

Research on the Reform Path of Foreign-related English Teaching in Police Colleges under the Background of the "Free Trade Port"

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Abstract

With the implementation of the opening-up policy of the Hainan Free Trade Port, foreign-related policing in public security colleges faces new challenges and opportunities. Based on an analysis of the impact of the construction of the Hainan Free Trade Port on English teaching, this paper argues that existing teaching models should innovate teaching concepts and reform teaching methods: strengthening the cultivation of English skills and legal literacy by introducing cross-cultural communication and legal English teaching; and optimizing the allocation of teaching resources and updating teaching content to meet the new talent requirements under the Free Trade Port. An college English teaching system adapted to the needs of the Free Trade Port is thereby constructed, providing theoretical support and practical guidance for the reform of college English teaching in public security colleges, promoting the improvement of education and teaching standards, and contributing to the cultivation of more high-quality foreign-related legal talent for the construction of the Hainan Free Trade Port.

Keywords

Public security colleges; college English; teaching reform.

1. Introduction

In September 2018, at the conference on strengthening the reform of public foreign language teaching, the Ministry of Education formally elevated public foreign language teaching to the level of a national strategy, proposing that the purpose of foreign language teaching is to serve the Belt and Road Initiative. This further clarified the reform orientation of college foreign language teaching at the level of national policy and determined its direction. In 2020, the Ministry of Education issued the College English Teaching Guide, which further proposed that improving English proficiency "helps to enhance the country's language strength, effectively disseminate Chinese culture, promote extensive exchanges with the peoples of various countries, and raise the country's soft power." As a compulsory basic course, college English and the reform of its teaching constitute an indispensable part of current educational reform.

According to the construction plan of the Hainan Free Trade Port, Hainan implements a visa-free entry policy for citizens of 85 countries. The resulting growth in the volume of foreign-related policing work has created an urgent demand in the policing sector for a large number of composite, high-quality, application-oriented English talents. As part of foreign-related policing teaching in public security colleges, English teaching is of great significance in cultivating legal talents with an international perspective, legal literacy, and cross-cultural communication competence. Against this new background, an in-depth exploration of the reform of college English teaching in public security colleges—with respect to policing talent cultivation objectives and the enhancement of students' English language proficiency and practical application ability—serves to adapt to the new changes in talent demand arising from

the construction of the Free Trade Port and to improve students' overall quality and adaptability.

However, college English teaching in public security colleges currently suffers from numerous problems, including outdated teaching content, monotonous teaching methods, and insufficient teaching resources, which require systematic reform and innovation. This study addresses the following core questions: What is the current situation of, and what problems exist in, college English teaching in public security colleges under the background of the Free Trade Port? How should the reform path of college English teaching in public security colleges be designed?

2. Current Situation of College English Teaching in Public Security Colleges

At present, college English teaching faces considerable problems: students' comprehensive language application ability is insufficient; their academic English expression is poor; they remain unable to read original English books with proficiency; they cannot communicate effectively in oral exchanges; their writing ability falls short of social needs; their capacity for autonomous English learning and their learning strategies have not been fully cultivated or tapped; teachers' knowledge structures are narrow; and teaching methods centered on language skills cannot adequately meet the needs of cultivating composite talents. In the era of electronic media and the Internet, new learning modes such as MOOCs have posed challenges to the traditional, uniform approach to college English teaching. In addition, investment in teaching resources and in the hardware and software environment for teaching is insufficient.

(1) The Gap Between Students' Language Application Ability and Social Requirements

With the continuous reform of English teaching, students' English proficiency has improved substantially compared with the previous century. It may be said that college foreign language teaching has thoroughly eliminated the phenomenon of "mute English," and that the pattern of high input and low efficiency in college English teaching no longer exists. While students' English proficiency continues to rise, society's demand for English is also rising, and a gap nonetheless remains between students' English proficiency and social requirements.

