
CHINA EFL: A Market Driven Model

PetroChina Embraces Holistic English Program

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ABSTRACT

For at least the past 20 years, Chinese employers have utilized the national English examination, CET 6, as the benchmark for employment of Chinese university graduates with English L2 capabilities. Recently, some Chinese educators have begun to question the validity of CET 6 as an appropriate benchmark because it measures knowledge learned about English but does not adequately measure comprehensible output. PetroChina, the world's largest company by capitalization and number of employees, has implemented the Holistic English Program at its Guangzhou Training Center to remedy the English deficiencies of its employees.

I. INTRODUCTION

Although “English Fever” is running rampant throughout China and is claimed to be “market driven”; the rush to institute English learning nationwide, with more than 1,000,000 Chinese teachers of English who are themselves, for the most part, unable to produce comprehensible oral or written English or teach in the target language, has miserably failed to meet market needs. The goal of universities and colleges throughout China is to have students pass national English competency examinations such as TEM 4, CET 4 and CET 6. Setting aside, for the moment, the fact that these national English competency examinations bear little or no relationship to comprehensible output, the pass rates have become the exclusive focus of administrative attention and false pride. This is in part due to demands of Chinese employers who are misinformed that passing CET 6 is the evidence of an accomplished English speaker¹. Wang Shugua, President of Harbin Institute of Technology is quoted as saying “I recognize CET as a good tool to promote English studies but I am against the practice of regarding a CET certificate as the prerequisite for graduation, which is totally misleading.” He tried to eliminate the requirement for a CET certificate in order to graduate from HIT, but gave up without success. “I had to reconsider the usefulness of CET certificates in job hunting for our graduates. Almost all employers want their recruits to have a CET certificate, so I had to push my students to pass the CET for their good, although it is against my will,”²

1 Yuankai, Tang, 9/6/07 Beijing Review, Education Feared to Raise Robots http://www.bjreview.com.cn/special/txt/2007-08/31/content_74644.htm (accessed July 10, 2008)

2 Beijing Review., Education Feared to Raise Robots http://www.bjreview.com.cn/special/txt/2007-08/31/content_74644.htm (accessed July 10, 2008)

The market need to have graduates who can produce comprehensible English output has been completely ignored. Consequently, foreign employers, Joint Venture employers and Chinese companies doing business abroad are hiring university graduates from India because they are better able to produce comprehensible oral and written English, than their Chinese counterparts. Imagine more than 5 million Chinese university graduates, who have learned English for 16 years, many of whom are being passed over for Chinese jobs in China. This is simply unacceptable! English is one of “*the 10 most popular disciplines that saw low rates of employment last year.*”³ Chinese universities are under tremendous pressure to change curriculums to meet the needs of the job market. But instead, they are simply reducing enrollments in certain majors.⁴ “One of the reasons for the difficulty in university graduates finding employment is that they are unable to satisfy the needs of employers,” he said. (Yang Weiguo, associate professor of Beijing-based Renmin University) He said the universities needed to adjust their teaching methods and content quickly to conform to social development and demand.⁵

Both “in house” and private corporate English training centers are proliferating throughout the business hubs of China. The curriculum is usually industry specific and amounts to ESP (English for a specific purpose), i.e. the teaching of technical language and phrases to meet the perceived need to limit English communication to a standard or formal form of English related to a specific discipline such as medical English, legal English, architecture English, IT English, etc..

In August 2008, China Petroleum Guangzhou Training Center, (TC) an educational arm of PetroChina,⁶ implemented the Holistic English Program⁷ in an attempt to rectify the recognized deficiencies of the CET 4 and 6 certification. Holistic English is to English language learning what Chinese traditional medicine is to health care, a holistic approach. Holistic English moves away from the traditional focus on grammar and lexis. “While there is a need for specialist terminology, the greatest need of international employers is to have employees who can communicate successfully in English. Thus, communication and accommodation should be emphasized in language instruction; the mastering of perfect grammatical forms is an added bonus that can be reserved for later refinement. Flexibility is just as important as the mastering of prescribed forms, if not more so. In

3 http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2008-06/27/content_6799171.htm

Beijing-based survey company Mycos HR

4 Hot courses' won't secure good jobs(Xinhua News Agency January 12, 2008) http://www.china.org.cn/china/national/2008-01/12/content_1239129.htm (accessed October 10, 2008)

5 20% university graduates fail to find jobs in 2007 (Xinhua News Agency January 14, 2008)

<http://www.china.org.cn/english/China/239233.htm> (Accessed October 1, 2008)

6 Petro China is the most valued company (by market capitalization - unless stock losses this year have changed that) in the world and Petro China and CNPC are both in the top 6 employers (by number) in the world.

