

**English Language Teaching in Chinese Universities in the  
Era of the World Trade Organization:  
A Learner Perspective**

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## **Declaration**

I certify except where due reference and acknowledgement have been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award. The content of the thesis is the result of my work that has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; and, any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third part is acknowledged.

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Date:

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## Abstract

Social and economic globalisation is having tremendous impacts on education. Since China's accession to the WTO in 2001, China has reformed its higher education system in order to meet the challenges of globalisation. In the era of WTO, China needs more and better English, which facilitates access to modern knowledge and technology and the possibility of communication with the outside world in the process of globalisation. To correspond with this trend, the Chinese government has prioritised reforms in the teaching of English at various levels of the education system. In this context, the change of policy in the foreign language education sector becomes an issue of concern.

This research, with a view to informing the ongoing reform of English language teaching (ELT), investigates learners' perspectives of ELT in Chinese universities in the context of current process of globalisation. The originality of this research lies in the fact that it is a novel theme to investigate the teaching of English in China in the context of the growing importance of English proficiency with progressive globalisation based on perceptions of students as the most prominent stakeholder and direct participants of ELT.

Social theoretical concepts used to inform this research were drawn from current accounts of cultural globalisation and its relationship with reorientation of educational pedagogies, policies and politics. This thesis argues that the adoption of various ELT curricula in various periods is heavily influenced by broader social and political policies that shape Chinese responses to the process of globalisation. The promulgation in 2004 of the *College English Curriculum Requirements (For Trial Implementation)* represented an immediate response in the ELT field to China's economic globalisation. It further argues that the Global English model, with its stress on communicative competence and performance should be the ELT priority in Chinese universities to meet the new communication demands of contemporary globalisation. These arguments are advanced based on a study focusing on College English education, which represents ELT in China at the tertiary level, the final as well as most important part in the hierarchy of language education.

To investigate the research problem in this project, a multi-faceted methodology was applied, including surveys, classroom observation and document analysis. The data collected was analysed to examine its relevance to the research problem and associated research questions. Piloting was conducted to locate ambiguities, confusion, or other problems in the content as well as in the format of the survey questions, thus increasing validity and reliability of the research. Prolonged involvement, persistent observing, triangulation and peer debriefing were also used to enhance credibility.

The following conclusions can be drawn based on the data collected. First, English remains a priority in China's education system and globalisation of English in WTO era is to the benefit of Chinese learners. Second, there has been evident shift of the goal of ELT in China from mastery of pure linguistic knowledge to development of communicative competence and the pedagogy from single skill training, i.e. reading, to integrated development of the four macro skills. Computer-aided and competence-led curricula in English language education are recent trends that contribute to the increasing awareness of both the professionals and students that productive abilities should be the priority. From the perspective of learners, this means a switch to a learner-centred model that allows more autonomy by making the teaching and learning a computer-based process of individualized learning, collaborative learning and hyper-textual learning. Third, the 1999 Curriculum failed to address the emerging issues regarding ELT in the process of China's globalisation. This led to strong dissatisfaction from the learners and strong appeal for ELT reformation in College English education in China. Finally, the *College English Curriculum Requirements (For Trial Implementation)*, while pinpointing the trend and model of future English education development, is confronted with serious challenges in its implementation.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

BEC	Business English Certificate (Cambridge)
CALL	Computer Assisted Language Learning
CE	College English
CECR	College English Curriculum Requirements (For Trial Implementation)
CEE	College Entrance Examination
CET	College English Test
CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EIL	English as an International Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
FLE	Foreign Language Education
ICT	Information and Communications Technologies
IELTS	International English Language Test Service
L2	the Second language
MOE	Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TESL	Teaching English as a Second Language
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TOEIC	Test of English for International Communication
WTO	World Trade Organisation



## Chapter One – Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

This research represents a historical and attitudinal analysis of English language teaching (ELT) in Chinese universities in the current process of globalisation from learners' perspective. This study draws on the existing research, theoretical and methodological literatures to expound on the analysis and interpretation of the ELT as well as EFL issues in the WTO era in China presented in the evidentiary chapters. The originality of this research lies in the fact that it is a novel theme to investigate the teaching of English in China in the context of the growing importance of English proficiency with progressive globalisation based on perceptions of students as the most prominent stakeholder and direct participants of ELT.

### 1.2 Research Problem and Main Argument

This research project was initially designed within the framework of English language teaching (hereinafter referred to as ELT) in Chinese universities amid the process of globalisation. It attempted to investigate the English learners' views regarding the question of how the ELT system in Chinese universities meets the needs of economic and cultural globalisation in the WTO era. The key focus is on the following sub-questions associated with the research problem:

1. How do College English learners view English globalisation in the WTO era in China?
2. How do College English learners perceive the 1999 College English Curriculum (hereinafter referred to as the 1999 Curriculum)?
3. How does the *College English Curriculum Requirements (For Trial Implementation)* (hereafter referred to as the 2004 CECR) respond to China's needs of English in its ongoing process of globalisation both in theory and practice?

4. What are the dominant trends in College English in the context of globalisation?

By examining the practice and pedagogical issues in College English teaching and learning, this project attempted to locate the strength and weakness of the current practice and then figure out what suggestions can be proposed so as to improve current teaching methodologies. Discussion and analysis mainly focus on how these pedagogies relate to the four domains of speaking, listening, reading, writing, and classroom contexts (e.g. number of students, equipments, teacher training, textbooks, and examination requirements).

This thesis argues that the recent College English reformation in higher education arena is a reflection of the appeal for change in responses to the needs of English in the process of globalisation. It further argues that the Global English model (Graddol, 2006) with stress on communicative competence and performance should be the ELT priority in Chinese universities to meet new demands on global communication in the context of contemporary globalisation in the WTO era.

As to the possible contribution of this study to theory, there is some discussion centring on key conceptual debates over the relationship between globalisation and ELT. For example, the issue of global cultural and linguistic homogenisation and cultural and linguistic heterogeneity as well as benefits and losses of Chinese EFL learners in globalisation were briefly explored by examining the Global English model of change for global communication.

### **1.3 A Brief History of English Language Education in China**

ELT in China is a significant issue, taking into consideration that China is estimated to have the largest number of learners of English as a foreign language in the world. That number, which is more than the population of the largest English-speaking country, the USA, keeps increasing thanks to China's integration into the global economy as symbolized by its accession to the WTO in 2001.

English has little heritage in China as a result of its long history of deliberately avoiding contact with the West for fear of cultural contamination. The history of foreign language teaching in China can be dated back to mid-nineteenth century, the time of the Qing Dynasty. The then self-claimed world center (the ‘Central Country’ as indicated by the literal Chinese meaning of China) was defeated in the Opium Wars in the 1840s by the British and its allies. China’s closed door was forced open to the West whose military strength and technology was superior to that of China. As a result, foreign language teaching became a governmental issue. For the first time the aim was to communicate with, as well as learn from, the West. In 1862, the Qing Dynasty established an institution called Tong Wen Guan (Universal Languages Academy) in Beijing that specialized in training interpreters and translators who could deal with all treaties with foreign countries, mainly written in English. Teachers were mostly foreign missionaries (He, 2002, pp. 1-7).

Before long, western subjects such as Geometry, Chemistry, Law, Physics, Economics, and Astronomy were incorporated into the five or eight-year language training curriculum in Tong Wen Guan. In the 1870s, similar foreign language schools emerged in other major cities, including Shanghai, Wuhan, and Guangzhou. In the 1920s, English teaching became more popular in secondary and tertiary education in China. Most university courses – science, engineering, medicine, business, education, economics, social sciences, and law – were taught with a heavy reliance on original English textbooks and reference materials. College admission invariably required a foreign language, most commonly English. Many secondary schools in major urban centers trained their students in English for the exam.

In 1941, the Communist Party of China started to run a foreign language school in its headquarters at Yan’an. This school later became the Beijing Foreign Studies University. The school not only trained military interpreters, but also produced talents in the field of diplomacy for a new China after the anti-Japanese War. However, only the privileged few had the access and the progress in ELT was so slow that, 100 years later, in the early 1970s only high schools in major cities had the resources to implement regular foreign language education as required by the government.

After the establishment of new China in 1949, Russian dominated foreign languages teaching in New China. During the time, English was condemned as unpatriotic because of national campaign against American imperialism and British colonialism. However, this phase did not last long due to the deteriorating relationship between the former Soviet Union and China. English teaching reclaimed its popularity when bilateral relations between the two countries collapsed in the early 1960s. By 1962, English had resumed its role in the entrance examination for colleges and universities. However, during the Cultural Revolution, English was again banned from schools.

The substantial change toward English language teaching in China did not happen until late 1978 when Deng Xiaoping came to power. English was again prominent as a main foreign language taught in Chinese schools. At an important conference on foreign language teaching in 1978 held by the Ministry of Education, English was given prominence again in schools, on a par with Chinese and Mathematics. By the early 1980s English had been restored as a compulsory subject in the college entrance examinations. English was then considered as a vehicle to know the West better and serve the country better. Despite the late start relative to many other countries in adopting English as a preferred foreign language, remarkable achievements were made in China's English language education during the last twenty years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. This has been attributed to "the strong and growing conviction of the Chinese government that English competence and computer skills are a must for the younger generations in the 21st century" (He, 2002, pp. 1-7).

In 2001, China decided to make English compulsory in primary schools from Grade Three. In practice, rural areas may not meet that target, whilst big cities, such as Beijing, Shanghai and Dalian, have already introduced English at Grade One. As stated earlier, China now has the largest English learning population in the world. Within the formal education sector an estimated 176.7 million Chinese were studying English in 2005. Kachru (2004) suggested that there were 200 million Chinese English users in 1995. As a result of the new policy, China now produces over 20 million new users of English each year (Graddol, 2006, p. 95).

ELT in China at the tertiary level, which is the focus of this project, is divided into two separate sections: English education for English majors and that for non-English

majors, with each division following its own curriculum. Since the Opening-up and Reform in late 1970s, under the influence of central planning in social and economic spheres, a national English curriculum has been made available at different times to serve as a guideline in all the universities and colleges where English is a compulsory subject. There is a huge population of non-English major college students, all of whom are required to take English as a compulsory course. Non-English major students admitted to colleges and universities are subject to a two-year general English course referred to as College English. The necessity of these initiatives has not been much doubted or challenged.

Wang (1999) suggested that a remarkable feature of the development of ELT in China was its close relation with social change, particularly with the change in politics, economy and international relations. After China's accession to the WTO, its process of globalisation is occurring at a faster rate than before. ELT, in turn, is experiencing a similar period of new development. However, in spite of the great achievements in statistical terms, the current status of ELT is far from being satisfactory in terms of either national or international standards. While it is commonly believed that China's World Trade Organisation (WTO) membership is opening up new opportunities for ELT, there is growing concern that the current ELT standards and practices in English are hampering its bid to remain a key player in the world economy. The commonly felt 'deaf-dumb' English among English learners has become one of the key concerns of the whole society.

Educators have long realized the importance of shifting the pattern of ELT from the traditional linguistic acquirement to communicative competence and the module of teaching English language from single skill development to integrated skills training. It can be seen from the reform of curricula and curriculum development project issued by the Ministry of Education in 1999. The emphasis of this curriculum is on a student-centred approach instead of a teacher-centred one. Another outstanding feature of ELT reform in China's higher institutions is that English study was continuous throughout the duration of four years in college. ESP (English for Special Purpose) courses are also added to the final year of students' study of English in college. The goal of these courses is to ensure the non-English major students who have different specialized background can make good use of English after their

graduation in their future working career. Besides this, the Ministry of Education requires that all of the specialized subjects (preferably foreign textbooks) be conducted in the English language in the near future.

A recent initiative by the Ministry of Education stated that ‘Practical English’ teaching and learning should be strengthened to enhance the comprehensive English competence of non- English major undergraduates (Zhang, 2002, pp.3-5). New initiatives to respond to these concerns are now in the course of development and the latest endeavour is the implementation of the College English Course Requirements with a view to developing:

students’ ability to use English in an all-round way, especially in listening and speaking, so that in their future work and social interactions they will be able to exchange information effectively through both spoken and written channels, and at the same time they will be able to enhance their ability to study independently and improve their cultural quality so as to meet the needs of China’s social development and international exchanges (CECR, 2004, p.16).

Meanwhile, construction of a streamlined ELT system from Chinese primary schools to the tertiary level is underway. A nationwide ‘One Dragon System’ is in the process of experimentation. This refers to the recent governmental efforts to establish a consistent English teaching and learning system at primary, secondary, and tertiary education levels, an effort referred to as ‘a streamlined ELT planning and management system’. A research group headed by Professor Dai Weidong from Shanghai International Studies University has reported recent developments in this move towards pedagogical conformity at primary, secondary and tertiary levels (Dai and Yang, 2002, pp.10-12). Correspondingly, the 2004 CECR was issued by the Ministry of Education to initiate and govern a new round of reform in ELT in China. It is worth noting that it is referred to as ‘requirements’ rather than adopting the usual term ‘curriculum’. These new guidelines aim at creating a new teaching and learning model that is computer-based and communication-oriented.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Research Problem**

Social and economic globalisation has tremendous impact on education. Chinese universities have been affected by global economic integration, domestic market reforms, and expanding cross-national academic exchanges. The recent fundamental transition to the socialist market economy in China creates strong demands for higher education as well as new demands on Chinese university students. As a result, it becomes significant to address how the educational system can best respond to these demands. Graddol (2006, p.74) argued that China has reformed its higher education system in order to meet the challenges of globalisation, which enables universities to compete at a global level. This naturally leads to change of policy in the foreign language education sector. With its accession to the WTO, China needs more and better English, the international language of business and communication, as it gives access to knowledge and technology and the possibility of communication with people all over the world in the process of globalisation. To correspond with this trend, EFL reforms at various levels become a matter of urgency.

Graddol (2006, p. 51) attached much significance to the rise of a middle class in China in his discussion of the role of English in the latest development in the 21st century. According to an income-based definition, nearly 19 per cent of China's population was considered to be middle class in 2003, and this is expected to grow. It is in this sense that it becomes a matter of significance to include the CE learners – elites-would-be and potential members of middle class in China as the research subjects and to make investigation regarding how they view ELT in China in this new era. University graduates should have learned the most English, but some constraining factors have prevented the majority of them from achieving an advanced level of proficiency, especially in terms of communicative competence. First of all, there have been ill-aimed guiding principles in the national curricula, with the priority not properly set, thus not meeting demands of various levels and that of recent socio-economic development. This issue will be explored in Chapter Three and Six of this thesis. Second, the teaching methods and methodology, notoriously known for being textbook-based, teacher-dominated and test-oriented, have remained an issue of enormous concern, as is discussed in Chapter Three and Six. Third, another key public concern is the separate ELT systems at primary, secondary and

tertiary levels, causing unnecessary repetitiveness and waste of resources, which is also discussed in Chapter Three and Six. Fourth, to make it worse, China is faced with such problems as the lack of qualified language teachers, high ratio of teachers to students as well as the lack of necessary teaching and learning facilities due to inadequate investment. These logistical constraints are discussed in Chapter Six.

To handle these problems, language policy makers are seeking an overall reform of the ELT system in China. The 2004 CECR represents the latest effort in this regard. In this case, first-hand collection of data from the frontline, with the researcher as the professional practitioner and the students as the direct participants, provides them with some evidence to inform the ongoing decision-making process concerning the reform. Reformation in this area is a never-ending process. Successful completion of this research project would mean the possibility to establish a research mentality, scholarship and power that would contribute to taking China's foreign language teaching in higher education much further. Implementation processes of the 2004 CECR will be the focus of Chapter Seven.

### **1.5 Theoretical Framing of the Research**

The entry into WTO means tremendous overall impact on China's various socio-economic spheres, including education. In today's increasingly globalised world, English has become the 'working language' of most international activities. Moore (2001, p. 13) mentioned that, "English is indeed, for good or ill, or both, the *lingua franca* of the movers and shakers and for those who wish to draw close to them and parents worldwide want it for their children". English is playing an increasingly important role as the world's *lingua franca* for the purpose of communication and understanding, implementing regulations and conventions, as well as for settling disputes (Huang and Xu, 1999). After China's entry into the WTO, professionals in various fields strive to have good knowledge of the English language in order to be more successful in their careers. China's full integration into the global economy by following rule-based international standards will need more and more professionals having good command of that *lingua franca*. It has been a long-standing belief in China that English is the key for access to western science and technology, which is essential to its ongoing re-emergence. As a result, "there is an increasing focus on



English teaching at all levels in China” (Feng, 2002, p.123, author’s translation). In order to meet the demands of both individuals and society, it becomes a matter of paramount importance that more emphasis should be placed on English language teaching than before. This social and political environment makes it significant to initiate the research on the current ELT theories and practice as represented by College English curricula and the teaching and learning activities in university classes.

Social theoretical concepts used to inform this research were drawn from current accounts of cultural globalisation and its relationship with reorientation of educational pedagogies, policies and politics. The focus is on developing conceptual tools for discussing the globalisation of English and the responding role of language policy and ideology in this process. As the research problem indicates, the major concern of this research project is English language teaching in Chinese universities in the current process of globalisation. The role of English in the process of economic and cultural globalisation is extensively explored in discussions with regard to the concept of global English by Kachru (1986), Phillipson (1992), Crystal (1997), Bryson (1990), Pennycook (2001) and Graddol (2006). These are also the major authors that were referred to in this thesis regarding the relationship between linguistic and cultural linguistic homogenisation and heterogeneity and global English. Among them, the Global English model suggested by Crystal (1997) and Graddol (2006) is the most influential in shaping the main argument of this thesis. Graddol (2006) argues that the future of English has become more closely tied to the future of globalisation itself and global English model of ELT may mean the end of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). He goes on to suggest that Asia, especially India and China, probably now holds the key to the long-term future of English as a global language as it will determine how English will fare as the global language of industry, commerce and the Internet in the coming decades. He also argues that we are already in a very new kind of environment and a distinctively new phase in the global development of English. These arguments help to establish the theoretical framework of this thesis, i.e. to examine what has happened and what will happen in China in the ELT field in the process of globalisation.

Literatures concerning China and the WTO, China's need for English in the global economy, English language teaching in China, in particular College English curriculum and pedagogy development in the context of English globalisation were also reviewed in order to make explicit current debates and to identify gaps in existing knowledge. The theory and practice with regard to College English is the focus of the study. The literature review revealed that there was little research into the specific needs of the English learners and there was a lack of study involving national ELT curriculum in the context of globalisation from the perspective of learners. Therefore, it becomes natural and significant for the researcher to conduct some empirical investigation, from the points of view of direct participants, especially college students who are the highest-level learners in China's ELT system, regarding how the 1999 College English Curriculum and the 2004 CECR suit China's needs for English in the WTO era.

This rationale informed the research approach taken and the next section will describe briefly the research process of this project.

### **1.6 Research Methodology**

To investigate the research problem in this project, multi-faceted methodology was applied to generate relevant data. Surveys, classroom observation as well as document analysis were conducted to collect the needed data for the research questions. The data collected was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively to investigate its relevance to the research problem and associated research questions. Piloting was conducted to locate ambiguities, confusion, or other problems in the content as well as in the format of the survey questions, thus helping increase validity and reliability of the research. Prolonged involvement, persistent observing, triangulation and peer debriefing were applied to enhance credibility.

Regarding the research subjects, College English learners were chosen as the main research participants for two main reasons. First of all, they represent the highest and final level of English learners in China's ELT system. Secondly, Graddol (2006, p.51) attached much significance to the rise of a middle class in China in his discussion of the role of English in the latest development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and the College

English learners in this study can be regarded as the elites-would-be and potential members of middle class in China.

To begin with, a pilot study was carried out, in which nine participants were invited to take part in a questionnaire and interview survey. A self-administered questionnaire was prepared so that respondents could fill in whenever and wherever they like. Data thus collected were analysed with a view to providing preliminary concepts about the data analysis and the result were examined so that a review of the questionnaire design and interview process and subsequently a refinement were made.

A questionnaire survey, interviews and classroom observations were the main data collecting instruments. The questionnaire was sent to about 100 non-English major university students who enrolled in 2000 and sat the College English Test Band 4 (hereinafter referred to as CET-4) in three major universities in Dalian, including Dalian Maritime University, Dalian University of Technology and Northeast University of Finance of Economics in 2003. Fifteen of them were invited to participate in interviews afterwards. A follow-up interview with another group of students enrolled in 2004 was conducted in October 2005 after the official introduction of the 2004 CECE into Dalian Maritime University. Classroom observations were also continually conducted in Dalian Maritime University from between 2003 and 2005.

In addition, as a result of the collection and analysis of educational policy documents, special reference has been given to the three national syllabi and one national course requirement, the 2004 CECE. Other documents concerning language policy and curriculum development in China were also collected and analysed. The data collected were processed both qualitatively and quantitatively to see how it related with the research problem and associated research questions. On the basis of this data analysis, tentative conclusions have been drawn about possible solutions to the research problem and answers to the questions.

Chapter Four includes more detailed description and elaboration of the research process including sampling procedure, data collection and analysis procedure and ethical issues.

### **1.7 Delimitations and Limitations of the Study**

Despite the apparently homogenous nature of College English teaching and learning under the centralised curricula, the selection of research sites in this study did not allow for maximum variation so that the vast differences in terms of educational level, English proficiency, regional development, etc. could be best represented and elaborated.

This study does not intend to develop a thorough and complete coverage of all the aspects of ELT in China due to limited time and resources at the disposal of the researcher. The scope of this study was limited to the College English, taught to non-English majors, which accounts for the vast majority of the university English learners in Chinese tertiary education. ELT for English Majors has been excluded from this research because it follows a totally different national curriculum and represents a much smaller proportion of Chinese university students. Meanwhile, the focus was further narrowed to deal with the most recent two curricula produced since the 1990s and the associated teaching practices in the study site.

Similarly, taking into consideration the thousands of universities with millions of enrolments, the sample size and depth of this study has its limitations due to the relatively small number of participants involved in this particular study. The representativeness of the samples and generalisability of the findings from this research is therefore not guaranteed. The findings may only apply to participants and situations involved in this research, and further research at other location is required to assess the extent to which these findings are generaliseable across China.

Another thing that should be pointed out here is the 2004 CECR is still a new initiative under experimentation and one that intends to achieve ambitious changes to the teaching of College English. Due to the timing of this research between 2003 and 2005, it is premature to develop a definitive account of the implications of the 2004

CECR so instead the thesis focuses on initial findings from the first wave of changes and considers implications for future implementation.

## **1.8 Outline of Thesis Structure**

Chapter Two covers a review of research and scholarly literature on globalisation and English language teaching. Educational change is the constant theme in modern society in the process of globalisation. Various versions of educational change theory and related educational change models have been attempted in this regard. However, the social process leading to the initiation of educational transformation and innovation are too complex to be fitted into a single model. Hence, a model that is market-oriented and responsive to public interests and concerns is needed so that mission of education in the modern world can be better fulfilled. The complex relationship between globalisation and English language is also discussed. Global English has become a central issue that lies at the heart of globalisation of English. English, the international language of business and communication, gives access to knowledge and technology and the possibility of communication with people all over the world in the process of globalisation. Since accession to the WTO, China has made more contribution in promoting Global English. To correspond with this trend, educational policy changes, especially ELT reforms at various levels to cultivate communicative competence for global communications become a matter of urgency.

Chapter Three summarises the research undertaken to date regarding the debates within ELT and globalisation field, especially in the context of China's WTO membership. This chapter studies the development of educational innovations in China as change strategies around which education is interpreted as a powerful agent of social transformation in the process of globalisation. The ELT issues in China was inquired into from a historical perspective with the focus on how these issues have been dealt with by other researchers in similar areas. By looking back at the historical literary contribution in this area, conceptual traditions and frameworks focusing on College English education in the context of globalisation process were established to examine the research problems. China's WTO membership exerts tremendous influence on the education system, including the foreign language

education sector. On the one hand, there is an increasing demand for Mandarin around the world. On the other hand, China's need for English language for global communication is becoming more and more urgent. Global economic integration and domestic market reforms have had tremendous impacts on Chinese universities. The recent higher education expansion is a response to the strong need for higher education generated from the transition to the socialist market economy. Hence, a model for reorientation of educational policies, in particular, foreign language education policy, that is market-oriented and responsive to public interests and concerns is important to confront the challenges.

Relevant issues including the role of computer technology and cultural factors in ELT in China were also examined in Chapter Three. Given that the increasing interdependence of English and technology makes new demands on Chinese students, it becomes important to address how the educational system can best respond to these demands. The rapid and widespread deployment of computer technology has had impact on technology in language pedagogy, which resulted in wide use of multimedia-based content, technology-enhanced language learning, and computer-mediated communication. These new technologies enable students to reach out and connect with wider communities as worldwide communication via the new technologies, dissolving some barriers in L2 environment. This makes it important for this research to examine the 2004 CECR to find out how this new national curriculum gears itself towards the future technological orientations. Critical evaluation of the relevant literature reveals that there was a lack of study involving national ELT curriculum in the context of globalisation from the perspective of learners. Similarly, there has not been much research into the specific needs of the English learners, especially those college students who take the highest position as learners in China's ELT system.

Chapter Four illustrates the methodology and methods applied in this research. In this study, reference was given to the adaptations to the national College English curriculum policies. The 1999 Curriculum and the 2004 CECR, the latest version of national curriculum were the foci of this investigation. Associated documents concerning language policy and curriculum development in China were also collected and investigated. To investigate the research problem in this project, multi-

faceted methodology was applied to generate relevant data. Questionnaire survey, interviews and classroom case studies were conducted to collect the needed data to deal with the research questions. 100 university students from three universities in Dalian were invited to participate in the project. However, the classroom observations were all conducted in Dalian Maritime University, where the researcher has been teaching English as a foreign language for more than 16 years. In this way, it is easier for the researcher to gain access to the target data sources as well as to achieve more insights into the everyday operation of CE teaching and learning. The data collected was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively to investigate its relevance to the research problem and associated research questions.

The following three evidentiary chapters were established to carry forward the main argument, based on the framework of social theory and literature review and research methodology.

Chapter Five reveals English learners' views on the status of English in China in the WTO era. Generally speaking, university students were positive about the role that English has been playing in China's education and agreed that it remains a priority. Similarly, a great majority of the students admitted that the English language holds superior status in Chinese education and it is their common belief that English is a major contributor to the economic and social advance and higher standards of English competence are necessary to meet the requirements of social and economic development in the WTO era. What is more, the students were positive about the possible gains for China in connection with the globalisation of English in the WTO era. In this global network of discourse, English, the dominant language of the Internet, is widely believed to be providing the main means of accessing high-tech communication and information in the WTO era. In addition, most participants acknowledged that they benefit from learning and using English as it enables better understanding of modern western values.

However, they did not believe that English and its cultural associations pose threat to traditional Chinese cultures and values and English facilitates EFL learners' understanding of modern western values. In addition, sufficient cultural exposure to English culture in their process of learning is essential for successful English

acquisition. Their attitudes towards learning English were not as positive. At the same time, there existed some disagreements regarding the idea of promoting the status of English in China as an official language and using it as medium of tertiary education. Similarly, although most of them were aware of the stratification function in job market, the students varied in their opinions about whether English language competence is related to socio-economic inequalities. The students were aware that successful communication required more than the ability to integrate language systems and skills. They were also aware that learning a language is inseparable from learning about its culture. Students welcomed and expected the cultural components in teaching and learning. However, in spite of the students' awareness of the demand of oral communication skills in jobs and professions in the era of WTO, they were worried about the lack of training in this regard. The students expressed their intense longing for the opportunities to integrate classroom learning into everyday use, but not to be subjected to passive teacher-centred, test-driven approaches.

Chapter Six further investigates the College English learners' views regarding the curriculum and pedagogy of ELT in China within the framework of the 1999 CE Curriculum. This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the 1999 CE Curriculum regarding how and why it failed to fulfill its intended objectives. Modification of national College English curriculum resulted in evident shift of the goal from linguistic competence to communicative competence and the pedagogy from single skill training (reading) to integrated skills (all four macro skills) development. At the same time, the stipulated methodology has changed from 'teacher-centered' to 'learner-centred'. However, as it turned out, the 1999 CE Curriculum failed to solve the most acute problems the Chinese English learners encountered as it failed to set the whole process of EFL teaching and learning in the context of globalisation and lagged behind soon after it was promulgated.

The result of part of the research project indicated that the university EFL learners are dissatisfied with the current situation. It was found that text-centred and test driven instruction remains prevalent in the universities. This system deprived the students of their chances to deal with EFL in the way that would better prepare them to meet the communicative competence requirements as a member in the global village. It becomes likely that a graduate might have well-documented English



language competence in terms of standard CET test scores, but fail to carry out the everyday communication in the language that they were certificated to be proficient. Students also expressed their dissatisfaction with the ‘chalk and talk’ methodology, the current textbooks and other related resources. It was their common demand that textbooks be revised to include more practical components by adding more cultural contents, attaching more importance to communicative skills to guide students’ interest in developing their English skills. As a result, an overwhelming majority of the students involved in the research project considered that Chinese ELT system needs immediate reform. The evidence and analysis in this chapter are of great significance because the 1999 Curriculum itself and the problems involving its implementations led to the ongoing ELT reform in China as represented by the promulgation of the 2004 CECR, which will be the focus of discussion in the next chapter.

Chapter Seven examines the current national curriculum, the 2004 CECR, from various perspectives. The 2004 CECR represents an immediate response in the ELT field to China’s economic globalisation. The Authoritative/Participative models characterize the implementation of the 2004 CECR as decisions about the nature and process of change are made by both authority figures within the organisation (e.g. representative teachers), and outside (e.g. the MOE). Also we can see that the expected change in CE is externally driven by the socio-economic globalisation, with immense input from the internal conditions. A comparison between the essential components of both the 2004 CECR and Global English reveals that they have much in common. Global English, rather than a general term for the Englishes in use worldwide, is concerned with a particular model of English language teaching and learning. The 2004 CECR, to some extent, reflects the concepts of Global English model of learning English.

The 2004 CECR model is in essence a combination of the concept of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), in that it stipulates that a computer-based and student-centred pedagogy should be adopted to suit the needs of the latest development in College English education. The main objective of the 2004 CECR is aimed at a shift of priority from “reading comprehension” teaching and learning to listening and speaking

competence development. The results of this study confirm Chen's (2005) finding that the integration of computer-mediated communication into English language learning can provide learners with more authentic input and more opportunities to participate in the target sociocultural contexts; both linguistic and pragmatic knowledge can be promoted. Moreover, motivation, learner autonomy, can also be encouraged through the use of computer-mediated communication inside and outside of the classroom.

However, a case study in a Chinese university reveals that the implementation of the 2004 CECR is confronted with some challenges. Substantial pedagogical improvement will not come unless there is a change in the understanding of the process of teaching and learning and philosophy of language. The traditional notion of teaching and learning in the CE classroom need to be reconsidered and reshaped to allow for a learner-centred multimedia language classroom to emerge. It also requires sufficient funding for computer facilities, and effective and timely training for teachers' professional development. Above all, it requires patience and the time to allow teachers to gain experience and bring about the necessary cultural change within institutions. On the other hand, insufficient authentic resources and the unfavourable environment to use the target language have resulted in difficulties EFL learners often encounter in developing communicative competence.

In combination with the above-mentioned challenges or difficulties, the following future trends are also obvious. Firstly, web-based CE courses resulting from the effect of the state-of-the-art technology on educational reform in Chinese ELT will be increasingly prevalent. Web-based courses have the advantage of providing learners as well as instructors freer and wider accessibility to language resources and better flexibility in time management. Moreover, technology-enhanced language learning, including multimedia-based content, Internet-based resources, and computer-mediated communication were included as an important part of CE teaching and learning. Innovation in this respect made it possible for students to be more cognitively and pragmatically involved in the teaching and learning process and the class work became more challenging and relevant to their personal needs and interests. The learners were more likely to have access to various aspects of the English language and the related materials and exercises to facilitate their learning.

Chapter Eight includes the conclusions.

## **Chapter Two – Globalisation and English Language Education**

This chapter focuses on constructing the debates within ELT and globalisation field and it is organised in a way that various issues and definitions emerge. In this chapter the existing empirical research on this topic both within China and more broadly will be summarised. The research works chosen for review are from the leading edge figures in the field whose names are frequently cited in the literature. The major purpose is to lay out the theoretical resources used in this thesis to inform the research methodology, in particular the data collection and analysis procedures. Reference to relevant social theories provides an explanation and justification for the key concepts that help locate current educational change as an expression of and response to contemporary globalisation.

This chapter begins by addressing the globalisation orientation taken in this research project to political, historical, economic and social concepts as they pertain to education. This provides a basis for critical reflection on the process of research itself and educational life and educational systems. This chapter explores the debates that surround globalisation of economy and culture, globalisation and reorientation of educational policy, globalisation of the English language and the responding role of language policy and ideology in this process. Particular reference is made to the contestation over concepts of the global cultural and linguistic homogenisation and cultural and linguistic heterogeneity. Following this, the meanings of key ideas in the field of cultural globalisation studies were explored. Discussion in this chapter centres on the following key conceptual debates: globalisation of English; educational change and its models; language education policy; and communicative competence.

### **2.1 Introduction: Culture and Globalisation**

The cultural dimensions of globalisation are having an increasingly significant impact on the third-world countries thanks to the time-space compression resulting from the development of modern technology (Beynon and Dunkerley, 2000, p.17). Economic, technological and social developments that collectively have been called postmodernism have produced different cultural forms in a global culture from the

culture of late capitalism. An assumption among the various developments in the field of cultural studies is its redefinition of its 'language', making it an object so comprehensive that it comes to cover almost the same ground as culture itself. Given the importance attached to language in understanding culture, it became more inseparable from culture in this context (Hodge and Louie, 1998, p.1).

The conventional wisdom on economic globalisation, development and education runs as follows: the liberalisation of world markets and the free movement of capital and technology increase the potential for economic development. Poor countries can secure jobs and incomes by producing for the larger market found in rich countries. Without the restriction on trade and flows of inward capital, the free movement of capital and goods, combined with the much lower labour costs in low income countries, should mean, in principle the relocation of capital and production to low income countries which would, in turn, lead to growth in production, exports, employment and incomes (Stewart, 1995). Stewart also suggested that this optimistic scenario was borne out in the Asian tigers. A critical difference between these and other developing countries was their different initial human resource bases. In 1970 the four tigers all had universal primary enrolments and over a third of their children in secondary school. Stewart argued that globalisation has made the role of education in economic development even more critical than before. The quality of education determines, to some extent, labour productivity and the ability to compete in international markets. What globalisation has done is to increase the returns to education available from exploiting the global economy and to raise the penalties for educational failure.

However, Stewart (1995) identified a new vicious circle stimulated by globalisation as it was accompanied by the debt crisis in many countries and structural adjustment policies. This has led in some countries to a reduction in state resources available for education, leading to a decline in enrolment and lowering of educational quality. Unlike the successful countries that build on their good human resource capacity, succeed in the global economy, generate higher incomes for families and more resources for education, more human resources and increased ability to compete in the global economy, failing countries start with a weak human resource base,

economic failure diminishes the resources available for education, leading to a decline in the resource base. This inevitably results in brain drain.

In modern society, the social production of wealth is accompanied by the social production of risks. According to Beck (1992, p.47), the risk society is a classless form of capitalism and it controls new sources of conflict and consensus. New social lifestyles and group identities emerge based around the individualisation of social risks. In contrast to the post-modern theories, Giddens and Beck hold an optimistic view that visualises the potentials of modern society. It is their shared assumption that society is becoming ever more fragmented and differentiated and that social life is more uncertain and diverse. From a Foucauldian perspective we might therefore suggest that such theories are themselves a part of the governance process, a process that seeks the ordering of society along individualised lines. Globalisation in Giddens' eyes was an inevitable process as he used the terms 'juggernaut' and 'runaway world' to describe the globalisation process. What he attempted to suggest is that this process is irresistible and that the best we can do is apply some steering mechanisms.

It is of equal significance to address the effects of cultural and political globalisation. According to Urzua (2000 p.421) globalisation refers to not only the dissemination of common cultural values, but also the re-emergence of nationalism, cultural conflict and social movements. Similarly, Giddens argued that our interdependence in communication as well as economic, cultural and political integration increases in the process of globalisation. The past decades have seen a revolution in communications, linked to the connection of satellites technology to computers, which has changed many aspects of our way of living (<http://www.polity.co.uk/giddens/interview.htm> access date: 18/05/2004). In accordance with enhanced mobility and the rise of various cultural networks in all domains of life, people assume multiple and flexible identities instead of one uniformed national character. As a result, there exists "an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness toward divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity" (Hannerz, 1990, p. 239).

In this case, it becomes a more difficult task for education to continue to act as “the leading author and guardian of national identity and culture” (Green, 1997, p. 134). The national factor is most obvious from the curricula for language and history education. Mastering the standard version of the mother tongue and being familiar with the history of the nation and its literature is traditionally regarded as the goal of good national citizenship that is worthy to pursue both in eastern and western countries. The closed environment of the school, the dominance of direct instruction and the authority of the book all contributed to the one-directional transmission of national heritage.

This educational goal, however, is being put into question. Changes in the economic and political landscape together with large-scale implementations of new media and new methods for teaching and learning suggest new educational programs also. Nevertheless, it remains in doubt that, if without national control and a program for national citizenship, the post-modern aversions to structure, meaning and value may lead to privatisation, fragmentation, relying heavily on multimedia and global information networks but lacking meaningful content. Ultimately it is the idea of citizenship itself that might be put at risk. The major dilemmas for governments and educationalists in the coming decade will evolve around how to reconstruct cultures of citizenship and nationhood in ways which are appropriate to modern conditions and yet conducive both to a deepening of democracy and to a strengthening of social solidarity (Green, 1997, p. 186).

## **2.2 The WTO and International Trade in Education**

The globalisation of the economy is acting as a powerful catalyst in this process of transformation whereby a sector traditionally regarded as a public service is turning into an increasingly attractive market for major national and foreign corporations. Although the international trade in education services is not a new phenomenon (for a long time now, there have been students and teachers working or following courses abroad), it is today assuming new forms and undergoing a rapid expansion. English-speaking universities had attempted to reach out to international students. A perplexing range of joint ventures and offshore branch campuses have to some extent replaced the growth in traditional onshore provision as American, Australian and

British universities now compete for international students in their home countries. The UK's University of Nottingham, for example, had two Asian campuses by 2005: Nottingham Malaysia and Nottingham Ningbo in China (a joint venture with a private college, Wanli University in Zhejiang). By such ventures, numbers of transnational students studying for UK degrees are expected to overtake international students coming to Britain for study. The new overseas campuses are likely to attract students from elsewhere in the region, thus helping to provide an international intellectual environment (Graddol, 2006, p. 79).

The WTO provides the legal and institutional foundation for the new multilateral trading system that came into being on January 1, 1995, encompassing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The biggest difference between the two is the WTO's dispute settlement body, which acts as a court to adjudicate trade disputes, and the addition of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). This gives the WTO disciplinary power that GATT did not have (Panitchpakdi and Clifford, 2002, p. 244). The WTO is the only global international organisation dealing with the rules of trade between nations and therefore "the most powerful tool that the international community has at disposal" (Panitchpakdi and Clifford, 2002, p. vii). At its heart are the WTO agreements, negotiated and signed by the bulk of the world's trading nations and ratified in their parliaments. These agreements are the legal ground-rules for international commerce. Essentially, they are contracts, guaranteeing member countries important trade rights. They also bind governments to keep their trade policies within agreed limits to everybody's benefit.

The GATS excludes services provided under government authority and without a commercial purpose. However, this does not mean that education, especially higher education, remains outside the scope of the Agreement. In order to meet these criteria fully and therefore be excluded from the scope of application of the GATS, the education system of the country in question must be completely financed and administered by the State and, moreover, must not have any commercial purposes. As a matter of fact, most countries have mixed systems, in which the private sector plays a more or less important role and competes with the public sector. It can even be argued that courses offered by public institutions that require the payment of fees fall within the category of 'commercial activity' and are therefore covered by the



Agreement. An accurate assessment of the true scope of the agreement requires experience in the interpretation of 'economic-legal' texts. McBurnie and Ziguras (2001, p. 87) summarised the WTO's four 'modes of supply' of services and their incarnations in higher education as follows:

1. *Consumption abroad* is trade in which the consumer travels abroad to the country where the supplier is located. In the education sector, the most common example is undertaking a course abroad. The first party's member country is encouraged to provide long-range education courses and services to the second party's member country. Historically, a large proportion of international education has involved students travelling abroad to live and study in another country for a period of time.
2. *Cross-border delivery* is trade in which the provider and recipient of a service remain in their own countries, and the service is delivered through communications. International distance education and most collaborative provision of transnational education fall into this category.
3. *Commercial presence* refers to a service supplier from a member country establishing a teaching operation in the territory of another member country, enabling the supplier in question to provide a service on that territory. In the education sector, branch campuses of foreign universities fall into this category, as does the acquisition of a private educational institution by a foreign owner.
4. *The movement of natural persons* means the ability of people (as opposed to organisations) to move across national borders to deliver services. In the realm of education, foreign teachers offering courses of various kinds are a classic example of this.

The agreements were negotiated and signed by governments. But their purpose is to help producers of goods and services, exporters, and importers conduct their business. The goal is to improve the welfare of the peoples of the member countries and to help producers of goods and services, exporters, and importers conduct their business.

As a result, consumers and producers are assured that they can enjoy secure supplies and greater choice of the finished products, components, raw materials and services that they use. However, it is important to note that so far GATS has had little practical impact on higher education around the world. Even in the case of China, which included commitments on education services during its negotiations to join the WTO, national and local regulations governing foreign providers have been much more influential and have been little affected by China's GATS schedule (McBurnie and Ziguras, 2007).

### **2.3 English: the Language of Globalisation**

Globalisation and the omnipresence of English as well as the iconic value of English as a sign of modernisation raise many questions for those engaged in language policy and in the management of language education. The aim of this section is to bring together key figures from a range of cultural, commercial, linguistic and educational environments with their perceptions regarding these issues. There is little doubt that English has acquired a status of *lingua franca*. This is largely a consequence of British colonialism and Americanisation, especially the United States' post-war advance and dominance in global economy, technology and science, education and even entertainment. People in the international community are communicating in English with professional partners and colleagues, reading English articles, watching American soap operas and movies, listening to Anglophone pop music and surfing the Internet which is 80 per cent English, the de facto language of the Internet. According to Global Reach, an organisation that monitors Internet use around the world, among the 801 million people online in 2004, only 35 per cent were English speakers. Many of the remaining 544.5 million, however, have some English as a second or additional language (<http://www.greach.com/globstats/index.php3>). In the daily speech of young people, who are surrounded by global media, local languages are easily mixed with fashionable English codes. Words like 'OK', 'bye', 'IC', 'email' and 'IT' have become part of Chinese in daily use. Cultural globalisation is evident in the spread of the English language around the world and in the films and TV programmes that are sometimes seen by millions of people in different countries at the same time. As the spread of English progresses, English is bound to reflect a diversity of distinct cultures.

It is in this context that the “hero or villain” dispute regarding the role of English in the struggle between sameness and difference, its power imposed worldwide and power confronted, cultural hegemony and cultural respect has emerged. Pennycook (1995) points out that English carries a set of ideologies, values, and norms based on the history of its development and use. The spread of English thus may benefit the privileged few (including both native and non-native speakers) at the cost of others who have less opportunity to learn it. However, Kachru (1986), who has also extensively discussed the power of English, believes that questions about language and power go beyond linguistics into history, educational sociology, politics and economic considerations. The power of language is intimately connected with societal power; it can be manifested by using persuasion, regulation, inducement or force to add a code to a speech community or by the suppression of a particular language variety and the elevation of another.

Having spread as a result of exploitation and colonisation, English is still the language of exclusive social elites, especially in ex-colonies of Britain such as India and Hong Kong (Cheshire, 1991, p. 6). The most important reason for the success of English is, according to Kachru (1986, pp. 129-132) and Crystal (1997, p. 53), the historical role of England as a colonial power. In addition, Crystal argues that the emergence of the United States as the leading economic power of the Twentieth Century is another factor that lead to the present-day international status of English. English as the official language of the United States, “with its political and economic underpinnings, currently gives the Americans a controlling interest in the way the language is likely to develop” (p. 53). On the other hand, as a major tool for acquiring knowledge in the sciences and the humanities, English has come to represent modernisation and development, and, as a link language, it has acquired intra-national roles over the years. However, the very growth of English has shifted the balance of forces within it, with second language speakers by some accounts now outnumbering first language speakers (Crystal, 1997).

Phillipson (2001) argued for the huge benefits of the investment in English as a commodity. The English teaching business was worth six billion pounds per annum to the British economy by the 1980s, and has expanded substantially since with the

number of learners constantly increasing. One strand of contemporary global English is the global examinations of proficiency in English (TOEFL in the US, IELTS in Britain and Australia), which facilitate the imposition and maintenance of British and American norms.

Similarly, huge investment in information technology and its marketplace and the remarkable resultant achievements in this area are accelerating the effect of English as an advantage for competition. For decades English has dominated the IT industry, from research and development, to the design of hardware and software. Its significance is reflected in the competition between China and India in the IT industry. In 2002, there were signs that the impact of China's initiatives in respecting international intellectual property rights heralded a new era of China-led technology standards that would inhibit the monopoly of technologies established to the benefit of English speakers. However, more recently, India, which once was very concerned about China's enthusiasm for changing standards in the IT industry, now sees the threat as fading – partly due to Indian businesses assuming that China will take a long time to catch up in English language proficiency, and that India's dominance in business process outsourcing was established in large part because of their command of the English language.

In parallel with the process of globalisation, it is notable that there has been a growing discussion among academics, educationists, journalists, business professionals about the nature and use of English as a 'world language', an 'international language' and as a 'global language', often expressed as 'World English', 'International English' and more recently 'Global English'. When scholars like David Crystal promote the idea of World Standard Spoken English, there is no doubt that the standards were of Anglo-American norm represented by global media conglomerates like BBC, CNN, HBO, and VOA. Phillipson (2001) argued that the idea that English had been taken over by its users worldwide, who can decide on their own norms, independently of Anglo-American gatekeepers, was naive. Local Englishes that are distinctively different, in East Africa or Pakistan for example, have local rather than global legitimacy. Thus there are the legitimate offspring of English, meaning pedigree white English in, say, Australia or Canada, and the illegitimate black offspring, Creoles and pidgins. Phillipson (2001) went on to criticise this

hierarchisation as racist and held that it was not only unethical, but also indefensible on linguistic grounds, in that all types of English, including the initial British variant, have experienced changes throughout the long history of development of the language. This inevitably raises the question of whether English is an international asset or a tool that influential cultural entities like America have been utilizing for the promotion of Western values, ideologies and the like (Crystal, 1997, pp. 35-36).

To some extent, English has become a polycentric language, one with different norms in different countries. The journal *World Englishes* has the sub-title 'Journal of English as an International and Intra-national Language' to stress that it deals with a language that serves purposes between countries as well as within them. The international purposes are not ideologically neutral, but rather essential to the functioning of globalisation (Phillipson, 1992). English interlocks with a wide range of immensely complex global processes, including, for example, the US military presence globally, the growth of multinational corporations, and the prominence in the past decade of non-government organisations and champions of human rights who are trying to modify globalisation. As a global language, English has long been seen as a tool to disseminate value concepts of world powers that are mostly English speaking countries. It is a phenomenon which is essential to globalisation: English is redefining national and individual identities worldwide; shifting political fault lines; creating new global patterns of wealth and social exclusion; and suggesting new thinking of human rights and responsibilities of citizenship (Graddol, 2006, p. 12).

Because language and culture are inseparably coupled, when teaching a language one invariably teaches more than just a code of communication. Authentic materials or texts used in English classes expose students to cultural messages and values associated with the native English-speaking societies to some extent. When Phillipson (1993) formally introduced the term 'linguistic imperialism', it was with strong connotation of ownership and conquest by military or economic means. He focuses on the way in which ELT policy and strategy developed in postcolonial countries, heavily influenced by government-funded agencies like the British Council. He argues that well-educated elites in different countries may have encouraged education in English, directly or indirectly, not only as a means of overcoming perceived problems arising from linguistic pluralism, but also of

consolidating their own advantage through privileging a language that they were already proficient in themselves.

It is in this context that Graddol (2006, pp. 13-20) associated the current enthusiasm for English in the world with the complex process of globalisation. He argued that English is closely tied to at least two of the three major phases in human history: modern and postmodern. English has played a most significant role in the transition from modernity to postmodernity. An English factor is found in almost every key macro trend: be it business process outsourcing, the rise of urban middle class worldwide, the development of new communications technology, the changing nature and control of news media, or the reform of higher education.

China, managing simultaneously both modernity and postmodernity, relies much the process of globalisation for its 'peaceful rise'. China has experienced steady and fast growth since its entry into WTO. According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, China could overtake the USA and Germany to become the largest exporter in the world in the next five years. In 2005, China revised its estimations of economic growth, showing that it had already overtaken Italy in Gross Domestic Product and was likely to become the world's fourth largest economy, overtaking the UK by the end of 2006. The English language, in the same way, attributes to its economic development and growth of international influence. A case in point is the connection between English and China's services sector, which was principally underestimated and probably already accounts for over 40 per cent of its Gross Domestic Product. Services are of linguistic interest since they often require much higher levels of communication than manufacturing. Exported services – which include receiving international students and tourists – often require international communication (Graddol, 2006, p.32). Graddol noted that a prominent recent feature of globalisation has been the outsourcing of services to countries with cheaper labour costs. Global English has helped accelerate this phenomenon and India has gained a competitive edge because of the official status of English in that country. According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, close to 20 per cent of total employment in the 15 pre-expansion EU countries, America, Canada and Australia could 'potentially be affected' by the international sourcing of services activities (*The Economist*, 30 June 2005). The desirability of

English in the outsourcing business results from the fact that most of the offshore contracts come from English-speaking corporations.

## **2.4 Cultural Implications of the Spread of English**

The idea of a national culture as the sum of social, psychological and historical idiosyncrasies of a particular nation necessary involves a national approach to language education. In human history, education and media have been the main channels for constructing the national citizenship. In a modern society, national public discourse is established through the traditional printed media and audiovisual media such as radio and television, together with the more recent online media. In this process the consistent use of a standard language has played a significant role. Anderson (1983) depicted nations as ‘imagined communities’; although citizens belonging to the same nation do not know each other personally, they acquire a sense of togetherness from sharing a language, reading the same novels and newspapers, listening to the same radio broadcasting, watching the same TV programs and discussing the same issues of national interest.

In a world of global consumers of global products and information, national differences tend to dissolve. Opponents of globalisation criticize it for tending towards unification, standardisation, and referring to the source of many of these products – Americanisation. The process of Americanisation, according to Graddol, Swann and Leith (1996, pp. 93-94), started in North America in 1789, with Noah Webster pleading for ‘an American tongue’. George Bernard Shaw’s claim in 1912 that, “What has been happening in my lifetime is the Americanisation of the world”, indicated the rapid progress of this process (cited in Holroyd, 1997, p. 660). Currently, globalisation often means the Americanisation of our public and private patterns of consumption, our ways of thinking, and the organisation of many domains of life.

The penetration of the English language and its associated culture is causing concern among nationalist movements all over the world. Several governments have attempted to take protectionist measures against the alleged threat to their cultural heritage. France, for instance, appointed a watchdog committee to expel extraneous

vocabulary from official discourse. It also lobbied hard to convince Europe to protect its audio-visual media markets during the trade negotiations in the early 1990s that led to the GATS. However, English has never been regarded in any sense as a threat to Chinese languages, especially Mandarin, and as Xu (2002b) observes, “Since Chinese Putonghua (Mandarin) does not feel linguistically insecure in the face of the global spread of English, the government is generously supporting the teaching and learning of English in China” (p. 226). Protectionist measures like import quotas imposed on Hollywood movies have been taken for commercial considerations rather than against any possible threats to Chinese cultural heritage, which remains in many people’s mind too strong to be marginalised or made redundant. From a historical point of view, all cultures, including China’s, have developed through exchanges in which outside influences have been filtered, processed, adapted and adopted, even if this has often involved the relative dominance of one culture over others. In this respect, the nationalist objective to keep a particular culture ‘pure’ is completely artificial and still not prevailing in China.

Nationalist movements worldwide are concerned with the infiltration of the English language and American culture. They sense a threat to their own cultures and fear that their languages will gradually lose their communicative functions, to end up finally as a dialect merely suited for local usage. As far as language is concerned: local/national languages are not replaced by English on the fundamental level of grammar; only their vocabulary is enriched by lexical items for which there is usually no local alternative. A case in point is the influence of English on Chinese, which has been mainly lexical in the adoption of technical terms. Meanwhile, there has been a mild influence on the morphology of Mandarin (Putonghua), in that the acquisition of both direct loans (such as ‘mo-deng’ for ‘modern’) and loan translation (‘guanxi’ for ‘connection’) has created polysyllabic words in a basically monosyllabic language (McArthur, 2003, p. 357).

Pennycook (1995) pointed out that English carries a set of ideologies, values, and norms based on the history of its development and use. Local cultures should not see communication networks in association with English as a threat, but rather as an opportunity to promote their own languages and traditions and to revitalize them by entering into dialogue with others. For non-English speaking Chinese immigrants in



English speaking countries, for example, getting involved in the long-cherished ‘mainstay community’ and striving for the re-emergence of submerged ethnic communities rely on effective communication with the wider community (Richmond, 1984).

Linguistic power can be manifested by using one of the following power strategies: persuasion, regulation, inducement and force. Kachru (1987, p. 222) lists also some other reasons for the dominance of English around the world: its propensity for acquiring new identities, its power of assimilation, its adaptability to “decolonisation” as a language, its manifestation in a range of dialects, and its provision of a flexible medium for literary and other types of creativity across languages and cultures. There are two hypotheses concerning language power: the intrinsic-power hypothesis and the acquired-power hypothesis. The first one claims that English would intrinsically possess certain linguistic characteristics that would make it a preferred language for international purposes (e.g. Jespersen 1905, cited in Kachru, 1986). This position, according to Kachru (1986), is similar to claims of racial superiority. The second hypothesis emphasizes the ways in which a language acquires power. English has also been referred to as a post-imperial language, signalling that colonial empires have given way to new types of alliance, collaboration and exploitation. Our world is increasingly dominated by Coca Cola, CNN, Microsoft and the many transnational corporations for whom the key language is English, and who through processes of McDonaldisation are seeking to create a global consumerist culture, a single market. English is therefore a key and effective instrument in breaking down national borders (Phillipson, 1992). English became gradually a major tool for acquiring knowledge in the sciences and the humanities. It has come to represent modernisation and development, and, as a link language, it has acquired intra-national roles over the years.

The most important reason for the success of English is, according to Kachru (1986, pp.129-132) the historical role of England as a colonial power. In India, for example, the political power naturally attributed a power to the language of the Raj (also referred to as the linguistic elitism strategy), and it also became a symbol of political power. English came to be the language of the legal system, higher education, pan-regional administrative network, science and technology, trade and commerce, either

because the indigenous languages were not equipped for these roles or because the use of English was considered prestigious and powerful and English provided for a convenient vocabulary.

The spread of English as a result of exploitation and colonisation thus privileges certain groups of people (including native speakers and non-native elites who have the opportunity to master it well) and may harm others who have less opportunity to learn it. It is especially notable that in many ex-colonies of Britain, English is still the language of exclusive social elites. On the other hand, those who fail to receive education of English whatsoever would be denied the English-related jobs. English is a necessary skill for many of the global workers: for example, Malaysia in 2003 made basic proficiency in English a requirement for all foreign employees, just as Bangladesh signed an agreement to send 200,000 workers to Malaysia. Phillipson (1992), when discussing global English and local language policies, argued that the common label 'English as an international language' might serve to obscure the fact that it is a national language for some of its speakers. It is in this sense that its role as a neutral *lingua franca* remains in doubt. Native speakers of English are often at an advantage, whether at international conferences and as editors of so-called 'international' academic journals.

To reduce such risks, Harbord (2002) suggested that the evils of linguistic imperialism might be avoided so long as primary and secondary education, and perhaps also the first stage of tertiary education (BA degrees) are taught in the local language other than English. During this period, the students are receiving rather than giving, and there is no need for them to receive information in a foreign language. China's language education policy is to some extent in conformity with this scenario. English courses are included in the primary, secondary and tertiary curricula as separate parallel courses with other subject courses like Chinese Language and Mathematics. No subject course is taught through English or any language other than Chinese in the primary, secondary schools. However, it has become an encouraged practice in tertiary institutions to provide English and Chinese bilingual subject courses.

This is a debate without conclusion. It is one thing to contemplate a cultural and linguistic evolution from a distance; it is another to take decisions on the political matters. While regarded unequal to favour the native speaker of English in Europe, it is also unfair in China to favour those have good mastery of English.

## **2.5 Language Education Policy and the Role of National Curriculum**

In the context of globalisation, foreign (and especially English) language education clearly gains ever more importance. For countries like China that do not have English as their mother tongue, the knowledge of this language has become a priority and advantage, since it is the *lingua franca* for most transnational communication. This leads to the rapid growth of importance of ELT in national education system.

Traditional language education has traditionally been shaped to spread national literacy and national consciousness. In the past few decades, however, language education has increasingly been moving away from the nation and national culture and has been heading towards a communicative paradigm. The main objective has become personal empowerment through communicative skills. The ability to perform communicative functions is considered as a necessary prerequisite to participate in democratic, individualized societies that rely heavily on highly specialized service and information economies. In China, English language courses have been a major component of curriculum in schools and universities, but it has never become the language of instruction in national education.

National policies related to language issues reflect attitudes on such vital issues as integration or exclusion. Halliday (1990 cited in Ho et al, 2000, p. 1) argued that language policy-making and language-in-education planning involve formulating policies, getting them adopted and making provision for ensuring that they are carried out. Halliday added that it is these measures that provide an institutional framework for the development and teaching of what is chosen as the national language and for the teaching of foreign language. He went on to argue that the two sets of activities are interrelated, with language policy-making setting the goals for language-in-education planning.

According to Halliday (1990, cited in Ho et al, 2000, p. 1), the factors that determine the nature of a country's language education system are dependent on the priorities that each country has set for itself, namely, the need to eradicate illiteracy, to establish national unity, and preserve a national culture and identity. There are also the economic reasons for teaching a language. However, the role of English in China is not "a common language to eradicate illiteracy and to develop a sense of national identity" (Ho et al, 2000, p. 3). Practical considerations of education and economic development have come into play. This language of international currency has been adopted as a language of wider communication and has become the most studied foreign language in China (Cheng, 1992, p. 162). The number of English learner has been increasing at phenomenal speed since the open-up in the late 1970s. In spite of the fact that English has no official status and there is no English speaking community in China, English has been an important criterion in government qualification recognition, a booming business in private education sector, and even in some circumstances a symbol of social identity.

The impact of geopolitical changes on interest in learning the appropriate languages has been apparent in China. It is worth noting that the ELT policies in different periods are closely linked with the socio-political changes. Lam (2002) puts the development of foreign language education in China since 1949 in six phases, based on the Three Periods (Before/During/After the Cultural Revolution) theory proposed by Scovel (1995) and recognized by many others. Different ELT policies have been implemented to respond to these often-dramatic changes since 1949. It is worthwhile to note that the status of supremacy of English as foreign language in China did not begin until the end of the Cultural Revolution, which partly account for the assertion that "English in China has not developed into an institutional variety, as it has in South Asia and parts of Africa" (Zhao and Campbell, 1995). However, it still remains uncertain whether English will eventually evolve into a language that takes different forms and enjoys different status from what it is now in China.

While it is now widely recognized that cultural content is an indispensable ingredient of learning and studying languages, it is not clear what this exactly implies for language education. It is highly questionable if an exclusively national core curriculum is the most adequate representation of knowledge in a rapidly changing

society with global networks and multiple identities. It presupposes a cultural consensus that seems no longer there. As Graff (1988) put it with regard to literary content knowledge, “What should we be teaching – when there is no ‘we’?” In this spirit, the national perspective should at least be corrected on the basis of local and global perspectives, as these are all important dimensions of contemporary life interacting with each other constantly.

In spite of a wide variety of new theories and practices, communicative language teaching (hereinafter referred to as CLT), the dominant teaching approach in many schools, encounters more neutral criticism for its alleged indifference towards cultural content and the values of citizenship. For efficient communicative performance, it is argued, shared cultural competence and common attitudes are as important as functional skills. This criticism was put forward by Bloom (1987) and Hirsch (1988), the latter being the founder of the influential American Cultural Literacy project in the 1980s. This attempt to bring language education ‘back to basics’, supported heavily by the conservative Reagan Administration was a clear example of nationalist revival, and not surprisingly the cornerstone of this project was a canon of cultural literacy about, “what every American needs to know” (Hirsch, 1988).

