

Modular Curriculum Design of Higher Vocational Tourism English Based on Customized Tourism Demand

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Abstract: With the rapid development of the customized tourism market, there is an increasing demand within the tourism industry for practitioners to possess enhanced English language proficiency and cross-cultural communication skills. As a critical training ground for professionals in the tourism sector, higher vocational institutions must innovate their curriculum design to meet the evolving demands of the market effectively. This paper addresses the necessity of designing a modular curriculum for tourism English education based on the specific needs of the customized tourism industry. It analyzes the current curriculum system's primary challenges regarding content, faculty qualifications, and practical training components. The discussion includes a reconstruction of the course content, enhancement of teaching staff capabilities, and optimization of practical teaching methodologies. Through a modular curriculum design that incorporates precise and contextualized teaching materials alongside diverse practical experiences, this approach not only aims to improve students' language application skills but also significantly enhances their professional competitiveness. Ultimately, the goal is to better serve the talent requirements of the customized tourism sector. By focusing on these strategic optimizations, higher vocational institutions can align their educational offerings with industry standards, thereby ensuring that graduates are well-prepared to meet the demands of a dynamic and competitive tourism landscape.

Keywords: Customized Tourism; Higher Vocational Colleges; Tourism English; Modular Course

1. Introduction

With the diversification of the tourism market, customized tourism has gradually become a

popular trend. Unlike traditional tourism, customized tourism places a stronger emphasis on personalization, flexibility, and premium service, which raises the requirements for tourism practitioners' English communication skills and intercultural competence. Higher vocational colleges, as key institutions for cultivating applied tourism talents, currently offer tourism English curricula that primarily focus on foundational knowledge but lack alignment with the practical needs of the industry, making it challenging to meet the demands of the customized tourism market. Modular course design, known for its flexibility and practicality, has emerged as an effective approach to optimizing curriculum structures and enhancing students' professional competencies. This paper explores the modular design of tourism English courses in higher vocational colleges from the perspective of the practical demands of customized tourism, offering insights into training high-quality professionals equipped with practical skills.

2. The Necessity of Reforming Higher Vocational Tourism English Curriculum in the Context of Customized Tourism Demand

2.1 Requirements of Customized Tourism Market for the English Proficiency of Tourism Professionals

With the increasing prevalence of personalized travel services, customized tourism has become a significant growth area in the tourism market. Compared to traditional group tours, customized tourism not only requires diversity in itinerary planning but also emphasizes personalized and differentiated services. This demand necessitates that tourism professionals possess a high level of English proficiency to respond swiftly to the specific needs of tourists and provide a comprehensive service experience. Given the international clientele, English serves as a crucial bridge between tourism professionals and their clients, playing a vital

role in itinerary arrangements, emergency handling, and intercultural communication. The English proficiency required for tourism professionals in customized services extends beyond basic conversational skills, encompassing a deep understanding of cultural backgrounds, geographical knowledge, and the mastery of specialized terminology. For example, when introducing tourist attractions, staff must not only describe natural landscapes but also convey the cultural significance and historical context of the location, thereby enhancing the cultural experience for tourists. Thus, meeting the needs of the customized tourism market goes beyond mere language transmission; it involves the accurate and clear expression of professional standards in personalized service delivery^[1].

2.2 The Necessity for Higher Vocational Colleges to Cultivate Practical Tourism English Talents

As institutions dedicated to cultivating applied talents, higher vocational colleges play a crucial role in supplying practical professionals to various industries. Tourism English courses hold a significant place within the educational framework of these colleges, and the rise of the customized tourism market has introduced new demands for talent development in this field. The personalized nature of customized tourism services requires practitioners not only to have a solid foundation in English but also to possess flexible language application skills to accommodate diverse customer needs and situations. Traditional vocational tourism English courses often focus on singular aspects such as grammar and sentence structures, which fail to fully meet the demand for diverse linguistic expressions in the customized tourism market. Tourism English instruction should place greater emphasis on practicality, enabling students to respond flexibly to various needs in real-life scenarios, such as handling emergency situations or explaining complex itineraries. Additionally, fostering intercultural communication skills is essential, as enhancing students' understanding of different cultures allows them to better engage in multicultural interactions prevalent in the customized tourism market. By aligning curriculum design more closely with industry demands, higher vocational colleges can more effectively cultivate practical talents that meet the evolving

needs of the tourism industry^[2].

