

Study on the Collaborative Modes of Teaching English for Special Purposes

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Abstract: The teaching of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has generally been seen as a distinct activity within English Language Teaching. The teaching of ESP has developed its own methodology based on research in various disciplines. ESP teaching involves both specific disciplinary knowledge and English Language knowledge. A specific discipline has its own nature and linguistic features. In an age of disciplines diversified and knowledge updated unprecedentedly, it is almost impossible for ESP teachers to have specialized knowledge in different academic fields. The paper presents the concept of the collaboration of subject teachers and English teachers, introducing two modes of collaboration on course books and team teaching to explore the efficient methods of teaching ESP. The collaborative modes are applied to practical teaching and adjusted from a pragmatic perspective, illustrating the modes of collaboration between subject teachers and English teachers.

Keywords: team teaching; ESP (English for Specific Purposes); collaboration.

I. INTRODUCTION

With the globalization of the economy, the international communication competence becomes the critical requirement for college graduates. English is an international language, and English competence has become an essential skill for students in career development. Colleges and universities are facing the challenge of cultivating all-round talents with both professional knowledge and English competence.

General English (GE) is the foundation of the discipline of English. The basic language knowledge and methods involved in general English are essential for English for Special Purposes (ESP). However, the purpose of ESP teaching is different from that of GE teaching. The goal of ESP teaching is to enable students to establish a conceptual framework and a discourse system for the disciplinary courses they are taking, acquire a comprehensive ability to use English and gain the specific disciplinary knowledge.

To improve the ability to communicate in the academic field, ESP teaching is attached to more importance in tertiary education. Some of ESP courses are bilingual, and the others are completely taught in English. As the college or university is dedicated to cultivating all-round talents with a global vision, ESP teaching becomes a significant part of tertiary education.

On the other hand, international sports games such as China Open and the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou give college students opportunities to serve as volunteers. Especially when the Olympic Games in 2018 and Winter Olympic Games in 2022 were held in China, a good deal of students were recruited as volunteers, which required teachers to design a volunteers' training program to meet the needs of volunteers.

The courses in physical education and sports are different from English courses, but ESP teaching combines the subject course with the English course. The common goal is to develop all-round talents who master both English and disciplinary knowledge and skills.

There are mainly two types of teachers who teach English for Special Purposes. Some ESP teachers transfer from general English (GE) teaching to ESP teaching. For example, teachers teach legal English, business English, scientific and technological English, or medical sciences English. Disciplinary courses have systematic set-ups in the academic fields,

which are essential for students to master a wide range of disciplinary knowledge and skills. However, because the teachers are not members of a disciplinary discourse community, they have certain limitations to teaching ESP. If they are not experts in the discipline, they will not be able to well extend the systematic disciplinary knowledge.

The other ESP teachers are subject teachers reaching a certain level of English. They are experts in their disciplines but they are not trained teachers in English language teaching. Language teaching has its special features and methods. Language teaching needs professional training to achieve the goal for ESP teaching. The two types of teachers have their own strengths while it is difficult to achieve the goals of ESP teaching to integrate the English language learning and the disciplinary learning.

Although the current ESP teaching situation affects the quality of ESP teaching in colleges and universities, it is unrealistic to require ESP teachers master English and the disciplinary knowledge in different fields with the exponential knowledge expansion and development. Like any other course, ESP has its own distinct language teaching methodology.

In a pragmatic way, it is efficient to integrate the advantages of language teachers and subject teachers. The purpose is to enable students to obtain both the disciplinary knowledge and English competence by means of the collaboration between subject teachers and English teachers. In this way, students can obtain systematic disciplinary knowledge and language competence. Teachers initiate collaborative modes in ESP teaching in practice.

Based on the concept of integrating advantages of teachers across various disciplines, different collaborative teaching modes are adopted according to different teaching needs and resources. The collaborative concept has been applied to ESP teaching practice in teaching content and team teaching. The two modes are collaboration on course books and team teaching.

II. COLLABORATION ON COURSE BOOKS

ESP course books are mainly introduced from the English-speaking countries. For various student groups, the introduced course book may need a bilingual, abridged or adapted edition to help students have a better understanding. It needs collaboration between subject teachers and English teachers. In this case English teachers help in proofreading when subject teachers translate original course books from English to Chinese. English teachers make sure that course books keep coherent and consistent when abridged or adapted.

