

The Enlightenment to English Teaching in Higher Vocational Colleges From Sun Tzu's Art of War---The Laying Plans

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Abstract. Sun Tzu's Art of War, as an excellent military work in ancient China, is widely used in many fields of modern society. This paper discusses the enlightenment and application of Sun Tzu's Art of War---The Laying Plans to English teaching in higher vocational colleges from the following five aspects: The Moral Law, Heaven, Earth, the Commander and the Method and Discipline, with the aim of improving the teaching effects and better carrying out foreign language teaching activities.

1. Introduction

The Sun Tzu's Art of War is the concentrated embodiment of the essence of ancient Chinese military thought and an important part of China's excellent traditional culture. It has a far-reaching influence and has been translated into many languages, widely spread at home and abroad. Sun Tzu's Art of War consists of thirteen chapters, with about 6,000 words. The strategies of military operations contained in the Art of War have been widely used in various aspects of life, such as economics and management. The Laying Plans is the first part of the Art of War, which is also referred as "Plan" (Ji). The original meaning of "Ji" is to calculate, estimate, which refers to the pre-war plans, strategies. As the first chapter of the Art of War, the Laying Plans can be regarded as the highly condensed and summarized main military thoughts of Sun Tzu to some extent. In fact, the English teaching process in higher vocational colleges is a combat process. This paper aims to improve the teaching effect by applying the main strategic ideas in the Art of War--- The Laying Plans to the teaching process.

The Laying Plans says, "the art of war, then, is governed by five constant factors, to be taken into account in one's deliberations, when seeking to determine the conditions obtaining in the field". These are: (1) the Moral Law; (2) Heaven; (3) Earth; (4) the Commander; (5) Method and Discipline. This article will discuss the enlightenment of the Laying Plans to the English teaching in higher vocational colleges from those five aspects.

2. The Moral Law

The Laying Plans points out that "The Moral Law causes the people to be in complete accord with their ruler, so that they will follow him regardless of their of lives, undismayed by any danger". "The Moral Law" means that people and the ruler have the same goal and the same will, so that they can live and die together without fear of any danger. In English teaching in higher vocational colleges, students and teachers are just like enemies on the battlefield. Therefore, "The Moral Law", here refers that students and teachers have the same goal and the same will, so that teachers and students can jointly improve the teaching effect without being afraid of any difficulties in learning. At present, English teaching in higher vocational colleges is faced with such difficulties as students' poor foundation, weak interest and improper emotional attitudes. Therefore, the teacher as a learning guide and commander, should actively create conditions for the students, improve their interest in learning, help them convert the learning interest into a stable emotional motivation and intrinsic motivation. By doing so, the students will gain the fun of learning, overcome self-abased psychology, and enhance their self-confidence. Teachers should also pay attention to students' emotions, build a harmonious teacher-student relationship in class, let students agree with teachers' teaching concepts and reach an

agreement with teachers' teaching goals. A good start is often half the battle. Teachers who capture students at the beginning of the semester will get twice the result with half the effort.

3.Heaven and Earth

The Laying Plans points out: “Heaven signifies Yin and Yang, night and day, cold and heat, times and seasons. Earth comprises distances, dangerous and security, open ground and narrow passes, the chances of life and death.” The so-called “Heaven” refers to the change of weather, climate, hot and cold, the alternation of four seasons and so on. The so-called “Earth” refers to the distance of the trip, the terrain steep or plain, broad or narrow battlefield, convenient to advance or retreat.

The “Heaven” and “Earth” in English teaching in higher vocational colleges refer to the external environment of teaching. Higher vocational English teaching environment is relatively good at present; Both the state and the college attach importance to college English teaching and every college sets English courses, the degree of English popularization is very wide. In order to achieve good teaching results, we should create a good learning environment for students. Good learning environment includes objective teaching environment and subjective teaching environment. The objective teaching environment should include spacious and bright classrooms, appropriate desks and chairs, good ventilation and air conditioning in hot areas. With the rapid development of information technology, multimedia teaching equipment is also indispensable. All higher vocational colleges should at least be equipped with such infrastructure; In addition, for English teaching in higher vocational colleges, phonetic training room and multi-functional business English simulation training room should be equipped. Subjective teaching environment refers that the teacher should create a good classroom atmosphere during the teaching process by various teaching methods, such as: group cooperation and competition, game teaching, independent inquiry and other teaching methods conducive to active classroom atmosphere. Besides, the teacher can divide students into different groups, arrange their seats by different groups and arrange group members reasonably in order to form a good classroom atmosphere that is helpful for teaching and learning.

In addition, “Heaven” and “Earth” are also applicable to teachers. The teacher’s position in classroom also plays a great role in classroom teaching effect. During the teaching process, if the teacher is sitting in the platform, he/she cannot fully observe the performance of the students in class; the students will also relax themselves because the teacher is relaxed and they will not pay attention to the lectures. Therefore, in the process of teaching, the teacher should stand and walk in the classroom, so as to observe the students’ reaction to the lectures. Thus, the teacher can adjust the way of teaching and change their own speaking speed and intonation in class at any time, so as to maximize the effect of classroom teaching.

