中文题目：浅析大学英语教学的创新之路 —— 从通用英语到专门用途英语

English: On the Innovation of College English Teaching —— From EGP to ESP

赵春霞　　Zhao Chunxia

中国石油大学（华东）文学院

College of Arts, China University of Petroleum
Email address:moesha@163.com

摘要

当今，大学英语教学的创新改革势在必行。本文认为，采取通用英语（EGP）与专门用途英语（ESP）有效衔接的教学模式，是解决当前英语教学问题的一个行之有效的办法。通用英语和专门用途英语是为实现同一教学目标的两个层面。专门用途英语既是专业课的一种教学方式，也可以看作是大学通用英语教学的深入。大学阶段的前两年，学生应该学习"通用英语"。到了高年级阶段，学生应该结合自己的专业学习更高层次的"学术英语"。

本文着眼于大学英语教学模式创新，探讨当前英语课程实施的问题与出路，并基于大学英语课程实施专门用途英语教学模式的必要性与可行性进行分析，对于整体促进大学英语教学改革具有重要的现实意义。

关键词：创新、通用英语、专门用途英语

Abstract

Today, the innovation of the college English teaching reform is imperative. The author believes that the effective connection of general English (EGP) and English for specific purposes (ESP), is an effective way to the problem of the current English teaching. General English and English for specific purposes are the two aspects of the teaching to achieve the same objective. ESP is both the way of teaching specialized courses, and also be regarded as the deepening of university general English teaching. The first two years of university stage, students should learn "general English". In the senior stage, students should learn a higher level "academic English" according to their own major.

This paper focuses on innovation of college English teaching, discusses the problems and measures of the current English curriculum implementation, and analyzed necessity and feasibility of teaching mode based on college English curriculum implementation of English for specific purposes the is, and it is significant for the overall promotion of college English teaching reform.

Key words: innovation, General English, English for specific purposes

1. Background information

Nowadays, college English is the basic required course in all colleges and universities in our country, but as the pace of China's further opening to the outside world, and the increasingly frequent exchanges with foreign countries, we urgently need the high-quality talents who both have the good command of English and the abundant professional knowledge, so the innovation of the college English teaching reform is imperative. In order to cope with the situation, meet the social demand for higher quality talents, stimulate students' interest in learning, and improve the efficiency of college English teaching, many colleges and universities are carrying out the exploration of various kinds of reforms.

The aim of this study was to focus on the college English teaching strategies in non-English speaking countries in view of the increasing importance and popularity of English. The study shows most college students hope they are able to learn English well and they will be very happy if college English teachers can adopt some efficient and suitable teaching strategies. Considering this, how to teach college English well in non- English speaking countries becomes a hot topic (Zhang, 2007), because college life is the transitional period for a person from school to the society.

The author believes that effective connection of general English (EGP) and English for specific purposes (ESP) are the effective solution to the problem of the current English teaching. English for specific purposes (ESP) as a prospective business, plays a pioneer role in the teaching. General English and English for specific purposes are the two aspects of the teaching to achieve the same objective. Because if the foreign language "teaching" and "learning" can be close to native language level, namely students can directly use the foreign language for thinking, communication, teaching and learning, we will reach the highest level of foreign language study. Therefore, the specialized course of English for specific purposes is a way of teaching, which can also be regarded as the deepening of university general English teaching.

2. The definition of ESP

2.1 Definition of ESP

ESP is a term that refers to teaching or studying English for a particular career (like law, medicine) or for business in general. Stenvens (1988) thinks ESP as an opposite concept to EGP, in his definition of ESP, he suggests four absolute characteristics and two variable characteristics. The four absolute characteristics are: 1) designed to meet specified needs of the learner; 2) related in content (that is in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations and activities; 3) centered on language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics and so on, and analysis of the discourse; 4) in contrast with "General English".

The variable characteristics are: 1) may be restricted as to the learning skills to be learned (for example reading only); 2) may not be taught according to any pre-ordained methodology.

Ten years later, Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) modified the definition by Stenvens and divided characteristic features of ESP into two groups according to its attributes, concerning the absolute characteristics: 1) ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learner; 2) ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the disciplines it serves; 3) ESP is centered on the language lexis, register, skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities.

