

# Training and development of ESP teachers—Take the cultivation and development of medical English teaching team as an example

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**Abstract:** *in recent years, under the background of the national college English teaching reform, college English teachers are facing new problems and challenges. Taking the reform of college English ESP teaching in Xi'an Peihua University of medicine as an example, this paper analyzes the problems in the construction of college English ESP teaching team under the new situation, the strategies of teachers' transformation, and proposes solutions and countermeasures.*

**Keywords:** *university ESP course; College English; Teacher training*

## 1. Introduction

With the globalization of the world economy, the exchanges between China and the world are increasingly frequent, and there is a sharp increase in the demand for application-oriented and inter-disciplinary talents who are both professional and proficient in foreign languages. The international and domestic situation requires more and more English proficiency of professionals, especially the application ability of professional English, which also puts forward higher requirements for college English teaching. According to the 2017 College English Teaching Guidelines issued by the ministry of education, it points out the main content of college English teaching can be divided into three parts, General English, English for Special Purposes, and Cross-cultural Communication. [1] Thus forming the corresponding three types of courses, namely general English courses, ESP courses, and courses in cross-cultural communication. For the first time, the college English curriculum system has been formally incorporated into the special-purpose English curriculum, which fully reflects the new thinking and understanding of the college English teaching circle on the curriculum system. In practical teaching, it is of great significance to apply the theory of "English for Specific Purposes (ESP)" to medical English courses, effectively connect English for General Purposes (EGP) with ESP, and form a new teaching mode to cultivate high-quality interdisciplinary medical English talents.

The emphasis of ESP and EGP is significantly different. EGP learners learn English to master a communication tool, while ESP learners learn English with a clear purpose, either for academic research or for professional activities. EGP teaching aims at teaching common English language skills, while ESP teaching is based on demand analysis, and the content of teaching is determined by different majors and needs of learners. ESP teaching focuses on 'doing', that is, improving English through practice, while traditional EGP teaching focuses on 'knowing', that is, understanding the universal rules of the language in the first place.[2] The effective integration of EGP and ESP in Xi'an Peihua University is in line with the development trend of English teaching in Xi'an Peihua University. For students, the effective connection between the two can not only make students become proficient in professional knowledge and able to communicate well in English, but also improve their professional competitiveness. For teachers, the reasonable and effective connection between the two can well train application-oriented talents with "specialty + skill" for application-oriented colleges and universities, and meet the teaching reform needs of application-oriented colleges and universities.

This study is based on the host's previous research project "Research on the Construction of English Teaching Model for Application-oriented Nursing Talents Based on the International English Proficiency Evaluation System". Aiming at the present situation of the applied university medical students English learning, guided by the international English level evaluation system. Teachers should define the teaching objectives, design the teaching plan and construct the teaching mode to discuss the training mode of applied and innovative talents with solid medical knowledge foundation and good

medical English level. During the course of teaching *English for Medical Care* to the nursing major of our medical school, I deeply felt the great popularity of medical ESP course among students. In the course of teaching, students not only learned a lot of medical English terms, medical situation English dialogue, medical English knowledge and practice, but also stimulated students' interest in learning, and set up the learning goal of becoming an international nursing talent. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out ESP courses in medical schools, not only for nursing majors, but also for pharmacy, medical information engineering, clinical medicine, stomatology technology and other specialties. With the reform of the college English curriculum and the training of ESP teachers and the construction of the teaching team, the ESP curriculum has been extended to all majors in medical school.

## 2. The key to ESP course is the faculty

The establishment of ESP courses in college English requires qualified ESP teachers. The ESP course in Chinese universities is a language course based on the content of the subject. It is designed around the language required by non-English majors to complete their professional tasks in the target occupation or academic field.

