
Research on the Differences and Integration Mechanism of Maritime English and College English Teaching Goals in Vocational Universities

Juan Liu*

Hainan Vocational University of Science and Technology, Haikou 571126, Hainan, China

**Author to whom correspondence should be addressed.*

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Abstract: The core positioning of vocational undergraduate education is to cultivate high-quality technical and skilled talents. Maritime-related majors are the distinctive specialties of these institutions, and their main task is to provide practitioners who can stand firm in the maritime industry and have a global perspective. In the teaching of vocational undergraduate maritime-related majors, College English and Maritime English are two core courses, which are closely related but have different emphases. To solve the current problems of disconnection in maritime English teaching and lack of targetedness in college English teaching, the key lies in clearly defining the teaching goals of the two courses and achieving effective integration. This article is based on the concept of integrated education in vocational undergraduate institutions, explores the fundamental reasons for the disconnection between Maritime English and College English teaching, and on this basis, constructs a corresponding integration mechanism to help vocational undergraduate institutions optimize the English teaching system for maritime-related majors and improve the quality of talent cultivation.

Keywords: Vocational undergraduate institutions; Maritime English; College English; Teaching goal differences; Integration mechanism

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1. Introduction

The global economic integration is accelerating, and the maritime industry is becoming increasingly crucial in international trade. Shipping is the main mode of transportation for international trade. To operate efficiently and safely, professional and competent maritime personnel with the ability to conduct international communication are indispensable. English is the universal language in the international maritime field. The communication and cooperation among ship operation, cargo transportation, international ports, and maritime institutions all require maritime personnel to be proficient in using English for communication and operation. Vocational colleges are the main venues for cultivating high-level technical and skilled talents. The English teaching in maritime-related majors of these colleges needs to take into account both language foundation and professional application, integrating the ability to use the universal language with the requirements of professional positions. Based on this background, conducting in-depth research on the differences in teaching goals

between vocational colleges' maritime English and university English, and establishing a scientific and feasible integration mechanism, is an inherent requirement for implementing the educational positioning of vocational colleges and is also an inevitable choice to adapt to the international development of the maritime industry and enhance the international competitiveness of our country's maritime talents.

2. Exploration of the root causes of the disconnection between the teaching objectives of maritime english and college english in vocational universities

2.1. Cognitive bias in course positioning, fragmenting the complementary relationship of the two courses

Some vocational universities have inaccurate understanding of the positioning of the two courses, maritime English and college English. During the integration process, they merely equate college English with a simple basic language course, failing to realize that it can provide support for professional learning. During teaching, they only focus on teaching general language knowledge without considering the needs of maritime studies and adding relevant content. This results in the disconnection between college English teaching and maritime studies, and even though students have learned basic language skills, they find it difficult to apply them in their professional fields^[1]. Conversely, in teaching related to the specific major, universities merely treat maritime English as a simple professional knowledge course, ignoring the prerequisite that the profession cannot exist without a language foundation. In teaching, they merely emphasize the explanation of professional terms and professional texts, without considering the different levels of students' basic language skills or making good use of the basic teaching of college English to expand and deepen related content. Students with poor basic language skills find it difficult to keep up with the teaching pace. Even developing a sense of difficulty towards the professional courses.

2.2. The curriculum design is unreasonable and lacks a collaborative connection mechanism.

In the curriculum design of vocational undergraduate colleges, there is generally a situation of "each doing their own thing". In terms of course setting, teaching schedule, and teaching content, there is no proper coordination planning between university English and maritime English. The course content and teaching schedule of university English do not take into account the learning needs of maritime professional students in the future. They still use the same teaching syllabus and teaching content, and the connection between university English and maritime English teaching content is insufficient. For example, in university English teaching, basic vocabulary and scenarios related to maritime are not included in advance. When students learn maritime English, they often encounter difficulties such as unfamiliarity with professional terms and unfamiliarity with the scenarios. In addition, the curriculum setting of maritime English and the teaching schedule of university English are not synchronized. Some colleges offer maritime English before university English, while some colleges offer both courses simultaneously. However, there is a lack of connection in the content, and students do not have a solid foundation in language skills. It will be more difficult for them to master professional English knowledge^[2].