And the variable characteristics are seen in four points: 1) ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines; 2) ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English; 3) ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be used for learners at secondary school level; 4) ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students. Most ESP courses assume basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners. (Stevens, 1988)

2.2 The classification of ESP

David Carter (1983) identifies three types of ESP: 1) English as a restricted language; 2) English for Academic and Occupational Purposes; 3) English with specific topics.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), ESP was divided into three groups: ESS (English for Social Science), EBE (English for Business and Economics) and EST (English for Science and Technology). Each category can be divided into two types according to learners' requirements: EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and EOP (English for Occupational Purposes). Carter thinks that knowing a restricted 'language' would not allow the speaker to communicate effectively in novel situation, or in contexts outside the vocational environment. And Carter also implies that the end purpose of both EAP and EOP are one in the same: employment. However, despite the end purpose being identical, the means taken to achieve the end is very different indeed; EAP and EOP are different in terms of focus on notions of cognitive academic proficiency versus basic interpersonal skills. Carter notes that ESP with specific topic emphasis shifts purpose to topic. This type of ESP is uniquely concerned with anticipated future English needs of. Gatehouse (2001) suggests that there are three abilities necessary for successful communication in a professional target setting. The first ability required is the ability to use the particular jargon characteristic of that specific occupational context. The second is the ability to use a more generalized set of academic skills; the third is the ability to use the language of everyday informal talk to communicate effectively, regardless of occupational context. The task for the ESP developer is to ensure that all three of these abilities are merging into and merging in the curriculum.

3. Differences between EGP and ESP

As a teacher, we should know whether the English you are teaching is "General" or "Specific". Ellis and Johnson (1994) pointed out in their work *Teaching Business English* that "Business English must be seen in the overall context of

English for Specific Purposes (ESP), as it shares the important elements of needs analysis, syllabus design and material selection and development which are common in all fields of work in ESP." Then, what is the difference?

The difference of ESP and EGP (English for General Purpose) is mainly the difference of focus. Traditionally, EGP's emphasis is on the level of general students; this kind of English learning has no special focus on one area of human experience over another (Harmer, 2001). After the study, most of the students will master the basic language skills, but when they encounter some specific problem in some specific area (e.g. business), they can hardly deal with it. To the problem mentioned above, ESP is probably a good solution. The ESP students is usually studying English in order to carry out a particular role (Richards, 2001), once in a business class, the students will be a businessman in the future, they have a closely identified goal or purpose for learning. As Hutchinson and water (1987) said: "There are three reasons common to the emergence of all ESP: the demands of a Brave New World, a revolution in linguistics, and focus on the learner. The ESP focuses on the learners, it satisfied the learners' needs and demands and wishes other than language teachers' (Hutchinson &Waters, 1987). While in EGP, we just teach English for general use and based on the wishes and demands of the teachers.

In actual teaching, ESP and EGP are mutually connected and unified, they combined to achieve the same teaching objective from two aspects. EGP focuses on a general language and puts knowledge skills as the main teaching content; The ESP is based on the demand analysis, to train students in a certain work environment to use English for communication as the goal, it has very obvious practical and industrial characteristic. The effective connection of ESP and EGP teaching mode embodies the "specialization after the first base," the basic teaching pattern should be: EGP is the foundation of the ESP, and ESP is the further step of EGP.

4. The necessity and feasibility of the link of EGP and ESP

The link of EGP and ESP is quite necessary. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) believed that all courses are based on a perceived need of some sort. Waters put forward the two concepts of target needs and learning needs. Target needs refer to what we should know to behave well and do successfully in the target situation, and the learning needs--how to obtain this. Needs analysis makes more sense before course design in college English teaching. The result of learning needs analysis among students shows that the basis of language skills is poor, and they are lack of motivation for English study, furthermore, the education system is short and class hours for English study are so limited, but the target needs analysis demonstrates that the students should meet the requirements about language and communication skills for their future profession life. In such circumstance, if English teaching focuses more on EGP because of the students' poor basis, the students should show little interest in English study owing to their opinions that English study has nothing to do with their future vocations; on the other hand, if ESP becomes the core of English teaching

neglecting EGP learning, this kind of teaching should be a failure because it is beyond the abilities of students. So the appropriate way of English curriculum design is to merge ESP with EGP, which will take into account the basis, learning target and interest of the students.

