

Exploration on the Teaching Mode of Combining EGP with ESP in Application-oriented Undergraduate Colleges

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Abstract: With the development of globalization and educational internationalization, it is really urgent to make a reform and innovation of college English teaching in application-oriented undergraduate colleges. Firstly, this paper analyzes the current situation of college English teaching in application-oriented undergraduate colleges in China. Under the current situation, the learning effects of students are far from satisfaction in learning English. ESP, short for English for Specific Purposes, is different from EGP (English for General Purposes), and it could be developed in order to meet the demands of internationalization of higher education. Thus, ESP teaching has become an inevitable trend in the reform and development of college English teaching. This paper also discusses how application-oriented undergraduate colleges carry out ESP teaching based on the analysis of curriculum setting, curriculum design, teaching methods, evaluation methods and the construction of teaching staff.

1. Introduction

As is known to us all, English has become a very basic skill that people must possess in their daily life. However, many college graduates are really frustrated and upset because they find that the English they have learned in school is far from enough to meet the actual needs in the workplace. Therefore, the reform of college English teaching is imminent and college English teaching needs to be reoriented. The goal of the reform is to meet the diversified demands of all social strata for talents. *The Outline of the National Program for Medium-term and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020)* calls for deepening the reform of higher education and cultivating interdisciplinary talents to meet the needs of social development. In order to adapt to the current economic development, local undergraduate colleges and universities should transform to application-oriented undergraduate colleges and universities. To serve the local economy, application-oriented undergraduate colleges and universities should cultivate application-oriented talents. College English teaching in application-oriented undergraduate colleges should be reformed, taking into account students' interest in learning, motivation and the needs in their future work. Meanwhile, teachers' strong points in their teaching and research should be considered in curriculum setting and teaching design. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teaching should be combined with English for General Purposes (EGP) teaching in college English course since ESP has a clear teaching objective and is based on the analysis of learners' needs. The selection of teaching content and the adoption of teaching methods should be determined by considering the learning needs of students. Therefore, incorporating ESP into college English course has important significance for college English teaching in application-oriented undergraduate colleges.

2. Current Situation of College English Teaching in Application-oriented Undergraduate Colleges

Of all college courses, college English, as a basic compulsory course, carry out English for General Purposes (EGP) teaching for a long time, and can be said to be the largest scale, but widely

criticized by all social strata. After graduation, students cannot read the specifications of products, business contracts or documents in English, and cannot conduct academic exchanges or write academic papers in English. Some of the students in college think that their English has not improved, but weakened or even declined greatly. Some think they didn't learn much from the college English course. Many students feel uninterested, bored, even frustrated in class. EGP teaching cannot inspire college students' enthusiasm in learning English and the teaching effect is unsatisfactory. In general, college students are slack in college English learning, and the lack of motivation and interest among college students are very common on campus after passing CET-4.

Why does this happen? According to the comprehensive analysis of college English teaching by Shu Dingfang, there are nine problems in college English teaching, and the "lack of needs analysis" is the second on the list. Cai Jigang think the key is a lack of accurate analysis of needs, or even no analysis at all. The reason why students are slack in college English classes is that they learn languages for the purpose of learning languages and are driven by learning languages. This kind of teaching mode can neither meet students' wants for professional language learning nor their employment needs after graduation. College students learn English without a clear learning objective, learning interest and learning motivation, which is the major obstacle students encountered in the process of college English learning. What's more, most colleges offer college English course just in the freshman and sophomore years. Once students pass the CET-4 and CET-6 exams, their English learning will be completed and they will not continue learning English any more. There is a gap in students' learning of English, so it is difficult to meet the demand for jobs after graduation.

3. The Necessity of Incorporating ESP into College English Course

3.1 The Concept and Classification of ESP

Hutchinson & Waters define ESP (English for Specific Purposes) as English related to a specific occupation or discipline, which is an English course established according to the specific purpose and specific needs of learners. Hutchinson & Waters stresses that ESP should not be seen as a product of a language, but rather as an approach to language teaching in which both the content and the method of teaching are based on learners' specific reasons for learning. According to Dudley Evans and St. John, ESP is a curriculum that takes learners' specific learning requirements as the premise and uses content and topics related to specific subjects, occupations and practical activities as teaching resources. From the definition, we can conclude ESP has two characteristics: the content is related to a specific specialty and designed to meet the specific needs of learners.

According to the different teaching Purposes of ESP, there are two types of ESP: EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and EOP (English for Occupational Purposes). EAP mainly meets students' needs to learn professional knowledge and conduct professional communication via English in different majors and academic fields while EOP mainly meets the needs of students to use English when working and communicating in different fields.

