College German Teaching based on College English Teaching Reform

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Abstract

Against the background of internationalization, high quality foreign language education has become an important indicator of the internationalization of colleges. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a good college foreign language education. In 2017, the college entrance examination reform program will incorporate German into the college foreign language teaching, as the exchange between China and Germany is becoming more frequent. As a result, German will surely gain a place in the secondary education. As a result, college German teaching will form a certain scale in the next few years which will face the same question as the college English teaching. Therefore, with reference to many aspects of the college English teaching reform in an active manner, such as the reasonable setting of the course nature, content, patterns, the forthcoming series of questions can be addressed. This article will combine the successful experience of college English reforms and the status quo of college German teaching, in order to analyze the orientation of college German teaching.

Keywords: College English Teaching Reform, College German Teaching.

1. RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Under the background of increasing internationalization in the 21st century, the high-quality foreign language education for college students to cultivate good foreign language ability has become an important indicator of the internationalization of colleges. For a long time, Chinese colleges have equated English with foreign languages. English is thriving in foreign language teaching. However, English teaching is definitely not equivalent to the whole foreign language teaching. China needs the English language to open to the outside world, to strengthen the connection with the world, to draw lessons from the foreign advanced technology, which does not mean English prevails over other foreign languages. Other languages, such as Russian, German, French, and Japanese, play a crucial role in international exchange and cooperation. In some industries, small languages are more important than English. Therefore, Chinese colleges should pay attention to the teaching of other foreign languages and develop multilingual foreign language teachings in colleges.

Since 2003, some reforms have been made in college English teaching in China, by optimizing the curriculum, teaching objectives, content, modes and methods. According to the teaching objectives, a variety of assessment methods and forms are used, such as following the teaching process, giving feedback teaching results, adjusting and optimizing the construction of teaching staff, in order to create an environment conducive to the professional development of teachers. Most colleges actively take the initiative to promote the reform of college English teaching, advancing with the times and cultivate talents to meet the needs of social development. This series of reforms is of great reference value for the college German teaching which is in the infancy. This article will combine with the status quo of college German teaching, drawing on the successful experience of college English teaching reform, and analyze the development of college German teaching direction.

2. STATUS-QUO AND PROSPECTS OF COLLEGE GERMAN COURSES

College German defines learning German as the first foreign language, which is a public basic course. Subjects for the college entrance examination’s “foreign language” are the German learning students, who choose German in secondary school instead of English. With systematic German learning, these high school graduates are cultivated with the appropriate German language skills before entering the college. It is recorded that at present, candidates from Shandong Province and Sichuan Province can choose to participate in the examination of German subject of the college entrance examination. A few comprehensive colleges have already offered College German for these students to meet their needs. The author’s school, a student enrolled in 2015 from Sichuan Province has German learning as the first foreign language study for the first time. The school offers college German courses for four semesters based on the college English curriculum, class hours and credits, and
the students need to pass the College German CET4 to obtain the degree certificate.

In 2017, China will implement a new college entrance examination program. In this "3+3" mode, English is no longer a single foreign language. Candidates can choose from six languages, English, Japanese, Russian, German, French, and Spanish. It is foreseeable that this reform will change the fundamentals of English reaching thriving in the secondary stage with multi-lingual flourishing becoming a trend. German teaching is bound to have a place in the secondary stage. At present, there are 100 million people who speak German in the world. In the context of internationalization, Sino-German cooperation and exchange are becoming more frequent. Made in Germany represents quality and credibility, and China needs Made in German. Goethe Institute with the mission of guiding the foreigners to learn German and promote international cultural cooperation, has energetically developed cooperation with Chinese secondary schools in recent years. There are reasons to believe that the number of secondary school students who choose to speak German as a foreign language will increase in the near future. By then, the college German curriculum will become reasonable, teaching methods and contents are in line with the psychological needs of students and the actual needs of the construction of the best teachers, which will be faced by the colleges and teachers. Educators should make preparations in advance to deal with the above challenges. At the beginning of setting up the college German course, the successful experience of the college English teaching reform should serve as great reference for the teaching goal put forward by the teaching requirements of the college German course.

3. PROBLEMS FACING COLLEGE GERMAN TEACHING

College German is a course adapted to the needs of the times. It is different from English majors’ second foreign language of German and elective courses which are different from German language learning. College German is different from the previous German teaching, which have higher requirements for the teaching materials and the teachers. With students’ basic knowledge of basic German, the contents of the lectures should meet individual needs of students of different faculties. Therefore, a series of problems will be encountered in the teaching process.