7 Qiang/ Teng/Wolff 7/08, China EFL: A New Paradigm, Ch. 11 Education in China 21st Century Issues and Challenges, Nova Science Publications, New York (<http://www.usingenglish.com/esl-in-china/new-paradigm.pdf>)

Qiang/ Teng/Wolff (2008) In Press, CHINA EFL; HOLISTIC ENGLISH, The revolution has begun but the long march lies ahead.

Nova Science Publishers, New York (<http://www.usingenglish.com/esl-in-china/holistic-english-1.pdf> and

<http://www.usingenglish.com/esl-in-china/holistic-english-2.pdf>)

order to communicate across international boundaries, students must learn to adjust to their interlocutor in order to facilitate understanding. Moreover, because of the growing use of English as a global lingua franca, students of the language need to be exposed to a wide range of English accents in order to increase their abilities to understand the people they are likely to encounter in an international career. Furthermore, it is not only formal but informal language skills that should be practiced at university; students should be made aware of the different genres and registers in English, so that they can determine the appropriate use of the language in the various situations in which they are likely to find themselves Finally, students should be taught skills that allow them to mediate between languages and cultures. Thus an intercultural approach is needed in language teaching, so that future employees are 'able to view different cultures from a perspective of informed understanding' (Corbett 2003:2)⁸ An approach that has the goal of successful intercultural communication at its core will prepare students for the relatively unpredictable needs of language use in corporate Europe."⁹

All of the trainees of the center are college graduates. Some have and some have not passed the national CET 4 English examination while many had passed the more advanced CET 6 examination; but all were unable to produce adequate comprehensible English output to meet the needs of their current employment position or prospective overseas assignments. This paper presents the data collected and the conclusions drawn regarding the efficacy of the Holistic English Program in assisting the TC trainees with English acquisition sufficient to prepare them for their work assignments abroad where English L2 will be the primary mode of communication with other L2 speakers of English.

II. TC INSTITUTIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

There is no written statement of the goals and objectives of the Training Center or the English department.

There were no written statements of goals and objectives for any trainee group.

⁸ Corbett, J. 2003, *An intercultural Approach to English Language Teaching*, Clevedon & Buffalo: Multilingual Matters

⁹ Erling and Walton 2007, *English at work in Berlin*, *English Today* Volume 23 Number 1

III. TC TRAINEE DEMOGRAPHICS

GROUP #1 DEMOGRAPHICS (Four Month Program)

T R A I N E E	M A R I E D	G E N D E R	C H I L D	DATE GRADUATED / AGE	MAJOR	ENGLISH SELF- ASSES	CET	YEARS OF ENGLISH STUDY	PRIOR FOREIGN TEACHER
1	Y	M	N	2003 / 30	Chem	Poor	4	10	Y
2	N	M	N	2007 / 29	Commer	Good	4	12	Y
3	N	M	N	2006 / 25	Math	V Good	6	12	Y
4	N	F	N	2006 / 25	B Eng	Good	6	12	Y
5	Y	M	N	2004 / 28	Eng	Good	6	4	Y
6	N	F	N	2007 / 24	Eng	Good	6	10	Y
7	N	F	N	2007 / 24	Econ	Poor	4	10	N
8	N	M	N	2006 / 26	Ind Des	Good	4	11	N
9	N	M	N	2004 / 27	Chem	Poor	4	4	N
10	N	M	N	2006 / 25	Geology	Poor	4	10	N
11	N	F	N	2006 / 26	Ocean E	Poor	4	12	N

CHART #1

GROUP #2 DEMOGRAPHICS (Six Month Program)