2.3. Insufficient collaboration among teaching teams, lack of interdisciplinary cooperation

The integration effect of the two courses, namely Maritime English and College English, is influenced by the degree of collaboration among the teaching teams. Currently, in vocational colleges, college English teachers and maritime English teachers belong to different teaching teams. During daily teaching, there is a lack of interdisciplinary cooperation and no regular communication mechanism has been established^[3]. Most college English teachers have a solid language professional foundation, but they lack knowledge related to maritime professions and are not clear about the specific English requirements for maritime job positions. It is difficult for them to integrate maritime-related content into teaching, resulting in the lack of targeted teaching in college English. Maritime English teachers mostly have a maritime professional

background, but their language teaching abilities are still insufficient. They are also unaware of the teaching progress of college English and do not have a good understanding of students' basic language proficiency. It is difficult for them to design teaching content based on students' basic conditions, ultimately causing the maritime English teaching and students' basic language abilities to not align.

3. Construction of the integration mechanism for maritime english and college english teaching objectives in vocational universities

3.1. Clarify the collaborative positioning and clarify the complementary relationship between the two

Adjust the teaching positioning of college English. The core positioning is to cultivate students' general language literacy. On this basis, add the orientation of the navigation major to make college English achieve a dual positioning of "general foundation + professional preparation". For students majoring in navigation, the teaching objectives of college English should be optimized. When cultivating students' basic language skills, incorporate basic vocabulary related to navigation, simple scenarios, and industry culture in advance, gradually cultivating students' awareness of learning maritime English, and laying a foundation for their subsequent study of maritime English^[4]. For example, in college English oral teaching, simple scenarios such as crew daily communication and basic introduction of ships can be integrated; in reading teaching, some navigation science articles can be added to help students initially understand the basic situation and related vocabulary of the navigation industry, so that college English and navigation major can achieve preliminary connection. The teaching positioning of maritime English should also be clear. Its core is to cultivate students' professional job capabilities, while also taking into account the improvement of students' basic language abilities, achieving a dual positioning of "professional application + basic consolidation". In the teaching process of maritime English, it is necessary to combine students' basic English proficiency, design hierarchical teaching objectives, for students with weak foundation, more emphasis should be placed on the combination teaching of basic language knowledge and professional knowledge to consolidate their basic language abilities, for students with good foundation, the focus is on strengthening the cultivation of professional English practical ability, so that students' language ability can achieve gradient improvement^[5].

3.2. Optimize the curriculum system and establish a collaborative and transitional framework

Based on the talent cultivation plan of vocational undergraduate colleges, English teaching can be divided into three progressive modules: the basic English module (college English), the transitional bridging module, and the professional English module (maritime English). The basic English module (college English) is conducted in the first and second semesters, mainly aiming to cultivate students' basic language skills, while incorporating basic content related to maritime affairs to prepare them for subsequent learning. The transitional bridging module is scheduled at the end of the second semester or the beginning of the third semester, lasting for 4-6 weeks. Its core function is to bridge the gap between college English and maritime English, focusing on the basic terms of maritime affairs and the basic expressions in common professional scenarios, clarifying the language connection points between college English and maritime English, and helping students smoothly transition from general English to professional English, addressing the issue of discontinuity between the two^[6]. The professional English module (maritime English) is offered in the third and fourth semesters, focusing on cultivating students' practical professional English skills, closely integrating with the actual needs of maritime career positions, deepening professional content teaching, and ensuring precise alignment between teaching and professional positions. In addition, a collaborative discussion mechanism for teaching content of college English and maritime English should be established, organizing the teachers of both courses to review the teaching content, ensuring that the teaching content is complementary and interconnected. In accordance with the latest requirements of the STCW Convention, the teaching content of maritime English should be updated in a timely manner to ensure that the teaching content can keep up with industry demands and also be consistent with international standards^[7].

