

# *Exploration on Training Strategies of Students' Core Literacy in Higher Vocational Public English Teaching*

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**Abstract:** This article combines theoretical analysis with practical exploration to illustrate the current situation and challenges in public English teaching within higher vocational colleges (HVC), along with the connotation and components of core literacy. Subsequently, it elaborates on crucial strategies, including the integration of curriculum content with core literacy, the innovation of teaching methods and tools, the establishment of a comprehensive assessment system, and the role and professional growth of teachers. The objective is to formulate a systematic and efficient core literacy training framework to incorporate core literacy into public English teaching in HVC and enhance students' all-round proficiency such as language competence, thinking aptitude, cultural awareness, and learning strategies, thereby laying a robust foundation for their career progression.

## **1. Introduction**

As globalization deepens, English, being the principal language for international communication, has grown in importance immensely[1]. In the higher vocational education framework, public English teaching serves as a vital link for cultivating students' language proficiency. It's also a crucial means to enhance students' comprehensive qualities and boost their international competitiveness [2]. Nevertheless, currently, public English teaching in higher vocational colleges (HVC) commonly encounters issues like the disconnect between teaching content and actual requirements, the monotony of teaching methods, and students' lack of application abilities [3]. Against this backdrop, exploring how to effectively enhance students' English core literacy is relevant to students' personal career development. It also constitutes an important part of improving the overall quality of national education and international influence [4]. Core literacy is a comprehensive notion that encompasses multiple aspects such as language ability, thinking quality, cultural awareness, and learning strategies [5]. It highlights individuals' capacity to comprehensively apply knowledge, skills, and attitudes to solve problems in complex situations. In higher vocational education, cultivating students' English core literacy implies enabling them to possess the abilities of effective communication, critical thinking, cross-cultural communication, and self-learning in English [6]. This holds profound significance for students' future careers and lifelong learning.

In recent years, scholars have been increasingly delving into core literacy, higher vocational English education, and their integration [7]. Some research efforts center on the theoretical framework construction, assessment system design, and specific teaching practices related to core

literacy. There are also studies that concentrate on the localized interpretation of core literacy within the Chinese educational context and how to conduct core literacy training across different educational phases [8]. Despite the bountiful research outcomes, in the domain of public English teaching in higher vocational colleges (HVC), research on how to concretely and systematically cultivate students' core literacy remains inadequate [9]. The task of combining the characteristics of higher vocational education with students' actual needs to formulate a teaching system that aligns with the core literacy concept and is also practicable represents a significant research lacuna. Building on the achievements of predecessors, this study will further probe into the specific strategies for cultivating core literacy in higher vocational public English teaching, aiming to bridge this research gap and contribute to the enhancement of higher vocational education quality.

The objective of this study is to investigate the specific core literacy aspects that ought to be nurtured in public English teaching in HVC. This encompasses, but is not restricted to, language application ability, cross-cultural communication ability, critical thinking ability, and autonomous learning strategies. By elucidating the specific connotations and training goals of these core qualities, a more definite direction can be furnished for English teaching in HVC.

## 2. An overview of public English teaching and students' core literacy in HVC

### 2.1. Vocational characteristics and challenges of public English teaching

Public English teaching in higher vocational colleges (HVC) constitutes a crucial segment of the vocational education system. Its distinctiveness resides in the fact that it not only imparts language knowledge and skills but also closely centers around students' professional necessities and career development objectives, thereby cultivating students' practical application capabilities [10]. This characteristic dictates that English teaching in HVC must emphasize practicality and relevance, highlighting the application of language in actual work scenarios. Nevertheless, higher vocational students encounter difficulties in English learning, such as a frail foundation, a lack of enthusiasm for learning, and insufficient learning motivation. Alongside the acceleration of globalization, English teaching is required to fulfill the novel demands of enhancing students' cross-cultural communication skills and information acquisition and processing capabilities. These challenges necessitate that higher vocational English teaching should innovate teaching methodologies and optimize course content to more effectively adapt to the progress of the times and the requirements of students.

