Research on the Talent Training Mode of the English Specialty

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Abstract: The leap development of the English specialty in the colleges and universities in China has brought many problems to the subject itself, and it needs urgent reform. Currently, there are two kinds of talent training mode of the English specialty: one kind takes the subject connotation road (English Language and Literature Direction), the other is a composite application mode: “English plus profession”. This paper analyzes the talent training objectives, the construction of the curriculum system and the teaching methods of the two different kind modes.

Keywords: The English specialty, Talent training mode, Liberal general talent training, Composite application talent training

1 Introduction

Since China’s reform and opening up, the specialty development of higher education in China is rapid, but compared to any other specialties, the development speed of the English specialty with a characteristic of “super convention” and “great leap” is astonishing. The striding development of the English Specialty causes a lot of problems within the specialty: unclear talent training objectives, unreasonable curriculum system, and poor teaching effect, all of which lead to graduates employment situation flashing red (Zhang Shaojie, 2010).

2 Situation of the Talent Training Mode of the English Specialty

Currently, there are two kinds of talent training modes of the English Specialty: one kind takes the subject connotation road (English Language and Literature Direction), the other is a composite application mode: “English plus profession (English plus business, English plus Travel, English plus translation)”. This classification of talent training is conducive to highlight the characteristics of talent and prevent similar graduates competing, and thus ease the employment pressure. However, restricted by the unified syllabus, the current outstanding problem of the two talent training modes are the unclear talent training objectives, the curriculum system disjointing with the training objectives and unreasonable teaching means and method. In fact, each mode of talent training has its own characteristics, and the training focus is also different. In order to better the classification training, we must first make clear the characteristics of the two talent training modes. For better distinction, we call the English Language and Literature Direction as “English Literature Specialty”, and English plus profession mode as “composite application English Specialty”.

3 The Talent Training Mode of the “English Literature Specialty”

The English Literature Specialty takes the subject connotation road and trains liberal general talents. This kind of talents have characteristics of broad humanistic knowledge, humanistic quality formed by infiltration of broad humanistic knowledge and research ability on discipline connotation (linguistics, literature, culture) of the English specialty. In China, the English language and literature specialty, which belongs to the humanities is under the foreign language and literature discipline with discipline connation of linguistics, literature, culture. The humanities have their own unique advantages to cultivate the students’ humanistic quality. The liberal general talents trained by the English literature specialty are with broad knowledge, self-confidence, independent thinking ability, knowledge of multi
culture, and also with the spirit of criticism and international perspective. The training focus transcends
the pure English language skills and makes the student obtain cultural vision, sound personality, and
ability of imaging, creating, communicating, observing, thinking, judging, and feeling, all of which do
not belong to a special skill, but abstract things more important than the actual skill. It is an ability
of migration. The advantage of this type of talent is with research capabilities, so they can go further study;
if they go to work directly, liberal general education makes them get the key ability of migration, so they
can adapt to different work requirements more easily in the changing market of competition. According
to the training objectives of the English literature specialty, the curriculum can be divided into three
dimensions: professional dimension, literacy attainment dimension and research method dimension (Hu
Bicheng, 2007). Professional dimension includes language skill training courses and professional
knowledge courses. Language skill training courses include language skill such as: listening, speaking,
reading, writing, and translating training courses. Professional knowledge courses include courses with
knowledge of English literature, culture and linguistics. Literacy attainment dimension includes
professional theory courses and literacy attainment courses in art category that help the students to
improve their humane accomplishment and critical thinking ability, for example “comparison between
Chinese and Western culture”, historical and philosophical aspects of curriculum, and also professional
theory courses such as “Literature Introduction” and “Literary criticism” which is good to enhance the
students’ critical thinking ability. Methods dimension courses include courses introducing basic
scientific research methods such as quantitative and qualitative, questionnaire, interview, and SPSS data
acquisition pattern and so on for the students’ future academic research (Figure 1).

