

Research on the Analysis of Existing Problems in Higher Vocational English Education and Innovative Strategies for Enhancing Teaching Effectiveness

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Abstract: Vocational college English education shoulders the dual mission of integrating linguistic skills with occupational competencies within the vocational education system. However, its current curriculum system exhibits structural contradictions, such as a disconnect between academic orientation and occupational demands, homogenized teaching strategies, and inadequate evaluation efficacy. Through empirical research and theoretical analysis, this study uncovers core issues, including ambiguous curriculum positioning, lagging integration of technology, and monolithic evaluation dimensions. It proposes innovative pathways, such as modular curriculum reconstruction based on occupational competency maps, the deep integration of blended teaching models with intelligent tools, and the establishment of multidimensional and dynamic evaluation mechanisms. The research emphasizes anchoring occupational scenarios as the focal point, achieving synergistic development of linguistic abilities and professional qualities through technological empowerment, and providing a practical framework for the transformation of vocational college English education from a "linguistic tool perspective" to an "occupational empowerment perspective."

Keywords: Vocational College English Education; Occupational Competency Map; Blended Teaching; Intelligent Teaching Tools

1. Introduction

Against the backdrop of the accelerating internationalization of vocational education, higher vocational English education must

transcend traditional language teaching paradigms and construct an ecosystem oriented toward occupational competencies. In current teaching practices, curriculum designs predominantly adhere to undergraduate English models, neglecting the intrinsic linkage between job-specific skills and linguistic proficiency. Teaching methods rely heavily on monolithic lecture-based instruction, lacking integration with industry-specific contexts; evaluation criteria concentrate on assessing linguistic knowledge, failing to reflect language application efficacy in occupational settings. These issues result in a misalignment between students' occupational English competencies and industrial demands, thereby constraining the effectiveness of vocational education in serving regional economic development. This study, grounded in the "typological" positioning of higher vocational education, systematically dissects the structural contradictions within teaching elements and explores synergistic pathways for technological empowerment and institutional innovation, aiming to provide theoretical underpinnings for the high-quality development of higher vocational English education.

2. Characteristics of Higher Vocational English Education

2.1 Occupational Orientation: Constructing a Linguistic Competency Framework Centered on Job Demands

The occupational orientation of higher vocational English education fundamentally lies in constructing a linguistic competency framework closely aligned with the dynamic spectrum of job demands. This characteristic necessitates that the curriculum system transcends isolated training in traditional language skills, instead focusing on the

realization pathways of linguistic functions within specific occupational domains—for example, project reporting in engineering technology, business negotiations in trade services, or user manual composition in information technology. Occupational orientation is not merely reflected in the vocational filtering of linguistic knowledge but also requires the deconstruction and reconstruction of occupational competency maps to refine linguistic competencies into observable and evaluable indicators of occupational behavior. Within this framework, the teaching of linguistic elements such as grammar and vocabulary must establish mapping relationships with task demands in occupational scenarios, including information processing and interpersonal communication, thereby achieving an organic integration of linguistic competencies and occupational proficiencies.

2.2 Practical Integration: A Deep Coupling Mechanism Between Linguistic Skills and Occupational Scenarios

As a core trait of higher vocational English education, practical integration fundamentally involves bidirectional penetration and dynamic adaptation between linguistic skill training and occupational scenarios. This mechanism requires teaching implementation to transcend the physical limitations of classroom spaces, transforming authentic tasks in occupational scenarios into carriers for language learning through methods such as virtual simulation and project-driven instruction. For instance, in the field of intelligent manufacturing, practices like English-Chinese translation of equipment operation manuals can be introduced, or in medical services, contextualized dialogue training for doctor-patient communication can be designed^[1]. The deepening of practical integration necessitates establishing nested relationships between linguistic skill elements and occupational operational processes—for example, embedding business English correspondence writing skills into the order processing phase of international trade workflows or integrating tourism English guide interpretation skills into the decision-making process of scenic

route planning. Such coupling not only emphasizes the functional application of linguistic skills in occupational scenarios but also promotes learners' implicit acquisition of linguistic rules and the concurrent development of occupational thinking through the reproduction and transfer of occupational contexts.