T R A I N E E	M A R I E D	G E N D E R	C H I L D	DATE GRADUATED / AGE	MAJOR	ENGLISH SELF- ASSES	CET	YEARS OF ENGLISH STUDY	PRIOR FOREIGN TEACHER
1									
2	y	m	n	1997/34	Machine	good	4	4	N
3	y	f	y	1997/36	Geology	good	6	24	N
4	y	m	y	1998/34	Geology	good	6	10	Y
5									
6	y	f	n	2005/28	Law	good	6	10	Y
7	n	f	n	2006/25	English	good	4	4	Y
8	y	m	n	2005/27	Engr	poor	6	15	N
9	y	m	n	2005/29	Engr	poor	6	16	N
10	y	m	n	1999/33	Explor	v. poor	n	8	N
11	y	m	n	2005/26	Ind.	poor	4	8	N
12	n	m	n	2005/27	Measure	poor	6	8	N
13	n	m	Y	1991/42	Logging	poor	4	10	N
14	y	m	y	1996/38	Logging	poor	4	15	N
15	n	m	n	2005/26	Mech	good	4	5	N
16	y	m	y	1996/38	Logging	good	4	22	Y
17	n	f	n	2003/28	Int. trade	good	6	10	Y
18	n	f	n	2005/25	Econ	good	6	8	Y
19	y	m	y	1999/29	Mis	poor	4	7	N
20	y	m	n	2005/35	Law	good	6	9	Y
21	n	m	n	2004/26	Geophys	poor	4	5	Y
22	y	m	y	2003/31	Account	good	4	14	Y
23	y	f	y	1994/35	Geophys	good	4	10	Y
24	n	m	n	2007/27	Res dev	poor	6	8	N
25									
26	y	m	y	1988/43	Pet	poor	n	7	N

27	n	m	n	2004/25	Geology	poor	6	8	Y
28	y	m	n	2004/27	Env.	poor	4	10	N
29	y	m	n	2004/25	Env	v. poor	4	10	N
30	y	m	y	1995/35	Chem	poor	n	6	N
31	y	m	y	1994/37	Admin	poor	n	7	Y
32	y	m	y	1993/37	Chem	good	4	10	N
33	n	m	n	2004/29	Welding	poor	n	10	N
34	y	m	y	1995/38	Geology	poor	4	20	N
35	y	m	y	1998/35	Chem	good	4	20	N
36	n	m	n	2003/29	Pet eng	good	4	10	N
37	n	m	n	2001/30	Chem	good	4	11	Y
38	y	m	y	1997/34	Chem.	poor	4	15	Y
39	y	m	n	2005/26	G & O	poor	6	10	N
40	n	m	n	2004/28	G & O	good	6	10	Y
41	n	f	n	2005/26	Mktng	poor	4	10	N
42	n	m	n	2005/27	Seismic	poor	n	10	N
43	y	m	y	1989/42	Econ	v. poor	n	1	N
44	y	m	y	1993/36	Material	poor	n	9	N
45									
46	y	m	y	1998/35	Pet Eng	poor	4	10	N

CHART #2

GROUP #3 DEMOGRAPHICS
(One Month Program)

T R A I N E E D	M A R I E D	G E N D E R	C H I L D	DATE GRADUATED / AGE	MAJOR	ENGLISH SELF- ASSESSMENT
1	Y	M	Y	1989/42	Chem	Poor
2	Y	M	Y	1982/49	Automation	Poor
3	Y	M	Y	1988/46	Power	Poor
4	Y	M	Y	1985/45	Inst	Poor
5	Y	M	Y	1991/40	Environment	Poor
6	Y	M	Y	1986/46	Petro	Poor
7	Y	M	Y			Poor
8	Y	M	Y	1991/40	Chem	Poor
9	Y	M	Y	1986/44	Mech Design	Poor
10	Y	M	Y	1985/40	Automation	Poor
11	Y	M	Y	1995/36	Mech	Poor
12	Y	M	Y			Poor
13	Y	M	Y	1989/42	Chem	Poor
14	Y	M	Y	1991/39	Molecule	Poor
15	Y	M	Y	1988/41	Petro	Poor
16	Y	F	Y	1989/41	Chem	Poor
17	Y	F	Y	1987/42	Tech	Poor
18	Y	M	Y	1969/41	Chem	Poor

CHART #3

GROUP #4 DEMOGRAPHICS
(Six Month Program)

UNAVAILABLE

IV. TC CURRICULUM

Each group of employer selected trainees receives a leave of absence and becomes resident of the TC for the duration of the one month, three month or six month training program, whichever program has been selected by the employer, in coordination with and in consultation with the TC.

The core TC curriculum consists primarily of:

Culture and Language

The course objectives of Culture and Language are to develop a systematic understanding of various world cultures and their inter-relationship to English as a global lingua franca.