3.2 The Necessity of Implementing ESP Teaching

The purpose of college English course is to enable students to master certain skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating, as well as prescribed vocabulary and grammar. However, the actual demand of students for English learning is latent and uncertain. Therefore, the teaching mode of EGP is obviously lack of pertinence. ESP, on the other hand, is designed to suit a specific practical purpose of students and cultivate students' ability to apply language in a practical environment. The two are obviously different in teaching purposes. At the same time, EGP and ESP are both unified and progressive. EGP teaching lays the language foundation for ESP teaching while ESP teaching is a continuation of EGP teaching. ESP teaching can be interpreted as a teaching concept with the specialty as the carrier. The teaching is focused on English and aims to help students master the linguistic features of a particular field. Although ESP has the characteristics of a specialized course, it is still a language course. The core of ESP teaching is the language used in a

specific specialty or industry, particularly the academic communication skills and strategies that students need most in their future work. Carrying out ESP teaching can improve students' comprehensive ability in using English and lay a solid foundation for students' employment under the background of economic globalization. Therefore, it is necessary and urgent to carry out ESP teaching in college English course.

Early in 1996, Liu Runqing proposed that a major change in English learning in the future might not be the study of English alone, but the integration of English with other subjects. In the future, English teaching will be increasingly combined with professional knowledge in one field, or with knowledge in another subject. ESP will become the mainstream of college English teaching in the 21st century. Cai Jigang proposed that the focus of college English course should be adjusted to ESP, because the learning of language course must be consistent with the purpose of language learning in real life. With the improvement of the English proficiency of the freshmen, ESP will be the direction of college English teaching in China. The demand for students' English ability from all walks of life presents a trend of diversification and specialization, so there must be a strong pertinence and practicability in English learning. Under the background of economic globalization and educational internationalization, the universal development of ESP is particularly urgent. The research on ESP teaching in China has been discussed by domestic experts and scholars as well as relevant teachers. Among them, some advocate the use of "content-based approach" in teaching, which combines the impartation of professional knowledge with the development of language skills. It is also believed that the general professional teachers have solid professional knowledge, but lack the ability to teach in English whereas English teachers are not proficient in relevant professional knowledge although they are proficient in English. Therefore, the two teaching resources should be combined to implement cooperative teaching.

4. How to Implement ESP Teaching in Application-oriented undergraduate colleges

The guiding ideology and talent training objectives of application-oriented colleges determine that ESP will be the developing direction of college English teaching. Application-oriented undergraduate colleges which carry out the reform of college English teaching should start from a full investigation and analysis of students' English level and learning needs. The curriculum setting should take into account the characteristics of different majors and develop a teaching mode of ESP teaching that is in line with the actual situation of a specific college.

4.1 Curriculum Setting

For the reform and innovation of college English course in application-oriented undergraduate universities, EGP courses and ESP courses should be set as the main courses, pilot teaching should be attempted, and teaching teams should be built at the same time, including EGP teaching team and ESP teaching team. EGP teaching team is mainly composed of English teachers who are responsible for teaching EGP courses, while the ESP teaching team is mainly composed of specialized course teachers who are responsible for teaching ESP courses. Each team should take the EGP+ESP concept as the basic idea to cultivate students' comprehensive ability of English application.

The English level of students within the same major in the same school is also uneven, we should conduct graded teaching according to the actual English level of students and students' willingness to learn ESP courses. Students who have a relatively good command of English and are willing to learn ESP are assigned to class A, while those who have a weak English foundation and have no intention to learn ESP are assigned to class B. Both class A and class B should be provided EGP courses in their freshman year to lay a solid language foundation for students to learn ESP courses. In the first semester of sophomore year, Students in class A are offered comprehensive English course of ESP to learn common knowledge related to different industries, such as recruitment, daily office work, official travel, reception, meeting arrangement, etc.. In the second semester, English for special purposes for each major will be offered as a compulsory course. For example, medical English is set up for nursing major and pharmaceutical major. Meanwhile,

English for Occupational Purposes courses will be set up as an optional course. In view of the language skills required by students in different situations in their future workplace, intensive training will be conducted to help students skillfully use English to complete basic communication in their daily work. As for students in class B, EGP courses should be offered in order to lay a solid foundation in the first semester of their sophomore year. In the second semester, both comprehensive English course of ESP and English for Occupational Purposes courses should be provided as optional courses.

