



Global-competence-oriented College Foreign Language Teaching System

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Abstract

The recent decade has seen a big development of language teaching especially English language teaching for non-English majors in China with its rapid internationalization of many fields. A university graduate equipped with global competence is a valuable talent who are in great need by the country and it is the institutions of higher learning that take the major responsibility for their cultivation. This paper firstly identifies the current language teaching problems in Chinese universities, and then explains global competence by clarifying each of its components according to both Tsinghua University and OECD's framework. The latter half of the paper is devoted to the suggestions for constructing a global-competence-oriented college foreign language teaching system from the aspects of the course groups, teaching model, and evaluation mode.

Keywords: Global Competence, Course Group, Teaching Model, Evaluation Mode

1. Introduction

As China has become increasingly internationalized, the foreign language knowledge and proficiency become a must quality for today's youngsters. However, the young people receiving higher education expect more than this because they will have intercultural encounters more possibly. The intercultural communication competence, the fundamental knowledge of the world and different cultures, the hot global issues and the alike should also be in their knowledge storage. More importantly, the education today should focus more on the moral cultivation of youngsters--the sense of global civilian responsibility, the sense of equality and empathy, the sense of communication and collaboration, professional morality and so on, for example--since they are the major power to promote international communication and collaboration, and build a better world. To conclude, foreign language education nowadays not only develops students' language skills and knowledge scope, but also cultivates their morality, and global competence represents the whole of them and is considered the quality that today's international talents should be equipped with.

2. The current situation of English language teaching in Chinese universities

English language, as lingua franca, has never been ignored in China, and is required to be learned by all the students in universities. However, its teaching effectiveness has always been criticized. The problems and their reasons are as follows.

For a long time teachers have focused on skill training only, ignoring the contents it is based on. Foreign language teaching shoulders the responsibility of educating international talents comprehensively. With ample contents from all fields like society, culture, literature, world knowledge and current hot issues etc., language teaching gets students' skills trained, meanwhile helping with students' comprehensive quality development, which is a must quality of the international talents.

In recent nearly 10 years, class hours for English language has been decreased in many universities, resulting in the imbalanced care for listening, speaking, reading and writing by teachers. Modern information technology has appeared in the teaching process and tried to play a supportive role, but the consequent new problems have come into being, take the design of classroom activities, the amount of time invested for in-class and out-of-class study, and the utilization of teaching and learning resources for example. It means that the modern information technology has not yet worked effectively for teaching and learning.

Teachers, though, know that language learning must be an active process with students' involvement, many of them tend to teach by talking all the way through the class because 1) the class size is too large and it is impractical for each individual student to talk a lot; 2) instead of adapting to the new teaching and learning environment in the IT era and change their role accordingly, teachers' role remain as conventional as the class

dominator and the major teaching tools they use are a book and PPT. As a result, students keep inactive and there is no chance for them to practice their language skills firstly, nor any possibility to practice their critical thinking abilities, let alone develop their interest in the class.

Accordingly, little amount of formative evaluation is utilized in the whole process of teaching. More possibly, the teaching will end with a paper test as the only exam, which takes the form of the summative evaluation. As is known to all, formative evaluation is highly encouraged and considered to be a praiseworthy way of improving teaching effectiveness.

The connections with outside world (compared to university campus) is insufficient for students learning foreign language. The outside world refers to any working places in and out of China where foreign language is used as the media language. More opportunities of internship in enterprises, companies, institutions and government or non-government organizations and so on should be offered to students.

3. Global competence

Tsinghua University started the research project *Global Competence: Preparing for the World* in 2016 and defined global competence as “the capability to learn, work and live with others from different culture origins, to embrace opportunities and challenges in the future”. Six core competences were announced as world knowledge and global issues, language, openness and respect, communication and collaboration, self-awareness and self-confidence, ethics and responsibility, and explained specifically. (see table 1)

World Knowledge & Global Issues	Understand the knowledge of world's history, geography, economy and society. Understand differences of political systems and cultures of different countries. Keep abreast of global issues including, but not limited to, environment, energy, health and safety. Understand the importance of interdependency and cooperation of all mankind.
Language	Be able to express in one's native language and at least one foreign language in both oral and written form. Be able to exchange professional ideas with peers from different backgrounds. Understand and appreciate different cultures through languages.
Openness & Respect	Embrace new adventures with curiosity and an open mind. Respect cultural differences with empathy. Face ambiguity and uncertainty at ease, and adapt one's emotion and behavior to new situations and contexts.
Communication & Collaboration	Develop team spirit and be able to interact and communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds. Engage actively in a cross-cultural team and be capable of solving conflicts when needed.
Self-awareness & Self-confidence	Recognize deeply one's own cultural heritage and values, and understand the impact of culture on individual thinking and behavior. Act adequately and appropriately with confidence in a cross-cultural environment, and learn through continuous self-reflection.
Ethics and Responsibility	Uphold integrity and comply with social and professional ethics. Make responsible decisions on issues bearing major impact. Have a strong sense of responsibilities, and pursue the sustainable development for humanity.