(2) The Balanced Integration of Language Skills and Cultural Understanding

Language is the carrier of culture. Language teaching is the unity of the instrumental and the humanistic. In current college English teaching, language skills are still treated as the sole concern, while the humanistic dimension of language and the transmission of culture are neglected. Language skills should be deeply integrated with the cultural context of language use. This means exploring the historical, social, and cultural dimensions embedded in language use. In doing so, students can not only acquire language competence but also broaden their horizons and deepen their understanding and appreciation of the multicultural contexts that shape communication. Furthermore, neglecting the humanistic dimension of language teaching weakens the richness and complexity of cultural heritage. Language and culture are deeply intertwined, reflecting the customs, traditions, and values of a society. Language teaching should therefore incorporate cultural exploration and appreciation, exposing students to authentic materials, literary works, and cultural artifacts. Such an interdisciplinary approach not only enhances language learning but also cultivates cross-cultural competence and empathy.

(3) Challenges Posed by Artificial Intelligence to Foreign Language Teaching

The development of artificial intelligence technology has also prompted a reconsideration of the role of foreign language teachers. With the emergence of intelligent teaching systems, the teacher's role has shifted from that of a traditional knowledge transmitter to that of a learning guide and resource manager. Teachers need to pay closer attention to students' individualized

needs and to flexibly apply artificial intelligence technology to provide more targeted teaching plans and guidance, thereby better promoting students' language learning. The emergence of artificial intelligence technology enables students to learn autonomously through tools such as online learning platforms and speech recognition systems, reducing their dependence on traditional classroom teaching. Although this individualized and autonomous learning model is convenient for learners, it also brings new challenges to teachers, such as how to ensure the quality of students' learning and how to coordinate with intelligent teaching systems.

3. Research on the Reform Path of College English Teaching

(1) Cultivating National Sentiment: Deepening the Teaching Reform of College English Through the Development of Police English Courses

The scale of investment in, and the number of learners of, college English teaching in China is arguably the highest in the history of world foreign language education. The primary objective of college English teaching reform is to cultivate professionals of various kinds who "understand policing and are proficient in English."

Reconstructing the college English curriculum system. Following the principle of "integration of learning and use with effective output," teachers are required, when designing teaching tasks, to give primary consideration to students' learning outcomes and to advocate that language teaching activities and language use are inseparable. As a core component of talent cultivation in higher education institutions, college English is characterized, compared with other basic courses, by a large number of class hours, heavy credit weight, a long period of study, and a broad scope of knowledge.

Given the particular characteristics of public security colleges, great attention should be paid to the development of curriculum ideology and politics, guiding students to establish the concept of a "Safe China" and to embrace the spirit of valiant struggle in fine Chinese culture to safeguard political security, maintain social stability, and protect the peace of the people. In public security colleges, curriculum ideology and politics is of paramount importance: it helps students form a view of the state, the nation, history, and culture, and—by integrating ideological and political education, a spiritual force both gentle and firm that nourishes all things—into every classroom and every stage of students' growth, it guides students along the great path and enlightens them with great wisdom, enabling them to grow into pillars of the nation.

Realizing the unity of the humanistic and instrumental dimensions of college English[1]. One important task of college English is to conduct cross-cultural education. Language is the carrier of culture and, at the same time, a component of culture. In learning and mastering English as a communication tool, students should not only learn and exchange advanced science and technology or professional information but also understand foreign societies and cultures, enhance their understanding of different cultures, develop awareness of the similarities and differences between Chinese and foreign cultures, and cultivate cross-cultural communicative competence. The core of the humanistic dimension is to put people first, promote human values, and emphasize the cultivation of overall quality and all-round development. For English, therefore, the instrumental dimension is the foundation and the means of the humanistic dimension, while the humanistic dimension is the carrier and the soul of the instrumental dimension. Only by clarifying the dialectical relationship between the two can teaching practice both consolidate students' human foundation, enrich their life experience, strengthen their cultural grounding, and correct their values and worldview, and attend to the necessary knowledge and skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), so that the two are united and highly integrated.

College English teaching must therefore emphasize curriculum ideology and politics and integrate ideological and political education throughout the talent cultivation system and course teaching. Fostering virtue through education is the fundamental task of higher education in China; regarding it as the foundation of socialist universities with Chinese characteristics is an inherent requirement of aligning with global talent cultivation models. College English teaching should organically incorporate the core socialist values, and, in addition to developing students' English proficiency, cultivate in them a positive value orientation, sound moral character, multicultural awareness, firm patriotic sentiment, and cultural confidence. Taking national sentiment as the core of the teaching strategy and implementing curriculum ideology and politics in college English teaching allows the "implicit education" of curriculum ideology and politics to deepen students' "national sentiment" and "humanistic literacy" while developing their comprehensive English competence, thereby integrating knowledge transmission with value guidance.