2.3 The Role of Modular Curriculum Design in Enhancing Students' Professional Competencies

Modular course design, characterized by its flexibility and adaptability, enables differentiated instruction tailored to students' varying skill levels and needs, thereby demonstrating significant advantages in enhancing students' professional competencies. Driven by the demands of customized tourism, incorporating modular teaching into higher vocational tourism English courses can effectively boost students' learning efficiency and practical application skills. By dividing the curriculum into distinct modules, such as Basic English, Cultural Background, Professional Terminology, and Scenario-Based Practical Training, students can systematically and comprehensively acquire knowledge in each area, equipping them to navigate real-world professional scenarios with greater ease. The modular design also allows for rapid updates in course content in response to industry developments, ensuring that students are continually exposed to the latest industry information. For example, as the tourism market evolves, new modules such as "Green Tourism English" or "Smart Tourism Communication" could be introduced, aligning students' learning with market trends. Furthermore, the modular structure enables students to enhance their self-directed learning and practical application skills progressively through real-life cases and scenario simulations, preparing them to respond confidently and professionally to future job demands. This approach not only fulfills the need for personalized learning but also effectively enhances students' competitiveness in the workforce, contributing to the cultivation of high-quality professionals for the customized tourism industry^[3].

3. Key Issues in Current Higher Vocational Tourism English Teaching

3.1 Limitations of the Existing Higher Vocational Tourism English Curriculum

The existing curriculum framework for tourism English in higher vocational institutions exhibits significant limitations in addressing the demands of the customized tourism market. Firstly, the curriculum predominantly

emphasizes the teaching of foundational English knowledge, typically focusing on grammar, vocabulary, and basic language skills training, while neglecting the diverse expressive capabilities necessary for practical application. In the context of customized tourism services, practitioners are required to possess flexible language communication skills that enable them to express themselves in a scenario-based and personalized manner according to client needs. However, traditional curriculum content remains narrow and lacks the necessary breadth to meet the complex and dynamic demands of the industry. Secondly, the current curriculum design fails to incorporate simulations of customized tourism service scenarios. As a result, students may struggle to respond effectively to clients from diverse cultural backgrounds and varied language expression requirements in their actual work environments. The teaching of tourism-related knowledge and practical skills within the existing framework often consists of theoretical explanations, lacking concrete situational simulations and case analyses. This pedagogical approach does little to enhance students' ability to react appropriately in complex and unpredictable situations. Thirdly, there is a noticeable absence of training in cross-cultural communication skills within the curriculum. In the customized tourism market, cross-cultural communication is an indispensable component, as tourists' backgrounds, cultural customs, and differing values can directly impact the quality of service provided. The traditional curriculum fails to adequately consider these factors, resulting in students lacking the sensitivity and professionalism necessary to navigate cross-cultural interactions effectively. In summary, the current higher vocational tourism English curriculum is insufficiently equipped to prepare students for the realities of the customized tourism industry. By addressing these limitations and incorporating more diverse, practical, and culturally responsive training elements, educational programs can better prepare graduates to meet the evolving needs of this dynamic sector, ensuring that they possess the skills required to thrive in a competitive marketplace^[4].

The limitations in curriculum design have made it challenging for higher vocational tourism English education to truly meet the practical needs of the customized tourism industry. As a

result, students often struggle to adapt to the work environment upon entering the job market. Moreover, the lack of flexibility and timely updates in course content prevents it from reflecting emerging trends and market dynamics in the tourism industry, failing to fully engage students' interest and motivation. The existing curriculum system's deficiencies in content depth, practical application, and intercultural communication significantly hinder the development of students' language proficiency and professional competitiveness.

3.2 Insufficient Faculty and Teaching Resources

Another major challenge faced by higher vocational colleges in tourism English instruction lies in the shortage of faculty expertise and teaching resources, manifesting in several areas. First, tourism English instructors generally lack industry experience and practical skills. Although many teachers possess strong English teaching abilities, they often have limited practical experience in the tourism sector, making it difficult to integrate English language instruction with industry needs effectively. This gap results in course content that lacks practical relevance. The high level of personalization required in customized tourism services frequently demands that practitioners handle various unexpected situations promptly. However, due to their limited industry experience, instructors are unable to provide students with effective, contextualized guidance. Secondly, the existing faculty training system is relatively outdated and fails to meet the ever-evolving demands of the tourism industry. The continuous changes in the customized tourism market place increased demands on practitioners' English communication and cross-cultural interaction skills. However, tourism English teachers often lack systematic in-service training opportunities, making it difficult for them to update their industry knowledge and teaching skills in a timely manner. This lag in professional development leads to a widening gap between course content and market requirements, ultimately compromising the effectiveness of the educational experience. Moreover, the scarcity of teaching resources further constrains the efficacy of the curriculum. Effective tourism English instruction requires not only a wealth of language learning materials but also a substantial array of authentic tourism