College English teachers who already have experience teaching second language should be able to use their professional background in language teaching to identify the skills in their teaching skills that can be used to teach ESP. This study suggests that apart from the role of pure language teachers, the important role of college English ESP teachers should also be the facilitator of the acquisition of professional knowledge in the subject area, rather than the direct role of subject teachers. Our college English teachers must not only be competent for the task of teaching non-English majors, but also adapt to the new domestic and international development situation for high-quality talents. In other words, the university public English teachers should be transformed into ESP teachers. Based on the cultivation and development of medical English teaching teams, this essay will study the training strategies, development paths and training modes of ESP teachers.[3]

In the practice of the reform, the teaching of college English teaching from the professional characteristics of the students in our school and the reality of learning demand, has updated the teaching concept, perfected the course system, strengthened the teaching management and teachers training, MODEL is constructed to the characteristics of college English courses, improved the student' English comprehensive application ability, improved the teachers' teaching level, professionalism and team spirit. Based on current medical English ESP courses in our school's current teaching situation and research achievements, the research goal of this essay is on the basis of medical English ESP propulsion, establish medical English teaching team, and further to ESP courses gradually radiation to other medical related specialty and the other college major. In the course system construction at the same time, help our university English teaching reform, improve the quality of college English teaching. [4] Meanwhile, we should improve the professional level of college English teachers and their teaching and research ability, expand their career development space, strengthen the strength of the teaching team, and ensure the motivation and sustainable development of the team.

## 3. Problems in ESP course construction

First, the faculty is inadequate. Teachers play an important role in the reform of college English teaching and are the key factor in the transformation from basic English teaching to ESP English teaching. Therefore, the key to ESP's teaching transformation is to develop a high-quality faculty. If the problem is not addressed properly, it will be difficult to achieve a successful transformation of ESP teaching. At present, the existing problems, first of all, is the shortage of teachers, our university English teaching and research office currently has 21 full-time teachers to undertake college English teaching tasks, and every semester there are about 30 part-time teachers on average. In the course of reform, the instability of part-time teachers is the main factor that affects the teaching reform.

Secondly, English teachers have a single knowledge structure. Since college English teaching has always been the responsibility of college English teachers, these teachers have become the undertakers of ESP teaching. However, all college English teachers are EGP teachers who graduated from English major. They have solid professional knowledge and English language skills, to be able to do the teaching work such as English listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating skills, but lack of related knowledge and practical experience, and no inability to combine English and industry knowledge organically and apply it to ESP teaching, thus have affected the ESP teaching purpose of

effectively combining basic English knowledge with industry knowledge.[5]

#### **4. ESP teacher training strategies and approaches**

The reform direction of college English teaching in our university is to change from EGP to ESP teaching, and the successful transformation cannot be achieved without the college English teachers in the front line of teaching. Currently, the English for medical care course is the combination of basic English knowledge and medical professional knowledge in ESP teaching. The EGP English teacher who is responsible for college English teaching is the key factor for the success of the transformation. Therefore, the transition from EGP teachers to ESP teachers puts forward higher requirements on teachers' knowledge structure, teaching methods, and teaching material evaluation ability. How to make a successful transformation to adapt to the transformation of college English ESP teaching has become a difficult problem in the development of application-oriented college English teachers. In view of the problems existing in the transformation of ESP teaching in our college and the requirements of ESP teaching for teachers, this study suggests that college English teachers in our college should establish a correct ESP teaching concept, construct a reasonable knowledge structure, select appropriate ESP teaching content and adopt correct ESP teaching methods to achieve a successful transformation.

##### ***4.1 Establishing correct ESP teaching philosophy***

ESP teaching is neither basic English nor bilingual, as it does not involve spending as much time explaining medical vocabulary and grammar, explaining difficult sentences, or translating articles sentence by sentence as a bilingual course does. The purpose of ESP teaching is to improve students' ability to listen, speak, read, write and translate professional knowledge in English by combining English with professional knowledge. The purpose of ESP teaching is to improve students' ability to listen, speak, read, write and translate professional knowledge in English by combining English with professional knowledge. Medical English, for example, the center of gravity of the ESP teaching is combined with medical professional knowledge of English, and meet the demand of medical professional medical related professional students, help students understand and master English skills related to medical professional knowledge, improve medical English using ability, promote students medical professional learning and development, provide the basis for enhancing professional potential students.

