Research on Business English Education Helping Island Rural Revitalization -- A Case Study of Zhoushan City, Zhejiang Province

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Abstract. In recent years, the Chinese government has vigorously promoted the rural revitalization strategy, aiming to achieve a balanced development of urban and rural social economy and promote common prosperity. The key to rural revitalization lies in talents. With the continuous improvement of Zhoushan's internationalization and opening up, Zhoushan's local foreign language talent pool is facing the dual pressure of quantity and quality, including the inadaptation of the training mode of business English education talents, the serious loss of high-quality talents in business English education and the uneven distribution of educational resources. Based on the current situation of business English education in Zhoushan City, this paper adopts literature research, expert interview, questionnaire survey, field investigation and other research methods. According to the results of questionnaire analysis and regional characteristics, this paper puts forward strategies to improve the business English education system in colleges and universities, strengthen the cooperation between colleges and enterprises, and promote the deep integration of information technology and business English teaching, hoping to provide new development opportunities for business English education to help rural revitalization.

1. Introduction

The proposal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on formulating the 14th five-year plan for national economic and social development and the long-term goal of 2035, which was deliberated and adopted at the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, clearly stated that "priority should be given to the development of rural agriculture and comprehensive promotion of rural revitalization. [1]" Zhoushan City has two municipal districts (Dinghai District, Putuo District) and two counties (Daishan County, Shengsi County). In the past few decades, Zhoushan City's industry and urbanization have developed rapidly, but the development of surrounding rural areas and remote fishing villages has been difficult, especially the loss of talents and capital has put it in a long-term development dilemma. The comprehensive development of Zhoushan is inseparable from rural revitalization. At present, Zhoushan's rural population accounts for nearly half of the total household registration population[2]. In the face of the accelerating process of economic globalization and the increasing demand in the field of foreign trade, business English education, aiming at cultivating professional talents with professional business English skills, conforms to the current trend of digital economy and "Internet +", and can be used as a powerful engine to stimulate rural revitalization and promote common prosperity.

2. Analysis of the development status of Zhoushan business English education helping rural revitalization

Since the development of the profession must rely on the support of related disciplines, new disciplines are constantly emerging. Under the background of big science, big economy and big strategy, emerging disciplines leave the mark of the times[3]. Business English is a subject with good development prospects and branded by the times among many new disciplines. To implement the strategy of rural revitalization, we must break the bottleneck of talents and put the development of human capital in the first place. Therefore, the key to solving the problems of aging, empty nesting and transformation of main industries in Zhoushan rural areas lies in talent revitalization. According to the city's 5% population sampling survey in 2022, the city's permanent population at the end of the year was 117,000, an increase of 5,000 over the end of the previous year, and the urbanization rate was 73.2%, an increase of 1.0 percentage points over the previous year[4]. It is concluded that with the advancement of new urbanization, Zhoushan urban area has a huge 'siphon effect' on the countryside, and the absolute labor force in rural areas and fishing villages has decreased rapidly. Moreover, the population...
flowing into the city is mostly young and middle-aged people with higher education and vigorous vitality in the countryside, while the surplus labor force in the left-behind rural areas is mostly the elderly and the weak, which affects the promotion and use of new agricultural and fishery technologies and hinders the transformation and upgrading of modern agriculture and fishery industrial structure.

At present, new industries and new formats are constantly emerging. The relationship between business English and the Internet is increasingly close. 'Internet+' has become a new trend of development, and its application scope is more and more extensive. In 2022, the total import and export volume of foreign trade goods in the whole year was 338.18 billion yuan, an increase of 43.6% over the previous year. Among them, exports 115.55 billion yuan, an increase of 49.0%; imports of 222.63 billion yuan, an increase of 40.9%. The proportion of total imports and exports and total exports to the province increased from 5.7% and 2.6% at the end of the previous year to 7.2% and 3.4%, respectively[5].

Zhoushan is in the accelerating period of new urbanization. The government has issued a number of policies to help rural revitalization, vigorously support the improvement of English proficiency of employees, and the effect of fishery feeding agriculture and urban feeding rural areas is obvious. However, according to the above data, the overall ability of Zhoushan business English education to help 'rural revitalization' needs to be further improved.

As of August 2023, the author has found a total of 114,200 related articles with 'rural revitalization' as the main keyword on CNKI, and only 7 related articles with 'business English rural revitalization' as the main keyword. From this data, the academic community has some research on rural revitalization, but there are few studies on business English to help rural revitalization. At present, the level of internationalization and opening up in Zhoushan continues to improve. The research on business English to help rural revitalization has certain practical significance for the further transformation and upgrading of agricultural fishery and the improvement of the quantity and quality of foreign language talent reserves in Zhoushan.