Table 1. Six Core Competences

<http://goglobal.tsinghua.edu.cn/en/competence>



OECD launched the program PISA in 2017 and defined global competence as “a multi-dimensional construct that requires a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values successfully applied to global issues or intercultural situations”. Global issues refer to those that affect all people, and have deep implications for current and future generations, and intercultural situations refer to face-to-face, virtual or mediated encounters with people who are perceived to be from a different cultural background. Global competence consists of 4 capacities.

<https://www.oecd.org/pisa/innovation/global-competence/>

Capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues	Be sensitive to hot issues and have a strong sense of global civilian responsibility. Be critical and analytically competent
Capacity to understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others	See different cultures objectively from the global perspective. Be empathetic. Be open and tolerant.
Capacity to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures	Show a good mastery of different languages and be communicative. Show understanding and respect to different cultures.
Capacity to act for collective well-being and sustainable development	Be action-motivated.

Table 2. Four dimensions of global competence

Both Tsinghua University and OECD consider developing global competence a life-long process, but it is one that education can shape. This paper tends to explain global competence from the three dimensions of knowledge, competences and values by taking both Tsinghua and OECD’s definitions into consideration, and design the language teaching system accordingly. That means language teaching in Chinese universities are knowledge-oriented, competence-oriented, and value-oriented. (See table 3)

Knowledge	Competences	Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World’s knowledge Global issues and basic knowledge of all fields International principles and protocols Professional knowledge and working experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional competence Language proficiency (multi-lingual) Intercultural communication competence Analytical and critical thinking ability Organizing and coordinating ability Executing ability Pressure resisting competence Adapting competence Emergency-handling ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patriotism Ethics and vision Cultural consciousness Civilian responsibility Honesty and credibility Professional spirit Sense of creativity Understanding and bearing Equality and empathy Openness and cooperation

Table 3. Global competence

4. Global-competence-oriented College Foreign Language Teaching System

4.1 The construction of course groups

4.1.1 The liberal education course group in English

Foreign language teaching first of all realizes the objective of language skill training from the very basic so that the person who gets trained will be able to make effective inter-cultural communication, learning and collaboration. Chang Junyue, Liu Xiaoqu & Deng Yaochen (2009) highly recommend content-based language teaching for its double value--it draws students’ attention to the contents that the language training materials are based on so that students are motivated to think upon them and absorb new information while directed to practice with language they are learning. And very importantly, the two teaching objectives are integrated naturally. Therefore, with the learning materials including the contents that teachers expect students to learn or think critically, teachers will be able to raise students’ qualities they want them to possess. If they are exposed to the learning materials full of cultural knowledge of different nations, for example, students will be able to develop the multi-cultural cognition and the cross-cultural sense, hence get their inter-cultural communication competence improved.

Humanity is the discipline that language belongs to. With a good use of this humanistic feature, foreign language teaching on the one hand lays emphasis on the perception of society, culture, and the differences between nations and nationalities, and the development of inter-cultural consciousness and communicative competence, on the other hand, on all-round development of human beings. This means to teach students to become good members of society, to be able to understand and accept the fundamental outlook on the world and values and behavioral patterns within their own nation, to possess humanistic thoughts, spirit and qualities. Therefore, human education is the basic characteristic of language teaching (Han Baocheng, Liu Runqing, 2008; Dan Wugang, 2016).

Typical courses are Writing, Speech and Debate, Interpreting and the alike that develop students language skills and critical thinking ability; British and American Society and Culture, Comparison of Western and Chinese Cultures, Intercultural Communication, Appreciation on World Classic Literature, World History and the alike that cultivate students’ humanistic quality; Introduction to Global Development Based on the UN Report, Ocean, Atmosphere and Climate Change, Ecosystem Health and Sustainable Development, International Law and Globalization, Public Policy and Diplomacy and the alike build up students’ storage of general knowledge of the world.