English Practice

The course objectives of English Practice are to provide different opportunities to practice English output for realistic development.

Audio-video

The course objectives of Audio-video are to provide various audiovisual resources, to combine language acquisition and learning, so as to improve learners' linguistic and pragmatic ability.

English for General Business Purposes

The course objectives of English for General Business Purposes are to provide a basic introduction to all phases of business operations.

Current Affairs

The course objectives of Current Affairs are to improve reading comprehension, oral discourse and expand world view through the use of current news articles.

Holistic English

The course objectives of Holistic English are to build self-confidence, develop intrinsic motivation and create autonomous learners, while increasing business knowledge and expanding world view.

None of the TC staff is well schooled in the difference between language learning and language acquisition.¹⁰ Therefore, creation of an English speaking environment remains elusive for many of the reasons previously identified.¹¹ However, on a campus challenged for adequate educational facilities, the leadership took the bold and creative step of utilizing an empty 3rd floor apartment to create an English coffee lounge to conduct a coffee hour every Friday afternoon from 2:30 to 5:00 p.m.; a friendly environment for the trainees to meet and speak English with the foreign teachers, outside the classroom.¹²

10 **Language acquisition** refers to the process of natural assimilation, involving intuition and subconscious learning, which is the product of real interactions between people where the learner is an active participant. It is similar to the way children learn their native tongue, a process that produces functional skill in the spoken language without theoretical knowledge; develops familiarity with the phonetic characteristics of the language as well as its structure and vocabulary, is responsible for oral understanding, the capability for creative communication and for the identification of cultural values. Teaching and learning are viewed as activities that happen in a personal psychological plane. The acquisition approach praises the communicative act and develops self-confidence in the learner. A classic example of language acquisition involves adolescents and young adults who live abroad for a year in an exchange program, attaining near native fluency, while knowing little about the language in the majority of cases. They have a good pronunciation without a notion of phonology, don't know what the perfect tense is, modal or phrasal verbs are, but they intuitively recognize and know how to use all the structures.

The concept of **language learning** is linked to the traditional approach to the study of languages and today is still generally practiced in high schools worldwide. Attention is focused on the language in its written form and the objective is for the student to understand the structure and rules of the language through the application of intellect and logical deductive reasoning. The form is of greater importance than communication. Teaching and learning are technical and governed by a formal instructional plan with a predetermined syllabus. One studies the theory in the absence of the practical. One values the correct and represses the incorrect. There is little room for spontaneity. The teacher is an authority figure and the participation of the student is predominantly passive. In the teaching of English in Brazil, for example, the student will study the function of the interrogative and negative modes, irregular verbs, modals, etc. The student learns to construct sentences in the perfect tense, but only learns with difficulty when to use it. It's a progressive and cumulative process, normally tied to a preset syllabus that includes memorization of vocabulary. It seeks to transmit to the student knowledge about the language, its functioning and grammatical structure with its irregularities, its contrasts with the student's native language, knowledge that hopefully will produce the practical skills of understanding and speaking the language. This effort of accumulating knowledge becomes frustrating because of the lack of familiarity with the language. Innumerable graduates with arts degrees in English are classic examples of language learning. They often are trained and theoretically able to teach a language that they can communicate in only with extreme difficulty. Krashen, Stephen D. (1981). Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition. English Language Teaching series. London: Prentice-Hall International (UK) Ltd.

11 Qiang/Wolff (2008) China EFL: Why Chinese Universities do not Provide an English Speaking Environment, Education in China: 21st Century Issues and Challenges, Nova Science Publishers, New York (<http://www.usingenglish.com/esl-in-china/china-efl2.pdf>)

12 An "English Corner" by any other name, including "Coffee Hour" is still an "English Corner." What is an "English Corner," where the foreign teachers' participation is required but the Chinese staff is absolved of any responsibility? It is simply a device whereby the Chinese staff can avoid any responsibility for helping to create an English speaking environment by pointing to the "English Corner" and saying "We have an English speaking environment because we have an English Corner." All responsibility for the creation of an English speaking environment is shifted to the foreign teachers, an impossible task without the active participation of the Chinese staff.

China EFL: English Corner (9/08) Wolff, China EFL: Curriculum Reform, Nova Science Publishers, New York
<http://www.usingenglish.com/esl-in-china/china-efl-english-corner.pdf>

V. TC TRAINEE EVALUATION

At the End of each program the trainees are given an evaluation form to render an opinion about each teacher. The trainees are not given an opportunity to render any opinion about the Training Center curriculum or leadership.

