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Research on College English Teaching Reform Serving the "Five Directions for Strengthening" Strategy of the Hainan Free Trade Port

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Abstract: The "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy of the Hainan Free Trade Port promotes the opening-up and development of five key industries: the seed industry, the marine industry, the aerospace industry, the green and low-carbon industry, and the digital economy. At present, college English teaching faces many difficulties, such as the disconnection between course content and local industrial demand, the rigidity of teaching modes, the lack of practical training platforms, and the one-dimensional evaluation system. Based on the reality of the Free Trade Port's development, this paper analyzes the existing problems in college English teaching and explores reform paths in the curriculum system, teaching mode, faculty development, and evaluation mechanism.

Keywords: Hainan Free Trade Port; "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy; College English; Teaching reform

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1. Introduction

The Hainan Free Trade Port is implementing the "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy, namely, strengthening itself through the seed industry, the marine industry, the aerospace industry, green and low-carbon development, and the digital economy. As international cooperation in these five key industries becomes increasingly frequent, new and higher requirements have been placed on the cultivation of foreign language talents in colleges and universities. Traditional college English teaching lays particular emphasis on general language knowledge and lacks teaching content related to the industries of the Free Trade Port. Against the background of the Free Trade Port's construction, this paper expounds the necessity of college English teaching reform, sorts out the difficulties in teaching, and constructs a teaching reform framework oriented to the "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy, so as to expand the capacity of college English teaching to serve regional development.

2. The Hainan Free Trade Port's "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy and the internal logic of college English teaching

2.1. Realistic demands for foreign language talents under the "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy

The "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy of the Hainan Free Trade Port covers five key industries — the seed industry, the marine industry, the aerospace industry, the green and low-carbon industry, and the digital economy — and all of these industries generate a large volume of foreign-related business in such areas as international technical cooperation, cross-border commercial and trade exchanges, overseas project coordination, and the international dissemination of achievements. Industrial development needs not only professionals with technical expertise, but also compound talents proficient in English for business negotiation, document translation, and international communication. Industry-oriented language ability is no longer limited to daily communication; it also requires students to read industry materials, master professional terminology, and complete cross-border business communication.

International cooperation in the key industries of the Free Trade Port will continue to deepen; activities such as overseas technology introduction, cross-border project implementation, and international exhibitions and exchanges will keep increasing, and foreign-related communication in these industries will become increasingly complex. A large number of positions require practitioners to independently handle foreign-language data processing, external communication and coordination, and similar tasks. As an important source of talent supply, colleges and universities need to integrate industry's requirements for foreign-related abilities into the whole process of college English teaching, so as to expose students to industry-related English application scenarios, shorten their adaptation period from campus to industrial posts, and build a sufficient reserve of language-service personnel for the development of the key industries of the Hainan Free Trade Port.

2.2. Educational orientation of college English teaching in serving regional development

As a common foundational course in colleges and universities, college English undertakes the tasks of consolidating students' language foundation, cultivating their international vision, and improving their intercultural communicative competence. Against the background of the Free Trade Port's construction, college English teaching should not be limited to the cultivation of general language ability; it should also serve regional development and take serving local strategies as an important educational orientation. Based on the industrial characteristics of the Hainan Free Trade Port, the course should integrate regional development needs into its teaching objectives, teaching content, and practical training. Through the teaching reform, students can not only master English as a tool, but also build up knowledge of the key industries of the Free Trade Port and acquire the basic ability to serve local foreign-related industries.

Public foreign language courses in colleges and universities have wide coverage and a large student base, serving students of all majors. Students of different majors will enter such fields as the seed industry, the marine industry, the aerospace industry, the green industry, and the digital industry in the future. The teaching reform needs to move beyond the examination-oriented orientation, strengthen the cultivation of application-oriented ability, guide students to recognize the practical value of foreign languages in serving the industrial development of the Free Trade Port, foster their awareness of serving local construction, and achieve resonance between talent cultivation and regional development [1].

2.3. Value implications of aligning college English teaching reform with the "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy

Aligning college English teaching reform with the "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy of the Hainan Free Trade Port can solve the practical problem of the disconnection between public foreign language teaching and regional industries, and can upgrade the educational value of the course. Most traditional college English textbooks consist of general texts, so students rarely encounter real language scenarios from the Free Trade Port. Introducing English materials related to the seed industry, the marine industry, aerospace, green and low-carbon development, and the digital economy can enrich classroom teaching resources, broaden students' horizons, and enhance the practical significance of language learning.

