

Taiwanese College Teachers' Attitudes towards English Reading Instruction in Discipline-specific Areas

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This study examines the attitudes of 137 Taiwanese college subject-area teachers towards teaching English reading in their discipline-specific areas. The results, based on a 12-item 7-point Likert scale survey, reveals that while college subject-area teachers regard content learning as their teaching priority, they acknowledge the importance of providing English reading instruction. The study finds that despite the belief that English reading instruction can be incorporated into their courses and that there is a need for this, most teachers do not feel competent to teach such skills. The study concludes by identifying a direction for future research based on the experiences of college subject-area teachers.

Introduction

This study investigates the attitudes of Taiwanese college subject-area teachers towards English reading instruction in their discipline-specific areas. The study is part of a series of research designed to find out the best approaches to solving the dilemma Taiwanese college students are confronted with: increasing demands for and lack of training in reading discipline-specific texts in English. As Kasper, Babbitt, Mlynarczyk, Brinton, Rosenthal, Master, Myers, Egbert, Tillyer, & Wood (2000) points out, the main goal of many ESL or EFL programmes is to prepare students to pass the TOEFL exam so that they may enter the academic mainstream in a native-English speaking setting. However, once they