

The Application of Task-Based Language Teaching in the Teaching of English for Special Purposes

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Abstract: With the deepening of higher education reform in China, higher education starts to focus more on the comprehensive training of talents, therefore many innovative teaching methods have been integrated into the higher education system, importantly, in English teaching, which is one of the important skills that modern talents should have. In the teaching of English for special purposes, the traditional teaching mode should be replaced with the task-based language teaching mode, where scientifically carry out teaching work based on the specific tasks and goals. This paper analyzed the connotation of task-based language teaching, and the significance of this teaching application in English for Special Purposes. Further, the purpose to study the application strategies of task-based language teaching in English for Special Purposes were also discussed in this paper.

Keywords: Colleges and universities; Task-based language teaching; English for special purposes teaching

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1. Introduction

Colleges and universities are the incubators of talents. At present, the various professional fields in the market required more complex professional talent, therefore colleges and universities should start to cultivate professional talents suitable for future market development. However, considering the actual situation of teaching English, especially the English for special purposes is often overlooked. In addition, when conducting teaching, the cramming teaching mode is still used in many colleges and universities, ignoring the actual development requirement of students and the society's demand for talents, suggesting the needs of training^[1]. Further, traditional teaching method of English for special purposes leads to many delays, and it could not be in line with the latest development of social professional fields. As a result, students were not being able to meet the talent requirement of various industries in the society when they practice their work in the future. Therefore, task-based language teaching method can be combined with the actual development needs of students with different majors, by emphasizing this teaching mode in the process of learning, allowing the students to use observation, operation, communication, reflection, and others. Driven by specific tasks, may allow in-depth exploration of particular knowledge, which in return can strengthen the students' English for special purpose learning level, thereby the students can gradually become comprehensive professionals. This article conducted a detailed analysis of the application of task-based language teaching in the teaching of English for special purposes.

2. An overview of the connotation of task-based language teaching

Task-based language teaching mode is an advanced and scientific teaching method. This teaching mode

was first proposed in the 1980s, and interestingly this teaching attracted the attention of the education field worldwide, therefore, was actively applied in the education system in all stages. When conducting the task-based language teaching, a specific task is used as a carrier, where taking the execution of the tasks as the driving force or motivation for learning, the completion of target tasks as the learning process, and finally the results of the tasks as a reflection of the teaching effect ^[2]. Therefore, the task-based language teaching should be applied to the teaching of English for special purposes, by actively changing the traditional single and boring teaching mode, and changing the traditional teaching mode of memorizing words, making sentences, and connecting grammar, in contrast, focus more on the students' understanding of the teaching content for special purposes, and guide them by using the task-based teaching content, thereby the students can understand specific professional knowledge under the task of specific professional field, and it can fully demonstrate the autonomy of the students. In the task-based teaching mode, the teachers can guide the students to carry out a series of professional tasks, and through the whole process guide the students to learn the knowledge of English for special purposes and drive the students' enthusiasm for learning. Therefore, with the help of the task-based language teaching mode, students' confidence in learning can be strengthened, and at the same time it can also stimulate students' subjective initiative, thereby the students can feel the joy of learning through independent exploration. In short, the application of task-based language teaching in the teaching of English for special purposes can meet the needs of teaching English for special purposes and take the future career development of students as the goal, and gradually try to achieve the goal of talent cultivation ^[3].

3. The significance of task-based language teaching application in the teaching of English for special purposes

3.1. Conducive to strengthening students' enthusiasm for learning

English for special purposes teaching is closely related to students' future career development and has become an indispensable and important basic ability for current talents. However, from an objective point of view, there are many professional vocabularies and knowledge in the teaching of English for Special Purposes, making it is difficult for the students to learn the English for Special Purposes. In addition, if the traditional teaching mode is still used, it will lead to students' low interest in learning, and even will eventually lead to weariness over time. Therefore, in order to stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning, students have truly to realize the importance of English for special purpose ^[4]. Thereby, teachers can introduce task-based language teaching mode in their teaching and combine students' future job-seeking intentions by introducing the practical cases in the student's professional fields into the teaching mode. This will create a professional teaching atmosphere for students, where, when the students learn English for special purposes, they can acquire important English knowledge related to their majoring and stimulate the enthusiasm in the students to learn professional knowledge ^[5]. Further, fully guide the emotions of students, letting the students solve the problems, and learn knowledge independently in the English for special purpose teaching classroom, can make students realize the importance of English for special purpose, and stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning ^[6].