Different types and school operation systems of universities required different curriculum systems, and the subject development and the talent training scheme decisions will also be different. Their requirement of English teaching and the students' learning are not the same. Higher education in the new period of personalized, diversified development meets with the most challenges. The college English curriculum, teaching arrangement and examination form had the intense conflicts, it makes the college English course gradually exposed its shortcomings: the teaching of English in a single mode, teaching contents mainly cover general topics, like literature and life, culture and so on. Almost no students have the related knowledge of their own majors, the teaching content does not conform to the learning needs, students' learning interest fell as the result of the poor teaching effect; the traditional form of compulsory English course can improve students' English language practical application ability only by little, however, the credits of elective courses are mainly distributed in compulsory classes, and frequently the student's choices of elective courses are limited; Teachers are exam-oriented and the constraints of teaching tasks had to be completed in form of the school reading, extensive reading and listening abilities, the English teaching is difficult to achieve the ideal effect. In this case, it is necessary to reform the existing mode of college English teaching, the effective connection of ESP and EGP in college English teaching is necessary.

5. The effective connection of EGP and ESP in college English teaching

First of all, in the aspect of teaching mode, laying solid language foundation should go first, then the ESP knowledge can be added. In view of students, who enrolled in the university, have basic English knowledge. During the four years' period of study in school, the school can focus on EGP teaching in the first year, to strengthen the students' English language elementary knowledge and basic skills training. At the same time, the teacher can use effective teaching methods, cultivate the students' practical use of English to communicate in their daily life. After a year of learning, the basic English knowledge and skills, and the English application ability of the students get promoted through all kinds of teaching activities inside and outside of class. In the sophomore year, according to the professional requirements of the different students, ESP teaching should be conducted. In ESP teaching, module teaching can be used. The first module is given priority to listening and speaking, and the authenticity of the target scene tasks should be emphasized, such as the business and technical congress; The second module is given priority to the reading, the selected texts are highly related to the students' major requirements, such as the practical writing, familiar essays, short play, etc.; The third module is an English

practical writing, such as reply to a colleague or boss's E-mail piece, to write all kinds of customs declaration form, etc. For the students of grade three and grade four, by opening elective courses to improve the ESP level of students. According to the different professional settings, different schools can open ESP and EGP courses in different ways, for example, the whole students' electives. This kind of ESP and EGP elective courses can be set according to professional integration on a large scale, such as computer related English communication, professional English practical writing, and professional business English reading and translation, etc. Students can select different courses according to their own majors or interests. In the following parts, the EGP+ESP connection will be further discussed:

5.1 The teaching department

ESP learning is a critical period to effectively improve students' English application ability and professional skills, and it can also reflect the characteristics of certain colleges, to show the market competitiveness of the college. But it is not one certain teacher or school' efforts can improve students' learning interest in ESP, to strengthen their English learning ability, this requires the various efforts to complete. Today, EGP and ESP are divided into different departments, and ESP teaching is more and more associated with the professional teaching and research section. To ensure the continuity and consistency of EGP and ESP teaching, college should attach great importance to perfect the EGP and ESP management and planning, it is very necessary to set up a special section to allocate EGP and ESP teaching resources, to strengthen the strong communication and cooperation among the teachers in these two different sections. To encourage EGP and ESP teachers to attend each other's classes, for evaluation, teaching and research discussion, academic exchanges and project cooperation. The effective cooperation in the aspects such as teaching and scientific research, not only to contribute to the whole implementation of the teaching plan, optimize combination faculty and organizing teaching activities, but also contribute to the overall study and research of the material, teaching plan, database and network curriculum teaching resources. Therefore, it will ensure the consistency of the whole English teaching system, to realize the real connection of EGP teaching and ESP teaching.

5.2 Curriculum content

At first, we should be clear about the course location. The colleges should earnestly work out teaching objectives with comprehensive analysis according to their own circumstance. First of all, reasonable positioning. To fully consider the features of students and teachers as a whole, give consideration to professional development requirements, and make reasonable requirements according to their aptitude. Second, pay attention to the training and students' future career-related English language ability and skills, not a "comprehensive" mode, but should have some highlight on one or two aspects. ESP has its relatively unique vocabulary, syntax and structure mode, ESP teaching is a combination of language skills training and professional knowledge learning. It has the English language skills practice, and a significant

professional connotation, its aim is to "strengthen basic training of English, make more contacts with its majors, to improve students' employment ability, improve the students' practical abilities" (Pei, 2009). Furthermore, ESP is the extension and enhancement of EGP, its teaching objectives are much clearer, it is to cultivate students' ability in the practical application of professional English, let students be more professional and practical.