Carrying out college English teaching reform can also promote the development of the course itself. The reform process requires reconstructing the curriculum content, renewing the teaching mode, and improving the evaluation system; it pushes teachers to expand their industry knowledge reserves and promotes the localization of curriculum resources. The reform not only improves students' foreign language application ability, but also shifts the college English course from simple language teaching toward the comprehensive cultivation of language ability, industry cognition, and cross-cultural literacy. Through the optimization of the teaching system, public foundational courses can achieve strategic upgrading and give full play to the role of higher education in serving regional economic and social development.

3. Existing problems in college English teaching for serving the "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy of the Hainan Free Trade Port

3.1. Disconnection between the curriculum content system and the industrial demands of the Free Trade Port

At present, college English courses are mainly based on general English materials, and teaching resources focus on general topics. The proportion of specialized English materials in such fields as the seed industry, marine engineering, commercial aerospace, green and low-carbon development, and digital cross-border trade is relatively low, and classroom teaching seldom involves industrial foreign-language literature, cross-border business texts, or materials for international project exchanges. Even if students master basic English, they still face problems such as an insufficient command of professional vocabulary and unfamiliarity with industrial contexts.

The homogeneity of the curriculum is also prominent: a uniform teaching scheme is adopted for students of different majors, without any hierarchical design. Students majoring in agronomy, in marine and aerospace engineering, or in economics and management face very different English application scenarios in their future careers. Uniform curriculum content cannot accommodate these differentiated needs; for some students, what they learn has little relevance to their future career development, which undermines their learning motivation.

3.2. Rigid teaching modes and insufficient supply of industry-scenario practical teaching

Existing college English classes are still teacher-centered, dominated by the traditional modes of text explanation, vocabulary and grammar drills, and exercises. Most classroom teaching stays at the level of language knowledge input, and there is a lack of practical training opportunities such as business communication, technical document translation, and international publicity writing. Classroom teaching is

separated from real industrial scenarios, so the language knowledge students acquire is difficult to transform into practical application ability. Teaching methods also lack innovation: modern approaches such as virtual simulation and industry scenario simulation are rarely used, making it difficult to build a language environment close to the industries of the Free Trade Port.

Extracurricular practice for college English is mostly limited to English competitions and ordinary club activities, and lacks practice carriers connected with the "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy. There is little teaching interaction between universities and local foreign-related enterprises, industrial parks, and scientific research institutions. Students lack opportunities to participate in frontline foreign-related auxiliary work, and cannot directly experience the real working state of foreign-related communication in the seed industry, the marine industry, aerospace, and other fields [2].

3.3. Insufficient industry knowledge reserve and teaching innovation ability of the faculty

College English teachers generally have solid language proficiency, but most of them lack background knowledge of the key industries of the Hainan Free Trade Port. Teachers have limited knowledge of the industrial logic, technical terms, and foreign-related business processes of the seed industry, marine engineering, commercial aerospace, the green economy, and digital cross-border business. Relying only on existing general textbooks for teaching design, they find it difficult to develop teaching resources in line with the "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy.

Industry-oriented teacher training systems are underdeveloped, and colleges and universities seldom organize college English teachers to conduct field research in the Free Trade Port's industries. Teachers lack channels for accessing foreign-related industry practice and opportunities to exchange with industry practitioners, so the pace of their knowledge updating cannot keep up with the development of the Free Trade Port's industries. Some teachers' teaching philosophy remains at the level of examination-oriented teaching, and their understanding of the teaching objective of serving local strategies is inadequate.

4. Basic principles of college English teaching reform for serving the "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy of the Hainan Free Trade Port

4.1. The principle of strategic adaptation: Anchoring the development orientation of the Free Trade Port's industries

The reform of college English teaching must adhere to the principle of strategic adaptation and firmly anchor itself to the development orientation of the Hainan Free Trade Port's "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy. Curriculum construction, teaching content, and practical design should all target the real competency requirements of the industries, abandoning traditional teaching ideas detached from regional development. Rather than simply piling up industrial vocabulary, the reform should integrate industry-related foreign communication scenarios into the whole process of the course, so as to channel language teaching toward serving the industries. Teaching objectives should give consideration to both basic language ability and industrial application ability, keeping language teaching in step with the industrial development of the Free Trade Port.