3.1 Lack of teaching material

Secondary school does not have the unified German textbooks. In college German learning, either German professional textbooks or German as a second foreign language textbook are for zero-based students. However, the college German teaching subjects have about 6 years of German learning experience before entering college, for whom the above materials seem outdated. Teachers can only choose the third or fourth volumes of these textbooks based on the average students’ level, supplemented by additional dynamic handouts, which has brought a certain amount of distress to college German teaching.

3.2 Level of student enrollment varies greatly

Affected by teaching resources, students enrollment is uneven. Some of the secondary schools have collaborative projects with the Goethe-Institut, from which German nationals undertake most of the teaching tasks. Students from these secondary school are better at listening and speaking than reading and writing. However, some students are from the secondary schools with inadequate resources of foreign German teachers, and these students are better at reading and writing than listening and speaking. Affected by the region, some students have a strong sense of participation in Sino-German exchange with certain intercultural communicative competence, while other students are in the opposite.

3.3 Teacher team needs to be optimized

At present, there is not a college that specializes in college German teaching. Some German professional teachers are good at scientific research of linguistics or German literature. Some teachers are engaged in the second foreign language teaching without much engagement in basic German teaching, whose scientific research ability is weak at the margins in colleges where there are fewer opportunities for enhanced study. These teachers need professional training in pedagogical methods to improve their professional accomplishment before they can undertake the task of college German teaching.

This series of questions will hinder the smooth progress of German teaching in colleges, resulting in great difficulties in German teaching in colleges. Only by solving these problems can good German education in
college be developed and students be prepared for the challenges of internationalization and globalization.

4. DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE GERMAN TEACHING

German Department of the Guidance Committee for Foreign Language Teaching in Colleges of Ministry of Education made it clear in the preparation of Teaching Requirements for College German Courses in 2010 that college German teaching is an integral part of higher education foreign language courses, including compulsory courses and elective courses, aimed to cultivate students comprehensive abilities to use German at different levels, so that they can use German to communicate effectively and accomplish various tasks in their study, work and social interaction in the future. At the same time, abilities of self learning and awareness of actively participating in Sino-German exchange can be enhanced and ability of intercultural communication and comprehensive cultural accomplishment can be strengthened, so as to meet the needs of social development and international exchanges in China. To achieve this goal, the experience and achievements of the reforms in college English teaching can serve as great reference to the current college German teaching.

4.1 Construct sound curriculum system

With reference to the results of the college English teaching reform, the College German can build a relatively perfect curriculum system, such as the unified College German general required courses for different faculties and different students by setting up German special-purpose elective courses. The compulsory courses continue to help students to systematically learn German and to acquire CET4 level or even CET6 level in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Therefore, the freshmen’s German language ability reaches at a relatively average level. Students who pass the College German Level 4 may be exempt from this course. Elective courses take into account different needs of different majors of different departments. For example, German for engineering students mechanical engineering; economic German for students majoring in economic and trade; German history for liberal arts students; German literature, tourism German, German law and so on. These courses will surely help students conduct better research in their specialized fields of study.

Compulsory and elective courses together constitute the college German curriculum system in line with the language tools and language ontology. The language instrumentalism believes that the purpose of foreign language teaching is to teach students how to use the language as a tool to effectively communicate in foreign languages. Therefore, learning a language of speech, grammar rules, vocabulary and the like is the natural stage, and only grasping can it be possible to complete the communication. Language is the main carrier of human thinking which is mainly expressed in language thinking. Teaching students to master the language tools can develop students’ language thinking. Students can learn various aspects of Germany’s culture, economy, law, art and industry through German electives using German thinking to experience the differences between China and Germany in all aspects. This will promote students to explore a deeper level of language, thereby comprehensively improving intercultural communication skills and overall quality. It is observed that what the Chinese students write in German is difficult for the Germans to understand. Because the influence of Chinese thinking makes Chinese students just translate Chinese way of expression into German. In this case, elective courses are offered to promote students’ understanding of German in all aspects as well as their understanding of German thinking. Only in this way can written articles be written in a German way. In addition, projects such as Engineering German for different faculties can cultivate students’ language skills for effective professional communication.