The foreign teachers were not allowed to test the trainees at the end of any given program.

However, personnel from CNPC, Beijing, did give special examinations to Group 2 and Group 3, without any knowledge of what the groups had been provided in terms of curriculum or training. Neither foreign teacher had been asked for a course syllabus or summary. The CNPC staff never spoke with the foreign teachers about the courses they had taught.

The foreign teachers were never told the testing areas or test content. Neither were the foreign teachers ever advised of the test results by any administrator.

VI. GRADING POLICY

Each group of trainees undergoes an intake evaluation to provide a basis for group assignment and a baseline for progress resulting from participation in the program.¹³

The final grade is based upon each trainee's improvement in English comprehension and comprehensible output skills when measured against the intake evaluation.

The intake evaluation is conducted in a friendly environment¹⁴ by the two foreign teachers with the entire project staff present as observers. The trainees fill out a demographics questionnaire that provides the basis for the informal interview. The group is sequestered in a separate room and brought into the evaluation room two at a time. When the interview is completed, the trainees remain in the interview room with absolutely no personal or mobile phone interaction with the trainees who are awaiting their interview. This insures that no trainee is able to have advance knowledge that will enable them to prepare and memorize responses for the forthcoming interview. The two foreign experts and the project manager record a value for each trainee's oral comprehension and output. These evaluations are CHARTED in the Appendix.

Why Chinese Universities Do Not Provide An English Speaking Environment (9/08) Qiang/Wolff, Current Politics and Economics of Asia, Volume 17 Issue 4

<http://www.usingenglish.com/esl-in-china/china-efl2.pdf>

13 For years this process consisted of an on camera interview under the glaring lights in a TV studio. Hardly an environment conducive to encouraging English output from an L2 speaker.

14 The intake evaluation was previously conducted as an oral English test in a television studio with overhead theatrical lighting and a camera in their face, a rather intimidating environment.

The final examination for the Holistic English course is usually conducted in the same manner as the intake interview. Class attendance, homework completion and class participation are requirements for qualification to participate in the final exam and play no role in determining the final grade. The final grade is based upon an assessment of self-confidence, word choice, sentence structure, question comprehension, response time and overall output comprehensibility, when measured against the intake evaluation for progress during the TC program.

Unfortunately, the foreign teachers were forbidden to administer any final examination to any trainee group.

The foreign teachers have absolutely no idea how any final grades were determined.

VII. CREATE AN ENGLISH SPEAKING ENVIRONMENT

Creating an English Speaking Environment (ESE) is no simple task. Each campus is unique and must be assessed independently. The campus evaluation should include an evaluation of five factors: 1. Physical facilities; 2. Chinese staff; 3. Students; 4. Campus support staff such as bus drivers, cooks, librarians, etc.; and 5. On campus residents and their families.

Each factor is unique on each campus and defies any simple single formula for creating an ESE.

The following is an evaluation conducted for PetroChina Training Center Guangdong Province.

When contemplating the creation of an English speaking environment, the proper definition must be kept in mind:

There are two required elements to a proper ESE. A proper ESE is one where the students are inundated with comprehensible English input and where it is easier to communicate in English rather than in the native Putonghua. An English speaking environment is defined as: "*An environment where English is the dominant language.*" Or, "*an environment where people are compelled to speak English*".¹⁵

The conversion of a Chinese speaking environment at a school located in China to an English speaking environment at a school, located in China, is a monumental task akin to eating an elephant.

15 Creating Authentic Dialog: ESL Students as Recipients of Service Learning, Stephanie Marlow, Boise State University (Boise , Idaho , USA) "An environment where authentic dialog with native English speakers occurs on a regular basis presents ESL students with the possibility to grow both linguistically and socially" .
<http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Marlow-ServiceLearning.html>

The only way to eat an elephant is one bite at a time. The transformation of a Chinese speaking environment to an English speaking one must be accomplished one step at a time.

In designing an English speaking environment there are two major resources in play. There is the physical facility and the people. Both resources play an equally important role.

The facility must impress the casual visitor with the fact that it is an English speaking and training facility. Everywhere you go and everything you see on campus should remind you to speak English. This begins with a western style STOP sign on both sides of the entrance gate and bilingual signage everywhere on campus, buildings to street names. Even the sign on the mango tree warning against picking should be bilingual. Since the hotel is on campus, it must be included.