5.3 The cohesion of teaching faculty

The guarantee of ESP teaching is to have the teachers with both professional knowledge and excellent English. So college leaders should not only pay attention to create conditions to the growth and development of ESP teachers, but also have some encouragement plans.

5.3.1 The integration of teaching faculty

At present, widely adopted way by many colleges is to arrange English teachers to learn professional knowledge, or make the professional teachers to improve English, but this method is less effective, and can't solve the problem in the long-term. In terms of current situation, to form teaching section with EGP teachers and professional teachers is necessary. The experienced teachers served as team leader, who is responsible for the design of the whole teaching plan, teaching organization and coordination and teaching materials, material research and development, and then assign the teaching mission, let the group members show their skills. In addition, the school can publish related policies and incentives, to select ESP teachers publicly. At the same time, the EGP teachers and professional teachers should make efforts to become the "bilingual teachers". This balanced and step-by-step implementation can make teachers foster their strengths and avoid weaknesses, can guarantee the teaching effect and ensure the integrity, systematization and consistency of English teaching (Fan, 2000).

5.3.2 Put knowledge into practice

To ensure the quality of ESP teaching, the teacher should not only learn the new knowledge, but also put the knowledge into practice; As far as the college is concerned, it can organize regular trainings for teachers, mainly in three ways: (1) invitation: Not only can invite the ESP experts in domestic and foreign countries to come to the school as the instructor, teaching the ESP teaching theory, the research methods, but also can invite professional experts to help teachers enrich the professional knowledge, enrich corpus sources of teachers, let the ESP teaching be more efficient, more targeted; (2) send: According to the colleges' different circumstance, schools of the various colleges and universities can select some young teachers with certain foreign language foundation and certain professional knowledge to go to ESP teaching training base for advanced study at home and abroad;(3) strengthen the self-cultivation. To encourage EGP and ESP teachers to attend each other's classes, for evaluation, teaching and research discussion, academic exchanges, project cooperation (Yuan, 2006). The experienced ESP teachers in the colleges should help and accelerate the growth of the young ESP teachers through seminars

and other activities. In addition, the college should make full use of summer and winter vacations for ESP immersion training, the teachers can be sent to the relevant enterprises. In these ways, can ESP teachers keep up with the pace of the times, and always be acknowledged with the new knowledge and new technology.

5.4 The connection of the teaching materials

Through the years of exploration and practice, the ESP teaching has accumulated some related materials and the experience, but that is not enough and systematic. Therefore, currently ESP teaching material used by many universities is relatively in confusion, to improve the overall domestic ESP teaching level is quite necessary. ESP education departments should organize a number of experienced ESP teachers and designers to write the good teaching materials, good ESP teaching plans for colleges and universities to serve the ESP teaching, which suits with the situation of China and then can be put forward to the whole country, to enhance the ESP teaching step by step. Secondly, in terms of teaching material, to meet the professional requirements of the teaching material. ESP teaching materials should be educational and teaching content should be reflected the most basic knowledge in the field of the professional and the most basic skills. ESP teachers should be closely related to students' professional course setting, make efforts to combine ESP teaching with students of the existing professional knowledge. ESP teachers need to read the latest select relevant professional newspapers, magazines, books, popular science articles used in the teaching of the nature. In addition, no matter the select teaching materials or edit the teaching material, they all should be taught in accordance with the teacher's own professional knowledge level.

5.5 Teaching evaluation

In the connected teaching mode of EGP and ESP, no matter they are the ESP and EGP teachers or other specialized course teachers, they all need cooperation and design the fixed teaching plan and syllabus together, to choose and write the teaching material, provide language skills training to the students, to give the evaluation of students. The connected teaching mode of EGP and ESP should make use of the teaching means such as multimedia, network, or create a simulated work environment, so that the students can feel the real work situations, help students get familiar with the real job as early as they can. To adopt multiple evaluation system. In the ESP and EGP immersion program, the content of assessment and evaluation should be used. The teachers should attach importance to the students' application of language skills and situation, pay attention to ability of using English to solve the problem of associated with specialty and the ability to finish work task. The forms of assessment can be verified, e.g. the usual practice, the final exam, the teacher appraisal, self-evaluation, students' mutual combination, etc. The teacher should also guide the student to pay attention to the learning process, and practical application of English ability. As is required by the EGP and ESP cohesion curriculum, the students need to pay more attention to language in listening, speaking, reading, and

