

Exploring the Attitudes and Needs of Pre-service ESP Teachers in Western Chinese Universities

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Abstract

Encouraging more and more English as General Purpose (EGP) teachers to teach courses of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) for non-English majors to prepare students for future professional needs has become a vital issue in the reform of College English Teaching in China. Although most colleges and universities in more developed eastern China have taken the lead in ESP teaching, only a few colleges and universities in less-developed western China have offered ESP courses. As the teaching mainstay of ESP courses, college English teachers face a period of "transformation". Thus, their attitudes towards teaching an entirely new subject area in English play an essential role in the effectiveness of language teaching. This article attempts to investigate how college English teachers regard teaching ESP courses and what kind of assistance they need to provide ESP courses. The participants are all teachers from Western universities studying ESP and EAP at the University of Aberdeen, funded by the China Scholarship Council (CSC). They are the backbone teachers of each university, so their views are representative. The research adopts a mixed research method combining qualitative and quantitative methods. A semi-structured questionnaire based on Richter's rating scale is used to understand the participants' attitudes, and an in-depth interview is used to explore the needs of these teachers. The findings of a questionnaire and interview among college English teachers from western Chinese universities can be applied to confirm the hypothesis that most teachers have positive attitudes toward teaching ESP courses. They would like to adjust themselves and change the teaching ideas and methods to achieve a better teaching effect in the future teaching process of ESP. Training programs for the pre-service ESP teachers to master specific related professional knowledge and new collaborative teaching models are requested by EGP teachers to equip themselves as proficient ESP practitioners. A strong sense of responsibility, moral sense, enterprise, and open attitude is the prerequisite and emotional basis for pre-service ESP teachers to carry out effective ESP teaching. Thus, the present EGP teachers can become students' assistants of ESP learning and collaborators with other professional disciplines.

Keywords: ESP Courses, Attitude, Effective Teaching, Western China, ESP Practitioner.

Introduction

This part will discuss the primary information of this research, the background of the study, the statement of the problem, research questions and objectives, and the significance of the study. They provide the readers with an overview of the research.

Background of the Study

Influenced by the pragmatism thought advocated by John Dewey, the great American educator, higher education in China also emphasizes practicality more. And the growing importance of global English has led to the rise of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teaching, particularly in higher education (Kirkgoz, 2019). The Requirement for College English Teaching issued by the Ministry for Higher Education clearly defines the goal of college English teaching: the teaching goal of college English is to cultivate the students' English comprehensive application ability, especially listening and speaking skills, to enable them to communicate effectively in English in the future study, work and social activities, at the same time to improve their ability of autonomous learning, improve the comprehensive cultural quality, to meet the need of social development in our country and international communication. It clearly explains the complete application ability of English, that is, the ability to communicate in English in the study, work, and social communication; thus, it can be seen that the direction of college public English teaching is finally moving towards practicality (MOE, 2007). The proposal responds to the demands of globalization through ESP. In exploring the language teaching method that combines language with speciality, ESP, as a language teaching method that integrates content and language, has attracted more and more attention in English language teaching and research in China.

One of the effects of the growing importance of global English in professional contexts has been the rise of ESP teaching at all levels (Huttner et al., 2009). The researchers hope to transform the current EGP-oriented college English teaching into cultivating students' ESP for professional learning or future career. Thus, students' global vision can be expanded, and their ability for cross-cultural communication, scholarly communication, cooperation in the professional field and participation in international competition can be enhanced. To a large extent, the application of ESP can meet these new requirements of college English teaching in China, since the main objective of ESP is to prepare students to read and comprehend materials in their discipline in English without any or at least little difficulty (Ahmadi & Bajelani, 2012). The increasing importance of English in professional contexts in the form of ESP has been reinforced around China. Therefore, ESP courses for non-English majors have become a trend in college English teaching (Liu, 2001; Cai, 2004, 2007, 2010). They can not only improve non-English majors' motivation for EFL learning significantly but also meet their future professional needs.

Problem Statement

Although ESP has become a catchphrase in EFL teaching and learning, the present studies mostly stay at the level of ESP itself. That is to say, most of the studies in China focus on the introduction of foreign ESP theories, analysis of students' different needs, ESP course design, the authenticity of teaching materials, teachers' education and training and professional development. Most domestic works in China on ESP are based on introducing foreign theoretical research results to explore its application in domestic English teaching practice. The few research studies that have been conducted have only tapped into how EFL learners

feel about ESP. Nevertheless, very little, if any, prior research has been done regarding ESP teachers' attitudes. The study focuses on understanding the ESP courses and exploring the attitudes of future ESP teachers toward the ESP courses themselves and their feelings about teaching them.