scenario simulations and multicultural background resources. The limited availability of such teaching materials hampers students' learning experiences in practical English usage and cross-cultural communication. The absence of specialized resources tailored to customized tourism, such as teaching cases closely aligned with industry practices and virtual scenario simulation equipment, prevents students from fully experiencing realistic customized tourism contexts in the classroom. The lack of adequate teaching resources results in a monotonous curriculum that fails to engage students actively, thereby limiting their motivation and participation in the learning process. Without the integration of rich, practical resources and cross-cultural contexts, students are unlikely to accumulate meaningful language communication experiences and develop cross-cultural understanding necessary for success in real-world environments. This shortfall ultimately diminishes their competitive edge in the customized tourism industry, leaving them less prepared to navigate the complexities of their future careers. To address these challenges, it is essential for educational institutions to invest in the development of a more robust faculty training system that aligns with industry needs, as well as to expand the availability of diverse teaching resources. By providing instructors with ongoing professional development opportunities and equipping them with relevant, contemporary teaching materials, institutions can foster a more dynamic learning environment. This approach will not only enhance the quality of tourism English education but also significantly improve students' readiness to meet the challenges of the customized tourism sector. Ultimately, a well-resourced and adequately trained faculty is critical to ensuring that students acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

3.3 Misalignment between Students' English Proficiency and Customized Tourism Requirements

A significant issue in tourism English courses at higher vocational colleges is the substantial gap between students' English proficiency and the demands of the customized tourism industry. Students' English skills are generally focused on basic language expression and simple communication, whereas the customized

tourism market requires a more complex skill set from practitioners. In actual work settings, professionals must not only communicate with clients in English but also possess strong logical thinking and adaptability to handle emergencies, address client inquiries, and adjust service plans as needed. However, the English training students receive is often overly focused on grammar and vocabulary memorization, lacking sufficient emphasis on adapting to real communication contexts. This gap leaves students ill-prepared to handle the demands of real-world customized tourism service scenarios effectively.

Furthermore, the inadequacy of students' cross-cultural communication skills has emerged as a significant disadvantage in the customized tourism market. Customized tourism services typically cater to tourists from diverse national and cultural backgrounds, and effective communication during the service process involves not only the transmission of language but also a deep understanding and respect for different cultures. However, students often have limited exposure to cross-cultural contexts during their academic studies, resulting in a lack of understanding of diverse cultural customs and values. This deficiency can lead to misunderstandings or communication barriers in actual work settings. The inability of students to navigate cross-cultural interactions effectively directly impacts the quality of service provided and the overall satisfaction of clients, ultimately failing to meet the service requirements of the customized tourism market. Another significant gap is observed in students' practical operational capabilities, particularly due to a lack of training opportunities specifically tailored to customized tourism. The language training received in the classroom is predominantly theoretical, with insufficient opportunities for practical application, leaving students without real-world language experience. The absence of external internships or simulation training results in students lacking the necessary skills for addressing problems in service scenarios and responding swiftly to customer needs. Such limitations in curriculum design hinder students' ability to meet the diverse demands of clients once they enter the customized tourism market, and they also contribute to a deficiency in confidence and communication skills. This misalignment between the English skills acquired in academic settings and the

communication and service capabilities required in professional environments severely affects students' potential for growth within the customized tourism industry. To address these shortcomings, it is imperative for educational institutions to redesign their curricula to include more practical training components and opportunities for cross-cultural engagement. By integrating experiential learning, including internships, role-playing exercises, and collaborations with industry professionals, institutions can better equip students with the essential skills needed to navigate the complexities of the customized tourism sector effectively. Ultimately, enhancing students' cross-cultural communication competencies and practical operational skills will not only improve their employability but also enable them to provide high-quality service in a diverse and dynamic tourism environment. This holistic approach to education will significantly bolster students' confidence and preparedness for successful careers in the customized tourism industry, thereby maximizing their developmental potential in this competitive field.