2 Problems of business English education in rural revitalization

2.1 Business English education personnel training mode does not adapt to the market

Based on the demand for compound, innovative and international business English talents in Zhoushan, the research team carried out a corresponding survey in Zhoushan. The questionnaire involves four categories: the first category, the English level and professional situation of cross-border e-commerce practitioners; the second category is the cross-border e-commerce practitioners' understanding of the current business English talent training system; the third category, cross-border e-commerce practitioners' emphasis on international business English, learning enthusiasm, etc.; the fourth category is the degree of attention paid by enterprises and institutions to international business English.

This study conducted a questionnaire survey on cross-border e-commerce practitioners in Zhoushan City. A total of 201 questionnaires were distributed and 201 valid questionnaires were recovered, with an effective recovery rate of 100%. In the process of issuing questionnaires, in order to ensure the reliability of the data, try to achieve a balanced distribution of age levels, a relatively balanced proportion of men and women, and a reasonable age span of respondents. From the results of the questionnaire, it is concluded that in the teaching process of the school, Zhoushan practitioners believe that the problems of school-enterprise cooperation, foreign trade e-commerce platform operation and practical teaching in vocational skills competition are more prominent, and 84.51% of practitioners believe that school-enterprise cooperation is conducive to the cultivation of business English talents. At the same time, the questionnaire shows that the dilemma of cross-border e-commerce in Zhoushan City and the problems in the cultivation of business English talents include the lack of practical links, the serious loss of high-quality talents in business English education, and the separation of teaching content from the development of foreign trade industry. In traditional business English teaching, the correlation between classroom knowledge and practical practice is still not high enough. At present, many college English courses in China focus on imparting grammatical knowledge and vocabulary. Business English teaching is more about listening, speaking, reading and writing, and lacks practical operation, cross-cultural communication and cultivation of international vision. At the same time, rural areas generally lack advanced business environment and market experience, and students lack opportunities to face the actual business environment, resulting in poor practicality and weak operability.

2.2 The brain drain of business English education in Zhoushan is serious

Talent revitalization is the key to rural revitalization. Because of the relatively low market competitiveness and living standards in rural areas, many excellent talents will choose to go to cities or other countries to pursue better opportunities and development. According to the annual report on the employment quality of graduates of Zhejiang Ocean University in 2022, except for the students who enter higher education and enlist in the army, the proportion of employment in Zhoushan is 17.15%. Many graduates choose to develop in cities such as Hangzhou and Ningbo. How to cultivate technical and skilled talents in line with rural revitalization, truly attract those excellent talents to stay in Zhoushan, and attract more young people to actively participate in the rural revitalization strategy is an urgent problem to be solved.

A high-quality technical and skilled talent team adds value and impetus to rural revitalization. However, in reality, cities have more opportunities, better treatment and higher levels of public services such as education and
medical care. Improving the education level of rural labor force is the key to rural revitalization. However, due to the lack of relevant technical skills training, most of the existing rural labor force is currently engaged in lower-end jobs, and the supply of high-level technical and skilled talents needed for rural revitalization is insufficient. At the same time, due to the lack of students, low social recognition, narrow employment, as well as the lack of professional teachers, venues, equipment and other factors, the development of rural vocational education lags behind, and the scale of agricultural professional training has shrunk.\(^6\)

2.3 Unbalanced distribution of educational resources

Zhoushan is located in the island. Although it enjoys unique geographical advantages, the land transportation is inconvenient, which leads to relatively slow economic development and difficult talent introduction. Some remote islands (such as Dongji Island, Shengsi Island, etc.) cannot obtain the same high-quality resources as the same urban area. Considering the lack of resources in Zhoushan universities, the international business English talents trained cannot meet the needs of the development of the free trade zone. This also limits the development of local business English education, making it difficult for rural areas to meet the needs of high-quality personnel training. At present, the global digital economy is developing rapidly. However, due to the relatively low level of digitization in rural areas, many valuable digital economic resources cannot be fully utilized.