Perhaps language education should deal with the ‘background’ issue of globalism and nationalism in much the same way: by turning the problem itself into a subject for the language course and a matter for reflection, discussion, and all kinds of creative efforts. For that purpose, it would be rather unthinkable not to use the Internet. Inevitably, it has English as common language, but it should also be able to function as an ‘umbrella’ for sites on the same issue using other languages

Phillipson (1992) holds different views with regards to images of English in globalisation, arguing that “global English is a myth, and wishful thinking” and that “seeing global English through a prism that obscures the cultural and linguistic diversity of the world’s many thousand spoken and sign languages is therefore a false representation of the globe’s reality”. He argues that:

What is at stake when English spreads is not merely the substitution or displacement of one language by another but the imposition of new ‘mental structures’ through English. This is in fact an intrinsic part of ‘modernisation’ and ‘nation-building’, a logical consequence of ELT. Yet the implications of this scarcely penetration into ELT research or teaching methodology. Cross-cultural studies have never formed part of the core of ELT as an academic discipline, nor even any principled consideration of what educational implications might follow from an awareness of this aspect of English linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992, p. 166).

In language education, as in education in other areas, national curriculum indicates a consensus around educational pedagogies, policies and politics. There has been more and more doubt as to whether it is the most adequate representation of knowledge in a rapidly changing society with global networks and multiple identities, especially at tertiary level. It becomes questionable whether national curriculum enhances the quality of the teaching and learning, whether the processes of formulation are honestly guided and motivated by ‘pure’ and ‘incorrupt’ notions of the possible improvability of students’ learning.

Nevertheless, given the scarcity of resources and opportunities, tensions and even conflict between educators whose priorities are pedagogy or policy or politics can be expected as they contest for advantages, opportunities, and superior achievements. Power is a crucial element in educational change. Success or failure in achieving personal or group goals is related to the possession of competence, knowledge, skills and other elements of power. Individuals have the freedom and flexibility to adjust their personal objectives in the framework of the more powerful society.

## **2.6 Global English as a Future Orientation**

Two diverging views on the intra-national or international roles of English were presented by Phillipson (1992) and Crystal (1997). While Crystal regarded the language more as a neutral and beneficial tool for international communication, Phillipson saw English and ELT as means of oppressing the third world. Phillipson (1992) interpreted Americanisation as English expanding at the expense of other

languages at both local and global level. This is best illustrated by the linguistic situation in the European Union. The endorsement of multilingualism in European Union treaties does not hide the hollow rhetoric of the equality of the 11 official languages. English has remained to be the one that has “the sharpest beak” in the “pecking order of languages” (Phillipson, 1992).

On the other hand, Bryson (1990, pp. 243-245) expressed his concern regarding the future of English by arguing that the most important question facing English was whether it would remain one generally cohesive tongue or whether it would dissolve into a collection of related but mutually incomprehensible sub-languages as the existing elements of linguistic diversity between Englishes in the world intensified with the passage of time. His denial of the suggestion that English will evolve into separate branches in the way that Latin evolved into French, Spanish, and Italian is based on the powerfully binding influences of the global communications systems. The communication products like Internet, movies, television, books, magazines, record albums, business contacts and tourism might exert a variety of linguistic impacts on English and its users in an unprecedented way. As a conclusion, Bryson (1990, p. 245) suggested: “If we should be worrying about anything to do with the future of English, it should be not that various strands will drift apart but that they will grow indistinguishable”. The presently frequently quoted term ‘global English’ could be regarded as an indication of this inclination. In recent years there has been much discussion regarding a fourth period in the history of English: after the Old English, Middle English and Modern English, which is the conventional division, comes the period of ‘Global English’, which in a sociolinguistic context refers literally to the use of English as a global language.

Before any elaboration on Global English, it is crucial to mention Kachru’s (1988, p. 5) description of global community of English speakers in terms of ‘three circles’. In the Inner Circle of native-speakers of English, English is spread through population shifts; in the Outer Circle, through colonisation principally; and in the Expanding Circle, through economic links and increasing interdependence in trade matters. The spread of English, especially in the Expanding Circle, is also characterized by Quirk (1990, p. 106) as the econo-cultural model. It is in this circle that the distinction between English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL)

becomes significant. This model categorises the types of spread, patterns of acquisition and the use of English in different cultural contexts.

The term ESL is used to refer to situations in which English is being taught and learned in countries, contexts, and cultures where English is the predominant language of communication. The teaching of English to immigrants in countries such as Great Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand typifies ESL. In these countries, individuals from non-English-speaking backgrounds may speak their L1 at home, but will be required to use English for communicating at work, in school, and in the community in general. The term is also current in countries where English is widely used as a *lingua franca*. These include the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong (where its usage reflects the region's recent past as a colony of Great Britain), Singapore, and India (where the populations speak a range of other languages and where English is therefore a conveniently 'neutral' communicative, political, and social medium). Obviously, the language policy in each country has a direct impact on the teaching of English in schools and the underlying assumption is that the socio-political factor in each country makes all the difference.

In contrast, EFL is used in contexts where English is neither widely used for communication nor used as the medium of instruction. Brazil, Japan, Korea, and Thailand are all countries where English is taught as a foreign language, either as part of the elementary and high school curriculum, or in private school or other educational settings. The ESL/EFL distinction has been an important one in language pedagogy for many years because in each case the context in which the teaching takes place is very different, requiring different materials, curricula, and pedagogy. In most EFL settings, there is limited exposure to the language outside of the classroom and very limited opportunities to use it. The curriculum therefore needs to be carefully structured, and there needs to be extensive recycling of key target language items. In addition, the burden for providing the cultural dimension to the curriculum very much rests with the teacher. Teaching is also complicated by the fact that the teachers are usually non-native speakers of English, and many lack opportunities to use the language or lack confidence in using it. In such situations, it is important for the materials to provide the sort of rich and diverse linguistic input that ESL learners encounter in the world beyond the classroom (Nunan, 1999).



However, Graddol (2006, p. 110) argued that the ‘three circles’ model failed to capture the increasing importance of the outer circle, and the degree to which ‘foreign language’ learners in some countries were becoming more like second language users. He went on to argue that Global English has led to a crisis of terminology and suggested that the distinctions between ‘native speaker’, ‘second-language speaker’, and ‘foreign-language user’ have become blurred. In a globalised world, the traditional definition of ‘second-language user’ as one who uses the language for communication within their own country no longer makes sense. Also, there is an increasing need to distinguish between proficiencies in English, rather than a speaker’s bilingual status. The ‘inner circle’ is now better conceived of as the group of highly proficient speakers of English - those who have ‘functional nativeness’ regardless of how they learned or use the language.

Graddol (2006) dealt with this issue putting the EFL and Global English into a matrix as shown in Table 2.1. On the one hand, it provides a novel perspective for the exploration of the new status of English as a global *lingua franca* and the new cultural, linguistic, political and economic issues surrounding English in the context of postmodernism. On the other hand, this mentality supports the ethnocentric view that English has now triumphed as a global language and makes it difficult to understand the complexity of the spread of English in the process of globalisation (2006, pp. 58-59).

Table. 2.1 Matrix of EFL versus Global English

	<i><b>EFL</b></i>	<i><b>GLOBAL ENGLISH</b></i>
<i><b>Target variety</b></i>	Native speaker, usually American or British	Focus on internationally intelligibility rather than a specific variety; carry-over of some L1 characteristics; need for receptive skills in a range of international varieties
<i><b>Skills</b></i>	Focus on speaking and listening; communicative curriculum	All skills including literacy; translation and interpretation skills often required; emphasis on intercultural communication strategies
<i><b>Learner motives</b></i>	Mixed; often poor motivation	Usually instrumental
<i><b>Primary purpose</b></i>	To communicate with native speakers; to satisfy entrance requirements for jobs, universities	To get jobs in own country; to communicate with non-native speakers from other countries
<i><b>Values</b></i>	Liberal: improves tolerance and understanding of other cultures	Global issues such as human rights, environment, poverty gender inequality
<i><b>Learning environment</b></i>	Classroom focused; timetabled subject; occasional visits to native-speaking country	Classroom is key context but is insufficient. Private sector and home tutoring often play a role
<i><b>Content/materials</b></i>	Local government textbook; international publisher	Content often relates to another curriculum area in CLIL style approach
<i><b>Assessment</b></i>	Either local exams or international (IELTS, TOEFL, TOEIC)	Existing exams often not appropriate; assessment often via assessment of ability to carry out tasks in English or by assessing knowledge taught through English
<i><b>Failure pattern</b></i>	Low proportion of learners reach high proficiency	‘mission critical’ process where broader education or employment is dependent on actual skills (rather than on token certification)

Graddol (2006, pp. 90-91)

Graddol (2006, p. 49) asserted that the use of language is inseparable from the social relationships and identities of its users. To some extent, the growing use of English as a global language is part of a wider sociolinguistic change, as the world becomes more urban, and some people become more wealthy and middle class – both of which are encouraging the adoption of English. The most obvious change we can observe is the shift from EFL to Global English as the main stream thinking of the role of the English language in the globalising world as indicated in Table 2.1.

Up to now, modernisation in China has principally taken place in the urban centres. However, the process of urbanisation in rural areas is well underway. An increasing proportion of the China's population will be city dwellers. The rate of urbanisation in China, despite the size of its rural population, is one of the highest in the world, and a further 300 million people are expected to move to the cities in the coming decade. English is an increasingly urban language, associated with growing middle classes, metropolitan workplaces and city lifestyles. The middle class is not just a consequence of a growing economy, but also a contributory factor. Both Indian and Chinese governments see the enlargement of the middle classes as a means of increasing domestic consumption and so attracting inward investment from multinational companies, whilst providing a stabilising effect on society (Graddol, 2006, pp. 49-50).

For a language to achieve global status, Crystal (1997, p. 3) argued that there were two chief ways. Besides the official language status to be used in such domains as government, the law courts, the media and the education system, a language, even without official status, can be prioritised in a country's second-language or foreign-language use. This is the very case in China as well as other over 100 countries. However, as long as the vast majority of Chinese people are not using English in any case, and without the slightest possibility of promotion of equitable treatment of English language and Chinese, ELT in China will remain a tough job and the ELT related policies and practices issues of dispute.

The growing attractiveness of Mandarin (Putonghua) to learners across the world can be another factor that affects the ELT in China. Language schools in many countries are expanding their provision to include Mandarin (Putonghua). Unlike the enthusiasm for learning Japanese that was prompted by the economic rise of Japan, Graddol (2006, p. 63) argued that interest in Mandarin (Putonghua) might remain a long-term trend. Although there is no clear indication of the future happenings, two trends are possible. One is that the increasing demand on Mandarin (Putonghua) worldwide would make ELT in China more important as it is now mostly taught through English. Another possibility is that the rising influence of Mandarin (Putonghua) would diminish the importance of ELT ultimately.

## **2.7 Models of Educational Change**

Rapid change within education systems has led to an assortment of new teaching methods, and new ways of learning have replaced the traditional methods. Zaltman, Duncan and Holbek (1973) produced two broad categories of theories explaining change in education, separated by the origin of the change. One group of theories sees change as an internal process originating from the organisation, and the other explaining change as externally driven, with immense input from social conditions. The internal change models are concerned with organisational process. An example is the Zaltman, Duncan and Holbek (1973) model whose emphasis is on the effects of internal environment of an organisation on the change process. The model suggests two basic stages in change: initiation and implementation, each with series of sub-stages. Initiation sub-stages are knowledge-awareness, attitude formation and decision, while implementation goes through initial implementation and continued-sustained implementation.

In contrast, another group of theories includes models that reflect organisational change as arising from social conditions. A case in point is Levin's (1974) Polity Model, which argues that educational changes essentially reflect changes in the society or polity. He suggested three implications of this model: firstly, for any change agent it is its requirement that any attempted change should be developed and presented in a way consistent with the values and goals of the society; secondly, major educational changes should be introduced when major changes in the society

occurred; finally, the change agent must identify social influences which are very important to change being considered. Nevertheless, the disadvantages are also obvious. The organisational characteristics that facilitate introduction of innovations may make implementation difficult, while characteristics enabling easy implementation may make initiation difficult. For instance, lack of teacher commitment may produce only passive conformity with change, which will in turn have negative impact on the realisation of the potential benefits of the change.

At the same time, the Authoritative/Participative models proposed by Zaltman, Duncan and Holbek (1973) characterize change in terms of the extent to which decisions are made by authority figures. In this framework, decisions about the nature of process of change are made entirely by individuals holding positions of authority. Such authority figures may be within the organisation (e.g. teachers), or outside (e.g. the Ministry of Education). It should be pointed out that, in spite of authority's superior role in this model, participants who will implement it must have an input, in some stages of the decision-making regarding the innovation. The scale of this input often puts this category of change into a participative mode. For instance, although teachers may not be part of the decision to set up certain project, their input is required regarding which textbooks to use and this may become part of an established policy, according to the assumptions of this model.

Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) provided an illustration of a model, which describes these characteristics in two dimensions. The first dimension is Authority Innovative Decision that emphasizes the importance of the superior-subordinate contact. Under this dimension, three stages of decision-making are separated from an implementation phase. Knowledge of the need for change, persuasion regarding intended changes, and decisions regarding acceptance or rejection of changes are handled by authority figures prior to implementation. The implementation phase includes communication of the decision to adoption units within the organisation and action by the adoption units to implement or reject the change.

Individual-oriented models focus on the individual decision maker or adopter, and many models were described under this category (Zaltman, *et al.*, 1977). The models describe the cognitive processes people experience, whether their decisions are made

in a group or organisational context, or in relative isolation. Although the individual is the main focus, several elements in this model are parallel to those described by organisational change models. In the individual-oriented model, the initial stimulus for change in the individuals comes from some awareness, perception or problem recognition by the individual. This is the awareness that a gap exists between real and desired circumstances, and therefore a need for some change or innovation to close that gap. This is followed by an informative stage involving considerations of various change possibilities and their attributes. If enough interest is generated from the information, comprehension follows which initiates attitude formation process. This leads to support gained through attitude formation and becomes legitimation or adoption. A basic defect with individual-oriented models is their lack of clear consideration given to the implementation process. Many of the models, according to Zaltman, *et al.* (1977) describe a purchasing or selection action only. The initial or sustained use of the innovation is neglected. Another problem of the individual-oriented models is the linear presentation of the model whereas various elements may occur at the same time or in different order. The overall implication of these models is the need to convince the change targets that there is a need for the change. Also knowledge of the actual solution must be made available, and must be realistic to the environment in which the change will occur.

There are many other models explaining the process of educational change, although they all contain elements of either an internal or external input as a pattern of initiation. Other models are derived from an observation of the pattern of initiation and implementation of various educational changes. For instance, Havelock and Huberman (1978) in a survey of various educational innovations in African, Asian and Latin American countries were able to synthesize a structural model that describes the internal qualities of various projects depicting innovations in education. It should be noted that this model was not categorized according to the source of change. Its main feature is it enables understanding of the structural mechanism of the innovations themselves, rather than the pattern of their initiation. By this characteristic, the model also described the application pattern of the various components of innovatory programmes.

In short, changes in education often come about when the current practices are challenged and questions are being asked about the way things are done. The search for a more efficient way of achieving educational objectives may lead to proposals for either a new way of doing the same thing, or restructuring the current provisions to enable achievement of the same set of goals. However, changes do not normally come about just because someone decides they want a change. There must be an event which informs those in charge of education that the present system is either not achieving or is incapable of enabling the achievement of developmental goals. Once that decision is made, what remains is the attempt to carefully identify not only why the old system can no longer be continued in its present form, but also how to provide a more acceptable alternative.

It is obvious that education policy is driven by social and economic globalisation, as it has to engage in a competitive and adaptive system of political and economic interactions. In a sense, globalisation means that borders become markedly less relevant to everyday behaviour in the various dimensions of economics, information, ecology, technology, cross-cultural conflict and civil society. In education, it refers to something more than just a growth of programs in foreign language and culture. It refers to the fact that an institution must not compete with another institution located half way across the globe for its pool of students; that inter-library loans now span the globe; that students are crossing borders at an escalating pace in search of the program that best fits their needs; that standards in educational curriculum, quality and management are increasingly being established by a world market irrespective of national origin. It is in this context that cross-border education becomes necessary. Curricula with international components should make it easier for students to understand and deal with the difficulties of transnational communication and conflict.

The notion of 'knowledge-based economy' resulting from the new technologies in telecommunication, biotechnology, microelectronics, computers etc. is a recent one. However, it is an important part of the economic globalisation and is systematically changing the way people live. According to Beck (2000), in the process of labour being replaced by knowledge and capital, labour must be re-assessed or reshaped by knowledge. This is possible if there is investing in education and research. It is the very characteristics of fierce competition of the global economy that makes such

investment a strategic necessity. In that case, continued local/global community support becomes more and more important to achieve uniform and higher standards in education. As higher education institutions have been created to serve the purposes of society, never before have they been so closely implicated in the general welfare of society.

Reich (1992) argued that it is important for policy makers to understand that a nation's real technological assets are the capacities of its citizens to solve complex problems of the future. A country's prosperity relies on its knowledge, its contribution to the world economy. An advanced education is more necessary than ever before to function well in today's workforce. At the same time, the inherent dangers presenting themselves daily in an increasingly faceless, hyper-connected society makes the argument for a more educated citizenry all the more compelling.

One of the main political responses to globalisation is therefore to build and develop the education and knowledge society. This should not only be understood in terms of 'flexibility' or 'lifelong learning', but should also cover such things as social competence, the ability to work in a team, conflict resolution, understanding of other cultures, integrated thinking, and a capacity to handle uncertainties and paradoxes of the second modernity. Higher education, while maintaining its traditional functions serving the purposes of society, is challenged by forces of change never before confronted in this realm. First, rapid advances in technology and its impact on pedagogy; second, the sudden expansion of virtual education; third, new providers of education at all levels, including the fast growth of for-profit concerns; finally, major demographic shifts as students are becoming more numerous and older, more goal-oriented and globally mobile. Thus, reorientation of educational policies is evidently important for educational institutions to gain a competitive edge to confront the challenges before policy makers and academic leaders. Obviously a new regulating system that is more market-oriented and responsive to public interests and concerns is needed so that mission of higher education in the modern world can be better fulfilled.

## **2.8 Communicative Competence for Global Communication**



In the era of globalisation, the use of English will be essential for people to live in a world of increasing competition. One's ability in conducting global communication depend on his or her ability, not only to learn English and assimilate its associated cultures, but to apply the language and cultural knowledge and skills into one's own practical work and serve the best interest of his or her real world life. China's entry into the WTO means more English-related jobs and more need to conduct communication with it globally.

The cultivation of the ability to 'share and negotiate meanings and conventions' (Breen and Candlin, 1980, p. 92) has been at the heart of foreign language teaching in the world since the concept of 'communicative competence' was first defined by Hymes (1972, p. 7) and Savignon (1972, cited in Kramsch and Thorne, 2002, p. 83). In recent years, there has been a major shift in perspective within the language teaching profession concerning the nature of what is to be taught. In simple terms, there has been a change of emphasis from presenting language as a set of forms (grammatical, phonological, lexical) that have to be learned and practiced, to presenting language as a functional system that is used to fulfil a range of communicative purposes. Littlewood (2000, p. 6) summarised four domains of skill that constitute a speaker's communicative competence. Firstly, the learner must attain as high a degree as possible of linguistic competence. That is, he or she must develop skill in manipulating the linguistic system, to the point where he or she can use it spontaneously and flexibly in order to express his intended message. Secondly, the learner must distinguish between the forms that he or she has mastered as part of his linguistic competence, and the communicative functions that they perform. Thirdly, the learner must develop skills and strategies for using language to communicate meanings as effectively as possible in specific situations. He or she must learn to use feedback to judge his or her success, and if necessary, remedy failure by using different language. Fourthly, the learner must develop sufficient awareness of the social meaning of language forms. For many learners, this may not entail the ability to vary their own speech to suit different social circumstances, but rather the ability to use generally acceptable forms and avoid potentially offensive ones.

We can characterize traditional language teaching methods and materials as concentrating on the development of grammatical competence, almost to the exclusion of the other components. Thus, a syllabus or a textbook which presents the grammar, the lexicon, or the phonology of a language as a set of forms and rules to be learned should have the effect, if successful, of giving learners the ability to produce grammatically or phonologically accurate sentences in the language being studied.

While Tarone and Yule (1999, p. 17) argued that the development of this grammatical competence should be in many respects the major goal of large numbers of students who take courses in a second or foreign language, Savignon (1983, cited in Kramsch and Thorne, 2002, p. 84) continued to stress the importance of ‘negotiation of meaning’ by using various sources of information - prior experience, the context to achieve understanding. This led to some proposal for a negotiated syllabus with both teachers and learners selecting the content of a course built upon social and problem-solving interaction so that the learners’ capacity for communication rather than their declarative knowledge about the language can be improved (Long and Crookes, 1992, p. 37). Based on the previous debates and discussions, Canale and Swain (1980) provided the most commonly accepted concept of communicative competence by arguing that key components of communicative competence include grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence.

Hird (1995) argued that the ELT in China was “not very communicative”. Under the guideline of the 1981 national curriculum for high school English teaching and learning which was structure-based and set “English language knowledge” as the main teaching goal in order for students to “lay a solid foundation for further studies”, “87 per cent of teachers in China’s middle schools used the traditional method in the late 1980s” (Zuo et al, 1990, p. 40). As a result, the traditional method produced a discontent with the existing state of affairs. Students became almost ‘deaf-dumb’ and had little ability to speak and understand English (Ng and Tang, 1997, pp. 63-85).

The MOE is the government administration that makes educational policy and determines the goal, curriculum, course books, and even teaching methods throughout the country. As Campbell and Zhao (1993) observed, “The highly centralized Chinese system of education subverts the development of more effective methods of teaching English in a number of ways, particularly in the ways foreign language teachers are selected and trained, materials and methods chosen, and programs and teachers are evaluated”.

As Johnson and Morrow (1981, p. 1) argued, “new movements often begin as reactions to old ones”. CLT was initially introduced into China in the early 1990s as new ELT approach to address the problem of the traditional text-driven teaching method that produces no English speakers but rather English readers. CLT views language as a tool for communication. It insists that interactive speaking activities in classrooms be instances of real communication. It assumes it essential for students to have sufficient exposure to the target language. However, CLT was initially not well accepted because the method was new in every way and it met with considerable resistance from the start, mainly because of teachers’ lack of confidence to teach communicatively and grammar-focused examination pressure. “Many teachers have tried to change the dominant teaching procedures but quickly get frustrated, lose their initial enthusiasm, and acquiesce to tradition” (Campbell and Zhao, 1993).

Similarly, Burnaby and Sun (1989) reported that CLT was inappropriate for the needs of most Chinese students, and difficult to implement within the Chinese context, in spite of the positive attitude held by Chinese teachers. Teachers expressed a desire for assistance with curriculum development, improved testing methods, and more native-speaker experts in ELT/EFL from English-speaking countries.

However, this mentality did not prevent CLT from reestablishing its position in ELT in China. As mentioned in Chapter Three, “English Course Guidelines for Secondary School Students” issued by the MOE in 2001 started a new round of reform by recommending task-based language teaching as effective teaching method as well as a new diverse evaluation system focusing both on formative and summative assessment. As a natural continuity of the secondary ELT, College English has to have corresponding reforms. The main objective is the same as the one set for

secondary schools: to promote students' comprehensive English language use ability. Early in the 1970's, as a result of a major reappraisal of language, linguists began to look at the English language, not as interlocking sets of grammatical, lexical, and phonological rules, but as a tool for expressing meaning. This re-conceptualisation has had an intense impact on English language teaching, especially EFL methodology. In the original versions of CLT, meaning was emphasized over form, fluency over accuracy. It also led to the development of differentiated courses that reflected the different communicative needs of learners. This needs-based approach also reinforced another trend that was emerging at the time – that of learner-centred education (Nunan, 2004, pp. 6-7).

## 2.9 Summary

Cultural globalisation as an integral part of the broader processes of globalisation, and these have varied impacts and implications on education. Educational change is the constant theme in modern society in the process of globalisation. Various versions of educational change theory and related educational change models have been attempted in this regard. However, the social process leading to the initiation of educational transformation and innovation are too complex to be fitted into a single model. Hence, a model that is market-oriented and responsive to public interests and concerns is needed so that mission of education in the modern world can be better fulfilled.

The relationship between globalisation and English language is complex. It helps transform the world and it, in turn is transformed by the world. To be more specific, economic globalisation accelerates the spread of English. On the other hand, the rise of the modern multinational corporation contributes tremendously to that spread. Graddol (1997) elaborated how English was adopted as a *lingua franca* when transnational corporations based in Europe, North American established joint ventures and production centres that are geographically dispersed in countries speaking languages other than English. On the other hand, the popularity of English also facilitates the process of globalisation. The spread of English as a global language has becomes a central issue that lies at the heart of globalisation. The English language finds itself at the centre of the paradoxes that arise from

globalisation. It provides the *lingua franca* essential to the deepening integration of global service-based economies. It facilitates transnational encounters and allows nations, institutions, and individuals in any part of the world, to communicate their worldviews and identities. Yet it is also the national language of some of the most free-market economies driving economic globalisation, and is often seen as representing particular cultural, economic, and even religious values (Graddol, 2006, pp. 9-22).

English, the international language of business and communication, gives access to knowledge and technology and the possibility of communication with people all over the world in the process of globalisation. To correspond with this advantage, educational policy changes, especially ELT reforms in China at various levels to cultivate communicative competence for global communications become a matter of urgency. It is the exact issue that will be the focus of discussion in Chapter Three.

## **Chapter Three – English Language Education Reform in China in the WTO Era**

This chapter studies the development of educational innovations in English language teaching in China in the process of globalisation, especially after China's WTO accession. The major purposes of this chapter are, first of all, to inquire into the contemporary ELT issues from a historical perspective and find out how these issues have been dealt with by other researchers in similar areas; second, by looking back at the historical literary contribution in this area, conceptual traditions and frameworks focusing on College English education in the context of globalisation process can be established to examine the research problems; what is more, the researcher will demonstrate the findings, theory and analysis contributed by other researchers as a cumulative process to deal with ELT in China and, specifically, curriculum and pedagogy. One of the larger concerns in this section is, through critical evaluation, to highlight the possible gap in the literature that this thesis will attempt to bridge. Also this part examines the relevant issues from a historical perspective with a view to establishing a common framework for this research on foreign language teaching in China with focus on the role of a national curriculum and curriculum design.

### **3.1 China and the WTO**

Reflecting on the significance of this event for China, Panitchpakdi and Clifford (2002, p. 80) describe China's accession to the WTO on November 10th, 2001 as 15-year odyssey and another Long March. Former WTO Director-General Mike Moore stated:

With the membership of a country that accounts for one quarter of the world's population, the WTO will take a major step toward becoming a truly world organisation. The step offered China a new place at the table of nations and gave new life to centuries of dreams. China's WTO membership opened more markets for China's rapidly expanding economy. In turn, China has made sweeping changes in nearly every sector of its economy, which is the largest and the fastest growing in the developing world (China Daily, 2001).

President Jiang Zemin said China's WTO membership brings "hard-won opportunity while constituting considerable challenge for the country" (China Daily, 2001).

China has gained remarkable benefit from this process of economic globalisation. It has been successfully attracting investments from all over the world, which contributes much to make possible world's most dynamic economy. As Panitchpakdi (2003) stated, "in just two years after its entry into the WTO, China has become the fourth biggest trading nation". China's Gross Domestic Product growth has been relatively steady for a decade, settling slightly to 7.3 per cent in 2001. The first results of 2002 indicated record growth in industrial output, as the government continued to invest in infrastructure at record levels, and direct foreign investment flows in at a projected level of US\$50 billion for 2002. After the entry, as China's laws and rules and the government's behaviours gradually adapted to international conventions, this high-potential market of China would draw to it swarms of foreign investment. It seems that China, like the US after World War II and Japan in the 1960s and 70s, has become the world's production and processing centre (Panitchpakdi, 2003).

McBurnie and Ziguras (2001, p. 85) observed that higher education is part of the increasing globalisation of the trade in goods and services and an important subset of international students are those engaged in transnational education. China made commitments on three of the four WTO categories concerning trade in education services, namely, *consumption abroad*, *commercial presence*, *the movement of natural persons*, but no commitment concerning market access and national treatment on *cross-border delivery*. The implication is that Chinese students will continue to be free to travel abroad to acquire education; joint schools were established, with foreign majority ownership permitted but no national treatment guaranteed. Foreign individual education service suppliers may enter into China to provide education services when invited or employed by Chinese schools and other education institutions, with conditioned national treatment (Chen and Luo, 2002).

Governmental interpretation of this historic move is reflected by the comment of Chen Zhili, the then Minister for Education:

China's accession has brought new opportunity and challenges to higher education in our country. After that, greater development will take place in exchanges and collaborations between China and international education. It will increase education resources supply to our education and enhance diversity and selection of education provision in our country.... It will also encourage reform of teaching contents and methodology (Chen and Luo, 2002, author's translation).

Wu (2003, p.129) similarly argued that China, in the first place, would benefit from the introduction of high-quality education resources from abroad and speed up the process of education reform, in order to narrow the gap in education between China and other developed countries. Secondly, China would benefit from the reform of education management system and would strive to meet the needs of the society.

The Chinese government realises that in the context of economic globalisation and knowledge economy in the 21st century, the competition in economy, science and technology lays its root in the competition of education and the advantage in human resource. To meet the challenges of the new century the Chinese government has identified the grand objectives of establishing a well-to-do society and perfecting the socialistic market economy in China. On March 3, 2004, the State Council of China approved *the 2003-2007 Action Plan for Invigorating Education* (hereinafter referred to as the Action Plan) prepared by the Ministry of Education. This Action Plan is the fundamental blueprint for all parties involved in education to further implement the strategies of 'Rejuvenating China Through Science and Education' and 'Reinvigorating China Through Human Resource Development' and to speed up educational reform and development in the years to come.

Resources were centralised to develop some world-class universities, a group of research universities with international reputation and some key disciplines to strengthen the comprehensive capabilities of our higher education, to enhance the construction of a national innovation system, and to improve our national power and competitiveness. Therefore, the Action Plan will continue to implement the '985 Project', the '211 Project', and the 'High-Level Innovative Talents Project'. Meanwhile, initiatives such as the 'Plan for the Innovation in Postgraduate



Education’, the ‘Project for Scientific and Technological Innovation in Higher Education Institutions’, and the ‘Project for Social Science Prosperity in Higher Education Institutions’ will also be launched by this Action Plan. The objective is that via these programmes and projects, the new Action Plan will offer an overall coordination for the development of various disciplines, talent training, science and technology innovation, the establishment of teaching and researching cohort, and international cooperation and exchanges. As a result, remarkable improvements can be witnessed in the key universities and key disciplines which then can drive the sustainable, healthy, cohesive and rapid development of higher education at the national level as a whole (Zhou, 2004).

As House (2000, p. 13, cited in Robertson and Wang, 2004) pointed out, in an age of economic productivity the dominant concerns are: expanding the economy, raising personal income and increasing the standard of living. This concern for productivity is manifested in a drive for greater efficiency and has special implications for education. It has been taken as important measure to guarantee the deepening of the educational reform and innovation in educational systems to further expand the openness of education to the outside world. It includes the expansion in international cooperation and exchanges in the field of education, the improvement in sending students and scholars abroad for studies and researches and in receiving more international students coming to China, the promotion of Chinese language teaching and learning in other countries and the exploration of international market for education services.

### **3.2 Higher Education Expansion and Reform**

As Postiglione (2004) observed, rapid development and China’s membership in the World Trade Organization makes improving higher education a top priority. An obvious change following China’s WTO entry is that China is becoming a leading provider of business process outsourcing. This forces the service providers to employ better skilled and better-educated labour forces. The best way to control the course of globalisation in higher education is to take part in it. As many universities in the world has branched out to initiate operation across the globe, China has opened its higher education market first to domestic private enterprises then to foreign

investment with its accession to the WTO, which is only the initial steps to ease the competitive pressure within and across the boundaries. Another measure taken as a national strategy is the large-scale expansion of some of the prestigious universities.

Table 3.1 Tertiary Education Institution Enrolment 1998 – 2004

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
New entrants of undergraduates (millions)	1.08	1.60	2.21	2.68	3.20	3.82	4.47
New entrants of Postgraduates (millions)	0.07	0.09	0.13	0.16	0.20	0.27	0.33
Gross enrolment ratio	9.8%	10.5%	11.5%	13.3%	15%	17%	19%
Higher Education Institutions Total	1022	1071	1041	1225	1396	1552	1731

Notes: Includes both four-year and three-year undergraduates in regular higher education institutions. Postgraduates include Master and PhD students. Gross enrolment refers to the percentage of total number of students at school to the population of school age students prescribed by the government. Adult Higher Education Institutions are not included.

Source: Report of Education Statistics for Year 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 by MOE, PRC, <http://www.moe.edu.cn/edoas/website18/info14794.htm>, access date: 22/03/2007)

As shown in Table 3.1, higher education in China experienced rapid growth in full scale from 1998 to 2004. The total of new entrants, including both undergraduates and postgraduates, increased dramatically from 1.156 million to 4.799 million in seven years. At the same time, the gross enrollment ratio doubled and the number of higher education institutions rose from 1022 in 1998 to 1731 in 2004, a growth of 59 per cent in seven years.

The governmental decision to expand further was in response to the pressure resulting from the increase in number of secondary school graduates. By 2001, 11

per cent of the relevant age group was in higher education, and this number is expected to reach 15 per cent by 2005. Another initiative the government took was to make families to spend more of their savings so as to stimulate the economy in the aftermath of the Asian economic crisis (and to keep more students in school during a period of rising unemployment). Education is the fastest-growing area of consumer spending by urban residents. This spending is increasing at an average rate of about 20 per cent annually (Postiglione, 2004). According to China's 10<sup>th</sup> five-year state plan, by 2010 the number of students enrolled in colleges and universities will reach 23 million, including one million postgraduates; the gross enrollment rate of colleges and universities will reach 20 per cent ([http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/bizchina/2006-04/18/content\\_570803.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/bizchina/2006-04/18/content_570803.htm) access date: 16/09/2006).

Higher education plays a significant role in developing knowledge economies. China's colleges and universities gear their mission to suit the latest development in response to economic globalisation, urban unemployment, and administrative decentralisation. While the Ministry of Education is maintaining its direct control over approximately 70 state universities under 'Project 211' (the 1993 government decision to establish 100 world-class universities in the 21st century), including the 'Ivy League' of Chinese higher education, 22 universities under 'Project 985'. Most other ministries surrendered universities under their direct administration to local provincial or municipal control. In line with the 'Project 211', universities are aiming for higher standards and economies of scale. From 1996 to 2000, a total of 387 colleges and universities in China were reduced to 212 through merging. The mergers at the end of last century and the beginning of this century promoted the expansion of Peking University and Tsinghua University, the two prestigious institutions of higher learning, both of which are on their way to becoming world-class universities (Postiglione, 2004).

Marginson (1997, pp. 242-244) argued that the university is deeply involved in the process of globalisation. One aspect of borderless education is the integration of university into the market with knowledge provision virtually becoming an industry. Chinese government, for example, decided to lift a number of restrictions regarding higher education entrance requirements which allows for much more numerous and older candidates the access to tertiary education. China's universities are increasingly

affected by global economic integration, domestic market reforms, and expanding cross-national academic exchanges. There is growing interest in joint-degree programs. Joint projects with reputable foreign universities could also create competition that would increase the quality of teaching and scholarship. Meanwhile, leading knowledge providers in China have made endeavours to get their shares in international student market. Peking University alone recruits 4000 international students from 80 countries (<http://www.oir.pku.edu.cn/newoir/stuab/pku.asp>, access date: 22/03/2007).

Moreover, globalisation or transnationalisation of university education and curricula will be necessary for students to understand and deal with the difficulties of transnational communication and conflict. Chinese colleges and universities are restructuring and improving their teaching methods and readjusting their curriculum. Tsinghua University, for example, has cut out 20 per cent of total class hours and added to its curriculum more fundamental subjects in the fields of mathematics, natural sciences and humanities as part of the move to train good all-rounders rather than graduates good at a specified area. Global elements become more and more important part in curricula. With China's integration into the world economy, specific courses like MBA, EMBA and MPA are heavily subscribed in universities. To train students with market-oriented expertise as well as global knowledge has now become a priority for Chinese colleges and universities to reform their teaching systems.

Other expansion trends are the development of non-governmental higher educational institutes and the availability of web-based higher education, both providing more chances for Chinese people to undertake higher education. With the phasing out of a planned economy, Chinese higher education has moved toward reforms similar to those in other parts of the world, including a proliferation of non-government-supported institutions of higher education. The private sector accounts for ten per cent of China's higher education enrollments. As of 2002, only four private colleges had been authorized to award the bachelor's degree and 129 a 'sub-bachelor' degree. The more than 1,200 other private colleges lacked official government authorisation and were only allowed to operate self-study programs (Yan and Levy, 2003).

In brief, globalisation brings about more complexity to the challenges for Chinese educational policy makers. In order to gain a competitive edge in the market-driven environment with freer travel of ideas and people, universities are making various endeavours to meet the challenges, both internal and external, domestic and international. While expanding the scale in various dimensions, the policy makers manage more international programs to ensure that domestic demand can be satisfied and at the same time, there is sufficient international involvement.

### **3.3 Language Use in the WTO Era**

McArthur (2003, p. 358) argued English and Chinese constitute two of the most powerful language complexes in the world and it seems highly likely that their influence on one another in future will exceed all the impacts that have so far had between each other. As discussed in the previous chapter, Mandarin (Putonghua) is closely associated with two megatrends in global communication: it will either make ELT in China more important or it will diminish the importance of ELT ultimately.

As the slogan of European Year of Languages 2001 indicates, “Language opens doors”. It also provides access to hearts and minds, employment, success and joy. More importantly, language is a key component in defining national identity. China, multiethnic and multilingual, with the Han group making up 93.3 per cent of the population and the 55 ethnic groups forming only 6.7 per cent, is a unique case in the Outer Circle. Although the Han population speaks Chinese or its variants, the other ethnic groups have their own languages and numerous dialects in any one language. Mandarin (Putonghua) was chosen as the national *lingua franca* for the creation of a unified multiethnic state in 1949, together with Hanyu Pinyin, the Chinese Phonetic Alphabet, which was intended to facilitate learning of the language and to wipe out illiteracy. This has proven a significant step to foster national identity, to improve inter-group communication, in the country.

Ho, et al (2000, p. 11) argued that the standardisation of the domestic spoken language was one of the main achievements of the language policy in China. The resultant removal of language barrier among different groups promotes better inter-group understanding and ensures better parity of treatment to the major groups as

well as greater national unity among the different cultural groups. While there is a significant language shift from the six main dialects towards Mandarin (Putonghua), Chinese citizens are commonly aware that access to knowledge and technology and the possibility of communication in both Mandarin (Putonghua) and English can secure the effectiveness of business in the new economic context.

Internationally, China's accession to the WTO confirms the country's status as one of the world's most important trading nations. The recent enthusiasm in Mandarin is a reflection of this situation. In many Asian countries, in Europe and the USA, Mandarin has emerged as the new must-have language. The rush towards learning Mandarin in South Korea, for example, is reminiscent of the enthusiasm for English only a few years ago. The Chinese government now actively supports the growing interest worldwide in learning Chinese as a foreign or second language through a worldwide network of 'Confucius Institutes', the first of which was set up in November 2004 in Seoul, South Korea. Mandarin is now enjoying popularity as a foreign language, and several countries in South-East Asia are re-establishing their Chinese-speaking credentials. An estimated 30 million people are already studying Mandarin (Putonghua) worldwide (Graddol, 2006, p. 62).

To have significant numbers of competent users of English in a whole range of professions, businesses, workplaces and enterprises has been seen by the government authorities as a key element in China's opening wider to the outside world and the drive to its modernisation and re-emergence. Since the opening-up, the importance of learning the languages of other countries has been fully recognized. In secondary schools and colleges, English has always been a required subject in the school curriculum. Currently, this has been extended to primary schools. On the other hand, good mastery of English makes a considerable difference for individuals: it opens up employment opportunities in multinational companies and is useful for career development in the private sector; it means better chance to enter and graduate from university; and even to obtain professional promotion in academic as well as civil service fields.

With regard to the public use of English, Zhao and Campbell (1995, pp. 377-390) speculated that instead of its primary role of international communication, English

has been used to achieve some special sociolinguistic and non-linguistic effects, e.g. for social and economic mobility. Until countries in the world are able to develop their national proficiency in Mandarin (Putonghua), which is not likely to happen in foreseeable future, English will provide their main means of communicating with China.

English language is closely associated with the economic modernisation in China. China needs English as the major foreign, if not the second, language for its economic rise. The WTO pursues a relatively equal and free business environment for all its members, which poses a major challenge for China's economy. The competitive demands of governments, industries and corporations, both national and multinational, for technological progress requires an understanding of the language of that technology - English. It is not exaggeration to say that English is a compulsory linguistic medium in the new economic environment. Business success in the global market depends on businessmen's ability to express themselves in English. Business monopolies such as telecommunications and banking used to enjoy protection from government at all levels have to adjust or replace their current operative and marketing strategies to cope with international English-speaking competitors. The effectiveness of this adjustment depends much on their ability to communicate - by using the English language.

It is not coincidental that in the recent there has also been growing interest among academics in the role of ELT in China's re-emergence. A case in point is the publication of the 2002 special issue of *World Englishes* with all presented papers dealing with English issues in the People's Republic of China. A central issue in the numerous literatures in this regard is how ELT in tertiary education as well as in the whole process of education should be reformed to meet the worldwide integration in sphere of the economy, finance and politics.

Table 3.2 Perceived needs for English after China's accession to the WTO

	Personnel managers	Employees
Receiving foreign counterparts	63	29
Obtaining specialist knowledge	34	52
Daily communication	30	43
Business communication	49	40
E-commerce	53	40
Travelling abroad on business	29	17
Travelling abroad for pleasure	21	24

Source: Pang, J., Zhou, X., Fu, Z. (2002, p. 210)

After China's entry into the WTO, professionals in various careers must have good knowledge of foreign languages if they want to be successful in their careers. Survey result as indicated in Table 3.2 shows that more than half of the personnel managers interviewed found it necessary to use English in arranging receptions involving foreign counterparts as well as in conducting e-commerce and other business communication. As for the employees, many of them regarded English as an important medium to gain subject knowledge. English competence means free access to knowledge on the web since English is the medium for 80 per cent of the information stored in the world's computers. At the same time, English is also taken as a good tool to conduct daily communication and manage business activities.

The rising power of economic forces took the shape of pressure applied in the world of trade and finance to liberalise markets still more, whether through the creation of the WTO or the project for a multilateral agreement on investment. The political power that had once been overwhelmingly exercised by nation-states with the aim of controlling economic activities became increasingly restricted by phenomena as diverse as the liberalisation of trade, the delegation of power to the supranational level and the devolution of the responsibilities of the state to infra-national institutions. Business process outsourcing is likely to become one of the most important forms of international exchange as a result of globalisation. The



Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development has suggested that close to 20 per cent of total employment in the 15 pre-expansion EU countries, America, Canada and Australia could potentially be affected by the international sourcing of services activities. English, the *lingua franca* of science and technology, is desirable in the outsourcing business because most of the offshore contracts come from these English-speaking companies (Graddol, 2006, p. 34).

The four primary categories of action of ‘education service’ as stipulated in the WTO regulations mean increasing contacts with foreign countries and these contacts, most probably, will be carried out in the international working language – English. This is in agreement with Wang’s (1999) argument that the development of foreign language education in China is closely related with social change, particularly with the change in politics, economy and international relations. These changes have brought about changes in many aspects of foreign language education, such as the purpose of learning foreign language, the choice of language and the content of textbooks, although modern linguistics has also exerted influence on some aspects of foreign language education. English became the first foreign language in China as a result of the depoliticisation in education since the 1980s.

In fact, English has not been learned in China only by the privileged few, for whom familiarity with a few literary classics and basic translation were considered intellectually and personally uplifting. It is primarily regarded as a necessary tool that facilitates access to modern scientific and technological advances in the western countries where English is a major language. The economic progress China has made over the past decades makes it possible for us to enter into the WTO and the successful bid for the 2008 Olympic Games. English has become the most popular foreign language in modern China. The socialist politicisation in Chinese education, the consideration of the role of foreign language education in serving China’s socialism, and the remarkable social change that has been reflected in foreign language education since the 1980s.

The real significance of foreign language education was realized when foreign influence is perceived as mutual enrichment rather than the means to absorption or conversion. A great deal of attention has been paid to English teaching and learning

since the beginning of the reform of Chinese economy in 1978. With more and more Western companies and joint ventures rushing into China, it is clear that to sell products in a global economy, we cannot afford to neglect to learn the language of the consumers around the world. Meanwhile, many college students would like to pursue their further education in the West to acquire advanced knowledge in science and technology. The English language has become indispensable for people to see the world in new ways and to establish a world citizen identity. All these account for the long lasting heat wave of English learning in China. China has taken a thoughtful approach to setting goals. Beijing is preparing for the 2008 Olympics by setting targets for each category of citizen and providing opportunities for learning. For example, 80 per cent of police officers under the age of 40 should pass an oral English test at basic level; 6,000 police officers at intermediate level; and 300 top officers at advanced level. Shanghai, meanwhile, is looking to the World Expo in 2010 as its deadline for improving its citizen's English language skills (Graddol, 2006, p. 95).

In 2002, Zang Xinsheng, Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Education was quoted as saying that: "With China's accession to the World Trade Organization and the approaching Olympics in 2008 more than ever is it a priority for young Chinese to learn and improve their language skills" (China Daily, 10/25/2002). However, the challenge is great, as one study found:

Despite producing an estimated 3.1 million graduates from colleges and universities, less than 10 per cent of Chinese job candidates, on average, would be suitable for work in a foreign company in the nine occupations we studied... The chief handicaps are weak spoken-English skills, especially among graduates of non-elite schools and the uneven quality of college curricula and faculty (Farrel and Grant, 2005, cited in Graddol, 2006, p. 75).

To sum up, the English language, as the first foreign language in China, has become indispensable for people to see the world in new ways and to establish a world citizen identity. It is primarily regarded as a necessary tool that facilitates access to modern scientific and technological advances in the western countries. In the WTO era, effective English skills are indispensable in global business environment. For

Chinese business monopolies, effective adjustment to WTO operative and marketing strategies depends on the ability to communicate using the English language. Also English has been an important criterion in government qualification recognition, a booming business in private education sector, and even in some circumstances a symbol of social identity. Graddol (2006, p. 95) argued that China's decision to make English a key part of its strategy for economic development is making it a leader in Asia in English learning, in spite of the huge economic benefits of speaking English India has demonstrated and all the effort by its neighbouring countries like Thailand, the Philippines to prevent the waning trend of national English proficiency.

### **3.4 English Language Teaching in China**

According to Kachru (1998, p. 93), presence of English in China as the most populous English using nation in the world can be illustrated in historical, functional, and educational as well as attitudinal contexts. The historical perspective is with reference to the language policies and the place of English in China; Functional considerations were made within the contexts of the uses of English in various domains; Educational reference had to do with the status and use of English in the educational system at various levels in, and types of, educational institutions. The attitudinal perspective deals with the users' attitudes toward the models and methods appropriate for the local users.

As Joseph (2004) pointed out, educational conflicts are historically dependent and consent and consensus in education are not something voluntary but take place under definite conditions. This supports Ross' (1992, p. 239) argument that foreign language education can be viewed as a barometer of China's modernisation trends. Changes in foreign language education register high when open participation in the global community is perceived to be commensurate with political and economic interests, and low when foreign influence is viewed as threatening to political stability and cultural integrity.

The history of foreign language education in China was deeply involved in political situations, both domestic and international after the establishment of new China in 1949. Russian was the only foreign language across the country in the 1950s due to

the close relationship between China and the Soviet Union. During this period of time, ELT was condemned as unpatriotic as a result of national campaigns against American imperialism and British colonialism.

The deterioration in the relationship between Russia and China in the middle of 1950s did not lead to an immediate policy change in foreign language education. Substantial change toward ELT in China did not happen until late 1978 when Deng Xiaoping came to power. After 1978, China's higher education was opened up after the basic policy of reform and of opening up China was established. Deng Xiaoping, who might yet be regarded as initiating the contemporary era of globalisation, proposed the guiding principle of "gearing education to modernisation, to the world, and to the future" (Geng, 2004, author's translation). In August of 1978, as a result of a national conference of foreign language education held by the Ministry of Education, *Proposals to Reinforce Foreign Language Education* was adopted and approved later by the State Council for implementation. It was decided that measures should be taken to improve foreign language education in elementary and secondary schools as well as various forms of adult education; to diversify foreign language education with more foreign languages teaching although English is the first foreign language; to heighten the quality of faculty of foreign language; to equip foreign language education with electronic devices; to do more research on teaching method and linguistics (Fu, 1988, p. 88-90, author's translation).

Phillipson (2001) argued that EFL expertise started to accumulate in the 1960s and the massive expansion of applied linguistics and ELT dated from the phase of decolonisation, the aid business, the mythology of modernisation as well as globalisation. In January 2006, the Worldwatch Institute, a US think-tank, warned that India and China are 'planetary powers that are shaping the global biosphere' who, if they were to consume as much per capita as Japan, would 'require a full planet Earth to meet their needs'. China may play down any imperial ambitions, but it is a country with immense self-confidence and sense of destiny and is able to play a long game. Chinese enterprises are quietly acquiring a controlling interest in key global resources. Its concept of 'peaceful rising' is the answer to US 'soft power' in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Central Asia, weaving together economic, diplomatic, political and cultural strategies. China's huge investment in English,

together with its promotion of Mandarin as a foreign language in the world, must be seen in this global context (Graddol, 2006, p. 33).

English teaching suffered ups and downs in China. After the new nation, the People's Republic of China was established in 1949, Russian remained the dominant foreign language in China till the later 1950s when bilateral relations between the former Soviet Union and China were disengaged. As a result, English teaching reclaimed its popularity by becoming part of the entrance examination for colleges and universities in 1962. In spite of the disruption due to Cultural Revolution, English was given prominence again in schools, on a par with Chinese and Mathematics in 1978.

By the early 1980s it had been restored as a compulsory subject in the college entrance exam. Students are told the importance of English when they start learning the language in primary school. Then it takes about one-fourth of their time in junior middle school, one-third of their time in senior middle school and nearly half their time in college to learn the language. In the meantime, they face all kinds of tests on English, such as quizzes in class, school and college entrance and graduation examinations, and College English Test Band 4 (hereinafter referred to as CET-4), CET Band 6 (hereinafter referred to as CET-6), not to mention IELTS (International English Language Testing System), TOEFL (Test of English as Foreign Language), GRE (Graduate Record Examination), GMAT (General Management Admission Test), which, for further study in some English-speaking countries or just to prove their language abilities, they may have to take. Together with Chinese and mathematics, English has become one of the three required subjects in the College Entrance Examination, the largest and most valued examination in the country. If one did not want to learn English, he or she was then all but denied the right of going to college, no matter what their achievements in other subjects. In addition, to be qualified for a good job or promotions, people also need to take various national qualification tests of English (Xie, 2004).

Consequently, China now has the world's largest number of English learners. There is no doubt about the importance of the English language in China today, but how to learn, how much learning is needed and who should be taught are questions that must be answered. Statistics has it that there were about 5.9 million people sitting for

CET-4 and -6 on June 19, 2004 alone

(<http://gb.cri.cn/11344/2007/03/13/2305@1493738.htm> access date: 24/03/2007).

But it remains in doubt whether we need that many people directly using a foreign language at work and in their daily life. For most people who are learning the language as a tool for communication, English is more of a skill than of knowledge. From a practical aspect, for those who are not receiving further education or working with foreigners, their subjective efforts are made in vain and the objective educational resources are actually wasted. The number of Chinese citizens who require good English skills at work constitutes a tiny minority. A great portion of college students are spending much of their time learning English instead of focusing on their majored courses. Graduating students find CET-4 and CET-6 certificates are more useful in getting a job than the scores in their majored courses.

This prestigious status of English in education has led to an unbalanced allocation of limited educational resources. Considering that about two million college students are graduating every year, the waste of educational resources is certain. Employers have found a lack of experienced technicians and skilled workers in the job market. Behind this phenomenon are the diminishing of technical and vocational schools, and a corresponding mushrooming of English training schools aimed at all kinds of language tests.

Considering the importance attached to English study in the whole period of schooling in this country and the amount of resources put into English education, Xie (2004) argued that the yield of investment in English education in China is not producing expected output and it is not necessary for the whole country to learn English. He went on to criticise the practice of selecting talented students or personnel based on their English tests results by arguing that the society needs all kinds of talented personnel and individual development should be able to enjoy diverse personnel aspirations as well. However, the current English examination system has, to some extent, become a bondage limiting the development of talented personnel who might not possess the required foreign language aptitude.

Immediate actions should be taken to create a more liberal and practical English education system. The English examination system as a compulsory part of all kinds

of schooling should be reformed and the practice of selecting talented people mainly according to their English competence should be changed. As a language tool, good English skills should not be a requirement for students to go for further education or for graduates to get jobs and promotions. Higher institutions should be given more power in running the schools according to public needs.

The major restructuring in college English teaching the Ministry of Education is brewing could be considered a reaction to handle the situation. Until recently, many researchers have shown interest in the field of ELT in China. Their findings provide tremendous still-accurate and still-relevant historical information in many respects.

Acknowledging that English plays a critical role in promoting China's economic development and social advancement, Ross (1992) did a study on foreign language education in China from both historical and modern perspectives and attempted to explore the relation between foreign language education and China's politics and economy. She put forward that "foreign language education tests the limits of what is considered acceptable levels of cooperation with foreign countries, so it can be viewed as a barometer of China's modernization trends: registering high when open participation in the global community is perceived to be commensurate with political and economic interests, low when foreign influence is viewed as threatening to political stability and cultural integrity" (Ross, 1992, p. 239).

Similarly, Fu (1988) provided a comprehensive review of foreign language education in China from history to the present, showing the great impact of social change on foreign language education in China in different social periods.

On these basis, Wang (1999) explores how foreign language education has been influenced by social change in China in the dimension of the content of English textbooks and argues that the use of authentic text materials taken from Western source such as U.S. and Britain implies acceptance of the Western culture to some extent as well as the efforts on learning native English language. He concluded that in dealing with materials from Western source when learning a Western language, China is attempting to educate her people with knowledge, beliefs, values and morals

that have gained universal recognition of human societies regardless of political difference.

Campbell and Zhao (1993) investigated the issues of trying to produce communicative competence in Chinese language learners. The dilemma is that even though learners study English for up to ten years in school, they cannot communicate effectively. The following citations from *China Daily*, the most circulated English newspaper tell the story.

Most of us begin studying English at 12 or even younger. By the time we graduate from the university, we have studied English for over 10 years. However, the result is awful. Many students can say nothing but some simple phrases. Even for some English majors, writing an article in English also means nothing other than making countless mistakes (Deng Di, *China Daily*, 6/9/2000).

The incompetence of many graduates from high schools or even colleges and universities to communicate effectively in spoken and written English is related to the teaching methods in China. Students are usually spoon-fed, listening and taking notes with teachers standing at the front and doing most of the talking (He Mei, *China Daily*, 9/28/2000).

Campbell and Zhao (1993) looked at the reasons for learners' difficulties in communicating, and propose solutions to the problems. Their findings are in conformity with what Dirksen (1990) concluded after a study involved 1,076 EFL learners. They pointed out that the typical stereotype of the Chinese student as a 'textbook-centered, Confucian scholar' is challenged by data showing Chinese learners as independent and kinesthetic learners. Towards the same issue, according to McKay (1994), there are three features of the Chinese EFL classroom: the presence of class monitors and classroom observers, and the need for communicative proficiency. He defined 'classroom monitor' and commented that the Chinese use of one is helpful when trying to keep a student-centered classroom because student needs and desires can be communicated to the teacher. Finally, McKay cited the need for transferring Chinese students' learned knowledge about English into



communicative proficiency (a typical problem in the Chinese EFL classroom). He explained his techniques for improving his students' communicative proficiency.

From a pedagogical perspective, Garrott (1992) conducted the Chinese Values Survey to identify the Chinese learners' preferences of language study and teaching methods. The primary finding of the study was that great diversity and complexity exists in various demographic groups of Chinese students. The implication is that, because of this great diversity and complexity, there is no panacea to ELT in China so that all will enjoy and benefit. Rather, new methods can be learned by Chinese students and variety in methodology is needed.

Hill (1998) stressed that the following three notions are interrelated and so form a larger whole in the discussion of ELT in China in a global scope in a futuristic perspective: first, uses of English and technology are becoming increasingly connected in China. Second, this connection is reshaping the knowledge and skills that Chinese students need to acquire. Third, the educational system needs to be reshaped in order to provide Chinese students appropriate opportunities to acquire such knowledge and skills.

While discussing the role of computer literacy for Chinese students to use the Internet, Hill (1998) went on to argue strongly for the integration of English with technology. In some instances, the term 'computer literacy' is used to refer to the procedural knowledge and skills that individuals must possess if they are to use effectively the array of software programs that allow them to do tasks such as word processing, creating graphics, managing databases, and, of course, communicating on the Internet. As software programs thrive, procedural knowledge and skills grow as well. The term 'computer literacy' can also be used to characterize the knowledge and skills that are required to process computer-mediated text structures as opposed to those mediated by traditional print artefacts such as the book. Computer-mediated text, in contrast, means text structures use a network format with multiple pathways rather than a linear format with a single pathway, as well as graphics and words rather than words alone.

During the past decade, rapid economic development in China has led to an increasing use of English in technological media. To begin with an obvious example, many more television programs are now presented in the English Channel CCTV International. In contrast to the public medium of television are the Internet and the World Wide Web, where a massive use of English by Chinese individuals and institutions is less visible. More than one million Chinese have already registered to use the Internet, and this number is rapidly growing. As the Chinese use the Internet, they are forced to rely heavily on English which functions as the *lingua franca* of most websites. In a recent issue of *Time* magazine (June 29, 1998) that featured President Clinton's visit to China, a young Chinese woman was reported as saying, "if you don't know English, you can't use computers. And if you can't use computers these days, you can't get ahead" (p. 33).

### **3.5 Curricula for non-English Majors in China**

As mentioned above, ELT in China at the tertiary level is divided into two separate sections: English education for English majors and that for non-English majors, which are under the guidance of respective curriculum. Only about 300 out of the total about 1,000 universities and colleges in China offer four-year BA programs in English language and literature, or ESP (He, 2002). Students enrolled in these programs, which is only a minor part of the huge population of college enrollment, are referred to as English Majors in China. The priority of ELT has always been on the other major part, which is referred to as College English. It includes English language courses taught to non-English majors in the universities and colleges all over China.

This new round of educational reform was part of China's economic opening-up and reform. English secured its prominent status as the first foreign language taught in Chinese schools. Later in 1980 it became a compulsory subject in the national college entrance examinations. However, the 1980 Curriculum that was issued in this context was more of a political announcement, a 'back to English' policy than a carefully designed curriculum. Its aim was to "provide students with capability to gain some information through English" (National English Teaching Curriculum for Non-English Majors, 1999, author's translation).

In May 1985, the Central Committee of CCP issued *Decision on the Reform of Educational System* that defined the general guiding principle as: “Education must serve the construction of socialism and the construction of socialism must depend on education” (<http://gov.hnedu.cn/web/0/200506/21115244281.html>, access date: 20/06/2005, author’s translation). This document contained specific decisions about: enhancing international communication; using the experiences of developing education in foreign countries for reference; enlarging autonomy in higher education institutions; changing the management system which meant that the central government unduly controlled higher education institutions; changing the unreasonable disciplinary structure, and reforming instructional contents, methods and systems.

An immediate response to this decision of historical significance is the 1985 Program of CE Curriculum applicable to undergraduates of science and engineering. The 1986 Curriculum of College English was applicable to undergraduates of humanities (hereinafter referred to as the 1985/86 Curriculum). A comparison of the 1985/86 Curriculum and the 1999 Curriculum indicates that although the aims were similar, the 1985/86 Curriculum gave an explicit objective for sub-skills. While the 1985/86 Curriculum specified a student-centred approach, which is different from the 1980 Curriculum, the classroom methodology actually reverted to a traditional teacher-centred method because teachers were unprepared and found it easier to fall back on methods they had been using for a long time. The vocabulary goals, however, were increased dramatically on the basis of investigations done in 1982 and 1983 into the changing needs of students completing secondary school (see Figure 6.1).