Adhering to the principle of strategic adaptation, the teaching reform should keep pace with the industrial development of the Free Trade Port. Its key industries are continuously upgrading, and the forms of international cooperation and types of foreign-related business will be constantly renewed. College English

teaching resources and tasks therefore need dynamic adjustment to absorb new materials from industrial development and maintain the timeliness of teaching content[3]. The reform process also needs to maintain continuous contact with the industrial sector, collect the actual needs of industrial exchanges, and avoid becoming divorced from reality.

4.2. The principle of stratification and classification: Accommodating disciplinary differences and ability gradients

The reform should follow the principle of stratification and classification, fully consider the differences in students' disciplinary backgrounds and future employment directions, and avoid a uniform teaching mode. Agronomy-related majors should focus on foreign-related content of the seed industry; marine and aerospace majors should strengthen foreign-related communication training for engineering technologies; economics and management majors should focus on language ability for cross-border trade and international negotiation; and digital-related majors should focus on cross-border digital business English. According to students' English ability gradients, basic, expansion, and advanced modules should be set up to meet the learning needs of students at different levels.

The principle of stratification and classification should be implemented in the design of the curriculum system through a modular course structure. The general English foundation module is retained to guarantee students' basic language skills, while optional expansion modules are set up for each of the five industry directions. Teaching tasks are designed with a distinction between basic tasks and extended tasks: basic tasks are intended for all students, while extended tasks serve students with higher learning needs. Through such differentiated teaching design, both the common training of students' language foundation and the improvement of their foreign language ability for specific industries can be accommodated.

4.3. The principle of industry-education integration: Connecting classroom teaching with industrial reality

The teaching reform needs to adhere to the principle of industry-education integration, break down the barriers between classroom teaching and the Free Trade Port's industries, and promote collaborative foreign language talent cultivation between universities and industry. The resources of the Free Trade Port's industrial parks, foreign-related enterprises, and scientific research institutions should be fully tapped, so that real industry-related foreign communication scenarios can be converted into teaching materials and real industrial tasks into classroom training projects. Classroom teaching should shift from book learning to real task-driven learning, allowing students to practice the language in simulated or real industry-related foreign communication scenarios.

To implement the principle of industry-education integration, it is necessary to build multiple channels of collaborative education. Colleges and universities may jointly build teaching practice bases with key industrial units of the Free Trade Port, invite practitioners to participate in classroom teaching, and organize special lectures and practical guidance. At the same time, teachers should be encouraged to go to the industrial front line to conduct research and collect first-hand information on industries' foreign-related activities to enrich classroom teaching resources[4]. Practical teaching components should include industry-related language practice projects that guide students to participate in such practical tasks as translating foreign-related materials and writing international publicity documents.

5. Implementation paths of college English teaching reform for serving the "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy of the Hainan Free Trade Port

5.1. Reconstructing the curriculum content system and building industry-oriented modular courses

Based on the Hainan Free Trade Port's "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy, the content system of college English courses should be reconstructed into a modular structure. The general foundation module consolidates students' basic language skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation, ensuring that they acquire general English communication competence. The industrial development module focuses on developing specialized teaching resources covering the five directions — the seed industry, the marine industry, the aerospace industry, the green and low-carbon industry, and the digital economy — introducing materials such as international cooperation documents in the seed industry, foreign-language documents in marine engineering, international exchanges in aerospace, green and low-carbon trade, and the cross-border digital economy; it develops supporting reading, translation, and oral training materials, with corresponding elective courses offered for students of different majors to take as needed.

In constructing the curriculum content, we should attach importance to the development of localized teaching resources, organize teachers to sort out authentic texts, industry reports, and project materials concerning foreign exchanges in the key industries of the Free Trade Port, and compile school-based teaching materials, so as to make up for the weakness of general textbooks in Free Trade Port industry content. Teaching should cover not only professional English vocabulary, but also the basic logic of foreign-related business and cross-cultural communication. According to the characteristics of different majors, the proportion of industry-related content should be allocated accordingly, with a moderately increased share of industry-specific English teaching. Through the construction of a modular curriculum system, an effective connection between college English teaching and the industrial needs of the Free Trade Port can be achieved.