What's more, the assistance needed by them is also sought through an in-depth interview (IDI). At the same time, how to design ESP courses for college EFL learners, especially those in western universities. Most of the English taught in European universities today is specialized English (Fortanet-Gomez & Raisanen, 2008). In China, only some universities are offering ESP courses, and these universities are mainly located in developed areas and cities. Those universities in relatively developed regions and cities in western China have few ESP courses. Therefore, for college English teachers who will teach ESP courses at Western University, their attitudes, ideas and needs are critical. The curriculum plan, setting and teaching mode of domestic and foreign universities that have offered ESP courses will provide a meaningful reference for the effective implementation of ESP courses at Western China University.

Research Questions and Objectives

The study will explore the answers to the following questions and achieve the objectives written below.

1. What do teachers think of ESP courses and instruction of ESP?
2. What kind of help do they need to implement the ESP courses?
3. How to design ESP courses for non-English majors in Western China?

Therefore, this study focused on exploring college English teachers' attitudes towards teaching ESP courses for non - English majors, and the results of the questionnaire are presented as indicators. Besides, it is also expected to seek further assistance by selected excerpts from interviews and make college English teachers more comfortable and confident to take ESP classes. The combination of the findings of the research and the existing models will be applied to explore feasible and effective teaching and learning models for instructors and learners.

Significance of the Study

This study focused on exploring college English teachers' attitudes towards teaching ESP courses for non-English majors, and the results of the questionnaire are presented as indicators. Besides, it is also expected to seek further assistance by selected excerpts from interviews and make college English teachers more comfortable and confident to take ESP classes. The combination of the findings of the research and the existing models will be applied to explore feasible and effective teaching and learning models for instructors and learners. A combined approach of qualitative and quantitative analysis is run throughout the paper.

Literature Review

Revolving around the main issues of ESP, researchers have carried out numerous studies in recent years. In this section, previous research into the ESP approach, the challenges and training needs for ESP practitioners, and the teaching attitude toward ESP are necessary to illustrate the significance of teaching ESP. The necessity to provide ESP courses to non-English majors and analyze ESP practitioners' challenges and training is also mentioned.

ESP and ESP Approach

The growth of technology and economics after World War II, the considerable development of linguistic theories, and the focus of educators on the needs of the learners have paved the way for the birth and nourishment of ESP (Stevens, 1988; Dudley-Evans & Maggie, 2002; Dehrab, 2002). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) stated the reason for the growth of ESP as "the expansion of demand for English to suit particular needs and developments in the fields of linguistics and educational psychology."

"Tell me what you need English for, and I will tell you the English that you need" (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987) was described as the guiding rationale of ESP. ESP should be simply regarded as a learning-centred approach to meet the specific needs of the learners rather than a product (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Stevens (1988) agreed that it was need-driven, but also argued related to the content and appropriate language identification. Moreover, Robinson (1991) defined ESP as a "target-oriented" process organized in the form of courses. The need for ESP is derived from a detailed analysis of the purpose and methods of achieving these targets. Thus, ESP is labelled as a need-based, learner-centred, profession-oriented, target-based, and content-based teaching approach. It is mainly due to these characteristics of ESP that it has grown to become one of the most prominent areas of teaching today.

ESP Practitioners

Teaching ESP and teaching EGP is theoretically no different, but in practice, there is a great deal of distinction (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). ESP teachers are described as "reluctant dwellers in a strange and uncharted land" (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987), which is intimidating for many ESP teachers (Belcher, 2006). It is mainly because ESP teachers "have to struggle to master language and subject matter beyond the bounds of their previous experience" (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987), but how far ESP teachers' specialist knowledge should extend is challenging to specify. Under such circumstances, ESP teachers seem to be put into a dilemma. Moreover, tasks for ESP teachers include analyzing students' needs, outlining objectives, selecting and adapting teaching materials, designing lessons, creating an adult-oriented learning environment, and assessing students' progress (Schleppegrell, 1991). Their switch from EGP teachers into this field is sudden (Stevens, 1988). Compared to EGP teachers, ESP teachers have more roles as teachers, designers, providers of teaching materials, collaborators, researchers, evaluators, analysts, and negotiators (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Content learners and facilitators should probably be added to the profile of ESP teachers. "Indeed, Swales (1985) prefers, with some justification, to use the term 'ESP practitioner' rather than 'ESP teacher' to reflect this scope" (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). The term "practitioner" best fits the ESP teacher's role, a position beyond merely teaching (Dudley-Evans & John, 1998). Esteban and Martos (2002) argued that the salient feature in teaching EGP is "homogeneity", while the defining criterion for ESP is "diversity". Diversity requires versatility and flexibility for competent ESP practitioners. In the context of the comparatively under-developed western China, the challenging, it may be more challenging for EGP teachers to transform into ESP practitioners.