writing and translating five aspects of the ability; improve the ability of English as a tool to obtain new knowledge, especially the professional knowledge. We should strengthen the English as a tool to solve problems related to the professional ability and the ability of working task, take the diverse forms of evaluation and examination, we can take the teachers' evaluation, students mutual evaluation, students' self-evaluation, etc. Combining the students' class performance, homework, methods of learning attitude, the students' English ability evaluation of usual practice, the final exam, the teacher evaluation. The teachers should let the student attach great importance to the learning process, and finally they can make the real practical application of English.

For ESP teaching assessment, we can also learn from other countries, such as we can take the internal and external mixed evaluation system (Richards, 2001), that is the method of combining. First, the main purpose of internal evaluation is the assessment of students' mastery of content they learned in class. Through periodic examination, students' self-evaluation, mutual evaluation, group evaluation method for it. Learning attitude and process evaluation, in order to improve the students' ability of autonomous learning. Of course, we can also refer to the college band four and band six examination, and other degree English exams, and let these students participate in these certification tests for once or twice a year, the students who passed the exam will be awarded with social acceptance qualification certificate. Second, external evaluation, its purpose is to test students to use English in the professional environment, the ways of evaluation are various, such as questionnaire, interview and so on. However, because the students are relatively scattered, compared with the internal evaluation, it is more different to organize the external evaluation, therefore, more people will be involved in.

5.6 Internet in EGP+ESP class

Make use of the Internet and the rich network resources, and construct ESP network teaching mode. With the rapid development of Internet information technology and multimedia technology, the teaching concept has been changed a lot. The ESP teachers can search the leading ESP materials at home and abroad by Google, baidu, being, Yahoo and other search engines very conveniently, especially the ESP teachers can upload and share their courseware, class audios and videos via the Internet. The higher education departments can set up a net resources platform to collect various colleges ESP courses exclusively, then the ESP teachers can learn from each other, to exchange and share their teaching resources. It will be quite effective for the ESP teaching research to save manpower and material resources and financial resources, the gap between the various colleges and universities of ESP teaching will be shortened, and can quickly improve the overall level of ESP teaching around the country.

ESP network teaching is based on the internet, interactive media is given priority to text, images and video, the participants can interact with Weibo, BBS, E-mail, SMN mainly, and also can resort to other means, such as blogs, wikis, Tag, SNS, and other social software.

6. Summary

With China's accession to the WTO and the continuous development of global economic integration, application characteristics of foreign language has become increasingly apparent. In this case, the original university English teaching mode has not adapted to the demand of the society. In this paper, a combination of the ESP and EGP in college English teaching goes with the development of the times, the mode can stimulate students' interest in learning, and effectively improve the college English teaching effect. It is an effective way of college English teaching reform, but also needs in real teaching continuously improve in practice.

The abilities of ESP and EGP are integral and necessary for effective communication in different professional settings. EGP is the base for ESP, and ESP is the application of EGP. It's obvious that ESP is not the opposite of EGP, conversely the relationship between them are complementary, which means they coexist in the curriculum design. As an approach to teaching, ESP is different from EGP in practicability and pertinence, but concerning teaching basic principles, there are the same procedures of teaching and learning in ESP and EGP. The specific teaching approach to ESP doesn't exist, that is to say, the ESP and EGP courses are to achieve the same purpose. EGP + ESP merging curriculum is in accord with the teaching philosophy which emphasizes the basic and application of language. On one hand, this kind of merging courses can improve the basic language skills of the students; on the other hand, it makes them realize the practical use of the language. For the different colleges, they will conduct the EGP and ESP teaching quite differently, but they share the assumption that the learners are at the center of any course and it guides the design of reasonable syllabus, appropriate materials, comprehensive evaluation and modification, making the English teaching and learning efficient. This merging curriculum pattern is a big challenge to the English teachers and the administrators; it indeed can stimulate the students' interest in language learning and motivation and improve classroom teaching effect.

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