##### ***4.2 Constructing a reasonable knowledge structure***

ESP teachers are first and foremost language teachers and should have the language teaching quality of foreign language teachers. Secondly, professional teachers should have the professional knowledge and quality of teachers of specialized courses. Only when the two are combined can ESP teachers be qualified for ESP teaching tasks. Take medical English as an example. For college English teachers who lack professional knowledge, they can participate in the class of medical teachers in their spare time, or choose to sit in on the class according to their own time and energy. They can also learn medical knowledge by self-study. In addition, the books and resources of medical specialty are very rich. Teachers can learn medical knowledge by reading books and network resources. They can also learn the specialized knowledge of ESP courses by reading English medical literature and watching English medical videos. In addition, college English teachers need to systematically learn ESP teaching theories, such as reading ESP teaching books and literature, attending relevant conferences, lectures and trainings.

##### ***4.3 Adopting the correct ESP teaching method***

ESP teaching is different from basic English teaching, it is also different from medical professional bilingual courses. ESP teachers in teaching can not continue to use the traditional grammar translation method, and the right ESP teaching methods must be used. At present, the method suitable for ESP is content-based instruction (CBI), that is, content-based Instruction. CBI teaching advocates the integration of language skills training and knowledge imparting in the teaching process. Promoting each other to realize the goal of knowledge construction, thinking training and English skill improvement. Taking medical English as an example, medical ESP teaching in our school is based on medical professional knowledge to cultivate students' English ability of using medical knowledge.

Teachers using CBI for ESP teaching can combine the knowledge of the medical profession with the improvement of English skills, and use English as a tool for teaching the medical profession and language teaching. In the process of teaching medical knowledge, teachers improved students' English knowledge and basic skills, and provided help for students' professional learning and career needs.

#### **4.4 Exploring the transformation mode of ESP teachers**

Limited by other professional knowledge, college English teachers have to learn relevant professional knowledge in the process of becoming ESP teachers, which poses a challenge to college English teachers. In order to break through this bottleneck, college English teachers should actively explore and learn professional knowledge, and timely change their teaching methods and concepts by going out for training, exchange, self-study and attending lectures. College English teachers should understand the current situation, existing problems and teacher training strategies of ESP teaching in our college. Combining with the reform of college English teaching, constantly explore suitable ways for our teachers to become ESP teachers, set up teaching teams and promote the comprehensive coverage of ESP courses.[6]

### **5. Conclusion**

The direction of college English reform in local application-oriented universities is ESP teaching, which is not only in line with the development trend of college English reform in China, but also conducive to the cultivation of inter-disciplinary talents with higher professional knowledge and English application ability in local application-oriented universities.[7]The transformation of our college English teachers to ESP teachers is an inevitable trend and a great challenge for the development of English teachers. At the forefront of the reform, medical English teaching team teachers must strengthen self-development awareness, learn medical professional knowledge and ESP teaching theory knowledge, actively write ESP medical English teaching materials that meet the needs of students, and take the initiative to become ESP teachers. In addition, college English teachers should seek development in the reform of medical English ESP teaching, set a positive example, promote the comprehensive promotion of ESP teaching in various specialties of our college, and improve the language application ability and career development of our students. At the same time, college English teachers distributed in various departments and institutes must actively participate in the teaching reform, choose ESP courses of different majors for research and study, comprehensively promote the reform of college English curriculum, and provide help for students' professional learning and career needs. For the reform of medical English, the development of medical and health services in China requires medical college to cultivate students with an international perspective, and ESP is the only way to achieve this goal.[8]The construction of ESP faculty is the foundation and guarantee for achieving this goal. The colleges should provide a platform for the construction of ESP faculty in the macro environment and system, strengthen the motivation of teachers' personal development, and achieve sustainable development of teachers with the cooperation and help of the team. Only individual, group, machine and macro environment can create a team of teachers to serve ESP teaching and realize the goal of cultivating compound talents.

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