Teaching Attitude towards ESP

It is commonly accepted that attitudes can mean a lot, and pieces of research related to attitudes are continually referred to. According to Souza-Barros (1997), attitude is defined in social psychology as mental preparation for action. It also represents the individual's

prevailing tendency towards an object, whether positive or negative. Attitudes and beliefs are a subset of a group of constructs that name, define, and describe the structure and content of mental states that are thought to drive a person's actions (Richardson, 1996). Bain and Ken (2004) defined attitude as a relational mental state that directs the behaviours of an individual, and it is composed of some indispensable psychological dynamics, such as experiences, beliefs, desires, hopes, likes and dislikes and intentions. Then before taking action, examining attitudes can be essential.

According to Ma (2005), the Teaching Attitude (TA) refers to teachers' views and actions on teaching. TA is further expanded by Guo (2011), who states that TA is regarded as a psychological tendency towards the teaching profession and students. It consists of cognition, affection, and the trend of teaching. She further pointed out that a positive teaching attitude can get twice the result with half the effort. Attitude is the manifestation of professionalism. Therefore, teaching attitudes may equally weigh against teaching competencies. Since teaching attitudes could negatively affect the learning process, Souza-Barros (1997) called for a change in teachers' attitudes. It can be inferred that positive teaching attitudes profoundly impact teacher practices and behaviours.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) put forward that ESP teachers need three elements only, including:

- i) a positive attitude towards the ESP content;
- ii) knowledge of the fundamental principles of the subject area;
- iii) the awareness of how much they probably already know.

It is mainly because teaching content is the foremost concern for ESP teachers. Hutchinson & waters only mentioned a positive attitude towards the ESP content. Although some limitations from this point of view are unavoidable, it is not hard to see that a positive attitude is crucially essential for ESP teachers.

Training of ESP Practitioners

By analyzing the profile of ESP practitioners, it is not surprising to find that being a qualified ESP practitioner requires more additional professional training. However, traditional teacher training is based on the assumption of clearly defined competencies and skills that student teachers need to develop to deal with predictable problems and requirements (Huttner et al., 2009). One of the effects of the growing importance of global English in professional contexts has been the rise of ESP teaching at all levels. Despite the concurrently increasing demand for ESP teachers, pre-service teacher education program in Europe have primarily neglected this critical area. To address the professional needs of future ESP teachers, a novel and coherent framework has been developed to mediate the findings of corpus linguistics, and genre analysis has been created. The advantages of such a model of mediated corpus-based genre analysis lie in its flexibility of application to diverse ESP settings and target groups, empowering both student teachers and their future pupils to develop autonomous language capabilities. Following this model, student teachers are familiarized with the potential of specialized corpora as a source of information regarding specific genres, such as sale contracts, sustainability reports, or company profiles, and as a tool in materials development. This mediated corpus-based genre analysis model, which will be presented and discussed in this article, has been implemented in an innovative teacher education project at the Department of English of the University of Vienna. Feedback from student teachers and future

employers underlines the positive effects of such a linguistics-informed approach to teacher education (Huttner et al., 2009; Richards and Farrell, 2005; Tsui, 2003; Widdowson, 1983). It falls short in terms of the diverse requirements of ESP practitioners. Boswood and Marriott (1994) have argued that there are inevitable limitations in the traditional ESP teacher training programs, which mainly focus on course design or genre analysis techniques. It is challenging to prepare language teachers to interact as ESP practitioners with clients in, for example, the business environment.