Every room of every building should encourage speaking English.

However, the signage would not be my first priority. My first priority would be something that is most impressionable, has the highest cost effectiveness, reaches the most people constantly and has an unforgettable and unavoidable impact.

(At Xinyang Agricultural College the first priority was a video wall in the main square that would play English movies with English subtitles every night to the entire college community. During the day it would play English news. The square is crossed regularly by 90% of the college community, several times a day.)

If I had the authority, power and money, my first transformation project at the training center would be as follows;

Purchase 5 flat screen TVs and permanently tune each one to a different English news channel.

TV #1 and #2 – locate on the second floor of the campus cafeteria, one in each room.

TV #1 tuned to BBC news.

TV #2 tuned to CNN news

(These channels are available through local cable service)

TV #3 and #4 should be located on the first floor of the campus cafeteria.

TV #3 should be tuned to Al Jazeera English news

TV #4 should be tuned to Russian TV English news.

(These channels are available through a 1,000- rmb satellite dish.)

Al Jazeera extensively covers the Middle East and Africa , both destinations for our trainees. Russian TV covers the Russia, the former Soviet Union block and the “...stan” countries bordering China and to which our trainees are assigned.

TV #5 should be located in the 1st floor lobby of the teaching building and should be tuned to CCTV 9 International.

The sound on all sets should be set just above the din but not so loud as to be intrusive beyond the target audience.

The first thing people entering the teaching building would hear is English and the last thing they hear before leaving would be English. People waiting for the elevators would have the opportunity to watch and hear English, great preparation for their further activity on upper floors.

The 4 TVs in the cafeteria should be available throughout the work day and not just during the meals. People should be able to watch anytime they have spare time or leisure time.

Subsequently I would want to create an English reading room that contains free choice English reading materials exclusively. These should not be academic reading materials but general interest and at varying English levels. For instance, the newspapers should include China Daily, Shanghai Star, 21st Century, South China morning Post etc. Magazine should include Marvel Comics, 16, Ms. Cosmopolitan, Esquire, Modern Mechanics, P.C., Auto trends, Home and Garden, better house and Garden, Vogue etc. Books should include romance novels, mysteries, detective stories, BUT NOT THE CLASSICS.

A video library should be available with English movies and English subtitles or no subtitles, BUT NO CHINESE SUBTITLES.

An English karaoke room should be established where everyone can enjoy singing English songs BUT NO CHINESE SONGS.

All computers and sound labs must have English programming NOT CHINESE. The computers can add Chinese language capability to the English programming so that communications may be prepared in a bilingual format.

The above is my preliminary assessment of the facility needs of primary importance. It is not intended as an exhaustive list.

Then we must have a comprehensive plan to deal with the human resource on campus. These must be divided into faculty and staff, service workers and incidental people. Two separate plans will be required.

The faculty and staff will require mini-seminars on language learning versus language acquisition, immersion, how to create an English speaking environment. They will need to learn their importance in creating an English speaking environment.

The service staff (bus drivers, hotel clerks, to cafeteria waitresses) may need basic English courses.

Then there are the incidental people. One large segment of this group is the children who live on campus. I would suggest, at the very least, a Saturday morning English cartoon hour

where the parents can take their babies and young children and older children can attend on their own.

Another large segment of incidental people are the spouses who live on campus. I would suggest that every on campus home be provided with English TV channels.

The third and lowest of my priorities would be English activities such as speech contests, debates etc. Such activities are English speaking opportunities but do not create the English speaking environment and are least important.

An English corner is a tacit admission that there is no English speaking environment so a special time for speaking English is set aside. And then it is relegated to a “corner” not the center.

The above are my preliminary ideas after spending a few days on campus and speaking with numerous staff and students. The above is not intended to be exhaustive and the staff and faculty should be encouraged to give input. Make them partners in the transition work and they will be more willing participants.

Trainees added the following suggestions for creating an ESE:

- English movies in dorm by closed circuit TV – no Chinese TV
- Bi-lingual signage on campus
- English electronic sign on Hotel
- English music on Public Address system
- Bi-lingual food signs in cafeteria
- Cafeteria staff should speak basic English
- Ability to check out English books from library
- English magazines such as fashion, beauty care, home decoration, new autos, popular mechanics etc.
- Speech contest
- Campus radio station should be all English
- Saturday or Sunday English Movie Theater
- Every classroom should have English signage

VIII. FIRST BITE OF THE ELEPHANT

Assuming the threshold decision has been made to try creating an ESE, step, by step, what is the first step? Again, there is no single simple answer for every situation. The following is the first step taken at the PetroChina Training Center.