3.2. Conducive to the cultivation of compound professionals

At present, the development of various fields in the society requires compound professionals, therefore, when teaching English for special purposes, one should pay attention in improving the professional level and the ability of the students. At the moment when the society engaged with globalization, all the education fields attach a great importance in strengthening the proficiency of English for special purposes of talents ^[7]. Compared with traditional English teaching, the teaching knowledge of English for special purposes is closely related to various industries, with professionalism, and particularity, and it is also tending to be

more professional when used. Therefore, in the teaching of English for special purposes, it is essential to actively introduce a task-based teaching model and guide the students to train professional knowledge in a specific atmosphere, together with the knowledge related to the professional fields and industries, which students may engage or explore in the future explore^[8]. The task-driven teaching mode is focused on the task as the main line of teaching, thereby the students can understand the content of English for Special Purposes teaching and recognize the use of methods and purposes of English for Special Purposes teaching, showing the value of English for Special Purposes teaching. Students can independently analyze, think, and solve problems through independent participation and cooperation; therefore, the students can activate their thinking and build a virtuous circle of mind. On the basis of improving professional practice ability, the level of English for special purposes should be strengthened, in order to help students to become compound professionals^[9].

4. Application strategies of task-based language teaching in English for Specific Purposes

4.1. Scientific division

When performing tasks-based language teaching method, the most important premise is the scientific and reasonable division of study groups. Combined with the actual situation of the class, 4-6 students are divided into a group to facilitate the teaching of English for special purposes. In the process of dividing into groups, teachers should ensure that the strength of each group is equal, and ensure the differences between the members of each group^[10].

4.2. Setting task-based language teaching tasks

After the group is divided, the teacher can define the task-based language teaching task according to the specific theme task. For the teaching of English for special purposes, teachers should analyze the actual characteristics of each education field and consider the future situation of the students who will eventually step into the social professional field^[11]. Thereby, closely combined English for Special Purposes with students' future professional development, and lastly prepare a clear teaching task. When teaching English for professional is used, teachers should prepare teaching tasks based on the students' future job requirement. For example, for students majoring in hotel management, teachers should prepare the task of professional vocabulary learning to let the students to learn vocabulary-related to hotel management professionals such as, Front Office (FO), Single Registration Card (RC), Operator Switchboard, Guest Relation Officer (GRO), Concierge, Receptionist Front Desk Receptionist, Assistant manager(AM), Lobby Assistant Manager, Front Office Manager, Cashier, and other related vocabulary, and the students clarify their learning tasks, and implement the teaching tasks in a targeted group manner^[12].

4.3. Teamwork

For group teamwork, students combine specific tasks and practice tasks in groups^[13]. In the process of group cooperative learning, the group leader should show his own leading role, and reasonably divide the tasks of the group members according to the actual situation of the group members, to facilitate the realization of the group learning tasks. For example, in the process of teaching English for Special Purposes for students majoring in the tourism management, teachers can guide students to use the group as a unit, creating a situational way to simulate the scene in English, to solve problems as described below in the future^[14].

“Tourists: Our group is missing a tourist”

“Tour guide: Does anybody see where he is?”

“Tourist A: I saw him at the restaurant 10 minutes ago”

“Tour guide: Please follow guide Zhang and continue on while I look for the lost tourist.”

Focusing on the content of specific English for special purposes teaching tasks, one should do a good job on the coordinating task within the group, and use a variety of teaching modes to drive students' interest in cooperation, thereby the students can complete tasks together in the process of practice, exploration, and cooperation, which can help in strengthen the students' knowledge of English for specific purposes ^[15].

4.4. Teaching evaluation

When conducting the task-based language teaching of English for Special Purposes, the final stage is teaching evaluation ^[16]. Teaching evaluation is the evaluation of students' group cooperation, and with the help of scientific and reasonable evaluation, students can view the problems in task-based language learning more correctly and optimize and improve the problems in task-based language teaching. The teaching evaluation should be divided into two levels: teacher evaluation and student evaluation. For student evaluation, it is to allow students to independently summarize and evaluate their own actual situation and summarize the advantages and disadvantages of task-based language teaching ^[17]. Meanwhile, for teacher evaluation, the teachers evaluate the problems and optimized the methods of each group based on the actual situation of each group. With the help of diversified evaluation methods, students can fully recognize their own problems, subsequently effectively improve them, which can stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning, and lastly lay a solid foundation for a high-quality development of subsequent task-based language teaching ^[18].

5. Concluding

In summary, the application of task-based language teaching in English for Special Purposes is of great significance. It could not only stimulate the students' enthusiasm for learning, but also lay a solid foundation for cultivating compound professionals. When carrying out task-based language teaching, it is essential to combine the characteristics of English for special purposes and the actual characteristics of students, scientifically, and reasonably disassemble task-based language teaching, and let the students to work in small groups by uniting them under a clear teaching task. Let the students to collaborate and explore, and complete teaching tasks together, which can strengthen the students' English for special purposes, and lastly lay a solid foundation for the students' sustainable development.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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