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“SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDDLE IS THE OPTIMAL BALANCE”: A SUBJECT SPECIALIST NEGOTIATING BUSINESS AND LANGUAGE IN TEACHING BUSINESS WRITING

Abstract

This article reports on a case study of a subject specialist Business English teacher who was appointed to teach business writing at a Chinese university. It draws on a variety of data collected from the study participant, including his course syllabus and lecture notes, his feedback on student assignments, classroom observations, interviews and email exchanges with him, student evaluation of his teaching, and assessment of his students' assignments by other business professionals. A constant comparative thematic analysis of the data identifies six major themes regarding his approach to teaching business writing, including Gravitation Towards Business Skills, Instilling the Mind-sets and Attitudes, Incidental Teaching of Language, Classroom Management, Image of the Business World, and Positive Reception of his Teaching. These themes are discussed to illuminate several key issues in ESP instruction and teacher development, including content and language integrated learning, motivation, researcher-practitioner collaboration, and strategies for team teaching.

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Key words

Business English, subject specialist ESP teacher, language and literature-background ESP teacher, content and language integrated learning, ESP teacher development.

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