

Cultivation of Vocational Students' English Practical Ability based on Multimodal Theory

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Abstract: Disadvantages have been gradually exposed in the fixed mode formed by vocational English teaching during a long period. With the deep exploration of teaching reform, educators continuously enhance students' practical ability for their value realization in future professional post. As an advanced element with multi-angle and profundity in vocational English teaching activities, multimodal theory will provide new ideas in aspects of teaching condition and network technique as well as college-enterprise combination. Meanwhile, it can also significantly improve English learning of vocational college students.

1 INTRODUCTION

With the popularization of higher education, teaching activities have widespread promotion in various vocational colleges. They act as the bond of schools and society, aiming to provide tremendous young professionals for social production. However, considering weak school condition and teaching resource of most vocational colleges, there is a doubt about the effect of vocational education as well as the professional quality of their graduates, which also concern students, parents and enterprises. Although currently the government has increased funding and policy support for vocational education, more efforts of schools and educators are required in complex teaching links in order to really turn the input into reasonable educational output (Yang Wenge, 2014). It is necessary to consolidate vocational education advantages and introduce new teaching concept and mode for the improvement of teaching work and the quality optimization of talent cultivation during the long-term practice and run-in period. The teaching exploration, with social responsibility and significance, needs front-line teachers' breakthroughs from fix thinking mode as well as strong coordination and support of students and their colleges (Liu Shuqi, 2014). These measures will ensure smooth process of the improvement activities and bring good achievements.

2 STATUE OF VOCATIONAL STUDENTS' ENGLISH PRACTICAL ABILITY

As a fundamental subject, English has a growingly consolidated place in education field. Increasing proportion of English course is considered in various teaching reform and examination adjustment, indicating the cultivation of students' English ability is still the key emphasis in future educational work. It needs attention and more efforts from schools, teachers and students. With the rapid internationalization of society and economy, there will be enormous job openings, which will give new challenges for internal students' English learning. In the meanwhile, various industries require plenty of special vocational employees with related professionals knowledge, and more expect that these employees can contribute for the perfection of departmental work system and the internationalized transformation with their stronger English practical ability and high-level professional quality (Luo Ying, 2014).

Like most English major teaching, vocational English education presents certain limitation with its fast development in China. Seen from basic teaching condition, there is a lack of normalization in English textbooks adopted by vocational college students. In the early days, these colleges with short running time had no special English textbooks, adopting the

same textbooks of undergraduate education. This behavior ignored the characteristic and special social responsibility of vocational education, and caused trouble to teacher-student English course activities during the practice. Students failed to adapt course difficulty and schedule, which influenced their learning quality and the enthusiasm in English subjects. In the next years, the government unified teaching textbooks for the regulation of teaching activities and teacher behavior in colleges. However, there are cases where some colleges still use self-compiled English textbooks to meet students' further demand of specialization. Only the complexity in teaching textbooks, consequently, has already made vocational education in trouble of management and development. Meanwhile, with some colleges' limitation in infrastructure construction as well as teaching and teacher resource, it is worrisome for English ability of vocational students. In addition, teachers are helpless for cultivation of students' practical ability due to the fixed mode of exam-oriented education in schools. With monotonous inflexible curriculum provision and traditional lecture-based learning, students have become line products of vocational college English major. Lacking certain application and management ability of English knowledge, they still stay at the initial stage of English learning.

From the above situation, graduates, educated by this vocational English education, is hardly appreciated by employers and is difficult to realize their career ambition. For economic specialty students, they have to master English knowledge related with commodity information, transportation, trade negotiation, contract correspondence, etc., and can apply the English ability of listening, speaking, reading and writing to work. Only in this practical way can vocational English embody its practical significance and help vocational college students to realize their career planning and life value.

3 APPLICATION OF MULTIMODAL THEORY IN CULTIVATION OF ENGLISH PRACTICAL ABILITY

Multimodal theory is modal symbols including language, image, characters, behavior, etc. It is applied in daily communication among social members to optimize common knowledge information transfer and feeling expression with its meticulous quantized standard. The purpose of this

mode is to change traditional single-mode theory and to fully explore individual inner potential in senses of sight, smell, hearing and touch. With its application in different practical activity, the more scientific and reasonable theory can be generally adopted in various fields.

3.1 Expanding teaching forms with equipments

Today's English education is more than words, sentence pattern and grammar. In vocational fields with high professionalism, especially, corresponding teaching activity reform cannot be limited to the increase of teaching section or the adjustment of teaching requirement. Pointed by *On A Synthetic Theoretical Framework for Multimodal Analysis*, multimodal exploration in aspects of culture, language environment, content and expression is influenced by specific behavior of educators. And to some extent, it is also affected by non-language teaching attachments and implements.

It is suggested that English education teaching be a pioneer in utilizing various advanced technologies. With certain material and economic basis, these technologies from education are applied in education for the huge demand of society. Diversified teaching tools are necessary to keep teaching activities up to date. Especially in the application of multimodal theory to vocational English, schools and teachers are more supposed to actively find various possibilities with diversified equipments and teaching form to realize multimode of students' English practical ability cultivation.