### 2.2. The connotation and composition of core literacy

Table 1: Framework of 21st Century Core Competencies

Core Competency Dimension	Specific Contents
Language Ability	Communication, Reading Comprehension, Multilingual Proficiency
Thinking Skills	Critical Thinking, Logical Reasoning, Creative Thinking
Cultural Awareness	Intercultural Understanding, Cultural Identity, Cultural Respect
Learning Strategies	Self-directed Learning, Information Management, Problem Solving
Teamwork	Collaboration, Leadership, Team Spirit
Innovation	Idea Generation, Practical Exploration, Risk Management

Core literacy is an important concept of education in the 21st century. It refers to the essential key abilities and qualities of individuals in adapting to the future social life, solving practical problems and achieving the common development of individuals and society. It goes beyond the single level of knowledge and skills, and covers many dimensions such as cognition, emotion,

attitude and values. Core literacy includes language ability, thinking quality, cultural awareness, learning strategies, teamwork and innovation ability (see Table 1). These core qualities together constitute the cornerstone of individual's all-round development.

### 2.3. Correlation between core literacy and public English teaching in HVC

There exists a close bond between public English teaching in higher vocational colleges (HVC) and the cultivation of core literacy. English teaching serves as a significant means to foster students' language ability, and language ability constitutes an essential component of core literacy. Via English teaching, students can enhance their fundamental skills like listening, speaking, reading, and writing, thus laying a solid groundwork for cross-cultural communication and information acquisition. Teaching activities such as reading, discussion, and project work in English teaching are conducive to cultivating students' critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and teamwork spirit. These are manifestations of thinking quality and social ability within core literacy.

The cultural teaching content incorporated in English teaching can boost students' cultural awareness and facilitate cross-cultural understanding and respect. Moreover, the guidance on learning strategies in English teaching can improve students' learning efficiency and nurture their autonomous learning ability. Consequently, integrating the cultivation of core literacy into public English teaching in HVC can enhance students' language ability, drive their all-round development, and establish a solid foundation for their future career and lifelong learning.

## 3. Higher vocational public English teaching students' core literacy training strategies

### 3.1. The integration of curriculum content and core literacy

In public English teaching in HVC, the careful design of course content is the key to ensure the cultivation of students' core literacy. First of all, the course content should closely focus on students' professional needs and future career development, and select real context materials (business communication, technical document reading, etc.) related to the industry, so that students can improve their professional quality while learning English. Secondly, by introducing the cultural customs and values of different countries, we can enhance students' cultural awareness and intercultural communication ability (see Table 2).

Table 2: Key Points for Designing Curriculum Content in Vocational Public English Teaching

Design Point	Specific Contents
Align with Professional Needs	Select Authentic Context Materials Related to Industries (e.g., Business Communication, Technical Document Reading)
Enhance Professional Competence	Integrate Professional Knowledge into English Learning to Boost Professional Skills
Incorporate Intercultural Communication	Introduce Cultural Customs and Values of Different Countries
Strengthen Cultural Awareness	Enhance Students' Cultural Cognition and Understanding
Improve Intercultural Communication Skills	Cultivate Students' Intercultural Communication and Interaction Abilities

The curriculum content has a multi-faceted impact on students' core literacy. Firstly, it significantly bolsters students' language skills. Through the intense debates and in-depth discussions, students are constantly compelled to express their ideas precisely, coherently, and persuasively in the target language. This repeated practice hones their speaking and writing abilities, while also

sharpening their listening and reading comprehension. Secondly, it vigorously drives the comprehensive growth of their core literacy. In terms of thinking quality, students are encouraged to view problems from a multitude of angles. They are no longer confined to a single perspective but rather learn to consider various factors, weigh different options, and develop logical and innovative thought processes. This equips them with the mental agility and flexibility required to tackle the complex and ever-evolving challenges of the modern world. Regarding cultural awareness, as students immerse themselves in the discussions and case studies, they inevitably encounter a rich tapestry of different viewpoints and cultural backgrounds. They become more attuned to the nuances and idiosyncrasies of various cultures, understanding how cultural values and beliefs shape people's perspectives and behaviors. This enhanced cultural sensitivity not only enriches their personal understanding of the world but also endows them with the ability to communicate and interact effectively in a globalized society.