Esteban and Marios (2002) stated that twofold training in their students' language and content should be provided to ESP teachers. The EFL teaching background can probably warrant their competence as language consultants and evaluators of the learning process but cannot provide proficiency in the content area. They then proposed a collaboration model among the ESP practitioner, the content teacher, and the students. But it seems pretty difficult for these three parts to collaborate effectively. The success of cooperation between the ESP teacher and the content teacher relies on the former's interest in the field of specialization of students and the latter's positive perception of the crucial role of English in training students (Esteban and Marios, 2002). Chen (2000) argued that if teachers sit around and hope for ESP training programs and supervisors to appear, self-training of ESP teachers can mean little since the present training is still suffering inevitable limitations.

All in all, the training of ESP teachers needs time and is no easy task. The critical point for ESP teachers is probably establishing confidence and have a positive attitude. Learning by doing and cooperating with content teachers and students can lead to further achievement.

Methodology

This study mainly adopts qualitative analysis and combines it with quantitative analysis to analyze semi-structured interview texts. Qualitative research refers to a method or angle for studying things according to the internal stipulation according to the social phenomenon or attribute of things and the contradictory changes in movement. In contrast, the so-called quantitative research refers to the measurement of the characteristic value of the object by comparing the characteristics of the object according to a certain standard to find the change rule of the quantity between certain factors. Quality and quantity are mutually related and mutually conditional. The combination of the two research methods in this study is conducive to mutual learning and plays the best analytical role. The qualitative research method is applied first, and later, when the analysis is performed, the quantitative research approach is also used on a large scale. In the literature review part, the researcher used an in-depth and detailed review of relevant literature. The qualitative analysis of the research is mainly speculative.

Instruments and Design of the Study

In this study, two instruments were used: (1) questionnaires and (2) interviews. A semi-standardized instrument measuring attitudes was adopted on a five-point Likert scale for the questionnaire. The questionnaire can be divided into two dimensions involving the angles of both students and teachers. Interviews were carried out to supplement the questionnaire to generate more opinions about the provision of ESP courses, feelings about teaching ESP courses, and solutions from the interviewees. Mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative studies will be applied in this essay. Data collected in the questionnaire among 38 college

English teachers from western China were analyzed quantitatively. The interview study was transformed into scripts and then analyzed qualitatively.

This study is based on research on teachers' attitudes towards ESP courses and teaching in western universities. First, a questionnaire survey and in-depth interviews with the subjects. The questionnaire and interview texts were analyzed by combining qualitative analysis and quantitative analysis to explore the thoughts and concerns of English teachers in western universities about teaching ESP courses. Then these questions as the interview outline dimension, depth interview was carried out on the object of study, with the same combination of qualitative analysis and quantitative analysis of research methods to analyze the interview text. It aims to seek specific effective strategies for English teachers, a professor of ESP courses, and the development of the western region of ESP courses of teachers' psychological preparation and actively provide them with the necessary training.

Participants

In the questionnaire phase of the study, a total of thirty-eight western college English teachers, consisting of thirty-five female and three male teachers, participated in the survey. These participants are teachers from the West region selected by CSC to study at Aberdeen University. Their program of study is ESP and EAP research. Thirty-eight teachers are expected to answer the questionnaire, and then thirty teachers are chosen randomly to do the interview. The age range of teachers is 30 to 40 years, with over ten years of teaching experience. The participants are English teachers from universities in western China. Since western China belongs to a less developed area, most of these teachers have little or no experience in ESP teaching. This lack of experience makes the relevance of the investigation more critical. To have representative views from different universities nationwide, the participants are from various universities or colleges.

Data Collection

A pilot study was conducted on five randomly selected college English teachers when the first drafts of the questionnaire were prepared to obtain information regarding the content of the items and the clarity of the instructions. After revising the questionnaire based on the pilot study, the final versions of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents.

Data Analysis and Findings

Based on the analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire and interview, the author tries to find out the attitude and concerns of college English teachers for teaching ESP courses.

Analysis and Findings of the Basic Information

The questionnaire results show that twenty-five out of thirty-eight participants are between 30-39, taking up 65.79%. They are veterans with an average teaching experience of 14.8 years. It can be inferred that these teachers are the backbone forces and take on plenty of responsibilities in their universities. Their attitudes and thoughts count a lot and can be considered when making significant decisions about teaching reformation. 60.53% of the western Chinese universities from which the informants offer ESP courses for undergraduates. It is a benign trend that universities in west China try to keep pace with the reform of college English. However, only 26.32% of these teachers have experience in ESP teaching. It means that 73.68% of them are void of ESP teaching ESP, mainly attributed to two

aspects of reasons. One is that ESP courses are not entirely spread currently; the other is that the foremost teachers of the specific field can instruct their students to study bilingually. However, there are only a few of these major and proficient teachers.

