

A Brief Introduction on ESP Teaching Current Situation and the Countermeasures in Higher Vocational Colleges

HU Bingyao^{[a],*}

^[a]Chong Vocational College of Economics and Trade, Chongqing, China.

^[b]Postgraduates, College of Foreign Language, Sichuan International Studies University, Chongqing, China.

*Corresponding author.

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Abstract

International competition is becoming more and more impetuosity. Global integration process is to speed up. English is as a bridge language connecting the world and naturally becomes the main; the most widely used international language. Since English is a language, so in English teaching we should focus on cultivating students' ability of applying English. ESP (English for Specific Purposes) follows this principle. It refers to a specific profession or related disciplines, setting up English courses according to the learner's particular purpose or the specific need. Its purpose is to cultivate students use English to communicate with others in a certain work environment, such as Business English, Legal English, Tourism English, Automobile, Computer English, English of science and technology, Engineering English, etc.. Until now, few people can directly use English for their scientific research or serve their work, life and study. Therefore, ESP courses are imperative in the higher vocational colleges. In addition, it is also the requirements of social progress and education reform, the demands of the market, the needs of integrating with the world education in the future. In order to make the ESP teaching be better implement the higher vocational English teaching, the author objectively analyzes and proposes the solution measures.

Key words: Vocational English; ESP teaching; Reasons; Current situation; Countermeasures

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INTRODUCTION

In a quite long time for the development of higher vocational education, College English is just as an EGP course. They do not pay enough attention to the ESP (English for Specific Purposes) reflecting higher vocational students' comprehensive ability. EGP takes up most of the English teaching hours. For the ESP related the higher vocational students' future career, Because time is too short to learn more. In recent years, with the development of school-based curriculum boom, many higher vocational colleges realize the EGP (English General Purpose) courses can't satisfy the needs of students and society. So these colleges have to invite some industry experts to develop “Tourism English”, “Exhibition English”, “Business English”, “Legal English”, “Automobile English”, “Computer English”, “English of science and technology”, “Engineering English” and other applicability English curriculums. Unfortunately, all go from one extreme to another extreme. Ignore the features of higher vocational students: The students' English foundation is weak. They do not understand the basic language and skills thoroughly. For the term of professional English, they can only be daunting. In addition, it is also very difficult for teachers to implement it.

The current full-time ordinary English teachers in the higher vocational colleges are most graduated from the universities which specialize in ESP teaching. That is, they learn a language literature or education, knew little of all kinds of professional knowledge, mostly lack the corresponding basic specialized knowledge and

professional skills. And professional teachers lack the adequate knowledge of English and language teaching experience. These have brought difficulties to ESP. Therefore, higher vocational colleges have to set up ESP courses. English must be combined with professional knowledge, but not too deep or narrow. EGP courses should also be appropriate to set up, to meet the needs of the widespread employment and personal continuing education.

1. ESP TEACHING CURRENT SITUATION

1.1 The Characteristics of ESP

ESP has four characteristics: First, to meet the specific needs of learners. Second, the teaching contents are related to the specific professional and career. Third, in the analysis of vocabulary, grammar, language application, skill, language classes and discourse, focusing on the language use associated with a specific professional or vocational activity. Fourth, contrasted with common English, there are some differences. Therefore, ESP is not just the language teaching theory. Above all, it is a kind of practice teaching according to the actual needs of the learners. It is purposeful, targeted and practical.

1.2 At Present, the ESP Teaching Level Is Not High

There isn't enough promotion or wide spreading. Many colleges and universities do not even set up the ESP courses; also do not have the related teachers. That is, the strength of ESP teachers' group is weak, lack of teaching resources and so on. Second, the ESP teaching in colleges and universities is also about the theory, not entered the stage of extensive practice. ESP is corresponding with general English, EGP (English for General Purposes). ESP appears because of the development of the society, the demand of the market. It is related to a specific profession or subject. Setting up English courses according to the learner's particular purpose or the specific need. Its purpose is to cultivate students to use English to communicate with others in the different work environment, such as Business English, Legal English, Tourism English, Automobile English, Computer English, English of science and technology, Engineering English, etc.. ESP course is a professional course or language course, positioning is not clear so far. Since experts do not resolve the ESP positioning of the English teaching in colleges and universities, leading that the leaders, teachers, students are still not clear to ESP teaching. They swing to the ESP teaching or take a wait-and-see attitude. Second, the idea of leaders, teachers and the students do not change. It still stays in this kind of teaching mode such as the general English or public English. They just care about the level rate of PETS, CET4 and CET6, Ignoring the ESP teaching. Due to many colleges and universities

are busy to grasp the level rate of PETS, CET4 and CET6, meanwhile leading that passers lose interest and motivation in English learning.