In Durkheim’s (1977) view, educational systems reflect major changes in society because the systems are a construct built by society. They reproduce its collective values, beliefs, norms, and conditions being part of its established institutions. As a result, educational systems bear the marks of social development at different stages. Educational change may come about either because it is imposed on the public by natural events, deliberate reform, or because we willingly initiate it when we find dissatisfaction, inconsistency, or intolerability in the current situation.

In the 1990s, China's higher education system entered a new development era with the intensification of the Reform and Opening up. The Chinese government consecutively issued a series of laws, regulations and policy documents to give its education sector proper guidance and direction, for example, *China's Higher Education Reform and Development Outline* (1993); *Higher Education Law of the People's Republic of China* (1998); *Action Scheme for Invigorating Education towards the 21st Century* (1998). Since then, the government prioritised the development of education, implementing the strategy of revitalizing the nation by developing science, technology and education. Using the developmental experiences of international higher education for reference, it has strengthened the higher education system's structural reforms, accelerating the developmental pace of changes in higher education.

It can be seen from Table 3.3 that the modifications involved changes in four aspects, namely, the aim, objective, methodology and vocabulary. An obvious change lies in the aims of the curricula. There is an apparent shift from linguistic competence to communicative competence and the pedagogy from single skill training to integrated skills development, from 'teacher-centred' to 'learner-centred', as suggested by Huang and Xu (1999) in Chapter Three. To correspond with the rapid growth of international communication in China, a shift from the one-way linguistic acquirement, that is, the 1980 Curriculum of 'gaining information', to two-way communicative competence, that is, the ability of 'exchanging information' set in the 1999 Curriculum. Naturally, there is also a move in objectives from an obscure one in 1980 Curriculum to single reading skill development in 1985/86 Curriculum to integrated macro-skills training in the 1999 Curriculum. The 1999 Curriculum emphasis is on a student-centred approach instead of a text/test-centred one. Meanwhile, the vocabulary capacity requirement has risen remarkably from the original 500 commonly used English words and phrases to 6,500.

Table 3.3 CE Curricula Matrix (1980-1999)

	<b>1980 Curriculum</b>	<b>1985/86 Curriculum</b>	<b>1999 Curriculum</b>
<b>Aim</b>	to provide students with capability to gain some information through English	to provide students with capability to gain some information through English for their professional needs	for students to be capable of exchanging information in the target language
<b>Objective</b>	ill defined	proficient reading ability, certain listening ability and elementary speaking and writing ability	strong reading ability and fairly good ability for listening, speaking, writing and translating
<b>Methodology</b>	Teacher/ text/test centred, grammar translation	learner centred (grammar translation in combination with audio-visual approach in practice)	learner centred (grammar translation in combination with audio-visual approach in practice)
<b>Vocabulary</b>	from 500 onwards	both functional and notional from 1,600 to 4,000	6500 (covering from Band 1- 6)

The 1999 CE Curriculum, though claimed to be 21st century oriented, lags behind soon after its full implementation in 2000. The main reason for this lag was the quickening process of globalisation, which reached a symbolic climax in 2001 with China's successful entry into the WTO and bid to host the 2008 Olympic Games.

According to He (2002), the Chinese government's strategy for foreign language education permeates the national curricula of education institutions at all levels. The teaching and learning of College English has always been under the direction of a national curriculum, which is formulated by a group of experts in College English Advisory Committee under the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education. Therefore, the most important available data to explore should be the

three syllabi representing guiding principles of university foreign language education in China in three different periods.

In these periods, according to Huang and Xu (1999), the goal of ELT in China has been shifting from linguistic competence to communicative competence and the pedagogy from reading to the development of all the four macro-skills. At the same time, the stipulated methodology has changed from ‘teacher-centred’ to ‘learner-centred’. Regarding the 1999 Curriculum of the National English Curriculum, Lu (2001) argued that it is theoretically a combination of several types of product curriculum as it is traditional, structural, situational and functional. Unfortunately, complexity of the design principle does not necessarily lead to satisfactory results in practical teaching and learning processes and that is reflected in the doubt raised by more and more people nowadays in China: does the present curriculum suit the need of post-WTO situation in China?

Feedback from official sources paints a negative picture; according to Zhang (2002) and Yan and Wu. (2002), there is a lot of room for improvement in regard to the status quo of ELT. Among them, the orientation and priority goal set in curriculum and how the curriculum is implemented in practice are the key concerns. At the same time, given the significant roles the four syllabi have played in ELT in China, there have been a lot of discussions regarding the four syllabi from various aspects. However, it is difficult to find from available resources any academic discussions about the development of these syllabi in the context of globalisation.

### **3.6 English Language Evaluation System for non-English Majors**

Chapelle and Brindley defined assessment as “the act of collecting information and making judgments on a language learner’s knowledge of a language and ability to use it” (2002, p. 267). Based on this definition, assessment is thus concerned with individual student learning. Evaluation, however, is often used in the broader sense of program evaluation, and refers to the process of collecting information and making judgments on the quality and effectiveness of the total language program. This involves a consideration of a range of elements in addition to student learning, such as teacher and student attitudes, teaching methods and materials, as well as

administrative systems and resources (Nunan, 2004, p. 310). This paper follows the above concepts while using these terms.

In line with other tests, the CET is a national standardized test sponsored by MOE and administered by the National College English Testing Committee. Members of the committee are appointed by the Higher Education Department of Ministry of Education. Since its inception in 1987, it has attracted an increasing number of candidates every year. In 1999 alone, more than three million college students in China sat for the test.

The CET is a test battery, which comprises CET-4, CET-6, and CET Spoken English Test (hereinafter referred to as CET-SET), which was included in the package later. MOE issues certificates for CET-4, CET-6 and CET-SET indicating the candidate's level of oral English proficiency. CET was claimed to have been designed in accordance with the requirements in the 1999 Curriculum with a view to objectively, impartially and accurately measuring the English proficiency of college students ([www.celea.org.cn/teic/60/60-21.pdf](http://www.celea.org.cn/teic/60/60-21.pdf), access date: 23/05/2004).

Though independently formulated by Chinese language testing professionals and claimed to have reached international standards of educational assessment, it has long been criticized for failing to reflect the real needs of China's reform and open-door policy and the educational change in globalisation. This system has been criticised as the main cause of test-driven CE teaching and learning. It is designed to have heavy wash-back effect on teaching and learning. In colleges and universities, this examination system has shown great impact on the study of other majored subjects and teaching activities. Although many universities changed their policy so that students failing to pass CET-4 are able to get their diploma now, the passing rate remains an important criteria assessing the teaching quality of a school and all students and teachers spend more time and energy dealing with this foreign language test. After all, the job market has the final say and CET certificates holders are in an obvious advantageous position.

Another national examination should also be responsible for the prevalent test-oriented CE teaching and learning, that is, the annual National English Entrance

Examination for Prospective Graduate Students. Similarly, the priority of the test is on reading and writing, attaching little importance on communicative skills. It was not until 2002 that MOE decided that a new foreign language oral and listening test should be included in this examination.

### **3.7 ELT Pedagogical Issues**

Many language educational theorists and researchers argued that EFL theory needs rebuilding in order to have a more functionally oriented and culturally authentic theory. Current theories are powerfully constrained by Western cultural premises since models of second language acquisition (hereinafter referred to as SLA) developed in the U.S. and Europe treat the vast majority of L2 learners, those that learn and use an L2 in non-native contexts, as marginal (Lin and Warden, 1998).

Although research of the psychologically pedagogical problems of ELT has not been carried out in China systematically, specific methods of teaching have been adopted and new means and techniques of presenting the materials, enrichment of the types and forms of classes implemented. The necessity to lean for support on the data of linguistics and psychology in teaching foreign languages (both specific and general) is a well-known hypothesis. The practical appropriateness of some lingual-psychological concept in connection with the specific conditions, aims and objectives of teaching makes for the generation of the principles to form a desired course or method. The social demand in practical command of foreign language marked the changes in language learning from the system of language as a whole to developing the speech actions, speech skills and speech behavior. The appearance of new methods of teaching aimed at practical results was determined by the new psychological and linguistic theories.

The task of developing communicative competence has been basically done audiolingual and audiovisual method. When considering the principles in the foundation of these methods in teaching foreign languages one can find that the set of such principles unreasonably reflects predominance either of linguistics or psychology. Harmer (2001, p. 79) argued that audio-lingual methodology owed its existence to the Behaviourist models of learning: to engender good habits in



language learners by using the Stimulus-Response-Reinforcement model through a continuous process of such positive reinforcement. The audiolingual method is characterized by the excessive passion for "purely mechanical" exercises, lack of speech exercises, underestimation of the native language role and individual features of learners; unjustified gap in teaching oral and written language. This method is still popular today and its influence can be seen in a variety of drill practice techniques and exercises. Although aspects of audiolingual method have been carried through to the communicative approach as a result of the reconceptualisation of language and language teaching in the 1970s, professionals recognised that teaching needs to incorporate a broader and more realistic view of language use and language learning, views that have emerged from research into second language acquisition. The research has exposed the limitations of the audiolingual method, but, it is important to recognize why this method gained currency during 1960s and 1970s.

Central to the techniques of audiolingual method was the behaviorist belief that learners could be trained to speak English correctly by listening and then responding to units of language presented in carefully graded sequence. It was a reaction to the traditional practice of foreign language teaching, which was based on techniques for teaching the ancient classic languages of Latin and Greek. Students of these languages were required to read rather than speak; learning was traditionally based on analyzing and memorizing structure for the purposes of translation. The system was known as the grammar translation method. Although it may have worked well for classical scholars, it cannot cater adequately for those who need to be able to speak in foreign languages nowadays. The globally structural imitation audiovisual method is based on the vocabulary selected from oral speech. But the merit of the method in selecting the vocabulary tends to be a serious disadvantage because of the vagueness of the term *structure*, badly developed hierarchy of structures in various models of courses created by outwardly the same methodology. The audiovisual method is more than the audiolingual one based on psychology. At the same time in spite of the mentioned limitations, the cornerstones of both methods, such as the priority of oral speech, the selection of basic models and speech patterns as well as globally structural foundation methods and methodology.

Eclecticism is a method that accepts the best tea of audiovisual method, had a positive impact on further development of the foreign languages teaching techniques from other methods according to the actual situation. To be eclectic, teachers were required to use CLT as a method while accepting elements of the traditional method. As Rao (1996) stated, it was the best method to reconcile communicative approaches to the teaching of English with traditional Chinese methods. The first stated aim of teaching English for communication can be found in the 1999 College English Curriculum that English teaching aims are: “training in listening, speaking, reading and writing, to teach students in order to gain basic knowledge of English and competence to use English for communication”.

The situational principle marked the emergency of the communicative approach – or CLT in language teaching. It is the name given to a set of beliefs that included both a re-examination of what aspects of language to teach and a shift in emphasis in how to teach. The ‘what to teach’ aspect of CLT placed the priority on language functions rather than focusing on vocabulary and grammar (Harmer, 2001, pp. 84-86). During the 1970s, as a result of major reappraisal of language, linguists started to look at language from a different perspective, i.e. not as interlocking sets of grammatical, lexical, and phonological rules, but as a tool for expressing meaning (Nunan, 2004, pp. 5-7).

The ultimate aim of the communicative approach is that instructors should engage the learner in communication so that communicative competence is developed. Introducing communication practice helps language learners to become confident in their ability to use English. By actively communicating in English, learners develop their communicative skills, strategies and knowledge of the language itself. Successful communication requires more than the ability to integrate language systems and skills. The learner also needs to understand how social contexts and specific situations influence the choice of language and the type of communication. The underlying principles of the communicative approach are that: language is a tool of communication; teaching should be student-centered; English should be taught through English; students learn by active involvement; learning tasks should use authentic materials that reflect real life communication.

There exist another tendency of changing from the informative to the so-called active strategies and methods of teaching including the elements of problem rising and research, transition to the developing, making more active and game-playing ways of managing the educational process. Rapid development of the technologies, the surplus of information and “overloading” of various natures, time deficit is the objective characteristics of the modern period. Under the circumstances the ability to properly use one’s own psychological reserves, awareness of the means and ways of psycho-regulation helps to avoid the nervous breakdowns and stresses abound in our life. No wonder some psychologists and psychotherapists have made an important contribution to pedagogy in general and to the development of the new methods of language teaching.

Another approach in foreign languages teaching is the grammar-translation. Krashen (1987) put forward the following as typical environment of the grammar-translation approach: much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words; long elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given; grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instructions often focus on the form and inflection of words; reading of difficult classical texts is begun early; little attention is paid to the content of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis; often the only drills are exercises in translating disconnected sentences from the target language into the mother tongue; little or no attention is given to pronunciation.

However, Lin and Warden (1998) argued that all the established English teaching and learning theories, approaches or methodologies fail to take the reality of local conditions into consideration. The large class size in China is a case in point. As a result, little credit can be given to their practicality in terms of actual application in such classroom settings. The difficulty of implementing these established theory, approach or methodology in English classes in China is therefore obvious. For example, it is almost impossible to adopt the communicative approach in big classes, a much more common language learning environment in Asian than in Western countries. If the local situation remains unchanged, even after years of local researchers and practitioners advocating of sound teaching and learning theories and methodologies that seem so well established in the West, there must be some facts

that require re-examination at a more fundamental level than previously thought (Wang, 1991; Wu, 1991).

### **3.8 The Role of Technology in English Language Teaching**

Communication via computer-based networks can be conducted in multiple ways, such as one-to-one or one-to-group, and synchronous or asynchronous, which could serve as supplement, if not replacement, to the traditional face-to-face classroom teaching. Computer has had a role in ELT pedagogical practice and in analysing the English Language. Computer assisted language learning (hereinafter referred to as CALL) developed and concerned itself with the applications of the information and communications technologies (hereinafter referred to as ICT) in ELT. Advances in ICT have made it possible to take advantage of the modern facilities available in the English teaching and learning process, as language itself is a means of communication. On the other hand, corpus linguistics has made it easy to conduct statistical analysis of the language, giving much insight into how the English language is actually used regarding the lexis, grammar, etc. The ever expanding global networking realised by cutting edge ICT have opened up new possibilities for teaching and learning that were unthinkable a few years ago. More importantly, ICT-based new opportunities for flexible learning have made possible new types of competition with many distant education providers entering the education market, and universities have been forced to invest part of their resources to keep pace with technological innovations in order to enhance teaching and learning practices.

ICT is exercising impact on every aspect of education and forcing changes in teaching and learning. Chen and Fu (1996) argued that CALL was an effective way of student-centred language learning. Paulsen (2001) argued that it was no longer a question of whether to take advantage of these electronic technologies, but of how to manage their use in foreign language instruction. How to take advantage of Internet resources to facilitate language learning is an issue in many articles and publications. Numerous websites present compilations of online resources for language teachers. Still other sites such as the Internet TESL Journal at <http://iteslj.org/> and Teaching with the Web at <http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/lss/lang/teach.html> contain ideas for

using web resources as a language teaching tool. There are also currently numerous websites containing material for ESL/EFL learning accessible free of cost.

Technological innovations have always played a significant role in the growth and spread of English and are changing the way in which we communicate, work, trade, entertain and learn. In a way, it is exercising tremendous impact on the non-native users of English, mainly from Asian countries. The common claim is that English dominates computers and the Internet, and that those wishing to use must first learn English.

It is fair to assert that the growth of the Internet has facilitated the growth of the English language and that this has occurred at a time when computers are widely available. That might have been true in the early days of the technology, but lack of English is no longer the barrier it once was. According to Graddol (2006, p. 44), the demography of Internet users by first language is changing rapidly with the Chinese, Portuguese and the lesser-used languages labelled 'other' growing most rapidly (2000 data from Global Reach, 2005 from Miniwatts International Ltd). The proportion of Internet users for whom English is a first language has decreased from 51.3 per cent in 2000 to 32 per cent in 2005. That is also true of web content. In 1998, Geoff Nunberg and Schulze found that around 85 per cent of web pages were in English. A study by ExciteHome revealed that had dropped to 72 per cent in 1999; and a survey by the Catalan ISP VilaWeb in 2000 estimated a further drop to 68 per cent. It seems that the proportion of English material on the Internet is declining, but that there remains more English than is proportionate to the first languages of users.

In addition to the change in statistics in the use of English, it is worth noting that the role of Internet in the spread of English necessitates a critical review of the traditionally established definitions and classifications like ESL, EFL, and EAL. Basically these definitions are based on the notion of learners and users in their physical spaces and the existence of the virtual world the Internet sometimes makes it difficult to identify the actual boundaries of these spaces. An English learner in China (traditionally referred to as an EFL learner) might have access to exactly the same online resources as an ESL learner in the United States. It is not coincidental that there is nowadays a strong call for the teaching of EIL in conjunction with the

discussion of the international or even universal ownership of the English language. Ultimately, it can be argued that English belongs to its learners and users, wherever they are.

As a governmental response to these developments, Wu (2004), vice-minister of MOE, demanded that Chinese universities should further improve their English teaching, seizing the opportunity brought by the development of the information industry, especially the construction of the Internet and campus networks. Four sets of English learning software specially designed for Chinese college students have been developed by four major publishers in China to meet this new demand. She also pointed out that Chinese college English teachers, when evaluating a student's language skills, should focus on listening and speaking instead of reading. Students should be more active in learning English by using computer networking and teaching software. Besides, the language skills of each student should be graded so that they can have lessons accordingly.

Technology tools are expected to enhance students' learning, increase their productivity, and promote their creativity. In this spirit, a major goal in developing College English curricula should be to provide students opportunities to use English as a tool to carry out meaningful tasks in a technological environment. This goal presents a two-fold challenge. On the one hand, Chinese universities must build the infrastructure that provides students ready access to computer technology. On the other hand, those who plan curricula in College English must ensure that students use this infrastructure to carry out meaningful educational activities.

However, it remains a challenge for College English educators to ensure that Chinese college students bring such critical perspectives to bear on what they learn in English. Chinese students must initially develop receptive competence with respect to computer networking and teaching software. It is reasonable to believe that Chinese students will become quite proficient at the integration of words and images and sounds, given the role that visual imagery has played within the traditional Chinese culture. The integration of words and images has a respected history within Chinese culture, as evidenced by the rich traditions built around calligraphy and painting.

Moreover, the written representation of words is itself more image-based in Chinese than in western languages like English.

At the same time, Chinese students also need to develop a productive competence in handling the new text structures that are emerging in online communication. We can observe in online chat rooms how computer technology facilitates our projecting the turn-taking frames of oral communication onto a written structure. The emergent text structures are often characterized as hybrid of oral and literate and oral forms of communication. Many researchers claim that computer technology is blurring the boundaries between the oral and literate frames of communication that have long been identified and categorised. As speech recognition research leads to a greater use of oral language in a technological environment, these boundaries will become even more blurred.

According to Li and Hart (1996), the multimedia capabilities and interactive functions of Internet have made it an attractive medium to conduct instruction. Meloni (1998) cited increased student motivation, authentic language, and global awareness as the reasons for using the web in EFL learning. Similarly, Chen (2005), based on his researches on CALL, proposed that the integration of computer-mediated communication into EFL learning can provide learners with more authentic input and more opportunities to participate in the target sociocultural contexts; both linguistic and pragmatic knowledge can be promoted. Moreover, motivation, learner autonomy, social equality, and identity can also be encouraged through the use of computer-mediated communication inside and outside of the classroom. However, there are still many problems with the application of the Internet in the classroom including the reliability of the information on the web, the cost of the equipment needed to connect to the Internet, inequality of access between the haves and have-nots, and sometimes frustrating slow connections.

### **3.9 Cultural Factors in English Language Teaching**

Among all the definitions of culture, Nida (1954, p. 28) argued that culture is “all learned behaviour which is socially acquired”. This corresponds to the behaviourist viewpoint that culture consists of observable behaviours or sets of behaviours, such

as habits, customs, or traditions. However, some anthropologists and psychologists believe that the concept of culture should include not only the behaviours but also the rules underlying these behaviours (Scarcella and Oxford, 2001, p. 183). Scarcella and Oxford (2001, p. 184) went on to argue that English is a subset of culture and vehicle for expressing culture and culture must be highlighted in ELT as a result of this important relationship.

Cultural differences should be central to any discussion regarding language teaching and learning. Issues may include the differences of educational systems, learning conditions, teaching and learning styles, learning differences between Western and Eastern cultures and differences in needs for language use in the job market. The Asian context is certainly very different from the situation in the western countries. Unlike the mainstream western culture that generally promotes: first, more laissez-faire child-rearing practices, thus promoting individual effort and achievement; second, a low-context environment minimizing the individual's status on the basis of background, which encourages independent learning without regard to the social environment; third, a technological environment which may place less emphasis on perceptual skills than in developing societies, Chinese students are taught to be a passive listener from the very beginning, which encourages collaborative learning and there is emphasis on a literacy tradition which places greater value on the written word, thus encouraging focus on print.

Learning style preferences are shaped by culture, which provides the 'mould' through which we obtain, process, and use information. Culture here refers to what is common to the group, i.e., what the group generally shares through learned behaviour in similar environments. Thus, learning styles have a dimension of socialisation through interaction with family, friends, and others in the community. Willing (1993, p. 1) defined the term learning style as referring to any individual learner's "natural, habitual, preferred ways of learning". In other words, learning styles involve cognitive, affective, and physiological characteristics that enable us to individually perceive and interact with our learning environment. Cognitive factors are psychological (left brain/right brain, analytic/ relational, reflective/impulsive) and sociological (concept of self, partner, group); affective factors include the emotional (motivation, persistence, self-confidence); and the physiological factors are



environmental (light, sound, temperature, design structure) and physical (perception, time, posture, mobility, food intake). Any combination of the above preferences affects learning. As a result, learning style preferences are varied and complex.

It could be argued that the most concerned issue of 'deaf-dumb' English competence of Chinese EFL learners is related to some differences between Western and Eastern cultures. It has come to the awareness of many educators in China that students in the west are not afraid of asking questions or using the target language even when producing errors. However, most Chinese EFL students would remain silent even when they feel the need to ask questions and participate. Students are very conscious of making errors in front of their classmates. A similar situation in China was evidenced by Leng (1997), who pointed out that:

One explanation is that Chinese people, long under the influence of Confucianism, seek more compromise than conflict. When it is applied to language learning, it is obvious that students are reluctant to air their views loudly for fear of losing face or offending others. In addition, there are some Chinese sayings that discourage oral communication in class. The following are some examples: Silence is gold; it's the noisy bird that is easily shot dead; a real man should be good at thinking, but weak at speaking (p. 38).

Another possible source of cultural fear was mentioned by Wu (1991), who found that even adults, who studied English, without grade pressure, did not dare speak English in front of other people due to the fear of making errors and losing face. Additionally, fear of making errors and losing face was among seven factors that influenced university students' willingness in participating in classroom oral communication. Since learning is always more efficient if it proceeds with understanding, the method is highly inefficient in this respect. It induces a dependency of learner on teachers, which is pedagogically unproductive while ideologically convenient.

### 3.10 Reshaping English Language Teaching in China in the WTO Era

Hodge and Kress (1988, 1993) insisted that ideology itself is never unitary or homogeneous but operates as a complex that contains contradictions at its core. Each ideological complex must incorporate a system of classification that assigns specific values to the various kinds of people, objects, and activities and places that the ideology is designed to cover. It is the same with Chinese language and ideology, which is contradictory and incoherent, occurring not as a single structure but as a complex. Historically, China has had the hard experience in the shift from English to Russian and back to English again mainly due to the change in international relations in the past few decades. This occurs because ideology is designed to serve two contradictory functions: to express the power of the powerful, their difference from the non-powerful; and to assure the solidarity of the non-powerful, their identity of interests with the powerful (Hodge and Louie, 1998, p. 48). China, an enthusiastic participant of the global market economy and post-modern culture, endeavours to maintain the traditional Chinese values and a state socialist system. New technologies have been introduced which may have unpredictable effects on the central discursive forms of contemporary China. With approximately one quarter of the population of the world, and as an indispensable player in the new world system, China is the largest political unit that has ever existed, and its language and culture are a natural part of that political achievement, one of the most amazing achievements of human culture (Hodge and Louie, 1998, p. 1).

It is of significance that the learning of a second language be regarded as a necessary part of total personality formation and development in the modern societies, since it should enable a person to free himself from the limitations imposed by belonging to, and being educated within, a single cultural group and a single linguistic community. Therefore, a second language must become part of the total education process, not something reserved for the gifted, for a normal educational experience for all (Stern cited in Els, *et al.*, 1984, p. 171). There is no doubt that English is the first foreign language in China and the dominance of English in comparison with other foreign languages is being consolidated progressively in countless ways. This trend is becoming more obvious as China fulfils its commitments to the WTO by opening wider to the outside world and by establishing its market economy system. What

McArthur (2003, p. 358) argued for the significance of both English and Chinese as two of the most powerful language complexes in the world adds weight to the significance to the ELT reform issue in China.

However, the first step in improving education is to recognize that the problems plaguing our education are rooted in the way our society is organized. We live in a competitive profit-driven society. As mentioned in Chapter Two regarding social conflicts, there are some disadvantages of ELT education in China. The first is a lack of qualified foreign language teachers most of whom have no experience of living in Western countries. On the other hand, only a limited number of English teachers have the necessary cross-cultural awareness. As a result, the teacher development program has become the ‘bottle-neck’ issue in current ELT in China. Worse is the backward methodology; teachers as well as students typically adopt the Grammar-Translation means to teach and learn English, which focuses on English grammar and vocabulary, on linguistic phenomena rather than on practical application and appreciation of the language. The practice of listening and speaking has always played a minor role. It is common for a Chinese student to have a very satisfactory mark on his English examinations while not being able to express himself well when the communication must be done in English. This notorious scene is known as ‘deaf-dumb’ English.

There is much consensus in attributing the initial progress in ELT in China to the event that English became part of the National College Entrance Examinations in the late 1970s. However, it is the same event that leads to the much-criticised test-driven ELT system. The advocates of reform have not met with much resistance. Potential employers of the college graduates, for example, especially those in the field of foreign trade businesses consider communicative competence in English a decisive factor in hiring a potential employee and an applicant with English qualification certificates must demonstrate his or her oral English capability. This emerging challenge to the traditional methodology of ELT is unprecedented in that the teacher is no longer seen as the sole knowledge provider and the students are no more encouraged to assimilate their teacher’s instruction dutifully and to labour their way through the lines of their textbooks.

Critical scholarship in cultural and communication studies worldwide has resulted in an increased awareness of the need to reconsider some of the more traditional practices and theoretical domains of arts, humanities and social science disciplines, towards a recognition of the differing imperatives of what critical studies of culture and communicating might look like in an Asian context (Hodge and Louie, 1998, p. i). The rigid pattern of old fashioned textbook-based, teacher-dominated and test-oriented teaching is out of sync with the rapid growth of China's international exchange. The need to cultivate future-oriented students with global views in the twenty-first-century, calls not only for inclusive curriculum but also, and more importantly, for cross-cultural rethinking of curriculum as well as of teaching and learning practices. A 'futures curriculum' as suggested by Littlejohn (2003), possesses the following features: a) Coherence: the use of themes, topics, projects to bind lessons together and provide coherence and a deeper focus and understanding. b) Significant content: future-oriented selection of content would attempt to raise students' awareness of future developments and discuss their own hopes, aspirations, worries and personal action. c) Decision-making in the classroom: Active student involvement in shaping lessons would be expected. d) Use of students' intelligence: thought-provoking exercises were used to involve students in hypothesising, negotiating, planning, and evaluating. e) Cultural understanding: tasks and texts would be designed to encourage students to learn the relative nature of values and to understand why people from different social and political contexts think and behave differently. f) Critical language awareness: Students would be guided to look more closely at the use of languages, beyond the surface meaning to look for deeper understanding.

The share allotted to foreign languages in the total of available educational provisions in a nation reflects the importance the nation attaches to the knowledge of foreign languages of its citizens. In China, a considerable amount of time has been invested in types of education at different levels from primary up to tertiary in studying foreign languages, especially English. The initial progress in ELT took place when English became part of the College Entrance Examinations. The Ministry of Education issued guidelines for textbook makers, requesting that English textbooks should include materials on the Western culture, listening and speaking practice as well. The most prominent in reforming the English testing system in

China is that listening and written English are included in some most important English tests for the educational institutions. Since most prominent in reforming the English testing system in China is that listening and written English are included in some most important English tests for all Chinese educational institutions. During the senior high school stage both required courses and elective subjects are available to suit individual needs and it is emphasized that the course should be based on students' learning interest, life experience and cognitive level. *English Course Guidelines Secondary School Students* issued by the MOE in 2001 recommended task-based language teaching as an effective teaching method. The study method of experiencing, practising, participation, cooperation and communication as well as the task-based teaching methodology is encouraged to promote students' comprehensive language use ability. Moreover, a new diverse evaluation system focusing both on formative and summative assessment was established to stimulate learning and encourage self-learning. It was in the same spirit that 2004 CECR was issued in 2004 by MOE to guide the new round of ELT reform at tertiary education level. A separate chapter, Chapter Seven, will deal with this issue.

### **3.11 Summary**

This chapter summarised the research undertaken to date by researchers regarding the debates within ELT and globalisation field, especially in the context of China's WTO membership. The ELT issues in China was inquired into from a historical perspective with the focus on how these issues have been dealt with by other researchers in similar areas; second, by looking back at the historical literary contribution in this area, conceptual traditions and frameworks focusing on College English education in the context of globalisation process was established to examine the research problems; what is more, the researcher demonstrated the findings, theory and analysis contributed by other researchers as a cumulative process to deal with ELT in China and, specifically, curriculum and pedagogy.

China's WTO membership requires that, within a framework of fair and open principles, China accelerate its efforts towards educational internationalisation. Only in this way can China eventually win an advantageous position in the globally competitive world education market. China has adopted strategies in reforming their

higher education systems in order to meet the challenges of globalisation. The fact that universities now compete at a global level entails the changing nature and role of higher education. This exerts pressure on the rest of the education system, including the foreign language education sector (Graddol, 2006, p. 74). The status quo of language use in China serves as a reflection of this situation. On the one hand, there is an increasing demand for Mandarin around the world. On the other hand, China's need for English language for global communication is becoming more and more urgent.

China's universities are increasingly affected by global economic integration, domestic market reforms, and expanding cross-national academic exchanges. The recent marketisation and decentralisation projects in China are closely related to the strong need for higher education generated from the fundamental transition to the socialist market economy. Given that the increasing interdependence of English and technology makes new demands on Chinese students, it becomes important to address how the educational system can best respond to these demands. Hence, reorientation of educational policies is important to confront the challenges. However, the social process leading to the initiation of educational transformation and innovation are too complex to be fitted into a single model. A model that is market-oriented and responsive to public interests and concerns is needed so that mission of higher education in the modern world can be better fulfilled.

The hegemony of the English language and its pioneer role in globalisation indicate an unnoticed and unclaimed intention to dominate the culture and language of the unfortunate EFL learners by imposing western values and beliefs through the medium of the language. Foreign language education had been influenced by social change in China and the use of authentic Western text materials implies acceptance of the Western culture to some extent. However, this goes against the belief that being aware of cultural differences is one thing, and following foreign cultural expectations is another (Tibbetts, 2002). In spite of the difficulty of establishing a direct link between the teaching of language and the subjection of learners to the dominance of the taught language and culture, the possibility always exists. At the same time, it came to the realisation of some researchers that the difference between Chinese and western cultures, to some extent, plays a negative role in ELT in China

and the established western teaching and learning theories, approaches or methodologies might not suit the local conditions where English is used as L2 in non-native context.

Relevant issues like the role of computer technology and cultural factors in ELT in China were also examined. The rapid and widespread deployment of computer technology has had impact on technology in language pedagogy, which resulted in the widespread use of multimedia-based content, technology-enhanced language learning, and computer-mediated communication. These new technologies enable students to reach out and connect with wider communities as worldwide communication via the new technologies dissolves the barriers in L2 environment. This makes it important for this research to examine the 2004 CECR to find out how this new national curriculum gears itself towards the future technological orientations.

Most importantly, it was found out through critical evaluation that there was a lack of study involving national ELT curriculum in the context of globalisation from the perspective of learners. Therefore, it becomes significant to examine, from the points of view of direct participants, how the Chinese ELT curricula, especially the CE curricula, were adapted to suit the educational changes in cultural globalisation. Another issue is that, although English is known to be a must in China's modernisation drive, there is no much research into the specific needs of the English learners, especially those college students who are mature enough to make their own choices and decisions.

The next chapter describes the methodological issues in conducting the research under the theoretical framework as presented in this chapter.

## Chapter Four – Research Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of research methodology employed in this project and describes the instruments and procedures that were utilized to address the research question. First, the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods is justified. Then, a comprehensive description is provided for each aspect of the study.

In this research, qualitative research methods were applied to collect needed data to deal with the research problem. Questionnaire, interview and classroom observation were the main data collecting instruments. As part of the data collection, special reference was given to three national College English curricula. Other documents concerning language policy and curriculum development in China were also collected and investigated. Data collected was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively to see how it related to the research problem and associated research questions, and what conclusions could be drawn as possible solutions to the research problem and answers to the questions.

A small-scale pilot study was steered to help both refine data collection methods and work out what is exactly involved in the data analysis. Glesne (1999, p. 38) suggested that pilot study be used not to get data per se, but to learn about the research process, questionnaire and interview questions etc; to test the language and substance of questions, and the overall length of the interview; to inform the researcher him/herself about the research topic itself. The preliminary testing involving nine participants was conducted with a view to finding out what changes to be made and why with regard to the data collection instruments and the data collection and analysis techniques. Changes in research might mean poor planning, but the new learning could turn out to be more significant and worthwhile than the original.

Literature review in Chapter Two and Three revealed that there was a lack of academic study involving the role of English in China and national ELT curriculum in the context of recent globalisation from the perspective of English learners. Another issue is that, although English is known to be a must in China's modernisation drive, there is no much research into the specific needs of the English



learners, especially those college students who are mature enough to make their own choices and decisions regarding what to learn and how to learn it.

Critical reviews in the previous two chapters also indicated that English, the international language of business and communication, gives access to knowledge and technology and the possibility of communication with people all over the world in the process of globalisation. To correspond with this trend, educational policy changes, especially EFL reforms at tertiary level to cultivate communicative competence for global communications become a matter of urgency in China. Therefore, it becomes significant to examine, from the points of view of these direct participants, the practice and pedagogical issues in College English teaching and learning in order to find out English learners' views regarding how College English education is influenced by the recent process of globalisation in China and how the Chinese ELT curricula, especially the CE curricula, were adapted to suit the educational changes in cultural globalisation.

What is more, the result of reviewing relevant issues like the role of computer technology and cultural factors in ELT in China shows that the rapid and widespread deployment of computer technology has impacted on language teaching pedagogy, particularly the use of multimedia-based content, various forms of technology-enhanced language learning and computer-mediated communication. These new technologies enable students to reach out and connect with wider communities as worldwide communication via the new technologies dissolves the barriers in L2 environment. In this case, it becomes important for this research to examine the 2004 CEFR to find out how this new national curriculum gears itself towards these future technological and pedagogical orientations.

#### **4.1 Research Philosophy and Approach**

An important part of a research project is to carefully consider and examine the appropriate research approach as the most important foundation. In spite of the constant interaction between ideas about social world and the data collected on it, it is still essential to be fully aware of the philosophical perspectives that will assist in understanding the aims and practices of social research work, in understanding and

explaining social phenomena as well as in challenging conventional ideas (May, 2001, pp. 28-33). A significant part of this research was the use of social theory as elaborated in the previous two chapters to scrutinise the data collected through surveys by interpretative approaches that are concerned with understanding.

Interpretivists argue that only through the subjective interpretation of and intervention in reality can that reality be fully understood. In this case, the study of phenomena in their natural environment is essential to the interpretivist philosophy. At the same time, interpretivism admits that there can be varied interpretations of reality, and maintains that these many interpretations are in themselves a part of the scientific knowledge they are pursuing.

Any serious methodological consideration in the framework of any science should, however, consider the nature of the investigated phenomenon first, and thereafter address the question which method may be adequate to describe, explain or understand this phenomenon. The advantages and disadvantages of various methodologies were taken into account, and an integrated approach combining both qualitative and quantitative elements was employed.

In this research, the data collected through surveys, observations and document analysis was examined by interpretative approach. In the process of policy analysis, data collected was reviewed critically so that both the strength and weakness were elaborated with a view to achieving new concepts and understanding.

Surveys enable the researcher to obtain data about practices, situations or views at one point in time through questionnaires, and follow-up interviews provide more insightful information. Quantitative analytical techniques are then used to draw inferences from this data regarding existing relationships. The use of surveys permit a researcher to study more variables at one time than is typically possible in laboratory or field experiments, whilst data can be collected about real world environments.

In the process of data reduction and analysis, variables and findings based on examination and critical reflection were obtained and applied in such a way that

contributed to the thematic development. By identifying and naming possible patterns in the raw data and by achieving best comprehension of the meaning of text or action, the researcher used the data collected to figure out answers to the research questions of this project.

#### **4.2 Sampling and Selection of Data Sources**

The research population determination might be the easiest part in my research. Among all the parties engaged with ELT in Chinese universities, students are obviously the most immediately and directly affected. Non-English major university students are those who have been affected by the current College English Curriculum and are the group of people most engaged with English education. This population is as huge as several millions. Also, the conception of learner-centred teaching and learning indicates that the students should be the priority. Therefore the research population was limited to Non English major university students and the targeted population for this research is the 5,000 students who enrolled in 2000 and sat the CET-6 in three major universities in Dalian. Finally about 100 of them were selected as the very subjects of my small-scale survey. It was of small scale due to the following factors:

- Financial resources available
- Personal time and energy constraints
- The nationally universal nature of the curricula
- The fact that college teachers, students and graduates around China do not vary much regarding their actual exposure to the curricula

Sampling procedure used in this project adopts the criterion of “fit for purpose”, which, in this particular case, is more useful than the statistical accuracy that probability sampling achieves. Therefore, non-probability sampling was carried out as there is no need to make a statistical generalisation to any population beyond the sample surveyed. Also, the cost-effectiveness of data collection was taken into account, as it was basically a self-funded research.

The site selection issue becomes less significant due to the very presence and nature of the national curriculum. Regional variables might exist as result of the geographic vastness of China and regional differences in educational level. The sampling was geographically concentrated in Dalian where about 16 colleges and universities are located. Three universities were sampled, including two state-key universities, namely Dalian University of Technology and Dalian Maritime University and Northeast University of Finance of Economics, which is under the administration of the Liaoning Provincial Government. However, the classroom observations were conducted only in Dalian Maritime University. This university is where the researcher has been teaching English as a foreign language for more than 16 years and it is easier for the researcher to gain access to the target data sources as well as to achieve more insights into the everyday operation of CE teaching and learning.

### **4.3 Characteristics of the Respondents of the Questionnaire**

100 university students were invited to participate in the survey. In general the respondents appear to be very similar; they were all 2001 undergraduates and none of them has acquaintance with the researcher. These participants were chosen on the basis that they had undergone two-year English learning, a period required by the national College English curriculum, specifically the 1999 Curriculum, and had just taken the national proficiency test: CET-4. No attempt was made to differentiate between male and female students as gender difference is not a significant variable in relation to the research problem of this research. Though not selected following strict random sampling procedure, these participants represented the most recent group of college students that had been covered by the national College English curriculum and had acquired complete required formal learning experience as to general English.

### **4.4 Data Collection Methods**

In this study, various methods were used, including survey and interview pilot, large survey, interviews, classroom observation, document analysis etc. Based on the result of pilot study, a combination of these methods is sufficient to provide data needed to answer all the sub-questions in this research project. Questionnaires, interviews and classroom observation were the main data collecting instruments. To

fulfill the research objectives of this project, the following multi-faceted methodology was applied to generate or otherwise collect relevant data.

#### **4.4.1 Document Collection and Analysis**

Document collection involving English language education policy was first conducted so that reference was available for questionnaire and interview design. These documents are effortlessly available in publications and accessible on government websites. This approach was used for the obvious advantages as follows: first, the knowledge and information needed is controlled by the questions, which allows for much precision and clarity; second, except for photocopying and postage, no significant budget were necessarily incurred; what is more, data can be gathered in different time slots as the questions are always the same and the format is identical, thus providing the researcher with much administrative convenience in conducting the data collection as it can be done in different locations at different times; finally, self-completion questionnaires allow access to contexts outside the institution to which the researcher is affiliated so that data can be collected from other institutions, thus resulting in possibly better validity (McDonough, 2000, p. 171).

Document analysis was the systematic examination of documents such as College English syllabi, including the 2004 CECR. This is useful for gaining insights into the documents and identifying changes and challenges as well as describing the future trends.

#### **4.4.2 Survey Questionnaire**

The research questions of this study determined the methodologies used, with questionnaires regarding students' views deemed most appropriate. In order to address the research questions, it was necessary to collect first hand data from English language students concerning their understanding, evaluation and expectations of the English Language Teaching in universities. Attitude scales were employed and the results were examined and interpreted from critical perspective.

Questionnaires were used in this study for the following reasons: First, appropriate questions were designed beforehand to ensure the collection of needed data. Second, the same standardized questions were presented to the total sample. Third, they produced both qualitative and quantitative data. Both closed and open-ended format questions were used and each question was developed so that it would relate to the research questions. Questionnaires also enabled the research to undertake this study without having to take leave of absence from full-time employment.

The survey questionnaire was developed in the following stages. In December 2002, the numbers and types of questions to be used were decided based on a well-established questionnaire survey: English 2000 by British Council. A preliminary draft questionnaire was developed and presented to a four-member panel of EFL teachers and researchers as well as specialists of applied linguistics at Dalian Maritime University for a review. Revision was made to the preliminary version with reference to feedback from the EFL teachers and researchers and specialists of applied linguistics at Dalian Maritime University. In May 2003, a pilot study was conducted and received comments and suggestions regarding the format and contents. The following questions motivate the need to conduct a pilot study: a) Methodologically, to what extent can the questionnaire design be effective, i.e. how well can the data collection instrument satisfy the need of collecting data? Is the spectrum coverage broad enough? b) Theoretically, to what extent will the data analysis result be related with the framework of social theory and literature discussed in the previous chapters? c) In what ways should the quantitative and qualitative data analysis process be carried out so that validity and reliability and other criteria of research work could be better achieved?

The general approach used in this pilot study was to collect questionnaire data from ten participants on their attitudes towards English use and English language teaching in China, specifically in Chinese universities, and follow-up interview data on their comments on the design of the instrument.

Following the preparation of the questionnaire, the researcher recruited ten participants for the pilot study. They were all 2001 undergraduates from the Navigation College, Dalian Maritime University and none of them has acquaintance

with the researcher. This number and variability is sufficient to explore the research questions and to give necessary clues on stratification criteria for selection of participants for the main study. These participants were chosen on the basis that they have undergone two-year English learning, a period required by the national College English curriculum, and had just taken the national proficiency test: CET-4. Though not selected following strict random sampling procedure, these participants represent the most recent group of college students that had been covered by the 1999 national College English curriculum and had acquired complete required formal learning experience as to general English. Another important consideration of this somewhat judgmental selection is that their profiles were almost the same as the students who would be invited to participate in the main study.

As what was done in the main study, all instruments and procedures used in this study obtained prior approval by the Faculty and University Human Research Ethics committees. At the same time, before the actual conduct of the study, a written approval was obtained from the college administration where the participants were from so that access to students was acquired.

Questionnaire copies of bilingual version (both English and Chinese) were sent to the ten participants. No on-the-spot completion was asked and there was a high rate of return: nine participants returned their completed questionnaires (response rate of 90 per cent) four days afterwards. At this stage, none of the participants was informed that they are part of a pilot study and the fact that their expected role is to help with possible improvement in the future main study. It was not until the group interview conducted weeks after the returning of the questionnaire forms, in which eight of the nine participants showed up, that they were informed of the pilot nature of the study.

In the interview, the following follow-up questions related to the questionnaire survey were first raised (Bell, 1999, p. 128):

1. How long did it take you to complete?
2. Were the instructions clear?
3. Were any of the questions unclear or ambiguous? If so, will you say which and why?

4. Did you object to answering any of the questions?
5. In your opinion, has any major topic been omitted?
6. Was the layout of the questionnaire clear/attractive?
7. Any other comments?

In the second session of interview, participants were invited to make comments on some general questions regarding English teaching and learning as supplement to the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire in spite of the fact that a variety of written comments were already available.

As mentioned above, the questionnaire piloting was conducted with the same type of respondents who were later surveyed on the finished version of questionnaire. What is more, efforts were made to make sure that it was done under conditions similar to those that will exist during the real project. Taking into consideration of the commonly assumed sensitivity of interviews, the follow-up interview was not conducted in a one-to-one manner. Focus-group interviews were conducted by inviting all the nine participants of the questionnaire survey to an office room in the Foreign Language Department of Dalian Maritime University. The whole process lasted about an hour and was recorded with a Samsung digital voice recorder and transcription is available originally in Chinese.

The main findings and comments identified in the analysis of questionnaire responses are as follows. Most participants took approximately 20 minutes to complete the whole questionnaire. The direction part was basically skipped because, as participants claimed, they developed familiarity with such direction while doing Multiple Choice, a commonly used test item in CET-4 and -6 as well as in other tests.

Many interviewees raised their doubts about Question 12: English is and will continue to be a privilege in China's education. Their comments are as follows:

Interviewee A: *It is illogical to say so as ELT in China is basically a failure.*

Interviewee B: *It is hard to understand where the privilege comes from.*

Interviewee C: *It's inappropriate expression.*



One participant said that he was not willing to answer *Question 8: After China's entry into the WTO, it's necessary that English become the second official language of China*. He argued that the second official language in history bears a mark of colonialism and it is something not acceptable by common Chinese citizen.

No one raised any question concerning the coverage of major issues in ELT in this questionnaire design. When asked about the layout of the questionnaire, several respondents made comments that they were not very comfortable with in different ways: the double-sided printing made it inconvenient to turn and read. Moreover, some participants pointed out that further classification of the questions with headings would be more helpful to give a clearer picture of the issues under discussion.

Based of these findings, necessary amendments were made correspondingly both to the layout as well as the content of the questionnaires. For example, interview questions were reorganised for the better. Although no generalisations should be made from this pilot study, the survey instrument and the management software proved valuable in the subsequent more extensive investigation regarding status quo of ELT in China, as well as in larger and more complex surveys in any related subject.

In July 2003, the final version of the questionnaire was completed with all the useful feedback incorporated into it. The resulting questionnaire (see Appendix III) contained 50 closed questions with attitudes scales and one open-ended question. Questions in Section I centred on general issues concerning the use of English in China in WTO era, while those in Section II focused on ELT issues in Chinese universities.

In compliance with the ethical procedures, questionnaire copies of bilingual version (both English and Chinese) were sent to 100 university students in Dalian Maritime University, Dalian University of Technology and Northeast University of Finance of Economics who were invited to participate in the survey. No on-the-spot completion was asked. The rate of return was low as only 43 participants returned their completed questionnaires, some with a few questions not answered.

### **4.4.3 Interviews**

Interviews were made after initial processing of the data collected from questionnaire survey so that questions for interviews could be shaped up accordingly. Interview is particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around a topic. Also it can be used as follow-up to certain respondents to questionnaires for further investigation of their responses. Interviews are particularly helpful to capture learners' voices and enhance our understanding of their learning reality.

A semi-structured group interview was conducted so that there could be more flexibility for the interviewer and an increased degree of power or control for the interviewees over the course of the interviews. As a result, some insightful information was obtained. For better interactions between the interviewer and the interviewees, Chinese rather than English were used to reduce the possibility of language skill interference during the interview. Ten respondents of the survey questionnaire were invited to take part in the interview for the main study and five for the follow-up interview for the study of the 2004 CECR. The whole process was recorded with a digital voice recorder and later transcribed. The Chinese transcription (see Appendix VII & VIII) was translated into English wherever applicable in the evidentiary chapters by the author.

### **4.4.4 Classroom Observation**

Classroom observation was organised as a means to triangulate the data collection process. 'Genuine classrooms' as identified by Nunan (1992, p. 92) provide important contexts to collect data concerning English language teaching and learning and CE classrooms are specifically constituted to make the implementation of the 2004 CECR happen. Therefore, it is highly necessary to approach some of the CE classes and make some observations. To collect evidence for the actual implementation of the 2004 CECR, six classes in various faculties in Dalian Maritime University were approached and observed during 2005.

As language classrooms are specifically formed to bring about teaching and learning, these constitute important contexts to collect data concerning English language teaching and learning. ‘Genuine classrooms’ as identified by Nunan (1992, p. 92) were chosen as subjects for investigation. No formal experiments, though useful for methods comparison studies, were conducted, as there was little chance to know beforehand the very method or methods employed in the genuine classrooms.

For the classroom observation, a number of College English classrooms in Dalian Maritime University were examined within a specific period of time via a range of data collection techniques including observation, follow-up interviews. These classes were selected for feasibility and accessibility. The focus was on course planning, course content, teaching material, teacher’s decision making, student involvement as well as learner-teacher interaction. This approach is essential for the research to gain first-hand data regarding the reality in CE classes at different stages.

Stimulated Recall technique was employed so that lessons were recorded and transcribed and afterwards the instructor (as well as students) was approached for comments about what was happening at the time the teaching and learning took place. In this way, it was possible to obtain some insights into process of teaching and learning which would be difficult otherwise (Nunan, 1992, p. 94).

#### **4.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation Methods**

The data collected was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively to see how it related to the research problem and associated research questions, and what conclusions could be drawn as possible solutions to the research problem and answers to the questions. Tesch (1990) suggested the following basic approaches to data reduction and analysis: a) the identification and naming of regularities as well as irregularities; b) the comprehension of the meaning of text or action; c) critical reflection to elaborate potential insights. More specifically, Robson (1993, p. 401) put forward the following analytical tactics, namely, counting, patterning, clustering, factoring, and relating variables and findings to the key theoretical concepts. There were all of significant help in the process of analysis and investigation in this research.

Data used in Chapter Five and Six includes both statistics from the scaled questions (Appendix V) and the script of the answers to the open-ended questions (Appendix IV) in the questionnaire (Appendix III). In the 5-item Likert scale questionnaire (Appendix III), 1 stood for “strongly disagree”, 2 for “disagree”, 3 for “no comment”, 4 for “agree” and 5 indicated “strongly agree”. In combination with the scripts of the comments by the participants during the follow-up interview, a survey result table was obtained (Appendix V). Bar charts obtained by using EXCEL based on the table will also be presented in this chapter based on the participants’ feedbacks of the related survey questions presented in the following tables as regards the participants’ views towards the respective issues in discussion.

Together with the questionnaire result, the researcher examined learners’ statements concerning learners themselves and the English learning at institutional settings in the macro social context. Student comments for the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire were translated by the author from Chinese originals (Appendix IV). Most of these were quoted in the thesis to further elaborate findings from the surveys and to provide evidence for the discussion and analysis.

#### **4.5.1 Survey Questionnaire Analysis**

Most part of the quantitative data was obtained from the closed questions while the open ended one produced some qualitative data. The focus of analysis was on the data from the closed questions as well as that from the open ended one. The latter proved to be the more difficult part of the task. However, the analysis was done by constructing analytical categories from survey responses and comments. Therefore, it evolved into patterns that could be related to the key theoretical concepts.

As is known, one of the great advantages of closed question is that they yield responses that can readily be quantified and analysed. This is particularly so when the researcher has access to computer statistics packages. Given the scale of the survey, software package like SPSS, which is good for large corpus-based data processing, was not necessarily essential. EXCEL did the job well instead. The Excel 2000 software, which is one of the most powerful spreadsheet and charting data

management applications available, was used to process the data from the returned questionnaires. One of the many reasons that Excel was chosen is its ability to perform calculations and chart the data, which makes it easy to visualize the worksheet data instantly. The usefulness of Excel in presenting data collected was tested and confirmed in the pilot study. Questionnaire results were successfully transformed into tables as well as bar graphs that were included as important evidences in the evidentiary chapters.

#### **4.5.2 Interview and Classroom Observation Analysis**

The interviews mainly involved the following questions:

1. Please comment the general situation of CE education.
2. What is your views regarding promoting ‘English as an official language in China’?
3. What are the dissatisfactions regarding CE textbooks?
4. What do you believe leads to ‘deaf-and-dumb’ English
5. How can you be really involved in learner-centred teaching?
6. How do you think of large-size CE class?
7. What are your comments regarding the current CE standards?
8. Can you talk about the relationship between English in the secondary school and CE?
9. What kind of CE testing you have in mind?
10. Is face-to-face classroom instruction still essential?
11. Should we set priority still on READING?
12. Please comment on the learning style you prefer.
13. How can we improve the learning environment on campus?

These questions are closely related to the research questions and were designed to obtain some in-depth information regarding the issues in the survey questionnaire and issues arising from the implementation of the 2004 CECR.

The voice data obtained from interviews was recorded and the useful part was transcribed for closer scrutiny. The basic task was to synthesise the recorded

information in such a way as to reveal certain patterns, without distorting or misinterpreting the data (Nunan, 1992, p. 146). The researcher scrutinised the transcription to achieve comprehension of the exact meaning of student comments as recorded and critical reflections were recorded while reading the transcription so as to elaborate insights.

The following analytical tactics were applied in the process of qualitative analysis, namely, patterning, clustering, factoring, and relating variables and findings to the key theoretical concepts.

#### **4.6 Reliability and Validity**

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2001, pp. 105-106) proposed validity as an important key to effective research as well as the touchstone of all types of educational research. More specifically, Christensen (1997, p. 217) defined validity as “measuring what you want to measure”. This is similar to the assumption of Brown (2001, p.176) that the essence of the idea of survey validity is that it is the degree to which a survey is measuring what it claims to be measuring. In addition, reliability, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2001, p. 105) “is a necessary precondition for validity”. Dooley (2001, p. 76) expanded the definition to “the degree a result is free from errors of measurement”. Christensen (1997, p. 217) simply says reliability is a term equating to “consistency or stability”. Regarding the application of these two terms to quantitative and qualitative research, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2001, p. 105) noted reliability as the former domain of qualitative research, but that view is under challenge. Validity has been traditionally attached to quantitative research. However, Burke-Johnson (1997) noted that the modern view that reliability and validity attach to qualitative research is plausible, credible, trustworthy, and, therefore, defensible.

An important recognition is that success of a survey-based qualitative research depends much on the successful construction of valid and reliable data collection instruments. Brown (2001, p.171) argues that survey reliability could be the consistency with which a survey measures whatever it is measuring. The reliability of the results in this research has been arrived at using the internal-consistency method to examine the consistency of the answers to questions in the questionnaire.

According to Brown (2001, p. 173), this method is most suitable for a single form of a survey administered on a single occasion. The most commonly reported internal-consistency reliability in survey research is Cronbach alpha, which provides an accurate internal-consistency estimate. One relatively easy way to calculate Cronbach alpha involves scoring the answers for the odd-numbered questions separately from the even-numbered ones. The result indicated that the respondents were answering the same way across all the section.

According to McDonough (2000), the validity of a research can be measured by two separate elements: internal validity and external validity. Internal validity, or credibility requires interpreting all the data in accordance with reality while external validity means generalisability as “all research is about making significant generalizations about some problem area” (McDonough, 2000, p. 66).

Robson (1993, p. 404) suggested that credibility of data analysis could be enhanced by practicing prolonged involvement, persistent observing, triangulation and peer debriefing. The reliability and validity of the 50 survey questions come from a process of refinement. As mentioned above, this process is managed throughout the prolonged process of the questionnaire development by peer consultation and examination by CE teachers who were colleagues of the researcher as well as piloting.

Triangulation was applied as a useful process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation. Methodological triangulation leads to data triangulation as well as triangulation in time and/or location (Freeman, 1998). This research aims to achieve both data and methodological triangulation to make possible convergence of results and to ensure the internal validity and external validity of the findings. In order to obtain a larger and more complete picture of the phenomenon under investigation in this research, data was collected through such various means as questionnaire surveys, interviews, observations and documents from various sources. In addition, data collection process involved different locations and was completed at different stages. This is significant to enhance the reliability and validity of the research as

the results obtained this way might turn out to converge, diverge or supplement each other.

In the process of analysis, to reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation, various procedures were employed, including redundancy of data gathering and procedural challenges to explanations.

To reduce threats to internal and external validity, some observations both before and after the survey and interview were conducted as it might provide useful messages or reflections to be included in the question design and in the data interpretation.

#### **4.7 Research Ethics**

This research is in compliance with the requirements of the RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee.

Research participants included 100 university students from Dalian Maritime University, Dalian University of Technology and Northeast University of Finance of Economics in China, whose ages may range from 18 to 22. None of the student participants were the students of the researcher or in any formal power relationship with the researcher. The teacher participants were colleagues of the researcher.

The subjects were invited to participate in the study by the researcher. At this stage assistance were sought from colleagues or friends who have acquaintance with the possible subjects. The research made contact with the potential participants and made detailed explanation the nature of the research. With confirmation from the potential participants that they were willing to take part in the project, the research provided them with the Plain Language Statement and the Informed Consent Form.

None of the subjects were in a 'vulnerable' or 'dependent' relationship with the researcher. Participating in the project caused no potential risk to subjects beyond what they might have in the normal course of a day. Questionnaires and interviews were designed so that no physical risk was involved. Prior consent was sought and



the personal freedom of the participants was highly respected in the course of the research. Participants were reminded of their rights and freedom to withdraw from the project anytime and were assured that personal information would be kept confidential. Contact details of the researcher, the supervisor as well as the faculty ethics chair were provided to the subjects so that should they expect to raise any issues about the project, they can do so at their free will.

Questionnaires were sent to the subjects so that they could finish it anywhere they like. Interviews were conducted in the researcher's office, a places that the subjects felt suitable and comfortable. The data collected was kept in a locked cabinet. As required, each participant was given a Plain Language Statement (see Appendix I) to explain the purpose of the study and how the results were to be used and that his or her involvement in the study was voluntary. Prior to the commencement of the study, each recruit signed a Prescribed Consent Form for Persons Participating in Research Projects Involving Interviews, Questionnaires or Disclosure of Personal Information (see Appendix II). Therefore it is reasonable to believe that each participant was well informed of the nature of the research and that anonymity and confidentiality were retained when presenting the information collected in the process of the research.

The researcher tape-recorded the group interview. Prior to the interview, participants were asked if they were comfortable for the interview to be recorded. Participants were informed that they were free to leave the interview at any time and that they also can request the exclusion of his/her data from the research project anytime after the interview was conducted and the researcher would do as requested. However, all the interviewees were very cooperative and helpful and no special request was raised during and after the interview.

As to the dissemination of research results, participants were informed that the results would become part of my thesis and would be presented at conferences and might be published. To ensure confidentiality, everything has been done to make sure that their identities would be excluded in the final thesis, presentation and publications. A summary of the findings would be available to every participant after the project was finished.

#### **4.8 Limitations**

A key weakness of this methodology is that it is very difficult to realise insights relating to the causes of or processes involved in the phenomena considered. There are, in addition, several sources of bias such as the possibly self-selecting nature of respondents, the point in time when the survey is conducted and in the researcher him/herself through the design of the survey itself. Given the thousands of universities with millions of enrolments, the sample size of this study has its limitations due to the relatively small number of participants involved in this particular study. The representativeness of the samples and generalisability of the findings from this research is therefore not guaranteed. The findings may only apply to participants and situations involved in this research. Another thing worth noting is that the 2004 CECR is still a new initiative under trial. In spite of the ambitious changes it intends to achieve regarding CE, the data I gathered regarding the 2004 CECR was not sufficient to answer the question whether the 2004 CECR would suit the needs of post-WTO CE in China.

#### **4.9 Summary**

The way in which research is conducted may be conceived of in terms of the research philosophy subscribed to, the research strategy employed and the research instruments thus utilized in the pursuit of the research objectives – and the quest of the solution of the research problem. In this study, the process of development of ELT in China, a non-native English-speaking context, was examined. Reference was given to the adaptations to the national College English curriculum policies while investigating the social and economic contexts that were linked with these changes. The 1999 Curriculum and the 2004 CECR, the latest version of national curriculum were the foci of this investigation. Associated documents concerning language policy and curriculum development in China were also collected and investigated.

