

Strategies and Approaches of Foreign Language Discipline Construction in Local Colleges and Universities

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Abstract: An important content of university work is discipline construction. Under the condition of shortage of funds and limited school resources, the construction of foreign language discipline in local colleges and universities is faced with many problems in terms of orientation and layout, personnel training mode and academic research. On the basis of defining the connotation, extension and principles of foreign language discipline construction, this paper discusses the strategies and paths of foreign language discipline construction in local colleges and universities. This paper holds that the construction of foreign language discipline in local colleges and universities should adhere to the path of defining the discipline orientation, condensing the discipline direction, relying on the platform to gather talents, establishing a learning academic team, and improving the construction of rules and regulations.

1. Introduction

Discipline construction is the basic construction of colleges and universities, and it is the most important thing in college construction. The level of discipline development is an important reference standard to consider the quality and comprehensive strength of talent cultivation in colleges and universities, and it is also the core competitiveness for the survival and development of colleges and universities. Discipline construction is a strategic infrastructure in the development of colleges and universities, and high-level discipline construction is a comprehensive carrier of the basic functions of universities.

Whether we can scientifically and reasonably improve the discipline construction mechanism in colleges and universities, produce landmark achievements and cultivate high-quality talents has become the key to the further development of colleges and universities, which has extremely important practical significance. In the new era, the "the belt and road initiative" initiative and the idea of "building Community of Shared Future for Mankind" have exerted far-reaching influence on the politics, economy, society and culture of China and the world. At the same time, it provides a new opportunity and a broader space for boosting China's higher education reform, accelerating the construction of foreign language disciplines and innovating the talent training mode.

On March 17th, 2018, Shanghai International Studies University held the first summit forum on the construction and development of first-class foreign language and literature disciplines and the inaugural meeting of China's foreign language discipline development alliance in universities. The purpose of this alliance is to speed up the reform of higher education, promote the construction of "double first-class", realize the connotation development of higher education in China, and give full play to the advantages and important role of foreign language disciplines in serving major national strategies such as the "the belt and road initiative Initiative". Yansong Li, president of the Federation, pointed out that foreign language disciplines should pay attention to coordinated and balanced development, efficiency and quality, connotation and extension of disciplines, combine with the strategy of serving the society, international exchange and Chinese culture going abroad, and actively carry out country and regional research to improve the quality of foreign language discipline construction.

While facing more new opportunities, there are still many problems in the construction of foreign language disciplines, and the development is in a dilemma. For example, the development of disciplines in different regions is unbalanced and inadequate; Scientific research output and display are not as good as other disciplines; Big data and artificial intelligence are the impact of the fourth scientific and technological revolution [1]. Especially local colleges and universities are facing great challenges. For example, in terms of discipline layout, the discipline structures of local colleges and universities converge, and the characteristics and advantages of disciplines are not obvious; The development of basic disciplines and applied disciplines is uncoordinated; The degree of integration of disciplines is not high, and the degree of cross-integration is low. In terms of specialty construction, the degree of cross-integration among various specialties is low, and the integration of modern science and technology and the application of big data can't be deeply integrated. In terms of allocation of educational resources, due to the strong national center model, the "special subsidy" of key universities is far higher than the "comprehensive quota", which makes local universities at the lowest end of China's "pyramid" higher education system for a long time [2]. Therefore, it has formed two characteristics of local colleges and universities. One is "locality", which mainly focuses on cultivating local development talents. Second, it is "low-end", which determines that its talent training orientation is quite different from that of high-level universities.

Under this background, the orientation and layout, specialty setting, talent training mode and academic research of foreign language disciplines in local colleges and universities need to be deeply explored. On this basis, the construction of foreign language disciplines in local colleges and universities should be rationally planned to produce landmark achievements and cultivate high-level innovative talents, so as to meet the needs of interdisciplinary development and the internationalization and informatization trend of higher education [3]. For local colleges and universities or late-developing disciplines, they should have a purpose, consciousness and strategy to create discipline characteristics. Advantages are the only way for discipline construction in local colleges and universities. Therefore, on the basis of defining the connotation, extension and principles of foreign language discipline construction, this paper discusses the strategies and paths of foreign language discipline construction in local colleges and universities.