(2) Mutual Support of Teaching and Research: Enhancing Teachers' Teaching Research Capacity and Teaching Standards Through Textbook Development

At present, the teaching faculty for college English remains inadequate. Teachers' workloads are extremely heavy; it is difficult for them to identify a clear research direction; research output is hard to produce; research pressure is considerable; and the distribution of professional titles is imbalanced. Accelerating the development of young teachers and correcting the imbalance in the faculty's title structure is therefore an urgent task.

Closely monitoring frontier developments in foreign language teaching at home and abroad, continuously updating educational concepts, and optimizing teaching models. The college should actively promote teachers' teaching and research work, encouraging them to apply for provincial and ministerial research projects, participate in textbook compilation, and publish teaching research papers. In practical work, according to the nature of the courses and the teaching tasks, teachers may form teaching teams for general English, general education, academic English, and innovation competitions. These teams empower one another and collaborate, giving full play to all teachers' initiative and subjective agency, making the best use of everyone's talents and all available resources, and forming a scientific and effective synergy.

Adhering to a combination of internal training and external recruitment to improve the quality of the teaching faculty. Building on the existing faculty, the focus should be on cultivating young teachers, with teachers selected each year to undertake domestic visiting research or pursue doctoral degrees. High-level teaching and research teams should be built, and teachers encouraged to actively participate in high-level academic conferences in order to update educational concepts and enhance teaching and research capacity.

Coordination between teaching and research, with integrated mutual reinforcement. Teachers are the main actors in teaching reform and innovation and important participants in and practitioners of the construction of new liberal arts; their teaching and research capacity can play a positive role in value guidance, course quality improvement, and model innovation. For application-oriented undergraduate institutions, the so-called coordination between teaching and research differs from the traditional mutual cooperation and collaborative education between universities and research institutes; it refers to the complete integration and mutual fusion of teaching research and scientific research—that is, teachers participate in both teaching research activities and scientific research activities, conducting research in the manner of teaching research and conducting teaching research with the mindset of scientific research.

The college therefore needs to deepen its emphasis on and support for teachers' teaching and research activities, further encourage teachers to conduct research around teaching, promote

the organic combination of teaching and research, and advance the improvement of the college's college English teaching quality.

(3) Beginning with the End in Mind: Expanding "Minor Degree" Programs Oriented to Policing Needs to Support College English Teaching

Traditional college English teaching has paid insufficient attention to the importance of closely combining language learning with comprehensive language use. Students tend to focus on learning and mastering the English language system, with a utilitarian intention of "serving examinations and obtaining good grades," which creates bottlenecks in improving students' comprehensive abilities such as autonomous learning, cross-cultural communication, critical thinking, and problem solving.

College English teaching should be grounded in the transmission of English language and culture proper.[3] Under the background of the new liberal arts, college English teaching should adhere to the essence of English teaching, consolidate students' English quality and skills, cultivate their language ability and practical application ability, expand their knowledge reserves, broaden their international perspective, and enhance their core competitiveness. As far as college English teaching is concerned, it is all the more necessary to take full account of students' differing levels, to strengthen guidance for different categories of students in a targeted manner, and to promote the maximum development of all students in English learning. College English teaching should actively pursue deep interdisciplinary integration. Under the background of the new liberal arts, the goal of college English teaching is not only to cultivate students' language ability but also to attend to the development of their critical thinking and humanistic spirit—organically integrating English with public security specializations,[2] building a dynamic internal and external dual-circulation talent cultivation mechanism between English and public security professional education, enabling the integrated development of college English and specialized courses, and cultivating innovative talents with solid and broad basic language knowledge and professional knowledge, relatively strong application ability, and relatively high overall quality, so as to meet the needs of national strategy and economic and social development and to shoulder the important task of foreign-related policing work.