4.1.2 The ESP course group

ESP course group is composed of EPP (English for Professional Purposes) and EAP (English for Academic Purposes) courses. They are designed for certain work or academic fields so that they appear practical and their teaching objective is clearly focused (Zhang Feirui, 2015). The formal one aims to develop students effective communication competence when they are at work, which makes some particular vocational vocabulary, sentence structures and discourses the key knowledge that students have to grasp. The latter one aims to develop students' academic spoken and written abilities so that they will be able to perform well in different forms of international academic interactions like listening to and delivering lectures, reading and writing papers, reporting achievements, making collaborations and so on. EAP ability is an ability that universities try to equip their students with when they try to develop them into international and innovative talents; it is also an ability that society and students themselves expect to possess (Zhou Mei, 2014; Cai Jigang, 2014; Xie Yu, Han Tianlin & Lin Fang, 2007).

The tool nature of language is fully displayed by ESP and EAP courses that are characterized by the knowledge integration of a language and a discipline or a line of work. The skills developed by doing these courses make students qualified for international work or diplomatic activities, which shows their good global competence to a certain extent. Typical courses are Business English, Medical Science English, Law English, English for Science and Technology, Academic English Writing/Reading/Listening/Speaking.

4.1.3 The multi-languages course group

English language has always been attached great importance to and is required to be learned by all the Chinese university students. Other languages are not compulsory courses for non-language majors, and even cannot be found on the elective course list. They are usually designed as the second language courses compulsory for language majors. However, the recent years have seen students increasing English proficiency, and the world requires multi-lingual talents for smooth and easy international communication. Different languages, therefore, should be, and have already been provided for students in some 1st class universities as the second, even the third choice of their foreign language study. Students equipped with multi-language abilities must be more capable of intercultural communication.

Popular language courses are French, Russian, Spanish, Arabic that are the global languages in the United Nations including Chinese and English. Other language courses like German, Japanese, Korean and so on are also easily identified.

4.1.4 The practice and internship course group

To speak fluently, communicate effectively and accomplish a task successfully on a foreign or intercultural occasion is the objective of foreign language teaching, which can be achieved more possibly if the practice and internship courses can be sufficiently offered to students. Therefore, it is very important to collaborate with businesses and companies for example to create internship opportunities for students, and to develop second class platform on campus to create practice opportunities for students. A very popular second class activity in Chinese schools and universities is Model United Nations which is very challenging for the participants for its high requirements for both language proficiency and broad scope of world knowledge. Additionally, different kinds of language contests of different levels are held across the country to provide students with practice opportunities. In a word, practice and internship courses need to be widely developed so that foreign language can be learned by doing.

4.2 The reform of the teaching model for language courses

The global outbreak of the pandemic has prompted further booming of MOOC and the consequent attempts and development of different creative teaching modes. With MOOC, teaching and learning can take place either online, or online and off-line, so that IT is sufficiently used to support teaching. MOOC helps with autonomous learning and time spent on learning can be extended as long as students wish. Class time can be saved for output activities which are designed from MOOC input and are very preferable teaching method for language class. Teachers try to change from the traditional dominant role on the class to the designers and organizers of class activities, cooperators and helpers of students' learning, while it is the students who are the real master of the class and their learning.

In such a class, apart from knowledge learning and language ability development, students also cultivate their analytical and critical thinking ability, organizing and coordinating ability, spirit of cooperation, sense of creativity and so on that are key elements of global competence.

4.3 The reform of the evaluation mode

If the class takes place the above way, the evaluation mode accordingly should appear to combine the summative with the formative, with the latter accounting for larger proportion of the score. The formative evaluation takes into account students' performance for online MOOC study, accomplishment of assignments like writing, and their performance for off-line face-to-face class including the activities like discussion and negotiation, questions and

answers, speech and debate, presentation and role play and so on. Also, students' learning attitudes, the interaction and collaboration abilities, their values and leadership can be observed. Such evaluation mode helps achieve more effective teaching and learning so that students get satisfied with their learning more easily and hence enhance their interest, motivation and responsibility for learning. It also helps the teacher and their teaching develop students good qualities for global competence.

5. Conclusion

An international talent is a talent equipped with global competence. Foreign language teaching takes great responsibility for this educational task because it enables a person to make international communication freely and get a broad scope of knowledge of society and culture. But the careful design of course groups and the reform on teaching and evaluation mode make language teaching more effective. Teachers today have to keep up with the times and change their conventional concept of language teaching and learning so as to achieve the result as expected.

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