4.2 Curriculum Design

Pauline Robinson, a British academic, argues that the teaching of language itself is not the end of ESP. The real purpose of ESP is to use language to achieve a definite goal. The key to ESP teaching is to identify the specific needs and objectives of learners and to design the curriculum according to the urgent needs of learners. In other words, curriculum design should be learner-centered and emphasize that learning is a coordinating process between learners and society. Students' needs, interests and personal development should be given top priorities. Only in this way, can students' learning motivation be improved and facilitated. Therefore, learners' needs should be taken into account in every stage of curriculum design and curriculum design becomes a dynamic and coordinated process. College English teaching changes from a single teaching of language skills to a combination of teaching language skills and professional content. Since the learning effect depends on the learners' subjective initiative and active participation in learning to a large extent, teachers are required to act as good designers, organizers and coordinators in the teaching process, using various possible means and conditions to stimulate students' sense of interaction and prompt them to play the main role. For example, teachers can design group learning, debates, panel discussion according to the teaching material. Teachers can also guide the students to make in-the-spot investigation, case analysis, paper writing, etc.. Students' language ability in various activities can be strengthened and improved, at the same time their professional research capabilities and the ability of using language can be improved.

4.3 Teaching Methods

The implementation of ESP teaching in college English course with rational teaching methods has a positive role in promoting the development of college English teaching. At the same time, the adoption of flexible and diversified teaching methods can also promote the improvement of students' English proficiency. Teachers can actively apply task-based teaching method, cooperative learning method and other methods in English teaching. For instance, in the teaching process, students should be considered as the center of teaching so that students can learn English through actual practice. Students should be guided to participate in various learning activities so as to effectively improve their comprehensive English ability. The application of task-based teaching method in English teaching can promote students to have a more comprehensive understanding of themselves. Teachers can design different teaching tasks based on students' professional characteristics and their future employment characteristics. Students can be divided into several learning groups, and complete the teaching task through exchanges and discussions in their own group. In this way, they can gain a better understanding of their future employment. When designing tasks, teachers need to combine the teaching tasks with the demands of the future profession. Therefore, Students can exercise their vocational skills and professional qualities in school, and can quickly adapt to the relevant requirements of the job after they join the work. After completing the learning task, students can be asked to display their learning results, which teachers and other students can evaluate. In this way, students can identify the problems in learning and make progresses.

4.4 Evaluation Methods

The evaluation of students' learning should be the combination of the summative evaluation and the formative evaluation. EGP teaching mainly use the former way with the assistance of the latter one, while ESP teaching mainly use the latter way with the assistance of the former one. For ESP

courses, the proportion of formative evaluation should be increased, and the summative evaluation should be oriented by practicality, emphasizing the evaluation of students' pragmatic ability, such as writing papers, research reports, oral defense, etc.. The continuous improvement and perfection of the evaluation methods should be pursued in order to cultivate students' comprehensive ability. An oral English test should be added. Teachers can ask students to choose certain topics or content to state their own opinions. Students can also complete their oral test in group work, like performing sitcoms. In this way, the evaluation of students' scores and abilities will be more comprehensive.

4.5 The Construction of Teaching Staff

The quality and competence of ESP teachers have always been the focus of the academic circles. Whether ESP teachers should have relevant professional knowledge has always been the focus of discussion. With regard to the skill-based ESP courses, scholars generally believe that ESP teachers do not need to learn professional knowledge. But with the development of ESP teaching, content-based ESP courses emerged in the late 1980s, which not only helped students learn the language, but also taught them how to learn professional knowledge through the language. Content-based ESP courses have put forward higher requirements for teachers' professional knowledge. Teachers' professional knowledge is an important factor for the success of ESP teaching. We should carry out teacher training in a planned and step-by-step way. It is an effective way to improve teachers' professional quality by studying other majors and acquiring interdisciplinary knowledge.

5. Conclusion

The goal of application-oriented colleges is to train application-oriented talents to meet the demands of social development, and ESP teaching takes into account students' employment needs after graduation, laying a solid foundation for cultivating students into application-oriented talents. Therefore, the reform of college English teaching must take the road of ESP teaching, which is the developing direction of the reform and innovation. The ESP teaching in application-oriented undergraduate colleges should focus on cultivating students' interests in learning, emphasize students' communicative ability, and train students' pragmatic competence in specific fields rather than impart the knowledge of specific subjects to students. Teachers should help students master the necessary English skills in their profession, so as to enable students to study effectively in their majors via English and possess the basic communication skills in the workplace.

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