Currently, widely used teaching tools have possessed multimedia devices such as projector, PPT and voice prompt system, helping students visually see course content. Besides, vision-oriented teaching form can easily present fuzzy language and ideology with images or characters. This provides free choices for students' absorption and comprehension, and further emancipates students' mind. Students are encouraged for the thought and attempt of practical English in language, movement and expression in order to arouse their stronger learning desire.

The breakthrough of traditional teaching pattern provides teachers a greater unlimited space. For each student's professional English competence, teachers' deep inquiry and survey can increase the pertinence and effectiveness of their teaching activities. With learning platform possessed high-tech elements, students can clearly know basic information such as major requirements of English competence, emphasis of major-related jobs and their present

English practical ability, and then rationally schedule their school life. This reform is due to teachers' accurate choice of multimode as well as their scientific control of sensorial utilization and environmental factor. Consequently, the main idea of multimodal theory is conveyed, which is maximally beneficial to the teaching and learning.

3.2 Efficient teaching system formed by network

Currently, work of various industries is widely integrated into information network where data and information can be easily collected and collated and even be quickly called and conveyed if needed. Education field, cradle of these knowledge and skill, is more supposed to utilize integrated and networked hi-tech tools for the upgrade of specific work.

Vocational English teaching can find the most suitable curriculum provision and teaching content with reference to network textbooks. According to English learning effect of vocational students at different stages, timely adjustment and upgrade of such textbooks can avoid the discrepancy of teaching activities and textbooks. Multimodal theory emphasizes teachers' cultivation of students' practical ability in various English teaching forms. Teachers are required to focus on whether students have mastered enough practical English vocabulary and grammar, whether they can skillfully apply what they learned in reality and whether they can quickly adjust to new environments and interpersonal relationships. These proposed new contents and standards, which are far beyond initial teaching requirements, not only indicate more comprehensive emphasis of modern society on talent quality, but also can gradually adapt to the wide existence of integration and network technique in daily life. Teachers can properly balance and classify each student's ability of listening, reading, speaking and writing and even their practical ability, creative ability and divergent ability, and then integrate related data into special information database to form archives. The database is a direct record and reflection of students' English learning and can effectively urge their active learning. Additionally, the database also provides reference data for training programs of vocational colleges, connecting teaching activities with modern technology.

As the core role in multimodal teaching pattern, information concretely includes course content, teachers' language expression and students' feedback and interaction. After the integration of these activities into network system, it can be

qualitatively and quantitatively evaluated about teaching results, input-output ratio and inherent potential. And the pattern operation can even provide reliable recommendations for teaching improvement. Consequently, only the network of teaching activities has already largely reduce teachers' working strength and decrease their futile action in teaching process. Meanwhile, it forms a virtuous circle between function and effect of vocational English with high teaching standard. On this basis, vocational colleges can expand network technique to other majors in teaching reform, student information management and teacher assessment and even schools' internal affairs management, to realize the modernization transformation of vocational college education as soon as possible.

3.3 Increasing students' practice opportunities based on multimodal theory

Effective connection between teaching activities and social positions determines the success of talent cultivation in vocational colleges as well as the realization of purpose to serve the economy and society. "Cooperation of colleges and enterprises, combination of work and study" is the personnel training mode proposed by Ministry of Education recently. It requires vocational colleges to adjust traditional lecture-based teaching, and emphasizes the consistency of society requirement and teaching requirement in college-enterprise cooperation to guarantee pertinence and effectiveness of students' learning. The best method to practice multimodal theory is to increase students' practice opportunities by all means. It will provide necessary reference to students' future career if they can comprehensively know about position statement, job specification and corresponding stimulation treatment of their major-related jobs.

In Hubei Province, vocational unified examination will retreat from its historical stage and be replaced by knowledge & skill assessment. The attempt to differentiate vocational education and general education not only further emphasizes the professionalism of teaching and learning in vocational colleges, but also is able to realize the important value of "From the society and to the society". With extensive use, vocational English has rich content including business English, travel English, scientific English, etc. It requires students have sufficient ability in aspects of spoken English, cultural background, reading and translation, daily writing, etc. These skills can make students high

standard technical employees who are qualified for their future positions. And what's more, good English practical ability will increase additional value for these young workplace freshmen, providing them with more independent choice right. With negotiation and contracts, vocational colleges can establish stable and reasonable win-win cooperation mode with work units such as enterprises and departments. It is effectively helpful to open students' eyes by the organization visits of specific workflow related to practical English, the participation in lectures made by foreign specialists and scholars and even the transportation of quantitative outstanding internships to foreign enterprises or famous domestic enterprises. Through these measures, students will have a further and comprehensive understanding of actual requirements in own majors and realize the distance between their learning effect and job requirements, which can urge them to lay more emphasis on English competence and self-improvement.

4 CONCLUSIONS

For the students in our vocational schools, both schools and teachers should pay more attention to its professionalism as well as students' corresponding practical ability and strain capacity considering specific actual requirements in subjects of vocational colleges. Multimodal theory, compared with traditional teaching theory, has unparalleled superiority due to its visible and comprehensive perspective. Meanwhile, it has unique application value to students' different senses in teaching activities as well as various fields related to teaching. With the support of schools and related departments, teachers can constantly expand teaching forms in this mode and integrate diversified teaching activities into network by information technology. With these measures and further college-enterprise cooperation, finally, students' comprehensive quality including practical ability will be improved.

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