2. Connotation and Extension of Foreign Language Discipline

According to the theory of discipline structure put forward by Nan Zuomin, every discipline has its discipline connotation (core) and discipline extension (discipline edge) [4]. The study of connotation knowledge reflects the profoundness of a discipline, and the discipline is deepened through constant refinement and classification. The study of foreign languages includes linguistics, literature, translation studies, teaching methods and so on. The extension of the discipline reflects the

radiation diffusion ability of the discipline, and it shows the correlation degree between the discipline and other disciplines and the combination degree with the real world. The interdisciplinary field of foreign language and political science may involve international political science, international relations or national political science, as well as political language research and communication research. The cross-cutting fields of learning foreign languages include international management, characteristics of country management, characteristics of management language, business communication, international business operation, international marketing culture and strategy [5].

On March 17th, 2017, the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council promulgated the Basic Conditions for Examination and Approval of Academic Degrees, which adjusted 13 two disciplines under the first-level discipline of foreign language and literature into five major directions: foreign linguistics and applied linguistics, foreign literature, translation studies, comparative literature and cross-cultural studies, and national and regional studies, so as to promote the layout adjustment and connotation construction of foreign language disciplines. Among them, linguistic studies, translation studies, comparative literature and cross-cultural studies are the connotation attributes of foreign language disciplines, and the addition of national and regional studies is the extension of foreign language disciplines. With the help of the linguistic advantages of target countries, first-hand relevant research materials are obtained and analyzed, and cross-disciplinary research is carried out with other disciplines. This means that in the past, the disciplinary pattern with country and language as the boundary and research object will no longer exist, and it will be replaced by a new pattern of cross-language, cross-country and cross-discipline [6]. Jiang Hongxin pointed out that the country's new demand for foreign language disciplines has expanded the boundaries of foreign language disciplines, reflected the changes in the connotation of foreign language disciplines, re-recognized their own functions and adjusted their positioning, which is forward-looking and leading [7].

3. Principles of Foreign Language Discipline Construction

To sum up, in the new era, China's foreign language discipline should adhere to the concept of "cultivating people by virtue" and "educating people by all means", concise its discipline characteristics, and cultivate "foreign language plus" professionals with feelings of home and country, international perspective and intercultural communication skills, so as to produce landmark achievements, better serve the national development strategy, and provide language services and intellectual support for national social, economic and cultural development. Therefore, the author believes that the construction of foreign language disciplines should follow the following three principles: returning to the "three characteristics", that is, humanistic attribute, national (ethnic) attribute and organizational attribute.

First of all, return to humanistic attributes. The backbone of humanities refers to the basic research fields of literature, history and philosophy, or art can be added. Broader concepts can also include linguistics and sociology. As a humanities discipline, foreign language discipline should focus on cultivating students' humanitarian spirit and humanistic feelings, and cultivate their critical thinking ability. Although it can't directly produce economic benefits, it can provide correct values and guidance for natural science. In recent years, many scholars have called for the foreign language major to return to its discipline standard and reflect the important position of humanistic education. Hu Wenzhong and Sun Youzhong believe that English majors need to return to the humanistic standard, focusing on cultivating humanistic or general talents, taking into account compound talents [8]. Zhang Xiping emphasized that the essence of foreign language education is humanistic education [9]. Lan Zhe pointed out that foreign language majors should return to the humanities, reflecting the true nature of humanities. Students trained by foreign language majors should be general talents who

not only master skilled foreign language skills, but also have generous professional knowledge, good humanistic qualities and are good at innovation and speculation [10]. Zha Mingjian pointed out that English major is a branch of humanities, and it should reflect the attribute requirements of humanities in professional orientation, talent training objectives and curriculum setting [11]. Zeng Yanyu believes that foreign language disciplines should overcome the one-sided influence of foreign language instrumentalism from the perspective of discipline connotation, clarify the discipline orientation, and strengthen the attributes of humanities, so as to effectively deal with the problems of discipline development and enhance the discipline competitiveness [12].