Yesterday the foreign teachers (t1 and T2) convened a special staff meeting with all of the Chinese staff in attendance. This was a first for me. I mean I have never heard of the foreign teachers successfully demanding a staff meeting nor have I ever heard of 100% attendance at any staff meeting. The Chinese Dean, being fully aware of the meeting agenda, approved of the meeting.

A foreign teacher (T1) presented a complaint received from several students. “The Chinese staff does not speak to us in English outside the classroom.”

The foreign teacher pointed out that we are teaching English majors in an English program and are employed by an English department. He also pointed out that all of the staff has very good English skills and there is no apparent reason for the staff not communicating in English outside the classroom. We then listened to an hour of excuses.

Another foreign teacher (T2) was called upon for comments. He walked to the front of the room wearing a red baseball cap with yellow letters that read “SPEAK ENGLISH.” He just stood there for two minutes until the laughter died down. Then he turned his back, took off the red cap and replaced it with a black cap. He then removed his outer shirt to reveal a black undershirt that read “ENGLISH ONLY” on the back. More laughter.

Then he whirled around displaying the front of the shirt and the cap, both of which read “ENGLISH POLICE.” Both hands were cocked like pistols and he yelled “WE ARE SERIOUS.” Then all of the foreign teachers displayed their black shirts and caps.

After the laughter died down, it was explained that every week arrest warrants would be issued for teachers who spoke to students in Chinese outside the classroom. Then the room went very silent. It was explained that every week a letter would be sent to the President identifying those teachers who were hindering student development by refusing to speak to students in English outside the classroom. Then every teacher was issued a red cap. Everyone put their cap on and agreed that they needed to speak to the students in English outside the classroom.

The next morning, as the Chinese teachers went to their classrooms without their red caps, they were met by a room full of students wearing red caps reminding the teachers to “SPEAK ENGLISH.” The teachers were very surprised and taken aback. The students explained that they refused to speak with any teacher who spoke to them in Chinese.

Within two weeks an administrative edict was handed down that the foreign teachers were prohibited from any further activity directed at creating an ESE.



VII. CONCLUSIONS

Language acquisition occurs when there is comprehensible input in a friendly environment.

The TC administration rebuffed all suggestions from T1 and T2 to create a friendly acquisition environment¹⁶ and ordered T1 and T2 to terminate their efforts to create an English Speaking Environment.¹⁷ T1 and T2 were instructed to create English speaking opportunities such as English Corner, English Speaking Contests, holiday parties etc.

The corporate ledgers expense the Training Center as an educational item but it would be more intellectually honest to expense it as a corporate retreat; a place where select employees go for R & R under the guise of continuing education. It may be politically incorrect for PetroChina to give its employees paid vacations without the veil of legitimacy provided by a continuing educational experience.

The TC perpetuates the English learning for test taking mentality. What makes anyone believe that 4 or 6 months more of the same teaching and English activities, methodology that has failed China for the past 25 years, will suddenly produce English speakers? If it did not work over 16 years, why will it suddenly work in 4 or 6 additional months? There is no magical solution. The trainees must read more, listen more, write more and speak more English outside the classroom. They must become autonomous learners. To make this transformation, they must increase their self-confidence, develop intrinsic motivation, and proceed in a productive manner. Currently, the trainees are not given this opportunity at the TC.

From a western human resource management, business management or educational management perspective, there is no logical or rational basis for the helter-skelter management of groups 2, 3 and 4.. Nor is there any excuse for a complete lack of stated goals and objectives.

PetroChina is arguably the most important company in the world today. It is the largest by capitalization and number of employees. It maintains three training centers in Beijing, Dalian and Guangzhou. These centers are in competition with each other for the training groups. This may be the reason the Guangzhou center panders to the every whim of all PetroChina leaders and trainees without regards to real educational goals and objectives. A rigid academic program may send trainees home bad mouthing the center and future groups may be inclined to choose the Beijing or Dalian center. It may be a matter of survival to send the trainees home with a smile on their face and a good report, even if they learned nothing.