4. The Commander

The Laying Plans points out: “The Commander stands for the virtues of wisdom, trustworthiness, benevolence, courage and strictness.” The so-called “Commander” refers to whether the Commander possesses those qualities. By contrast, the “Commander” of English teaching in higher vocational colleges refers to teachers, and the five qualities of the Commander correspond to the qualities of teachers. According to the Laying Plans, teachers should have the following qualities:

4.1 Wisdom

The teacher should have rich professional knowledge of foreign languages and master pedagogy, psychology and other teaching theories. Just like the battle, the teachers’ “enemies” are the students. In order to defeat the students, capture the hearts of students, the teachers must have profound knowledge and excellent teaching abilities, so that students can be convinced. As the saying goes, “to give students a cup of water, you must have a bucket of water.” In addition, a teacher should also have rich life knowledge and experience, and be able to answer questions other than professional knowledge.

4.2 Trustworthiness

The quality of trustworthiness is embodied in “confidence in yourself, trust others and win trust from students”. A teacher, as a propagandist, must be confident in himself and his students. Students of higher vocational colleges have very low confidence in English learning. Due to the poor entrance performance and weak English foundation, most of the students are often afraid to speak English in class, and they dare not raise their hands to answer questions. Some of them even give up English learning. Faced with these circumstances, teachers should give students more encouragement and trust and have enough confidence in students, believe that students can learn, also believe that they can become better. By doing so, the teaching and learning process will obtain a virtuous cycle. The trust in teachers themselves and in students will improve the effect of learning and teaching, which will gain the trust from students and strengthen the self-confidence of students themselves.

4.3 Benevolence

Benevolence refers to the heat of benevolence. Teachers should be full of love for students, concerned about students' study, life, emotion and other aspects. Benevolence is embodied in sincere respect for students, fully understand students, tolerant care for students, magnanimous tolerance of students.

4.4 Courage

Courage means being brave, determined. In English teaching in higher vocational colleges, teachers should have the courage to innovate, face up to difficulties and have the firm will. The students who were born after the year of 2000, have avant-garde ideas and distinct personalities. The traditional teaching methods cannot arouse their interest in learning. Therefore, teachers should have the courage to innovate, adopting advanced teaching concept and teaching methods to carry out teaching activities. Teachers inevitably will encounter difficulties during the teaching process, when they must face up to the difficulties and find out solutions.

4.5 Strictness

Although teachers should be full of love for students, but it is not unrestrained love. This love is not unbridled love, but strict and lattice love. Teachers should also form their own characteristics in teaching and establish their own majesty.

5. Method and Discipline

The Laying Plans points out: “Method and Discipline” means the system of military establishment, the management of soldiers and the supply management of munitions. The so-called “Method” refers to the organizational system of the army, the scope of duties of officers, and the supply management system of military supplies. In teaching, “method” corresponds to teaching system and methods. At the beginning of the English course, the teacher should make the students clearly know the requirements of the course and relevant regulations, such as discipline requirements, homework requirements, class requirements, assessment requirements, etc.; After knowing the requirements of the course and relevant systems, students will make their own learning plans according to the teachers' teaching plans, which will play a very good guiding role in the future course learning. In terms of teaching methods, since English teaching in higher vocational colleges is more specific than other subjects, teaching methods should also be more innovative. The following teaching methods can be used for daily teaching reference:

5.1 English dubbing demonstration before class

Through this activity, students can train their pronunciation and intonation and improve their oral English. Through English dubbing, students can also learn about relevant English films or works, and broaden their horizons. In addition, English dubbing activities can enliven the classroom atmosphere and attract students' attention, which will improve the students' learning interests.

5.2 Team/group cooperation and competition teaching method

During the process of teaching and learning, students can be divided into several teams. The team members cooperate with each other and they compete with other teams. This teaching method can not only cultivate students' teamwork ability, but also stimulate their enthusiasm for learning, which can help create active and heated class atmosphere.

5.3 Audio-visual teaching method

Teachers can provide audio, video, micro-class and other materials for students to conduct audio-visual and speaking training to stimulate students' interest in learning and deepen their memory of learning materials. With the audio and visual learning materials, students can memorize and understand the learning contents with higher efficiency.

5.4 Communicative teaching approach

The fundamental purpose of English teaching is to communicate; and the English syllabus of higher vocational colleges requires students to be able to use English for daily use and communication. In the process of teaching, teachers can arrange students to carry out situational dialogues, role plays and so on, so as to cultivate students' communicative competence.

6. Conclusion

As the first chapter of Sun Tzu's Art of War, the Laying Plans contains abundant wisdom, which has played an immeasurable role in the past and now. In this paper, the author briefly discusses the application of the Playing Plans in English teaching in higher vocational colleges from the five aspects of Moral Law, Heaven, Earth, Commander, Method and Discipline. And there are many strategies that can be applied to English teaching in Sun Tzu's Art of War, which cannot be listed one by one here. The author believes that Sun Tzu's Art of War, as a valuable traditional Chinese culture, will surely shine brightly in every field of life.

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