The Study on Business English Teaching Mode of International Trade Students based on ESP Theory

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Abstract
The growing foreign trade conflicts with the current shortage of compound foreign trade talents. How to combine English language knowledge with international trade professional knowledge in order to cultivate compound foreign trade talents is a hot topic for many universities. This paper is trying to solve the problems of current situation and explore how to develop students into talents who master foreign trade knowledge and English knowledge with ESP teaching mode and lay a solid foundation for occupational English, pushing forward English course teaching reform.

Keywords
Business English; Teaching Mode; International Trade.

1. Introduction
Nowadays, with the continuous development of the economy and the gradual deepening of economic globalization, international trade has become an important pillar of economic development in our country. At the same time, the standards for foreign trade talents is becoming high gradually, especially the English ability of international trade talents. At present, the previous training mode has long been unable to adapt to the development of society. Universities in China is strengthening the management of international trade specialty for meeting the needs of market. For students majoring in International Trade, it's quite significant to be good at the English language which performs as the lingua franca. For example, they could read English materials in medium difficulty and understand the meaning; they could clearly write some applications such as letters, contracts without grammatical errors; they could translate some major-related materials with the help of online tools; they could handle general conversations on their business in foreign activities. English teaching for students from International Trade major should include language ability training and professional knowledge which aims at combining English and students’ major together. From the perspective of students from International Trade Major, it's very helpful to improve the working efficiency by developing English language abilities. Meanwhile, teachers should keep learning continuously in order to be qualified in the English course especially for students from International Trade major.

2. ESP Theory
ESP(English for Special Purpose) is a kind of teaching approach designed for specific major and occupation guided by special objectives based on need analysis [1]. The teaching content and teaching methods depend on learning aims, such as Business English, Traveling English, Financial English, Medical English, Law English and so on. In the teaching process, language use ability is to be developed and cultivated in a special field by language learning. British applied linguistics Peter Strevens defined ESP as ESP courses are those in which the aims and the content are determined, principally or wholly not by criteria of general education(as when
English is a school subject), but by function or practical English requirements of the learner. Until now from 1960s, ESP theory has formed complete teaching mode including teaching ideas, teaching approaches, teaching plans and procedures.

Universities in China should provide all kinds of ESP courses for students with some basic English knowledge, which will not hinder the improvement of students’ English level but promote the language learning efficiency. The teaching theory combining the language learning and professional knowledge and skills training undoubtedly provides new theoretical basis for college English teaching. When it comes to teaching objectives for students from International Trade major, the aims of Business English course is to master the knowledge and skills of English language; learn some professional knowledge; most importantly students can process effective business negotiations and handle the practical problems in the international business. According to relevant ESP theory, ESP courses are set up for satisfying students’ specific aims and needs. ESP expert Robinson has said that E is determined by SP. The analysis and study on learners’ learning objectives is the essence. Therefore this paper is trying to explore the proper teaching mode for students from International Trade major based on ESP theory highlighting the characteristics of this major and cultivating compound and practical talents.

3. Problems in the Current Situation

Students from International Trade major think that they had mastered necessary English language knowledge basis and their English abilities has improved a lot after two years’ learning of general English. However they can not use English freely during the business activities. The problems can be listed as follows.

Firstly, students are lack of business English language knowledge. A great many students are lack of business English vocabulary and don’t understand the customs and business contextual forms. Many grammatical, syntactic and textual mistakes appeared in practical use.

Secondly, students have poor business practical skills and English output techniques. A majority of students are short of the professional skills required in companies and don’t know how to use English to handle business work in practical business activities. Investigation shows that students performed so poorly in the real business situations. Some graduates cannot write emails and letters according to business contextual forms, even a decent English memo; some cannot translate the business ads and product directions; some cannot introduce the products to customers fluently in English or perform effective business negotiations.

Thirdly, students are lack of business crosscultural communication ability. Some graduates had difficulty communicating in English because of poor business crosscultural communication ability. In the real practice, they would unconsciously use the language rules, communication habits and cultural background of their mother tongue to convey their ideas, which lead to misunderstanding and conflicts or make each other feel embarrassed because of the failure of business information expression.

4. Suggestions on Improving Current Situation

4.1. Improve the Teaching Efficiency

The combination of students’ needs, social needs and curriculum objectives should be considered. Language ability and all-around abilities should be cultivated comprehensively. A successful foreign trade worker should master business cultural differences of different countries and areas, which will avoid impoliteness caused by ignorance and make sure the normal development of economic activities. The combination of language skills and professional skills training shouldn’t be ignored. Offering a certain number and abundant
elective courses for students to choose is an important way to improve students' comprehensive quality [2].

4.2. **Optimize the Content of the Curriculum**

Use modern knowledge to review, select and organize the classic and traditional teaching content, and increase the teaching content that reflects the latest development of the subject area [3]. Choose the right textbook. The update of the course content is mainly achieved through the update of teaching materials. For the selection of teaching materials, our principle is to choose teaching materials that are conducive to the study of business English language and business professional knowledge, broaden the knowledge structure, and strengthen the training of business English skills.

4.3. **Make Full Use of Multimedia Teaching Methods**

Computer-assisted teaching is an important means to increase teaching capacity to realize multiple modes of classroom teaching and improve teaching effects. We combine multimedia teaching methods with business English teaching, optimize course content through the use of language, music, image, and animation data, mobilize students' hearing, vision and imagination, expand students' thinking space, further strengthen the network teaching mode, which not only improves the teaching effect also enriches the students’ extracurricular learning content. Students can also develop their own ability to obtain and process information through the Internet.

4.4. **Establish A Proper Course Evaluation System**

Evaluation is an indispensable step in curriculum design and an effective way to ensure the quality and effectiveness of the curriculum. Through tests and assessments, understand the students' learning situation in stages. Through random checks and interviews from time to time, to understand students’ evaluations of courses, including teaching content, teaching methods, teaching effects, teaching activities, learning effects, etc. These evaluation methods provide feedback information for the curriculum plan, course content and quality, so that we can discover in time if there are problems, improve the requirements in time to reach the course goals.

5. **Conclusion**

With the diversification of foreign economic and trade business methods, e-commerce and paperless trade are becoming more and more common, foreign economic and trade business units and departments require applied international economic and trade talents to have strong practical capabilities. It is particularly important to strengthen practical teaching and strengthen students’ application ability. For students majoring in international economics and trade, we should improve the teaching efficiency, optimize the content of the curriculum, promote computer-assisted teaching and establish a proper course evaluation system in order to cultivate the foreign trade talents to meet the needs of society.

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