1.3 There Are a Lot of Troubles in ESP Teaching

Because of lacking of corresponding ESP teaching "outline", there are a lot of troubles. For example, teachers are unable to compile textbooks, unable to set up the courses, unable to determine the teaching hours, unable to form a teaching staff. Then, it leads to all at sea with the ESP's future living space and development prospect. For the policy, there are not any specific policies to raise the level of ESP teaching at present. In terms of money, there is less expense. As for the guidance and examination, the administrative departments for education lack of regularly check and supervision to ESP teaching. Check and supervising are formalized. There is no regular or reasonable guidance, guide and standard. The teachers' lack, especially lack of ESP professional teachers. As the ESP teaching is interdisciplinary, professional teachers have the language barrier. English teachers have professional knowledge barrier. By the way, there is serious lack of stable ESP professional teachers. Second, there are many part-time teachers undertaking ESP courses. That is, the ESP courses are undertaken by non-English major teachers. Non-English major of teachers' English level is not high. Such as, they do not have standard pronunciation. They have less vocabulary. Their English ability is not strong and has the language barrier. They misled students' ESP teaching enlightenment of ESP courses directly, leading student s' pronunciation repeats one's mistakes.

The teaching method is not appropriate. People do not work out specific ESP teaching methods. The teaching methods are not innovative. That is, teachers teach students rigidly or Stereotypy, step-by-step. The teachers change the ESP courses abruptly into translation courses and bilingual courses. Those teachers kill the students' interest and confidence in learning English. Second, they do not create any good language environment. They do not create any good English learning atmosphere. So, students are difficult to devote themselves to their English learning. In the usual English teaching, because of the teachers' teaching level, it is difficult to guide the student to understand the importance of ESP courses well. What's more, some teachers don't prepare lessons earnestly. English teaching is formalized. Randomness is strong. The teaching contents are not rich. Experts, leaders, teachers, students lack of communication, understanding, supporting and cooperation between each other. Both experts, the leaders of the department of education and school leaders rarely take the initiative to communicate ESP teaching situation, progress with teachers or students. They do not lead, guide or standardize regularly. So, ESP teaching has to only stay in the theory, too little practice. Teachers and school leaders, experts, leader from

the department of education have few communication opportunities. Even if communication, they also own less support from leaders. They care more about their students' level rate of PETS, CET4 and CET6 in the class.

2. COUNTERMEASURES TO IMPROVE THE ESP TEACHING

(a) ESP teaching orientation should be settled as soon as possible. What are the nature and implications of the ESP teaching? Taking EGP courses to transfer to ESP courses. Making college leaders, teachers and students to realize the transformation of teaching is the need for social development and talent market. They must directly face it. It is imperative.

(b) Change ideological conception. First of all, the education department and school leaders should attach great importance to the thing that ESP teaching should be how to do the specific work in one's college. Don't blindly only care students' level rate of PETS, CET4 and CET6 in the class and ignore the application ability of learning English. Second, teachers should focus on the present situation of the students' English learning. At the same time, teachers should try their best to discover students' advantages and disadvantages. In my opinion, they should capture the dynamic learning state of the students in time. If students have problems or difficulties in their study, find reasons then help them in time. For students' progress made in English, teachers may encourage them in time and make it form a lasting learning motivation. In addition, the students should also change their own concepts. They can cooperate with their teachers together to explore new teaching methods and make progress together.

(c) Strictly regulating the curriculum and increase teaching material is optional. According to the students' awareness rule, mental development, psychological endurance, physical development and other objective conditions and rules, teachers try to write the teaching outline, teaching progress plan, standardize the curriculum and textbook of ESP. They should regulate the curriculum strictly and write the appropriate ESP teaching materials for students. At the same time, they make it gradually realize the standardization of the English curriculum and teaching in higher vocational colleges. Including the standardization of the initial year, gradually achieving ESP English teaching' goal in colleges and universities proposed by the ministry of education. Is specification of total teaching hours, not less than ones required by ESP teaching outline? In reality, this kind of ESP teaching is difficult to achieve. So, teacher can do the test first. For example, formatting demonstration colleges or demonstration classes. Play a positive role in the demonstration colleges. This will play a powerful role in promoting other colleges' ESP teaching. For the colleges

and universities whose economy is very poor, the teaching resource is very poor, people don't suggest to set up ESP courses, to avoid students' English phonetics misleading from the teachers, teaching resources and other issues, otherwise, not easy to correct the students phonetic pronunciation, etc..