Analysis and Findings of Teachers' Attitudes

Attitudes on a Five-point Likert scale are discovered. The questions are designed from 2 dimensions of students and teachers to reveal teachers' attitudes and thoughts to ESP courses, learners, and teaching ESP courses.

Teachers' Attitudes to ESP Courses and Learners

Table 1 shows the views and attitudes on the teachers about the need to offer ESP courses to undergraduates. The samples of strongly agree and agree overwhelmingly are 33, occupying the proportion of 86.84%. Table 2 shows that 60.53% of informants consider that ESP courses are more motivating for my students' language learning. Even though 39.47% are not sure about it, one chose items to disagree and strongly disagree. Therefore, the majority of teachers hold positive attitudes toward ESP courses. The hypothesis can be verified.

Table 1 ESP

Courses are essential to satisfy students' future professional needs

Items	Frequency	Percentage	Accumulated Percentage
Strongly Agree	12	31.58%	31.58%
Agree	21	55.26%	86.84%
Unsure	4	10.53%	97.37%
Disagree	0	0%	97.37%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.63%	100.00%
Total	38	38	100.0%

Table 2

ESP courses can be more motivating for my students' language learning

Items	Frequency	Percentage	Accumulated Percentage
Strongly Agree	4	10.53%	10.53%
Agree	19	50.00%	60.53%
Unsure	15	39.47%	100.00%
Disagree	0	0%	100%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	100.00%
Total	38	38	100.0%

50% chose the item with which to disagree and 7.89% strongly disagreed with Question 7: ESP courses are only appropriate for students with a high level of English. From the perspective of this 57.89% of teachers, ESP courses are suitable for students of all levels, while there are still 42.11% of teachers who hold different opinions. 18.42% of them still believe that ESP courses are only for people with a high English level. For item 8: ESP courses are only appropriate for students interested in it, 55.26% of the participants showed their disagreement, and 7.89% showed strong disagreement. 3.68% are not sure, and only 15.79% agree with it. Though it is often said that interest is the best teacher for learning, most students are expected to be interested in their major learning. Table 3 describes whether ESP

courses are helpful in the effective acquisition of language. 39.47% are sure about the enhancing effect and 50% are unsure.

Table 3

ESP courses can help English learners acquire the language effectively

Items	Frequency	Percentage	Accumulated Percentage
Strongly Agree	0	0%	0%
Agree	15	39.47%	39.47%
Unsure	19	50%	89.47%
Disagree	3	7.89%	97.36%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.63%	100.00%
Total	38	38	100.0%

For students who cannot handle EGP, 34.21% of the informants think they cannot also learn ESP courses well. 36.84% choose the uncertain item and 26.32% disagree. Then we can see that the learning of EGP can lay a particular foundation for ESP learning.

Teachers' Attitudes to Teaching ESP Courses

Table 4 clearly shows that an overwhelming majority of the teachers surveyed found teaching ESP courses challenging, 73.68%. For items 14 and 15, 68.42% of teachers are concerned about how to teach ESP and 55.26% of teachers are concerned much about having to learn specialist knowledge. In ESP course teaching, 55.26 % of teachers say that language teaching is not more important than content. That is to say, language and content share the same significance.

Table 4

Teaching ESP courses is a big challenge for me

Items	Frequency	Percentage	Accumulated Percentage
Strongly Agree	3	7.89%	7.89%
Agree	25	65.79%	73.68%
Unsure	6	15.79%	89.47%
Disagree	1	2.63%	92.1%
Strongly Disagree	3	7.89%	100.00%
Total	38	38	100.0%

65.78 % of teachers still feel comfortable, even though students may have more knowledge about a specific subject. From Table 5, we can see that 63.16 % of teachers think they can adapt to the future professional demands of teaching ESP courses. 31.58 % of teachers are unsure, and only 5.26 % disagree. 71.05 % of teachers would like to study a new subject to be more competent as an ESP practitioner if the opportunity is given. 76.13 % of teachers are willing to teach ESP courses when training programs are available. We can find that the eagerness for some training courses for college English teachers is intense from these two figures. Although they fear teaching an unfamiliar field, they accept it and still want to try.