4.2 Explore new teaching modes

Computer and network technology is an important means of modern education. College English teaching reform has highlighted the status of computer and network in teaching, which are only embellished in college German teaching, which has much potential to be tapped. The Teaching requirements for College German Courses pointed out that the multimedia and internet resources should be made full use of by actively conducting computer-assisted college German teaching. Much has been produced a certain influence in China at present, the major colleges have joined the MOOC platform which provide free online courses. College German teaching should meet the requirements of the times, seizing this opportunity to explore new teaching modes.

MOOC as the new teaching model based on learning has huge impact on the traditional teaching mode. A significant change is the flipped classroom turning teacher-centered into student-centered. This new teaching model maximizes the ability to stimulate student self-learning. Students at home watching pre-recorded teaching
videos provided by the teachers to complete the homework beforehand. In class, by following the teaching activities
designed by the teacher, the students can discuss with the group members, in order to study together
and to reach a conclusion. In this process, the knowledge will be repeated. Especially for college German
compulsory courses, students can be repeatedly trained in the group discussion of language knowledge,
grammar rules, listening and speaking. After class, students submit their homework or discuss the topics or
difficulties and get feedback in time through online. It is undoubtedly a effective teaching mode for language
learners.

Introduce Goethe-Institut teaching mode. The Goethe-Institut promotes German teaching in non-German
speaking countries, provides teaching resources and task-based teaching to guide students specific language
tasks in specific communicative situations. Students can complete their language assignments within the
required timeframes on an individual and group basis. This method is suitable for college German compulsory
courses, with which students can quickly master the language skills, giving full play to the ability of
independent learning. For a selective elective course, such task pedagogy can be used. For example, assigning
students from the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering the task of learning each part and each function of a car. In
this way, students can learn the language knowledge and review the professional knowledge. In addition, the
Goethe-Institut organizes a wide variety of cultural events such as film festivals, theater shows, and Oktoberfest,
which can be copied in German-German classes where students can experience German culture at close range.

4.3 High-quality professional teachers

College English teaching reform attaches great importance to strengthening the construction of teachers. The
German college faculty faces the same problem. On the one hand, some policies have been promulgated by the
school to encourage young teachers to pursue their doctorate degrees and apply for research programs and
engage in scientifc research. On the other hand, college German teachers should take the initiative to improve
their professional qualities. They can apply for the training of German teaching methods, Germanic literature and
other short-term trainings held by Goethe-Institut in Germany, as well as the trainings of domestic teaching
methods organized by Goethe Institut and the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. In addition, in
view of the current impact of MOOCs, German teachers can use the network platform to register in opened the
flipped classroom teaching method by Peking University Digital Center, about Teach You How to Make
MOOCs, taking the initiative to participate in various teaching competition of micro-course competition,
combining the teaching and the network, in order to adapt to the new teaching model. A double-method approach
can improve business quality both internally and externally.

Teachers need continuous learning. In addition to learning German professional skills and new teaching
methods, in view of the creation of elective courses in German, teachers need to grasp the expertise of relevant
areas. For example, teachers who teach engineering German have to understand German language knowledge
and the engineering expertise, which is also an example of the professionalism of public foreign languages. For
college German teachers, the professional knowledge is hard earned. In addition, the teachers need to learn the
latest developments with timely updates of lectures by paying attention to the relevant learning websites.
German teachers can try to organize the common textbooks for such courses.

Teachers need to motivate the students emotionally. During the in-class teaching activities, the emotional
incentives can stimulate the enthusiasm and interest of the students in independent learning. Students are eager
to have confirmation from the teachers, for example, the praises from the teachers can arouse the learning
interest of students. However, the interest can be changed or disappear. Teachers need to arouse student inner
interests and make German learning a part of their learning process. In other words, that is, engaging German in
the specialization of the students is an integral part of professional learning. If English is a business language
and French is a diplomatic language, then German is a technology language. Goethe once said that if people
want to understand the latest developments in science and technology, they must learn German. Especially in
science and engineering, if students want to know advanced science and technology, they must read the German
science and technology articles. To obtain the professional information they need, these students must learn
German well, which is the intrinsic motivation of the students. Teachers can use emotional incentives and other
means to turn the intrinsic motivation into intrinsic interest, in order to fully mobilize the ability of independent
learning and to improve comprehensive German abilities of the students.

REFERENCES