

Yulong Li

*Graduate School
The Education University of Hong Kong, China
lyulong@eduhk.hk*

Lixun Wang*

*Department of Linguistics and Modern Language Studies
The Education University of Hong Kong, China
lixun@eduhk.hk*

AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF CHINESE COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHERS' TRANSITION FROM TEACHING ENGLISH FOR GENERAL PURPOSES TO TEACHING ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES

Abstract

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Presently, few empirical studies exist investigating the experiences of teachers of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), and the few that do exist (e.g. Alexander, 2012, 2013; Campion, 2012, 2016; Martin, 2014; Post, 2010) are confined to UK teachers only (Ding & Campion, 2016). Thus, by adopting ethnographic methods, the present study focuses on four teachers' transition from teaching English for General Purposes (EGP) to EAP in a new context – China, where the first policy concerning the introduction of EAP at Chinese tertiary institutes was published by the Shanghai Education Bureau in 2013. Findings revealed that during the transition the four teachers benefited from both their former teaching of EGP and their research experiences. The teachers concerned, to a varying extent, realized the importance of EAP, even prior to the commencement of the reform, and teaching EAP helped them overcome career crises, and stimulated their desire of becoming researchers. This study extends existing knowledge garnered from EAP teachers in the literature internationally, particularly those in transition from teaching EGP to EAP in China.

Key words

EAP, EAP teachers, EAP in China, pedagogical transition.

* Corresponding address: Lixun Wang, Department of Linguistics and Modern Language Studies, The Education University of Hong Kong, 10 Lo Ping Road, Tai Po, N.T., Hong Kong, China.