3.3. Strengthen teaching collaboration and establish interdisciplinary teaching platforms

Form an English teaching discussion group, with members including university English teachers, maritime English teachers, and key teachers from the maritime discipline. They will engage in exchanges on aspects such as integration of teaching objectives, connection of teaching content, innovation of teaching methods, and students' learning situations, to solve various problems that arise during teaching^[8]. For interdisciplinary teaching content such as maritime cross-cultural communication and professional scene dialogues, university English teachers will mainly focus on language expression and grammar explanations, while maritime English teachers will undertake the tasks of professional knowledge and scene interpretation. Through this approach, language teaching and professional teaching can be deeply integrated, thereby improving teaching effectiveness. Based on the teaching characteristics of both courses and taking into account students' learning needs, actively innovate teaching methods, and focus on strengthening practical teaching. Ultimately, achieve the integrated cultivation of basic language skills and professional practical skills. While applying traditional teaching methods, rely on online teaching platforms to build an English learning resource library, integrate relevant teaching resources of university English and maritime English for students' autonomous learning, and realize online and offline integrated teaching, helping students enhance their autonomous learning ability. Regularly organize university English teachers to participate in maritime professional training, maritime industry research and other related activities, so that they can fully understand the actual needs of maritime career positions for English, related professional knowledge and industry norms, and improve their maritime professional literacy, enabling them to better integrate maritime-related content in teaching^[9].

3.4. Improve the evaluation system and establish a comprehensive orientation mechanism

A comprehensive evaluation index system for maritime students' English proficiency is constructed. This system consists of three core dimensions: 30% for basic university English proficiency, 40% for maritime English professional skills, and 30% for comprehensive English application skills. Basic university English proficiency mainly assesses students' basic levels in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation. The assessment methods incorporate assignments, classroom performance, and final exams. Maritime English professional skills focus on evaluating students' professional listening, professional speaking, professional reading, professional writing, and professional translation abilities, with the assessment combining simulation training, practical assessment, and other forms. Comprehensive English application skills mainly evaluate students' ability to apply basic language knowledge to solve professional-related problems. The assessment is conducted through vocational scenario simulations, comprehensive training tasks, etc., to determine the accuracy and professionalism of students' language application. In terms of evaluation methods, the previous single final exam model should be broken, and a diversified evaluation approach combining process-based evaluation, end-of-term evaluation, and practical evaluation should be adopted. Process-based evaluation focuses on students' daily learning performance, covering aspects such as classroom participation, assignment completion, and group cooperation, and is conducted by both course instructors. Summative assessment mainly examines students' learning outcomes at a certain stage, including final exams for university English and maritime English, etc. It focuses on testing students' mastery of language knowledge and professional knowledge. Practical assessment focuses on students' ability to apply English in practice. It is implemented through methods such as simulated job training, vocational skills competitions, and enterprise internships to ensure that the evaluation results can truly reflect students' job competence^[10].

4. Conclusion

In vocational undergraduate colleges, the teaching goals of maritime English and college English are significantly different, but they are not in opposition. Instead, they are complementary and mutually supportive, working together to achieve the educational purpose. In the context of the continuous development of the maritime industry and the ongoing updates of the STCW Convention, the English teaching needs for vocational undergraduate maritime programs should

also be flexibly integrated. In the future, within the integration mechanism of these two aspects, we should combine modern information technologies such as artificial intelligence and big data to innovate the implementation methods of the integration mechanism, summarize and promote good teaching integration experiences, and gradually improve the integration mechanism. Only in this way can the English teaching quality of vocational undergraduate maritime programs be continuously improved, providing strong talent support for the high-quality development of the maritime industry.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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