4. Curriculum Optimization Strategies for Customized Tourism

4.1 Curriculum Content Restructuring Based on Customized Tourism Needs

In order to effectively meet the demands of the customized tourism market for professionals specializing in tourism English, it is imperative to undertake a comprehensive reconstruction of the curriculum content, specifically tailored to the diverse service scenarios characteristic of customized tourism. The curriculum should prioritize practical applications, enhancing students' language proficiency through the analysis and simulation of common situations encountered during the provision of customized tourism services. The proposed curriculum restructuring can be categorized into two main components: foundational modules and application modules. The foundational modules encompass essential English language skills and intercultural communication competencies. This includes vocabulary building, situational dialogues, and instruction on the cultural contexts of tourism, all designed to provide students with a robust foundation in language expression. Conversely, the application modules can be further subdivided into specialized areas

such as destination interpretation, itinerary design communication, and emergency incident management. These modules should incorporate specific situational teaching cases that reflect the actual service scenarios encountered in the realm of customized tourism. By engaging in simulations of real-world situations, students will have the opportunity to practice and refine their language expression and adaptability in a controlled environment. Through this dual-module approach, the curriculum aims not only to equip students with the necessary linguistic skills but also to foster their ability to respond effectively to the dynamic challenges presented in the customized tourism sector. By immersing students in realistic scenarios and providing them with the tools to navigate these situations, educational institutions can better prepare graduates to thrive in a competitive job market, ultimately contributing to the advancement of the tourism industry as a whole^[5].

Incorporating practical tasks related to customized tourism services into the curriculum, such as itinerary presentations, client needs analysis, and proposal recommendations and adjustments, can significantly enhance students' logical expression and communication abilities. Additionally, the curriculum design should integrate knowledge of diverse cultural backgrounds, guiding students to utilize appropriate language expressions in accordance with varying cultural values and customs. This approach aims to improve the professionalism and sensitivity of students in cross-cultural communication contexts. Within practical courses, the selection of real-world tourism industry case studies is essential. Discussions should center around modules such as destination descriptions and personalized itinerary recommendations, allowing students to engage in iterative language output that continually hones their communication skills. Furthermore, it is crucial to introduce contemporary industry topics and trends, such as sustainable tourism and smart tourism, into the curriculum. This will not only keep students abreast of industry developments but also enhance the relevance and practicality of the coursework, ensuring it reflects current market dynamics. The reconstructed curriculum is thus positioned to more effectively align with the specific requirements of the customized tourism sector. By equipping students with the necessary skills to adapt to future work environments and

fulfill various client needs, the program will foster graduates who are proficient in providing language services tailored to a diverse clientele. Ultimately, this strategic approach to curriculum enhancement aims to produce competent professionals capable of navigating the complexities of the evolving tourism landscape, thereby contributing to the overall advancement and sustainability of the industry.

4.2 Strengthening Faculty Development to Enhance Teaching Quality

The quality of instruction in tourism English courses is critically influenced by the expertise of the teaching staff. To enhance this quality, it is essential to strengthen teachers' industry knowledge within the field of tourism English. This can be achieved by promoting continuous professional development and practical exchanges for teachers, thereby deepening their understanding and awareness of the unique characteristics of customized tourism services. One effective strategy is to facilitate the participation of faculty members in industry seminars, workshops, and hands-on training programs. Such opportunities can equip teachers with valuable real-world experience, enabling them to more effectively integrate English language instruction with the actual demands of the tourism industry. Moreover, inviting professionals with extensive experience in customized tourism to participate in teaching, or incorporating them into the part-time faculty roster, can significantly enhance the industry's relevance within the curriculum. These specialized teaching resources provide students with authentic industry perspectives, allowing for the incorporation of more practical experiences and applicable skills into the coursework. By integrating insights from seasoned professionals, the curriculum can offer students a more operationally focused education that prepares them to meet the challenges and requirements of the customized tourism market effectively. In summary, the concerted effort to enhance the qualifications of the teaching staff through industry engagement and collaboration with experienced practitioners not only enriches the educational experience but also ensures that graduates are well-equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in the dynamic landscape of the tourism sector. This approach ultimately contributes to the overall enhancement of educational outcomes in

tourism English programs, aligning them more closely with industry needs and expectations.

In the realm of faculty training, it is imperative to regularly organize courses that focus on cross-cultural communication skills and service psychology. Such training initiatives are designed to strengthen educators' awareness of diverse cultural backgrounds, thereby enhancing their ability to guide students effectively in navigating the communication challenges arising from cultural differences. Additionally, conducting pedagogical workshops among faculty members can facilitate the sharing of teaching resources and experiences, enabling educators to collaboratively explore innovative teaching methods and tools. In the context of classroom instruction, it is essential to encourage educators to adopt innovative teaching approaches, such as flipped classrooms and project-based learning methodologies. These strategies can stimulate student interest and enhance classroom interactivity, fostering a more engaging learning environment. While integrating industry resources, it is also crucial to provide teachers with high-quality instructional materials, including case studies and situational simulation resources. This will empower educators to continually refine their teaching content in response to the evolving demands of the customized tourism market. The enhancement of faculty competencies extends beyond mere knowledge updates; it fundamentally involves a shift in pedagogical philosophies. By encouraging educators to design personalized teaching content that aligns with industry needs and students' skill levels, the tourism English curriculum can achieve a greater degree of precision in its instructional delivery. Ultimately, high-quality faculty will significantly bolster the professionalism and practicality of the curriculum, enabling students to acquire essential English language skills pertinent to customized tourism contexts. Such a well-rounded approach to faculty development will not only improve educational outcomes but also prepare graduates to effectively meet the demands of a rapidly evolving tourism industry, thereby contributing to their success in the professional realm.