![Figure 1 Three-dimensional curriculum system of the English literature specialty](image)

The teaching methods and means of English literature specialty should combine teaching with
researching to train students’ research ability. Teachers should encourage students to publish papers
through academic research. Critical thinking ability is a big advantage the English literature specialty. In
order to train students’ critical thinking ability, teachers should provide students with as much texts as
possible of the foreign literature and Chinese classical culture, and continuously guide students to
compare them to train the students’ thinking ability. In addition, the English literature specialty should
also pay attention to reading and writing ability and combine them together. Write training is one of the
best means to cultivate the students’ thinking ability (Sun Youzhong, 2010). Strong ability of Writing is
an important symbol of academic talent and also the basis of collecting materials and published thesis.
In the field of management, tutorial system can also be established. Tutor can guide through e-mail,
mobile phone, text messages and online communication at any time to care for their students’ study and
academic research, and at the same time, noble character of the tutors can also influence the students.
4 The Talent Training Mode of the “Composite Application English Specialty”

Composite application talents are reflected in two aspects of composite and application. When two or more than two things get together, we call it “composite”. The Talent Training Mode of Composite is a kind of interdisciplinary talents training mode by breaking the boundaries of disciplines. Composite talents are proficient in theory and basic skills of two or more than two disciplines, and form the comprehensive ability and high quality through the process of multidisciplinary knowledge construction and digestion. The “composite” are intellectual elements compounding, not a simple 1+1=2, but 1+1>2. The interdisciplinary knowledge sets off a chemical reaction, when they integrate, penetrate and finally achieve the upgrading of the “quality”. Application talents are with strong professional technology application and practice ability. They can put the professional knowledge and technology into social practice and transform them into productive forces. Composite talents training emphasize comprehensive ability and thinking under comprehensive knowledge of interdisciplinary; application talents training emphasize putting the relative knowledge and skills into social production and practice. Composite application talents of English specialty should have a broad knowledge, comprehensive thinking and creative ability which are the sustainable sources of their occupation. At the same time, composite application talents of English specialty with solid language ability should makes the language service in other industry practice, which reflects the characteristics of English as a language tool. This kind of talent in the future occupation without special training can quickly adapt to the specific requirements of occupation, exhibit superior comprehensive thinking ability and the ability of social practice, to better serve the production practice and social.

Two dimensional curriculum systems (Figure 2) are more suitable for composite application talents training. This theory divides curriculum system of English specialty into two dimensions of longitudinal and transverse. The longitudinal dimension includes: basic courses in discipline, English professional courses and related professional courses. Basic courses have the characteristic of composite features, and highlight comprehensive ability of the students. The English professional courses include language skills course and courses about literature, culture and linguistics with the characteristics of English subject to ensure the discipline foundation. In fact, strong English language skills and profound professional knowledge are the advantages and characteristics of the English specialty, which is different from other disciplines. The related professional knowledge courses which fully embody the characteristics of composite applications are certain other specialty courses taught in English, such as: business courses, tourism courses and secretary courses which indicate that in the future the students will be engaged in. Transverse dimensions include: theory teaching system, practice teaching system in class, extracurricular practice teaching system. This kind of curriculum system fully reflects the combination of students’ theory and practice ability’ training, and highlights the latter (Figure 3).
In teaching methods and means, more attention should be paid to the students’ practical ability in composite application talents training, more flexible teaching methods should be used, such as classroom discussion with a theme, context design and debate simulation to create a real language environment; combination of the first and second class, and encourage students to take part in the English speech, English competition activities and social practice (reception, tour guides, translation) in order to cultivate students' language ability; encourage students to put the theory of knowledge in class to find and solve the problem in practice, and from practice, they can find professional learning gap, thus promoting the first classroom learning. In addition, in order to cultivate the practice ability of students, the school should open up more practices base on order and effective practice under the guidance of teachers.

5 Conclusion

In short, whether it is English literature specialty or English composite application specialty, students are required to have strong language ability first, this is the bottom line; they must have broad English knowledge, which is the survival foundation of English specialty. At the same time, whether English literature specialty or English composite applied specialty, the distinction between them is general, not quite distinct from each other. English literature specialty students also need social practice, without it they will become empty talk pedant; composite application English specialty students also need professional theoretical knowledge learning, or else the practice will be blind.

References