign linguistics and applied linguistics to international business, international trade and world economy, mainly training internationalized compound business talents who are expert at both foreign language and business [2]. They believe that their expertise includes three dimensions: business subject knowledge (internal logic), industry practices (cognitive behavior strategies), discourse output and acceptance (language strategy skills)[3][4]. This “three-dimensional” professional technical analysis is conducive to the integration and penetration of knowledge and skills between English and business.

According to the “three-dimensional” technical analysis, students are required to master the language knowledge and skills that are necessary for them to carry out business activities. At the same time, students should be required to learn the business-related knowledge by independently established courses, and gradually their thinking mode of business discipline can be cultivated. Although the courses of business discipline do not necessarily include all the courses that the students, whose major is related to management, must master, the relevant subject knowledge and industry practice are regarded as an indispensable two dimensions of the three-dimensional structure of professional knowledge; and 20% - 30% of the professional learning time can be taken out for students to learn business knowledge and business skills[5], which ensures that relative professional knowledge is self-contained and establishes its inherent logical relationship. In this way, disciplines can be intersecting and compound, and students' knowledge and skill structure will also have the characteristics of compound talents.

B. Integration of BE Knowledge and Skills, Simulation Training and Graduation Practice

The simulation training is an indispensable part of the teaching links. It often refers to the actual economic business of the enterprise unit, making students work in the simulation environment of the entity enterprise, and carry out the practice exercises of the single or whole process. Simulation training for BE major is particular, mainly divided into two modules: language training module and professional training module. In the setting-up of the training course module, it is in principle to carry out the training of the language module first, and then carry out the practical training of the professional module, because, in the simulation practice of the professional module, students are able to deal with the actual process operation of various professional modules in English only after they have mastered enough English language knowledge and skills. At the same time, students must have excellent professional knowledge and skills in business to carry out simulation training, so that in the simulation training they can be gradually familiar with the practical process operation, and the two aspects of the knowledge and skills in English and business are fused into the simulated practical operation process, only to achieve the maximum level of the run-through of the whole business process operation practice and reach the point where students can practice in English at their own will. In addition, every knowledge or skill course must have training links. The specific proportion of its theory and training hours can be determined according to the differences of courses. The simulation training must be arranged before graduation practice, and a single simulation drill can be arranged according to the open semesters of the different knowledge and skill courses. As for the whole process business operation simulation training, basically it cannot be carried out until all the knowledge and skill courses or the courses with the highest relevance to the whole practical operation process are finished.

The quality of simulated training courses is especially important for subsequent graduation practice or employment. Throughout the graduates with solid theoretical knowledge, they are rarely able to work in an internship unit or even if they are employed, the liquidity (commonly known as “job-

hopping”or “job change”) is high. One of the most important reasons is that these graduates are not able to excellently complete the business process of enterprise entities, and in the final analysis it is the simulation training link that results in problems, affecting the links of graduation practice. The emergence of these problems indicates that the three links have not been truly integrated and mutually penetrated. Therefore, we must attach great importance to the simulation training.

However, the simulation training link is not the real enterprise entity after all, so many factors are not taken into account, such as real interpersonal relationship, real practice environment and so on. Even if the simulation training is completed well, it may not be possible to make a lottery or be successful in graduation practice. Therefore, graduation practice is also important. We must take it seriously and set it up carefully.

Usually, graduation practice refers to the students' participation in practical work before the graduation, that is, after the completion of the whole course (including knowledge and skill courses and simulation training courses or links), through comprehensively using all the professional knowledge and related basic knowledge to solve professional technical problems, to obtain independent work competence, to get all-round exercise in ideology and business, and to further master the practical teaching form of professional technology. In general, the internship is arranged in the eighth semester or from the seventh semester, but at least half a year should be guaranteed.

Another factor should be considered in setting up graduation practice - internship feedback. Through feedback, we can understand the problems in the process of students' practice. Such problems may be the problems of knowledge and skill links, and may also be the problems in the simulation training link. Internship feedback will help to improve the course setting in the future, making the curriculum concept of “two-skill integration and three-link mutual penetration” more mature and the teaching mode more perfect day by day.

IV. GUARANTEE CONDITIONS OF INTEGRATION

The guarantee conditions of integration and penetration are manifold. The two aspects, training or practice environment and professional teacher combination, are discussed here.

A. *Good Training or Internship Environment*

BE major is not traditional English major, and the requirements of the simulated training environment inside the campus is bound to be higher than those of a single traditional English major. Firstly, there should be many types of training rooms in the traditional English major, such as language laboratories, voice training rooms, writing training rooms, oral training rooms, film and speaking rooms, etc., and of course, some training rooms can be replaced by general multimedia classrooms. Secondly, there must be professional training rooms for international trade and business, such as international trade training rooms, business negotiation training rooms, e-commerce training rooms, etc.

A sign, which says XXXX simulation training, does not simply hang on the door of simulation training room. The

training room should satisfy all kinds of hardware and software conditions (such as computers, a big screen, some simulation training software, etc.) required by the practical operation process, and it can be used to achieve the lowest standard of industry.

B. *Excellent Professional Teachers*

The combination of excellent professional teachers is essential. Due to the length of space, only business professionals are discussed here. In principle, business classes must be taught by teachers who are proficient in English and business. BE major is born out of traditional English major. Teachers' self-transformation and readjustment are urgently placed before us. It is unrealistic for us to expect English teachers to start the basic courses of other specialties after one or two term training and it is irresponsible for students[6]. Therefore, it is imminent to introduce high-level BE teachers and industry skillful craftsmen.

Reasonable policies should be formulated for hiring or introducing foreign teachers. We can employ foreign teachers from British and American countries, making them responsible for oral English and audio-visual speaking teaching. If possible, business professional foreign teachers are introduced to teach practical operation simulation training courses. The foreign teachers who are proficient in business can drive students to participate in the classroom training, and be able to quickly become familiar with the practice of the practical operation process in the English language environment.

V. CONCLUSIONS

With the continuous enhancement of China's national strength, her foreign business activities become more and more colorful, and the demands for talents in this respect are also becoming even more and more important. The curriculum and teaching mode of foreign-related majors, especially BE major must be further improved and perfected, in order to make students more ready to come into this field of BE after high school graduation and make them more able to get on with their professional work soon after college graduation. Therefore, it is necessary for educators to do initial theoretical discussion and practice on the curriculum concept and teaching mode of “two-skill integration and three-link mutual penetration”, and to carry out deeper theoretical exploration and practice research in the future.

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