3. Research on the strategy of business English education to help rural revitalization

3.1 Improve the business English education system in colleges and universities by practice-assisted learning

Colleges and universities can encourage business English professionals to combine with ocean, agriculture and other disciplines, improve the core competitiveness of the professionals, meet the needs of the market, and realize the rational allocation of resources. Generally speaking, the social service function of colleges and universities, especially in the process of serving rural revitalization, is more of an integrated participation. From the existing practice, there are three types of integrated participation methods for colleges and universities to help rural revitalization: science and technology, talent support, and combination of school and agriculture.\(^7\) Colleges and universities can combine local policy advantages and local resources to provide students with more practical teaching, such as increasing the practical opportunities of business English teaching, such as organizing students to participate in practical activities such as business negotiation simulation and business case analysis, so as to improve their English practical ability and professional quality. Moreover, Halliday's\(^9\) conception of register is relevant here, even though the register of Business English tend to be single. Carry out comprehensive evaluation, pay attention to the development of students’ comprehensive ability and personality cultivation.

3.2 Positioning School-enterprise cooperation to create localized business English compound talents

Zhoushan enterprises and universities can establish a long-term and stable cooperative relationship. The cooperative relationship between enterprises and universities is close cooperation and mutual support. Zhoushan has the resources of Zhejiang Ocean University, Zhejiang International Maritime College and so on. The cooperation between universities and enterprises can provide more practical opportunities for students. Through cooperation with enterprises, colleges and universities can better understand the needs and trends in the business field, link the teaching content with the actual professional requirements, so that they can contact the real business environment, so that business English learning can form a demand-oriented. At the same time, we should establish an integrated business English education service model of " production, learning and research, " improve the integration of resources, strengthen the long-term stable cooperative relationship between enterprises and universities, provide employment opportunities, form a two-way talent flow, and alleviate the crisis of talent loss to a certain extent. For example, business English majors can coordinate the resources of colleges and universities, make good use of their professional advantages to carry out on-site English teaching, entrepreneurship practice, observation and communication, and provide basic English communication guidance services for fishermen in need, so that some high-quality fishermen can master the ability of simple English communication and sales, and promote the transformation and upgrading of Zhoushan fishery. Business English talents have great advantages under the background of the construction of Zhoushan Free Trade Port, such as convenient communication and understanding of foreign trade structure. Because Zhoushan has a famous Zhoushan fishing ground as a unique geographical advantage, the development of aquatic products trade income is also an important part of Zhoushan economy. The cultivation of localized business English talents will help promote the action plan of the United Front Department of Zhoushan Municipal Committee's " One Island One Product " and the call for action of " Hello Island " for the common prosperity of islands. Guided by market demand, we should make good use of island resources, better transform beauty into productivity, and transform the blue sea sands into Jinshan Yinshan.
3.3 ‘Internet+’ promotes the deep integration of information technology and business English teaching.

In 2023, Daishan County was selected as the pilot area of digital reform in the field of education, Zhoushan Jingye Primary School was selected as the pilot school of rural future school cultivation, and the information service was deeply excavated to further promote the digital reform in the field of education. With the development of modern educational technology, it is not only possible but also inevitable to further enhance regional and inter-school cooperation and realize resource sharing. Teachers are an important factor in e-commerce teaching. To cultivate students’ innovative and entrepreneurial abilities, e-commerce teaching not only requires teachers to have corresponding professional theoretical knowledge, but also has a certain ability to innovate, but by investigating the current college teachers, we can find the following problem[10-11]. At present, the cooperation between schools is relatively close, and inter-school alliances and mutual recognition of credits have been developed. Since 2020, more and more colleges and universities have tried online teaching modes, such as MOOC, SPOC teaching, hybrid mode and so on. Through online education platform, remote teaching tools and so on, students can overcome the geographical restrictions of islands and realize the rational allocation of resources. Teachers should actively innovate, with the help of rich teaching resources or platforms, such as WeChat applets, etc., to fully stimulate students’ interest in learning and effectively improve the teaching effect. Students can carry out multi-stage autonomous learning around the course objectives inside and outside the classroom, online and offline, realize resource sharing and personalized teaching, and alleviate the problem of insufficient teachers to a certain extent. In the process of the integration of information technology and business English teaching, we should also consider the actual situation of college students’ self-management ability, and explore and optimize the practical scheme.

4. Conclusion

Business English education can not only activate the internal driving force of island development, but also draw a concentric circle of urban and rural common prosperity. Therefore, from the three perspectives of improving the business English education system in colleges and universities, creating localized business English compound talents, and promoting the deep integration of information technology and business English teaching, we can promote the construction of business English education and help the new path of rural revitalization. With the implementation of big strokes and big movements, the function and quality of the island are continuously improved. The rural construction of the island continues to show new features, and the background of the common prosperity and beauty of the island is increasingly bright.

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