### 3.2. Innovation of teaching methods and means

The innovation of teaching methodologies and tools is a crucial avenue for cultivating core literacy. Public English teaching in higher vocational colleges (HVC) should discard the conventional spoon-feeding instructional approach and embrace more flexible and diversified teaching techniques. For instance, project-based learning, flipped classroom, and cooperative learning can be adopted.

In project-based learning, students are engaged in exploring real-world tasks or projects. They enhance their practical skills, teamwork capabilities, and innovation capacities through collaborative efforts, data collection, and presenting their achievements. The flipped classroom model shifts the traditional classroom teaching activities to the extracurricular realm, with in-class time primarily dedicated to discussions, problem-solving, and in-depth exploration. This bolsters students' active learning aptitude and critical thinking skills. Furthermore, teachers can leverage modern information technology to offer students more abundant and vivid learning experiences. By doing so, students' learning enthusiasm and efficiency can be effectively improved, facilitating their acquisition of knowledge and the development of core competencies essential for their future success.

### 3.3. Construction of comprehensive assessment system

Table 3: Diversified Assessment System for Vocational Public English Teaching

Assessment Dimension	Specific Contents
Language Ability Test	Assessment of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing Skills
Critical Thinking Assessment	Assessment of Analytical, Reasoning, and Evaluative Thinking Abilities
Intercultural Communication Assessment	Examination of Intercultural Understanding, Communication, and Adaptation Abilities
Learning Strategy Usage	Assessment of the Application of Self-directed Learning, Collaborative Learning, Information Management Strategies
Learning Process Assessment	Assessment of Classroom Participation, Learning Attitude, and Progress Trajectory
Ability Development Assessment	Assessment of Innovation, Problem-solving, Team Collaboration, and Other Abilities' Development

Constructing a scientific and reasonable assessment system is the key to ensure the training

effect of core literacy. The assessment system of public English teaching in HVC should be diversified and comprehensive: it not only pays attention to students' learning achievements, but also attaches importance to their learning process and ability development. The assessment system should include language proficiency test, critical thinking assessment, cross-cultural communication ability inspection, learning strategy use and other dimensions (see Table 3). Such a comprehensive assessment system can more accurately reflect the progress and deficiency of students in core literacy and provide a strong basis for teaching improvement.

### 3.4. Teacher's role and professional development

In the process of cultivating core literacy, the role of teachers is very important. Teachers should change from traditional knowledge givers to guides, promoters and collaborators of students' learning activities. They need to have advanced educational concepts, be familiar with the connotation and requirements of core literacy, and be able to design teaching activities according to students' actual conditions to stimulate students' interest and potential in learning. Teachers should also constantly improve their professional quality and teaching ability, and learn about the latest educational trends and teaching methods by participating in training, research and academic exchanges, so as to better meet the needs of core literacy training. Schools should also provide teachers with a good career development environment and support, and encourage teachers to actively explore and practice effective ways to cultivate core literacy. For example, establishing teachers' growth files, providing teaching resources and research platforms, etc. Through this change of teachers' role and professional development, we can provide a strong teacher guarantee for the cultivation of students' core literacy in public English teaching in HVC.

## 4. Conclusions

This study, delving into the core literacy cultivation strategies in HVC public English teaching, has yielded significant findings. Core literacy is vital for enhancing higher vocational students' overall competitiveness. Through integrating course content, innovating teaching methods, building a comprehensive assessment system, and facilitating teacher role shifts and professional growth, students' language, thinking, cultural, and learning skills can be effectively enhanced, laying a firm foundation for their careers and lifelong learning. Merging core literacy into English teaching boosts students' learning zeal and promotes their holistic development, equipping them to better handle the global flux with greater adaptability and innovation. Future in-depth research will optimize these strategies, furthering the cultivation of high-caliber technical talents with international perspectives, creativity, and practical know-how.

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