Table 5

I can adapt to future professional demands of teaching ESP

Items	Frequency	Percentage	Accumulated Percentage
Strongly Agree	1	2.63%	2.63%
Agree	23	60.53%	63.16%
Unsure	12	31.58%	94.74%
Disagree	2	5.26%	100%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	100.00%
Total	38	38	100.0%

To determine the future ESP course practitioners' view of the specific subjects, the researcher selected 12 standard courses from their school's curriculum and asked participants to rank them in order of difficulty, from the simplest to the most complex. In choosing these courses, six categories are considered: liberal Arts, science, engineering, medicine, PE and art. Figure 1 clearly shows the ranking of subjects according to the 38 samples. The most specific subject is tourism for the informants, while science is the most difficult one. It is consistent with our hypothesis because science subjects require more logical thinking skills and are more challenging for English teachers to explain. Medical courses are also quite difficult for English teachers because medical subjects need a lot of theoretical knowledge and many professional terms. Therefore, when designing and arranging training programs for future English teachers in ESP courses, decision makers should fully consider the difficulty and particularity of each subject.

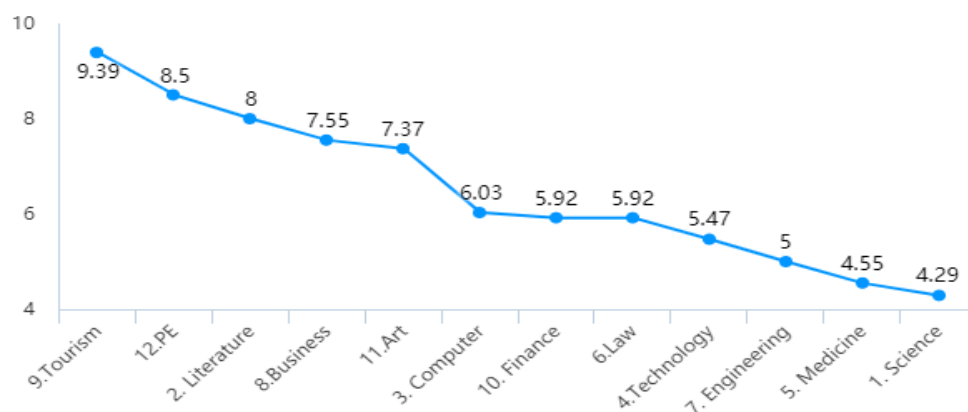


Figure 1 The Ranking of Difficulty of the Common ESP Subjects

Analysis of the Interview and Findings

The researcher probes three questions in the in-depth interview, and the answers of the 30 informants are wholly documented. These questions involve their opinions about ESP courses for non-English majors and statements of their reasons, their feelings towards teaching ESP courses for non-English majors and the help they need to teach ESP. The 30 English teachers interviewed at universities in western China answered each of the three questions. By transcribing the interviewer's responses, the researchers obtained approximately 9,495 characters of text. These words represent the actual views of 30 teachers on the ESP course and the coaching training required.

Attitudes towards ESP Courses for Non-English Majors

In this part, word frequency analysis is adopted to verify the questionnaire results. There are 20 frequently-used words picked up from the texts of the answers. From Table 6, it can be seen that teachers have a positive attitude towards ESP courses and that 11 out of 30 think it is necessary for major learning. Knowledge of a specific area can benefit the profession a lot. The addition of ESP courses can promote their major learning.

Table 6

Frequently-used words to show the Positive Attitudes ESP Courses

NO.	Words	Times	Frequency %
1	necessary	11	1.1518
2	future	10	1.0471
3	knowledge	8	0.8377
4	professional	8	0.8377
5	good	5	0.5236
6	important	5	0.5236
7	use	4	0.4188
8	development	4	0.4188
9	interested	4	0.4188
10	useful	4	0.4188
11	academic	3	0.3141
12	specific	3	0.3141
13	help	3	0.3141
14	practical	3	0.3141
15	motivated	2	0.2094
16	motivation	2	0.2094
17	basic	2	0.2094
18	profession	2	0.2094
19	essential	2	0.2094
20	hunting	2	0.2094