When Physical Education (P.E.) teachers introduced original course books and translated from English into Chinese, such as course books on core strength training and volleyball training, they asked English teachers for proofreading. In the process, English teachers consulted them for the meaning and connotation of academic terms and expressions and then gave advice on translation and P.E. teachers decided on the final edition.

In some cases, ESP course books have to be translated from Chinese to English. Traditional Chinese martial arts is a most important part of Chinese sports and culture, having a great influence in the world.

Tai Chi is a form of traditional martial arts in modern China. In 2020, Tai Chi was listed as an intangible cultural heritage of mankind by UNESCO. At the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, a performance of thousands of people in white clothes playing Tai Chi at the same time attracted the attention of the world. Tai Chi has spread to many countries and regions around the world, with millions of practitioners. More and more foreigners appreciate the charm of Chinese traditional culture by practicing Tai Chi.

The traditional Chinese boxing will have more influence and more people will benefit from it if students whose majors are traditional martial arts are well equipped with traditional Chinese boxing knowledge, skills and English competence. Transcultural communication skills are crucial for safeguarding the career prospects of students and promoting traditional Chinese martial arts. Therefore they are supposed to take ESP courses in college. The course books have to be translated from Chinese to English. The subject teachers collaborated with English teachers on ESP course books for intangible cultural heritage Chinese boxing.

When subject teachers edited a course book for ESP teaching of intangible cultural heritage Chinese boxing, the collaboration with English teachers facilitated the work and made it efficient. Subject teachers prepared the Chinese materials for the course book and chose the pictures to illustrate the moves. They were in charge of the task. English teachers proactively tried to understand the disciplinary background knowledge of traditional boxing, syllabus of the course. English teachers were involved in translating the course book from Chinese to English and found out the conceptual framework, discourse system and cultural focuses.

In the collaborative process, English teachers discussed with subject teachers, consulted them about the materials and pictures for the course book and asked for their opinions on the cultural focuses. The cultural focuses were supplemented in the teaching materials and explained in details. For example, Tai Chi absorbs the dialectical thought of ancient Chinese philosophy, takes Taiji and yin and yang as the core concepts, and integrates nourishing temperament, strengthening the body, and technical attack and confrontation.

In the technical way, Tai Chi pays attention to practicing the coordination of the body's internal essence, qi, spirit, breathing and external shape, and pays attention to the free progress and retreat, rigidity and softness. Baduanjin, which is a traditional Chinese regimen, like Qigong and Tai Chi. Yin energy is unfamiliar to Westerners, which is the opposite to yang energy. The typical attribute of yang energy is forceful, active with fast, loud and outward expression. While yin energy is a soft, still, slow, quiet and inward expression. Regular subtle yin movement makes energy flow throughout the body, increasing the overall energy and improving the ability to repair. It draws a clear distinction from working out.

Traditional Chinese martial arts reflects different cultural expressions. The collaboration successfully introduces the technical movements and skills in English, and makes the cultural comparison and contrast in the course book for ESP teaching.

III. TEAM TEACHING

The holding of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing has greatly promoted the development and popularization of winter sports in China. Some students in Capital College of Physical Education and Sports were recruited to serve as volunteers of the 2022 Winter Olympics. Volunteers would participate in the various work of the 2022 Winter Olympics.

Volunteers were supposed to understand English background knowledge and technical skills of ice and snow sports events in the 2022 Winter Olympics. Meanwhile they were required to have necessary communication skills to fulfil their tasks. It was urgent to have a systematic training in ice and snow sports events and English language. A needs analysis was first made to find out what specific knowledge of ice and snow sports events and which language skills were most needed by volunteers.

The needs analysis showed their needs for background and technical knowledge of ice and snow sports events such as terms, expressions, and for English competence including listening, speaking, translating and reading skills. Based on the needs analysis, it was found out that volunteers urgently need supplementary materials in English about ice and snow sports events from the historical, cultural, technical and language learning perspective. To meet the needs of volunteers, an intensive training program was designed to provide professional knowledge of ice and snow sports events, necessary English background knowledge and intensive English skills training including listening, speaking, translating and reading.

