A Study on ESP—Based Curriculum Construction of College English Teaching and Learning

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Keywords: ESP, College English curriculum construction, College English reform.

Abstract. In this study, we established the connotation of university ESP courses. Then the specific mode of University ESP courses is presented. We investigated the feasibility of this new ESP based teaching mode through carefully analysis. After that, the concrete construction of the curriculum under this curriculum model has been carried out, and the reference practice of curriculum development has been put forward in theory and practice.

Introduction

College English teaching reform should still be the focus of all college English educators and researchers. In the process of exploring the language teaching method that combines language with specialty, as a content and language integrated language teaching method, English for Special Purpose (ESP), has aroused more and more attention from English language teaching and researching in China. The researchers hope that the present college English teaching which focuses on general English could shift to guiding students in English learning or engaging in professional English for specific purposes to future occupation. In this way, students can expand their international vision, enhance the intercultural communication ability, academic communication and cooperation ability in their professional field and the ability to participate in international competition. This study holds that the reform of College English teaching will inevitably focus on how to construct a new college English curriculum system through the integration of subject content and language knowledge.

Theoretical Basis

The Theory of University ESP Curriculum Construction

Through careful literature research, this research group holds that structural view of language teaching, function view, transfer theory and activity theory provide the most direct macroscopic guidance for the construction of ESP curriculum in Universities.

Structural theory and University ESP Curriculum. As the most traditional language theory, the structure of language teaching can be used to explain the ESP teaching method based on genre. ESP is associated with getting students ready to enter the target text community (academic, professional and career). The communicative practices in these communities are clear and evolving. ESP Students can be regarded as future participants in the discourse community. If ESP learners want to get into the society they want, they must understand the rules of the game that relate to these genres. Therefore, the task of ESP teaching in college can be seen as the study and teaching of these rules. In ESP study, genre analysis has yielded fruitful results. It demonstrates the importance of the content of the subject through examples, especially the social system of these contents.

Function View and University ESP Curriculum. Under the influence of language teaching function, language teachers and researchers believe that language teaching can be more closely related to the needs or purposes of learners. The Functional Syllabus defines the communicative content of
courses related to function, concept, topic, language and vocabulary. ESP is built around such a point of view. Robinson (1980) is a functional description beginning with the learner's needs rather than a structural theory of language. Therefore, the functional notional syllabus is a necessary form of reference for our university ESP curriculum design.

**Language Transfer View and University ESP Curriculum.** The migration theory holds that knowledge can be transferred across disciplines. In students' cognitive structure, the existing important concepts in the field of one discipline, in interdisciplinary language learning, the construction of new English corresponding conceptual meaning will inevitably bring positive migration. This theory provides meaningful guidance for the integration of content and language in ESP curriculum development.

**Feasibility Study of University ESP Curriculum Model**

The survey was conducted in the form of a network questionnaire. 100 students from different universities and of different majors who have finished college English learning. 50 college English teachers from different universities and 50 new graduates completed the questionnaire. In this way, we collect quantitative and qualitative information needed for this study.

Through the investigation of scientific nature and feasibility of the establishment of the University of ESP curriculum model, it showed that all the college students, college English learning, newly graduates and college English teachers thought that they all supported the scientific nature of ESP. For the feasibility of this model, we can see that from the teacher's point of view, the overall is also affirmative. Although there are some doubts, it can be seen as forecast of the difficulties and problems that may arise in the course design and implementation of this curriculum model. It is very favorable to the development of this new model since the potential problems can be foreseen.

**University ESP Course Construction**

ESP is a very efficient language teaching method for specific learning needs of specific learners. Therefore, this study will try to combine the characteristics of the school and the existing teacher level and students' English foundation, to find the appropriate ESP curriculum model.

**ESP Curriculum System Practice.** The curriculum of College English is divided into two stages: basic stage (General English) and development stage (Academic English). The basic stage is divided into four levels. After entering the university, students participate in a unified grading examination. Students entered at these four levels to learn English according to the exam results. After the placement exam students can voluntarily enroll in a written examination and interview each semester, the outstanding students can directly enter a higher level of learning. At the end of the four grade comprehensive English course, students will enter the development stage, that is, academic English learning stage. This stage is divided into language courses, science and technology translation, literature and culture and Business Economics and so on. Students may choose any subject based on their professional background and interests.

**Transition from EGP to ESP.** Vocabularies for ESP are quite different from those of EGP. They are uncommon, boring and even obscure. Therefore, most engineering students feel really difficult to learn ESP at the very beginning. In addition, in the teaching process of ESP, due to lack of vocabulary, syntax and grammar for literature reading, students find really difficult to understand the professional literature. Therefore, in the process of setting up and practicing the ESP curriculum system, we have conducted a detailed arrangement of the teaching links between the general English course and the specialized English course.

**Linkup of Teaching Material.** At present, there is almost no connection between the teaching materials of general English and ESP in china. In general English textbooks, there is little information about the rules of word formation, syntactic structure, rhetoric and stylistic features of Engineering English. The biggest problem of Engineering English teaching materials is the lack of instruction in
teaching theory, ignoring the target needs and learning needs of learners. Therefore, in the compilation of English textbooks, our study group carefully considered the depth and breadth and degree of difficulties of materials, aiming at improving the students' professional ability as the core of English teaching.

**Linkup of Teaching Method.** The teaching methods of EGP and ESP are quite different. Professional English is mainly used in English working environment, scientific research and academic communication. It requires students to have a relatively complete knowledge system, not only to analyze, compare and judge professional documents, but also to have the ability to communicate in scientific research, that is, fluent listening, speaking, reading and writing ability. Therefore, to enhance students’ senses of cooperation and encourage students to use the Internet platform to understand foreign cutting-edge knowledge of science and technology, and create an academic atmosphere to train students’ literature reading, oral communication and literature writing abilities are the core of ESP learning.

**Conclusion**

Since the implementation of this model in our school, the students' English learning enthusiasm and learning efficiency have been greatly improved. The passing rate of 2015 grade four students is obviously higher than that of former students. With the improvement of learning effectiveness, students' satisfaction with the quality of College English teaching is increasing year by year. In addition, the teaching system has also promoted the development of teachers themselves. As a result of good teaching results, teachers have been awarded the title of "Distinguished Professor". This topic also arouses the research enthusiasm of our foreign language teachers. After two years of curriculum practice, some teachers are writing related papers, compiling ESP materials and application for project approval.

ESP based English teaching model is more scientific and refined. It can meet the needs of both the society and students. This model can not only effectively avoid the repetition of construction of College English and senior high school English curriculum, but also greatly optimize the knowledge structure of students. Besides, it maximizes their ability to acquire the English language required for future work, which is more conducive to the training of interdisciplinary and practical talents.

**References**