To investigate the research problem in this project, multi-faceted methodology was applied to generate relevant data. Surveys and classroom case studies were conducted to collect the needed data to deal with the research questions. The data collected was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively to investigate its

relevance to the research problem and associated research questions. The data-gathering instruments was piloted to test how long it takes recipients to complete them, to check that all questions and instructions are clear and after examining the results of data collection and analysis, to modify the design and specific items for the main study so that more usable data was yielded. In addition to finding out how participants responded the questions in the questionnaire, it was hoped that such piloting could help spot ambiguities, confusion, or other problems in the content as well as in the format. Piloting was conducted to locate ambiguities, confusion, or other problems in the content as well as in the format, thus helps increase validity and reliability of the research. Across-method triangulation and data triangulation were also applied to enhance credibility and confirmability. Prolonged involvement, persistent observing, triangulation and peer debriefing were practiced to enhance credibility of both data collection and analysis. Successful construction of valid and reliable data collection instruments was achieved through a process of refinement by peer consultation and examination, extended involvement as well as the pilot study.

The next three evidentiary chapters include results and discussion obtained after applying the methods discussed in this chapter regarding the research questions. Chapter Five reveals college students' views towards the role of English in China in the WTO era.

## **Chapter Five – English in China from a Learner Perspective**

This chapter reveals the results and discussions in regard to the social, political and cultural impacts on the role of English in China as perceived by the university students in the context of the recent globalisation process marked by China's accession to the WTO. Based on the discussions in various previous sections with reference to the language policies and the place of English in China in the WTO era as well as the functional considerations within the contexts of the uses of English in various domains, survey questions included were designed under the framework of Kachru (1998, p. 93). These questions were intended to investigate the presence of English in China in historical, functional, and educational as well as attitudinal contexts. Related issues were mainly integrated in the first section of the survey questionnaire: Part I English education and China's globalisation (See Appendix III).

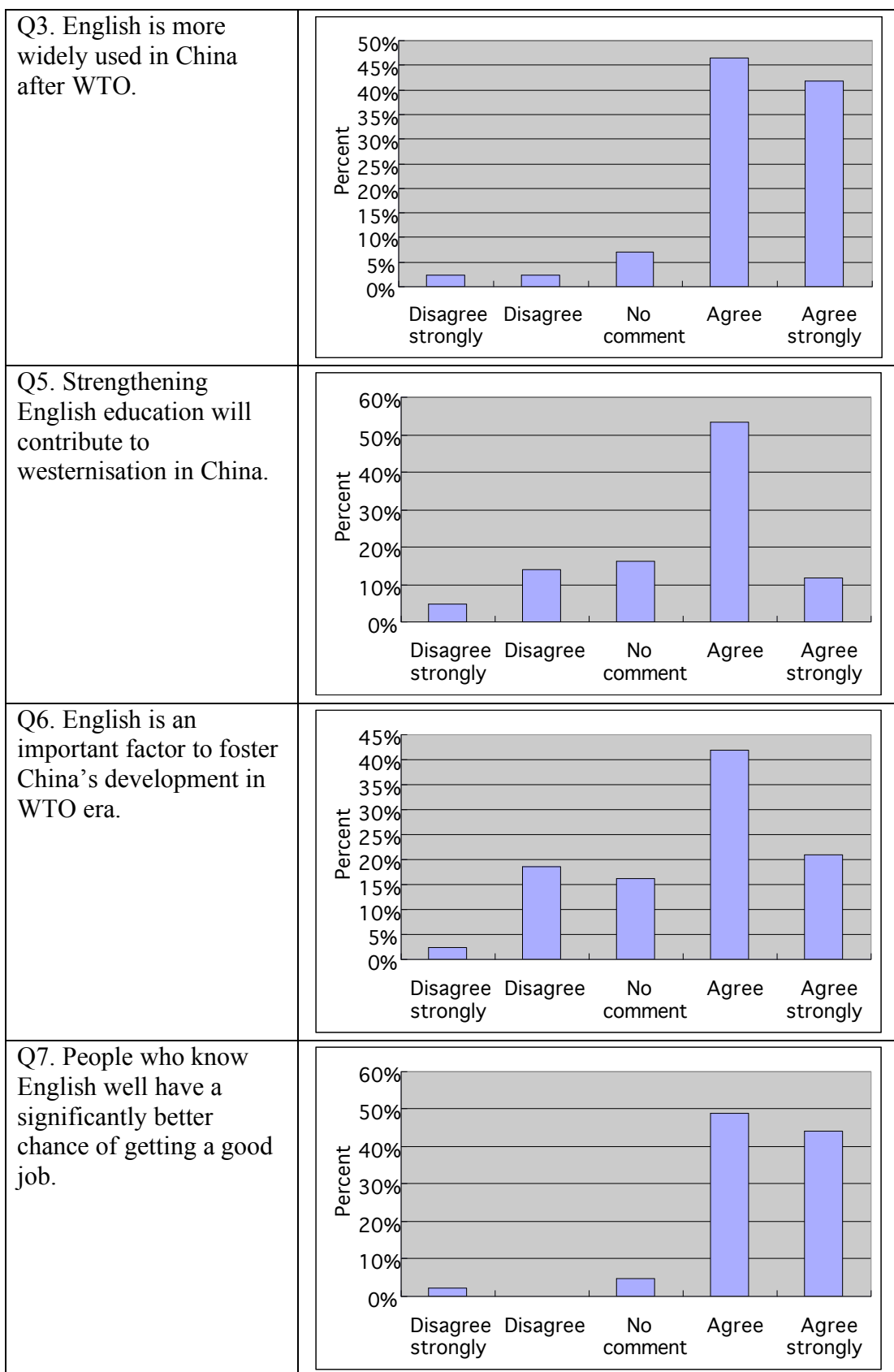
The results of the questionnaire are presented thematically in this chapter. The themes to be explored and corresponding survey questions (See Appendix V) are listed as follows:

- Learners' views on China's need for English in the WTO era: 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 14, 15, 16, 20
- Learners' views on social and political concerns about the globalisation of English: 1, 2, 8, 9, 13, 14, 18
- Learners' views on educational and cultural impacts of the globalisation of English: 4, 11, 12, 16, 17, 19, 41, 50
- Learners' views on impacts of the globalisation of English on individuals: 7, 8, 10, 11, 20, 37, 43

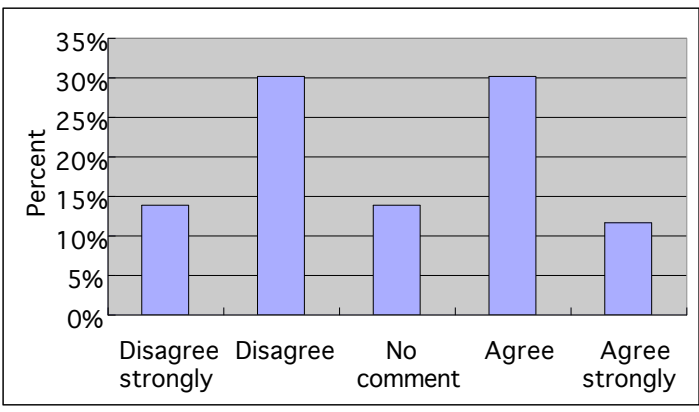
### **5.1 Learners' Views on China's Need for English in the WTO era**

The result of the survey questions regarding how the college students viewed China's need for English in the WTO era are presented below.

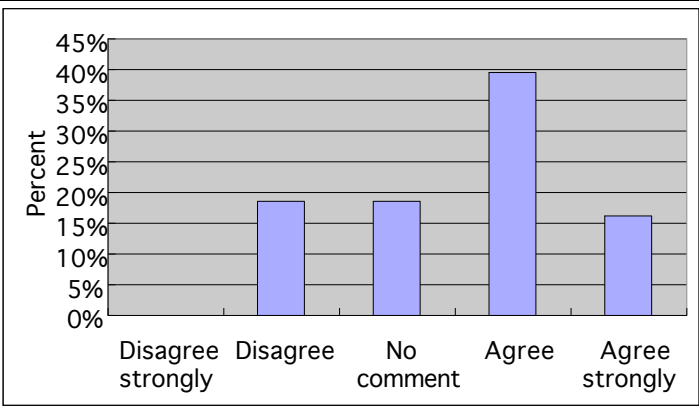
Figure 5.1 – Learners’ Views on China’s Need for English



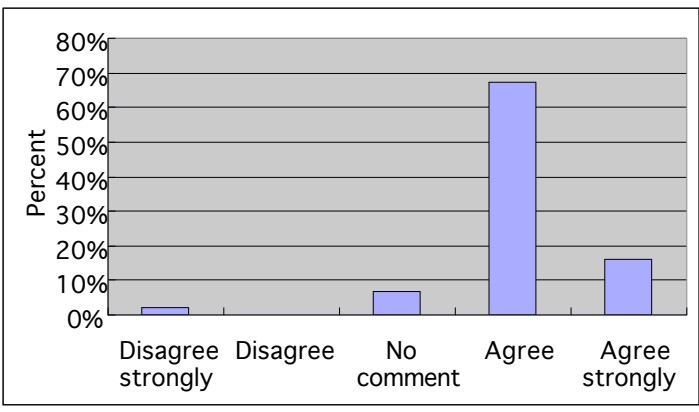
Q9. After China's entry into WTO, it's necessary that English become the second official language of China.



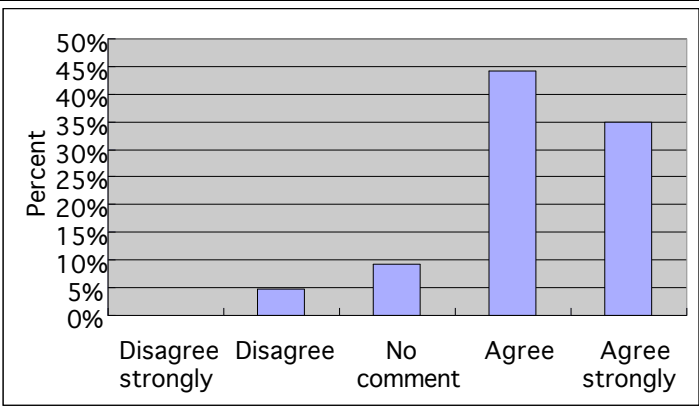
Q14. English is a major contributor to the economic and social advance since the opening-up and reform in the 1980's.

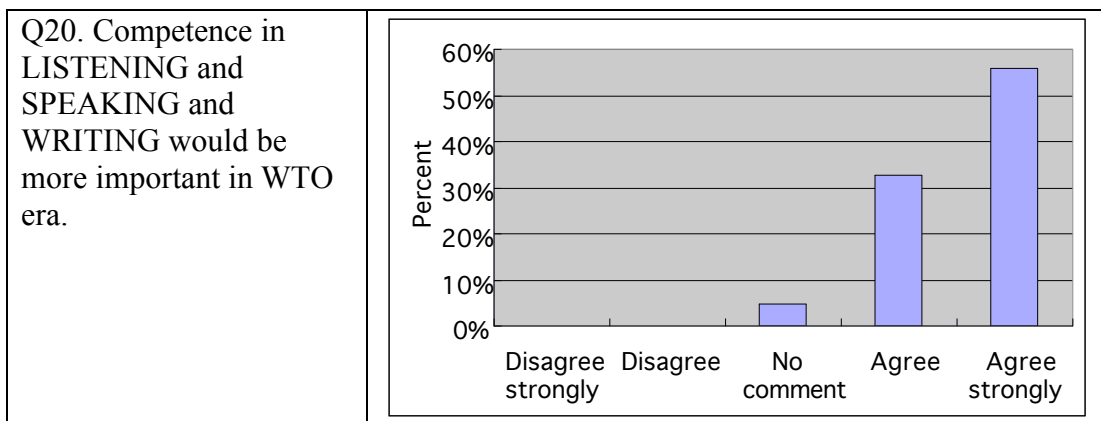


Q15. English will provide the main means of accessing high-tech communication and information in WTO era.



Q16. English teaching and learning has become more and more important in China after its accession into WTO.





In the knowledge economy, information is wealth and one important medium of disseminating and gathering information is the English language. In the era of knowledge economy, it is also a useful tool to transform science and technology into productivity. The result of Q6 in the above figure clearly revealed that most of the participants believed that English is an important impetus to boost China’s socio-economic achievement in regard in the WTO era.

According to the result of Q15 in Figure 5.1, an overwhelming majority of the participants regarded English as a necessary tool that facilitated access to modern scientific and technological advances from the developed countries. As a matter of fact, the English language, as the most taught foreign language in China, has become indispensable for Chinese people to establish world citizenship. On the other hand, as it is unlikely that countries in the world are able to develop their national proficiency in Mandarin (Putonghua) in the foreseeable future, English will provide these countries with windows of communication with China.

However, in spite of the abovementioned importance of English, the result of Q20 in the above figure showed that 89 per cent of the participants were aware of the weak spoken-English skills among college graduates, which Farrel and Grant referred to as “the chief handicaps” (2005, cited in Graddol, 2006, p. 75). They reckoned that effective English skills in Listening, Speaking and Writing were indispensable in global business environment in WTO era.

It is true to say that national English proficiency is essential for Chinese businesses to operate effectively and efficiently in the framework of WTO. After China’s entry

into the WTO, professionals in various careers must have good knowledge of foreign languages if they want to be successful in their careers. On the other hand, good mastery of English makes a considerable difference for individuals: it opens up employment opportunities in multinational companies and is useful for career development in the private sector; it means better chance to enter and graduate from university; and even to obtain professional promotion in academic as well as civil service fields. These advantages, to some extent, support the speculation by Zhao and Campbell (1995, pp. 377-390) that English has been used to achieve for social and economic mobility.

As the result of Q3 indicated, a vast majority of students shared the view that English is more widely used in China after its WTO entry. This confirms Ross' claim that foreign language education was a barometer of China's modernisation trends: registering high when open participation in the global community is perceived to be commensurate with political and economic interests (Ross, 1992, p. 239). According to Pennycook (1999), English as a colonial language accomplishment has been pronounced a key element in creating technical labour forces that meet their investment specifications, and national ministries of education have uniformly complied with the ideological demand for English.

Similarly, the students were positive about the possible gains for China in connection with the globalisation of English in WTO era. As the survey result of Q6 indicated, 63 per cent of the participants agreed that English is an important factor to support China's growth in WTO era. This is in conformity with the survey result of Q14 in Figure 5.1. Most participants, 56 per cent to be exact, held that English had made significant contribution to the economic and social progress since the opening-up and reform in the 1980s. This is in agreement with the Graddol's (2006, p. 95) belief that China has benefited from its decision to make English a key part of its strategy for economic development against the waning trend of national English proficiency in other Asian countries.

In response to the significance of English and the need of better national English proficiency, about 80 per cent of the participants in the survey agreed that the importance of English teaching and learning in China was much increased after its



WTO accession (Q16, Figure 5.1). English language is closely associated with the economic modernisation in China. China needs English as the major foreign language for its economic rise and peaceful political reemergence in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

However, discussions on the needs are accompanied by the voices of doubt as follows.

Why should 1.3 billion Chinese learn English when 95% of Chinese college graduates will not use oral English in their whole lifetime nor will they read any English materials? (*China Daily*, 11/03/2003)

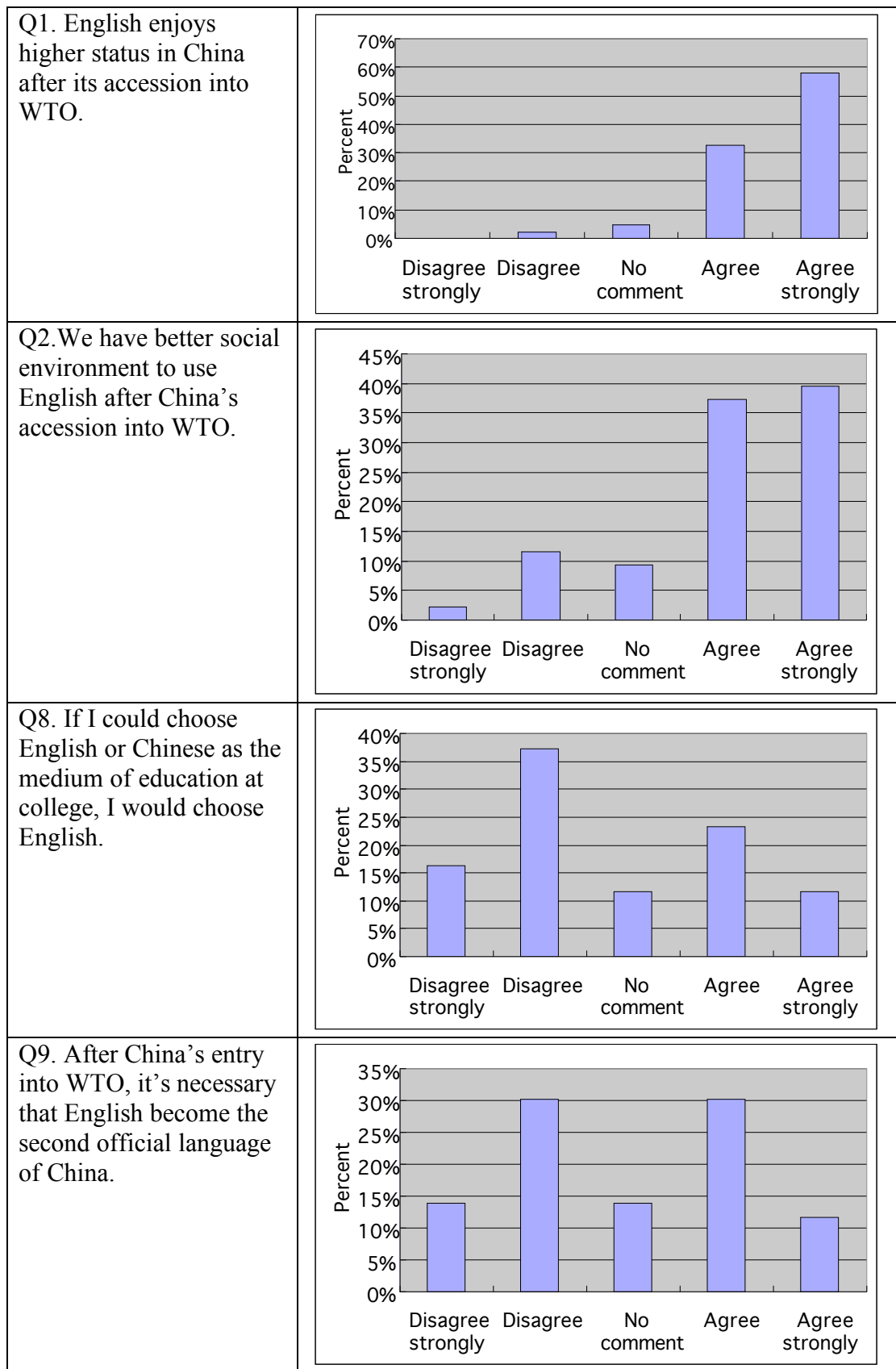
*P25* *Honestly, English is of little use in our everyday life.*

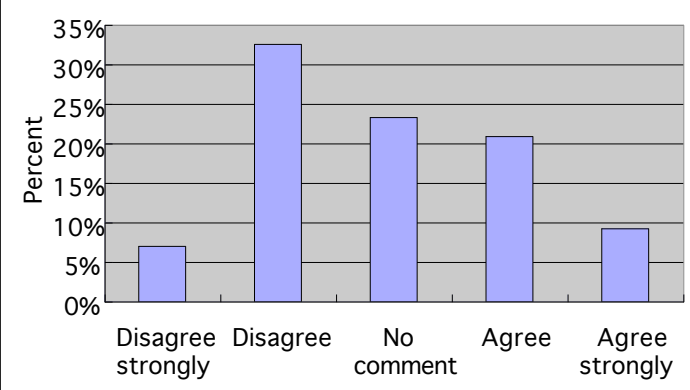
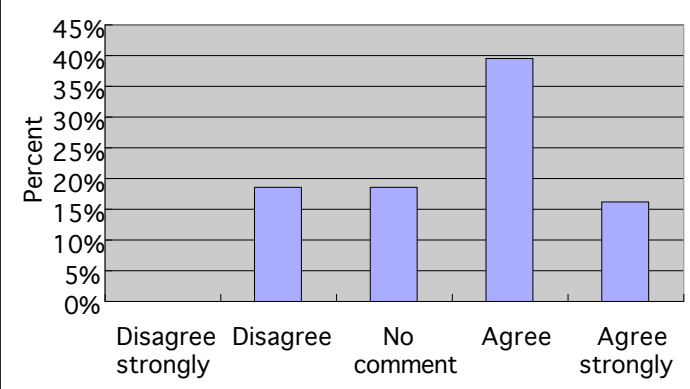
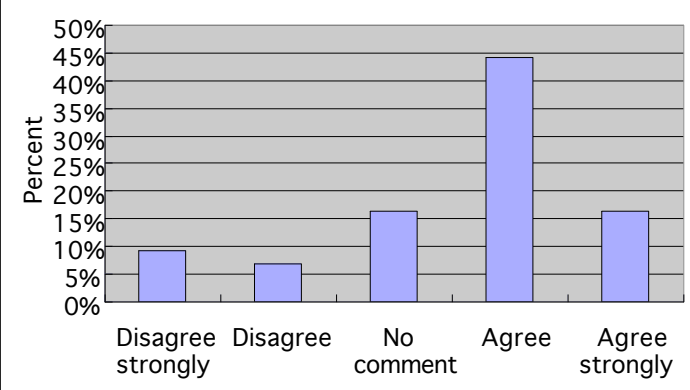
While English is not used in the daily life or work of many people, it seems unreasonable for the government to impose the national needs of English on the majority of the college students. Thus, it is understandable that these students have some concerns in this regard, which will be further discussed in the following section.

## **5.2 Learners' Social and Political Concerns about the Globalisation of English**

The result of the survey questions regarding the concerns expressed by college students on the social and political impacts of the globalisation of English are presented below.

Figure 5.2 – Concerns about the Globalisation of English



<p>Q13. Competence in English encourages elitism and increases socio-economic inequalities.</p>	 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disagree strongly</td> <td>7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>33%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No comment</td> <td>24%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree</td> <td>21%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree strongly</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Percent	Disagree strongly	7%	Disagree	33%	No comment	24%	Agree	21%	Agree strongly	10%
Response	Percent												
Disagree strongly	7%												
Disagree	33%												
No comment	24%												
Agree	21%												
Agree strongly	10%												
<p>Q14. English is a major contributor to the economic and social advance since the opening-up and reform in the 1980's.</p>	 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disagree strongly</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>19%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No comment</td> <td>19%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree</td> <td>40%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree strongly</td> <td>17%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Percent	Disagree strongly	0%	Disagree	19%	No comment	19%	Agree	40%	Agree strongly	17%
Response	Percent												
Disagree strongly	0%												
Disagree	19%												
No comment	19%												
Agree	40%												
Agree strongly	17%												
<p>Q18. Higher standards of English competence are necessary to meet the requirements of social and economic development in WTO era.</p>	 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disagree strongly</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No comment</td> <td>17%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree</td> <td>45%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree strongly</td> <td>17%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Percent	Disagree strongly	10%	Disagree	8%	No comment	17%	Agree	45%	Agree strongly	17%
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China's opening-up to the outside world in the 1980s is taken by many to mean a new initiative of 'westernisation'. In spite of the fact that 'westernisation' still remains ideologically ambiguous in China, its ongoing process of industrialisation is in most cases closely associated with the construction of western-style industrial civilisation. In the same way, as survey result of Q5 in Figure 5.1 indicated, 65 per cent of the participants believed that English education was closely associated with the westernisation event in China, though it is unclear from the result whether this westernisation process is to the advantage of the students. The initial debate about whether this is the right direction to take is now overshadowed by increasing concern regarding the effects of the policy of encouraging, or to some extent, enforcing, the

teaching and learning of English language in China. The following comments reflect the concern of many people that the governmental stress on English education would be at the cost of Chinese language and that the output in English language learning does not match the input in most cases.

*P22 Learning English in China has almost become a national obsession. This is very rare in the world. However, most English learners cost much but gain little.*

*P24 Are we going to have our education colonized by strongly advocating studying English while playing down their importance of learning the mother tongue? Educational authorities need to think over the issue. English is merely a tool after all.*

*P26 I am totally against the practice of placing as much emphasis on learning English as on Chinese. It's a shame for a country with such a splendid culture to do so. It's not right to require every Chinese to bend on learning English, especially when this is initiated and sponsored by government.*

The above concerns from the students can find support from Pennycook's argument that there existed widespread threat by English in the world. "If it is not posing such a threat to first languages, as a universal second language it is constantly replacing other languages in daily use and school curricula. In bilingual or multilingual societies, for example, the prevalence of English can easily lead to the disregarding of one or more other languages" (2001, p. 81).

The students may not have much familiarity with the very concept of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992; Pennycook, 1994), but it is still a concern here that the spread of English might be at the cost of the mother language of Chinese. Being well educated in China partially means having received at least ten years' English education from primary or secondary to tertiary stage. However, few Chinese would associate teaching English with an act of linguistic imperialism. Phillipson also used

the term ‘linguicism’ to refer to the privileging of one language at the expense of others, usually aboriginal languages (Jones, 2002).

As shown in the result of Q13 in Figure 5.2, the participants indicated less concern in the possible negative social effect that the spread of English in the WTO era might bring about than Graddol (2006), who argued that the key to understanding the impact of the spread of English probably lies in how well and how strategically its implementation is managed in each country as it is a double-edge sword. He went on to argue that, as a result of the complexity regarding the impact of globalisation on wealth, it seems that inequalities are being intensified within all countries, but the gap between national economies may be narrowing.

Based on the situation in China, economic development can magnify inequality by making the rich richer and the poor poorer. The rich, the middle class, the better educated, the urban, all tend to benefit more than their already worse-off compatriots. While the poor rarely become poorer in absolute terms, relative inequality increases, giving rise to social and political problems. When it comes to the globalisation of English, the global English model represented by the “World English Project” may be even more problematic in that it has the capacity to make the poor not just relatively worse off, but poorer in absolute terms. As indicated in the result of Q14, nobody expressed strong disagreement with the idea that access to English is a significant contributing factor in the economic and social advance. As English becomes a basic skill, so success in other areas of the curriculum becomes dependent on success in English. In effect, failure to master English as a basic skill means failure in other disciplines. The innovation diffusion model predicts this kind of consequence – where English once brought competitive advantage, learners are now punished for failure (Graddol, 2006, p. 119).

As mentioned above, the issue regarding the association between English competence and elitism and socio-economic inequalities was not a serious concern for most Chinese university students. As shown in the result of Q13, Figure 5.2, only 30 per cent of the participants agreed with this correlation. This result is different from Pennycook’s claim that “English operates as a major means by which social, political and economic inequalities are maintained within many countries” (2001, p.

81). The main reason is that English, unlike the situation in some former colonized countries like Kenya, is not the dominant language of schooling in China. In fact, it is not used as means of instruction in any subjects besides the English subject itself. Another reason, plausible as it is, might be the fact that ELT in China has been poorly served by academic work that fails to address the far-reaching questions like the ultimate roles of English in China in this era of globalisation. This, to some extent, leads to the doubts that are commonplace among English learners in China as represented by the following comments.

*P32 Our teaching and test systems have deviated from the initial purpose of English learning in that it teaches and encourages elite English instead of practical one. Beneficiaries are limited to those who intend to study overseas. Yet, to the millions who have little use of the language, it is a great waste of time, energy and resources.*

It is certainly true that English plays a significant role as a gatekeeper for movement between countries, in particular for transnational education. The priority for a Chinese student who wants to study in an English-speaking country is often to obtain a proof of their English competence by taking IELTS or TOEFL. As a result, college students in prestigious universities like Peking University and Tsinghua University are infamously known for their diligence to learn English only for passing these international exams to gain admission to further their education in those English-speaking countries. One of the main differences between the new global English and the old EFL educational models is that ELT has now become a ‘mission-critical’ undertaking (Graddol, 2006). With a long tradition of pedagogic practices that are well tuned to create high rates of failure, it requires energy, resources and patience to ensure that ELT does not become an even more effective gate-keeping mechanism for elite groups in society.

English is at the centre of many globalisation mechanisms. Its future in China is likely to be closely associated with future patterns of globalisation, which does not mean much more than westernisation. Hence, the neutrality in the teaching of English remains a question. Since the term *Linguistic Imperialism* was proposed by Robert Philipson, there has been considerable discussion about the potential for

English teaching to be used as a means of transportation for western capitalist hegemony.

Such a concern arises because English has dominated and facilitated various aspects of life around the world. In China, though hard for it to achieve the same dominance elsewhere, English is applied in education as a key to advanced western knowledge. This will irreversibly strengthen the indispensability of the English language in China's modernisation. In EFL countries like Korea and Japan, there were proposals to make English the second official language. The policy-makers in these countries sought for panaceas thinking that this will solve all their language learning problems. However, Phillipson (2001) argued that careful analysis of what factors need to be in place was very important for such a proposal to succeed. The survey result in Q9 in Figure 5.2 regarding this issue justified the caution of Phillipson in this regard. 44 per cent of the students deemed it unnecessary to establish English as the second official language in China, while another 42 per cent expressed the opposite view. The bimodal distribution as shown in Q9 in Figure 5.2 indicated that the participants fell into two distinct camps on this issue. It is one thing to contemplate such a linguistic and political solution; it is another to take decisions on these matters in the arena of educational pedagogy and policies.

However, if the need to make the best of Chinese language and the cultures associated with it is disregarded in language education policy planning, nationalism leading to discontent and hatred may arise regarding the impacts of globalisation and the cultures integrated with the English language. An examination of the result of Q8 in Figure 5.2 revealed more obvious clue. 53 per cent of the participants did not like the idea of being educated in the medium of English while only a minority of 35 per cent held positive attitude towards this issue. Heated discussions in the follow-up interview further confirmed the complexity of this issue. Some participants pointed out that Chinese would find it 'unacceptable' as China was never actually colonised and it is not a popular destination of immigration. Similarly, some believed that it was unlikely for English to achieve the status of official language because its use is not wide enough and the overall educational level in this country is not satisfactory enough to make this possible.

*We should not be bound by the narrow nationalist thinking. We learn English not to blindly worship the West, we learn it to revitalise our nation by introducing more leading-edge science and technology.*

*Another thing is that we need the lingua franca to promote ourselves by making us better known in the world.*

On the other hand, other participants deemed it highly necessary to promote the status of English in China. The reasons are generalised as follows: Firstly, China's WTO membership means that English will have an even more important role to play in its better integration into the international community; secondly, such an initiative would push English learning and use in China to a higher level. Considering its indispensable role in international exchange and communication, it is significant to attach more importance at national level to English.

The function of English as a gatekeeper to positions of prestige in society is another major concern of Pennycook (2001, p. 81). As Q7 in Figure 5.1 indicated, a majority of the participants were aware that that linguistic competence has been an important factor in labour market stratification, with English taking up a nearly equal position with Chinese in the Chinese educational system, it has become one of the most powerful means of inclusion into or exclusion from further education, employment or social positions. Pennycook's argument that "the extent to which English is involved in the political, educational, social and economic life of a country is clearly a result of both the historical legacy of colonialism and of the varying success of countries since independence in warding off the threats of neo-colonialism" (2001, p. 81) failed to justify this particular situation in China. It is more logical to say that it is globalisation rather than colonialism or neo-colonialism that has played a major role here. Whatever the reason, this study revealed that 60 per cent the participants believed that, as a result of the impacts of English globalisation, higher standards should be set for the English language competence in order to satisfy the China's needs for English in this new era (see Q18, Figure 5.2).

In short, regarding the social and political implications of the English globalisation on China in the WTO era, most students believed that English, as the main means of



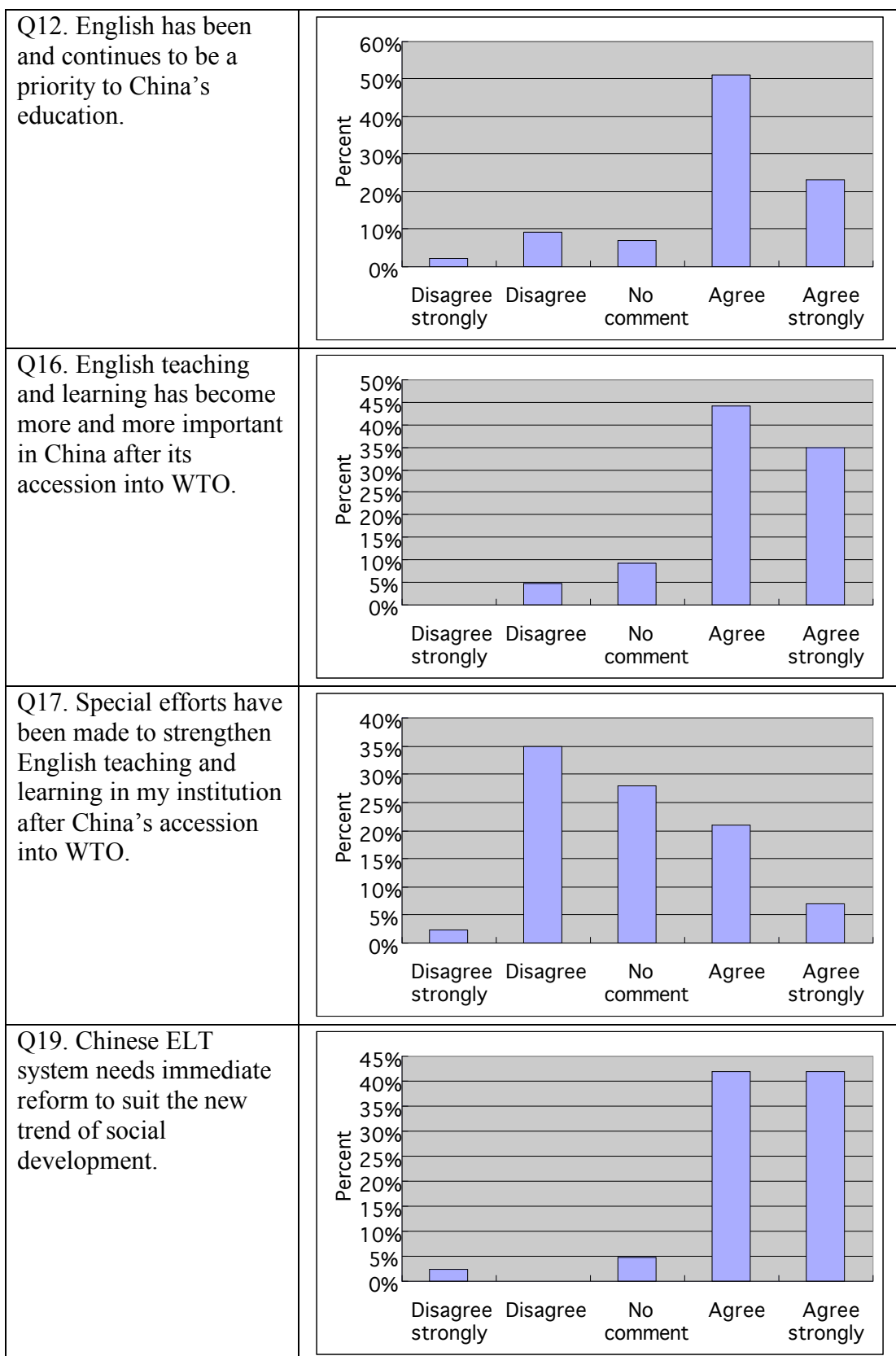
acquiring the high-tech communication and information as well as cultural understanding needed in the process of integrating with the outside world, plays a significant role in promoting the economic growth and social progress. However, there existed obvious conflicts regarding the idea of promoting the status of English in China as an official language and using it as medium of tertiary education. Similarly, although most of them were aware of the stratification function in job market, the students varied in their opinions about whether English language competence is related to socio-economic inequalities.

More detailed discussions on the educational and cultural issues related to English will be the focus of the next sections.

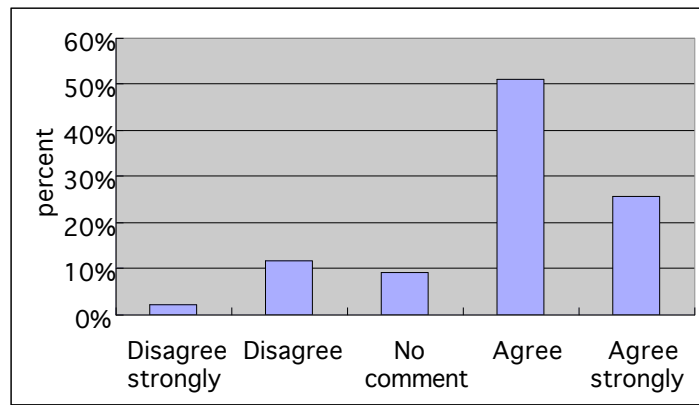
### **5.3 Educational Impacts to the Benefit of Learners**

The result of the survey questions regarding the educational and cultural impacts of the globalisation of English as viewed by college students are presented below.

Figure 5.3 – Educational Impacts to the Benefit of Learners



Q41. Learning subject courses through English is a good way to gain more practical use of English.



Thanks to its WTO membership, China’s universities are increasingly affected by global economic integration, domestic market reforms, and expanding cross-national academic exchanges. According to Graddol (2006, p. 80), countries that have, in the past, provided major sources of international students, such as Malaysia and China, are sending fewer students overseas and repositioning themselves as net exporters of higher education. For both the lucky few that have the chance to study overseas and those who stay at home to pursue their degrees and then acquire a job, English will provide them with the main means of taking advantage of the most needed communication and information in this era of globalisation (see Q15, Figure 5.1).

As discussed above, the status of English as the predominant foreign language in China is beyond any doubt. To enhance the English language proficiency at a national level, China has opened its gate to English as the first foreign language. Legions of approximately 150,000 foreign EFL teachers (Niu & Martin, 2003) and more than one million Chinese English teachers are currently teaching English to more than 600 million Chinese (MacArthur, 2004) at any given moment, twice the population of the United States of America.

This statistical significance accords with students’ views regarding the place of English. Generally speaking, the students were positive about the role that English has been playing in China’s education and agreed that it remains a priority (as shown in Figure 5.3). Similarly, a great majority of the students admitted that the English language holds superior status in Chinese education. This is supported by their common belief that English is a major contributor to the economic and social advance and higher standards of English competence are necessary to meet the

requirements of social and economic development in the WTO era (as shown in Figure 5.2). These results confirm the finding of Graddol (2006, p. 40), who argued that the services sector, in which English is of particular value, would play an increasing important role in national economies. As many countries enter an ‘educational arms race’ in order to maintain international competitiveness, high-value intellectual work – including basic science research – is beginning to move to countries like India and China. However, the students also raised their doubts regarding the views that the spread of English is natural, neutral and beneficial.

*P30 I'm not very keen on English study. English is just a skill rather than knowledge. My mother tongue is Chinese. It's one of the most beautiful languages in the world. I love it!*

Moreover, ELT professionals realized that globalisation of university education and curricula will be necessary for students to understand and deal with the difficulties of transnational communication and conflict. Chinese colleges and universities are restructuring and improving their teaching methods and readjusting their curriculum. A resulting effect is that as many as 91 per cent of the students’ believed that better social environment is available to use English after China’s accession to the WTO (see Q2, Figure 5.2).

The predominance of English has profound impact on the international academic communities. A large proportion of world’s textbooks are published in English and designed for use either in the internal English-speaking countries or in international non-English-speaking market. English medium courses in Chinese universities have been promoted as a major measure to improve the curriculum quality and to attract international students and teachers, though only a small portion of the participants agreed that subject courses should be taught through English (see Q41, Figure 5.3).

As mentioned above, an immediate result of the globalisation of English is that it is widely accepted as being an international language. Pennycook (2001, p. 85) proposed the notion of ‘the world in English’ by arguing that the many discourses of global power of development, democracy, capitalism, modernisation have been facilitative of the spread of English and that, in the same way, this spread has

facilitated the spread of those discourses. As indicated in the survey result of Q20 in Figure 5.1, students were aware of this changing nature of English use and aspired to be better prepared for this trend by acquiring more productive language skills in listening, speaking as well as writing. The following comment also provides supportive evidence in this regard.

*P38 I know it's important to study English to get a good job here and also if I want to study, not only abroad, but even here because there are many English books, journals, articles which can be taken from the internet, etc. Also, listening comprehension and speaking are important skills to develop if they have to give speeches or attend conferences or meet foreigners, and not just people coming from the US, UK, or Australia, etc.*

An undeniable fact is that the number of non-native speakers of English exceeds that of native speakers worldwide. On many occasions English is used not only for communication between natives and non-natives but also among non-natives worldwide. The concern for communicating in English is accompanied by calls for recognising the hybridity of the language. English is spoken by many of the world's peoples who have adapted, modified and influenced its vocabulary, grammar, tone, phraseology and meaning in accordance with local interests. Wardhaugh (1987) makes this point powerfully:

English is the least localised of all the languages in the world today. Spoken almost everywhere in the world to some degree, and tied to no particular social, political, economic or religious system, or to specific racial or cultural group, English belongs to everyone or to no one, or at least it is quite often regarded as having this property (p. 15).

Since no language is used to its fullest extent by its native speakers, there is always much room left for our non-native speakers to exploit it in the unique form of English usage, phonetically, lexically, syntactically, semantically and pragmatically. English has developed not as a singular, homogenous global language but rather as a series of heterogeneous hybridisations of global/local Englishes owned by many

culturally different peoples. The following comment from one of the participants reveals the needs and demands of the CE learners to be fully prepared for this trend.

*P15 Various accents should be included in listening materials, not restricted to RP or GA. Cultural components, both Chinese and foreign, should be added in reading.*

With the globalising higher education alongside the economy, English is serving as a key ingredient – partly because universities in the English-speaking world dominate the global league tables, and partly because English is proving popular as a means of internationalising both the student community and teaching staff (Graddol, 2006, p. 73).

The wide spread of English use results from China's enormous progress in English language education in the last twenty years, which, in turn, is due largely to the strong and growing conviction of the Chinese government that English competence is a must for the younger generations in the 21st Century. As we can see from Q12 in Figure 5.3, more than 70 per cent of the participants agreed that English remains a major task for China's education. At the same time, according to the result of survey question Q19, the participants reached consensus regarding the necessity of immediate change of the English language teaching and learning system to adapt to China's socio-economic advance in the WTO era.

However, it is important to note that only a small portion, 28 per cent of the participants, agreed that individual institutions made particular efforts to strengthen English teaching and learning after China's accession to the WTO (see Q17, Figure 5.3). It indicates that the impacts of globalisation of English on ELT in China are gradual, and individual institutions need some time to manage proper response to the latest changes.

As mentioned in the above section, the students were well aware of the wider application of English in every field after China's entry into the WTO. The students reacted very positively towards the concern that exposure to, and promotion of, English and its cultural assumptions endanger traditional Chinese cultures and values.

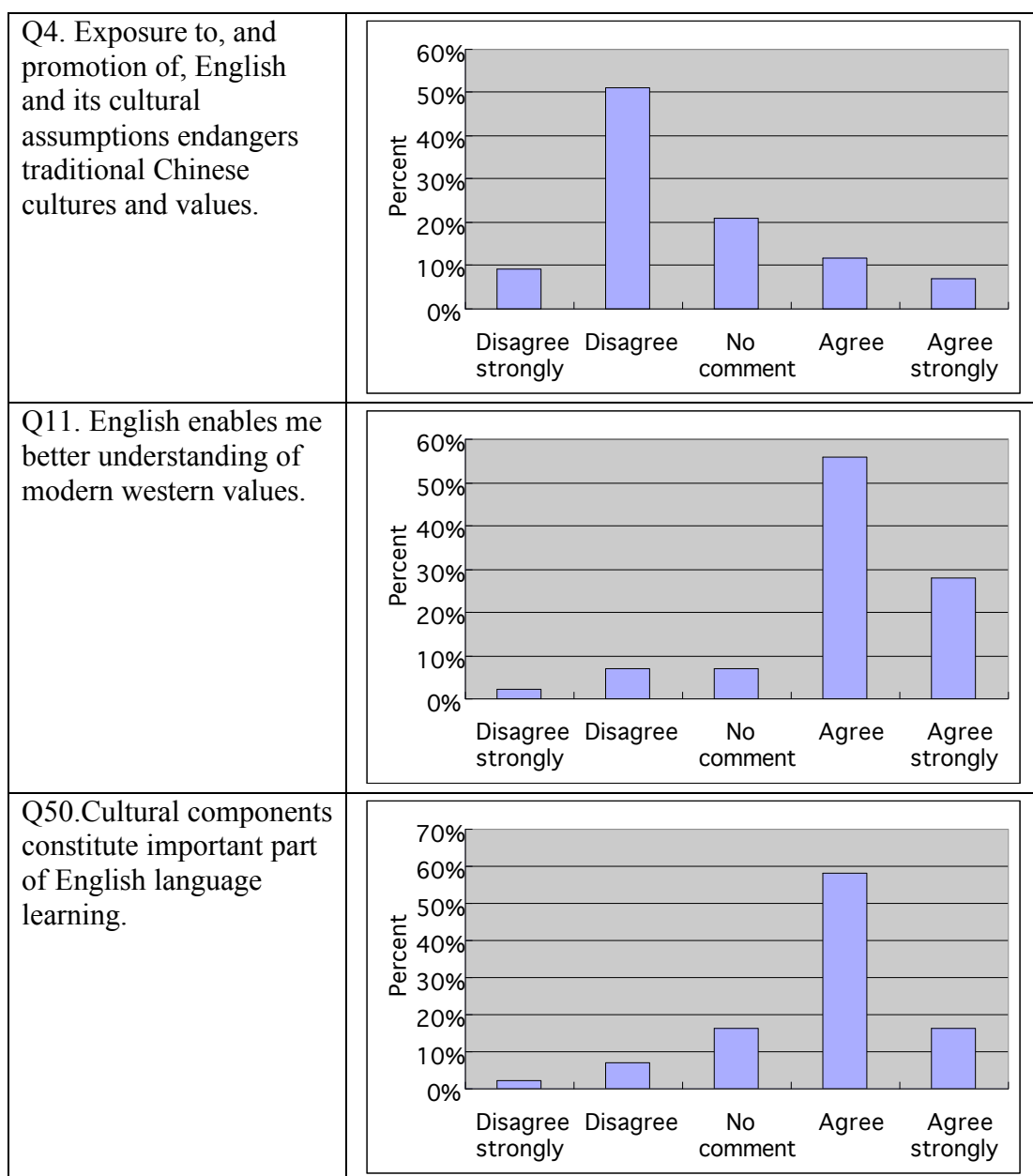
60 per cent of the participants expressed their disagreement with this worry as represented by the survey result of Q4 in Figure 5.4. This is probably due to the fact that the teaching and learning of English as an international language for wider communication does not necessarily entail any acceptance of the values of the society from which it originates. At the same time, what is taught in English classes is usually processed by students and appropriated by them in ways that suit their needs.

In spite of the difference in attitudes and motivations towards English learning, the participants reached much consensus when it comes to the function of English in promoting understanding of behaviours, values, beliefs and customs of the particular culture carried with the English language. A high 84 per cent of the participants agreed that English helps them to achieve better cultural understanding in association with the language (Q11, Figure 5.4). The next section will discuss the cultural impacts of English globalisation as viewed by the students.

#### **5.4 Cultural Impacts from the Perspective of Learners**

The result of the survey questions regarding the cultural impacts of the globalisation of English as viewed by college students are presented below.

Figure 5.4 – Cultural Impacts from the Perspective of Learners



To many developing and underdeveloped countries, modernisation means westernisation. The West is now well into modernity and to some extent to be modern means to be western culturally. The adoption of western languages and cultures as well as technology seems unavoidable in the process of modernisation.

The socio-semiotic view of language as presented by Halliday (1979) and Halliday and Hasan (1984) stresses the social meanings that language both represents and shapes. According to Halliday (1979, p. 114), the social structure is not just a



decorative context to language interaction; it is an essential part of the evolution of semantic systems and processes. It is in this sense that we believe the English language, as any other languages, reflects the values, beliefs and assumption of the culture it lives with. Therefore, learning English also involves learning the culture it is associated with. This naturally leads to the inclusion of intercultural communication awareness and competence as part of the communicative competence as suggested by Hymes (1972), whose definition of communicative competence highlighted the importance of understanding the socio-linguistic aspects of language (pp. 269-293).

EFL has highlighted the importance of learning about the culture and society of native speakers (Graddol, 2006, p. 82). Perception of the cultural aspect of EFL may depend on the possible cultural expectations the EFL learners are being required to follow. A common form of greeting and starting a conversation in Chinese is to ask if one has eaten, which profoundly differs from English native speakers' cultural expectations. For most Chinese EFL learners, it is not too difficult to modify this type of cultural behaviour to fit themselves in the English-speaking community so that they will start a conversation by talking about weather. Whether English enculturation displaces traditional Chinese culture and values or not is an issue that needs more elaborate consideration. At least the CE learners did not hold strong opinion regarding this possibility. They did not feel that greeting by commenting on the weather detracts from their Chinese-ness. For example, the Chinese style of presenting an opinion or argument is often less direct than that of an English native speaker. A Chinese speaker of English may decide to comply with native speaker norms and be direct in order to form a bond with the person he or she is speaking with or he or she might decide his or her purposes may be better served by emphasising his or her Chinese background. In neither case is he or she submitting to linguistic imperialism (Tibbetts, 2002).

**P27** *ELT should give further priority on ... understanding of deep meaning of cultures rather than superficial things. This would be where we can benefit.*

**P15** *Cultural components, both Chinese and foreign, should be added in reading.*

On the contrary, as the above comments indicate, students are welcoming this form of cultural components in teaching and learning. Therefore it is reasonable to believe that they can manipulate such language and cultural expectations as best they can to their own advantage. As they do not have to transform themselves to suit the society they live in as the non-English speaking immigrants do in the English-speaking countries, the students do not have to adopt the values, attitudes and behaviours that are closely connected to the English language. However, it is their common recognition that language and culture is inseparable and it is important to gain sufficient knowledge of the culture associated with the English language in order to achieve competence in this language. In this case, the exposure to the target culture is limited to ‘understanding’ rather than ‘immersing’. The cultural penetration of English language does not manifest its comprehensiveness as it did as a form of colonisation of the African mind as argued by Mazrui (1975, cited in Pennycook, 2001, p. 81). As a result, the cultural components linked with the English language have not been much examined from a negative point of view by Chinese English learners.

**P18** *Can China just demand that those desiring to do business in China or with China should learn Mandarin? In this way, we Chinese do not have to learn English?*

**P11** *I've made so much complains. It doesn't mean that I hate learning English. I mean that our country and our school should do more efforts to improve ELT in Chinese universities. I know that our country isn't very rich, so we can't do the same thing as the developed countries. All in all, I'll learn English by heart. The purpose of learning English is that I can do much more things for my country!*

**P3** *ELT [in China] is unbalanced, with little input and training in ... cultural backgrounds.*

Thanks to their understanding of how social contexts and specific situations influence the choice of language and the type of communication, the students were aware that successful communication required more than the ability to integrate language systems and skills. They were also aware that when one learns a language one also needs to learn its culture. The message is clear: it is not because the English-speaking people are better or more powerful, but because it is necessary to understand these people (their lifestyles, beliefs, attitudes) if there is a need to foster communication, tolerance and solidarity.

As language and culture are inseparable, it is extremely important that both the L2 students and teachers have any appreciation for the cultural context in which the native speakers actually use the language. Thus, the students will be able to produce the L2 in a form of English that the native speakers will find acceptable and understandable rather than odd, bookish, stiff, inappropriate, and unintelligible. Patience and understanding for these non-native learners is necessary because it may take years and much practice for them to adopt behaviour and mode of thinking in the target culture. Unfortunately, the feedbacks from the students reveal that there is not enough cultural exposure in their process of English learning. With this in mind, it remains an issue to decide to what extent non-native learners are expected to meet such cultural expectations, given that English is considered as an international language. Students were often told that they should think in English language while learning it. However, the result, as indicated in the following comment, is often unsatisfactory.

**P33** *I cannot do that [thinking in English] because I have been living my life as a Chinese for all the years. I cannot help but think in the Chinese way when I speak English.*

For most students English as a foreign language has no real role within their own community or society. English is taken as an important component in China's educational system simply because of the external benefits it brings from outside the Chinese community. It is taught with a view to promoting relationships with the outside world that uses it as a language of international academic communication and cultural exchange.

The economic globalisation has brought about enormous space for cultural exchanges among different nations. However, in this process, by its economic strength, the western culture has managed to launch an unparalleled development campaign to promote its political system, concept of values, ideology and ways of living. To some extent, it is true to say that the western culture has not only occupied the cultural market of developing countries, but also cultivated worshippers of western culture. As a result, the development of individualism, money-worship, consumerism and sex liberation in China is attributed to the wide spread of the western cultural products.

In China, the phenomenon referred to as English linguistic hegemony by Phillipson (1992) is not as obvious as in the ex-colonized. Only a small portion of the participants (19 per cent) believed that the English language and culture pose some threat to the Chinese language and culture (see Q4, Figure 5.4). However, in spite of its status as a foreign language, English has achieved similar ‘social stratification function’ found in some non-native English speaking countries. It is not unusual that an individual might be denied access to certain kinds of work because of his or her incompetence to use the English language. In many ways English has been used in China as the main determinant of an individual’s progress up the ladder of formal education and professional positions.

**P3** *ELT is unbalanced, with little input and training in listening, speaking and cultural backgrounds...*

**P2** *Teaching approaches should be enriched by classic movies, English speeches and performance so that English usefulness could be best represented.*

The result of Q50 in Figure 5.4 clearly indicated that most students realised that there is close relationship between English learning and the various cultural forms as represented in movie industries, pop music fields, cyberspace, reading activities, arts appreciation, etc.

Linguists generally believe that, to ensure ample exposure to a language, it is of importance to have enough exposure to the ideas and values associated with this language so as to develop a global awareness. Wang's (1999) observational finding was that in dealing with materials from Western source when learning a Western language, China is attempting to educate her people with knowledge, beliefs, values and morals that have gained universal recognition of human societies regardless of political difference.

In spite of the different or even conflicting interpretations and responses to the culture available through diverse media, one thing that is certain is that cultural consumption and cultural assimilation are significant for successful English learning. The learners do not usually take into consideration the so-called cultural imperialism so long as they can benefit from being exposed to such cultural forms. The point that is convincing to them is that English is of practical use. Whether the global use of English and cultural impacts it has brought about serve the best interest of the native English speaking countries like US, UK and Australia etc. is a matter of little irrelevance. 84 per cent of the participants agreed that English play a useful role in promoting EFL learners' understanding of modern western values (see Q11, Figure 5.4).

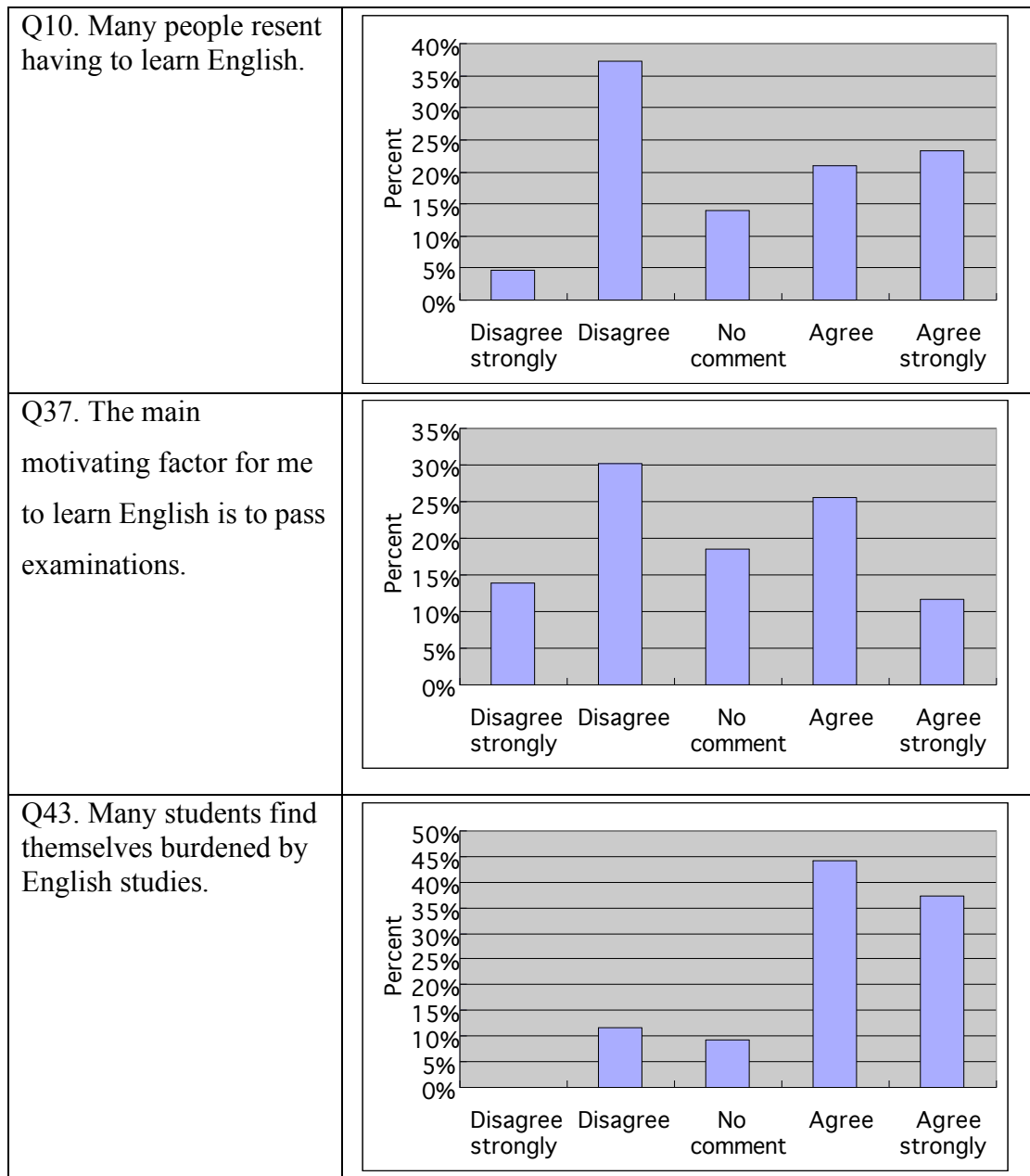
To sum up, the results of this study confirmed Parsons' claim that individuals reconcile personal will and desire with those determined by the social structure (Joseph, 2004, pp.194-207). Most students reacted positively towards the impacts of cultural globalisation. They did not believe that English and its cultural associations pose threat to traditional Chinese cultures and values and English facilitates EFL learners' understanding of modern western values. In addition, sufficient cultural exposure to English culture in their process of learning is essential for successful English acquisition.

There will be more detailed discussions on ELT problems in Chinese universities in the next chapter, Chapter 6.

### 5.5 Impacts of the Globalisation of English on Learners

The result of the survey questions regarding the impacts of the globalisation of English on college English learners are presented below.

Figure 5.5 – Impacts of the Globalisation of English on Learners



In this global network of discourse, English, the dominant language of the Internet, is widely believed to be providing the main means of accessing high-tech communication and information in the WTO era (see Q15, Figure 5.1). In addition,

most participants acknowledged that they benefit from learning and using English as it enables better understanding of modern western values (see Q11, Figure 5.4).

However, as far as students' attitudes towards English learning are concerned, the message we can obtain from Figure 5.5 is generally a negative one. The result of Q10 in Figure 5.5 showed that there were 42 per cent of the participants who gave negative answer to the question whether they disliked the idea of learning English, which is almost to the number of students who expressed their resentment to some extent. This is in agreement with the survey result regarding their interests and motivations towards learning English.

*P43 My suggestion is that College English should switch from required to optional so that students gifted in English learning take the course on their own wills and those who are talented in fields other than foreign language learning could do away with this heavy bondage of examinations. Thus, ELT will switch from test-driven to all-round quality education in a real sense.*

The above statement and the result of Q43 in the above figure clearly showed that an overwhelming majority of the participants were taxed by the learning of English and they expect more freedom in choosing 'what to learn'. This kind of fear or hostility observed confirm the finding of Chen (1985) and Wu (1991) in their research regarding Chinese students' actual hostility and fear towards learning English. This sentimental reaction towards English learning will certainly affect university students' final achievement and the fear of making errors and losing face among other factors will influence their speaking performance.

