Teaching Method of Business English Translation in Colleges and Universities Based on the ESP Theory

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Abstract

ESP (English for Specific Purpose) as a branch of the ELT (English Language Teaching), as its English name indicates, refers to the English associated with certain particular purpose, usually with specific occupational and subject correlation. It is a course based on the learner's specific purpose and specific needs (Hutchinson, 1987). Its purpose is to cultivate students’ ability to work with English in specific communicative situation. Therefore, ESP both belongs to the teaching method and the teaching mode. Its contents and methods follow the students' learning purpose and demand. Different from the old English teaching, ESP teaching is for "special purpose" rather than the language itself. Great changes have taken place in its organization teaching method.

Keywords: English for Specific Purpose; Business English; Teaching Reform

1 INTRODUCTION

With China's rapid economic development and the increasingly frequent international business activities, social demands for English talents has turned to extravert, applied and interdisciplinary ones. As an important part of the inter-disciplinary talent, demands of the business English talents is increasing. This trend is changing the professional positioning and development direction of English major in colleges and universities, and affecting its curriculum setting and teaching. One of its features is that various types of English for special purposes (ESP) are appearing in English major courses in colleges and universities, with the most popular and rapidly growing one being business English. However, due to different teaching backgrounds and experiences, the views of business English and the curriculum setting are different. Therefore, by knowing the current business English courses offered in colleges and universities, the curriculum setting is random, lacking of plan and system, and their teaching patterns vary hugely. With the speeding up of economic globalization, the involving field of business English becomes broader and broader, its course categories become growing. Therefore, Discussing and analyzing the setting of business English courses under the framework of the ESP theory is very necessary and significant.

2 Overview of the theory of demand analysis

Demand analysis is the prerequisite for ensuring ESP teaching effect with its key point in finding out gap between the learners’ existing language ability as well as knowledge level and

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the degree of the society and themselves desired to achieve. The premise of ESP is to investigate the learners’ specific learning goals and the actual demand for language skills in the actual working scenario. While these investigations will become the foundation of the course setting and textbook writing. Because the demanded language skills in the field of business English is more difficult to be predicted than that of in any other branches of the ESP, the demand analysis for business English course setting is particularly important.

As a branch of English Language Teaching (ELT), the development of ESP can be divided into five stages: register analysis, rhetorical and discourse analysis, target scenario analysis, analysis of skills and learning strategies and learning centered. There are different linguistic theories, different teaching contents and teaching modes in different stages of development. Demand analysis first appeared in the third stage of the ESP teaching, which means the target scenario analysis. At this stage, the design of the ESP course first focused on the analysis of the learners' target environment, closely linked the language analysis with the learners’ purpose of learning to meet the different needs of different learners. Till develop to the fifth stage, namely learning centered, the learning centered development stage, the demand analysis in the ESP teaching became irreplaceable, which makes ESP teaching content compact with key point being much more highlighted.

3 Characteristics of the business English course

3.1 Discipline characteristic

Business English language is an emerging discipline derived from the foreign linguistics, with its discipline theory being still in the exploratory stage, still required a process of constant development and improvement. Business English linguistics is to study how to apply English from the perspective of different theoretical linguistics into the international business. It is the cross of English linguistics and international business. Based on this point, business English linguistics can include the following 13 parts: business English lexicology, business functional linguistics, business cognitive linguistics, business pragmatics, business discourse analysis, business translation, intercultural business communication, business social linguistics, business contrastive linguistics, business corpus linguistics, business English education, English economics, business English research methods. All the theories can be applied to the practical field of international business with the guidance of business English linguistics theory.

3.2 Economic function of business language

It is reflected in the study of social and economic value of language. Firstly, language is a valuable product, with studying the economic and social value of language from the language economics and social culture theory. Language becomes a variable factor in the economic activities. Language learning is a kind of economic investment, which will produce investment costs and returns. From this perspective, it has a guiding significance for us to understand business language and carry out the business language theory research. Starting from the economic value of language use, we can establish a theory model based on the relationship between language and business, and establish the theory of business language characteristics and application rules. Influence of the language selection on international
trades and the language policy research on multinational companies is another study of business language economic function. Collecting information and verifying the formed theory model in the actual management practice of international trade and multinational companies has a practical significance to guide the international trade and multinational company management.

3.3 Workplace characteristics of business English

Business English is to adapt to the language requirements in the workplace, with its contents involving in the economics, management, finance, international tourism, commercial ads, international transportation and other aspects. English used in all these activities is called business English. Business English is the English for special purpose by taking language as the carrier, putting the core content of the business in it, regarding the employees as the goal, and taking those commonly used in business activities as key English. The main characteristics of business English lies in its professional teaching, colloquial and strong pertinence. In a word, practicability is the biggest characteristic of business English. The business English derives from and lays in general English. It completely has the characteristics of general English language. There is no essential difference in comparing with the general English. However, business English has the specific "business characteristics", with obvious characteristics in the application. The uniqueness of business English is in style and language.

3.4 Stylistic features of business English

There are two main types of stylistic features of business English, one is the formal style, and the other one is the application style. Business English style is developed from the development of commodity production and trade. It is a kind of practical style, with its biggest characteristic being concise and clear, logic tight, structure rigorous. It is mainly used in all kinds of formal and informal business activities, which require the style to be more accurate, timely and logic for the expression effect than that of any other styles.