Efforts should be devoted to achieving the joint improvement of students' English language ability and comprehensive application ability. On the one hand, with respect to students' English language ability—that is, the ability to understand and express meaning, intention, and emotional attitude through listening, speaking, reading, viewing, and writing in social contexts—explicit teaching content should be designed to improve the language skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation, together with implicit teaching content that manifests language ability. On the other hand, to cultivate students' comprehensive English application ability, ESP content should be further added to the teaching content to meet students' individualized learning needs, while highlighting students' subject position, creating an environment of "learning through use," and enhancing the effectiveness of college English teaching.

(4) Collaborative Education: Comprehensively Cultivating Students' Innovative Ability Through Integration with the Second Classroom

The improvement of language application ability depends more on "acquisition"; beyond the core curriculum, a ubiquitous environment for language learning and application is indispensable. By building a dynamic, open, and well-sequenced collaborative system, the coordination of "guided learning, directional learning, and facilitated learning" is scientifically and reasonably achieved, providing students with a broader space for "promoting learning through competition." [2]

Coordination between the first and second classrooms to achieve integrated development. On the one hand, attention should be paid to the interconnection and mutual integration of the first and second classrooms, advancing interaction between English teachers and administrative/academic support staff of departments through a college English teaching management mechanism of "integrated learning, teaching, and management," and, from the perspective of collaborative teaching, collaborative learning, and collaborative management, promoting the integrated development of the first and second classrooms and achieving effective connection and two-way interaction between the first classroom and the relaxed, collaborative, and individualized second classroom. On the other hand, based on policing characteristics, the policing-featured English second classroom should be continued, providing students with a display platform combining "English + specialization + interest," promoting students' subjective agency through a learning environment of situational creation and collaborative cooperation, enriching students' English learning experience, and forming a virtuous interaction between teaching and learning.

Coordination between learning and competition: "promoting teaching through competition and promoting learning through competition." Experience in organizing competitions shows that English competitions with clear tasks help to stimulate and sustain students' enthusiasm and creativity in English learning, and that the content of different types of competitions is often updated annually and highly practical, which also helps to cultivate students' autonomous learning and teamwork spirit. Through competition practice, students can gain positive learning experiences and a sense of achievement, enhancing their innovative ability and overall quality, while, by guiding students in competitions, teachers also promote the reform of their own teaching methods and the improvement of their teaching ability. It is therefore necessary to further actively organize students to participate in high-level English competitions such as the "FLTRP·ETIC Cup," the "SFLEP·Word Master," and the "Telling China's Story in Foreign Languages" outstanding short video competition, using competitions to further stimulate and consolidate students' enthusiasm for English learning, effectively building a learning-competition coordination mechanism that "promotes teaching through competition and promotes learning through competition," enhancing students' comprehensive English ability and awareness of innovation, and helping to improve the quality of the college's talent cultivation.

(5) Lifelong Learning: Advancing the Sustainable Development of Students' English Ability with Talent Cultivation as the Foundation

In the report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping proposed advancing the digitalization of education and building a learning society and a learning-oriented major country in which all people pursue lifelong learning. The concept of lifelong learning means that learning runs through a person's entire life, with continuous learning on the basis of better adapting to comprehensive economic and social development. Serving local economic and social development and improving the language service capacity of all kinds of talent should become the main objective of our college's foreign language teaching planning.

With public security officers as the primary audience, public security colleges should follow a socialized and market-oriented development path, forming a career-development-oriented training network system. The focus is on improving public security officers' foreign-related skills and literacy, building diversified and tiered continuing education and training models, continuously improving learning channels, and enhancing the effectiveness of policing training. Making joint use of the training resources of our college and other institutions to provide vocational skills training in foreign-related policing is an inescapable responsibility, an arduous task, and a glorious mission.

4. Conclusion

As an important base for talent cultivation and cultural inheritance, the college can not only integrate the concept of lifelong education throughout the entire process of talent cultivation, guiding university students to establish the concept of lifelong learning and stimulating their initiative and self-awareness in lifelong learning, but can also, through those students, widely disseminate and penetrate this concept into every corner and group of society, raising society's awareness of the importance of lifelong learning.

In the new era and on a new journey, college English, on its path of continuous endeavor, persists in reform and innovation, focusing on cultivating composite talents with solid basic professional knowledge and with foreign-related policing awareness, innovative awareness, practical ability, and national sentiment, so as to make a due contribution to the realization of the Chinese Dream of great national rejuvenation.

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