Regarding their interest and motivation in learning English, based on the bimodal result distribution of Q37 in Figure 5.5, we also found that students learn English for various motivations. 38 per cent of the participants reported that they studied English to pass examinations like CET-4 or CET-6, which is prerequisite for obtaining their bachelor's degree), a weak-instrumental motivation according to Ellis (1997, p. 75). In contrast, an integrative motivation is one in which "learners may choose to learn a particular L2 because they are interested in the people and culture represented by the

target-language group” (p. 75). Others had a strong-instrumental motivation. They studied English because they wanted to acquire a good job or study abroad. However, some studied English for integrative reasons as learning English turned out to be an enjoyable work to them.

It is understandable that an individual in this particular era of WTO may be motivated to learn English as a second language in order to be able to do business with the outside countries, to gain access to a scientific literature or to a cultural and historical heritage, or to be able to work and/or study in English-speaking countries. However, for those who do not have these motivations, learning English can be an inescapable trap. On the one hand, the current English examination system encourages the practice of selecting talented students or personnel partly based on their English tests results. On the other hand, the society does cultivate talents who do not possess competent aptitude in foreign language learning. 19 out of 43 subjects reported that they realised the resentment of having to learn English. This small portion might be the exact kind of diverse talented personnel our society needs (see Q10, Figure 5.5). As indicated in the above comment by Participant 43, all-round quality education which is free from the bondage of tests would provide the talented students who are not good at English examinations more chance of success.

The network of globalisation enables easier access to various kinds of symbolic and material goods in economic trade and cultural exchanges and images such as music and film and they are always available with a language, which is mostly English. In almost the same way, recently available communication technologies associated with Internet are accelerating the process of globalisation by facilitating the interactions between people. In the following interview excerpt, a participant shared his experience of learning English by taking advantage of IT advances.

**P43** *I used to be very busy in my high school. The pressure of study almost drove me insane. But life has been changed when in college. Now, I've got lots of free time and I could do anything I want to do. I like movies a lot and I watch lots of movies in English. I love to listen to English songs. Besides, I'm hooked on Internet, spending much time on surfing websites, listening to Internet radio, watching videos,*



*chatting ... and lots of the information I get online is in English. Over time, my English has been improved unconsciously. I'm not learning English on purpose anymore, but my English does get better through doing what I like.*

In reality we do have some good students who managed to take tremendous advantage of the various resources available and make successful transition from a secondary school mode of English learning to the one that can be regarded as an ideal mode for tertiary English learning. This mode is, to some extent, the one that is proposed by the MOE in the 2004 CECR, which will be discussed in great length in Chapter Seven.

## **5.6 Summary**

As a conclusion, the socio-economic globalisation, especially the globalisation of English serves as the external force that drives the ELT reform in China as Levin's (1974) Polity Model suggested. English language is closely associated with the economic modernisation in China. China needs English as the major foreign language for its economic rise and peaceful political reemergence in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The vast majority of students in this study agreed that English is more widely used in China after its WTO entry. Generally speaking, the students were positive about the possible gains for China in connection with the globalisation of English in WTO era. The survey result indicated most participants agreed that English is an important factor to support China's growth in WTO era and that English has made significant contribution to the economic and social progress since the opening-up and reform in the 1980s. This confirms the Graddol's (2006, p. 95) belief that China has benefited from its decision to make English a key part of its strategy for economic development against the waning trend of national English proficiency in other Asian countries. About 80 per cent of the participants in the survey agreed that the importance of English teaching and learning in China was much increased after its WTO accession.

Generally speaking, university students were positive about the role that English has been playing in China's education and agreed that it remains a priority. Similarly, a great majority of the students admitted that the English language holds superior status in Chinese education and it is their common belief that English is a major contributor to the economic and social advance and higher standards of English competence are necessary to meet the requirements of social and economic development in the WTO era. What is more, the students were positive about the possible gains for China in connection with the globalisation of English in the WTO era. In this global network of discourse, English, the dominant language of the Internet, is widely believed to be providing the main means of accessing high-tech communication and information in the WTO era. In addition, most participants acknowledged that they benefit from learning and using English as it enables better understanding of modern western values.

They did not believe that English and its cultural associations pose threat to traditional Chinese cultures and values and English facilitates EFL learners' understanding of modern western values. In addition, sufficient cultural exposure to English culture in their process of learning is essential for successful English acquisition. Their attitudes towards learning English were not as positive. At the same time, there existed some disagreements regarding the idea of promoting the status of English in China as an official language and using it as medium of tertiary education. Similarly, although most of them were aware of the stratification function in job market, the students varied in their opinions about whether English language competence is related to socio-economic inequalities.

The students were aware that successful communication required more than the ability to integrate language systems and skills. They were also aware that learning a language is inseparable from learning about its culture. Students welcomed and expected the cultural components in teaching and learning. However, there were some problems found regarding students' the attitudes and motivations towards learning English. Some students expressed their intense fear and hostility for having to learn English.

The national CE curricula have played a paramount role in shaping the ELT realities in China. This justifies the significance to scrutinise these curricula, in particular the current ones in the process of this study, which is the focus of the next chapter.

## **Chapter Six – The 1999 College English Curriculum and Pedagogy: Students’ Perspectives**

This chapter reports an investigation of College English learners’ views and comments regarding the ELT, in particular, CE curricula and pedagogy. It attempts to reveal the relationship between the curriculum modifications and socio-economic changes as a result of globalisation in China. It is an analysis and interpretation of the evidence collected on the 1999 College English curriculum, the one that was current when this project was initially started in 2002, from students’ perspective and based on documentary evidences collected. Another major source of data is from a case study of Dalian Maritime University based on class observation.

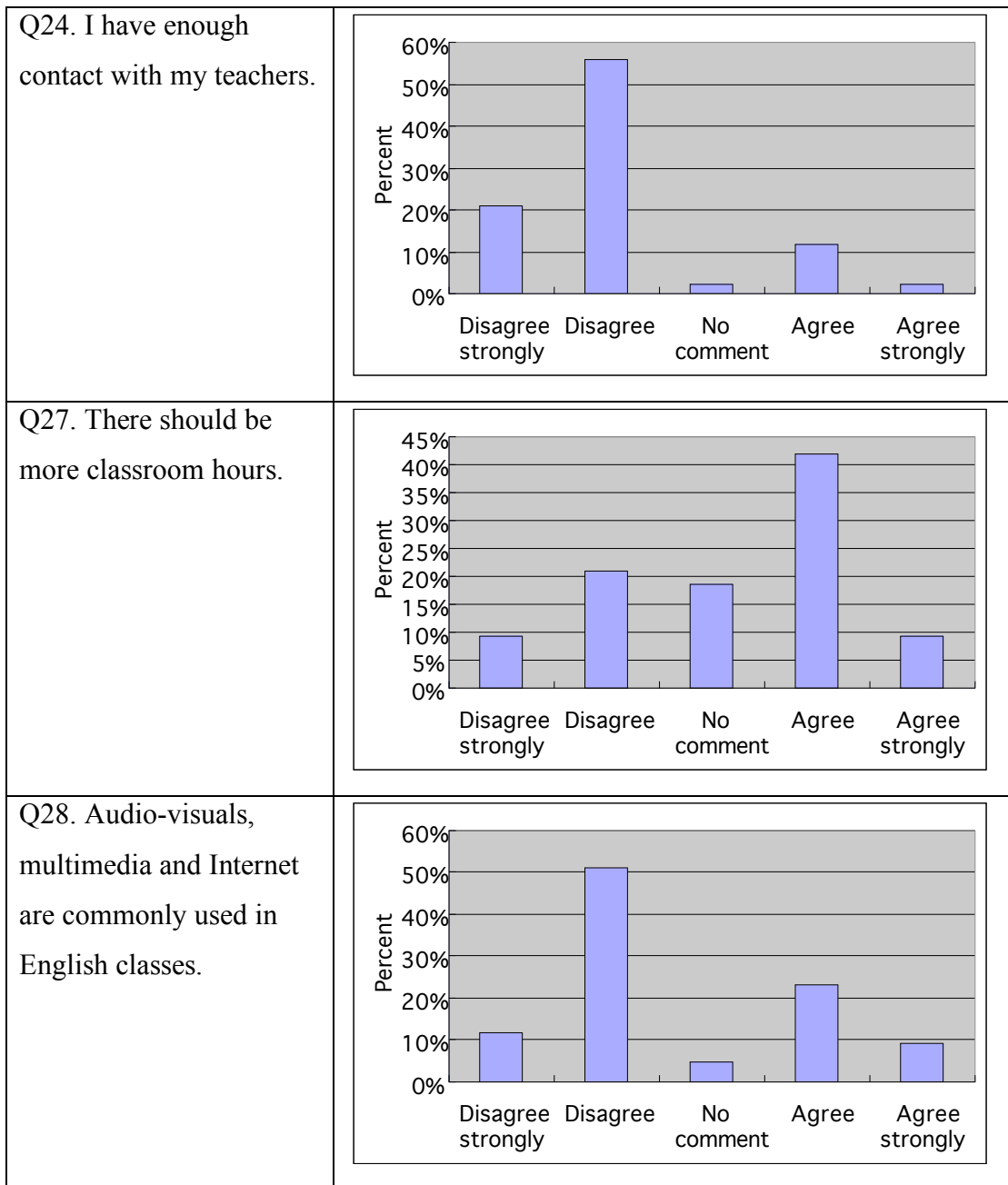
The focus is to explore the problems in CE curriculum implementation. That directly leads to a discussion on the necessity to change. The analysis will be directed at the educational resources, text-centred and test-driven teaching and learning and communicative competence issues. Survey questions included were designed to investigate these factors that lead to the criticisms regarding the 1999 Curriculum. Related issues were mainly integrated in the second section of the survey questionnaire: Part II English Language Teaching in Chinese universities (See Appendix III). The results of the questionnaire are presented thematically in this chapter. The themes to be explored center around all the criticisms and sequential number of the survey questions corresponding to these issues in following sections are listed as follows:

- Educational resources concerns: 22, 24, 27, 28, 39, 40, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49
- Text-centred teaching and learning: 21, 22,
- Test-driven system: 23, 35, 36, 37, 38
- Neglected communicative competence: 25, 26, 31, 32
- The need for change to suit the need of the WTO era: 18, 19, 20, 29, 41

### **6.1 Concerns Regarding Inadequate Educational Resources**

The result of the survey questions regarding the educational resources issues in College English as viewed by college students are presented below.

Figure 6.1 – Concerns Regarding Inadequate Educational Resources



<p>Q39. I have adequate access to English learning resources.</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disagree strongly</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>75%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No comment</td> <td>8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree</td> <td>5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree strongly</td> <td>8%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Percent	Disagree strongly	10%	Disagree	75%	No comment	8%	Agree	5%	Agree strongly	8%
Response	Percent												
Disagree strongly	10%												
Disagree	75%												
No comment	8%												
Agree	5%												
Agree strongly	8%												
<p>Q40. I like the idea of learning English through multimedia.</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disagree strongly</td> <td>3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No comment</td> <td>8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree</td> <td>62%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree strongly</td> <td>22%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Percent	Disagree strongly	3%	Disagree	10%	No comment	8%	Agree	62%	Agree strongly	22%
Response	Percent												
Disagree strongly	3%												
Disagree	10%												
No comment	8%												
Agree	62%												
Agree strongly	22%												
<p>Q44. We have good language teaching facilities in our university.</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disagree strongly</td> <td>19%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>45%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No comment</td> <td>12%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree</td> <td>22%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree strongly</td> <td>5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Percent	Disagree strongly	19%	Disagree	45%	No comment	12%	Agree	22%	Agree strongly	5%
Response	Percent												
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Agree	22%												
Agree strongly	5%												
<p>Q49. There should be smaller English class size at college.</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disagree strongly</td> <td>7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>18%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No comment</td> <td>18%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree</td> <td>45%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree strongly</td> <td>35%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Percent	Disagree strongly	7%	Disagree	18%	No comment	18%	Agree	45%	Agree strongly	35%
Response	Percent												
Disagree strongly	7%												
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Agree strongly	35%												

Figure 6.1 indicates that the participants held very strong views regarding the teaching and learning resources available. A majority of the participants indicated having inadequate access to English learning resources and 63 per cent of the participants believed that their universities failed to provide satisfactory language teaching facilities. What is more, 63 per cent of them believed that audio-visuals, multimedia and Internet were not commonly used in English classes while 81 per cent of them expressed their intense interest and need in learning English through high-tech facilities like multimedia. This need accords with what Paulsen (2001) and Wu (2003) suggested (see Chapter Two). In order to take advantage of the new possibilities that ICT has created for teaching and learning, universities should utilize technological innovations to enhance teaching and learning practices. Students should have ready access to computer technology so that they are able to use English as a tool to conduct meaningful tasks in an ICT-based environment.

In recent years the expansion of higher education in China has led to the clash between increasing enrolment of college students and limited teaching resources. Current statistics indicate that China has 20 million college students but only 60,000 English teachers, with a teacher-student ratio of 1 to 300, an increase by more than 200 per cent from that in 2000, which was 1 to 130 (source: [www.edu.cn](http://www.edu.cn), access date: 10/10/2005). An investigation of 340 Chinese universities by the MOE showed that the number of schools giving one English lesson with fewer than 40 students attending only accounts for 37 per cent, while 20 schools still have English classes with more than 80 students each. Most teachers who give English lessons are required to teach 16 to 20 class hours on average every week, leaving them no time to improve their teaching methods, or to do action research (People's Daily, 2004). As a result, there is a general lack of teaching staff and other teaching facilities including classrooms. Most English teachers have to motivate and engage more than 60 students in their classes. This makes it very different for a CE teacher to take good care of each student in the class because of the large class size.

**P13** *Class hours for English is not enough and should be increased. There should be more oral classes...*

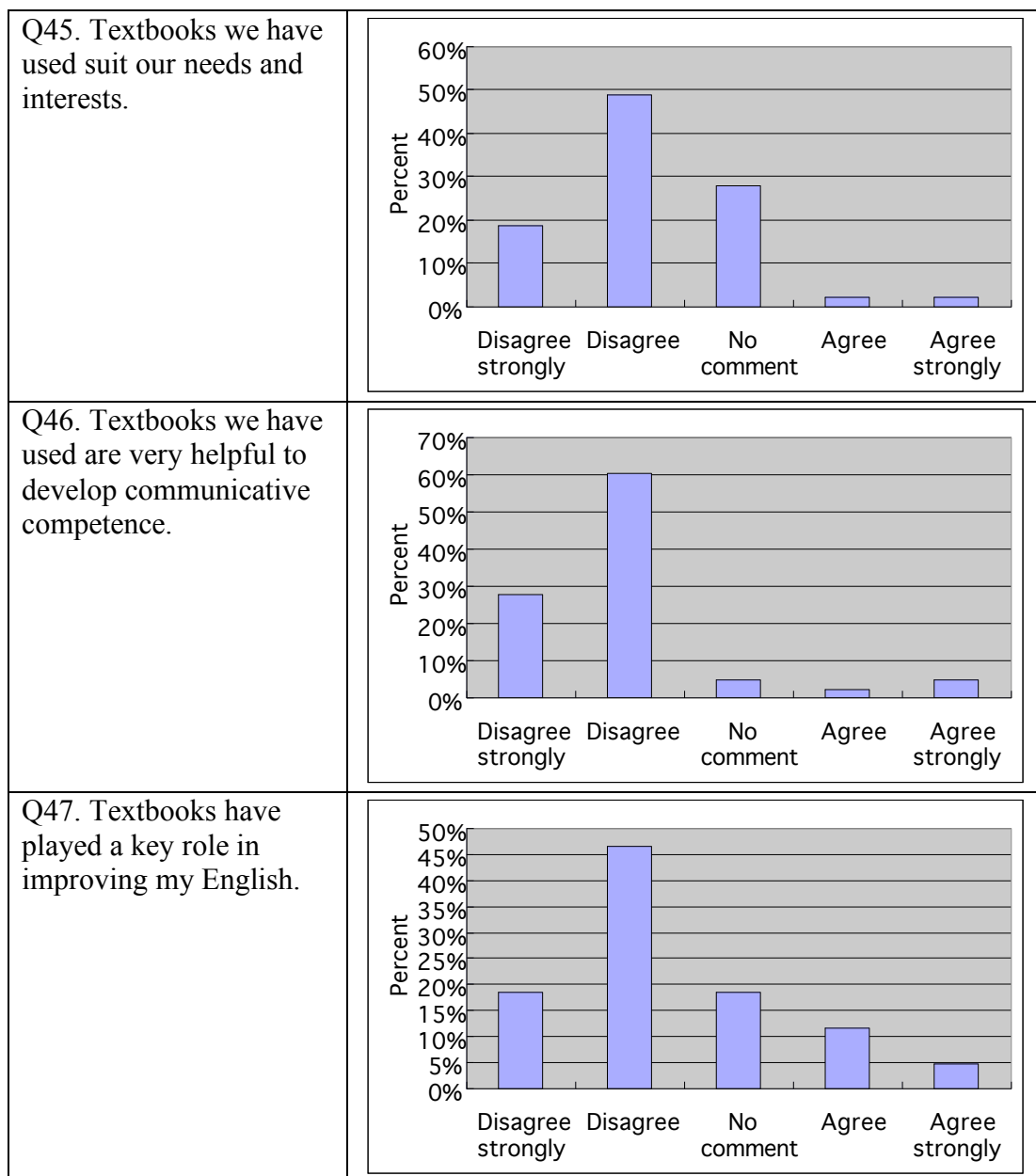
It was also the expectation of the students that better facilities should be available so that the quality of teaching and learning could be improved. Another concern from the students is about the student-teacher contact. According to the result of Q24 in Figure 6.1, the part of students who were satisfied with the situation of student-teacher contact was strikingly as low as 14 per cent, which meant they needed more face-to-face instruction from their teachers. This is also evidenced by the above comment and the result of the Question 27 in Figure 6.2 regarding classroom contact hours as 51 per cent of them asked for more. Many students spent much of their after-class study time on English in addition to the four weekly contact hours required for English courses.

This also relates to the size of the CE class. As the result of Q49 in Figure 6.1 indicated, most of the participants preferred smaller classes so that they could have more chances to interact with the teachers. However, as a result of the expansion of higher education, this became more and more unlikely in most universities and colleges in China. The trend is bigger CE classes for reading and listening classes. According to Weber's notion of market economy, distribution of property, resources, and life chances leads to conflicts (Joseph, 2004, pp. 194-207). The issue of large size CE classes is obviously linked to the higher expansion fad.



## 6.2 Uncommunicative Teaching Materials

Figure 6.2 – Uncommunicative Teaching Materials



From Figure 6.2, it can be seen that the participants reacted negatively to the CE textbooks they used. The result of Q45 indicated that very few students agreed that these textbooks suited their needs and interests while 88 per cent of the participants expressed their disappointment with the textbooks as they failed to provide the due assistance for the students to improve their communicative competence in English at either a specific or general level.

The following interview scripts are further comments of participants regarding the CE textbooks.

**P8** *The bondage of textbooks should be done away with.*

**P12** *Textbooks are boring. Teaching is dull and content is outdated.*

**P24** *We should bring in advanced facilities to make the English class colourful.*

**P42** *Textbooks we have used don't suit our needs and interests. We need some helpful textbooks to develop communicative competence.*

The above comments reveal that there existed intense dissatisfaction towards the textbooks used and students expressed their desire to be freed from the oppression of the current textbooks in their traditional format, which was 'boring', 'outdated', not 'colourful', not 'helpful' as indicated in the above comments. There were four types of widely used CE textbooks from four major Chinese publishers when this study was conducted, which were in nature of the same format.

Explanation might be found in four sequential conditions that must be met for a learner to be motivated to learn (Keller, cited in Driscoll, 1993, p. 312): attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (ARCS). Dull classroom instruction is least likely to attract sufficient attention. Large class size means less attention from the teacher to individual students. Outdated contents mean less relevance. All these wear away the confidence of the teacher in providing good teaching as well as that of the students to reach their goals. The abovementioned conditions make it difficult to keep the learner interested in the topics in class.

**P13** *Our English level could be much improved if foreign teachers could be available for classroom teaching... There should be more oral classes and the textbooks should include wider topics in broader areas.*

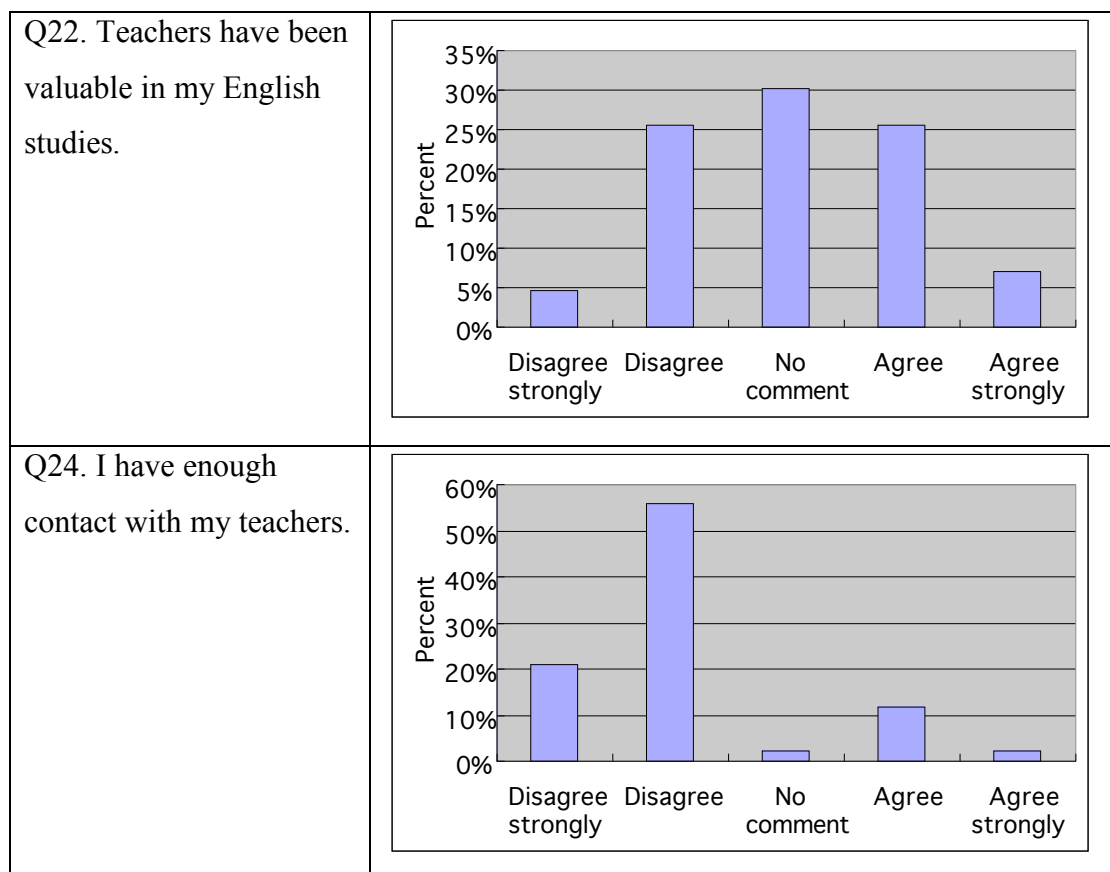
**P39** *Regarding ELT ...teaching approaches should be more varied, with multi-media access and more interactions between foreign students.*

It seemed that the students considered communicative competence development an important component of CE textbooks and the ones available for their use failed to satisfy their needs.

### 6.3 Divergence on Teachers and Teaching

The survey result of participants' view on CE teachers and teaching is displayed in the following figure.

Figure 6.3 – Divergence on Teachers and Teaching



Teachers and teaching, a significant part of the pedagogical trinity, was one of the major concerns of the students. The symmetrical distribution of Q22 in Figure 6.3

indicated that the students' views on the value of their English teachers varied significantly. This reveals a conflict between students' increasing expectations of their teachers in contrast with a relative lowering of teachers' comprehensive abilities. At a time when college students are more eager to learn English than ever, the teaching profession is not only decreasing in size, but in quality as well. The following accounts for the decline. Firstly, English major graduates constitute the main, if not the only source of college English teachers. As China opens wider to the outside world, they have a wider range of job and further education possibilities beyond teaching. The best English major graduates are attracted to the more exciting and more lucrative career opportunities from English-speaking graduate schools, multinational corporations, banks and the mass media industry, to name just a few prospects. In comparison, university teaching seems dull and is under-rewarded. It is common to find in most universities teachers who have no study or living experience in any English speaking countries. Their lack of access to regular and systematic professional development opportunities is another disadvantage. Consequently, it is very difficult for English teachers to upgrade their knowledge and skills in English and teaching so that they could be in a better position to meet the expectations of the students (Xiao, 2004).

***P16** We have less contact with our teachers than ever before. If we have any questions, it's impossible to turn to the teachers for help. We don't know where they are and how to contact with them.*

On the other hand, as the above complaint indicated, the students were aware of the importance of establishing contact with their teachers. However, the survey result of Q24 revealed that 76 per cent of the participants did not manage to develop regular touch with their teachers to take advantage of the most important part of teaching resources. This high percentage is not unusual if we consider that more than 60 per cent of the participants gave no positive answer for Q22 regarding the value of their English teachers in their learning.

In this case, it is not surprising to find out that many students believed that learning English with native speakers of English was very important and availability of foreign teacher and international students would help in this regard. The following

scripts also revealed students' belief in the importance of having native speaking teachers.

*P36 There should be more investment on foreign teacher in English teaching.*

*P29 Our University should try to add some foreign teachers to grant the students of all majors equal opportunities to communicate with native English speakers.*

*P7 There should be more foreign teachers and we should cultivate the atmosphere for English learning.*

*P3 There are not enough teachers and their competence is also a problem.*

This kind of appeal from the students indicated the students' lack of confidence in their Chinese English teachers. The quality and quantity of CE teachers remains an issue of concern. Many people doubted that, without any actual immersion in, or exposure to, the L2 culture, a L2 EFL learner could not be a competent L2 EFL teacher, which is the norm nowadays in China. On the one hand, there is acute shortage of CE teachers, on the other hand, students, some based on their disappointing experience with their Chinese CE teachers, seek to get help from native English speaking teachers. At the same time, students voiced their perception regarding the role of a CE teacher: to show the way to good mastery of English; to allow more access and after-class contact for students; to set higher academic standards for students and be more tolerant of their poor performance and behaviour in class; to offer more chances for student to use English in class.

China reportedly recruits approximately 100,000 native English teachers each year ([www.chinatefl.com](http://www.chinatefl.com)). However, this stock of international teaching resources seems inadequate to satisfy the needs of every student. It should be pointed out that merely hiring a few foreign experts to visit with the students a couple of hours a week does not constitute the creation of a friendly English acquisition environment when all of

the other daily input is Chinese. Students should have free library access to diverse English reading materials (books for all ages and language development stages including comic books, magazines, newspapers, novels, journals, classics, as opposed to English textbooks) since comprehensible input will be different for each student based upon their stage of English language development and learning speed differentials. They should also have free access to English music, movies, and television (e.g. CCTV-9, the only English channel in China). Free access in this sense means freedom to choose interesting and understandable materials, which are referred to as comprehensible input, freedom to decide when to access the materials and freedom from the stress of doing assignments in preparation for a test, which partly constitutes the friendly environment significant for students.

**P29** *English teachers should be stricter with students.*

Teachers' class management was also raised as an issue of concern. By expecting teachers to be 'stricter', students wanted their teachers to be a disciplinary force that would make them better engaged in the learning tasks that could be of enormous intensity and pressure. In Chinese universities class attendance is always an issue for both teachers and students. As attendance is not necessarily included in the grading system, unmotivated students would attend the first class of a semester to make certain they are on the roll, and then disappear until the final examination or some would take but only a small part of the classes. For teachers, big class size, besides the lack of regulatory support, is another factor that prevents them from making effective class management. As a result, many teachers chose to ignore this part of their responsibilities.

**P10** *College English should attach importance to letting students learn English voluntarily. What teachers should do in class is teach the ways to learn the language and the related background knowledge.*

The teacher was no longer seen as the sole provider of knowledge. Increasingly the students did not assimilate their teacher's instruction dutifully, nor were they working to work their way laboriously through the lines of their reading textbook.

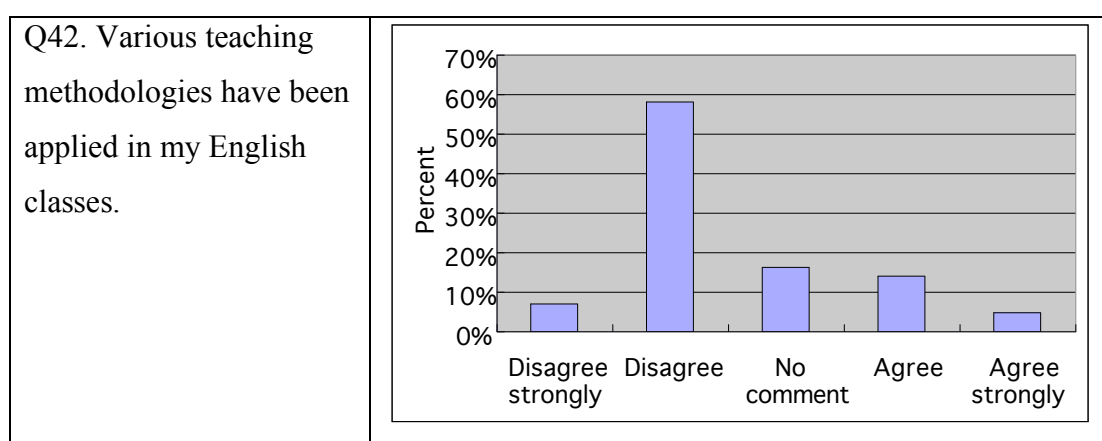
The following report of the College English education in Dalian Maritime University, based on site observation and documentary recording, might serve as a showcase of the situation in Chinese universities.

About 65 teachers of English were teaching College English and English for Special Purpose to the undergraduates, postgraduate students as well as the part-time students in Dalian Maritime University, which is located in Dalian, Liaoning Province, and a state key comprehensive university in MOE 'Project 211' with 15,000 students in total and 1,400 staff members. The profiles of the teachers were basically the same: aged between twenty-four and forty-eight; English graduates or postgraduates from universities of foreign languages or English departments in comprehensive universities or normal universities; 80 per cent are MA Linguistics or MA English Language and Literature degree holders. Thanks to their different educational background and their diverse concepts and perspectives on language learning and teaching, it is understandable that most of them conduct their classroom teaching in the way they were taught.

As with other universities in China, it was taken for granted in the past within this university that English majors had the ability to teach English without further professional development since it was considered that "anybody who learns some English can teach the language, regardless of whether or not they know anything about teaching and learning" (Thorne and Wang, 1996). Many teachers started their teaching career upon their graduation with a BA. During their teaching careers, about 80 per cent of these teachers received retraining by applying for MA programs and studying for MA degrees. Some of them (about ten per cent) were granted opportunities to study abroad in English-speaking countries as visiting academics. However, there were a number of teachers (ten per cent) who never had the experience of professional development of any forms. The heavy workload and the financial problems that undertaking further education may involve constitute the main hindrance. Every teacher has to teach at least three classes of 35 students each week (four hours a week per class). Nowadays shortage of English teachers results in that many teachers are busily engaged in teaching tasks, not only in the university, but also in schools. Therefore professional development for up-to-date linguistic and pedagogical expertise remained a serious problem for the teachers in this university.

To make it worse, College English teachers were not assessed directly by their teaching performance, but by so-called ‘academic achievement’, that is, the papers and books they write and publish. This means-and-end-upside-down practice has a negative effect on college English teaching. In short, the text-test driven system, in conjunction with the publication-oriented teacher evaluation system, accounts for the complaint that colleges and universities have few incentives for good teaching.

Figure 6.4 – Variety in Teaching Methodologies



Regarding College English teaching, as Figure 6.4 indicated, more than 60 per cent of the participants believed that the College English teachers failed to apply different methodologies in their courses. This monotony directly led to their dissatisfaction, if not hatred, with the “chalk and talk” methodology, the current textbooks and other available resources. It was their common demand that textbooks be revised to include more practical components by adding more cultural contents, attaching more importance to communicative skills to guide students’ interest in developing their English skills. More multimedia-based content needs to be available for students as part of the reform of teaching approaches.

To sum up, the expansion of higher education as a result of globalisation has led a general lack of educational resources in staff, facilities, teaching materials etc. to meet the need of CE education. The next section examines how the teaching and learning process was affected as a result.



## 6.4 Text-Centred Teaching and Learning

To investigate College English teaching models, the researcher observed five College English classes in Dalian Maritime University from April 2003 to December 2004. The classes shared the following characteristics: the class size ranges from 30 to 60 students; classrooms for reading class contain basically the same facilities: desks, chairs and blackboard while the classrooms for listening are language laboratories and some of those for speaking are equipped with multi-media systems; the total class hours allotted to College English is four hours per week, including two hours for listening every other week; a textbook was used, though of different versions from different publishers in China. Recordings and notes made in the process of observation were reorganised into individual classes labelled A, B, C, D, and E as follows.

*Class A:* The teacher started the lecture by explaining the new words listed at the back of the reading passage. Then she went on to explain the difficult points in the passage. She did most of the talking in the lecture and students were given the opportunity to read some part of the text and answer questions regarding the meaning of phrases and expressions. The teacher sometimes used Chinese (mandarin) to assist communication. Students usually made their answers in Chinese.

This excerpt indicated that teaching in CE course is text centred, with students more often than not at the receiving end. Teachers explain the text and go through the key words and phrases suggested by the textbook writers. The teaching of vocabulary-level contents takes up the most of the class hours, as vocabulary and grammar are an important part in CET. The learners learn the language through working with the texts and the exercises regarding reading comprehension, grammar, translation and writing.

*Class B:* The teacher went around the class in the reading lessons, asking individual student to read aloud in turn. The teacher interrupted from time to time to check their pronunciation as well as comprehension. When reading aloud, the students often feel tense or nervous. The students were often asked

to make new sentences using the given words or phrases in the text.

Translation or interpreting of individual sentences was also conducted from time to time.

It was common in CE classes that teachers spent a substantial amount of time dealing with words and expressions. Even in reading class, analysis and explanation at the discourse level was often neglected, as it was not stressed in the textbooks or the tests. Advocates of this approach hold that teachers can bring to the students' attention the conceptual differences between English and Chinese; and translation in the classroom is both economic and effective in explaining a concept.

***Class C:*** When the teacher gave the students a text from the textbook to read, she first asked them to read it once very quickly for the main ideas. After that, she went through the whole passage again by focusing on words and expressions, and then one or two of the students were asked to tell in their own words their understandings in English or in Chinese. Next, she asked them to answer more questions and then do some English to Chinese translation to check understanding of the text.

One disadvantage of this text-test based strategy for teaching and learning is that: it does not create opportunities for the practice and application of what is taught. The best possible opportunity for students in this regard might be the reading-aloud. To make it worse, students tended to believe that English could be learned by reciting the CET vocabulary included in the textbooks. As a result, almost every student had a CET vocabulary brochure.

***Class D:*** When the teacher taught reading, she asked the students to read the text aloud, one paragraph by one paragraph. Then she went over any unfamiliar vocabulary and difficult expressions, mostly by paraphrasing in English, and sometimes by giving them the equivalent words or expressions in Chinese. Then a couple of basic questions were asked to check students' comprehension of the main ideas. After that, students work in pairs to answer comprehension questions attached to the reading text.

Reading has always been seen as a source of considerable pleasure and satisfaction. Reading for the sake of reading should always be the guiding principle for teaching and learning reading. This is important, but perhaps has been neglected in the pursuit of test results that will improve their position under a statistics-based system. Higher CET passing rate was once a goal for many College English teachers as there was close relevance with promotion, bonus and others.

A learner-centered classroom should be one in which learners are actively involved in their own learning processes. Firstly, learners can be involved in making decisions about what to learn, how to learn, and how to be evaluated. However, considering the possibility that most learners do not possess sufficient knowledge or experience to make such decisions, it is still the professional responsibility of the teacher to make these decisions about what to learn, how to learn, and how to be evaluated. Secondly, the class time should be maximized so that learners, rather than the teacher do the work (Littlewood, 2004, p. 8).

Another important point to make based on the result of this study is that a certain amount of Chinese in CE classes is necessary and beneficial to both teachers and students. Regarding the issue of using the mother tongue in the classroom, according to Auerbach (1993), current SLA theories suggest that use of the L1 reduces anxiety and facilitates incorporation of learners' life experiences and allows for learner-centred curriculum development. Further justifications for mother tongue use are that it can be very time-efficient in certain situations, for example, in the case of Class C when checking of exact text comprehension is needed (Chambers 1992; Atkinson 1993 cited in Hawks 2001).

Also, this complimentary function can serve as a compensation for the possible disadvantages of L1 in L2 teaching and learning contexts. Chinese explanation would also be important for those who have a high reliance on translation from English into the native language in order to understand the rules of English grammar. What is more, for the majority of non-native English speaking teachers, teaching entirely in the target language is not really feasible, for a variety of 'real' and perceived reasons (Chambers, 1992; Phillipson, 1992; Atkinson, 1993; cited in Hawks, 2001). Finally, in many cases, it may not be desirable to teach only in the

target language, since it reinforces existing unequal power balances (Phillipson, 1992).

A large part of the feedback from open-ended interview questions has to do with classroom teaching. Student-centred interactive teaching is strongly desired by the participants. They expect more student involvement as well as teacher-student communication. The following comments, or rather complaints regarding text-test driven teaching from students reflect the situation.

*P12 There is not sufficient teacher-student communication.*

*P5 Hope that teachers would allow more student involvement in class; giving us more chances to answer questions. In this way, we can learn English more effectively.*

*P2 English teacher should make a good circumstance for talking in English, not just on the book. The vital English skill is oral English, not grammar.*

*P21 Classroom teaching should be interactive, giving us students more chances to speak in class...*

More and more students realized that active participation rather than passive attendance and reception would lead to more effective learning. The motivation, interest, desire, psychological comfort, positive emotional relations of the communication partners are the required conditions of successful language learning. There exist a number of trends in modern psychological and pedagogical theory that defines the educational process as mutually mediated activity both of a student and an instructor. The specific problem of modern pedagogical psychology is the problem of a dialogue in teaching or the problem of a pedagogical communication. If the instructor shows that he or she is actively interested in the students as individuals, the learners will respond well, contributing to a good rapport and a productive learning atmosphere. The necessity for individuals to be prepared to work with and support each other is one of the terms the learning could take place. However, this

remains an issue considering the low-level of learner autonomy and rather large class size for CE learners in China. CE learners were too burdened by the fully loaded timetable to have the freedom to practice self-management of time as well as other autonomous learning activities.

**P8** *The main objective of classroom teaching is to mobilize students so that they would take the initiative to learning English by adopting more active approaches.*

This statement might sound out of tune, but a second thought on the status quo of CE with limited class hours and other resources as well as large class sizes, would reveal that it proposed an invaluable solution to current CE problems. What the learners need most is more motivation and guidance than mere lecturing.

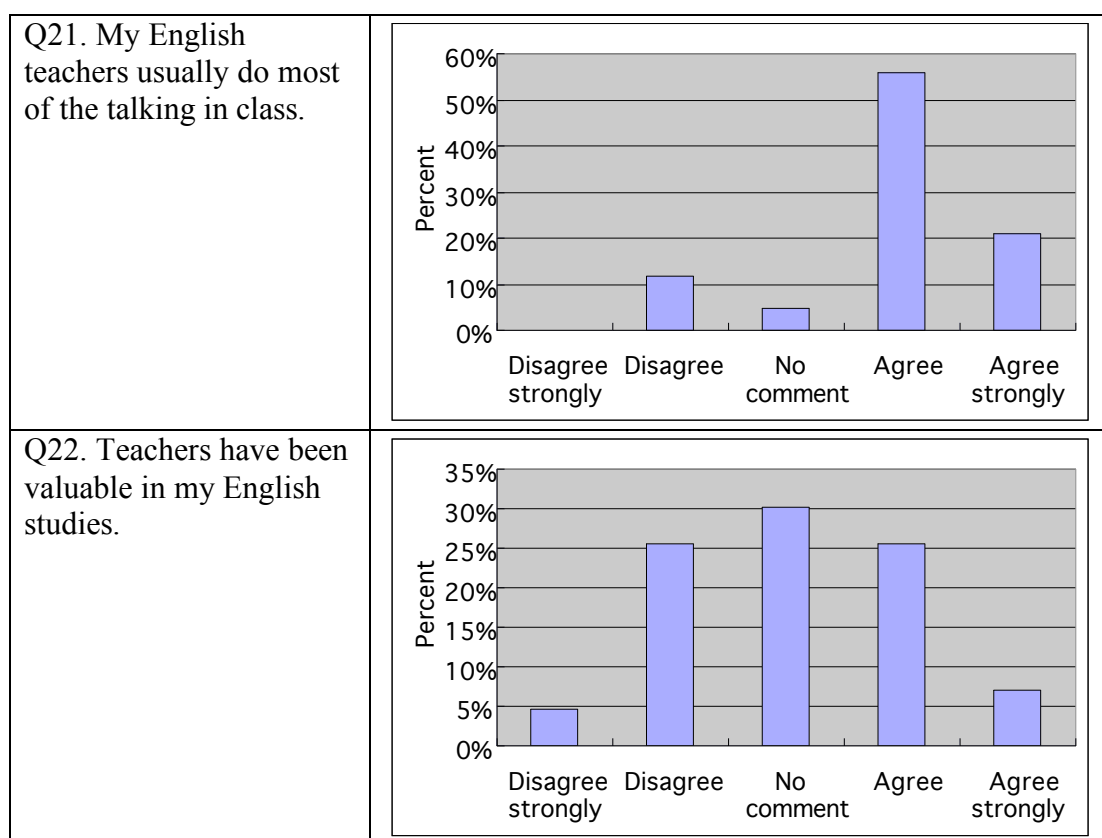
**P10** *The current teaching is nothing but literary translation sentence by sentence, which is ineffective and boring. ELT should be diversified, not limited to conventional classroom instruction, giving more chance for students to put what they learn into practice.*

Clearly, the students were not satisfied with the current traditional grammar-translation oriented classroom instruction. By suggesting more interaction and communication in class, they anticipated to assume a more central role so that they have more say regarding how to put what they have learned into practice. Anyway, it is in the classroom that there is more likelihood for them to secure the partners that are to practise English with. It was also their expectations that teachers would pay attention to the emotional and affective aspects of language learning, which means sharing their own learning experiences and problems, providing sufficient guidance in learning, fostering their motivation and potential for autonomous learning, and enhancing their capacity for independent learning.

**P21** *Classroom teaching should be interactive, giving we students more chances to speak in class; Teaching approaches should be enriched by classic movies, English speeches and performance so that English usefulness could be best represented.*

Some participants complained that they did not always understand the teaching goals through the teacher-centered lectures. The purpose of teaching, as commonly perceived, is to enable students to acquire strong linguistic competence in the shortest possible time. This influences the decision about teaching method. The question in EFL classrooms is not whether a teaching method is good or not, but whether the teacher knows how, for what purpose, for what kind of students, and in what language situation a particular method is used to enhance learning effectively.

Figure 6.5 – Text-Centred Teaching



As indicated in the result of Q21 in the above figure, it is clear that about 80 per cent of the students found themselves in teacher-dominated classrooms. They were discouraged from participation and the social construction of meaning that facilitates language acquisition. This is out of sync with Greene’s concept of democratic classrooms, which emphasized that teachers must learn to listen to student voices as this allows teachers to discover what students are thinking, what concerns them, and what has meaning to them. In addition, the act of listening creates possibilities for

students to introduce multiple perspectives into the classroom, and it encourages students to contribute their social critiques to the classroom dialogue (Xu, 2002, p. 15). Teachers alone are not to blame. Under the current system, teachers are not encouraged to make any changes or to take initiatives. On the contrary, teachers bear the responsibility to use the designated textbooks and follow the methodology required by the curriculum.

Based on the above information, we can conclude that the use of such teaching methodologies as grammar-translation was common in CE classes, though there was not much sign of what Krashen (1987) put forward as typical environment of the grammar-translation approach. This methodology is of little or no use in enhancing a student's communicative ability in the target language but is the preferred teaching methodology because it requires few skills of the teacher and can be objectively evaluated and graded. In certain contexts, the grammar-translation method may prove good for promoting language proficiency among students. However, there is absolutely no support or justification for this teaching methodology in any of the second language acquisition literature.

### **6.5 Test-Driven College English System**

Improper testing systems in English language teaching were also problematic in China. Testing of English language has traditionally taken the form of testing knowledge about the language, usually the testing of knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Since Hymes (1972, p. 7) proposed the concept of 'communicative competence' in the early 1970s, the basic idea of communicative competence remains the key to the ability to use language appropriately, both receptively and productively, in real situations. However, College Entrance Examinations in China require students to be capable users of written English, more than spoken English and listening ability. Therefore, most schools put emphasis on written English and spend little time in training students' listening and speaking ability. Consequently, students getting high marks in English in College Entrance Examinations as well as in CET-4 and CET-6 are not necessarily good English language users. 'Deaf-dumb' English does not suit China's needs in the era of WTO when there is increasing need in global communications and exchanges in all fields and aspects.

**P23** *The problem is English is now used as a tool for various tests rather than a tool for communication. In Hong Kong, children in the kindergartens are speaking English. They are learning the language in the simplest way, by listening and speaking. Look at us in the mainland, even a graduate student cannot speak the language properly or read English newspapers after some 20 years' efforts. Why? It's because we pay too much attention to grammar.*

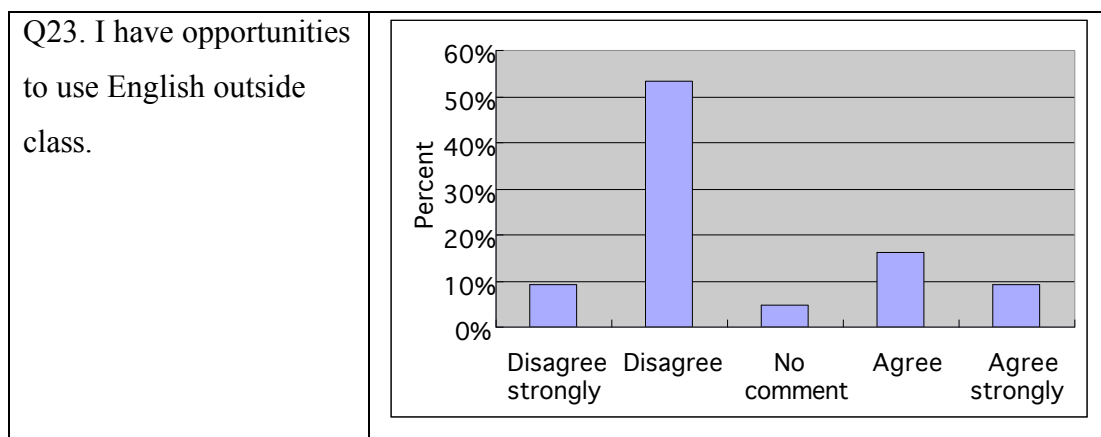
**P41** *Learning English is for communication, not for passing the exams.*

**P35** *In English teaching and learning, we should not be for the test, such as CET-4 or 6. We should be for the communion and know the culture of other countries in the world. We should use English as a tool and should not think it as an aim.*

It can be concluded from the above comments that the students were keenly aware of the problems in the current system. Many students were trained to be subjected to rote, passive teacher-centered, test-driven approaches. As a result, English learning is a chore for some of them, associated with formulaic work like doing multiple choices questions rather than an authentic and lively language that is used as tool to open the door to a new world of possibilities in the process of establishing global communications.



Figure 6.6 – Opportunity to Apply Learning



The students expressed their intense longing for the opportunities to integrate classroom learning into everyday use. As Figure 6.6 shows, learning English as a foreign language in China usually means that learners find themselves removed from the naturalistic English speaking settings. This result confirmed the assumption by Campbell (2004) that there is not adequate exposure to English outside of the classrooms and there is not much opportunity to practice what they learned in class. It is normal that English learners in China return to the real world speaking Chinese (not necessarily Mandarin, but all the dialects) the minute they step outside the classroom. The traditional top-down approaches applied in classroom instruction are confronted with more and more complaints, if not resistance, in Chinese universities.

All the abovementioned problems regarding CE come down to the examination system. As a required course for all non-English major university students, most undergraduates in Chinese universities have to pass the national CET-4 to graduate with a bachelor's degree. The scale of the CET is enormous; two million students take the CET-4 across the country annually, and there were about 5.9 million people sitting for CET-4 and CET-6 on June 19, 2004 alone (<http://gb.cri.cn/11344/2007/03/13/2305@1493738.htm>, access date: 24/03/2007).

The following figure contains the result of the survey regarding participants' views on the College English Test.

Figure 6.7 – Testing Focussed Teaching

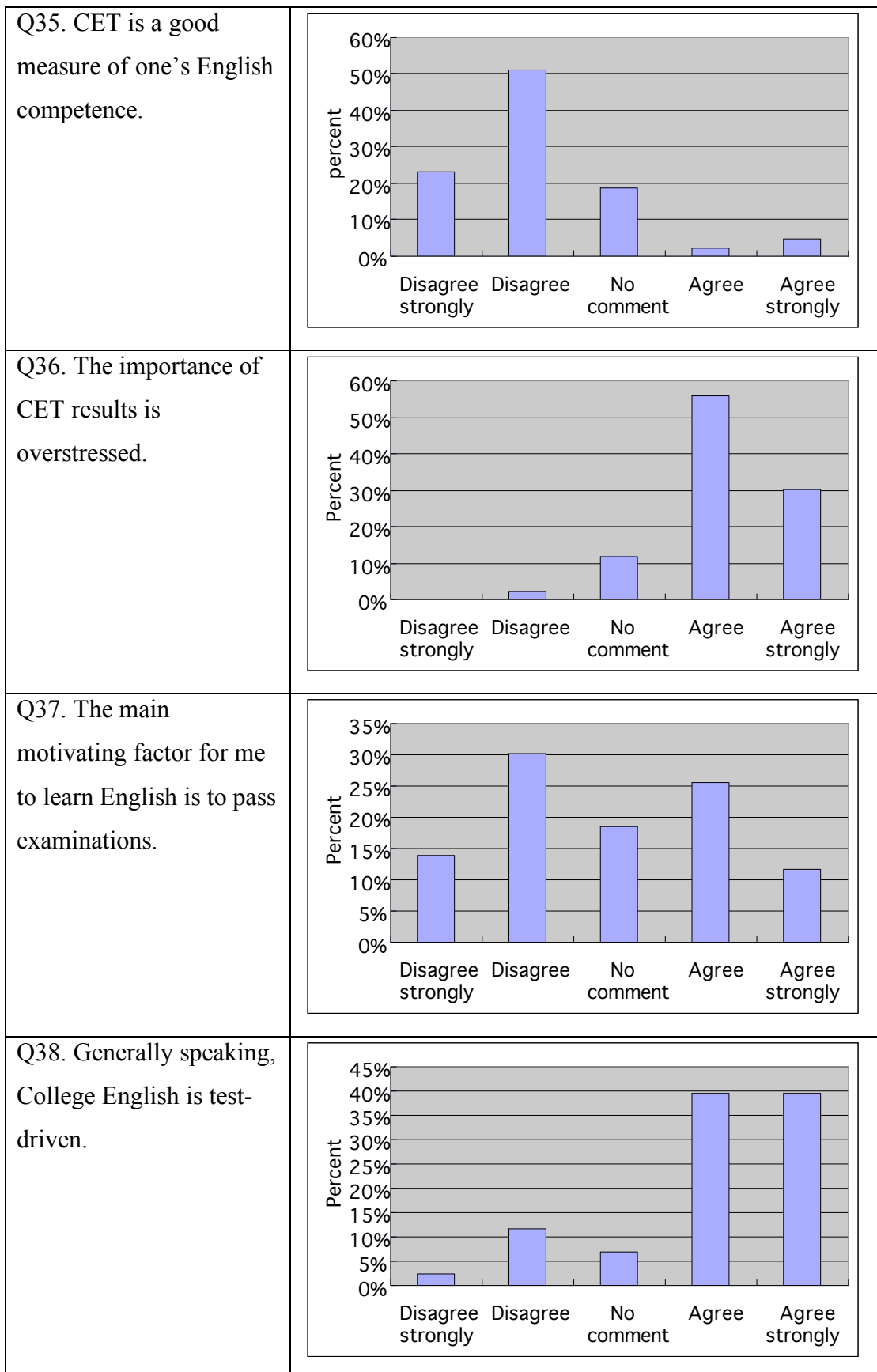


Figure 6.7 indicated that students varied in their perception of what motivated them to learn English. 19 participants (44 per cent of the total) believed that they did not learn English for the sake of passing examinations like CET while 37 per cent of the participants considered passing examinations their drive to study English (see Q37). This is in close association with the result that 80 per cent of the participants agreed that the present College English is test-oriented (see Q38). It is fortunate that only such a small portion of the students chose to comply with the test-driven system. Examinations were imposed on the learners by the educational system. Students had no choice but to follow and work hard for the examinations as these examinations. They understood that outstanding achievements provide them with a means of competition to move upward in the educational hierarchy so as to reach higher in the social hierarchy.

However, result of Q35 in the above figure revealed that very few learners intended to use these examinations as authoritative and official standards to mark the learning objectives they attempted to reach and to define the English language proficiency they managed to achieve. On the contrary, a majority of 74 per cent of the participants indicated that CET did not measure the actual English language competence and what they learnt in CE courses failed to meet their expectations. Inadequate measurement of students' listening and speaking ability ultimately prevents students from developing English skills and abilities for communication. However, there was a high percentage of participants, namely, 86 per cent, claimed that too much importance was attached to the result of CETs. As revealed in Chapter Three, CET-4 certificate is a prerequisite for bachelor's degree and CET certificate holders are better employed in the job market. The following comments made by the participants provide more evidence of the test-driven system.

*P42 Our College English is test-driven.*

*P12 It is a test-driven system with too much emphasis on CET-4 and CET-6 examinations. There's not enough attention to developing students' competence, their listening and speaking, especially speaking.*

Many participants indicated that the test-driven CE system should be responsible for inadequate development of students' practical competence of the English language. CET-4 and CET-6 certificates are even more useful in getting a job than the scores in their majored courses. Students were driven to pursue this kind of token certification rather than to enhance their communication competence in general and their English skills in specific. A great portion of college students spent most of their time allotted to English learning trying to pass CET-4 or CET-6 instead of improving their actual competence in using English in real life. The following excerpt revealed some of the drawbacks of the system.

***P39** Regarding ELT, our school still takes test-oriented attitude. It gives no impetus to English learning as it values the final scores too much. This score-referenced criterion is a big blow to the initiatives of students.*

***P40** Please allow me to write in Chinese here. I have no doubt in the competence and capability of English teachers. However, our English learning is much hindered by the educational system, in particular the examination system. As a result, it becomes very difficult for us to develop good listening and speaking abilities as well as other communicative competence.*

The above comment by Participant 40 indicated that he was obviously not among the ten per cent of successful EFL learners in China. The disadvantaged students under the Chinese ELT system were keenly aware of the cause of the 'deaf-dumb' English. They believed that the examinations they had to pass should take the blame. Therefore, a more acceptable attitude towards CE and CET can be: teaching takes the first place, for which the test serves.

The following excerpt is part of the result of classroom observation of a listening class in Dalian Maritime University.

***Class E:** This is a typical listening class in a language lab. The teacher kept sitting at the control and played the cassette tape recordings for students to*

listen to. Students did exercises (mostly multiple choices and blank fillings on their textbooks). After that, some students were asked to give their answers and the teacher made necessary corrections and comments.

Through observations, it was found that the instructional context or culture of instruction that permeated nearly every classroom was the teacher-directed instructional model where teachers actively lead and control all of the activities in the classroom, while students are always at the receiving end with almost no participation in the whole process. This model denotes the typical one-way teacher-student communication happening in most CE listening classes. Instructional activities such as small group work and independent work were seldom observed. Furthermore, we found that the intellectual level of the curriculum was low and that the culture of the classroom focused on “getting the teaching content done within time limits” rather than on more authentic or culturally relevant learning situations. The curriculum focused on low levels of learning, and there was an emphasis on “drill and repetition” in order to prepare students to answer questions on the tests. The forms of the exercises in the textbooks are strictly in consistence with the CET test items. The objective of this type of teaching and learning is obviously to prepare students for CETs.

**P40** *English was just one of the required courses like math, physics, history... English classes were boring, surrounded by endless exams, I kept learning blindly and aimlessly.... What have I learned? Well, I've known 4000 or so words and passed tons of English tests smoothly, and that's all. I couldn't speak, I didn't understand people's conversation or movies in English, and I had a hard time reading English newspaper or books.*

**P43** *I found that it was boring to listen to the teacher in class and I started learning English in my own way gradually... I worked a lot on mock tests to pass CET-4.*

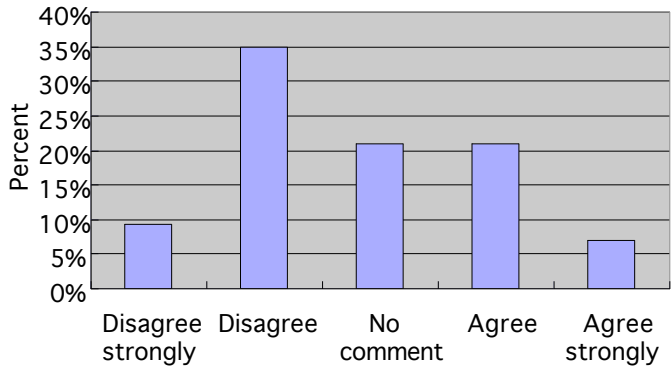
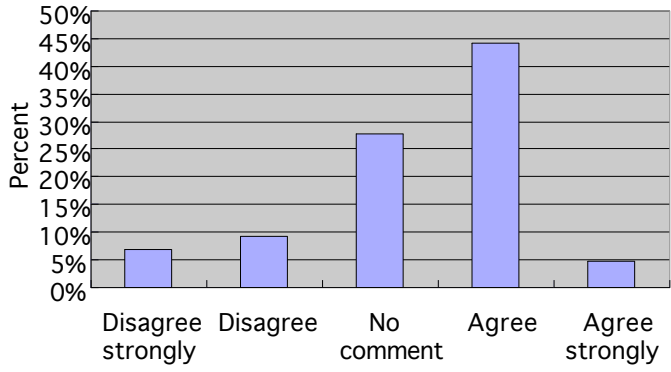
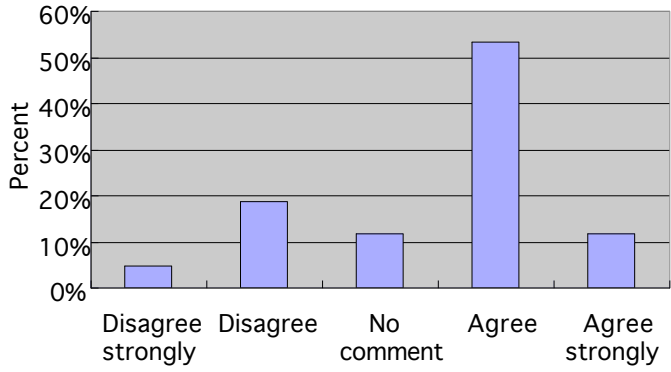
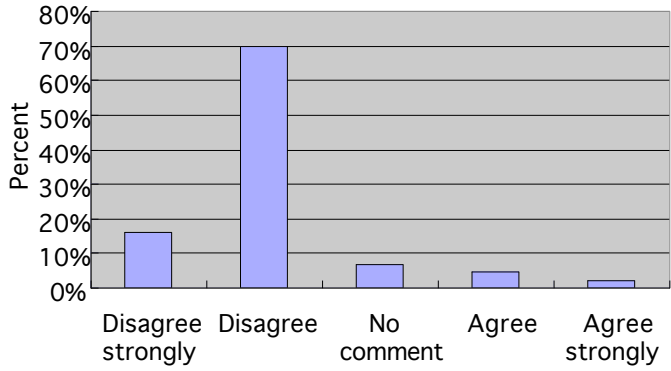
The above statements represent a reflection of the current mentality of the College English learners towards English teaching and learning as they better recognize the

significance of acquiring communicative competence for them to gain fair chance in the competitions in the ever-globalising economy. Too much emphasis on tests naturally leads to defocus of ELT in China, which is the issue to be discussed in the next section.

### **6.6 Communicative Competence: A Priority Neglected**

The survey result of participants' view on communicative competence teaching is displayed in the following figure.

