The Training Mode of the Practical Ability of the Outstanding Talents of English

De-Hua XU
School of Foreign Languages, Baicheng Normal University, China, 137000
jlbc-xdh67@163.com

Keywords: Local Normal Universities, Outstanding English Talents, Training Mode.

Abstract. In order to promote the training mode of English top and innovative talents in normal universities, the present status of English professional training in our university is analyzed, and six modes for training practical abilities of excellent English talents are summed up based on our teaching practice and literature research. Only when these six modes are systematically integrated in the routine teaching plan in the local normal university, can the English students master the outstanding practical ability.

Introduction

With the increase of the great pressure from the employment of English majors of local normal universities, the cultivation of the practical ability of the excellent English majors become a really tougher problem. The research of the outstanding talents is a hot problem in academic fields, but the training mode of the practical ability of the outstanding talents of English majors is rarely studied. Therefore, under such situation, the study of the training mode for the outstanding English majors’ practical ability is of great significance, on one side, it helps those students themselves find more opportunities in the future employment markets, on the other side, it will bring about more excellent talents to the society, and it is significant for the development of the well-being society, so this paper will discuss this problem from the following two aspects: the present situation of the training of English majors and the training modes of practical ability of outstanding innovative English talents in our university.

The Present Situation of the Training of English Majors in Our School

Our English department was founded in 1978, and it was changed from the past teachers college into the normal university in 2002, and business English major was the newly increased professional direction in 2013, which has trained a large number of English talents for local education and other fields. Although we have been making the teaching reform, but only on teaching methods not on the cultivation of students’ practical ability, so the efficient teaching is not under good supervision, and the practical ability of students is still relatively weaker compared with the other universities in our province; in addition, all the teachers have only paid attention to their teaching methods and means, not to the students’ practical ability; what’s more, as to assessment methods, written-exams are mainly used for students’ listening, reading, writing and translating ability, which are in lack of practice opportunities; meanwhile the teaching hours for professional courses account for 38.4% of the total number of students studying hours, professional courses per week is 15 hours (the above information from the 2017 edition of the “Baicheng Normal University undergraduate training program for English majors”), on the whole, the daily hours is 3 hours. Compared with the overseas foreign language training classes, the weekly learning hours for our students is half less than that. In addition, the annual passing rate of TEM Four and Eight is only 2% for professional English majors. These facts suggest that the current teaching situation is not conducive to the cultivation of innovative talents’ professional practice ability. To solve this problem, our research group proposed the project “the research of training modes for developing the practical ability of outstanding innovative talents in local normal universities”, which aims to promote English teaching in local normal universities,
The Training Mode of the Practical Ability of Outstanding Innovative English Talents

English innovative talents refer to normal university English majors with innovative ideas and behavior, excellent English language skills and ability in English. Training mode just refers to teaching mode, the stable teaching activity framework and procedure which is set up under the guidance of certain teaching thought and theory.[1] Therefore, the training mode of top-notch and innovative English talents’ practical ability refers to cultivating superior professional skills and ability to work in English by all the conventional teaching mode and unconventional teaching mode. Therefore, on the basis of practice and literature research, our study group has summed up six kinds of super-normal practice ability training modes.

Diversion Training Model

The training of English majors’ practical ability is closely related to the direction of students’ future development, after graduation, they may work as teachers, or they may continue their postgraduate education. Therefore, according to these two major directions, students should be divided into two groups, and enter a talent class and receive respective cultivation. The former president of Harvard, Mr. Conant (James B. Conant) said: “the honor of a university lies not in its buildings and the number of its students, but in its generations of quality teachers, if a university tries to get success, its teachers must be excellent.” The excellent students are the future teachers, if they are not best trained, how can we have excellent students, so the key to the cultivation of top-notch talents should be trained respectively, which is more conducive to the cultivation of practical ability of those outstanding talents, and which is the most efficient way on the premise of graduates serving the society.

Employment-oriented Training Model. According to the different directions of our specialties, students should gain the basic quality and ability in certain specialty. If students want to be teachers in the future, they should master the teachers’ practical ability, which includes basic guidance ability in pronunciation and grammar, the ability for English explanation and organizing classroom. In addition, if students intend to enter foreign enterprises, they should master communicating ability, translating ability, coordinating ability and western culture etiquette, etc., and meanwhile, students should be encouraged to make better practice in the training bases, esp. during probation and internship.

Postgraduate-oriented Training Model. After graduation, usually some students choose to take part in the postgraduate entrance examination. For them, it is necessary to get the basic quality of being teachers and the basic practice ability, and then improve their quality in literature, linguistics, their academic research, academic writing, and the ability in reading English data. In addition, the intercollegiate exchange and study is beneficial to motivate students to learn better.

Competition-based Training Mode

Competition is the main way to highlight practical ability. On the basis of investigation, Wen Fei put forward that “second classroom is the extension of the first class. The flexibility of its time, place and form is more conducive to the development of English practical activities, and it can stimulate students’ enthusiasm and initiative”. [2] Obviously, it is necessary to give full play to the advantages of the second class. With the transformation and development of colleges and universities, the best mode of the comprehensive training of students’ practical ability is the mode of the second class on the platform of competition.