5.2. Innovating classroom teaching modes and building an industry-education collaborative practice platform

Classroom teaching modes should be actively innovated: the traditional teacher-centered classroom form should be changed, and task-driven and scenario-simulation teaching methods should be promoted. Classroom teaching tasks should be designed around foreign-related business in the Free Trade Port's industries, simulating real work scenarios such as international business negotiation, translation of foreign-language technical documents, and international promotion of the Free Trade Port's industries, with students organized to carry out group cooperative drills. Virtual simulation teaching platforms should be fully used to build virtual training scenarios for industry-related foreign communication, allowing students to complete various language practice tasks in a simulated environment and improve their practical language ability. Classroom teaching should highlight students' central role, incorporate such activities as classroom interaction, project-based discussion, and presentation of learning outcomes, and stimulate students' enthusiasm for active learning.

An extracurricular practice platform should be set up, and cooperation with the Free Trade Port's industrial parks, foreign-related enterprises, and scientific research institutions should be deepened to build a college English practice base jointly. Students should be organized to participate in industry-related foreign affairs assistance practice, carrying out practical activities such as translating foreign-language materials, writing international publicity documents, and volunteering at international exhibitions. Frontline industry

practitioners should be invited into the classroom to conduct thematic teaching and share real experience of industry-related foreign work. Online practice channels should also be built, encouraging students to complete practical projects on the international communication of the Free Trade Port's industries [5]. Through the linkage of classroom teaching and extracurricular practice, students' comprehensive ability to apply foreign languages in foreign-related contexts can be effectively improved.

5.3. Strengthening faculty development and the diversified evaluation mechanism to ensure the implementation of the reform

The construction of the college English teaching faculty should be strengthened, and a mechanism for improving teachers' industry-related competence for the Free Trade Port should be established. English teachers should be organized to conduct on-the-spot investigation and research in the key industrial enterprises and scientific research institutes of the Free Trade Port, so as to understand the actual situation of foreign-related business in the seed, marine, aerospace, green, and digital industries. Interdisciplinary training should be carried out to help teachers master the basic knowledge of the five industries and improve their ability to develop industry-related English teaching resources and conduct thematic teaching. Cooperation in teaching and research between teachers and industry practitioners should be encouraged, teaching materials should be jointly developed, and a contingent of teachers with both language proficiency and industry awareness should be built to provide human-resource support for the teaching reform.

A diversified evaluation system adapted to the goals of the reform should be constructed, so as to break the single evaluation model that relies solely on final written exam scores. The dimensions of assessment should include basic language knowledge, industrial English competence, quality of project completion, and cross-cultural communication literacy. Performance in classroom tasks, simulated training performance, and industry-related practice results should be included in the comprehensive evaluation, so as to reduce the weight of the final written examination. A process evaluation mechanism should be established to track students' growth and changes in course learning and practice projects. At the same time, a feedback mechanism for the teaching reform should be established to collect the opinions of students and industrial units and to continuously optimize the course content and teaching mode. Through the coordination of faculty development and the diversified evaluation system, the reform of college English teaching in service of the Hainan Free Trade Port's "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy can be effectively guaranteed.

6. Conclusion

The continuous development of the Hainan Free Trade Port's "Five Directions for Strengthening" strategy has set new requirements for the cultivation of foreign language talents in colleges and universities. At present, college English teaching still faces such practical problems as the disconnection between curriculum content and industrial demand, rigid teaching modes, insufficient supply of practical training, and limited industry knowledge reserves among teachers. In response, this paper has proposed three reform principles — strategic adaptation, stratification and classification, and industry-education integration — and, on this basis, specific implementation paths covering the reconstruction of a modular curriculum content system, the innovation of classroom teaching modes, the building of industry-education collaborative practice platforms, and the improvement of faculty development and diversified evaluation mechanisms. It should be noted that this study is a conceptual exploration based on the current situation of college English teaching; the

effectiveness of the proposed reform paths awaits empirical verification through future teaching pilots and follow-up data, which will be the focus of subsequent research.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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