4.3 Reinforcing Practical Training and Hands-On Experience for Students

Customized tourism services impose substantial demands on practitioners' practical abilities,

requiring that English communication extends beyond theoretical learning in the classroom to encompass repeated practice in real-world scenarios. Therefore, it is essential to emphasize the enhancement of practical training and experiential learning within the course design, aimed at helping students improve their communication and adaptability skills in authentic contexts. By fostering partnerships between educational institutions and industry stakeholders, it is possible to establish simulated training environments specifically designed for customized tourism services. Such collaborations allow students to gain firsthand experience in client communication and itinerary arrangement, thereby enhancing their proficiency in language application throughout these processes. Within the campus, the development of scenario-based language laboratories is crucial. By employing cutting-edge technologies such as virtual reality and role-playing, these labs can simulate various situations encountered in customized tourism services. This immersive approach enables students to engage in a comprehensive experiential learning process, covering everything from itinerary customization and destination interpretation to navigating cultural differences in communication. Such varied training scenarios are designed to reinforce the practical application of language skills in a dynamic and realistic manner. Ultimately, the integration of practical training opportunities into the curriculum not only equips students with the necessary skills to meet the demands of the customized tourism market but also ensures they are well-prepared to respond effectively to the complexities of real-world interactions. This comprehensive approach to learning enhances students' confidence and competence, positioning them for success in the increasingly competitive field of tourism.

The practical training components of the curriculum should also incorporate training in cross-cultural communication and emergency response strategies, aimed at equipping students to handle unexpected situations and cultural differences that may arise in customized tourism. Cross-cultural communication training can be facilitated through methods such as cultural role exchange and situational role-playing, which allow students to experience different communication styles inherent to various cultural backgrounds. This immersive approach

is intended to enhance their capacity to manage and resolve cultural conflicts effectively. Additionally, the implementation of regular practical assessments is crucial. These assessments could involve simulations of welcoming foreign tourists or responding to emergency situations, thereby evaluating students' language application, psychological resilience, and adaptability within realistic service contexts. This multifaceted training arrangement is designed to assist students in accumulating practical experience before they formally enter the workforce, significantly reducing the transition time from academia to professional environments. Furthermore, encouraging students to engage in short-term internships with relevant enterprises can provide them with direct involvement in the operational processes of customized tourism. Such real-world experiences not only reinforce the knowledge acquired in the classroom but also enhance students' confidence and capabilities in language communication through genuine interactions with clients. During this process, students can gain a clearer understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, helping them to identify their career development paths. This comprehensive experiential learning approach not only equips students with the specialized skills necessary for success in customized tourism but also cultivates essential professional attributes and a strong service orientation. Consequently, this prepares them to be more competitive within the customized tourism market, fostering a higher degree of employability and readiness to meet the industry's evolving demands. Overall, the integration of these varied practical experiences will greatly enhance students' preparedness for their future careers in the dynamic field of tourism.

5. Conclusions

As the demand for personalized services in the customized tourism market increases, higher vocational colleges face numerous challenges in teaching tourism English. The traditional curriculum framework is no longer adequate to meet the industry's high standards. Through modular course design, tourism English instruction can more flexibly respond to changing market demands, achieving practical and diverse course content. Modular design not only aligns the curriculum with the authentic

contexts of customized tourism but also integrates core competencies such as intercultural communication and emergency response into the teaching process, enabling students to enhance their professional skills in varied real-world scenarios. The flexible structure of modular courses also provides students with personalized learning pathways, helping them acquire essential skills through practical training across different modules, thereby enhancing their adaptability and service awareness in actual work environments. Furthermore, by optimizing faculty development and enriching practical training components, the overall quality of the curriculum has significantly improved. Through this systematic and practice-oriented course reconstruction, higher vocational colleges not only enhance students' English language proficiency and professional competitiveness but also cultivate practical talents that better meet the needs of the customized tourism industry, thereby empowering students to excel in their future careers.

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