Figure 6.8 – Communicative Competence

<p>Q25. I have good chance to speak in class.</p>	 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disagree strongly</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>35%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No comment</td> <td>22%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree</td> <td>22%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree strongly</td> <td>8%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Percent	Disagree strongly	10%	Disagree	35%	No comment	22%	Agree	22%	Agree strongly	8%
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<p>Q26. I have learned more knowledge than communication skills in English.</p>	 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disagree strongly</td> <td>8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No comment</td> <td>29%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree</td> <td>45%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree strongly</td> <td>6%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Percent	Disagree strongly	8%	Disagree	10%	No comment	29%	Agree	45%	Agree strongly	6%
Response	Percent												
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<p>Q31. I'm more confident with my reading than listening and speaking.</p>	 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disagree strongly</td> <td>6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No comment</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree</td> <td>54%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree strongly</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Percent	Disagree strongly	6%	Disagree	20%	No comment	13%	Agree	54%	Agree strongly	13%
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<p>Q32. I have had good training of productive skills like LISTENING, SPEAKING and WRITING.</p>	 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disagree strongly</td> <td>18%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>70%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No comment</td> <td>8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree</td> <td>6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree strongly</td> <td>3%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Percent	Disagree strongly	18%	Disagree	70%	No comment	8%	Agree	6%	Agree strongly	3%
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Cameron (2002, pp. 71-73) found that employers cited oral communication ability as the most important soft skill, even more important than the specialist subject knowledge new recruits bring with them from education. However, it was perceived to be sorely lacking in recruits coming straight from further or higher education. For those who aspire to work in multinational corporations, many jobs in exports and imports, tourism, leisure and hospitality require English competence. The students were aware of this demand of communication skills and were worried about the lack of training in this regard. As shown in the result of Q18 in Figure 6.9, 62 per cent of the participants indicated their awareness of the need of higher English competence in response to China's WTO membership and nobody made any objection to the judgement that productive English skills are better required in this case. Unfortunately, focus on reading rather than on these productive skills in the national curriculum becomes a hindrance that stops students from achieving their objectives.

The following excerpts from interview transcripts provide evidence for the common feedback of students towards the current situation of College English. The strong voices from many students indicated the problem in College English: there was simply no importance attached to the training of productive skills.

**P2** *In the English education system of our school, oral-English class is not enough. Many students want to study English without "do-it-for-exam". They want to talk more for not only practicing oral-English, but also strengthening what have been learnt in class.*

**P6** *There should be more emphasis on the actual use of English and more opportunities and better environment for students to do listening and speaking.*

**P9** *Priority should be given to students' listening and speaking abilities and their ability to use English to express themselves.*

**P12** *There's not enough attention to developing students' competence, their listening and speaking, especially speaking.*



The survey result of Q32 in Figure 6.8 revealed that as many as 85 per cent of the participants believed that they received poor training of productive skills like listening, speaking and writing. This result is not unexpected considering that College English lessons focused on Intensive Reading, which occupied three-fourth of the total class hours allotted to College English. Listening, in strange isolation with speaking, or any other macro skills, took up the remaining one fourth. This scenario results in the possibility that a graduate has well-documented English language competence in terms of standard CET scores, but is unable to perform the everyday communication in the language that they were certificated to be proficient. The current CE education practice is different from Harmer's (2001, pp. 84-86) notion that 'what to teach' aspect of CLT places the priority on language functions rather than focusing on vocabulary and grammar. Listening and speaking, perhaps the more important functions of human communication are secondary, if not totally neglected, in CE education. As is known, the aim of the Communicative Approach is for instructors to engage learner in communication so that communicative competence is developed. The basic assumption is that by actively communicating in English, learners develop their communicative skills, strategies and knowledge of the language itself.

Grammar-translation method in combination with the Audiolingual Method has been dominant in China for years. This method upholds that language learning is deductive process-rules first, examples later. The learner needs the skill of translating in writing from mother language to target language and vice versa. The class is mainly in form of teacher-to-student instruction. And the teacher is considered as all-knowing and ever-correct authority. In English classes it is typical for the teacher to take up the entire teaching hours, explaining usually in the native language the rules of grammar at great length. Little or no attention is paid to oral communication. Students feel they do not have enough two-way communication with their teachers, so the student-teacher contact is emotionally distant.

**P14** *Listening and speaking should be enhanced and class hours for English be increased.*

**P22** *More listening, more speaking, more exposure.*

*P27 ELT should give further priority on listening and speaking competence.... This would be where we can benefit.*

*P41 Learning English is for communication, not for passing the exam.*

*P42 We need some helpful textbooks to develop communicative competence.*

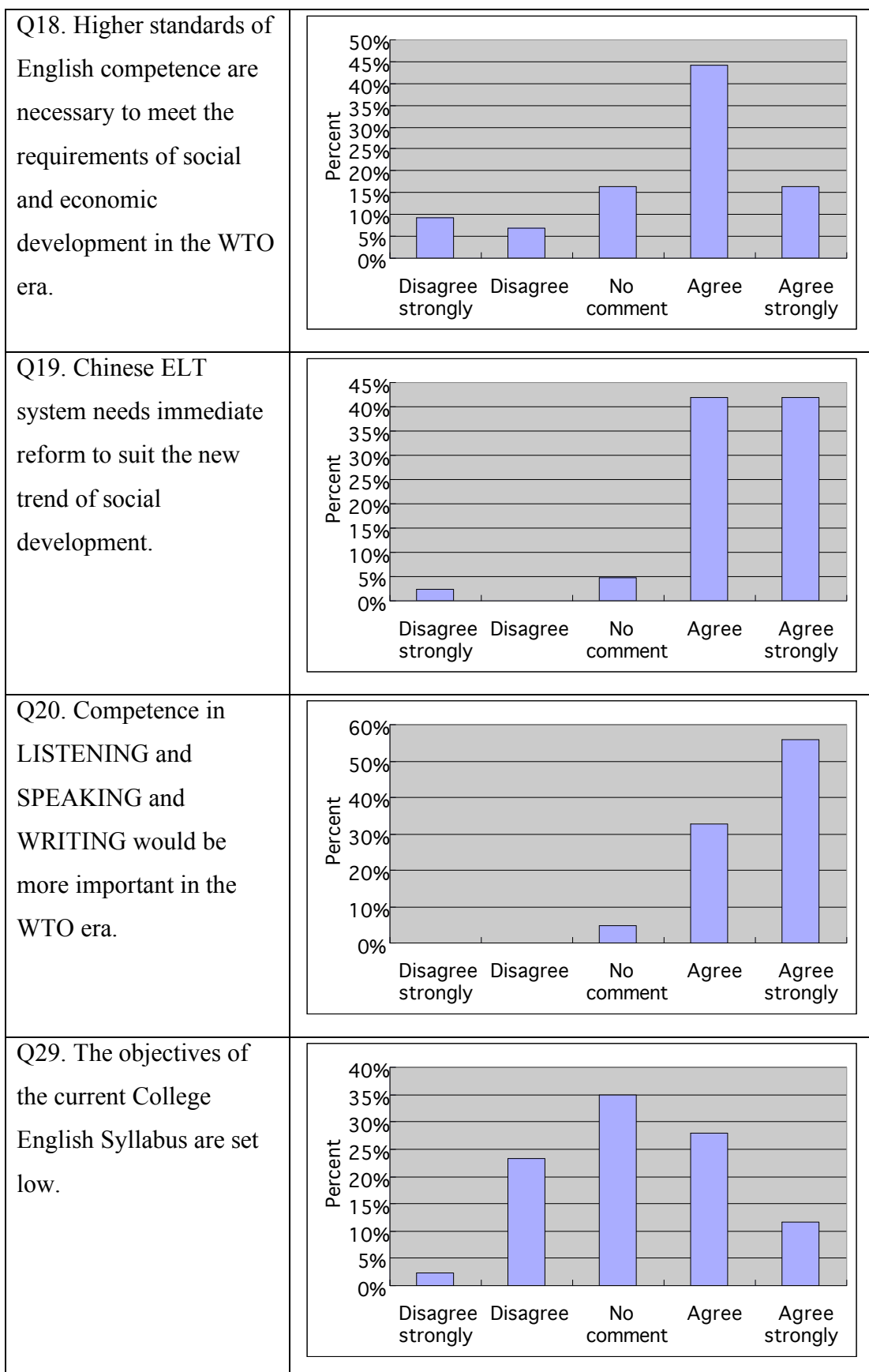
Judging from the above unanimous appeal for productive ability from the students, it is fair to state that most of the commonly accepted principles of the communicative approach have not been adopted in CE education. That is, language is not used as a tool of communication; teaching is not student-centered; and learning tasks do not reflect real life communication. English is basically taught through English and there is some student involvement in the process of classroom teaching and learning. However, according to Krashen (1982), acquisition requires meaningful interaction in the target language, that is natural communication, in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but with the messages they are conveying and understanding.

The phenomenon of 'deaf-dumb' English, the ultimate result of the whole process of English teaching and learning thus becomes unavoidable and astonishing. Based on the result of Q31 in Figure 6.8, less than 30 per cent of the participants were confident with their listening and speaking ability in comparison with their competence in reading. However, being deeply involved in the process of globalisation, the students were keenly aware of the demands of communicative English competence in the WTO era and they anticipated the reform in the field of College English teaching and learning. The next section will focus on these anticipations of the students.

### **6.7 Call for Change in the WTO Era**

Student views based on the result of the survey regarding ELT reform in Chinese universities are shown in the following figure.

Figure 6.9 – Students Suggestions for Reform



Frequent modification of national College English curriculum in the past two decades is an indication of the impact of quickening process of globalisation on higher education, especially ELT in China. Not surprisingly, according to the result of survey question Q19 in Figure 6.9, there was a uniform appeal for immediate change of the English language teaching and learning system to go well with the new round of socio-economic development in the WTO era. As indicated in the survey result of Q18, 60 per cent of the participants believed that there should be higher demands of English on individual competence in the era of WTO. This claim was made with reference to the standards set in the 1999 CE Curriculum.

The entry of multinational corporations and joint ventures in the WTO era was accompanied with a heat wave of English learning in China. Many college students would like to pursue their further education in the developed western countries to acquire advanced knowledge in science and technology. They take international English tests such as TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and IELTS (International English Language Testing System) as the first step to their overseas studies. For some it is proof of their English proficiency. At the same time, employers, especially those in the field of foreign trade consider communicative competence in English to be a decisive factor in hiring a potential employee. Therefore, an applicant must demonstrate his or her oral English capability besides their various English qualification certificates.

This demand for CE students poses an unprecedented challenge to the traditional methodology of ELT. The Grammar-Translation method has served the standard means to teach and learn English. Focusing on English grammar and vocabulary, these linguistic phenomena do not equate with reading the content itself, let alone the practice of listening and speaking. It is rare case that a Chinese student who has a very satisfactory mark on his or her English examination cannot express him or herself well in English with his or her foreign peer. This scene in learning English is popularly described as ‘deaf-dumb’ English learning.

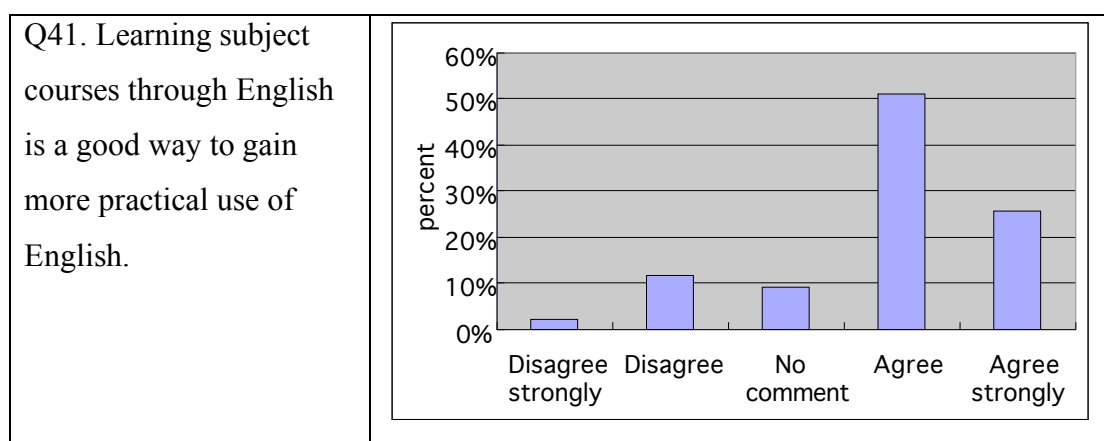
- P27 ELT should give further priority on listening and speaking competence as well as understanding of deep meaning of cultures rather than superficial things. This would be where we can benefit.*
- P34 I think there should be various ways used in the English teaching. Make sure our students have more chances to contact with foreigners and environments.*
- P37 Currently, university English teaching practice is not open enough. There is more routine and lifeless teaching and learning but not enough communication in English. We should recruit more foreign teachers and reform the teaching model. Students should be inspired and stimulated. These would foster the integration of English with the Chinese society.*

Obviously, this stiff pattern of old fashioned textbook-based, teacher-dominated, test-oriented teaching is out of sync with the rapid growth of international communication in China. Educators have realised the importance of shifting the pattern of ELT from the traditional linguistic acquirement to communicative competence and the module of teaching English language from single skill development to integrated skills training. This can be seen from the reform of curricula and curriculum development project issued by the MOE in 1999. The emphasis of 1999 Curriculum was on a student-centred approach instead of a text and test-centred one. Meanwhile, the vocabulary capacity required for students was enlarged from the original 1,800 commonly used English words and phrases to 4,000. Another feature of that reform was to make sure that the English learning process is not continuous and consistent throughout the duration of the four college years.

It is interesting to notice that the result regarding Question 29 in Figure 6.9. The distribution of the answers revealed that students varied in judging the level of CE objectives. This can be justified by the fact that the 1999 Curriculum was applicable to about 5 million students in more than 1,000 Chinese universities and colleges. Though it suggested that students should be taught in accordance with their aptitude, the options were not sufficient to cover such a huge range. Consequently some

requirements might be too high for some students and too low for others. For instance, the vocabulary requirement for CET-4 was low for some key university students, but too high for students from remote areas. Listening and speaking were high in general terms; however, even English majors will need more efforts to reach such goals. Therefore it is basically impractical to set specific goals. Another case in point is the speed for intensive reading, which was set at 70 words per minute. This is too specific because learners' reading speed is affected by the contents of the texts being read and by their knowledge of the subject matter. One may read articles on his or her subject of interest very fast but be slow reading articles about different content matter. It is impossible to limit or predict reading materials in advance.

Figure 6.10 – English as a Broader Language of Instruction



Another attempt of the 1999 Curriculum was to make English learning continuous and consistent throughout the duration of four years at college. To achieve this purpose, English for Special Purpose (ESP) courses were also added to the final year of students' study of English in college. As indicated in Figure 6.10, about 77 per cent of the participants expressed their hope to learn subject courses through the medium of English. It was their belief that this could be an ideal way to gain more practical use of English. In Dalian Maritime University, attempt was made to tailor to the needs of the students in individual major by teaching ESP, for example, English for Logistics, Maritime English and English for Marine Engineering. The goal of these courses is to ensure that the non-English major students who have different specialised background can make good use of English after their graduation in their future working career. Besides this, the Ministry of Education required that all of the

specialised subjects be conducted in the English language, preferably using foreign textbooks, in the near future. The construction of a streamlined ELT system from Chinese primary schools (third grade) to the tertiary level is underway. A national English standardized test divided into several levels is being developed to evaluate the outcome of reforming in Chinese ELT from primary level to the tertiary level.

Furthermore, the students anticipated to experience more than the common single-approach practice in CE classroom teaching and to benefit from the computer technology by having more access to Internet and other technological resources that would assist in English learning.

Soon after its full implementation in 2000, with China's WTO accession, its higher education system entered a new development era with the intensification of the Reform and Opening up. The Chinese government prioritised the development of education, implementing the strategy of "Revitalizing the Nation by Developing Science, Technology and Education". Using the developmental experiences of international higher education for reference, it has strengthened the higher education system's structural reforms, accelerating the developmental pace of changes in higher education. As a result, the 1999 CE Curriculum, though claimed to be 21st century oriented, lagged behind China's socio-economic development.

In the WTO era, it failed to satisfy the need of English in China and particularly to meet the expectations of the learners. In Durkheim's (1977) view, educational systems reflect major changes in society because the systems are a construct built by society. As a result, educational systems bear the marks of social development at different stages. Educational change should be initiated when we find dissatisfaction, inconsistency, or intolerability in the current situation. This need for change directly leads to the introduction of the 2004 CECR in 2004, the latest and current program guiding the ELT in all the higher education institutions in China.

## **6.8 Summary**

The past century saw frequent modification of national College English curriculum as a result of the impact of quickening process of globalisation on higher education,

especially ELT in China. There has been evident shift of the goal of ELT in China from linguistic competence to communicative competence and the pedagogy from single skill training (reading) to integrated skills (all four macro skills) development. At the same time, the stipulated methodology has changed from ‘teacher-centered’ to ‘learner-centred’.

This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the 1999 CE Curriculum regarding how and why it failed to fulfill its intended objectives. The 1999 CE Curriculum, the focus of the discussion in this chapter, designed based on modern concepts, failed to solve the most acute problems the Chinese English learners encountered as it failed to set the whole process of EFL teaching and learning in the context of globalisation and lagged behind soon after it was promulgated.

The result of part of the research project indicated that the university EFL learners are dissatisfied with the current situation. It was found that text-centred and test driven instruction remains prevalent in the universities. This might have some connection with the more competitive achievement-focused and teacher-centred curriculum in secondary education where the origin of the student’s motivation is not intrinsic but extrinsic. The teachers’ approaches are clearly knowledge-oriented, which give rise to grammar-translation approaches, focusing on grammar, vocabulary and phonology.

The text-centered and test-driven system deprived the students of their chances to deal with EFL in the way that would better prepare them to meet the communicative competence requirements as a member in the global village. Intensive Reading had the priority and it occupied three-fourth of the total class hours allotted to College English lessons. Listening, in isolation with speaking, takes up the remaining one fourth. Thus it becomes likely that a graduate might have well-documented English language competence in terms of standard CET test scores, but fail to carry out the everyday communication in the language that they were certificated to be proficient. In spite of the students’ awareness of the demand of oral communication skills in jobs and professions in the era of WTO, they were worried about the lack of training in this regard. The students expressed their intense longing for the opportunities to



integrate classroom learning into everyday use, but not to be subjected to passive teacher-centred, test-driven approaches.

Students also expressed their dissatisfaction with the ‘chalk and talk’ methodology, the current textbooks and other related resources. Although learners’ ability of translation and an adequate knowledge of grammar and vocabulary establish bases for verbal communication in a foreign language context, it is far from enough. Grammar-teaching method gives students the wrong idea of what the language is and of the relationship of languages. It ignores the communicating function of language and fails to motivate language learners effectively.

It was their common demand that textbooks be revised to include more practical components by adding more cultural contents, attaching more importance to communicative skills to guide students’ interest in developing their English skills. More multimedia-based content needs to be available for students as part of the reform of teaching approaches.

This pattern, as represented by the case of College English teaching and learning in Dalian Maritime University, is textbook-based, teacher-dominated, and test-oriented. It is obviously out of sync with the rapid growth of international communication in China. Educators have realised the importance of shifting the pattern of ELT from the traditional linguistic acquirement to communicative competence and the module of teaching English language from single skill development to integrated skills training.

As a result, an overwhelming majority of the students involved in the research project considered that Chinese ELT system needs immediate reform to suit the new trend of social development. It is natural that higher expectancy regarding the quality of ELT in China leads to efforts made to reform the system. In this case, it becomes a matter of significance for administrators and teachers to be fully aware of these realities and the principles that surround realistic classroom teaching and learning so that they make better choices regarding specific methods and activities to the benefit of the learners.

The 2004 CECR was introduced on this particular occasion as the authoritative governmental endeavour to manage active response to the urgent need of well-educated personnel with the required English linguistic competence. The evidence Fu (1988) provided demonstrated the great impact of social change on foreign language education in China in different social periods. As a continuum, the promulgation and implementation of the 2004 CECR represents the latest governmental effort to enhance the quality of English teaching and learning in response to the new socio-economic developments in the WTO era.

The evidence and analysis in this chapter are of great significance because the 1999 Curriculum itself and the disadvantages and problems involving its implementations and applications form the internal force that leads to the ongoing ELT reform in China as represented by the promulgation of the 2004 CECR, which will be the focus of discussion in the next chapter.

## **Chapter Seven – The Implementation of the 2004 CECR at Dalian Maritime University**

This chapter introduces an analysis and interpretation of the 2004 CECR issued in 2004 by the MOU based on a case study of CE education in Dalian Maritime University conducted in 2005 after the promulgation of the 2004 CECR. The organisation of the evidence was determined in part on the implementation of the 2004 CECR as a response to China's needs of English in its ongoing process of globalisation and in part on the argument that the Global English teaching and learning model with stress on communicative competence and performance will be the ELT priority in Chinese universities to meet the demands in conducting global communication. Other issues that emerged from the evidence itself are also included. It becomes a matter of significance to have a detailed examination of the 2004 CECR itself and to seek possible evidence of its performance by observing the existing CE arrangements under the guidance of the 2004 CECR, as well as to examine the policies as well as proposals in this new program to find out whether the new initiatives provide solutions to all the problems regarding ELT in China and feedbacks to all the dissatisfactions from the English learners.

The data to be drawn on in this chapter mainly consists of two parts. The major part is the text of the 2004 CECR document and the other is the classroom observation as well as follow-up interviews with students and instructors conducted during 2005 after the official introduction of the 2004 CECR into Dalian Maritime University. Also it was found necessary to refer back to the data collected in 2003 because of the natural connection between the 2004 CECR and the 1999 Curriculum.

To collect evidence for the actual implementation of the 2004 CECR, six Year 2005 classes in various faculties in Dalian Maritime University were approached and observation made. This was more or less a case study. A number of related 'cases' – College English classes were examined within a specific period of time via a range of data collection techniques including observation, follow-up interview.

The strength of this method is that it allows the researcher to concentrate on a specific instance or situation and to identify the various interactive processes at work. Genuine classrooms” as identified by Nunan (1992, p. 92) provide important contexts to collect data concerning English language teaching and learning and CE classrooms are specifically constituted to make the implementation of the 2004 CECR happen. Therefore, it is highly necessary to approach some of the CE classes and make some observations. The focus was on course planning, course content, teaching and testing materials, teacher’s decision making, student involvement as well as learner-teacher interaction.

Classroom environments and class instructions and the follow-up interviews were observed and recorded. Generalisations were made based on the recordings and field notes by the researcher as well as comments from the instructors and students about what was happening at the time when the teaching and learning took place.

### **7.1 The 2004 CECR as a Response to China’s English Needs in the WTO Era**

Currently, the English teaching in colleges and universities is not at a higher level, but only a repetition of what the students learned in high school. And again, the English class for postgraduates is a repetition of their college classes. The students take the course only for passing the examinations. The real meaning of English learning no longer exists (China Daily, 11/3/2003).

Besides the students’ chorus of disapproval of the 1999 Curriculum and their common appeal for change as evidenced in Chapter Six, the CE issue has for a long time become the focus of public concern. The above comment from the most circulated English newspaper in China represents the call of the public for immediate change.

In response to Wu’s (2004) demand that Chinese universities should further improve their English teaching, seizing the opportunity brought by the development of the information industry, especially the construction of the Internet and campus networks, MOE put into effect the CECR at the beginning of 2004. It aimed to promote the new developments of higher education in China, deepen teaching reform, improve

teaching quality, and meet the needs of the country and society for qualified personnel in the new era (CECR, 2004, p.16). The most significant change this time is that it is referred to as a 'requirement' instead of 'curriculum'. Correspondingly, the traditional centralised role as a national curriculum is weakened to allow for more flexibility in dealing with the diversity found in the institutions all across the country. Such intention is indicated in the 2004 CECR itself.

Because institutions of higher learning differ from each other in terms of teaching resources, students' level of English upon entering college, and the social needs they face, colleges and universities should formulate, in accordance with the Requirements and in the light of their specific circumstances, a scientific, systematic and individualized College English syllabus to guide their own College English teaching (CECR, 2004, p.16).

The most obvious distinction between the new requirement and the 1999 Curriculum is that the 2004 CECR sets priority on the introduction of new teaching models with the help of modern information technology, particularly network technology. It also requires changing the existing teacher-centered pattern of language teaching to the learner-centered pattern setting priority on training the communicative competence of learners.

Implementation of the 2004 CECR was the result of the MOE's initiative in 2003 to create a scientific and up-to-date College English curriculum, rather than to modify the then existing CE 1999 Curriculum. There is a move away from acquiring only knowledge and skills towards the comprehensive ability of EFL use. Some importance was attached to emotional attitude, learning strategies and cultural awareness. Where content is concerned, concerted efforts are taken towards implementing a multi-dimensional English language system, which incorporates different teaching models and approaches. The introduction of multimedia-based content represents this latest effort. Table 7.1 indicates that the 2004 CECR inherits the principles of tiered and categorised guidance and the qualitative and quantitative objective setting system of the 1999 Curriculum. However, it is obvious that the 2004 CECR is different from the 1999 Curriculum in many ways, including the

general objectives, teaching and learning styles. The following part will elaborate on these new developments.

Table 7.1 Comparison of 1999 and 2004 CE Curricula

	<b>1999 Curriculum</b>	<b>2004 Curriculum</b>
<b>Aim</b>	For students to be capable of exchanging information in the target language	To exchange information effectively through both spoken and written channels, and to study independently and improve cultural quality so as to meet the needs of social development and international exchanges
<b>Objective</b>	Strong reading ability and fairly good ability for listening, speaking, writing and translating	To develop students' ability to use English in an all-round way, especially in listening and speaking
<b>Methodology</b>	Learner-centred	Learner-centred; Communicative; Computer-based
<b>Vocabulary</b>	6500 (a coverage ranging from Band 1-6)	Higher Level: 6500 words and 1700 phrases; Intermediate Level: 5500 words and 1200 phrases; Basic Level: 4500 words and 700 phrases

## 7.2 New Objectives of College English as stipulated in the 2004 CECR

College English, a mandatory EFL part of higher learning in China, is a basic course for undergraduate students guided by a national curriculum, currently the 2004 CECR. In nature, it can be regarded as the systematic continuum of High School English. However, only a small portion of the participants of the survey for the 1999 Curriculum, 24 per cent to be precise, believed that there was natural and smooth transition from secondary High School English education to tertiary CE education. The 2004 CECR attempts to address this issue by stipulating that College English has as its main components knowledge and practical skills of the language, learning strategies and intercultural communication, etc. (CECR, 2004, p. 16).

Difficulties in implementing the CE 1999 Curriculum owing to the vast discrepancies across China in economic and educational developmental level have been a major concern. As revealed in the previous chapter, it was inefficient and irrelevant to use the 1999 Curriculum for the students, many of whom come from remote Western China where the high school academic standards are much lower than those in cities. This directly leads to the three-level requirement amendment regarding the teaching and learning standards set in the 2004 CECR, i.e., the Average Requirement level, the Higher Requirement level and the Much Higher Requirement level.

The idea is that all non-English majors are required to attain to one of the three levels of requirements after studying and practicing English at school. The average level is the obligatory requirement for college graduates of all non-English specialties, while the latter two are optional and aimed at the students with better aptitudes and more spare time. The average level requires students to be able to understand lessons taught in the medium of English, follow daily conversations and oral speeches on general subjects and to develop discussion on a certain topic. As Table 7.1 shows, students of this level are supposed to have a vocabulary pool of 4,500 words and 700 phrases. Students of the higher level ought to understand the conversations and speeches given by native speakers and should also converse fluently with them. Students are required to master 5,500 words and 1,200 phrases. The requirements for much higher level are that students should be able to follow English broadcasting and TV programs and to converse or discuss on the general or professional topics. At this level, the vocabulary pool rose to 6,500 words and 1,700 phrases (CECR, 2004, p. 16).

The three levels of requirements, which incorporate knowledge and practical skills of the English language, learning strategies and intercultural communication, also pinpoint the current objective of College English teaching. The basic requirements are the minimum level that all non-English majors have to reach before graduation. The freedom, if any, that is left with the individual institution is that colleges and universities are supposed to establish their own objectives in the light of their specific circumstances, to create favourable conditions, and encourage students to

adjust their objectives in line with their own performance and try to meet the intermediate of higher requirements.

The 2004 CECR clearly states that ‘the objective of College English is to develop students’ ability to use English in an all-round way, especially in listening and speaking, so that in their future work and social interactions they will be able to exchange information effectively through both spoken and written channels, and at the same time they will be able to enhance their ability to study independently and improve their cultural quality so as to meet the needs of China’s social development and international exchanges (CECR, 2004, p. 16).’ “Being able to exchange information effectively through both spoken and written channels” means that College English learners can combine the building blocks of language (grammar, vocabulary, phonology) to express themselves clearly and appropriately in speech and writing. “Being able to use English in an all-round way” means that the learners can interpret messages that they hear and read correctly and can respond to these messages appropriately and comprehensibly. This is a complete process of information encoding, decoding and giving feedback. Therefore it is obvious that the main objective of the 2004 CECR is aimed at a shift of priority from “reading comprehension” teaching and learning to listening and speaking competence development.

As discussed in Chapter Three, technological innovations have always contributed to the growth and spread of English and are exercising tremendous impact on the non-native users of English. This accounts for the Chinese government’s decision universities should further improve their English teaching, seizing the opportunity brought by the development of the information industry, especially the construction of the Internet and intranets.

Technology tools are expected to enhance students’ learning, increase their productivity, and promote their creativity. In this spirit, a major goal in developing College English curricula is to provide students opportunities to use English as a tool to carry out meaningful tasks in a technological environment. At present, many Chinese universities managed to have the infrastructure ready so that students have ready access to computer technology. However, given the varied stages of economic



development in various regions, it remains a challenge for all the institutions to provide all of their students with adequate facilities.

As to teaching materials, four sets of English learning software in combination of four sets of CE textbooks specially designed for Chinese college students were developed by four major publishers in China to meet this new demand. Evaluation of a student's language skills focuses on listening and speaking instead of reading. All the drillings of listening and speaking were conducted on computer with a view to increasing students' motivation in learning. Students can study whenever they want, and the system can even check students' pronunciations. Students can contact with teachers to have face-to-face tutorial when having questions. Besides, CET-4 and CET-6 will also be adjusted to this reform. The focus of the tests will be students' all-round practical abilities, and the form of the tests will change from written examinations to cyber-examinations. Besides, the language skills of each student should be graded so that they can have lessons accordingly.

The design of the new teaching and learning models borrowed from the concept of CALL, an area of development that is fast making inroads in language teaching. Computer technology in the classroom can help students become capable users, information seekers, problem solvers and decision-makers. Students use technology to locate, evaluate, and collect information from a variety of sources, to process data and report results. Resource-based CALL helps develop strategies for autonomous learning and thus reduces the teachers' workload.

The 2004 CECR is of communicative nature regardless of the zero occurrence of the word 'communicative' in the entire document. The communicative approach is characterized, first of all, by the denial of the audio-lingual and audiovisual method's ban on using the learners' native language as one of the means of semantisation. The decisive role belongs to the realisation of the learners' demand in own communicative intentions. For English learners to be able to communicate effectively one needs to be able to use and understand English in a range of situations.

The guiding principles in the 2004 CECR enable it the same role as its predecessors, that is, the national curriculum. Although colleges and universities are to formulate

their respective syllabi and to establish their own teaching and learning models, it remains an issue of common concern whether there is sufficient room to maneuver within the framework of the 2004 CECR. On the other hand, although the 2004 CECR possesses some features of the 'futures curriculum' as suggested by Littlejohn (2003), the extent to which the individual institutions integrate these features into their own syllabi remains uncertain.

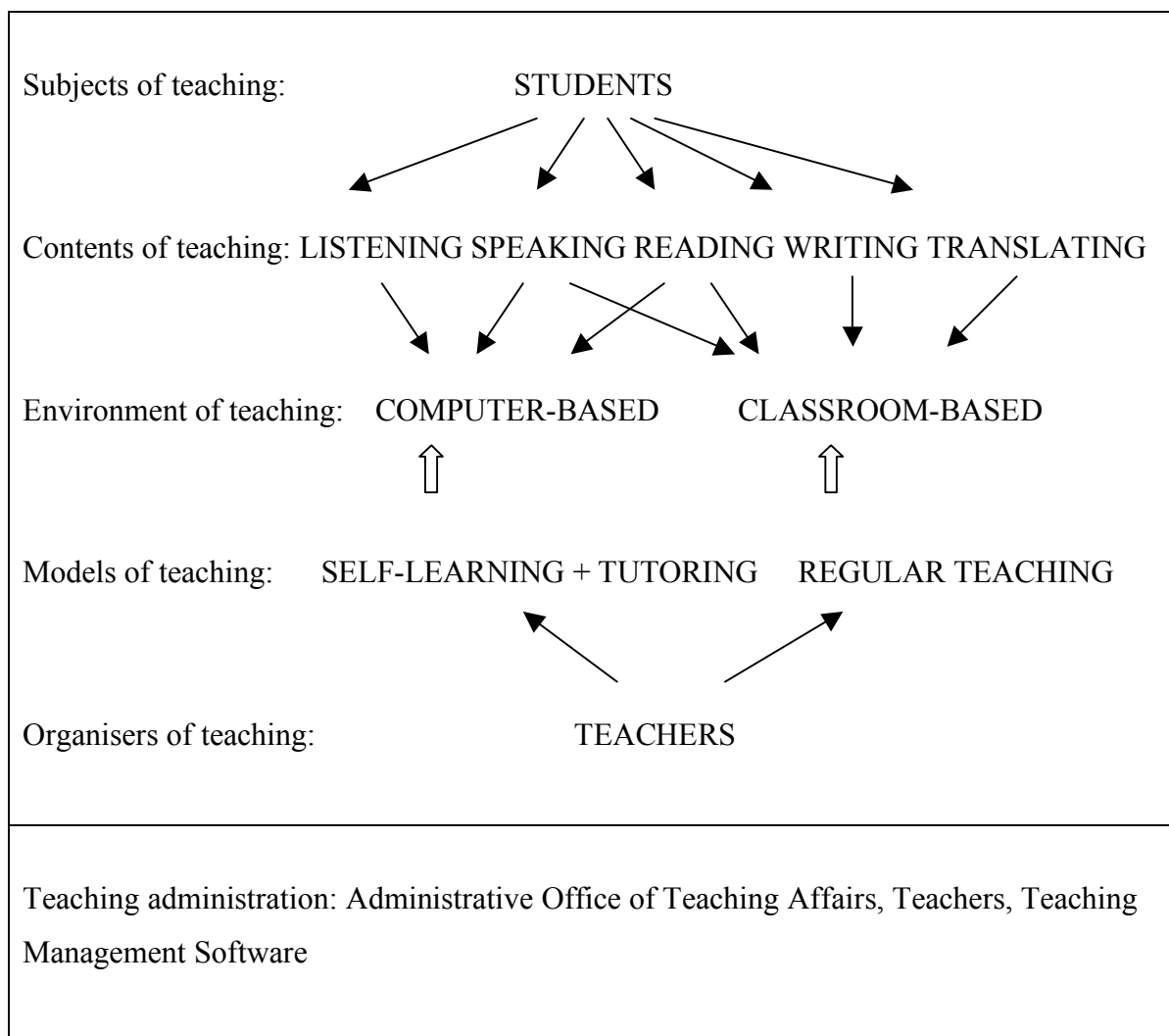
### **7.3 Teaching Model Stipulated in the 2004 CECR**

For the implementation of the new model, a Computer-and Classroom-based Multimedia college English Teaching Model is stipulated in 2004 CECR to help students achieve the set objectives. The model places a premium on individualized teaching, independent learning and making full use of the special function of computers in assisting learners with individualized and repeatable language practice, especially with the training of the listening and speaking abilities.

Change in the teaching model by no means calls for changes in teaching practices or approaches only, but, more importantly, changes in teaching philosophy, and in a shift from the teacher-centred pattern, in which knowledge of the language and skills are imparted by the teacher in class only, to the student-centred pattern, in which the ability to use the language and the ability to learn independently are cultivated to language knowledge and skills.

Based on the discussions with regard to communicative approach in Chapter Two, we can argue that the following pedagogical guidelines are important in achieving this shift of teaching style: Teaching should start with listening and speaking; Drills on language form should not be excessive; English should be used in class; Use of translation should be limited; Audio-visual aids like realia, pictures, over-head transparencies, audio-tapes, videos, computers should be fully utilized; The teacher's role should be a facilitator and helper to guide students to develop effective learning habits; Teachers should be aware of the individual differences among students in the learning process.

Figure 7.1 Components of the 2004 CECR Model



Source: CECR (2004, p. 26)

Figure 7.1 indicates that the new CE model lays stress on web language teaching by introducing new teaching model with the help of multimedia and network technology. Geared towards students' individualized and autonomous learning, the new model combines the principles of practicality, knowledge and interest, mobilizes the initiative of both teachers and students, and attaches particular importance to the central role of students in the teaching and learning process. Besides the consideration given to the remarkable increase in student enrolments (web teaching is likely to be free from the constraint of time or place and to accommodate much more students), this model technically attains to a high level of interactivity,

feasibility and operability. In addition, it takes into account and incorporates into it the strengths of the traditional model and modern information technology.

The 2004 CECR requires that colleges and universities should design a computer-based or intranet or campus-network-based multimedia listening and speaking teaching model that suits their own needs in line with their own conditions and student situation. Those in more favourable situations may deliver listening and speaking course via the Internet. The teaching of reading, writing and translation can be conducted either in the classroom or online. In either case, however, enough teachers should be guaranteed for face-to-face instruction or lectures.

An important part of the reform of the teaching model is the development of individualized study methods and the autonomous learning ability on the part of students. The new model, if properly conducted, enables students to select materials suited to their individual needs, make up for the limitations of the conventional classroom teaching of listening and speaking, and track down, record and check the progress of learning as well as teaching and coaching, so that students can be supervised to learn on their own initiative, and their listening and speaking abilities and other linguistic abilities can be improved at a faster pace.

For effective execution of the teaching model, the proportion of teaching hours or credits for computer-based English courses should be increased. It is proposed that the credits acquired via computer-based learning account for 30 – 50 per cent of the total (CECR, 2004, p. 26).

The following were suggested by Warschauer, *et al.* (2000) as reasons to use the web for English teaching:

**Authenticity:** Language learning is most successful when it takes place in authentic, meaningful contexts. The web gives students 24-hour access to vast amounts of authentic material and allows opportunities for authentic communication and publishing.

**Literacy:** By combining English and technology in the classroom, students master the skills they will need for academic and occupational success.

**Interaction:** Interaction is the major means of acquiring a language and gaining fluency. All effective English teaching incorporates some kind of interactive communication in the curriculum. The Internet provides opportunities for students to interact 24 hours a day with native and non-native speakers from around the world.

**Vitality:** The Internet can inject an element of vitality into teaching and motivate students as they communicate in a medium that is flexible and connected to their real-life life needs.

**Empowerment:** Mastery of the Internet increases the personal power of teachers and students. It allows them to become autonomous lifelong learners who can find what they need when they need it and collaborate with others to help construct new knowledge. Taken together, these reasons help bring English teaching ALIVE (Warschauer, *et al.*, 2000).

However, Warschauer, *et al.* (2000) claimed that though the web provided a valuable medium for helping bring classrooms alive, successful results depend on how the web was used. Just as students would not learn simply by being brought to a classroom, neither would they learn by being placed in front of a networked computer. They went on to argue that in the end, it was not the technology itself but the teaching that would make the difference.

With regard to the computer-mediated pedagogy, the instructor plays a key role in facilitating critical reflection and cultural awareness from the learners after the task-based classroom activities. Nunan (2004, p. 9) provided some suggestions as how to increase learner involvement in the learning process. He argued that learner-centred classroom could be created by: making instructional goals clear to learners; helping learners to create their own goals; encourage learners to use their second language outside of the classroom; help learners to become more aware of learning processes and strategies; showing learners how to identify their own preferred styles and strategies; giving learners opportunities to make choices between different options in the classroom; teaching learners how to create their own learning tasks; providing learners with opportunities to master some aspect of their second language and then teach it to others; creating contexts in which learners investigate language and

become their own researchers of language. These suggestions can be included as part of the pedagogy under the framework of the 2004 CECR.

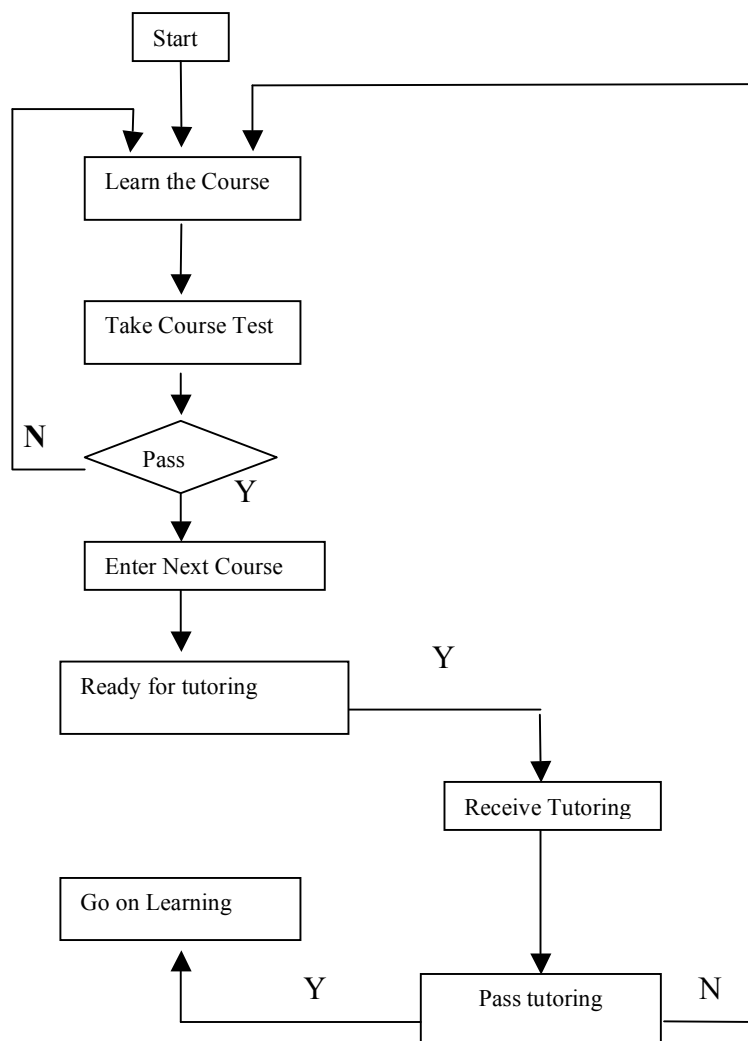
#### **7.4 Learning Styles Stipulated in the 2004 CECR**

The basic idea of teaching and learning as stipulated in the 2004 CECR is that it should be computer-based. The adoption of novel computer-based teaching concepts, which is totally absent in the previous model and course framework, can be regarded as a breakthrough. From the perspective of learners, this means a switch to a learner-centred model that allows more learner autonomy by making the teaching and learning a computer-based process. Hu (2004) summarised it as a model of individualised learning, collaborative learning and hyper-textual learning. When asked about the experience in finding the right path for English learning, one interviewee stated:

*Life at college is so much different from that in high school. I used to be very busy in high school. At that time, the pressure of study almost drove me insane. But things have been changed when in college. Now, I've got lots of free time, I could do anything I want to do. I like movies a lot and I watch lots of movies in English. I love to listen to English songs. Besides, I'm hooked on Internet, spending much time on surfing websites, listening to Internet radio, watching videos, chatting ... and lots of the information I get online is in English. Over time, my English has been improved unconsciously. I'm not learning English on purpose anymore, but my English does get better through doing what I like.*

The above comment represents the success story of a student in learning English. It indicates that individualized learning and hyper-textual learning could be a way out for the students seeking solution to the problems troubling them in the course of their English learning. This provides valuable hints for implementing the 2004 CECR, for example, in producing the local or institutional CE syllabus.

Figure 7.2 Process of Computer-Based English Learning



Source: CECR, 2004, p. 27

In constructionist view, the learning process through our senses is an active process, not a passive one. This means that individualized learning or learner autonomy should be a natural part of the learning process. The 2004 CECR was designed with the anticipation that students can make their own decisions as to when to learn and what to learn. Thus better time management can be achieved in accordance with the learners' personal needs. On the other hand, students can be assisted by computer in choosing the appropriate content of learning according to their specific needs,

proficiency and schedule under the guidance of teachers, so that their all-round ability to use English can be improved and the best effects of learning achieved.

The communicative student-centered approach encourages active learning via student involvement. With the instructors' guidance, supervision and encouragement students are encouraged to think about and experiment with language. While instructors can direct and facilitate learning, students themselves have ultimate responsibility for their own progress. Research has shown that people who learn languages successfully have a well-developed appreciation of their own learning styles and preferences that enables them to build on their strengths and improve their weaknesses. Instructors can assist students to become aware of their personal learning by encouraging students to reflect upon their own progress on a regular basis (Hu, 2004). One interviewee commented:

*While learning English, we'd like to work together in pairs or in groups of three or more.*

Collaborative learning means that students work in groups toward a common academic goal. The advantages are that students can construct knowledge and learn from each other. Proponents of collaborative learning claim that the active exchange of ideas within small groups not only increases interest among the participants but also promotes critical thinking. Classroom activities provide immediate responses, are flexible to human needs, and can adapt as needed to different learners' styles. In addition, a classroom of peer learners can provide added motivation, inspiration, and a community environment further stimulating interest and involvement. Virtual learning environments can be used to facilitate collaborative learning and group work through the use of communication tools and the formation of groups. It is a reflection of the recent emergence of discussion concerning hyper-textual learning (network learning, multimedia, or hypermedia) instead of CALL, because computer no longer plays an assisting or supportive role in language learning. Since "Network", "Internet", "WWW", "link" are all to be realized by hypertext, hypertext serves as an all-inclusive term. For another thing, hypertext always suggests changes in discursive formation, especially from linearity to non-linearity in thinking process, as



expounded by post-modernists (Hu, 2004). On the other hand, student self-learning should be conducted on the web where students have access to ready-made resources and the learning process is under effective teacher management. It is in this sense that we should never weaken the role of face-to-face classroom instruction even under the framework of computer-based new model. This is in conformity with Glatz's (2001, p. 222) argument for the importance of teacher in providing immediate feedback and direction.

One trend is that some students have realised the importance of independent learning and have developed the habit of self-study while attaching not so much attention to formal classroom teaching and learning. There is evidence that however hard the teacher attempts to exercise impact on the course of development in the process of learning, the learner will attempt to follow a sequence of learning determined by his own natural process. There is already argument concerning the necessity of teachers in foreign language teacher. The doubt regarding the traditional role of teacher's role in foreign language learning results from the observation that the learning processes occurring in the natural language acquisition environment can work without any teacher at all. Reflecting this sentiment, an interviewee observed that:

*Chinese people just lay too much stress on learning English. Personally, I don't give much attention to classroom learning, but rather I am an independent learner.*

The above comments indicate that some CE learners developed sufficient self-confidence and chose to be independent from the traditional classroom teaching and learning. This is now possible as learner autonomy is advocated in the 2004 CECR. The characteristic of autonomy is reflected in two aspects: firstly, more freedom of selection are granted to the colleges and universities concerned so that they can establish their respective syllabi in accordance with the 2004 CECR as well as the evaluation to attain their determined objectives; secondly, learning can be done by students in web environment in an independent manner so that they can adjust their progression of learning to suit their own needs as well as to achieve the best effect.

Observations revealed that self-directed learners tended to take responsibility for their own learning and were therefore usually more motivated to learn. Virtual learning environments accommodate the self-directed learner who can work at their own time and place and work in a collaborative environment.

The overwhelming advantages of computer-based learning might be that the learners could work at their own pace, learn when it was convenient for them and do this anywhere. The pace seemed crucial to many of them and was often linked to not being disturbed or interrupted. Other advantages included the possibility to go back over key learning points.

To sum up, the 2004 CECR, with an objective to develop students' practical ability to use English in an all-round way so as to meet the English language needs of China's social development and international exchange, sets priority on the introduction of new teaching models with the help of modern information technology, particularly network technology. It also requires changing the existing teacher-centered pattern of language teaching to the learner-centered pattern. Also students are encouraged to develop independent learning ability. It is natural that the students will have different learning styles. However, the value of face-to-face instruction should never be underestimated. It is important for students to have shared learning objectives to work on so as to enhance their communicative competence in English. However, the test-oriented system makes it difficult for students to develop the learning collaboration and cooperation. The pressure of the competition from the examinations results in a stressful and inhibitive relationship among the learners in the whole process of their learning which should be enjoyable, spontaneous, and most importantly, collaborative. Therefore, it is important for teachers to be aware that some styles work better than others in different learning environments, but no one learning style is better than another.

The next section will discuss the difficulties in the course of implementing the 2004 CECR. Materials, methods and assessment, often referred to as a pedagogical trinity, will be discussed in detail in the following.

## **7.5 Current Challenges for 2004 CECR Implementation**

### **7.5.1 Drawbacks for Teaching Change**

The new requirements in the 2004 CECR are intended to introduce many changes, which are not merely restricted to the changes in teaching practices or approaches, but, more importantly, to changes in teaching philosophy, which deals with teacher's "knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and thinking that inform such practice" (Richards, 1998, p. xviii). CE teachers are best placed to translate educational theory into practice and apply these new ideas in the classroom. It is stipulated in the 2004 CECR that education administrative organisations at different levels and colleges and universities should regard the evaluation of College English teaching as an important part of the evaluation of the overall teaching quality of each school.

It became particularly serious issue since the introduction of the 2004 CECR, which demanded that teachers should "adapt to the new model of English teaching". Also "opportunities should be created so that the teachers can enjoy sabbaticals and engage in advanced studies, thus ensuring a sustainable improvement in their academic performance and methods of teaching" (CECR, 2004, p. 25). Wu (2003) revealed her findings that "our EFL teachers are not ready for the educational reform". In Dalian Maritime University the main drawbacks were from three aspects.

First, under a national curriculum, teachers' initiatives over the curriculum and control over assessment procedures have been much restricted. The bureaucratisation of nationalised curriculum limits their energy and opportunities to follow goals other than those that are centrally prescribed and externally monitored. The 2004 CECR, though requires that colleges and universities formulate a scientific, systematic and individualized College English syllabus to guide their own College English teaching in the light of their specific circumstances, still acts as a national curriculum.

Therefore, it becomes difficult for the teachers to develop adequate awareness and understanding of all the changes set to happen so that they would be cooperative, if not active, in implementing the new requirements.

Second, CE teachers have to be confronted with the physical barrier of large size classes and limited contact hours. “It is teachers who, in the end, will change the world of school by understanding it” (Stenhouse, 1985). Chinese teachers of English, much like their counterparts in the West, would associate communicative approach to teaching with oral use of language. The major communicative uses of English that are emerging in modern China have largely to do with literate rather than oral uses of language. With the new college English curriculum’s focus on developing students’ communicative competency, especially listening and speaking skills. English teachers in China are looking for practical ideas to help them expand their repertoire of approaches and activities for teaching English. Good awareness of the importance or urgency of CLT does not mean a teacher can establish effective and efficient communication with 60 or more students in a single class within 180 minutes per week, which is the common class size and teaching hours in Chinese universities.

Third, it is necessary that this and next generations of teachers find adequate means of acquiring and updating technological knowledge and skills through further education or in-service professional training in order to work most effectively with students. Based on an understanding that the quality of teachers is key to the success of College English teaching reform and to the long-term development of the discipline, the 2004 CECR takes faculty management and professional development as important components of the required system of teaching administration to be established for the whole process of College English teaching. It is important that College English teachers be better adapted to the new model of English teaching and manage a sustainable improvement in their academic performance by receiving systematic training and professional development. Glatz (2001, p. 222) argued that the role of teacher in instruction in the process of mediation is not threatened by the rapid deployment of multimedia-based content, but rather that there is a greater demand for teachers to mediate multimedia learning materials effectively. Immediate help and feedback would always be necessary for computer-based learning. Teacher professionalisation is the trend in world teacher education development and a key trend in China’s teacher education reform. Many teachers are beginning to realize the need to change their beliefs about teaching and learning, and the need to acquire new skills and techniques in teaching and in assessment

according to the new concepts in teaching and learning and according to the needs of their students.

In fact, teachers engaged in College English teaching are caught in dilemmas. On the one hand, they realise they should enhance the students' overall English ability rather than prepare them for any specific exam. On the other hand, they tend to become collaborators of the text-test game to meet the expectations of students whose prime task is passing examinations. Another difficult situation they often find themselves in is that, on the one hand, they value the limited contact hours with their students. On the other hand, in the traditional classroom teachers have 'control' over information that they disseminate at the time, and in the manner, they deem most appropriate to the learning situation. Inflexible teaching methods contribute to poor learning outcomes. It is undoubtedly true that in preparing teaching programs, any teacher considers time. Regardless of students' actual ability to digest English, they pour out the materials according to their own tastes, within a short class period. In this sense, the teacher acts as a statesman whereas the students are the audience. It is important to realize, however, that this teacher-centered approach is not necessarily the most effective role for the teacher to adopt. As a matter of fact, teaching and learning are tightly related to each other and neither can exist without the other. It is vital for the teacher to arouse the interest of students and let them participate in classroom discussion actively.

With the advent of web learning teachers no longer have 'ownership' of knowledge as students have access to vast stores of information via the Internet. The concept of the teacher as 'instructor' therefore is inadequate to describe his or her comprehensive functions. In addition to the traditional roles as classroom manager and language instructor, willingly or unwillingly, he or she should start to adapt themselves to the role of a 'facilitator of learning' who perform the following multiple roles, separately or simultaneously: supervisor who oversees the students' performance; coordinator of activities so that they form a coherent progression, leading to better communicative competence; consultant or advisor who guides and directs students to appropriate resources as well as appropriate learning strategies (Littlewood, 2000).

The CE teachers are also confronted with other difficulties. However, in reality the progress of CALL leaves much to be desired. CALL is still a very new concept in some regions because no facilities are available and the teachers do not have the technological know-how. There is also a worrying lack of qualified tertiary teachers of English who can use the computer for teaching purposes.

The situation in Dalian Maritime University revealed that it might be difficult for teachers to develop the awareness in the importance of encouraging their students to stretch their learning styles under the 2004 CECR framework. Also it remains a challenge for the teachers regarding how to recognise the students' learning style strengths and how to give them the opportunities to exercise these strength by helping them to develop a better understanding of how they learn best. Meanwhile, many teachers were aware of the difficulty to achieve effective pedagogical outcomes under the computer-based new model. However, the abovementioned doubts regarding the traditional role of a teacher does not mean the teachers are not necessary under the new model. In a Deweyan classroom, the teacher is an expert who is responsible for organizing experiences so that students learn content, social and academic skills, and an appreciation for democratic living. The CE classrooms are intentionally structured rather than natural environment for the learners. Most learners still rely on the classroom instructions from the teachers for adequate motivation to communicate with the English language as well as for sufficient exposure to the language by working with native English speaking teachers.

### **7.5.2 Difficulty in Communicative Competence and Performance Evaluation**

Evaluation is a key component in language teaching. A comprehensive, objective, scientific and accurate evaluation system is of vital importance to the achievement of the course goal. It not only helps teachers obtain feedback, improve the administration of teaching, and ensure teaching quality but also provides students with an effective means to adjust their learning strategies and method, and improve their learning efficiency. As ELT reform continues to change the English education landscape in China, highlighted by the implementation of the 2004 CECR, educators and practitioners explore and attempt pedagogical innovation and multiple

approaches to assessment with a view to enhancing diverse dimensions of learning and developing multiple skills as well as promoting learner autonomy.

According to the 2004 CECR, CE evaluation consists of formative assessment and summative assessment. Teachers are required to weave assessment into instruction and provide chances for students to utilize evaluation skills as a learning task. Such a process might serve as a means of empowering students to become active learners and decision makers in their own learning.

Formative evaluation is carried out while a product is being developed and is designed to gather evidence that can be used to modify the product to make it more effective. Such assessment includes students' self-assessment, peer assessment, and assessment conducted by teachers and school administrators. By keeping a record of students' in and outside of classroom activities and online self-learning data, keeping files on students' study results, conducting interviews and holding meetings, students' learning process is under observation, evaluation and supervision, thus contributing to the enhancement of their learning efficiency. Formative assessment is particularly important in computer-based teaching which is characterized by students' independent learning.

On the other hand, summative evaluation is carried out with finished products and is designed to determine the effectiveness of the product. It includes CE final tests and proficiency tests. These tests are designed to assess student's all-round ability to use English. Student's scores in reading, writing and translation should not substitute for or offset the scores in listening and speaking, or vice versa.

To evaluate the results of the set goal, colleges and universities may administer tests of their own, run tests at the intercollegiate or regional requirements set by the 2004 CECR. Whatever form the tests may take, the focus should be on the assessments of students' ability to use English in communication, particularly their ability to speak and write in English.

Student results in Dalian Maritime University consisted of two parts. Part One was the final exam (75 per cent of the total); Part Two was the class performance (25 per

cent of the total), including attendance, written quiz results as well as oral test at the end of semester. An end-of-term CE Band-3 test for second-year maritime students at Dalian Maritime University, Semester Two, Academic year 2005 took the following form:

**Section One:** Listening comprehension (20%): 20 multiple-choice questions based on dialogues and passages read

**Section Two:** Reading comprehension (30%): 15 multiple-choice questions based on three passages.

**Section Three:** Vocabulary (20%): 40 multiple-choice questions

**Section Four:** Filling the blanks (10%): Select 10 words from the 11 given ones to fill in the blank

**Section Five:** Translation (20%): Translate five Chinese sentences into English and five English sentences into Chinese.

From the above, we can see that both summative and formative assessments were administered in Dalian Maritime University as required by the 2004 CECR. The oral part (Part Two, 25 per cent of the total) of the evaluation in Dalian Maritime University was processed as follows. Each examinee was first given five minutes to talk on a given topic. The examiners (usually in a panel of two) then raised some questions from a list of prepared questions. The result was recorded on an evaluation sheet based on examinees' performance in fluency and accuracy. The whole process lasts no more than ten minutes. The testing items, marking patterns and the length of the test were much questioned and debated among teachers and students.

Nevertheless, considering the large number of students and limited sources, this might be the best the administration can manage. The debates and doubts in Dalian Maritime University in this regard revealed one of the big issues the implementation of the 2004 CECR brings about, that is, how to scientifically evaluate the communicative abilities of the students. There is no ready-made solution to this problem.

Besides the university CE tests, students were encouraged to take part in the national CETs in spite of the suspicion whether nationwide testing like CET-4 would lead to genuine school improvement and higher student achievement or just sort out and



penalize low-performing schools and the students in them. It is argued that until there is truly equal opportunity to learn for all students (with equal access to technology, highly qualified teachers, good facilities, and other learning inputs), testing is an empty exercise. Another thing is that teachers might be torn between teaching the curriculum aligned with the state assessment and switching gears to focus on whatever other test is being used to determine rewards and sanctions. In fact, the running of CET has strong political overtones. For policymakers, it is closely associated with the policy of opening up and reform. Control of foreign language policy at the central governmental level is a strong indication of the importance attached on foreign language education. In the spirit of the latest CET reform, non-English major students might not have to get a mandatory pass at CET-4 for their bachelor's degrees. A notification of results, rather than a CET certificate will be issued to examinees. The whole system is becoming optional in more and more colleges and universities and more and more students tend to sit it as a proof of their language ability. In the foreseeable future it will remain an advantage, if not a must, when they applying for graduate school or work. This might be a good sign towards the disengagement with the test-driven system, but how well each institution manages the transition from the present model to the required one remains to be seen.

As revealed in the literature regarding CET in the previous chapters, the current national CETs, though reliable and efficient to administer, do not provide sufficient useful information about the test-takers' ability to use the language in the real world. To systematically investigate what happens when people use language for communicative purposes, Canale and Swain (1980) proposed a model of communicative competence that identified the different kinds of abilities that were required to communicate appropriately in a particular social context. This is still the most comprehensive illustration of communicative competence. However, how to integrate these abilities in CE teaching and learning, in particular, how to manage accurate and reliable evaluation of these abilities remain a difficult task for CE teachers.

According to Nunan (2004, p. 310), the process of assessment involves a wide range of elements in addition to student learning, such as teacher and student attitudes, teaching methods and materials, as well as administrative systems and resources.