Secondly, return to national (ethnic) attributes. Different from mathematics, physics, chemistry and other natural disciplines, foreign languages have national (ethnic) attributes, and mainly study the language, culture and literature of other countries. At the same time, the subjects of study and research are native people, that is, learning and researching foreign languages and literature on the basis of their own culture. It can be seen that foreign language disciplines not only have national (ethnic) attributes, but also have the characteristics of diversity, integration and cross-culture. Wang Xuemei pointed out that the construction of foreign language disciplines should pay attention to the combination of internationalization and localization, be guided by real questions and urgent questions in foreign language education in China, explore theories and paths that embody Chinese characteristics, and avoid copying western theoretical systems and practical experiences mechanically. We should return to the national (ethnic) nature of foreign language disciplines, and adhere to the principle of "focusing on ourselves and promoting integration", that is, we should adhere to the Chinese perspective, take everything in everything, develop in multiple ways, and constantly cultivate the ability of thinking and innovation [13].

Thirdly, return to organizational attributes. There are many discussions about the definition of discipline. Chang Wenlei expounded the connotation of discipline from the perspectives of knowledge and organization, and considered that the basic elements of discipline generally include unique research objects, unique research methods, unique research fields and knowledge systems, and academic organizations as materialized forms [14]. Dai Weidong and Wang Xuemei put forward that discipline is not only a knowledge system covering related academic fields, but also an academic organization engaged in teaching research, including teachers, students, researchers, teaching administrators and the running mechanism running through it [15]. Liu Yumei pointed out that subject structure can be reorganized, integrated and optimized under the condition of following the law of scientific development. Generally speaking, many scholars mainly define it from two dimensions: knowledge view and organization view [16]. It can be seen that discipline is a community of knowledge and organizational forms, and it is the basic unit for universities to carry out teaching, scientific research and social services. Knowledge form is the subject and branch of knowledge system, and organizational form is the functional unit and organization for universities to carry out teaching, scientific research and other activities, and it is the foundation and platform for realizing school-running functions. Therefore, discipline construction is an organizational behavior based on knowledge form [17].

4. Strategies of Foreign Language Discipline Construction in Local Colleges and Universities

Since discipline construction is an organizational behavior, it is particularly important to cultivate and enhance the core competitiveness of disciplines. Wang Jianmin believes that the core competence of a discipline refers to the unique competitive advantage of a particular discipline compared with other disciplines, and it is the ability contained in the connotation of the discipline and to keep the discipline sustainable [18]. Li Jianning believes that the core competence of a discipline is the core resource and core competence for its survival and development. It is the core of a discipline's technical

ability, which enables the discipline to obtain a sustainable competitive advantage through the integration of strategic decision-making, scientific research and industrialization of its achievements, curriculum setting and teaching, human resource development, organization and management, or through the highlighting of the utility of a certain factor [19].

Therefore, the author believes that the construction of foreign language disciplines in local colleges and universities must be based on the "three characteristics", namely, humanistic attribute, national attribute and organizational attribute, and driven by the "four major strategies", namely, the strategy of strengthening schools with talents, the strategy of cross-integration of disciplines, the strategy of combining with Industry-University-Research and the strategy of internationalization, so as to show its advantages and characteristics and make steady progress.