Network-based Training Mode

College students should have an autonomous learning environment and English extracurricular learning environment, the Internet is such a huge resource repository. The theory of comprehensible input hypothesis put forward by Krashen holds that the key to deciding the second language
acquisition is to contact with a large amount of understandable, interesting and related target language.[3] And the key to foreign language acquisition is to let students keep contact with the natural environment under the guidance of teachers, teachers should recommend some good websites or apps. which will make students exposure to the input context of a natural target language, because now we do not have a lot of foreign teachers, so students’ language ability can be better improved by using internet as a live language input.

**Watch English Movies and TV Dramas.** According to modern teaching theory, the natural process of language acquisition is from input (reading and listening), absorption (processing and memory) to output (speaking, writing and translating). English movies and TV dramas can provide a vivid language scene and set up a good learning platform for English learners. Through the different scenes of the movie plots and dialogues, through visual, auditory impact, students are in the organic combination of the sound and picture, which is the ideal context of a complete English thinking, which is one of the natural context of learning western language, culture, customs, and history.[4]

**Learning through WeChat.** Chen Huiting studies confirmed the advantage of WeChat in the English classroom teaching, combining with the use of WeChat and the software of English learning in oral English teaching, WeChat is a medium of communication, which can also upload learning outcomes, the English learning software is a platform for training and scoring; teachers can establish WeChat groups in different levels in teaching, thus, completely changing the traditional stereotype in oral English teaching, [4]at the same time, the teachers should recommend students some good learning softwares, such as “Cai Lei English”, “Englishbus”, “TutorABC”, “EnglishRemix”, “Uncle Bear”, “Chinadaily” and so on. In WeChat, not only oral English teachers but other teachers can also be instructors in pronunciation, intonation, listening, dictation, and even reading training.

**Training Mode Based on Teaching Reform**

The teaching reform should start from the following aspects: 1. Reform in the undergraduate training program for English majors, by increasing the number of learning hours per week, in order to enhance the students’ practical ability; 2. Reform in teaching methods, in order to improve the practical ability of innovative talents, and make good use of the micro course, which is characterized by short, fine, live, and fast display of knowledge, and reverse the passive and long-time learning state in the traditional teaching, students can study themselves by flexibly and actively using the micro course, which may provide enough space to think for the students.[6] In addition, we should guide students to watch Ted talk, read China Daily, correct and share compositions through QQ; 3. To promote the reform in evaluation, the process evaluation method should be gradually adopted instead of the only written form examination; 4. Form a first-class team of teachers to cultivate talents.

**Training Mode on the Premise of Autonomous Learning**

For top-notch talents, autonomous learning ability is the necessary learning ability.  Self-learning ability is the internal power, which plays a decisive role in the cultivation of top-notch talents. It is the enthusiasm to study, and it is a person’s conscious and dynamic state of mind which comes from the needs of people, so it is the strong internal power to encourage students to get higher and higher goals.

**Training Mode Based on the International Exchange**

**Promotion of International Exchange.** With the development of China’s foreign relations, cooperation between universities at home and abroad has promoted the share, cooperation and exchange of educational resources, so as to improve the “soft power” of colleges and universities in remote areas. “Exchange student projects and foreign personnel training project” fit in line with the current trend of talents training.[7] Now, our English department, for three consecutive years, has sent 10 teachers and 15 students to study abroad, this experience of study abroad has expanded both teachers and students’ horizons, also improve teachers’ professional level, which is also conducive to cultivating talents and enhancing students’ self-confidence and ability to adapt to the society. Therefore, the development of international exchange projects is conducive to the construction of the teachers and the cultivation of the top talents.

**Learning from Foreign Universities.** Learning from the advanced foreign universities is
promoting the cultivation of the practical ability of the top-notch innovative talents. The United States University of California, Davis (UC Davis) educational philosophy is “student-centered”, which actively cultivates students’ sense of ownership through public service, sets up more than 6000 internship positions, the service requirements for volunteers is 3-5 hours per week, students select courses by themselves but under the teachers’ arrangement, and teachers are required to teach only the essential and ensure plenty of practice in a small class, and promote the individualized, personalized various teaching which may positively influence the development of students’ personality, and meanwhile, encourage students to focus in one or several disciplines, and cultivate students’ interpersonal communication ability and social adaptation ability, sense of responsibility, leadership and international perspective, and the independent ability to solve problems. Our university should learn from foreign universities and also provide students more chances to practice their all kinds of practical abilities, which is an experienced and successful method to guide students’ practical ability training.

Conclusion

In summary, such training modes based on competitions, online courses, WeChat and other software must be incorporated into the routine teaching plan, and they should be carried out systematically and they should become a part of the routine teaching plan, in addition, for the special class for the English talents, its members should not be fixed, those drop-outs are allowed to move out of the class, and the teaching materials for them should be planned and flexible in a certain range. We should adhere to the educational concept of service learning, combine the academic and social service organically, and improve the students’ practical ability, citizen consciousness and social service ability. In the learning process, we should combine the training content, the service items and the evaluation system of practical learning ability. Evaluation is the ability to measure the quality of service learning.[8]Therefore, for the cultivation of practical ability of English talents in normal universities must be combined with classroom teaching and extracurricular teaching activities, under good evaluation and supervision, can students’ excellent teaching skills, language skills and other comprehensive quality be quickly and efficiently cultivated.

Acknowledgement


References