Traditionally, the pedagogical role for many teachers is to evaluate all learners' performance in accordance with strictly set criteria. However, in facilitating learners' development of the communicative ability, what a teacher can do is to provide the students with stimulus and involvement rather than to attempt direct control over them. Most teachers believed that tests should be used as measures of accountability and they developed and used tests for classroom purposes, mainly to see how much students have learned, to provide a basis for grades, or to gain an understanding of individual students' strengths and weaknesses. The above factors raised by Nunan (2004) are difficult to be measured appropriately, thus making it even more difficult to evaluate the communicative competence and performance of students.

### **7.5.3 Unfavorable On-Campus English Environment**

It might be true to say that, for Chinese students, their communicative competence has to be achieved mainly in class, since they have little chances of employing what they have learned outside the classrooms. Therefore it is of tremendous importance to make full use of school time to practice and promote their communicative skills. However, an appropriate L2 acquisition environment is essential to the ultimate success of the acquiring of L2. Acquiring English should become a matter of enjoyment and fun. The student should receive as much daily comprehensible input in the target language as possible, as one interviewee commented:

*The school should take measures to promote on-campus English learning atmosphere, including adopting English-only policy in certain places, not just English Corner, establishing a campus English radio, organizing English debates or speech contests, and setting up self-access English learning centers.*

The typical EFL environment in Chinese universities should be held for responsibility for the problem that most of the students are refrained from interaction using English.

*The English learning environment is not good for us. Some students are motivated in learning but some are not. All of us are shy to talk in English*

*and some simply can't open their mouth to speak English.... It is very difficult for us to collaborate in English learning.*

The following result of the study in Dalian Maritime University in 2005 reveals what is common in EFL environment. On the University campuses, the superiority of Mandarin is evident. It is the working language and it is used in loudspeaker system and in the written notices and bulletins posted on the public information boards around the campus. In contrast, it is difficult to find anything in English. Even the posted notice advising of an impending English Corner is sometimes written in Chinese. To make it worse, there is a general lack of any inducement to speak English. Although the buildings are with Chinese and English names, in the English department offices all of the business was conducted in Mandarin. Ironically, a teacher of English who is in a habit of greeting his or her colleagues in English would be the topic of private discussion, as many teachers do not feel necessary and comfortable to be greeted that way. Therefore we can see that the degree to which the Chinese English users accept the cultural conventions in association with the English language depends on particular situations.

Apart from the academic English journals for various disciplines, there are limited general English reading materials suitable for average learners of English in the brand new University libraries. The collection does not include authentic English reading materials for persons of varying English comprehension capabilities and does not contain the types of materials like English music CDs, English DVD movies or television programs that may be chosen for free or recreational purposes that are so necessary for L2 acquisition.

The above-described environment violates principles set forth by Krashen and Terrell (1988) for establishing a friendly English acquisition environment. The following suggestions can be useful in light of the SLA theories by Krashen and Terrell (1988). The key to using a language for communication is practice with the structures in which actual information about the speaker or writer and his or her world is being transmitted. As learners practice meaningful use of English with a few structures, their minds and bodies become accustomed to the rhythms that are natural to people who speak the language as natives. Control of a few rhythms contains the

essence for learning to control all of the remaining structures. If Chinese teachers would allow for this kind of early use of English, their students could go beyond the limits imposed by present methodology, and the present goals of English education in China.

It is common sense that chances of success in acquiring a language increase with opportunities to use that language as a tool of communicating with its native speakers. A key finding from the investigation illustrated in the previous chapters was that almost every student knows that communicating with English-speaking personnel, ideally native English speakers, will help them acquire English. In the obvious absence of native or near native speakers of English as teachers, Chinese teachers could allow for ample exposure to English speaking persons through mass media and tapes. Improvement can come as teachers and students, alike, experiment with communicating orally while increasing their exposure to native English models on television, radio, in films and on tapes. A different, enhanced perspective of English might be the fortuitous result of the suggested changes accompanied by an increase in actual English proficiency by Chinese students.

According to Campbell (2004), EFL learners generally do not have adequate access to English outside of the classrooms and practice what they have learned in the classroom. English learners in China normally return to the real world speaking Mandarin the minute they step outside the classroom. In classrooms, although teachers now have gradually adopted approaches that focus on meaning and language use in a mode of face-to-face interaction, the learning outcome is still not efficient enough. EFL teachers now urgently need a solution to increase exposure and use of the target knowledge both inside and outside of the classroom. It is important to provide the students with the learning contexts that are related to acquisition and similar to the authentic communication settings. The limited accessibility to communicative English in a natural environment provides no motivation for students to come to terms as to why they spend the thousands of hours to learn it within the Chinese school system.

## **7.6 Trends in College English Teaching**

How much impact the latest CET reform will have on ELT in China remains to be seen. However, the mega trend in CE teaching and learning is obvious, that is, the shift from achievement focused aims – ‘to learn in order to pass exams, to get a degree or to get appraisal towards learning related objectives’ – towards learning to achieve competence – ‘to learn in order to learn, to understand and to apply the learned knowledge’. More and more Chinese universities have ceased to take CET results as a requisite for academic diploma.

The rapid and widespread deployment of computer technology in such short time has had impact on technology in language pedagogy, which resulted in wide use of multimedia-based content, technology-enhanced language learning and computer-mediated communication (Glatz, 2001, p.221). Technology, especially the emergence of the Internet, is affecting every aspect of education and changing the way we teach and learn. “It is no longer a question of whether to take advantage of these electronic technologies in foreign language instruction, but of how to harness them and guide our students in their use” (Paulsen, 2001).

To investigate the latest CE teaching and learning models, the researcher observed five CE classes in Dalian Maritime University from April to December 2005. The classes shared the following characteristics: the class size was about 35 students; the total class hours allotted to CE was still four hours per week, including two hours for listening every other week; a textbook attached with a CD was available for each student; a courseware with an e-version of the textbook was stored in the teacher’s control. However, classrooms were of two kinds, one is equipped with nothing more than the traditional blackboard and chalk; the other is newly built multi-media language labs. In the follow-up interviews, both students and teachers were asked about the effectiveness of this novel model and the advantages and disadvantages of Web-based course in comparison with conventional teaching and learning environments. They were also encouraged to make any other comments regarding CE teaching and learning.

### **7.6.1 Development of Web-Based CE Courses**

The immediate effect of the state-of-the-art technology on educational reform in Chinese ELT is the emergent web-based CE course. As far as information technology goes, there is no denying that English is indispensable as a tool of communication. Chinese English learners today, though still in the environment of traditional instruction, are acquiring computer literacy rapidly. Web-based courses have the advantage of providing learners as well as instructors freer and wider accessibility to language resources and better flexibility in time management. The CE teachers will play a guiding role by preparing and presenting materials and activities that they have found effective in assisting independent learning. Another possible advantage is that the traditional classroom instruction forms can be transformed based on an educational philosophy of learning by doing. For example, students can have the opportunity to use the Internet to conduct a research project in their major field, like logistics, which might result in both oral and written presentations. These presentations can be used as a means of course evaluation. Thus College English students can use English as an effective tool of communication in real-life environment not only to gather information in a technological environment but also to present it in a certain fashion, which is exactly what they will do with English in their future works. This, if properly managed, could at least save both teachers and students from the dullness of monotony in class.

There are various possible uses of information technology that are relevant to the CE teaching and learning: access to online resources; establishing links with schools overseas, using email and videoconferencing; assessment and testing, including automated test generation and adaptive feedback; automated language analysis; creation of virtual learning communities. Basic to the enterprise of designing a web-based course is ensuring that students have greater access not only to relevant online materials but also to each other. For developing people skills, face-to-face human interaction is arguably the most powerful of learning interventions. This accounts for the research done in the CE classes in Dalian Maritime University.

Dalian Maritime University was one of the 180 selected colleges and universities by the MOE for the CECR implementation experiments. College English teachers in Dalian Maritime University who were involved in the experiment believed that a well-designed computer-based lesson could be an effective alternative or supplement

to traditional face-to-face tuition. They pointed out that classroom learning, though with the potential for intense interaction, was in practice a rather passive learning environment where average students had limited interaction with the teacher. Well-designed computer-based education, in contrast, made learners active participants in the learning process. Chances were that each student could have intense interactions in one session. In this process learners were in control of their own learning and teachers were there to provide necessary feedbacks.

The CE classes the researcher observed in 2005 can be divided into two categories. Most of the classes remained more or less the same with the ones described in Chapter Six, when observations were conducted before the implementation of the 2004 CECR. The classroom environment remained the same as it was two years ago. No ICT facilities were available in these classrooms. Other classes were conducted in brand-new language labs with multi-media facilities available for CE classes (altogether two such classrooms were built after the introduction of the 2004 CECR).

In a multi-media lab in Dalian Maritime University, 37 PCs (one for the teacher, 36 for students) together with three servers are linked together to form a local area network that enables the in-class communications. They are connected to the Internet through the campus network, a part of CERNET (China Education and Research Network). Multimedia Classroom Software 3.0 controlled all the 37 PCs in the lab. By using this software, teacher can not only broadcast audiovisual or visual courseware to every student, but can also realize some special interactive activities with students, for example, remote instruction (the teacher can control any student's PC via her own PC remotely), screen surveillance (the teacher can survey any student's screen), chat between teacher and students, group discussion (the teacher can electronically divide students into groups at will and allow students to chat with each other within the group, meanwhile, teacher can take part in any group's discussion), electronic forum, sending messages between teacher and students or among students, file transmitting (the teacher can transmit any file to students, or students can hand in their assignment electronically), network cinema, and even courseware-on-demand system. Before the program, every student applied for a free E-mail account. Thus, the use of both the Internet and the local area network formed an online learning environment.

The result of in-class observation from April to December 2005 in the multi-media language labs in Dalian Maritime University indicates the following two levels of web-based teaching and learning practice. Level One: Initial information and online resources support. Online resources available via <http://sfl.dlmu.edu.cn/2005/yyxxzy/wyxxzy.htm> and <http://www.dlmu.net/pe/> primarily addressed an ongoing, immediate concerns regarding establishing the basic framework of the web-based courses. The learners, based on his or her previous knowledge, accessed the relevant topics and materials either via an index or the keyword search engine. Level One offerings allowed learners access to global ELT materials. This level was widely realized in Dalian Maritime University as part of independent learning. Level Two: Interactive online learning. At this level, learners further enhanced their knowledge and personal development beyond the beginning level by engaging in immersive interactions with peer learners and teachers of the items and issues presented in Level One. At this stage learners learned collaborative skills, and created and built real-life learning networks to enhance their own intellectual capital through IT products such as Chatroom. Collaborative spaces using same-place, different-time communication enable a truly local/global learning environment. This level, considered an important part of collaborative learning, was still in experimental stage and only available for classes involved in the trial programs for the implementation of the 2004 CECR. This part of the learning process supported virtual groups with materials and consulting to maximize learning results and was occasionally observed in Dalian Maritime University and not yet an organised practice for all the students.

General attitudes of both the teachers and students towards the use of online modules as informed by the results of the observations and interviews have been positive. They were well aware of all the benefits of the integration of computer-mediated communication into ELT as suggested by Chen (2005). Interviews with students indicated that they deemed it helpful to learn English through teacher-recommended websites and regarded the Internet as a useful tool to supplement in-class instruction. This supported the results of the study by Kung and Chuo (2002) who surveyed on students' perceptions of English Learning through ESL/EFL websites. In spite of all the discussions among the teachers regarding adapting traditional teaching strategies in order to meet the needs of students with varied learning styles, the virtual learning



environment pedagogical strategies discussed above are not yet commonly accepted and adopted. Students had access to language laboratories once every other week for listening course. Although multi-media rooms were located throughout the campus, they were not available to all the programs. Tape recorders or CD players were available for use for CE teachers on most occasions.

However, it was also found that most teachers and students did not have experience in web-based course, although they were familiar with the Internet and had adequate computer literacy skills. At the same time, some were skeptical of web-based teaching and learning as well as large-class instruction, taking them as 'training on the cheap' and believing that they can never replace the richness of the face-to-face classroom model of learning. What seems to set computer-based tuition apart from the traditional face-to-face models is the degree of interaction. The attraction of online learning seems to be its interactivity factors like sharing ideas in a virtual chat room or posting comments and feedbacks on a bulletin board.

The results of the observations and interviews confirm the claim that CALL is an effective way of student-centred language learning (Chen and Fu, 1996). One thing that is certain is that web-based courses put the emphasis on learning rather than teaching and are learner centred rather than teacher led, allowing the learner to choose the learning appropriate to them at a particular time and space. The changed role of computers from tools to tutors, as observed in the process, has been of great value to students. As previously pointed out, one of the most important aspects of interaction was that of feedback. The most important feature of the course, as indicated by the students, was the ability to receive immediate feedback, often in direct response to their input. Students indicated that they often had to wait up to a week to get their work back from a teacher, by which time they had moved on. When they did similar exercises on the computer they received immediate feedback. Moreover, of great value to the students was being able to work at their own pace, often in their own time and from various physical locations.

The use of Email and BBS to discuss issues on topics set by the teacher using the Bulletin Board was of great value to the learners as it allowed privacy and time for

preparation. However, the students found it difficult to hang on English in online chats and would switch to Chinese for more effective communication.

The teachers commented on the range of possibilities they could make use of in addition to using the course content, such as online communication and tasks, based on the online content yet linked to external authentic sources, which significantly increased learners' motivation and produced good outcomes. Using the bulletin board for regular discussions linked to topics as already introduced in the online modules was seen as having significant value. Having students working from various physical locations such as home, library made the online environment meaningful. Of highest value to both the teachers and students was the environment, which incorporated such a broad range of online tools within the same platform.

However, advantage of the 'any time, anywhere' aspect of the web-based courses does not mean that they can provide as positive a learning experience as classroom instruction. Both teachers and students saw its best use as an extension of the classroom. They all regarded the face-to-face tuition as the core of the teaching and learning process. This shows that language students need immediate support from a teacher and that teachers feel most comfortable in their traditional role.

Judging from the overall feedbacks, there is no doubt that the Web is perceived as a feasible environment for language learning, especially as an add-on to face-to-face teaching. The study found that all five reasons, namely authenticity, literacy, interaction, vitality, empowerment, to use the Web for English teaching as identified by Warschauer, *et al.* (2000) are very important in this context. It proves that the over-arching goal of web-based CE courses is to use ICT to reinforce a student-centred, communicative approach to English language learning. Integrative CALL, in which computer is used on a regular basis with other tools and media "serving the creation of an enriched workplace for accessing resources and using language constructively" (Barson and Debski, 1996) seems to be a solution to the problem of helping the classroom come alive.

It is not a difficult task nowadays to collect evidence for the value of technology as proposed by Li and Hart (1996), Meloni, (1998) and Chen (2005) for English

language teaching and learning. However, technology alone is not a universal remedy. It should be kept in mind that despite the many benefits of CALL, computers are only machines with no power of thinking and creating. A CE class can well be computer-based, but never computer-centred. The role of the teacher, who is always the creative and thought-provoking leader in the class, should never be neglected. What is more, without insufficient effort put into online content development and teacher training, this potential will never be realised. A coherent overall language teaching and learning strategy needs to be developed to make the most of what technology has to offer to enhance the overall quality and ultimate pedagogical effectiveness of teaching and learning.

Also it is worthy mentioning that implementing web-based learning must involve more than merely making the tools and technology available to people. It requires a culture change in the way people approach learning. A culture that encourages personal development and where learners are responsible for their own learning and development needs is vital to the success of any web-based learning initiative. Learners must be helped to understand their learning styles and learning needs and introduced to new ways of learning. Technology alone will not change behaviour. Learners must be actively encouraged to learn and be given the time and space to do this. Judging from the fact that students are commonly overburdened by the many contact hours every week, we have not much reason to be optimistic in this regard.

### **7.6.2 Use of Multimedia-Based Content in Parallel with Textbooks**

It is stipulated in the 2004 CECR that in designing a CE course, requirements for competence in listening and speaking should be fully considered, and corresponding teaching hours and credits should be adequately allocated. Moreover, the extensive use of advanced information technology should be encouraged, computer-and Web-based English teaching should be promoted, and students should be provided with favourable environment and facilities for language learning. With regard to computer-based course, the 2004 CECR stipulates that face-to-face coaching should be dully provided, and the hours spent on coaching should be counted in the teachers' teaching load. Students should receive credits after completing courses they learn via computers and passing the exams. What is more, CE course designing

should give a full play to the strengths of traditional classroom teaching, and encourage excellent teachers to offer courses suited to classroom teaching, thus forming a combination with computer-and web-based courses (CECR, 2004).

In this context, serious considerations must be given regarding what is best for the learner and what material is best suited to web-based courses. Krashen (1985) suggested that teachers should be allowed to choose their own texts which they deem best suited to the level of English proficiency of the class and of interest to the students, i.e. comprehensible input. An inevitable outcome of web-based courses is the weakening of the role of traditional print textbooks. As a replacement, the strengths of multimedia-based content strengths are obvious: firstly, sound, still image, video, and hypertext are so superior to a course based on a textbook that students have the visual and aural input of real speech in a context. Secondly, the use of interactive exercises in a web setting is superior to traditional face-to-face in-class interaction, especially when it is teacher led and not conducted in two-way or multi-way model (Pennington, 1996; Levy, 1997, cited in Glatz, 2001, p. 222).

Several types of textbook are used in Dalian Maritime University, including *College English* published by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, *Experiencing English* published by Higher Education Press and *New Horizon College English* published by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. The writing of a textbook reflects the dominance of a certain teaching methodology. Influenced by the Grammar-translation method, the CE textbooks used to contain literary works and formal writing as learning materials. The texts were monotonous in style and type. A lesson was typically made up of four parts: a text, a vocabulary list, grammar notes, and grammatical or translating exercises.

However, since the issuance of the 2004 CECR, tremendous efforts have been made to transform the grammar-translation mode textbooks into the ones that suit the need of the English learners in the new round of China's development, the ones that set priority on strong productive ability training. *Experiencing English*, for example, represents the latest effort in this regard.

The justification for using the required texts was that the students needed to learn English in a systematic manner as provided in the texts. Modern L2 acquisition theory provides that the teacher should be free to select the text or teaching materials that will be comprehensible for the particular class. This is particularly important in a situation, like the one at hand, where the students are not segregated according to L2 skills or development and any given class contains students of varying abilities and L2 acquisition proficiency (Krashen, 1987).

In one of the classes observed in Dalian Maritime University, each student sat before a computer with earphones and the teacher was at the control with a monitor computer, communicating with the students through a microphone. The monitor computer was stored with the e-version of the printed textbook. Each textbook had an attached CD-ROM with part of the texts and reference materials. Pictures and songs related to the text topics and contents were presented via PowerPoint or other multimedia equipments. Some students kept looking at the screen instead of the printed textbooks while listening to the teacher. Others still made notes on the textbooks and the main content dealt with in class is nothing but the textbook. The teacher kept control of the whole process of instruction and the students were not encouraged to browse web resources in class and they were not granted free access to Internet in class.

We can see from the above observation that the use of multimedia-based content does not necessarily lead to learner-centred classroom instruction. Students agreed that multimedia-based content gave them more confidence and freedom to manipulate the learning program. It is understandable that, within the limited class time, the learners were not given the freedom to access and use online resources. The World Wide Web is a double-edged sword (Gilster, 1997). To avoid possible abuse of this freedom, teachers should take on a new role to give due guidance and supervision. By leading the learners to work partly on their own and get more involved in the process of teaching and learning, teachers can help them to develop more motivation and interest in English learning. Superficially, the problem here observed might have resulted from the teacher's lack of competence in making use of the computer facilities to the benefit of the class, which is a concern expressed by some students. The root cause might be the tremendous impact of the traditional

notion of teaching and the role of the teacher in the CE classroom. This makes substantial pedagogical improvement difficult in a short period of time.

In general, the use of computer mediation aims to make students more cognitively and pragmatically involved in the teaching and learning process so that the possible monotony can be reduced and the class work can be more challenging and relevant to their personal needs and interests. The learners can even have the flexibility of having access to various aspects the English language and the related materials and exercises to facilitate their learning. Another beauty of the use of computer in language teaching and learning process is that the varied electronic facilities and resources available via the networks enable the learners to have more exposure to the different situations that are otherwise inaccessible in their everyday real lives. This provides a possible solution to the long-standing EFL problem, i.e. as a result of the disengagement with the real-life contexts of the English language, learners often find nowhere to put what they learn in class into practical use. Thus, it becomes easier for CE reading instruction to concentrate on authentic contemporary materials from countries where English is a native language, which is of essential value to EFL learners. The following statement makes clear the importance of the mediation process to narrow the gap of understanding between text and context in the use of multimedia-based content in language teaching.

What multimedia thrust upon us as never before is the necessity to keep text and context in constant tension with one another. The computer with its unlimited memory and capacity, rather than challenging our analytic and interpretive responsibilities, seduces us into believing that the truth is just around the corner of next 'text' that will fill the ultimate gap in our understanding. But this universe of spoken, visual, written, and printed texts is not self-explanatory. Contrary to folk wisdom, understanding has not been made more immediate through the advent of multimedia technology. Rather, it has become more mediated than ever, with a type of mediation that ever more diffuses and conceals its authority. The role of education, foreign language education in particular, is precisely to make this mediation process visible (Kramsch & Anderson, 1999, cited in Glatz, 2001, p. 222).

In short, different from the traditional print media that are basically of linear format, text structures of multimedia-based materials share the dynamic character of the new medium. Web-based courseware was developed to bring together words and graphics to build a network that would require greater complexity and allow access to more pathways. Recent online and computer-based materials, and computer-mediated communication were included as a major component of CE teaching and learning. To cope with these new kinds of computer-mediated text structures effectively, both EFL teachers and learners need a considerable body of knowledge and skills not only to find information but also to critically evaluate it. Teachers and students must thus be aware that the gate-keeping practices established for traditional print media have not been developed for the Web. With respect to finding information, students need to learn how to use search engines to locate relevant websites. Once they have located these websites, they must then learn how to scan them for useful information. To a certain degree, the scanning skills to be acquired are like those required for traditional print resources, but there is an important difference: students must learn to work efficiently with multiple pathways through a network of information that they actually need for a course project in their major field. To return to Dewey's philosophy, students learn best when they are carrying out a meaningful task.

### **7.6.3 The Model for Change: Global English for Global Communication**

Table 7.1 clearly shows the change of CE curricula from the 1999 program to the 2004 version. As a pattern of initiation, we can see from the previous discussions in Chapter Two, Three and Six regarding ELT in China that the expected change in CE is externally driven by the socio-economic globalisation, with immense input from the internal conditions. This is in accordance with theories of Zaltman, Duncan and Holbek (1973) regarding models of change in education. What is more, Levin's (1974) Polity Model suggested three implications of this model: firstly, for any change agent it is its requirement that any attempted change should be developed and presented in a way consistent with the values and goals of the society; secondly, major educational changes should be introduced when major changes in the society occurred; finally, the change agent must identify social influences which are very important to change being considered. Nevertheless, the disadvantages are also obvious. The organisational characteristics that facilitate introduction of innovations

may make implementation difficult, while characteristics enabling easy implementation may make initiation difficult. For instance, lack of commitment from teachers may produce only passive compliance with change, which will in turn have negative impact on the realisation of the potential benefits of the change.

Among the many other models explaining the process of educational change, although they all contain elements of either an internal or external input as a pattern of initiation, the Authoritative/Participative models characterize the latest ELT change as decisions about the nature and process of change are made by both authority figures within the organisation (e.g. representative teachers), and outside (e.g. the MOE). It should be pointed out that, in spite of authority's superior role in this model, common participants who will implement it must have an input, in some stages of the decision-making regarding the innovation. Views from teachers and students as the direct stakeholders should be the most important information to rely on for decision-making.

As discussed in the previous chapters, the introduction of the 2004 CECR is the result of both external and internal factors. Externally, the progressive wave of globalisation around the world has exerted more and more influence on the socio-economic spheres in China. Its WTO accession is a landmark of this influence. China needs English in this new era of economic development and political re-emergence. The message to English language education is that linguistic preparation for the need for more international communication should be made. On the other hand, technological innovations have always contributed to the growth and spread of English and are exercising tremendous impact on the non-native users of English. To catch up with the modern development of English teaching methods in the world and to raise awareness that teaching English is not rote teaching grammar and that the true mastery of a language involves communicative competence, the governmental decision of China is to seize the opportunity brought by the WTO accession and the development of the information industry.

Internally, the MOE's initiative in 2003, just one year after China's WTO accession, to produce a scientific and up-to-date College English curriculum to strengthen its English education policy was the major impetus for the creation of the 2004 CECR.



Secondly, the difficulties and dissatisfactions in association with the implementation of the 1999 CE Curriculum made the MOE decide to create a brand new curriculum rather than to modify the 1999 version. Thirdly, CE learners, who were not satisfied with the CE education in universities under the 1999 Curriculum, had a strong appeal for ELT reformation towards the cultivation of practical language skills.

China's WTO accession served as the major change agent in CE education reformation and the attempted changes included in the 2004 CECR were developed and presented in a way consistent with the social values and goals: i.e. to promote the new developments of higher education in China, deepen teaching reform, improve teaching quality, and meet the needs of the country and society for qualified personnel in the new era by taking advantage of the advance of technology. Both language educators and educational policy makers in China have taken into consideration the importance of shifting the pattern of ELT from the traditional linguistic acquirement to communicative competence and the module of teaching English language from single skill development to integrated skills training. The Computer-and Classroom-based Multimedia Model in 2004 CECR, with a premium on individualized, independent and hyper-textual learning, was designed to help students achieve the objectives.

As mentioned in the Introduction section, one of the main arguments of this thesis is that the global nature of the Global English model with its stress on communicative competence and performance in global communication meets the new ELT demands in Chinese universities in the context of contemporary globalisation in the WTO era. In order to highlight the relationship between the 2004 CECR and the Global English model (Crystal, 1997 and Graddol, 2006), the following table was developed.

Table 7.2 Comparison of 2004 CECR and Global English

	<b>2004 CECR</b>	<b>Global English</b>
<b>Aim</b>	To exchange information effectively through both spoken and written channels, and to study independently and improve cultural quality so as to meet the needs of social development and international exchanges	To get jobs in own country; to communicate with non-native speakers from other countries;
<b>Target variety</b>	All the varieties in English speaking countries	Focus on international intelligibility rather than a specific variety; carry-over of some L1 characteristics; need for receptive skills in a range of international varieties
<b>Skills Objective</b>	To develop students' ability to use English in an all-round way, especially in listening and speaking; to improve cultural quality	All skills including literacy; translation and interpretation skills often required; emphasis on intercultural communication strategies
<b>Learning environment /style</b>	Learner-centred; communicative; computer-based; equal stress on face-to-face instruction and independent learning	Classroom is key context but is insufficient; private sector and home tutoring often play a role
<b>Assessment</b>	To reform the existing CET; Emphasis on both formulative and summative assessment	Existing exams often not appropriate; assessment often via assessment of ability to carry out tasks in English or by assessing knowledge taught through English
<b>Learner motives</b>	Departure from token certification like CET; Actual skills for communication	Usually instrumental; Broader education or employment

Source: CECR (2004) and Graddol (2006, pp. 90-91)

From the above matrix, we can conclude that Global English, rather than a general term for the Englishes in use worldwide, is concerned with a particular model of English language teaching and learning. The 2004 CECR, to some extent, reflects the concepts of Global English model of learning English. As indicated in Table 2.1, the target variety of the 2004 CECR includes all the varieties in “English speaking countries” rather than American English and British English only; both receptive and productive skills are required, in combination with translation and interpretation skills and intercultural communication strategies; with the learner motives becoming more instrumental, the primary purpose of ELT is to communicate with “personnel from English speaking countries” (CECR, 2004, p. 18); the learning environment is less classroom focused, though still a key context, computer-based home tutoring and independent learning are encouraged; assessments are designed to assess “students’ all-round ability to use English” (CECR, 2004, p. 18), rather than to pass local or international examinations. This leads to a ‘mission critical’ process where broader education or employment is dependent on actual English language skills (rather than on token certification like CET-4 and -6). Moreover, the bilingual teaching and learning fad (teaching subject courses in English as well as Chinese) in Chinese universities is more or less the same as the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) proposed by Graddol (2006, pp. 90-91) in the Global English model.

To some extent, CLT is naturally associated with the training of the skills in the above new model. Although it is not specifically included or recommended method in the 2004 CECR, and there is no ready answer to the question whether CLT naturally leads to better communicative competence. An obvious change that is happening in many institutions is the switch from traditional approaches having preference on structure and form to the CLT approach. Grammar-translation as well as Audio-visual approaches is commonly considered to account for the failure to develop the communicative competence of the CE learners.

The rationale of the CLT approach is that teachers as facilitators should create a student-centered and environment to engage as much as possible the learners in life-like and sensible communications so that communicative competence is developed and the learners are able to produce more comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982). Successful communication requires more than the ability to integrate language

systems and skills. The learner also needs to understand how social contexts and specific situations influence the choice of language and the type of communication. The underlying principles of the communicative approach are that: language is a tool of communication; teaching should be student-centered; English should be taught through English; students learn by active involvement; learning tasks should reflect real life communication.

Specifically, CLT implies the formation of phonetic, lexical, grammatical skills by involving learners into communicative situations that are close to the situations of real communication. This approach is aimed to the practical use of the communicative skills. Hence the learning situations imitate real communication. We keep in mind that process of learning foreign languages cannot completely coincide with the process of real communication, so it is a question of highest possible approaching of studies to real life situations by means of communicative-oriented structure of a lesson; communicative-motivated behavior of a teacher; thorough selection of materials, topics, situations, handouts reflecting professional needs of students; authenticity of materials; thorough selection of active and passive vocabulary and grammar; situational oriented task instructions; implementation of various reading strategies; tolerance of error which do not impede successful communication; formation of intercultural competence.

A contrast between the major distinctive features of Grammar-Translation in combination with the Audiolingual Method and the Communicative Approach, might illustrate all the difference that is possible by utilizing different approaches:

Table 7.3 – Comparison between Communicative Approach and Grammar-Translation in Combination with the Audiolingual Method

<b>Communicative Approach</b>	<b>Grammar-Translation in Combination with Audiolingual Method</b>
Meaning is paramount	Attends to structure and form more than meaning
Contextualisation is a basic premise	Language items are not necessarily contextualized
Language learning is learning to communicate	Language learning is learning structures, sounds, or words
Effective communication is sought	Mastery is sought
Drilling may occur, but peripherally	Drilling is a central technique
Comprehensible pronunciation is sought	Native-speaker-like pronunciation is sought
Attempts to communicate may be encouraged from the very beginning	Communicative activities only come after a long process of rigid drills and exercises
Judicious use of native language is accepted where feasible	The use of the student's native language is not encouraged, if not forbidden
The target linguistic system will be learned best through the process of struggling to communicate.	The target linguistic system will be learned through the overt teaching of the patterns of the system.
Communicative competence is the desired goal (i.e. the ability to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriately)	Linguistic competence is the desired goal
Teachers help learners in any way that motivates them to work with the language	The teacher controls the learners and prevents them from doing anything that conflicts with the theory
Language is created by the individual often through trial and error	Language is habit, so errors must be prevented at all costs
Fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal: accuracy is judged not in	Accuracy, in terms of formal correctness, is a primary goal

the abstract but in context	
Students are expected to interact with other people, either in the flesh, through pair and group work, or in their writings	Students are more expected to interact with the language system, embodied in machines or controlled materials

Source: Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983, pp. 91-93)

Typically, a traditional CE approach (of Grammar-translation in combination with Audiolingual Approach), such as the 1999 Curriculum, lists learning items in terms of structures, functions, notions and vocabulary which are then set in situations and which usually integrate a variety of skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking). This dominant approach has been characterised as product-orientated because it focuses on what is to be learnt or on products (White, 1988). The problem with this approach, as Nunan (1988) pointed out, is that input cannot be equated with output and that teaching cannot be equated with learning. In short, what the teacher teaches is not what the learner learns.

Unlike grammar-translation or audiolingualism that merely focus on learners' ability to produce accurate language form and structure, the CLT approach gives priority to the learners' ability to effectively use the target language in various real-life contexts. By grouping up learners and involving them in a wide range of meaningful interactive discussion tasks, teachers attempt to promote the learners' ability to achieve the communicative goal, rather than forming grammatically correct sentences.

One thing that should be pointed out is that grammar instruction should not be neglected in the communicative approach. Ellis (2002) argued that explicit grammatical instruction is not only useful for developing meta-linguistic knowledge, but also for aiding acquisition through 'noticing'. Noticing is basically the idea that if learners pay attention to both the form and meaning of certain language structures in input, this will contribute to the internalisation of the grammatical rule (Batstone, 1996). Therefore, the learning of grammar still has a role to play in the dominant endeavour to improve one's communicative abilities in order to make input

comprehensible and to develop awareness to help the learner notice the form of input and their own output.

Many of the students involved in the research had difficulty reaching advanced levels or proficiency in English, especially when it comes to productive skills such as speaking. This confirms the ‘failure pattern’ specified in Figure 2.1, Chapter Two. The behaviour and the ways of thinking of the majority of the students, especially in the beginning level, seem to be transmitted from their native Chinese culture even when they speak English. One of the reasons may be due to the linguistic difficulty they face: they are struggling with word order, pronunciation, and vocabulary, to name but a few. Another reason may be that they lack confidence. Under such circumstances, the students cannot easily follow the behaviour and the modes of thinking, regardless of whether or not the English language teacher expects them to do so.

This practice can have support from the Input Hypothesis Krashen (1985) proposed. It claims that learners make progress in English acquisition through exposure to comprehensible input. Comprehensible input is defined as “understanding input that contains structures at our next ‘stage’ – structures that are a bit beyond our current level of competence” (Krashen, 1985, p. 2). This is often designated with the equation “ $i + 1$ ”. The “ $i$ ” represents the learner’s current competence in the second language; the “ $+ 1$ ” symbolizes the features of the input that are beyond the learner’s competence, and which he is developmentally ready to acquire. Accordingly, input that is either too simple or too complex will not help a learner make progress in spoken English.

## **7.7 Summary**

ELT reform has been much boosted both internally and externally since China’s entry into the WTO in 2001. Promulgation of the 2004 CECR, somewhat a combination of CALL and CLT concepts, represents an immediate response in the ELT field to China’s economic globalisation. The 2004 CECR stipulates that a computer-based and student-centred pedagogy should be adopted to suit the needs of the latest development in College English education, that is, the development of the

individual learner's communicative competence. The results of this study confirm Chen's (2005) finding that the integration of computer-mediated communication into EFL learning can provide learners with more authentic input and more opportunities to participate in the target sociocultural contexts; both linguistic and pragmatic knowledge can be promoted. Moreover, motivation, learner autonomy, can also be encouraged through the use of computer-mediated communication inside and outside of the classroom.

Despite these positive results, the trial nature of the 2004 CECR is worth noting and the implementation of the 2004 CECR is confronted with some challenges. First and foremost, substantial pedagogical improvement will not come unless there is a change in the understanding of the process of teaching and learning and philosophy of language. The traditional notion of teaching and learning in the CE classroom need to be reconsidered and reshaped to allow for a learner-centred multimedia language classroom to emerge. It also requires sufficient funding for computer facilities, and effective and timely training for teachers' professional development. Above all, it requires patience and the time to allow teachers to gain experience and bring about the necessary cultural change within institutions.

Secondly, empirical study on the implementation of the 2004 CECR reveals that it remains a major problem in regard to evaluating students' communicative competence and performance. Specific communicative abilities need first to be identified, though reference can be made to model proposed by Canale and Swain (1980). Then, there is still the issue of how to integrate these components into the process of evaluation so that effective and efficient work can be done regarding evaluating students' communicative competence and performance.

Finally, the unfavourable on-campus English learning environment to use the target language has resulted in difficulties EFL learners generally encounter in developing communicative competence. Grammar-translation in combination with audio-visual approaches is also considered to partly account for the failure to develop the communicative competence of the CE learners. Research on CALL indicates that the integration of computer-mediated communication into EFL teaching and learning can provide learners with more authentic input and more opportunities to participate in



the target socio-cultural contexts so as to benefit the learning and develop learners' communicative competence to a certain extent.

In combination with the above-mentioned challenges or difficulties, the following future trends are also obvious. Firstly, web-based CE courses resulting from the effect of the state-of-the-art technology on educational reform in Chinese ELT will be increasingly prevalent. Web-based courses have the advantage of providing learners as well as instructors freer and wider accessibility to language resources and better flexibility in time management. Moreover, online and computer-based resources, as well as computer-mediated communication were included as an important part of CE teaching and learning. Innovation in this respect made it possible for students to be more cognitively and pragmatically involved in the teaching and learning process and the class work became more challenging and relevant to their personal needs and interests. The learners were more likely to have access to various aspects of the English language and the related materials and exercises to facilitate their learning.

What is important to note is that the 2004 CECR, to some extent, reflects the concepts of Global English model of learning English language. As a result, it seems unstoppable that there will be increasing focus on learner-centered teaching modes and the development of the individual learner's communicative competence. Regarding the model of change, we can conclude that the Authoritative/Participative models characterize the latest ELT change as decisions about the nature and process of change are made by both authority figures within the organisation (e.g. representative teachers), and outside (e.g. the MOE). Also we can see that the expected change in CE is externally driven by the socio-economic globalisation, with immense input from the internal conditions.

In general, with the introduction of the 2004 CECR, ELT in China is clearly entering a new and largely unexplored phase. Efforts are yet to be made in CE teaching to ensure alignment with the 2004 CECR. Its full implementation and operation need careful consideration and organisation, which accounts for the necessity of the trials and experiments in process in 180 selected colleges and universities across the country. This will provide decision-makers and practitioners with the guidance and

reference they aspire for. More work is needed in the context of the current streams of challenges when we look into the future of ELT in China, in particular, the future of the 2004 CECR.

What is predictable for the time being is that we can not be optimistic about the full implementation of the 2004 CECR across the country in the foreseeable future in spite of the fact that partial implementation is already happening in many educational institutions. One thing we do know for sure is that implementing a project like the 2004 CECR takes some time and needs better availability of essential resources, including the facilities required by the computer-based model and the supply of teaching staff who have sufficient proficiency of English and adequate technical know-how of computer technology and more importantly, of making technology pedagogically effective.

## Chapter Eight – Conclusion

The ongoing socio-economic globalisation has obvious impact on education policy making. Globalisation means that borders become markedly less relevant in the various dimensions of economy, information, technology, cross-cultural communication, and so on. Cultural globalisation, as an integral part in the whole process of globalisation, has its impact and implication on education. Conflict, cohesion and consent are knotted with educational pedagogies, policies and politics. Consequently, educational change is a constant theme in globalising societies.

Many changes have taken place in all socio-economic, cultural and political aspects of everyday life across the country since China's entry into the WTO in 2001. China's WTO membership has brought about challenges as well as opportunities, in many fields including education. Education practitioners as well as education policy makers have learnt to view education in global terms. A regulating system that is more market-oriented and responsive to public interests and concerns is needed so that mission of higher education in this new era can be better fulfilled.

China's tertiary education, as the top and final level of public education system, is increasingly affected by global economic integration, domestic market reforms, and international academic exchanges. In particular, English language teaching in China has been restructured to meet the changing demands of the society in the era of WTO. Although it still remains to be seen whether English will become a prominent medium of communication in China, communicative competence is emerging as the supreme value of English language teaching. For both EFL teaching professionals and learners in Chinese universities, therefore, it is crucial to engage with questions about what kinds of problems are encountered and what solutions should be attempted.

At the same time, we need to recognise that the relationship between globalisation and English language is complex and the English language use and users are both intensely affected by globalisation. The global spread of English in the post-WWII era, with the growing American power and influence in various aspects of the

modern world, is the most recent and significant event in the history of the English language. As a result, English has acquired the status of the *lingua franca* for international and cross-cultural communications. China's accession to the WTO means more English-related jobs and more chances to conduct communication with it globally. This means higher demands for English learners. Tremendous importance has been attached to English teaching and learning in China since the beginning of the Reform and Open-up in 1978. Although Mandarin (Putonghua) is the only language with more first language speakers than English, the English language grows in popularity and influence, and the number of English speakers or users is enormous and keeps growing in China. English is not only the language to interact with Americans, the British, the Australians or any other native English speakers, it is also the common language for Chinese people to communicate with other Asians and people from other continents. Obviously English has been used in China as a tool to know the outside world and to let the whole world know China in turn.

In this context, it becomes significant to investigate English learners' views regarding the question of how well the ELT system in Chinese universities meets the needs of economic and cultural globalisation in the WTO era. To investigate this research problem of this project, multi-faceted methodology was applied to generate relevant data. Questionnaire survey, interviews and classroom studies were conducted to collect the needed data to deal with the research questions. Systematic classroom observations were conducted to examine actual practices in order to collect the first-hand data that was essential for analysis. As part of the data collection, special reference was given to the national curricula and other documents concerning ELT policy and curriculum development in China. The data collected was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively to investigate its relevance to the research problem and associated research questions.

### **8.1 Major Findings**

Regarding the role English plays in the recent process of globalisation in China, the result of analysis of the data collected, though based on a fairly small sample and limited site observations, confirmed the following general beliefs.

ELT in China's tertiary education is an issue of complexity concerning many aspects of Chinese society. ELT in China's colleges and universities involves various players in different contexts. These form a network with all the elements interacting to bring about the status quo. First, there are the students and teachers at the centre stage as the direct participants. Second, there is the Department of Higher Education, MOE as the central governing body. In addition, there are such domestic tests as CET, WSK (proficiency tests for foreign languages) and international tests as BEC, GRE, GMAT, TOEFL, and IELTS as the catalyst of ELT. In support of all the abovementioned, there are a number of publishers producing English textbooks and other ELT resources. Above all, the progressively more open and market-oriented Chinese economy has created a labour market that favours employees with good mastery of English.

Such extensive inclusion and sophistication is intensified by the sharp conflicts in the current ELT in higher education in China. A conflict of paramount public concern is the growing enrolment of college students and the lack of college English teaching and learning resources including proper textbooks, adequate multimedia access, qualified teachers, and so on. Conflict also exists in the demand for comprehensive English competence and the CET driven CE system. There is a longstanding debate over whether test scores in traditional examinations are able to represent actual abilities to carry on tasks in English. As Alexander and He (1997, p. i) pointed out, formal examinations with a bias towards the written language often obstruct rather than help a student in learning a language when it is regarded as an end in itself. The CET with its standardized and so-called objective form is even more questionable as it only tests fragments of language rather than comprehensive language use and behaviour. As these fragments can easily be cracked – the real intentions of the question designers can often be circumvented, students are taught on many occasions how to figure out the right choices without genuinely understanding the questions. This means departure from the normal course of language learning.

China's WTO accession makes these conflicts more obvious. Globalisation of English enhances its status in China in the WTO era. China needs English in this new era of economic development and political re-emergence. Frequent modification of national College English curriculum is an indication of the impact of rapidly

developing process of globalisation on higher education, especially, on ELT in China. Hence the government's recent attempt to strengthen its English education policy by readjusting the national curriculum in 2003. As a result, the 2004 CECR was promulgated only four years after the implementation of its predecessor, the 1999 CE Curriculum.

All these conflicts are leading to significant educational changes in the ELT sphere, and ELT in China is at a crossroads. The latest momentum for change, driven by the process of globalisation, is the implementation of the 2004 CECR. To catch up with the modern development of English teaching methods in the world and to raise awareness that teaching English is not rote teaching grammar and that the true mastery of a language involves communicative competence, the 2004 CECR was promulgated. College English, a required basic course for non-English major students in colleges and universities, intends to:

develop students' ability to use English in an all-round way, especially in listening and speaking, so that in their future work and social interactions they will be able to exchange information effectively through both spoken and written channels and at the same time they will be able to enhance their ability to study independently and improve their cultural quality so as to meet the needs of China's social development and international exchange (CECR, 2004, p. 16).

The communicative competence development was set as priority in CE teaching and learning in this initiative.

To sum up, two general conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of the trends within English language education in China. First, ELT reform in response to the English language needs in the WTO era becomes inevitable as a result of the driving forces both from internal and external sources. The recent reformation, marked by the implementation of the 2004 CECR, can be regarded as a major change of language education focus in response to China's socio-economic development in the new millennium. China's entry into the WTO actually triggers this shift of focus in English language education as communication competence is more and more

recognised as essential in integrating with the world society in the process of globalisation. Second, the model of change as represented by the 2004 CECR in essence reflects the basic concepts of the Global English model of teaching and learning with stress on cultivation of global communicative competence, linguistically and culturally.

The following findings provide concrete support to these generalisations.

**Finding One: English has been playing an important role in China's education and it remains a priority in the era of WTO.**

University students were positive about the role that English has been playing in China's education and agreed that it remains a priority. Similarly, a great majority of the students admitted that the English language holds very high status in Chinese education and it was their common belief that higher standards of English competence are necessary to meet the requirements of social and economic development in the WTO era. The notion that the spread of English might be at the cost of the mother language of Chinese is a matter of concern for very few.

**Finding Two: Globalisation of English in the WTO era is to the benefit of Chinese EFL learners.**

Most participants held that English is a major contributor to the economic and social advance since the Reform and Open-up in 1978. In this global network of discourse, English, the dominant language of the Internet and international communication in other fields, provides the main means of accessing high-tech communication and information in the WTO era. In addition, most participants acknowledged that they benefited from learning and using English as it enables better understanding of modern western values. Learners' discourses about English learning were often linked to finding a better job, securing a higher social position, or achieving more business successes.

However, in spite of the students' awareness of the demand of oral communication skills in jobs and professions in the era of WTO, they were worried about the lack of

training in this regard. The students were aware that successful communication required more than the ability to integrate language systems and skills. They were also aware that learning a language is inseparable from learning about its culture. Therefore they welcomed and expected the cultural components in teaching and learning.

The following findings provide some answers to the research question as to whether the dominant pedagogical approaches used in College English suit current and emerging needs in China.

**Finding Three: English learners were not satisfied with the CE education in universities under the 1999 Curriculum and there was a strong appeal for ELT reformation towards the cultivation of practical language skills.**

For various reasons, the 1999 Curriculum, which was not fully and successfully adopted across the country, failed to address the emerging issues regarding ELT in the process of China's globalisation. An overwhelming majority of the students involved in the research project believed that Chinese ELT system needs immediate reform to suit the new trend of social development. It is natural that when higher expectancy is made about the quality of ELT in China, efforts will be made to reform the system.

The survey conducted specifically regarding the 1999 Curriculum revealed that the common pattern of CE teaching and learning under the direction of the 1999 Curriculum is, contrary to its original designing initiatives, still textbook-based, teacher-dominated, test-oriented. It is obviously out of step with the rapid growth of international communication in China. The students expressed intense longing for the opportunities to integrate classroom learning into everyday use, but not to be subjected to passive teacher-centred, test-driven approaches. Students also expressed their dissatisfaction with the 'chalk and talk' methodology, the current textbooks and other available resources. It was their common demand that textbooks be revised to include more practical components by adding more cultural contents, attaching more importance to communicative skills to guide students' interest in developing their practical English skills. In addition, multimedia-based content needs to be made



available for students as part of the reform of teaching approaches. This situation necessitates reconsideration of the role of ELT in the WTO era.

**Finding Four: The 2004 CECR represents a positive policy response in the ELT field to China's recent globalisation process as well as the globalisation of English.**

Both language educators and educational policy makers in China have realised the importance of shifting the pattern of ELT from the traditional linguistic acquirement to communicative competence and the module of teaching English language from single skill development to integrated skills training. The 2004 CECR represents the latest attempt at developing and integrating online modules into the CE courses for their support and enhancement.

The 2004 CECR aims to promote the new developments of higher education in China, deepen teaching reform, improve teaching quality, and meet the needs of the country and society for qualified personnel in the new era. The most significant change this time is that it is referred to as a 'requirement' instead of 'curriculum'. In consequence, the traditional centralised role as a national curriculum is explicitly weakened to allow for more flexibility in dealing with the diversity found in the institutions all across the country.

The 2004 CECR might just be regarded as an improved version of the 1999 Curriculum integrating concepts of modernity. Another important feature is that it determines that a computer-based and a student-centred pedagogy should be adopted to suit the needs of the latest ELT development. It is commonly understood that the main objective of the 2004 CECR is aimed at a shift of priority from "reading comprehension" teaching and learning to listening and speaking competence development. It has been recognized that language is a medium of social communication. Listening and speaking skills are as important as reading and writing. Various classrooms activities maximize opportunities for learners to use English in a communicative way, like role-plays, surveys and projects. English is used as the normal medium for classroom management and instruction. The class is more student-orientated.

A computer- and classroom-based multimedia College English teaching model was provided in 2004 CECR to help students achieve the objectives set by the requirements. The model places a premium on individualized teaching and independent learning and make full use of the special function of computers in assisting learners with individualized and repeatable language practice, especially with the training of the listening and speaking abilities. From the perspective of learners, this means a switch to a learner-centred model that allows more learner autonomy by making the teaching and learning a computer-based process of individualized learning, collaborative learning and hyper-textual learning.

The following trends and model of change were evidenced in this research. Regarding the model of change, it is important to note is that the 2004 CECR, to some extent, reflects the realities of Global English model of teaching and learning English. As a result, it seems unstoppable that there will be increasing focus on learner-centered teaching modes and the development of the individual learner's communicative competence. We can conclude that the expected changes were externally driven by the socio-economic globalisation, with immense input from the internal conditions and that the Authoritative/Participative models characterize the latest ELT change as decisions about the nature and process of change are made by both authority figures within the organisation (e.g. representative teachers), and outside (e.g. the MOE).

The following future trends in regard to College English education are obvious. Firstly, web-based CE courses resulting from the effect of the state-of-the-art technology on educational reform in Chinese ELT will be increasingly prevalent. Web-based courses have the advantage of providing learners as well as instructors freer and wider accessibility to language resources and better flexibility in time management. Second, online and computer-based materials and resources, as well as computer-mediated communication will be more included as an important part of CE teaching and learning. Innovation in this respect make it possible for students to be more cognitively and pragmatically involved in the teaching and learning process and the class work can be more challenging and relevant to their personal needs and

interests. The learners can also have access to various aspects the English language and the related materials and exercises to facilitate their learning.

**Finding Five: The 2004 CECR implementation is confronted with challenges in practice.**

With the introduction of the 2004 CECR, ELT in China is clearly entering a new era. Not knowing exactly what is to come, we will keep a close eye on this situation and appeal to professionals worldwide for advice. However, what we do know is that implementation of the 2004 CECR is confronted with several challenges.

First of all, for pedagogical enhancement to happen, there should be a remarkable change in the understanding of the process of teaching and learning. The traditional Chinese notion of teaching and the role of the teacher in the CE classroom need to be reconsidered and reshaped to allow for a learner-centred multimedia language classroom to emerge. It also requires sufficient funding, and effective and timely professional development training.

Secondly, empirical study on the implementation of the 2004 CECR reveals that it remains a major problem in regard to evaluating students' communicative competence and performance. Specific communicative abilities need first to be identified, though reference can be made to model proposed by Canale and Swain (1980). Then, there is still the issue of how to integrate these components into the process of evaluation so that effective and efficient work can be done regarding evaluating students' communicative competence and performance.

Finally, the unfavourable on-campus English learning environment with its limited scope to use the target language has resulted in difficulties EFL learners generally encounter in developing communicative competence. Grammar-translation in combination with audio-visual approaches is also considered to partly account for the failure to develop the communicative competence of the CE learners. Research on CALL indicates that the integration of computer-mediated communication into EFL teaching and learning can provide learners with more authentic input and more

opportunities to participate in the target socio-cultural contexts so as to benefit the learning and develop learners' communicative competence to a certain extent.

Materials, methods and examinations, traditionally referred to as pedagogical trinity, would be of essential importance in achieving the objective of the 2004 CECR. Efforts are yet to be made in CE teaching to ensure alignment with the 2004 CECR. Its full implementation and operation need careful consideration and organisation, which accounts for the necessity of the trials and experiments in process in 180 selected colleges and universities across the country. This might provide them with the guidance and reference they aspire for.

## **8.2 Transferability of this Research**

It should be pointed out that research data obtained on EFL education from a survey of students in China should not be applied to any non-EFL situations. Any comparison would, whilst probably being based on sound criteria and research design, provide misleading results, unless specifically limited to that country of origin. The analysis and conclusion in this thesis is based on data collected in limited number of institutions. In spite of the temptation to make generalisation, it is essential to be aware that single or a few cases are poor representation of a population of cases and poor grounds for advancing grand generalisation. This study is of value in refining theory and suggesting complexities for further investigation, as well as helping to establish the limits of generalisability.

The purpose of the study is not to represent the College English world, but to represent the situation examined. Criteria for conducting the kind of research that leads to valid generalisation need modification to fit the search for effective particularisation. The utility of this research to ELT practitioners and policy makers is in its extension of experience. On the other hand, this study provides a source of crosscheck information. It can be argued that the extent to which findings from the study can be generalized to other cases depends on how far the subjects are similar to others of their types. The relatability in this case is more important than its generalisability. It might enable members of similar groups to recognize problems and, possibly, to perceive ways of solving similar problems in their own group.

### **8.3 Implications and Recommendations**

Pedagogical implications based on this study are directed at the conditions of College English instruction in China described above. Firstly, in the obvious absence of native or near native speakers of English as teachers, it is vital that great effort should be made to improve teachers' self-awareness of their role to play in the context of the 2004 CECR. They as well as the learners should allow for ample exposure to English speaking persons through mass media and tapes. The availability of web-based courses should be enhanced so that the disadvantage of lack of real English environment could be reduced to its utmost limits. Improvement can come as teachers and students, alike, experiment with communicating orally while increasing their exposure to native English.

Secondly, it is important to include authentic English inputs and meaningful use of language as essential parts of all instruction: reading instruction should concentrate on contemporary materials from countries where English is a native language; vocabulary words should be defined in English as often as possible to avoid the matching up of English words with Chinese meanings. Once students gain control of a fairly consistent vocabulary, they can be encouraged to use those words in order to associate new words when they have to look up the English definition, not Chinese translation, in a standard English-only dictionary. Chinese translation should be used to gain the meaning of the definition if unknown English words reused to define the new words. In this way, English will be mastered in terms of English contexts, not in terms of Chinese meanings.

Thirdly, the key to using a language for communication is practice with the structures in which actual information is being transmitted. Students should be encouraged to utilize good English sentences. As learners practice meaningful use of English with a few structures, they become accustomed to the rhythms that are natural to native English speakers. Control of a few rhythms contains the essence for learning to control all of the remaining structures. If Chinese instructors would allow for this kind of early use of English, their students could go beyond the limits imposed by present methodology, and the present goals of English education in

China. Language is a tool of communication. Practice makes perfect, and students should have more opportunity to practice their English, especially talking to people whose native language is English (Luo, *et al.*, 2003).

Harmer (2001, p. 95) regarded teaching and learning as contract between two parties for which both the teachers and students need to agree on the terms. It is not one-sided affair. Teachers need to understand student wants and expectations when they are determined to push their own methodological beliefs. However, this does not necessarily mean that they have to abandon their own theories simply because the students are not used to what their teacher wants to do. Instead, accommodation has to be reached between what the two parties want and expect. In that case, gradual rather than immediate change should be initiated based on prior investigation.

At the same time, the researcher strongly recommends that the actual 2004 CECR implementation process should be further examined and investigated. This is especially important considering that the MOE is planning a readjustment of the requirements towards a final version. One of the big issues the implementation of the 2004 CECR brings about is how to evaluate the communicative abilities of the students. How to integrate the communicative abilities Canale and Swain (1980) identified in College English assessments deserves systematic investigation and careful decision.

Another recommendation the researcher makes is that the relationship between CLT and CALL should be further studied. The relationship between CALL and the building of communicative competence remains an issue worthy of investigation, especially in the context that the 2004 CECR stipulates that College English should be computer-based and the priority is developing the practical ability of using English as a tool in global communication. Further research of whether EFL learners' communicative competence can be fully developed with the help of computer-mediated communication tools still needs to be done. It would be a valuable work to start a project to investigate the correlation between the application of CLT in College English and the enhancement of students' communicative competence. Experiments can be designed and conducted so that hypothesis can be tested. For example, to find out how CLT pedagogical techniques in the traditional classroom

setting can be successfully transferred to the virtual learning environments and how computer technology can be applied to achieve pedagogical effectiveness.

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## Appendices

## Appendix I Plain Language Statements

(letter head here)

### PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS IN QUESTIONNAIRE

Date

Dear Participant,

I am at present a PhD student in the Department of Language and International Studies, RMIT University, Australia carrying out a research project titled: **Post-WTO English Language Teaching in Chinese Universities** (With special reference to Syllabus and Pedagogy Development for non-English Majors), which is undertaken as part of my PhD degree under the supervision of Professor Michael Singh.

I would like to find out more about language use and your comments and attitudes towards foreign language teaching and learning, especially your comment on the College English Syllabus.

I would really appreciate it very much if you could participate in the study by filling in this questionnaire, which will take you approximately 20 minutes. The data collected, which will be kept in a locked cabinet, will be analysed for my thesis and the results may appear in conference presentation and publications. The results will be reported in a manner that you will be identified and your anonymity will be protected. You also can request the exclusion of your data from the research project anytime after the interview is conducted and I will do as requested.

Participation in this research is voluntary and you may withdraw at anytime! A summary of the findings will be available to you after the project is finished. Please let me know if you would like to be advised of the results.

If you have any queries regarding this project please contact my supervisor Professor Michael Singh, phone 0061 3 99251921, email [Michael.singh@rmit.edu.au](mailto:Michael.singh@rmit.edu.au) or the Chair of the RMIT FELCS Human Research Ethics Sub-committee Assoc. Professor Heather Fehring, phone 0061 3 99257840, email [heather.fehring@rmit.edu.au](mailto:heather.fehring@rmit.edu.au). Thank you very much for your interest in the project.

Yours Sincerely,

Luo Weihua



(letterhead here)

**PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS IN INTERVIEWS**

Date

Dear Participant,

I am at present a PhD student in the Department of Language and International Studies, RMIT University, Australia carrying out a research project titled: **Post-WTO English Language Teaching in Chinese Universities** (With special reference to Syllabus and Pedagogy Development for non-English Majors), which is undertaken as part of my PhD degree under the supervision of Professor Michael Singh.

I would like to find out more about language use and your comments and attitudes towards foreign language teaching and learning, especially your comment on the College English Syllabus.

With permission, I will videotape record the interview. Prior to the interview, you will be asked if you are comfortable for the interview to be videotaped. If, at any time during the interview you ask that the recording should be stopped, I will comply. If you decide that you are not comfortable with any part of the interview content, I will undertake not to use it in the research or erase the recording if you require. You are free to leave the interview at any time. You also can request the exclusion of your data from the research project anytime after the interview is conducted and I will do as requested. The data collected, which will be kept in a locked cabinet, will be analysed for my thesis and the results may appear in conference presentation and publications. The results will be reported in a manner that you will be identified and your anonymity will be protected.

A summary of the findings will be available to you after the project is finished. Please let me know if you would like to be advised of the results.

If you have any queries regarding this project please contact my supervisor Professor Michael Singh, phone 0061 3 99251921, email [Michael.singh@rmit.edu.au](mailto:Michael.singh@rmit.edu.au) or the Chair of the RMIT FELCS Human Research Ethics Sub-committee Assoc. Professor Heather Fehring, phone 0061 3 99257840, email [heather.fehring@rmit.edu.au](mailto:heather.fehring@rmit.edu.au).

Thank you very much for your interest in the project.

Yours Sincerely,

Luo Weihua

## Appendix II Consent Form

RMIT HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE  
Prescribed Consent Form For Persons Participating In Research Projects Involving  
Interviews, Questionnaires or Disclosure of Personal Information

**FACULTY OF**  
**DEPARTMENT OF**

Education, Language and Community Services

Department of Language and International Studies

Name of participant:

Project Title:

**Post-WTO English Language Teaching in Chinese  
Universities:**

Syllabus and Pedagogy Development for non-English Majors

Name(s) of  
investigators: (1)

Luo Weihua

Phone: +864114724470

(2)

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

1. I have received a statement explaining the interview/questionnaire involved in this project.
2. I consent to participate in the above project, the particulars of which - including details of the interviews or questionnaires - have been explained to me.
3. I authorise the investigator or his or her assistant to interview me or administer a questionnaire.
4. I acknowledge that:
  - (a) Having read Plain Language Statement, I agree to the general purpose, methods and demands of the study.
  - (b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
  - (c) The project is for the purpose of research and/or teaching. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
  - (d) The confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded. However should information of a confidential nature need to be disclosed for moral, clinical or legal reasons, I will be given an opportunity to negotiate the terms of this disclosure.
  - (e) The security of the research data is assured during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published, and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to \_\_\_\_\_ (specify as appropriate). Any information which will identify me will not be used.