The strategy of strengthening schools with talents refers to the strategy of strengthening the introduction and cultivation of talents, stimulating the vitality of teaching and research, and improving the level and popularity of teachers. Cross-disciplinary integration strategy refers to the cross-integration of research directions within foreign language disciplines and with other disciplines. The combination strategy of Industry-University-Research is to meet the major needs of national and local development, emphasizing the social service function of this discipline. Deepen the cooperation between schools and enterprises, and create a new mode of collaborative education. In particular, local colleges and universities must return to the origin in discipline construction, and strive for breakthroughs in deepening school-enterprise collaboration, school-local collaboration, integration of production and education, and symbiosis between schools and cities, so as to shape brands and innovate talent training modes. Relying on industry resources, deepen the integration of production and education, promote the long-term mechanism of collaborative education, and provide reserve talents for industry development. Anchored in the city, embedded in the local institutional environment, closely coordinated with the regional economic and social development, and deeply branded with the local economy, society and culture. Internationalization strategy refers to the promotion of the discipline's integration with international standards in personnel training, academic research, social services and discipline management, and drawing on advanced experience and practices. The specific contents include internationalization of students, teachers, curriculum, academic research and communication, etc. The implementation of these strategies can promote the applied research of this discipline, improve its social service function and enhance its social reputation.

5. The Path of Foreign Language Discipline Construction in Local Colleges and Universities

5.1. Adhere to the Advantages and Characteristics, Clear discipline Positioning

We should do a good job in top-level design of discipline construction, and know what we want to make our discipline look like. It is necessary to take the initiative to meet the needs of the national development strategy and local social and economic development, combine the traditional advantages and characteristics of our school and disciplines, design discipline development plans on the basis of in-depth analysis and demonstration, and determine the development goals, construction contents and guarantee mechanisms. Pay attention to the following points:

- (1) The irreplaceable advantages.
- (2) According to the development trend at home and abroad, based on the forefront, leading the way.
- (3) According to the overall orientation and goal of running a school, establish the orientation of foreign language discipline. Based on the place, focus on cultivating some fields or research directions to reach the leading position in the region and have important influence.
- (4) Serve the national development strategy and local social and economic needs, and provide them with talent guarantee and intellectual support.

For local colleges and universities, it is important to find comparative advantages, make a clear positioning, determine the development focus and build the core competitiveness of this discipline. With the goal of serving the regional economic and social development, we should pay attention to cultivating high-quality applied and compound talents.

5.2. Concise the Discipline Direction and Create Advantages and Characteristics

The dominant characteristics of a discipline are the soul of the core competitiveness of a discipline, and the discipline direction should be condensed on the basis of discipline orientation. The foreign language discipline should be guided by real problems, and all research should be done to solve the urgent problems in foreign language education in China. Seriously investigate, identify the problem, learn from ancient and modern wisdom, and create new knowledge in the process of solving the problem [20].

Many local colleges and universities are constrained by the shortage of funds, limited running resources and the superiority of basic research over applied research. Therefore, it is necessary to follow the idea of differentiated development and dislocation competition, the frontier of scientific and technological development, the major national strategies, the changes of local economic and social development needs, and the historical advantages of long-term development of disciplines, all of which should be the foothold on which the discipline construction of local colleges and universities should rely, and insist on doing something and not doing something, thus forming their own characteristics. Generally speaking, the key to discipline conciseness is the discipline frontier, national and local needs, and the foundation and advantages of the school.

For example, local colleges and universities can rely on the research advantages and characteristics of academic leaders and combine the frontiers of disciplines to focus on strengthening the construction of this field; Take advantage of the close ties with local governments, actively participate in local economic and social development, stabilize basic research, transform regional characteristics into their own characteristics, strengthen applied research, and attach importance to the transformation of academic achievements; Relying on the leading edge of a certain industry field, set up a school-enterprise alliance to cultivate outstanding talents.

Therefore, foreign language disciplines in local colleges and universities should adhere to the road of interdisciplinary and differentiated development, concise the direction of disciplines, gradually occupy the commanding heights of disciplines, and establish a highly internationalized personnel training system and discipline system with distinctive local characteristics.

5.3. Relying on the Platform to Gather Talents and Form A Learning Academic Team

It is the first element of talents and the key to the development of disciplines. The core competitiveness of a foreign language discipline includes three elements: academics, talents and mechanisms. It is necessary to construct the core competitiveness of a foreign language discipline from the perspectives of academics, talents and mechanisms, among which the core competitiveness of talents is the key [21].