4 Translation skills of business English

Translation is the communication process and tool between two languages, and also one of the important means to learn foreign languages. Its purpose is to promote the political, economic and cultural progress of the original language society, and its task is to perfectly transfuse the logic and artistic image of the real world in the original work from one language into another language. Business English translation is a combination of business knowledge and English translation. When it comes to translation, we know it is not easy. Bad translation tends to affect the quality of translation, then how to translate? First of all, when doing the translation, we must pay attention to the language characteristics, familiar with professional terms of business English, narrate it concisely in rigorous structure with tight logic, and abide by the business practices and norms; Secondly, under the precondition of not against English translation standards, use local and unified business language to express the meaning of the original work, with not trapping in the form of the original work. Therefore, mastering certain translation skills can help to improve the quality of translation.
5 Teaching mode of business English

5.1 Teaching methods of business English

The mind of curriculum teaching reform centered in teachers in the past for most college English teaching with the students passively accepting knowledge, which called cramming teaching, which ignores the communicative purpose of learning a language with students passively accepting the training. In order to reverse this situation completely, according to the actual situation of 2th business English class of grade 2009, the author changed the teaching textbook to the new one, namely Business English Translation, at the same time, changed the teaching method, which giving priority to project teaching, and integrating with communication method, demonstration method, case method and other many kinds of teaching methods. After confirming that the course the students learned can be applied in the work areas, it will clear the work tasks to different posts and divide the whole curriculum into a number of work items and create teaching simulation scenarios according to different work tasks, help students to complete all the work tasks in the simulation scenarios by combining the project with the scenario to eventually improve students' translation skills, namely, business English interpretation and translation ability.

5.2 Demonstration and evaluation of the business English teaching

This process mainly includes the project work presentation, groups’ mutual evaluation, teacher evaluation, project report to be written by students, etc. For the displayed project by each group, students should evaluate it mutually, and the teacher should comment the completion of each group. Through the presentation and evaluation, students should learn how to objectively evaluate themselves and others, and also find out their own weaknesses after watching other works to improve themselves, and make the summary of their own experience and ideas in the form of written report, and lay a good foundation for the further development for the future after getting exercise and improvement. Teachers' evaluation on students' progress plays a crucial guide, but at the same time, in the process, teachers should strengthen their communication with students to stimulate a fierce collision of their way of thinking and values and make both of them get sublimation. In this way, on one hand, it can make students improved in cognitive level, on the other hand, it also can make the teachers' teaching level and teaching effect improved. This teaching method breaks through the traditional mode of teaching with teachers teaching and students machinery imitating, have fully aroused the enthusiasm of students, and made students firmly remember the knowledge when finding and solving problems. Project teaching method focuses the teaching on the learning process, while not only pays attention to learning outcomes. Compared with traditional teaching methods, the project teaching method obtained a significant effect in mobilizing the participant enthusiasm of students, and strengthened the students' cooperation ability and the team consciousness when completing the project in a team. It really makes students become the center of the classroom, and gives a new role for teachers in the classroom, namely guider but not addressor.

5.3 The meaning of "integration of teaching, learning and practicing" teaching mode

Literal explanation of teaching model of "integration of teaching, learning and practicing" is to integrate the teaching, learning and practicing and jointly applied them to teaching. This
teaching mode is different from the traditional one. We can see that in new mode, practicing is added while not included one. This teaching mode requires to strengthen the student's quality and emphasizes on the students' ability of practice. This teaching model can be widely used in teaching, especially in business English translation course which requires strong practicability. Business English translation teaching’s features are its wide range and strong profession. It emphasizes on strictness and scientific. But when it comes to the current business English translation teaching, its mode is too much single and its content lacks of universality.

After joining the WTO, applications of English in China becomes more and more popular in many fields. And the business English becomes much more popular because it meets business demands. Many colleges and universities have set up business English to meet the market demands for talents who mastering the ability of business English, however, many business English major graduates can't meet the demands of posts. This phenomenon makes us think more about our education: how much does it apply to guide the future work? Translation is the most important part of business English. The practicability of business English will increase greatly when the translation closes to the reality and is in line with market demands. Currently, improving the practicality of business English translation course is the issue needing to be solved urgently.

6 CONCLUSIONS
Business English translation teaching is still constrained to the traditional teaching mode, which means that the teacher as the center, fixed teaching textbook as the carrier, the spread of knowledge being only from teachers to students, during the teaching process, teachers commonly adopting the method: "teacher making examples - student trying to translate - teacher making evaluation”, to explain the translation theory and skills, and select some "appropriate" sentences or paragraphs from other materials for students to practice. This kind of teaching mode lacks of classroom discussion, simulation exercises, and communications between teachers and students. As a result, the students' learning initiative and enthusiasm cannot be fully stimulated. It is not conducive to cultivate students' innovative thinking and the ability to actively seek and solve problems. The original textbook compilation mode is also not conducive to students' learning and cannot give full play to the students' innovation ability when mentioning "people-oriented". Translation textbook should be written and complied from the chapter to the paragraph, and then to the sentence and the last to be word selection. Business English translation teaching content must be updated in time, focus on the times and authenticity of material. Turn listing translation skills to describing translation process. Most of business English translation textbooks focus on the result rather than the process when introducing translation skills. In fact, the textbook should highlight the students’ ability to find, analyze, and solve problems, focus on cultivating students' translation ability, more important to let students actively discover, explore, and accumulate skills in practice under the teacher's guidance and inspiration.
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