**Participant's Consent**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Participant)

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Witness to signature)

Where participant is under 18 years of age:

I consent to the participation of \_\_\_\_\_ in the  
above project.

**Signature:** (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signatures of parents or guardians)

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Witness to signature)

Participants should be given a photocopy of this consent form after it has been signed.

**Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Secretary, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, University Secretariat, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. The telephone number is (03) 9925 1745.**

## Appendix III Questionnaires

### Personal Information

Age年龄:

Gender性别:

Major专业:

Institution学校:

Please circle the number you reckon appropriate.请在您认为合适的数字上画圈。

### Part I English education and China's globalisation 英语和中国的全球化

1. English enjoys higher status in China after its accession to the WTO. 入世后英语的社会地位更高了。

1 = strongly disagree非常不同意 2 = disagree不同意 3 = no view没意见  
4 = agree同意 5 = strongly agree非常同意

2. We have better social environment to use English after China's accession to the WTO. 入世后我们使用英语的社会环境更好了。

1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

3. English is more widely used in China after its WTO entry. 入世后英语在中国使用更广泛。

1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

4. Exposure to, and promotion of, English and its cultural assumptions endangers traditional Chinese cultures and values. 接触和提升英语及其文化会危害中国传统文化和价值观。

1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

5. Strengthening English education will contribute to westernisation in China. 英语教育的加强会对中国的西化起作用。

1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

6. English is an important factor to foster China's development in WTO era. 我认为英语是使中国更快发展的重要因素。

1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

7. People who know English well have a significantly better chance of getting a good job. 英语好的人找到好工作的机会大得多。

1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

8. If I can choose English or Chinese as the medium of education at college, I would choose English. 如果我能选择英语或者汉语作为教育媒介, 我会选择英语。

1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

9. After China's entry into the WTO, it's necessary that English become the second official language of China. 中国入世后, 有必要使英语成为中国的第二官方语言。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
10. Many people resent having to learn English. 很多人对必须学英语不满。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
11. English enables me better understanding of modern western values. 掌握英语使我能更好地了解西方的现代价值观念。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
12. English has been and continues to be a priority to China's education. 英语是并且将继续是中国教育的一个重点。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
13. Competence in English encourages elitism and increases socio-economic inequalities. 强调英语能力会鼓励精英主义, 扩大社会不公现象。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
14. English is a major contributor to the economic and social advance since the opening-up and reform in the 1980's. 英语对中国经济和社会发展起到了重要作用。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
15. English will provide the main means of accessing high-tech communication and information in WTO era. 英语是WTO时代接触高科技通讯和信息的主要途径。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
16. English teaching and learning has become more and more important in China after its accession to the WTO. 中国入世后英语教学变得越来越重要。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
17. Special efforts have been made to strengthen English teaching and learning in my institution after China's accession to the WTO. 入世后我的学校采取了措施加强英语教学。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
18. Higher standards of English competence are necessary to meet the requirements of social and economic development in WTO era. 有必要确立更高的英语能力标准, 以满足WTO时代社会和经济发展的要求。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
19. Chinese ELT system needs immediate reform to suit the new trend of social development. 中国的英语教学系统需要立即改革以适应社会发展的新趋势。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

20. Competence in LISTENING and SPEAKING and WRITING would be more important in WTO era. 在WTO时代, 听、说和写的能力将更为重要。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

## Part II ELT in Chinese universities 大学英语教学

21. My English teachers usually do most of the talking in class. 英语课大多是教师在上面讲。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
22. Teachers have been valuable in my English studies. 老师对我的英语学习很有帮助。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
23. I have opportunities to use English outside class. 我有机会在课堂外使用英语。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
24. I have enough contact with my teachers. 我与老师有足够的接触时间。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
25. I have good chance to speak in class. 在课堂上我有很多机会发言。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
26. I have learned more knowledge than communication skills in English. 与英语交际技能相比, 我学到了更多英语知识。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
27. There should be more classroom hours. 应该有更多的课堂教学时间。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
28. Audio-visuals, multimedia and Internet are commonly used in English classes. 在英语课中普遍使用了音像, 多媒体, 因特网等。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
29. The objectives of the current College English Syllabus are set low. 现行大学英语大纲的目标定得太低。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
30. I believe READING is the most important. 我相信阅读是英语学习最重要的部分。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
31. I'm more confident with my reading than listening and speaking. 我的阅读比听说好很多。  
1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
32. I have had good training of productive skills like LISTENING, SPEAKING and WRITING. 我接受了良好的听、说和写等应用能力的训练。

- 1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
33. College English learning is natural continuity of English learning at high schools. 大学英语学习是中学英语的自然连续。
- 1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
34. Classroom teaching is the most important for English learning at college. 课堂教学是大学英语学习的最重要的形式。
- 1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
35. CET is a good measure of one's English competence. 四、六级考试能准确测量英语水平。
- 1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
36. The importance of CET results is overstressed. 人们过分强调了CET 成绩的重要性。
- 1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
37. The main motivating factor for me to learn English is to pass examinations. 我学英语的主要动因是通过考试。
- 1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
38. Generally speaking, College English is test-driven. 总的来说, 大学英语教学是应试型的。
- 1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
39. I have adequate access to English learning resources. 我能使用足够的英语教学资源。
- 1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
40. I like the idea of learning English through multimedia. 用多媒体学习英语是个好主意。
- 1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
41. Learning subject courses through English is a good way to gain more practical use of English. 用英语学习专业课程是培养实用英语的有效方法。
- 1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
42. Various teaching methodologies have been applied in my English classes. 英语课使用了多种教学法。
- 1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
43. Many students find themselves burdened by English studies. 很多学生被英语所累。
- 1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意
44. We have good language teaching facilities in our university. 学校有很好的英语教学设施。

1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

45. Textbooks we have used suit our needs and interests. 英语教材符合我们的要求和兴趣。

1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

46. Textbooks we have used are very helpful to develop communicative competence. 我使用过的教材非常有助于发展交际能力。

1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

47. Textbooks have played a key role in improving my English. 教材对提高我的英语水平起了关键作用。

1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

48. What I have learnt in College English courses has met my expectations. 我在大学英语课程中学到的正是我想学的。

1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

49. There should be smaller English class size at college. 大学英语课的班级人数应更少。

1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

50. Cultural components constitute important part of English language learning. 文化方面的内容是英语学习的重要部分。

1 = 非常不同意 2 = 不同意 3 = 没意见 4 = 同意 5 = 非常同意

Please feel free to make any other comments regarding English teaching and learning. 关于英语教学，您还有哪些看法？

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Thank you very much for your participation. 谢谢您的参与。

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## Appendix IV Additional Questionnaire Comments by Participants

The following responses are a verbatim translation from Chinese by the researcher where the answer was not given in English.

- P1* (1) improve skills of teaching English  
(2) exchange students with foreign schools  
(3) let foreign students live with native students  
(4) perhaps that teacher brings the students to join in English corner in first several times is a good way for them being interested in it.
- P2* English teacher should make a good circumstance for talking in English, not just on the book. Because the vital English skill is oral-English, not grammar. In the English education system of our school, oral-English class is not enough. Many students want to study English without "do-for-exam". They want to talk more for not only practice oral-English, but also strengthen what have been learnt in class.
- P3* ELT is unbalanced, with little input and training in listening, speaking and cultural backgrounds. There are not enough teachers and their competence is also a problem.
- P5* Hope that teachers would allow more student involvement in class, giving us more chances to answer questions. In this way, we can learn English more effectively.
- P6* There should be more emphasis on the actual use of English and more opportunities and better environment for students to do listening and speaking.
- P7* There should be more foreign teachers and we should cultivate the atmosphere for English learning.

- P8 *The bondage of textbooks should be done away with. The main objective of classroom teaching is to mobilize students so that they would take the initiative to learning English by adopting more active approaches. If possible, subject courses should be taught through English.*
- P9 (NOT AVAILABLE)
- P10 *College English should attach importance to letting students learn English voluntarily. What teachers should do in class is teach the ways to learn the language and the related background knowledge. However, the current teaching is nothing but literary translation sentence by sentence, which is ineffective and boring. ELT should be diversified, not limited to conventional classroom instruction, giving more chance for students to put what they learn into practice.*
- P11 *I've made so many complaints. It doesn't mean that I hate learning English. I mean that our country and our school should do more efforts to improve ELT in Chinese University. I know that our country isn't very price, so we can't do the same thing as the developed country. In all I'll learn English by heart. The purpose of learning English is that I can do much more things for my country!*
- P12 (1) *It is a test-driven system with too much emphasis on CET-4 and CET-6 examinations. There's not enough attention to developing students' competence, their listening and speaking, especially speaking.*  
(2) *In English teaching and learning, competence is judged based on examinations marks. Classroom teaching is dull and routine.*  
(3) *Textbooks are boring. Teaching is dull and content is outdated.*  
(4) *There is not sufficient teacher-student communication*

- P13 Our English level could be much improved if foreign teachers could be available for classroom teaching. Class hours for English is not enough and should be increased. There should be more oral classes and the textbooks should include wider topics in broader areas.*
- P14 Listening and speaking should be enhanced and class hours for English be increased.*
- P15 Various accents should be included in listening materials, not restricted to RP or GA. Cultural components, both Chinese and foreign, should be added in reading.*
- P16 We have less contact with our teachers than ever before. If we have any questions, it's impossible to turn to the teachers for help. We don't know where they are and how to contact with them.*
- P17 (NOT AVAILABLE)*
- P18 Can China just demand that those desiring to do business in China or with China should learn Mandarin? In this way, we Chinese do not have to learn English?*
- P19 (NOT AVAILABLE)*
- P20 (NOT AVAILABLE)*
- P21 Classroom teaching should be interactive, giving we students more chances to speak in class; Teaching approaches should be enriched by classic movies, English speeches and performance so that English usefulness could be best represented.*
- P22 More listening, more speaking, more exposure.*

- P23 *The problem is English is now used as a tool for various tests rather than a tool for communication. In Hong Kong, children in the kindergartens are speaking English. They are learning the language in the simplest way, by listening and speaking. Look at us in the mainland, even a graduate student cannot speak the language properly or read English newspapers after some 20 years' efforts. Why? It's because we pay too much attention to grammar.*
- P24 *We should bring in advanced facilities to make the English class colourful and the size of classroom should be smaller. We should emphasize the ability of speaking and listening. What's more, we should try our best to talk with foreigners to improve our English.*
- P25 *Honestly, English is of little use in our everyday life. We need more changes to practice our speaking, writing and listening skill. I think it is more important to use English than to learn.*
- P26 *I am totally against the practice of placing as much emphasis on learning English as on Chinese. It's a shame for a country with such a splendid culture to do so. It's not right to require every Chinese to bent on learning English, especially when this is initiated and sponsored by government.*
- P27 *ELT should give further priority on listening and speaking competence as well as understanding of deep meaning of cultures rather than superficial things. This would be where we can benefit.*
- P28 *It does not matter. What is important is self-study!*
- P29 *(1) Our university should try to add some foreign teachers to grant the students of all majors equal opportunities to communicate with native English speakers.  
(2) Our English lessons should try to emphasize oral English, and also the listening.*

*(3) English teachers should be stricter with students.*

*(4) Students should recite more materials.*

*P30 Chinese people just emphasize too much on learning English. Personally, I don't give much attention to classroom learning, but rather I am an independent learner.*

*P31 More listening and reading!*

*P32 I think there're so many problems in English teaching. First, our teaching is more or less separated from society. Second, teaching means should be various. At last, we should have more chances to communicate with foreigners.*

*P33 ELT should give more priority to practical use of what is learned. Learning and use should not be separated. At present, what we learn in class is not very useful in real life. There should be more foreign teachers so that we could learn idiomatic spoken English and western cultures.*

*P34 I think there should be various ways used in the English teaching. Make sure our students have more chances to contact with foreigners and environments.*

*P35 In English teaching and learning, we should not be for the test, such as CET-4 or 6. We should be for the communion and know the culture of other countries in the world. We should use English as a tool and should not think it as a aim.*

*P36 (1) There should be more investment and foreign teacher in English teaching.*

*(2) The test-driven English should be changed.*

- P37 *Currently, university English teaching practice is not open enough. There is more routine and lifeless teaching and learning but not enough communication in English. More foreign teachers should be invited and the teaching model should be reformed so that students could be better motivated and inspired. This will help to promote the integration of English with China.*
- P38 *I know it's important to study English to get a good job here and also if I want to study, not only abroad, but even here because there are many English books, journals, articles which can be taken from the internet, etc.. Also, listening comprehension and speaking are important skills to develop if they have to give speeches or attend conferences or meet foreigners (and not just people coming from the US, UK, or Australia etc.).*
- P39 *Regarding ELT, our school still takes test-oriented attitude. It gives no impetus to English learning as it values the final scores too much. This score-referenced criterion is a big blow to the initiatives of students. Teaching approaches should be more varied, with multi-media access and more interactions between foreign students.*
- P40 *Please allow me to write in Chinese here. I have no doubt in the competence and capability of English teachers. However, our English learning is much hindered by the educational system, in particular the examination system. As a result, it becomes very difficult for us to develop good listening and speaking abilities as well as other communicative competence.*
- P41 *Learning English is for communication, not for passing the exam.*
- P42 *Textbooks we have used don't suit our needs and interests. We need some helpful textbooks to develop communicative competence. Our college English is text-driven.*

*P43 My suggestion is that College English should switch from required to optional so that students gifted in English learning take the course on their own wills and those who are talented in fields other than foreign language learning could do away with this heavy bondage of examinations. Thus, ELT will switch from test-driven to all-round quality education in a real sense.*

## Appendix V Questionnaire Results for 50 Scaled Questions

Result (percentages) Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	No comment	Agree	Strongly agree
Q1. English enjoys higher status in China after its accession to the WTO	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	2 (5%)	14 (33%)	25 (58%)
Q2. We have better social environment to use English after China's accession to the WTO	1 (2%)	5 (12%)	4 (9%)	16 (37%)	17 (40%)
Q3. English is more widely used in China after WTO	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	3 (7%)	20 (47%)	18 (42%)
Q4. Exposure to, and promotion of, English and its cultural assumptions endangers traditional Chinese cultures and values	4 (9%)	22 (51%)	9 (21%)	5 (12%)	3 (7%)
Q5. Strengthening English education will contribute to westernisation in China	2 (5%)	6 (14%)	7 (16%)	23 (53%)	5 (12%)
Q6. English is an important factor to foster China's development in WTO era	1 (2%)	8 (19%)	7 (16%)	18 (42%)	9 (21%)
Q7. People who know English well have a significantly better chance of getting a good job	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	2 (5%)	21 (49%)	19 (44%)
Q8. If I could choose English or Chinese as the medium of education at college, I would choose English	7 (16%)	16 (37%)	5 (12%)	10 (23%)	5 (12%)
Q9. After China's entry into WTO, it is necessary that English become the second official language of China	6 (14%)	13 (30%)	6 (14%)	13 (30%)	5 (12%)
Q10. Many people resent having to learn English	2 (5%)	16 (37%)	6 (14%)	9 (21%)	10 (23%)
Q11. English enables me better understanding of modern western values	1 (2%)	3 (7%)	3 (7%)	24 (56%)	12 (28%)



Q12. English has been and continues to be a priority to China's education	1 (2%)	4 (9%)	3 (7%)	22 (51%)	10 (23%)
Q13. Competence in English encourages elitism and increases socio-economic inequalities	3 (7%)	14 (33%)	10 (23%)	9 (21%)	4 (9%)
Q14. English is a major contributor to the economic and social advance since the opening-up and reform in the 1980s	0 (0%)	8 (19%)	8 (19%)	17 (40%)	7 (16%)
Q15. English will provide the main means of accessing high-tech communication and information in WTO era	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	3 (7%)	29 (67%)	7 (16%)
Q16. English teaching and learning has become more and more important in China after its accession to the WTO	0 (0%)	2 (5%)	4 (9%)	19 (44%)	15 (35%)
Q17. Special efforts have been made to strengthen English teaching and learning in my institution after China's accession to the WTO	1 (2%)	15 (35%)	12 (28%)	9 (21%)	3 (7%)
Q18. Higher standards of English competence are necessary to meet the requirements of social and economic development in WTO era	4 (9%)	3 (7%)	7 (16%)	19 (44%)	7 (16%)
Q19. Chinese ELT system needs immediate reform to suit the new trend of social development	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	2 (5%)	18 (42%)	18 (42%)
Q20. Competence in LISTENING and SPEAKING and WRITING would be more important in WTO era	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (5%)	14 (33%)	24 (56%)
Q21. My English teachers usually do most of the talking in class	0 (0%)	5 (12%)	2 (5%)	24 (56%)	9 (21%)
Q22. Teachers have been valuable in my English studies	2 (5%)	11 (26%)	13 (30%)	11 (26%)	3 (7%)
Q23. I have opportunities	4	23	2	7	4

to use English outside class	(9%)	(53%)	(5%)	(16%)	(9%)
Q24. I have enough contact with my teachers	9 (21%)	24 (56%)	1 (2%)	5 (12%)	1 (2%)
Q25. I have good chance to speak in class	4 (9%)	15 (35%)	9 (21%)	9 (21%)	3 (7%)
Q26. I have learned more knowledge than communication skills in English	3 (7%)	4 (9%)	12 (28%)	19 (44%)	2 (5%)
Q27. There should be more classroom hours	4 (9%)	9 (21%)	8 (19%)	18 (42%)	4 (9%)
Q28. Audio-visuals, multimedia and Internet are commonly used in English classes	5 (12%)	22 (51%)	2 (5%)	10 (23%)	4 (9%)
Q29. The objectives of the current College English Syllabus are set low	1 (2%)	10 (23%)	15 (35%)	12 (28%)	5 (12%)
Q30. I believe READING is the most important	3 (7%)	10 (23%)	7 (16%)	18 (42%)	5 (12%)
Q31. I am more confident with my reading than listening and speaking	2 (5%)	8 (19%)	5 (12%)	23 (53%)	5 (12%)
Q32. I have had good training of productive skills like LISTENING, SPEAKING and WRITING	7 (16%)	30 (70%)	3 (7%)	2 (5%)	1 (2%)
Q33. College English learning is natural continuity of English learning at high schools	2 (5%)	22 (51%)	9 (21%)	8 (19%)	2 (5%)
Q34. Classroom teaching is the most important for English learning at college	1 (2%)	14 (33%)	3 (7%)	20 (47%)	5 (12%)
Q35. CET is a good measure of one's English competence	10 (23%)	22 (51%)	8 (19%)	1 (2%)	2 (5%)
Q36. The importance of CET results is overstressed	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	5 (12%)	24 (56%)	13 (30%)
Q37. The main motivating factor for me to learn English is to pass examinations	6 (14%)	13 (30%)	8 (19%)	11 (26%)	5 (12%)
Q38. Generally speaking, College English is test-driven	1 (2%)	5 (12%)	3 (7%)	17 (40%)	17 (40%)
Q39. I have adequate access to English learning	4 (9%)	31 (72%)	3 (7%)	2 (5%)	3 (7%)

resources					
Q40. I like the idea of learning English through multimedia	1 (2%)	4 (9%)	3 (7%)	26 (60%)	9 (21%)
Q41. Learning subject courses through English is a good way to gain more practical use of English	1 (2%)	5 (12%)	4 (9%)	22 (51%)	11 (26%)
Q42. Various teaching methodologies have been applied in my English classes	3 (7%)	25 (58%)	7 (16%)	6 (14%)	2 (5%)
Q43. Many students find themselves burdened by English studies	0 (0%)	5 (12%)	4 (9%)	19 (44%)	16 (37%)
Q44. We have good language teaching facilities in our university	8 (19%)	19 (44%)	5 (12%)	9 (21%)	2 (5%)
Q45. Textbooks we have used suit our needs and interests	8 (19%)	21 (49%)	12 (28%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)
Q46. Textbooks we have used are very helpful to develop communicative competence	12 (28%)	26 (60%)	2 (5%)	1 (2%)	2 (5%)
Q47. Textbooks have played a key role in improving my English	8 (19%)	20 (47%)	9 (19%)	3 (12%)	2 (5%)
Q48. What I have learnt in College English courses has met my expectations	9 (21%)	20 (47%)	9 (21%)	3 (7%)	2 (5%)
Q49. There should be smaller English class size at college	0 (0%)	3 (7%)	7 (16%)	19 (44%)	14 (33%)
Q50. Cultural components constitute important part of English language learning	1 (2%)	3 (7%)	7 (16%)	25 (58%)	7 (16%)

Note: some participants gave no answers to some of the questions.

## Appendix VI Chinese Script of Interview I (for Pilot Study) in 2003

罗：发给大家的问卷，大家都非常认真地填写了，谢谢大家。我今天呢，有一些关于问卷的问题问一下，你如果觉得自己有什么想法就可以直接说就可以，随便说。首先呢我想问一下就是大家这个，完全本着问卷大概花了多少时间。一般同学大概都花了多少时间？

学生：15-20分钟，加后面写。

罗老师：加后面写，20来分钟。

学生：20分钟左右。

罗：20分钟左右，啊，那大概觉得这个问卷时间的话是不是太长了？还是还可以。

学生：太长了。

学生：觉得有点长。

罗：有点长……问题写的太多了还是……

学生：不是，问题比较实际。一想到划上就行呀，马上就反应出来了，自己怎么想的就怎么划。

罗：这个时间……然后，我第二个问题就是说问卷指示，就是前面部分，是不是清楚？一看就知道要做什么。

学生：比较清楚。

罗：比较清楚，有没有觉得没有看明白，到底让我干什么呀？有没有这个……？哪个同学有这种感觉？你们觉得自己应该怎么做才能完成这个问卷？

学生：就是前面这部分啊，我写完以后……

学生：我个人体会，同学们做选择题做得比较多，有些，哎，根本就没看题，啊看的就是选项。

罗：啊，基本上就是……

学生：没看题。

罗：啊，基本上不看啊。

学生：反正是选择题。

罗：啊，就不看了，就无所谓啦。

学生：当时一拿过来一看就选上。选择题嘛……

罗：啊，这样的，那我明白了。。。。。那下面这个问题就是说所有这些问题里面，大概是45个问题，你有没有觉得不太清楚、看不懂的？或者说意思很含糊的问题？

学生：有，忘了哪些。

罗：有一些，看看能不能看看，找找哪些问题，你觉得看不懂？这个就是很重要的。

罗：哪个同学能不能举个例子？

学生：12题。英语是并且将继续是中国教育的一个优势。

罗：啊，这个问题……你觉得不好理解是吧？

学生：对，就是说，我觉得从逻辑上来说，就是说英语是中国教育的一个优势，我觉得可能这个提法就不恰当。

罗：啊，就是从逻辑上讲这个提法有问题？

学生：嗯。我觉得中国教育，英语教学这一方面应该说做得比较失败，我选得就是非常不满意。

罗：我看，就是很多同学都选得非常不满意。有五个同学选得非常满意，有三个写没意见，然后一个写了同意，所以大家对这个优势提法有疑问，啊很好，很好，觉得应该是相反。

学生：不是，不是相反，这个题目理解本身就不太……

罗：不太一致？

学生：提法不恰当。

罗：这个提法不恰当，啊，好，谢谢，看看还有，还有哪个？

学生：还有23题。

罗：23题。

学生：有一个我们就是……自己都有一个从自己教学过程过来之后，就是在英语课中普遍使用了这些设备，只能从自己来看，好像了解的并不是很多，所以说这个题答起来不太容易。

罗：答起来不太容易？

学生：啊。

罗：对，这个，那我这个题就是希望大家按照自己的经历来回答这个问题的。很多同学我看，大部分答的是非常不同意，不同意，是不是意味着你们在平时课程当中就是说……

学生：没有谁用过，我们自己学习，这个东西根本就没用过，根本就没有……

学生：上课时，老师在黑板上讲，你根本就就没有。

罗：没有，根本就没有——

这也正好是咱们改革的一个方面。以后多媒体教学是一个方向，为什么，嗯，因为你这个……咱们不可能全部都让老外来教，当然不可能让你搬到国外去学，所以说呢只能通过多媒体让你好像有点在真实的语言环境当中，好像国家以后会往这一方面去留意。这个好象大家根本就没有，所以，我，对大家这个意见反映出来比较准确的，我统计了一下，9个人都是，基本上都是1、2、3，连3在内3个意见，没有说是同意的，这个就能看出问题来……有一个39题，39题就是说The English textbook you have used suits our needs and interests well. 这句话讷讷，大部分同学就是说也是填了，选了前3种意见，非常不同意，那么大家对这个教材看来不是很满意，是不是呀？

罗：啊……很好……还有没有.哪个同学看看这个问题有哪些不太清楚的？理解起来有困难的？或者觉得不好回答的？那有没有哪个问题你不想回答？比如这个问题我不太喜欢，我不想回答。

学生：第8题。

罗：第8题，好，第8题是不想回答，为什么呢？

学生：首先，我觉得官方语言这个概念好像就像不太理解，不知道官方语言主要用来干什么，我只知道大多数就是用于发表文件或者什么的，平时使用上……

罗：官方语言体现在一个官方的文件。

学生：对。

罗：还有一些法院、法庭、法庭宣判。

学生：对。

罗：还有一些主要的媒体。

学生：那是第二官方语言的主要功能。

罗：第二官方语言这个就是说中国人来说，没有概念的，像许多国家有第二官方语言。

学生：嗯，就是说平时他这个文件都是双语的？

罗：啊，啊，这样的……这个，大家这些意见都非常好。那还有一个问题，希望大家想一想，就是说我这个所有问题里面，有没有觉得漏掉咱们整个教学过程中存在的一些比较重要的问题？

学生：前面的时候还是感觉很全面的。

罗：前面的时候感觉还是很全面的。

学生：一下子20分钟就得把问卷完成的话，根本没有多余的时间去迅速地想或一个一个地想，有没有漏的地方，根本不可能？

罗：当时是不可能。

学生：当时前面还是感觉挺全面的。

罗：啊，然后再看一下就我这个问卷设计的布局呀、卷面呀，怎么样觉得？

学生：不要有正反面比较好，我觉得。

罗：噢，不要正反面。

学生：嗯，对。

罗：啊，不要有正反面。好，还有什么别的看法？这个卷面是否合理？这个时间稍微有点长了，本来今天问卷第二个礼拜我就开始请你们来。这段时间太长可能想不起来，没关系。有什么尽管说。

学生：就是那个选项呀，应该就是分一下类，有几个类要进行。

学生：全球化和中国大学英语教学。

罗：分细一点，是不是呀？他的意思我知道，就是说分的类别更细一点，比如说这个，教学方面比如说教材、教师、设施。

学生：当中几个大类，就是3、4个大类，4、5个大类，这种。

罗：嗯。

学生：我觉得这种显得就是那个更……

罗：这个我当初设计的时候为什么没分太细呢？就是说因为我最后要根据所有的这些问题，自己总结出来一个，到时写的，能多写些东西出来，当时是这么想的。那关于问卷本身的就这些问题。好，大体就这样，谢谢大家。然后你们所有这些想法都很重要，非常有价值，啊，……非常感谢你们！

## Appendix VII Chinese Script of Interview II (for Main Study)

罗：我先再简单介绍一下我这个项目，就是我给大家曾经发了一个Plain language statement, 大家都收到了，是吧？就是，实际上我是2002年国家公派到澳大利亚皇家墨尔本理工大学——RMIT University。到那个大学去留学。然后，留学期间我跟我们那边的系主任，然后跟他们工作一段时间，他们就愿意提供奖学金让我在那里读博士学位。所以这个整个项目就是我读博士学位的项目，啊，读博士学位呢，那个读学位要求主要是最后交一篇10万字的论文。论文呢就是说，因为我是在中国在这样背景下面来写的话，所以我就想借我从事的工作把论文，项目题目就叫做《全球化跟中国的外语教学》。这么一个大的题目，那么我想真正要研究的是咱们大学英语教学。大学英语教学因为现在一直以来大家对好几个大纲——我从90年开始教英语，教到现在已经有三、四个大纲，每个大纲出来刚开始大家都觉得挺好，但是呢慢慢用着用着大家都觉得不是那么好，那么主要是想针对这些大纲，它规定了一些标准，那调查一些这个（？）。以前我觉得大家考虑这个教学法大纲的时候，就是说征求学生的意见比较少。那么我做这个研究主要是从学生的角度出发，想问问，就是说同学们在，比如经历过2年在大纲的指导下学习以后，对这个大纲，然后对大纲所控制教学环节下面的一些意见，主要是这么一个想法。那么咱们这个大纲实际上现在，你们用完这个大纲以后，从今年开始又要有一个新的大纲，那么这个大纲的主要思想就是要分级教学，不同的地方的学校要实行不同的标准，不能全国各地的学校都一样，好象是不太科学，还有一个就是要培养大家实用性的英语，培养大家这个实际使用英语的一些能力，而不是说专门能看懂文章就行，所以主要以后英语学习会发生很大的变化，要大家就是说提高听、说、读、写，各发面的能力要齐头并进，不能光是强调听、说能力。这个是前几天，北京，咱们国家教育部高教司刚召开这个21个所有211大学都去开会，宣布了这么一个精神，你们可能就是赶不上了，你们还是那个旧的大纲体制下完善你们这个英语学习的，啊，那么这个，我这个计划还主要是针对旧的东西。旧的大纲，然后呢，在旧的大纲基础上看看大家有什么样的看法，大家这个问卷呢，我收回来，这个大家都非常认真地填写了，完成了，谢谢大家。

这个.....能得到同学们第一手的意见、第一手的资料，这个对我们老师发面来讲好应该是非常重要的，啊，只有知道了同学们是怎么想的，然后慢慢地咱们的一些努力全能够把这个整个教学工作呢做得更好，那么我今天呢，首先表示感谢，然后我有一些关于问卷的问题问一下，然后第二部分呢就是关于咱们实际英语 教学环节中的一些具体问题，我还想问一下，希望大家就是说不一定就是一个个回答。你如果觉得 自己有什么想法就可以直接说 就可以，随便说，不要紧张，咱们这个不是开什么大会，不是这样的。随便说，你这个想法.....



不管是……没有对错，我所收集的不是对错，而是说第一手的意见，不要有任何的顾虑，没有什么顾虑，咱们就是从研究、从学术的角度来说。

罗：那么大家觉得这个不满意的地方主要在哪些方面？就是教材。

学生：那些材料都不是那么很有用的，都是那什么文学性、欣赏类的，像文章欣赏里面的情节或者光有这些枯燥的知识，也没有内容比较实用的、贴近生活的。

罗：不实用的，不贴近生活的。

学生：嗯。

学生：学起来也比较枯燥，像有一些词平时不常用，这样背起来也比较困难。

罗：主要是觉得比较枯燥？

学生：嗯。

罗：这些教材的问题。

学生：当然形式有点单一了，我觉得，比如可以用什么声像那样类型的教材，不一定都让我们听出来。

罗：对，声像，声像类的教材。那么刚才有些同学提出来就是文学方面的东西，那你们觉得就是说像你们这些，工科的是吧？你们文学方面的东西有没有必要给你们？

学生：很有必要。

学生：必要是有，但题应是多种题材的都有吧？

学生：对，应该是……

罗：应该是多种题材都有。

学生：对……

罗：包括小说。

学生：科幻。

罗：科幻、小说，诗歌这些方面东西都应该有。

学生：对。

学生：有些课本也有。

学生：贴近生活的文章应该有。

学生：贴近生活的。

罗：贴近生活一点的。

学生：对。

罗：贴近一点的，更新一点的，更现代一点的。

学生：里面还有一种就是对人起教育、警示作用内容就是太多了。

罗：说教性的东西太多了。

罗：第8题有关将英语定为官方语言的问题大家有什么想法？

学生：首先，我觉得官方语言这个概念好像就像不太理解，不知道官方语言主要用来干什么，我只知道大多数就是用于发表文件或者什么的，平时使用上.....

罗：第二官方语言这个就是说中国人来说，没有概念的，像许多国家有第二官方语言。

学生：嗯，就是说平时他这个文件都是双语的？

罗：对双语的，你像这个加拿大，加拿大这个英语、法语，它是，它就不叫第二官方语言，它实际上是同等，同时是官方语言。

学生：它那里官方语言，我觉得好像第一是它是原来是别人的殖民地，第二或者说是这部分土地上移民太多了，才出现了第二官方语言。

罗：对。

学生：如果说中国弄上了，第二官方语言是英语的话。那好像是说中国现在好像是受人口控制什么的。现在好像（????）好像中国人有人接受不了这个。

罗：啊，中国人有的会觉得接受不了？

学生：对。

罗：英语成为第二官方语言是中国??????

学生：英语使用率好像还不是达到这个目标。

学生：这方面好像里面

学生：第二官方语言好像使用率应该比较高的。

罗：啊。

学生：人的接触比较多的，但现在如果中国人使用率和接触都没达到这个高度的话，觉得成为第二官方语言.....不太可能。

罗：可能性不大。所以这个地方就有点问题，因为我看有5个同学说同意，然后有的非常不同意，有的非常同意，我，我这个地方做了注解，我就是说.....就是按照大家的意见，就是说英语成为第二官方语言可能性是很小的，是不是呀？

学生：嗯。几乎是没有什么可能性。

罗：如果要有的话，就是英语

学生：我觉得是怎么着，如果是说全民的文化素质高的话，这个还是可以接受的，如果是按照那个老思想来看的话，这个好象上不太能接受。如果说你像一些农村人，你说第二官方语言的话，他有的好像.....有的最起码会感到比较反感，可以说。

罗：农村。

学生：对，根本不能接受，如果说文化教育水平都上去的话，完全能接受。

罗：所以，这个.....在座的有哪几个同学觉得啊，不同意这种观点？我想再澄清一下这个问题。

学生：我是同意的。

罗：你是同意的，有这个必要。

学生：我觉得确实有这个必要。

罗：为什么呢？

学生：就是说如果成为官方语言的话，能够体现高层的重视。

罗：体现高层国家里的重视。

学生：国家领导人也好，就是教育部那样的高层对英语的重视程度，所以从这个角度推动英语更好得去学。

罗：主要推动英语更好得学习，在中国的使用。

学生：因为现在，我觉得我们国家很多做事的时候，上面的态度是，比如说支持什么，这样取得的成效是不一样的。

罗：如果是上面有这个正确的保向，非常那个明显的话，他还是对英语学习这方面有——

学生：再说我觉得加如了WTO以后，现在可能还没有，慢慢地还没有什么感觉，我觉得现在已经，中国人民变得慢慢走向国际化，走向国际化了以后，不能再那么狭窄的民族主义去想，就是外国人讲的语言，中国强了，为什么要学习？现在最重要的是交流和合作，比如说英语达到普及程度上是因为我们国家总的来说，大部分区域挺有力量。我记得朱容基以前在清华大学大学讲过，他说“我觉得在我们这样大学里边，或者说像我们一样档次比较高的大学里边，我就支持必须全部用英语教学。他说我们学 英语不是为了崇洋媚外，是振兴我们自己的民族。我觉得还是很有道理的，就说普及英语方面对加强科学，我们国家科学方面总的来说还是比较落后的。现在如果英语学好了，向科技领域，对……科技领域如果学好了，能够把握好，对前沿科学的话能持续介入再用自己的，站在这个基础自己再研究的话，那是对整个国家也是很有用的。现在致力保持那种，就是外面如果很封闭那种，不通过一种渠道的话，根本就使得……你翻译过来的话，可能……”

罗：翻译过来的过程中，可能丢失一部分很宝贵的东西，很真实的。

学生：就是我的感觉就是，最能体现高层对下层人民的共识。作为官方第二语言，出发点也没有什么，其实我觉得也有可能持续。

罗：嗯，好，你，你是什么？

学生：我跟他的观点是一样的。

罗：观点一样。好，谢谢。那么，那么还有其他同学吗？

学生：我，我是非常同意的。

罗：你是非常同意的。好，你也是非常同意的。

学生：哈！

学生：以为如果中国真的有必要加第二官方语言的话，勉强来看，外国那些语言，你不可能学日语或俄语呀，以英语作为世界来说，世界通用语言，必须得学英语。学英语更是为了推销我们，向国外将我们国家推销嘛，让更多的人了解我们中国。

罗：嗯。

学生：我觉得这，如果说英语不成为官方语言的话，也并不代表我们就不是用英语，就是说并不代表外国的技术看不懂，也并不是英语一点也不懂。

学生：对，但是用了英语之后发展会更快。由于这个题目是加入WTO之后，英语作用是巨大的。

学生：这个语言是官方语言的话，它是作为预备使用，并不是说全能去使用，这个也不代表普遍性，这个东西。

学生：但是我觉得还是刚才说的有没有体现上层对人民的态度，我觉得可能起着很好的作用。

罗：作用很明显的就是说……

学生：这个作用应该有。

学生：那个促进作用。

学生：如果上层指令要做什么事，哪怕很容易的事情。如果上层迟迟没有表明他们明确态度的话，咱国家形式、各方面都……

学生：现在并不是说官方语言都不重视，像你现在考国家公务员的话，最起码还得看你英语的直接水平吧。

罗：对，如果第二官方语言的话，那就更重视了。

学生：学生对英语的重视程度也肯定不一样。

罗：但它意思就是说现在所有的，印度呀，新加坡呀，像这种把英语作为第二官方语言的国家，都是，像殖民地那种，有些这种方面的色彩。啊，意思就是说大家对这个问题的看法还是比较有分歧的。那紧接着有个同学提出的问题就是说，说在清华大学朱容基总理说都用英语上课，那么，国家现在也有这么一个政策强调要，有些特别是重点学校，尽量多地用英语上专业课，比如说上航海英语，肯定是英语课。比如说你从学数学的时候，从大一开始学数学的时候就要用英语上或者你整个学航海的时候都用英语上，大家觉得，这种想法怎么样？

学生：我觉得以目前来说不太现实。

罗：不太可能实行，为什么？

学生：有些文章比较难，汉语都看不懂，你说弄成英语之后，肯定怎么……

学生：需要一个整个教学系统，对应英语的那种，你从小学就这样的话，也许可以。你小学、初中全部都用中文教学，到了大学……

学生：但这也不可能，你如果从小学开始的话，都汉语都丢了，把自己的语言都丢了。

罗：如果从小学开始，可能对自己的语言有影响。嗯，所以觉得这个可能性不大。

学生：我觉得这种提法是非常好的，我觉得……

学生：提法是好的，但现在好象不太适用，你像航海的，他们发下书之后，他们是不看中文看英语，他们看不懂，有些中文都看不懂，你说看英文的，那不更……

罗：那你们学习当中……

学生：高中毕业那英语水平能有多少，能看几个单词？

罗：高中毕业时，水准起点就比较低，那你们这个，已经大三了，是吧？这几年有没有用英语上过什么课？

学生：除了基础英语，好像没有了。

学生们：哈哈。

学生：条文也没有英语。

学生：是双语。

罗：‘避碰’是双语教学？

学生：对。

罗：怎么个双语语法？

学生：就是用英语解释，完了之后……

罗：那个老师是航海学院的？

学生：一般就是，是用英语然后讲过解释一遍，再用汉语。

学生：因为条例是英语嘛。

学生：你如果翻译成中文的话，可能有点偏差，所以用英语坚持来讲。

罗：条例原文是英文的，所以用英文来讲，大家觉得效果怎么样？

学生：感觉他发音好像有点不是很好。

罗：主要是发音觉得有问题，听起来不舒服。

学生：嗯。

学生：我觉得这方面……

学生：我觉得他比较有经验吧——跑船呀，有这些经验给我们讲。

学生：其实我觉得，就是说在推广英语教学、全英语教学的过程中，存在一个最大的问题，就是说不仅仅在学生这一块；在师资配备中，很多老师他也没有这个能力来用英语讲课，他自己表达不清晰，比如说，就是说专业方面的、生活方面的表达，有的就感到……有的老师可能自己就做不到，比如说刚才讲的朱容基在清华大学里边讲的，我觉得也是在有条件的学校，就是说学校里边群体能达到那个水平那种情况下，我觉得……

罗：大家觉得主要是师资的问题，教材方面没有问题。

学生：就是说师资也是一部分问题，老师很多都是六、七十年代那个时候学习的，象六十年代还算是年轻一点的，像我们以前的老师都四、五十岁。现在四、五十岁，六、七十岁，他们已经接受了那种教育，他们以前学的英语的话，就是一个词一个词的蹦的那种。所以说，师资这一块很有必要提高。

罗：教材倒不是问题很大，你象哪个避碰是原版教材，那，那老师那个教材就是把条文直接拿过来，是不是教材呢还是原稿？

学生：就是原稿。

罗：就是原版，原版那个条例，没有编成教材？

学：没有。

罗：啊，啊，这样的……这个，大家这些意见都非常好。那么还有一些就是涉及到大家总体情况，这个大学英语教学总体情况，我希望大家再发表一些意见，比如说你觉得在学了两年外语，是吧？你觉得最大的问题是什么？

学生：我觉得我们学的都是”哑巴英语“。

罗：最大的问题就是”哑巴英语“。

学生：平时学了这么多英语，真正说一句英语真是很难……

罗：不容易。

学生：特别是英语氛围还不够。

罗：氛围不够。

学生：英语学习环境不利。有些学生学起来有动力，有的却不然。大家都需要羞于开口，有的根本就张不开嘴。。。。这样，想让我相互协作挺难的。

学生：那好象除了初中、刚一接触英语那一段，采用交流方式，以后到教材越来越减少交流的东西，就是说高中英语怎么在生活中交流这一段方面，到后面(???)

罗：交流技巧没有。

学生：对。

学校应该想办法提升校园英语学习的气氛，包括在一些固定的地方实行‘只讲英语’的政策（而不仅是在英语角），还应成立校园电台，组织英语辩论或演讲比赛，并设立自主学习中心。

罗：噢，这些问题，那咱们上课环节当中，课堂教学环境当中，我们现在要以学生为中心，那么假使在课堂里面要以你为中心的话，你觉得要让你参与到，怎么样的学生才能真正参与到教学环境当中去，而不是像以前那样，你就坐在那里听课，什么样的模式才能把你的积极性调动起来？你然后觉得我愿意参加到这个教学环境中去。

学生：我觉得这一点对一个老师的要求比较高，我个人感觉来说，读高中的时候，我是读的外语学校，第一学年的时候，那个老师就感觉好像班上学生的积极性调动不起来，上课听起来很枯燥，而且学的也非常累，每次上课都是几大

黑板的笔记，到后来换了一个南方老师，那个老师很生动，上课非常幽默，表达。美国幽默我觉得平时可能掌握，上课大家的积极性都提高起来，并且大家觉得学习也没那么累了，语感、各方面也提高了，说得也比较多，我觉得这个对老师的要求比较高，刚才同学也讲到了，对老师的要求非常高。

罗：主要是——

学生：不仅学生的兴趣，关键是老师有时候——

罗：老师的引导。

学生：对老师要求很高，很不容易。

罗：那你这个提到的是哪个外语学校？

学生：重庆外语学校。

罗：啊，重庆外语学校。他那个老师，你觉得哪些方面做得比较好？

学生：我们那个老师参加乌鲁木齐那个全国外语学校青年教师什么大赛，我看他拿了第一名，就是上课的时候就是表情呀、肢体呀、运用得非常得好，就是上课的时候你就看他那动作，有的时候根本一句话没听，你就知道他在说什么，对同学的听力呀，各方面都有好处。上课表达能力特别强，还有就是用那些动作我觉得用得特别得和谐。

罗：他上课时，他说话说得多，还是你们说话说得多？

学生：他说得，还算，上课一直用英语吧，但是还是给下边同学很多机会。有什么问题讨论什么的。这些对于那些社会上比较热的问题，哪怕有些感觉，男孩和女孩高中的时候说有些问题的时候，感觉是有点那个的。但他那个思维非常地开放，年轻人嘛，我们那个老师也28岁，聊起来比较容易进入状态。有的就是早恋什么的，一块就说了，有的女老师可能谈到这一块石油，谈到这个问题避开了，其他同学里面还有什么想法，同学们说说。

学生：我说说自己的一点体会。中学时都特忙，压力大的都有点受不了。但一到大学就不同啦。现在空闲时间很多，可以做自己想做的事。我很喜欢看电影，也看了很多英语片。我还喜欢听英文歌。而且我还特喜欢上网，花了很多时间在网冲浪，听电台，看录像，聊天。。。网上很多信息都是英语的。慢慢地我的英语水平就不知不觉提高了。再也不是抱着什么目的去学，而通过做自己喜欢做的事，英语的确能学得更好。

罗：如果大家这个，比如说上一节英语课，大部分时间都是同学好，在那说，在那发音，在那里互相，比如说同学之间互相交流，会不会觉得没学到什么东西？

学生：现在就让老师来把握那个度，就是讲多少，同学们，点过一下，总结一下，我觉得老师也觉得这个度，老师要掌握那个火候。

学生：我觉得这样就是说以老师和学生为中心，两个中心。

学生：两个都是中心。我觉得你这个是得什么，将来可以以教室为中心。我看没准以同学为中心，我只好选同学，老师两部分为中心。

罗：两个中心，为什么呢？

学生：因为学生在课堂上毕竟是要学知识，通过学生自己很难或者说容易地掌握一些知识，需要老师去灌输一些知识，但是在灌输过程中，全部是那种填鸭式灌输，也需要学生主动一下。

罗：嗯。这个提法还真是，很有意思，很好。

学生：我觉得确实也不太好，就是说以某一个为中心。

罗：不能够以某一个为中心。

学生：那个教学师生那个融洽关系——

罗：应该提倡一点，互动。

学生：互动的那种。

罗：互动的那种好一点……然后大家觉得需要改进的还有什么地方？总体来讲，咱们，咱们学校情况需要改进的还有哪些地方？不管是同学也好，还是教学方面，老师方面。

学生：教学的形式应该稍微有点变化，每天都是上课时老师老在上面讲，学生坐到下课，每次一学期几次课都是这样，一点连对话形式都没有感觉。

学生：非常大的班，都是这样，大班平时……

罗：大班，你们觉得大班效果好不好？

学生：不敢想象，做什么肯定比小班难得多。

罗：大班总体来说感觉不好。

学生：效果不好，你发言呀，机会更差。

学生：更少了。

学生：但是老师还看不过来，30多人老师还看不过来，你如果200多个人，老师连面都不认识。

罗：现在60多个人，大班现在60多个人。

学生：两个班。

罗：两个班，60个人这样，这个是我另外一个课题，我要研究的。到底要不要大班上课，也有的人说，大班上课有它的好处。

学生：我在电视上也看过，他们好像外国人里面一个班光八、九个人到十几个人。就围在这儿，上课就是随便讲。老师也不是讲，实际上就像咱们这样坐在这里，就这么多学生，他们。

罗：我原来是上海外语学院毕业的，我们班上就20来个人，不能超过60，不许超过那个数。

学生：你像现在海员在培训的时候，他们也控制是20左右，一般也就十五、六个。



罗：外语专家就是说最佳状态是不能超过十五个，少了也不一定好，一个两个也不一定好，你不能超过十五个，十五个以内效果是最好的，那咱们现在没办法，扩招，没办法，有实际的困难。

学生：那也不一定就在教师上课吗？随便找个地方。。。。。。

罗：那希望你把这个意见跟教务处提，跟教务处提——

大家：哈哈。。。。

罗：环境倒可以，问题不太，但关键是思维，你要是这样上课的话，老师，我们老师经常说，不是照书本来讲，要拿点自己的东西去讲，那又到时候可能会来找你麻烦，说你怎么不按教材来讲，老师也有这方面的经历，我有个同事，他上课喜欢给大家唱英语歌什么的，背个吉他去讲课，然后年纪大一点的就看不惯，他们觉得你这个方法是错的，你这不玩吗？他觉得不行，那照我的看法，像我平时积累很多资料，我要有机会的话，设备什么的，把国外什么积累的一些资料给同学看，比你在那讲一天课文效果强得多，我也是这么想，但现在包括我们研究生上课都没有这种设备，你决不可能有投影仪、放像机呀，他没有。

学生：这个想法我觉得非常好，比如说一个学期有20多，比如有十七、八周的课，有时说，每节课都用，三、四课间隔来一次，有这个效果就可以。

罗：调节调节。

学生：调节调节，不是每次上课都是那种模式，我觉得效果可能会比较好。

学生：但我觉得这种改革方式的话，要想有什么特长、灵活多样的话，必须考试形式改革。

学生：对。

学生：考试要还是这样考的话，必然还是这样用。

学生：对。

罗：像你们平时上课，希不希望我在课堂上多发发言什么的？大部分同学是想要发言，还是老师别找我。

学生：关键是这个气氛，大多数老师那个，给同学机会也不是很多，而且这样——

罗：我觉得有时候比如说我经常上课问了几遍，同学都没啥反应，我也就.....

学生：老师问的时候，一般都是提出问题，让你回答问题。而不是说这样聊天式的这种，有些——

罗：不是平等的那种，哈？

学生：如果说给你给一个问题的话，他就考虑怎么去回答，这样的话，他就是(???)

罗：不喜欢被动地那种被提问。这个也有道理，还有一个很重要的问题就是大家觉得，咱们现在是四级都考过了，四级里面这些教材呀，包括这个词汇要求

方面，总的来说标准低了还是高了？我问卷里也有这个问题，希望大家关于这个发表点看法。

学生：对于大学二年级学生来说，我觉得低了。

罗：低了。

学生：我觉得高中近进来之后，完全可以考四级。

罗：噢，高中进来后就可考四级，完全可以考四级。

学生：一般都可以。

学生：肯定差不多，你像高考时好多都考110或者更多。

学生：高考练习很多拿四级来练。

罗：现在呀？

学生：啊。

罗：你是哪个地方来的？

学生：福建。

罗：福建的。

学生：他平时穿插着四级题给你做。

罗：嗯，有些拔高题那样。

学生：像阅读什么的，很多高中时学过，听力很多高中时听过。

罗：噢，听过了。

学生：有一些四级材料一看就高中时看过。

罗：所以我有个问题就说大学英语和中学英语的自然连续，很多同学说不同意，这个想法——

学生：并且我认为至少同学往后面拉

罗：拉过去，往后面拉，拖拖后腿。

学生：已经爬到了这高度就可以了。

罗：啊

学生：你看他平时学的不如高中那时，觉得——

罗：句的好象没什么学头了？

学生：对，结果到了大学后，那种积极性没有了，变懒了。

罗：啊，这个问题很严重，这个问题很严重，现在说是我们马上要实行的分级的、分水平的。真正要因材施教，要因材施教，这一点的确很重要，嗯，我要问的基本上就问这些问题，大家从整体来讲还有没有觉得要想谈一谈的？

学生：希望学校尽量给我们增加多一点的（??）

罗：具体哪方面的环境比较重要？

学生：比如学生听广播呀，我们自己开一个英语节目广播出来。

罗：英语广播？

学生：嗯。

罗：你们平时能不能看到电视呀？

大家：看不到。。。。。

罗：电视看不到。

学生：能看到电视的话，上面有英语频道，要经常看看还是不错的。

学生：学校不鼓励开外边的，你像一些外国的什么队、文艺节目，我觉得现在有电视，学校只留下一个频道的还——

罗：这个我觉得不是特别好，因为学生通过看电视，很重要的一个接受信息的一个渠道。

学生：你像乒乓球什么的全是英文.....但这个看不到

罗：这个思路有点，这个广播，这个接触英语的一些机会。

学生：如果教材能与多媒体配套使用的话，就好了。

罗：多媒体配套教学，现在新的教材好像都有了，是吧？现在新的教材都有多媒体光盘什么的。

女老师：有光盘。

学生：课文录音吧，跟磁带没什么两样。

罗：录音，跟磁带没什么两样。

罗：同学们需要的就是说——

罗：身临其境的。

学生：像讲的小故事用电视剧编出来，那——

学生：对呀，我觉得——

学生：就是看电视剧了。

学生：拍成小电影，你让学生看的话，说不定有看的。

学生：看到之后把主要的语言——

学生：到时候你放到课文中让他读的话，他不一定能读懂。

女：精读与口语这个没法确定，当成口语来上精读，语速就——

罗：那个是——

学生：老师可以解释语法。

罗：实际上，精读语法这些东西照我观点，高中阶段就已经解决了。剩下的就是大量的词汇，大量的场景，大量的各种场合下面人家英语怎么用、怎么说的。然后呢各种文件，各种各样的文本，比如我给你们看的 plain language statement，像这种东西一看知道是怎么一种语言形式，让你接触各种各样的语言形式。这个就行。那么报纸、杂志，原版的，多往里去看，这些东西弄好的话，咱们这个整个英语教学系统确实问题很多，但这样做的话，咱们人太多，不仅仅是人太多，还有成本太高，他做不到这一点，你平时要是觉得这里边，像我们读书的时候，我读大学的时候是，我是86年开始读大学，我们班，那时学外语什么条件？我们每个班里有彩电，随时看，然后有个三用机，打字

机，你随时听什么、放什么的都可以的，我们就是在这种环境中学习的，那鼓励你去看电视，鼓励你去看原版的東西，这个就可以啊，这个素质，这个思路，思路是很重要的。

学生：我觉得考试的话，你像那些单项填空呀，单项选择了那些，还有什么完形填空拉，那些课文（?? ——那个没有必要考。

罗：考试这个。

学生：差不多的词汇。

罗：我们说的这个叫客观题，现在国家——

学生：对，那些文字游戏。

罗：现在国家已经注意到这个问题实际上，马上就要变，以后考试呀，大部分都是主观题。

学生：没必要这么考了，也不一定这四个单词就选这个，也许用别的方法也可以。。。。。

罗：以后考试就什么形式呢，就是说像雅思，像雅思那样的形式，每次考试听说读写都要考。

学生：那种特别——

罗：以后这样考，不是说像现在这样，绝对不象四级考这个，你们觉得呢？四级考试考然后，大学都按这个模式去学，按托福，实际上，追根究底是托福，托福按这个模式去学，弄好了，英语学好了，就可以出国，那英语还能不好吗？实际上那些人到了国外，都一样哑巴英语，交流不了。

学生：过两个月也不行啊？

罗：过两个月也够呛，他如果跟那些老外，像我们那些出国留学的，工科出去的，我们学校也不一定每一个人都行，老师也不一定每一个人都行，我告诉你，很多老师就不灵的，他不敢说话的。

学生：就我们现在所说的改革也不是很难，你就是把完形填空呀，单项选择去掉，然后加上口语，这不听说读写都有了么？

罗：听力、作文，然后听说读写，每次都考，是不是呀？每次你口语不学，那时考还得考，对，这，都——

学生：以后可能。

学生：但是上课的那种体制就以精读为主。

罗：对，大家觉得是不是应该以精读为主？

学生：我觉得这应该改。现在咱们中国需要的英语并不是那种，精读我觉得应该向写作方面多一点，正规化多一点。现在咱们中国需要那种交流式的英语，这种口语内容的。

罗：这些方面东西要更，比精读更重要。

学生：我们有上也得到交流英语的，船上用英语也交流。

学生：但交流时间并不——

学生：他说英语，我也说英语。

学生：我说的交流不一定是人与人的交流。比如说你读一本报纸、杂志，那进行思想上的交流。

学生：对。

学生：那样阅读跟理性不一样，你读一篇报纸跟读一篇小说，读一篇作文是不一样的。

罗：这个它主要是教育的目的你要有个储备，比如说你上班时要出国或者来了一个国外客户什么的，你要是接待或干什么的或工作上的谈判什么的，用的出来，主要是要达到这个目的。以后呢，我们就是说实用性英语，就是这个目的。

学生：另外我觉得你做得（??）那方面的问题，我觉得老师，很多英语老师不太进取，所以说，如果一本教材，这一届学生用了下一届还用这个，我不能，其他不用学，我只要把这本教材看熟了就行了。我觉得自身的素质有时候也不太高，还有老师的那种知识结构、知识层次，更新得比较慢，他自己脑子里边有写些东西不可能，我觉得始终在英语教学这一块，对老师的要求应该是很高的，一个很好的老师教出来的学生和一般、平庸的老师教出来的学生差别非常大，是我切身的体会。

罗：老师还是很重要的。

学生：对老师的要求非常高，在英语教学这一块。

罗：有这样，有这种看法就是说，英语这个玩意，以后根本不用老师教了，我自己学就行。

学生：但是现在，今后某个时候也许可能。

学生：但是咱们学校现在并不是都是，像什么听力教室，他就放音，放完音你答题就行了。现在我觉得这个多媒体设备这么贵，买来了也不一定就这一个功能，比如说放音，那按上喇叭就行了，不一定——

学生：咱们学校这个设备还没——（????）

罗：单向的，你听着就行了。

学生：对呀，就是可以说老师可能不会用。

罗：老师是不会呀，大部分老师是不会用呀，老师告诉你可以帮你用呀，老师告诉你把声音传出去就行了。

学生：在学校按喇叭就可以放了，何必那么远跑到教学楼去？

罗：中国有很多事情是很可笑的。（??）课堂教学总的来说，现在这种情况来看还是有必要的，是吧？

学生：嗯。

罗：就是课堂教学。

学生：现在看有必要。

学生：中国人就是太看重学英语了。就我个人而言，我不太注重课堂学习，而是属于独立性很强的学习者。

学生：课堂教学对老师要求就应该比较高。

罗：咱们假设以下，大学里，你们进来以后，就没有老师了，你们也不上课了，你们就自己学英语。

学生：那毁了。

学生：这样的话，你从小学念到大学，中文（??）咱们小学到初中那样的不行，除非下面的教学也改。

罗：你们是从从小学开始学英语吗？

学生：我们都从初中开始。

学生：我从小学开始学的。

罗：现在好多是从从小学开始。

罗：好，大体就这样，谢谢大家。然后你们所有这些观点都很重要，非常有价值，啊，我也希望，经过咱们能够给，能够放到我这个论文里去，看能不能，国外这个论文，要求达到出版的水平。如果我这个论文最后能够出版，能够，那就是能在澳洲那边出版的话，或者在美国、英国出版，把大家的观点放进去以后，如果产生一定影响的话，应该说在座各位都是功不可没的。这个，然后你们签字的这些东西呢，我都要存档，然后叫到我们学校去，所以你们名字就会一直在档案里面。啊，我觉得你们提的意见都很中肯，比较切实的一个想法，很多东西我们也知道，但具体还有些东西没想到，问题，有些会怎么严重呀，有些问题还要从你们角度俩看一下，对促进我们教学很有帮助，……非常感谢你们！

**Appendix VIII Extract of of Script of Interview III with English Translation  
(for the 2004 CECR)**

Interviewee 1: 中国人对学英语有点太重视了。我个人不太看重课堂学习, 而是自己学得多。

*Chinese people just emphasize too much on learning English. Personally, I don't give much attention to classroom learning, but rather I am an independent learner.*

Interviewee 2: 学校应该采取措施提高校园的英语学习氛围, 象规定在一些地方只能讲英语(不仅在英语角), 举办英语电台, 英语竞赛, 设立自主学习中心等。

*The school should take measures to promote on-campus English learning atmosphere, including adopting English-only policy in certain places (not just English Corner), establishing a campus English radio, organizing English debates or speech contests, and setting up self-access English learning centers.*

Interviewee 3: 英语学习的环境不利。有些学生愿意学, 有些却没有任何动力。大家都羞于开口讲英语, 有些干脆张不了嘴。。。。。。大家很难学到一块去。

*The English learning environment is not good for us. Some students are motivated in learning but some are not. All of us are shy to talk in English and some simply can't open their mouth to speak English. .... it is very difficult for us to collaborate in English learning.*

Interviewee 4: 大学中学太不一样了。以前在中学时特忙, 学习压力太大。但到了大学就不一样了。我现在空余时间很多, 可以任意支配。我喜欢英语电影, 也看了不少。我也喜欢听英语歌。此外, 我还喜欢上网, 花了大量时间在网上溜达, 听新闻, 看电影, 聊天。。。上面很多信息都是英语的。久而久之, 我的英语不我知不觉就提高了。我再也不是非常功利地去学英语了, 而通过做自己喜欢做的事情, 我的英语水平的确有提高。

*Life at college is so much different from that in high school. I used to be very busy in high school. At that time, the pressure of study almost drove me insane. But things have been changed when in college. Now, I've got lots of free time, I could do anything I want to do. I like movies a lot and I watch lots of movies in English. I love to listen to English songs. Besides, I'm hooked on Internet, spending much time on surfing websites, listening to Internet radio, watching videos, chatting ... and lots of the information I get online is in English. Over time, my English has been improved unconsciously. I'm not learning English on purpose anymore, but my English does get better through doing what I like.*

Interviewee 5: 我们喜欢配对练习, 或三个人, 或更多的人一起学习。

*While learning English, we'd like to work together in pairs or in groups of three or more.*