The Winter Olympics is divided into ice sports events and snow sports events, and there are currently 15 sports disciplines and totally 109 events. Among them, there are ice sports events snow sports events. Ice sports events include speed skating, short track, figure skating, ice hockey and curling. Snow sports events include biathlon, cross country, alpine skating, Nordic combined, ski jumping, freestyle skiing, snowboarding and other events.

It was a challenge to provide an intensive English training program for volunteers. There were a good deal of content about ice and snow sports events. The task of training was to provide the English background information and technical knowledge of ice and snow sports events and harness listening, reading, speaking and translating skills. In terms of teaching environment and teaching content, teachers made further exploration in collaboration and applied a mode of team teaching to the training program. A team of teachers collaborated to give volunteers intensive training. Specifically, team teaching referred to the subject teachers who specialized in ice and snow sports events and English teachers worked together in the training program.

In the preparatory phase, based on the consultation from the subject teachers, the training content and set-up was discussed and settled. The English teachers set out preparing for the training program and each of them was assigned to prepare training materials for one of ice and snow sports events. The team selected the teaching material from the original magazines, books and the official websites. They conducted systematic discourse analysis, and summarized terms, vocabulary, discourse characteristics, conceptual framework and connotation of terms.

The team decided on the teaching content of a specific ice and snow sports event, centered on an event story, followed by 3 parts of practice. The first part was terms, words, phrases and expressions. Students acquired the necessary words and expressions about the event. The second part was notes, which provided some background information. The third part was language drills, focusing on listening, reading comprehension, speaking and translation skills training. The English materials

were used in skills training. The listening and reading comprehension were checked by answering questions and presentation. Meanwhile, different situations were designed to train speaking and communicative skills in the real situation.

In the teaching process, the subject teachers were in charge of technical sections. The English teachers were in charge of English language training. English teachers and subject teachers discussed the teaching procedures to make sure that students learned professional knowledge and English knowledge of ice and snow sports events from the teaching materials prepared by teachers in advance.

The teachers shared the teaching tasks in the program based on the teaching materials. For example, the listening task was a professional lecture on ice and snow sports events or a report on ice and snow sports events. English teachers conducted language teaching and checked relevant language comprehension. Subject teachers who specialized in ice and snow sports events made professional comments and expanded on students' answers, and handled technical explanation and expansion. When the training went further, the discuss topic changed from detailed questions to more systematic problems. In this process students got a complete picture of winter sports.

In the training program, volunteers learned the background and technical knowledge of ice and snow sports events and improved English competence. Collaborative mode of team teaching succeeded in the training program, which achieved ESP teaching goals. It also fulfilled the task of taking social responsibilities. It contributed to cultivating all-round talents with global vision.

IV. CONCLUSION

The advantage of collaboration of teachers from different disciplines is that teachers have a clear division of responsibilities, their teaching tasks are relatively light, and the use of professional expertise in their fields to achieve complementary advantages. The collaboration between teachers of different subjects enables students to acquire complete sports expertise and relevant English language knowledge.

The holdings of the Winter Olympics and other sports events put forward higher requirements for the cultivation of talents. Colleges and universities are facing the challenges of cultivating all-around talents who have expertise and English competence. To achieve the goal, ESP teaching has been a part of college education. It requires continuous exploration in terms of teaching modes and content. The integration of the advantages of teachers of different subjects can effectively solve relevant problems and improve the quality and efficiency of talent cultivation. The collaborative modes offer mutual benefit and reciprocity.

The rapid development of disciplines provides an opportunity for talent cultivation, and also challenges the training goals and modes. As a course in colleges and universities, English for Specific Purposes plays an increasingly important role in adapting to social development and cultivating outstanding talents. In view of cultivating the ability to communication and expand knowledge, ESP has been attached more importance in tertiary education. The collaboration of teachers of different subjects integrates the advantages and improves teaching efficiency. Certainly, the collaborative mode depends on close cooperation between departments to achieve complementary advantages and resource sharing. With disciplinary diversification and specialization, knowledge exponentially updates in modern times, it is beneficial to explore more collaborative teaching modes in ESP teaching.

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