2.3 Dynamic Adaptability: Collaborative Evolution of Teaching Content and Industrial Technological Change

Dynamic adaptability represents the core capability of higher vocational English education to respond to industrial technological iterations and occupational competency upgrades. This characteristic requires the design of teaching content to break free from the constraints of static knowledge systems and instead construct a dynamic knowledge network that resonates with industrial technological changes. For example, amid the penetration of artificial intelligence technologies, teaching content must promptly incorporate emerging domain knowledge such as language quality assessment under machine translation assistance and corpus analysis driven by big data. Under the trend of digital office proliferation, course modules must integrate skill elements like multimodal text processing in cloud-based collaboration platforms and cross-cultural communication strategies in remote meetings. The realization of dynamic adaptability necessitates establishing a dual-cycle feedback mechanism between teaching content and industrial technological development. Through industry research, analysis of technical white papers, and other methods, language demands arising from industrial technological changes are translated into update nodes for teaching content. Conversely, through learners' practical feedback in occupational scenarios, the granularity and structural optimization of teaching content are refined^[2].

3. Existing Issues in Higher Vocational English Education

3.1 Structural Imbalance in Curriculum Systems: Academic Orientation

Disconnected from Occupational Demands

The current design of higher vocational English curriculum systems predominantly adheres to traditional undergraduate education paradigms, overemphasizing the parsing of grammatical rules and intensive reading of literary texts while failing to adequately integrate industry-specific English corpora and core job-skill modules. This results in a significant mismatch between course content and occupational scenarios. Textbook compilation remains dominated by general English, lacking specialized training in occupational competencies such as technical document reading, business email composition, and cross-cultural communication. Course module configurations fail to dynamically track industrial technological iterations, with professional terminology and industry standards in emerging fields like intelligent manufacturing and cross-border e-commerce not being timely incorporated into the teaching framework. Such structural imbalance not only undermines the instrumental value of language learning but also leads students to confront the dilemma of "linguistic competencies misaligned with job demands" in the employment market, thereby constraining the core function of vocational education in serving regional economic development.

3.2 Homogenization Dilemma in Teaching Strategies: Conflict Between Monolithic Models and Diverse Learning Needs

Teaching strategies in higher vocational English education predominantly exhibit a "teacher-centered" lecture-based model, with classroom interactions confined to standardized sentence pattern drills and fixed-topic discussions, failing to implement tiered instruction tailored to individual student differences. The uniformity of language input channels (dominated by textbook materials) and output tasks (oriented toward written examinations) results in stunted development of students' critical thinking and creative expressive abilities. The introduction of blended teaching tools often remains superficial, such as merely migrating offline PPT content to online platforms without reconstructing

learning pathways based on constructivist theory, reducing digital technology to an "electronic veneer" of traditional classrooms. This rigidity in strategies sharply conflicts with the heterogeneity of learners' backgrounds (e.g., English proficiency, major orientation, learning motivations), exacerbating the contradiction between a "one-size-fits-all" teaching model and the demand for personalized development.

3.3 Inadequate Efficacy of Evaluation Systems: Neglect of Process-Oriented Growth in Outcome-Centric Assessment

The prevailing evaluation system in higher vocational English education is dominated by summative examinations, emphasizing quantifiable indicators such as vocabulary size and grammatical accuracy while neglecting students' development in dimensions like project collaboration, problem-solving, and cultural understanding. This manifests in: a focus on objective question types (e.g., multiple-choice, translation) in examinations, lacking dynamic monitoring of practical language application abilities; an evaluation 主体 limited to unilateral teacher judgment, failing to incorporate multidimensional perspectives from enterprise mentors, industry experts, and peer evaluations; and evaluation results used solely for academic performance ranking without forming a feedback loop for students' learning strategy adjustments and occupational competency development. Such an outcome-centric, singular evaluation mechanism not only fails to comprehensively reflect the complex process of language learning but also risks undermining students' intrinsic learning motivation through excessive emphasis on score competition, fostering a utilitarian tendency of "learning for exams"^[3].