Local colleges and universities should focus on the core direction and gather talents. Build an innovative academic team led by academic leaders and composed of academic backbones (other professors, associate professors, young doctors, etc.). Compared with science and engineering, the construction of talent team in foreign language disciplines often leads to the situation that the research direction of academic team is unfocused, imprecise, single-handed and unable to form a joint force. Therefore, on the basis of strengthening the construction of teachers' ethics, the foreign language discipline should not only pay attention to the introduction of high-level talents, but also to the cultivation of internal young talents, and set up a high-level teaching team led by well-known scholars,

combining the old with the young, with obvious international characteristics, so as to achieve the goal of "thinking in one place with one mind and making efforts in one place". This requires academic leaders to play an important role, and at the same time, introduce some measures to strengthen team building, strengthen the mechanism of internal training and external introduction, and build a first-class teaching staff. For example, we can promote the introduction plan of first-class talents and urgently needed talents; Field talent cultivation plan; Young teachers' overseas training and academic qualification upgrading program; Academic Forum for Young Foreign Language Teachers; Postdoctoral teacher training program; Training programs for young teachers' practical skills and teaching skills.

In addition, scientific research platform is the carrier of scientific research, the foundation of discipline development and an important symbol of discipline level. Build a scientific research platform around the direction and team to carry out organized scientific research. Local colleges and universities should pay more attention to the coordinated development of schools and enterprises, increase the construction of innovation platforms and bases in Industry-University-Research, and strengthen the interaction mechanism between discipline construction and all social sectors. It is necessary to build a learning organization with the characteristics of shared vision, team learning, self-transcendence and systematic thinking [22].

5.4. Improve the Rules and Regulations, Standardize the Main Behavior

The purpose of formulating rules and regulations is to straighten out the system and mechanism of internal management, promote the further optimization of discipline organization, better coordinate various relationships within the discipline, and promote the benign operation and scientific development of the discipline. Perfecting rules and regulations and establishing incentive mechanism can stimulate the initiative of relevant subjects, improve teaching and scientific research conditions, standardize subjects' behaviors and produce high-level innovative achievements.

Effective discipline management is an important link to ensure the realization of scientific research objectives and the improvement of efficiency. Foreign language disciplines in local colleges and universities should gradually build and improve a set of standardized scientific research management systems in scientific research practice, such as academic committee system, discipline leader system, and guidance system for young teachers. For example, the system of academic tutors guiding young teachers to carry out scientific research, the system of teachers' scientific research assessment and achievement reward, and the measures for the administration of funding plans for the publication of academic monographs and key teaching materials can be formulated. Strengthen the construction of academic committees, academic degree sub-committees, teaching committees and other special committees, give full play to the role of these committees in college management and discipline development, and strive to build a "fair, transparent, democratic and harmonious" governance environment.

Introduce the evaluation mechanism. Adopt targeted assessment mechanism for scientific research teams with different directions and characteristics, and pay attention to the balance between fairness and flexibility. Take the best value as the criterion, establish an objective and fair evaluation standard, so that the work value of each scientific research team can be correctly evaluated, and quarterly or annual periodic results summary, evaluation and assessment will be carried out, which will be inspected and supervised by relevant departments of the school.

6. Conclusion

Under the historical background of unbalanced and inadequate development of higher education, it is of great practical significance to explore the strategies and paths of foreign language discipline

construction in local colleges and universities in combination with the development trend of globalization, informatization and the major strategic needs of the country such as the "the belt and road initiative" initiative. This paper holds that foreign language disciplines in local colleges and universities should be purposeful, conscious, and strategic to create discipline advantages. On the basis of enriching the connotation and expanding the extension, the discipline construction should be based on the humanistic attributes, national (ethnic) attributes and organizational attributes of foreign language disciplines, driven by the four major strategies of "strengthening schools with talents, cross-integration of disciplines, integration of Industry-University-Research and internationalization", showing its characteristics and steadily advancing. Adhere to the discipline orientation, concise discipline direction, rely on the platform to gather talents, set up a learning academic team, and improve the construction path of rules and regulations.

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