(d) To strengthen the construction of teaching staff, the relevant departments should conscientiously implement the central spirit, formulate related policies. Such as by the hard and fast rules to make teachers relay cooperation in higher vocational colleges. At the same time, teachers should exchange, communicate with experts and leaders in fixed time and timely feedback ESP teaching situation to them and put it in place. Second, ESP English teachers of on-the-job training strengthen and implement the training. In the short term, to make the ESP English teachers' teaching level to a higher level is not realistic. So, it is necessary to try to develop some teachers whose basic skill is excellent, dare to try. Focuses on the future, based on the international, develop pairing and fellowship between countries, regularly exchange the exchange students, teachers, and leaders to learn and communicate with each other. Besides, hire experts well-known in domestic and foreign to train the ESP teachers on a regular basis, guidance them and put in place. Teachers also should study hard by themselves, especially the interdisciplinary learning and further study. Professional teachers to learn English and Professional discipline teachers should have strong communication and learning. That is, English teachers learn professional knowledge from the professional discipline teachers. The professional discipline teachers learn some English from the English teachers. It will complement each other and compensate each other. Try to overcome the problems of the teaching transformation.

(e) Improving teaching methods. Teachers should pay much attention to improve teaching skills, enrich the teaching contents, and ensure the quality of teaching. Teachers need to explore and research the new teaching methods for ESP courses. In a new field, teachers try to look for the treasure of knowledge constantly.

(f) Increase the fund's investment, strengthen the management, guidance, check and supervision, and especially increase ESP teaching's manpower, material resources, and financial resources. At least there are enough ESP teachers in higher vocational colleges. In addition, to strengthen inspection, supervision and check, to supervise whether to put in place, to ensure that it does not go through the motions and the ESP teaching moves on smoothly.

(g) Make ESP level certificate test, the test can be divided into writing part and oral part. Let the usability and practicality of ESP teaching be given full play. Involve the final score of the two parts, just the composite score achieves the passing score, students pass the test. If

so, it is both equal for students to be partial to writing or oral examination.

CONCLUSION

(a) ESP is a teaching approach which has a clear goal, strong target, with high practical value. It has two marked characteristics: First, the ESP learners are all adults, including ones engaged in various professional talents; ones on-the-job or in training; College students; Some students of secondary vocational schools or vocational high school students often needing to use English in the future. Second, the purpose of ESP learners to learn English is to learn English as a means or tool, for further professional knowledge learning. Such as non-English major students in all kinds of university, they may treat it as a means or tool to study so as to finish the work effectively. The essence of the ESP is to analyze and meet the different needs of different learners in order to improve the teaching effect. Application language scholars in the United Kingdom, America and other countries pointed out that the development of ESP today should include the following main categories: EOP/EVP (English for Occupational/Vocational Purpose); EAP/EEP (English for Academic/Educational Purpose); EST (English for Science and Technology). Even some people think that the purpose of English teaching is not clear, such as “English Workshop in Practice”, “English in Agricultural Science”. According to the theory of ESP and the actual needs of students in higher vocational colleges, the traditional English teaching in higher vocational colleges needs to be reformed and adjusted. ESP teaching must be reformed from the traditional concepts, established the new concept. Namely, to teach English

as a communication tool, to cultivate students’ ability of using English in different actual environment.

(b) After all, as long as the current market situation, people owning both solid professional knowledge and English application ability are very favorite in the job market. The employers are more humanized to graduates’ foreign language ability. They no longer just check whether the applicants have PEST, CET 4 or CET 6 certificates. “The Basic Requirement” explicitly points out that the English teaching goal in vocational colleges is arranged under the guidance of practicality. ESP teaching is imperative, making “the students as the main learners, teachers as the leading” throughout the higher vocational English teaching, at the same time, integrating into the international education and stepping into the future together.

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