

# Strategies on Employment-oriented English Teaching Reform in Higher Vocational Colleges

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**Abstract:** Higher vocational colleges are different from other ordinary colleges and universities, the former pays more attention to the professional development of students, and the teaching content also focuses on the solution of students' future career problems. As a common language in the international community, English is playing an increasingly important role in people's interpersonal communication and career development. Vocational colleges should strengthen the professional tendency of English teaching and pay attention to improving students' comprehensive English accomplishment. Therefore, this paper analyzes the problems existing in vocational English teaching at present, so as to explore and discuss the strategies to promote the reform of vocational English teaching, such as constructing vocational comprehensive curriculum, enhancing the strength of teachers and carrying out teaching activities.

**Keywords:** Employment-oriented; Vocational English; Teaching reform; Problem; Strategy

This paper is a periodical achievement of the Foreign Language Education in Higher Education Project 2020 of Shandong Provincial Institute of Education Sciences. No.: 2020WGYB009 Title: Employment-oriented Reform of English Teaching in Vocational Colleges

## 1. Introduction

At the present stage, the education department has put forward the overall goal of "teaching by learning". Teachers of all learning sections have adapted to policy changes and updated classroom teaching concepts and teaching modes, aiming to bring scientific classroom teaching to students with effective teaching methods. Higher vocational colleges are also actively exploring teaching strategies with student development as the main goal. With the accelerating international exchange and cooperation, the utilization rate of English is getting higher and higher. The reform of English teaching methods and teaching ideas in vocational colleges is becoming more and more important. Therefore, teachers should work out effective teaching plans according to the existing problems in English teaching, so as to achieve a breakthrough in vocational English teaching reforms.

## 2. Problems existing in English teaching in vocational colleges at present

### 2.1 Theoretical teaching is more important than practical teaching

In English classes of higher vocational colleges, the teaching problem of "paying more attention to theory than practice" is very prominent. When higher vocational colleges set up English courses, the selection and implementation of teaching content are mainly based on theoretical basic English knowledge, assisted by less English practice and exercise activities. As a result, many vocational college students have typical polarization in the process of English learning. For example, some students can speak English, but they can not write English; some students are able to write in English but not able to communicate in English, and some are able to read articles but not able to write articles. This is mainly because teachers lack the connection between students' practical exercise and knowledge learning during classroom teaching, which leads to the disconnection between students' English practical application ability and basic knowledge<sup>[1]</sup>.

### 2.2 Lack of professional teaching guidance

The lack of professional teaching guidance is also a typical problem in English teaching in higher vocational colleges. Higher vocational colleges are professional and targeted in talent training. By providing students with professional course teaching and professional ability training, they can improve the employment rate of students in the society. However, in English classroom teaching, teachers are still based on traditional knowledge teaching and lack of professional English skills training for students. On the one hand, the English curriculum system lacks professionalism. The teaching content of English courses is relatively basic. In the course teaching, teachers also lack the explanation and practice of professional English teaching content, which leads to the lack of professional tendency in the cultivation of students' English learning ability. On the other hand, the professional teaching of English teachers is not deepened enough. The main reason why many teachers fail to effectively cultivate students' professional English ability in classroom teaching lies in their recognition of the cultivation of students' professional English ability. In addition, some teachers

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doi: 10.18282/l-e.v10i9.3270

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also need to improve their teaching ability.

### **3. Employment-oriented vocational English teaching reform strategies**

#### **3.1 Build comprehensive vocational courses based on teaching materials**

Teaching materials are the important basis for school curriculum teaching and the basic source for students to learn English knowledge. Therefore, higher vocational colleges and teachers, in accordance with the teaching material content of the school, build up the professional integrated curriculum system, improve the English classroom teaching professional orientation, improve students' English ability of practical application, and help students conform to the trend of the development of the social work, master the basic essentials and key skills of English, can improve students' adaptability in the society in the future. For example, when teachers in higher vocational colleges carry out the teaching content of Unit 2 Can I Help You, teachers should lay down the basic knowledge barrier for students' English ability according to the basic content of the textbook, and cultivate students' professional English ability based on the knowledge of the textbook. For example, the words "blouse, jeans, perfect, sign, sweater, size, dress, section" in the vocabulary section are introduced first. Then, teachers can use information multimedia courseware to carry out the teaching task of selecting words to fill in the blanks and consolidate the English words learned by students. After the students have mastered the basic English knowledge, let the students make sentences according to the Chinese sentences displayed on the electronic blackboard<sup>[2]</sup>. When the students have a certain degree of proficiency in words and sentences, let the students with the same desk as a group to carry out the English exchange simulation of commodity trading, which is conducive to enhance the students' practical English ability, apply the knowledge of English into the market transaction, enhance the students' professional ability in English learning.

#### **3.2 Strengthen the building of teachers and enhance the level of vocational teaching**

The construction of teachers is an effective strategy to improve the efficiency of English classroom teaching in vocational colleges. Teachers are the main guide of students' learning and the main person in charge of cultivating students' professional ability and quality. Teachers' teaching methods, teaching ability and knowledge accomplishment will affect the overall learning effect of students. Therefore, higher vocational colleges should strengthen the building of teachers, through improving the teaching level of English teachers, to provide professional teaching guidance for students. For example, colleges and universities should provide regular training opportunities for English teachers, such as class competition activities and efficient classroom observation activities with major colleges and universities, so that teachers can actively participate in improving teaching level. At the same time, teachers themselves should constantly update their knowledge structure to achieve the professional development of students' English ability<sup>[3]</sup>. For example, when carrying out the teaching content of Unit 2 What an Amazing Place, teachers can use the Internet to collect excellent classroom teaching on the Internet for reference and observation, absorb excellent teaching experience and make the teaching courseware of What an Amazing Place. At the same time, teachers can also communicate with teachers in the college to discuss the teaching method of this period and improve the quality of classroom teaching.

#### **3.3. Carry out teaching activities to improve students' vocational ability**

The development of teaching activities is helpful to avoid the teaching phenomenon of "paying more attention to theory than practice". Teachers carry out classroom teaching activities according to the contents of textbooks, which can lay a solid foundation for English teaching. Through setting and carrying out diversified, innovative and practical teaching activities, improve students' comprehensive English literacy and help students adapt to the development of social work situation. For example, the teacher is carrying out the teaching content of Unit 3 My English is Improving Fast! When teaching, teachers can use the form of teaching activities to help students understand the content of the class and improve their English ability, such as "What are the key factors needed to improve your English skills?" For example, effort, practice listening, memorize words, learn to write, enhance reading, improve oral expression ability", ask the students to debate their learning activities in class. As a guide, teachers observe students' learning and give suggestions, such as "Please express your viewpoints in the debate". In this way, it is not only conducive to improving students' cognition of the teaching content of this class, but also conducive to cultivating students' English practice ability.

### **4. Conclusion**

To sum up, strengthening the professional tendency of English classroom teaching in higher vocational colleges conforms to the development situation of international society and the basic trend of education policy reform in China, and plays an important innovative role in the development of students in higher vocational colleges. Vocational colleges focus on cultivating students' professional ability and quality. Professional teaching content in English classroom teaching can enhance students' professional ability, improve students' adaptability in the future social job hunting, and help students solve the employment problem of "graduation means unemployment". Therefore, higher vocational colleges should accelerate the overall reform of English classroom teaching and realize the integration of basic English classroom teaching and vocational courses.

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