4. Innovative Strategies for Optimizing the Effectiveness of Higher Vocational English Teaching

4.1 Curriculum Reconstruction Strategy: Modular Curriculum Design Based on Occupational Competency Maps

The optimization of higher vocational English curriculum systems must be anchored in occupational competency maps,

decomposing linguistic skills into quantifiable and transferable modular units to construct a curriculum architecture that dynamically adapts to job demands. The construction of occupational competency maps relies on industry research data to clarify core competency elements and their weightings for specific roles, such as cross-cultural communication competencies in business interactions or technical terminology analysis in technical documentation. Based on this, foundational language modules, industry-specific English modules, and integrated practice modules are designed. Modular curriculum design emphasizes decoupling and recombining among modules. For example, the "Business English Negotiation" module can be subdivided into sub-modules like "Terminology Analysis," "Agenda Design," and "Conflict Resolution," which can be taught independently to meet short-term skill training needs or combined into a holistic project-based curriculum to support degree education systems.

4.2 Technology-Empowered Pathways: Integration of Blended Teaching Models and Intelligent Teaching Tools

The implementation of blended teaching models requires technological support from intelligent teaching tools to form a closed-loop teaching chain of "online resource provision - offline practice reinforcement - intelligent analysis feedback"^[4]. Online platforms should integrate resources such as micro-lecture videos, virtual simulations, and online quizzes to construct a layered and progressive learning pathway. For instance, for the "Technical English Reading" module, a progressive learning package ranging from foundational grammar parsing to in-depth reading of patent literature can be provided, embedded with an intelligent error-correction system for real-time feedback on grammatical mistakes. Offline classrooms focus on cultivating higher-order competencies through interactive formats like role-playing and case discussions, such as simulating full-English defense sessions in international engineering bidding scenarios. The involvement of intelligent teaching tools extends beyond resource

provision to permeate the entire teaching process: Natural Language Processing (NLP) technology analyzes the fluency and accuracy of students' spoken output, generating personalized improvement suggestions; learning analytics systems track learning trajectories, identify bottlenecks, and push customized remedial solutions.

4.3 Evaluation Mechanism Innovation: Construction of a Multidimensional Evaluation System and Dynamic Feedback Mechanism

The innovation of higher vocational English evaluation systems necessitates breaking through the limitations of singular summative evaluations to construct a multidimensional evaluation framework encompassing linguistic competencies, occupational literacy, and innovative potential. Linguistic competency evaluations should distinguish between foundational skills (e.g., vocabulary size, grammatical accuracy) and higher-order skills (e.g., academic writing, cross-cultural critical thinking). For example, a "computer-based testing + human evaluation" model can be adopted, using computer adaptive testing to assess foundational competencies and industry experts to professionally review project reports. Occupational literacy evaluations must be embedded in authentic occupational scenarios, such as using enterprise mentor scores as the basis for evaluating "team collaboration competencies" and "problem-solving abilities." Innovative potential evaluations can examine critical thinking through open-ended question designs (e.g., "Propose improvement plans for a technical document") and conduct comprehensive assessments by combining records of students' participation in academic competitions and patent applications. The dynamic feedback mechanism emphasizes the immediate transformation of evaluation results. For example, data on classroom performance, assignment quality, and project outcomes are promptly recorded in learning portfolios to generate visualized competency radar charts, which are then used to adjust teaching objectives and resource allocations for the subsequent phase^[5].

5. Conclusion

The essence of reforming higher vocational English education lies in reconstructing the symbiotic relationship between linguistic competencies and occupational abilities. At the curriculum level, it necessitates grounding the design in occupational competency maps to construct a modular curriculum architecture that achieves precise alignment between linguistic skills and job demands. At the pedagogical level, the integration of blended teaching models with intelligent teaching tools is required, optimizing resource provision and learning pathways through data-driven instructional decision-making. A multidimensional and dynamic evaluation system must be established to incorporate assessments of language performance in occupational scenarios, forming a closed-loop mechanism of "evaluation-feedback-improvement." When synergized with curriculum reconstruction and technology empowerment, this approach can drive a paradigm shift in higher vocational English education from imparting linguistic knowledge to empowering occupational competencies, thereby providing institutional support for

cultivating interdisciplinary talents.

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