Feelings towards Teaching ESP Courses for Non-English Majors

By analyzing the text of the interviewees, 20 words are selected that show the participants' feelings about teaching ESP courses are selected. 12 out of 30 teachers argue that teaching the ESP course is challenging. The frequency of the word "challenge" is up to 1.5412. It is not surprising that participants found teaching ESP classes a challenge. Almost everyone has an innate fear of trying new things. It's safe to be in your comfort zone. However, most teachers are willing to face the challenge. They want to become qualified as an ESP practitioner. It is believed that teaching ESP courses is a win-win move for teachers and students. On the one hand, students can be more proficient in their major studies to meet the needs of their future job hunting; on the other hand, teachers can also learn more from their field. Lifelong learning is an immutable pursuit. In Table 7, only three words show respondents' negative feelings: worry, demanding, and challenging, and their frequencies are 0.5128, 0.1282 and 0.1282.

Table 7

Frequently-used words to Show the Feelings toward Teaching ESP Courses

NO.	Words	Times	Frequency %
1	challenge	12	1.5412
2	qualified	3	0.3846
3	great	3	0.3846
4	help	2	0.2564
5	future	2	0.2564
6	interesting	2	0.2564
7	relevant	2	0.2564
8	specialist	2	0.2564
9	achieve	1	0.1282
10	activate	1	0.1282
11	confident	1	0.1282
12	consistent	1	0.1282
13	welcome	1	0.1282
14	wonderful	1	0.1282
15	necessary	1	0.1282
16	interest	1	0.1282
17	important	1	0.1282
18	worried	4	0.5128
19	demanding	1	0.1282
20	difficult	1	0.1282

Assistance needed to teach ESP courses for Teaching ESP Courses for Non-English Majors

Similarly, the author analyzes the frequency of the collected text with 2574 words and picks out the frequently used words of the interviewees. Table 8 clearly shows that more than half of the informants consider it essential to provide an ESP program systematically or relevant pre-service training involving lexicon, terms, special knowledge, and even teaching skills and approaches in that field. Some of them ask for the opportunities to talk with the professional practitioners very often, cooperate, or even co-instruct with them. They prefer teamwork with colleagues, and they consider it helpful. Guided books can provide them with adequate knowledge of the targeted field of ESP. The respondents also think that if opportunities to visit work places of related professions are offered, they can get advice from experienced workers in those professions.

Table 8

Frequently-used Words to Show the Assistance Needed to Teach ESP Courses

NO.	Words	Times	Frequency %
1	training	15	3.0828
2	knowledge	13	2.4691
3	special	8	1.6245
4	need	8	1.6425
5	professional	7	1.4403
6	books	6	1.2345
7	help	6	1.2345
8	courses	5	1.0288
9	related	4	0.823
10	field	4	0.823
11	chance	3	0.6173
12	learn	3	0.6173
13	learning	3	0.6173
14	program	3	0.6173
15	specific	3	0.6173
16	practice	2	0.4115
17	professions	2	0.4115
18	theories	2	0.4115
19	methods	1	0.2058
20	approaches	1	0.2058

Conclusion

ESP teacher training is an integral part of college English teaching reform during the "transition period". ESP teachers who have been transformed from ordinary English teachers urgently need full-round development. This study focuses on the influencing factors and countermeasures for the development of university English teachers at home and abroad, combining and comparing based on the selection of college English teachers. Thirty-eight English teachers from western Chinese universities are taken as the research object. The questionnaire and semi-structured in-depth interviews are adopted to explore the teachers' attitudes toward ESP course teaching; meanwhile, the countermeasures to assist the "transition" ESP teachers are referred to.

Based on data and text analysis of questionnaires and interviews, the findings in this research can be included as the following. Firstly, the hypothesis that English teachers in Western universities positively favor ESP courses and teaching has been confirmed. Secondly, if valuable and practical resources and training programs can be given, they are more comfortable with ESP teaching challenges. Thirdly, it is necessary for English teachers in western universities in the transition period to get guidance from experienced ESP teachers in the early stage of teaching ESP courses. Last but not least, the transition time can be significantly shorten by adopting a cooperative teaching mode between language teachers and professional teachers in colleges and universities where conditions permit, which greatly benefits both the language and the professional knowledge of the two teachers.

Meanwhile, Wang (2011) proposed that college English teaching should be guided by classification through the analysis of the survey results of college English teaching in China. He put forward different solutions according to the categories, school-running positioning, levels, and school-running characteristics of other schools to overcome the phenomenon of homogenization. Therefore, the universities should fully consider their practical situations to designing ESP models for their students and practitioners.

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