¹⁶China EFL: Why Chinese Universities do not provide an English Speaking Environment <http://www.usingenglish.com/esl-in-china/china-efl2.pdf>

¹⁷ CHINA EFL: English Corner <http://www.usingenglish.com/esl-in-china/english-corner-china-efl.pdf>

Lee Iocca, former Chairman of Chrysler Corporation, advised administrators to “Lead, follow or get out of the way.” The administrators of the English Department of PetroChina Guangzhou Training Center are not competent to lead, refuse to follow, and block the way.

The Appendix data clearly establishes that the trainees appreciated and benefitted from the Holistic English Program.

APPENDIX

SUMMER GROUP 2008

PROJECT TEAM

Agatha Chen Bai Yu, B.A. Project Leader; Garry Huang Zhi Yong, B.A.; Crystal Xu Hai Jing, B.A.; Laura Lian Song Qing, B.A.; Herbert Png Xuanchun, MBA; Martin Wolff, J.D.

TRAINEES:

The summer group consisted of 11 Da Gang Oil Field company employees selected for further English training in a three and one-half month program. The group consisted of six women and five men, ages ranging from 23 to 48. All trainees had graduated from a Chinese university and had studied English for at least 12 years.

FOREIGN TEACHERS:

A 26 year old male L2 speaker from Singapore with one year teaching experience in China (T1) and a 60 year old male native of the USA with six years teaching experience in China (T2).

T1 taught six periods per week of “Culture and Language” using teaching materials gathered from internet sources.

T2 joined the teaching staff with only three weeks remaining in the project term. T2 taught 6 periods each week from Holistic English Book I. In the third and final week of the project, T2 was asked to teach all 6 periods, every day.

When inquiry was made regarding the goals and objectives of the group program, it was disclosed that the trainees were at the training center as a “reward and for R & R.” There were no identified educational goals or objectives.

GROUP #1 (Commencing September 8, 2008)

PROJECT TEAM

Laura Lian Song Qing, B.A. Project Leader; Garry Huang Zhi Yong, B.A.; Dean Heather He Li Ling, B.A.; Hatty Xu Shu Xian; Eleana Xu Xiao Wen; Agatha Chen Bai Yu; Lili Li Li Ling; Jenny Wang Jun Hong; Herbert Png Xuanchun, MBA; Martin Wolff, J.D.

TRAINEES:

Group #1 consisted of 11 Da Gang Oil Field company employees selected for further English training in a three and one-half month program. The group consisted of four women and seven men, ages ranging from 24 to 30. All trainees had graduated from a

Chinese university and had studied English for 4 to 12 years. Only 6 of the Trainees had ever previously had a foreign teacher. 7 of the trainees had passed CET 4 and 4 had passed CET 6. The trainees were evaluated by their Chinese employer as being “excellent” speakers of English.

FOREIGN TEACHERS:

A 26 year old male L2 speaker from Singapore with one year teaching experience in China (T1) and a 60 year old male native of the USA with six years teaching experience in China (T2).

T1 taught six periods per week of “Culture and Language” using teaching materials gathered from internet sources.

T2 taught six periods per week of “Holistic English” using the Holistic English Workbook series, modified for the specific three and one-half month program.

Immediately prior to commencing the teaching program, the foreign teachers conducted an intake interview of each trainee and evaluated their English comprehension and oral communication ability. The trainees themselves (Section III above) gave a fairly accurate self-assessment of their English capabilities that is consistent with the foreign teachers’ evaluation. CHART #4 reflects the English skills evaluation of each trainee by both foreign teachers and the project manager.

TRAINEE	T1	T2	PM
1	45	75	65
2	55	80	70
3	75	95	85
4	75	92	90
5	65	90	85
6	65	90	85
7	60	75	70
8	60	80	70
9	60	75	70
10	60	75	65
11	55	70	60

CHART #5

The foreign teachers did not evaluate a single trainee as an “excellent” speaker of English. The employer’s criteria for determining that this was a group of “excellent” English speakers, is unknown. The trainees themselves (Section III above) gave a fairly accurate self-assessment of their English capabilities that is consistent with the foreign teachers’ evaluation.

The Holistic English Program commenced on time and the trainees completed Book I and Book II of the four book Holistic English Program. With the exception of trainee #2 who was absent twice, the remainder of the trainees had a perfect attendance record and completed most of their homework.

TRAINEE EVALUATION

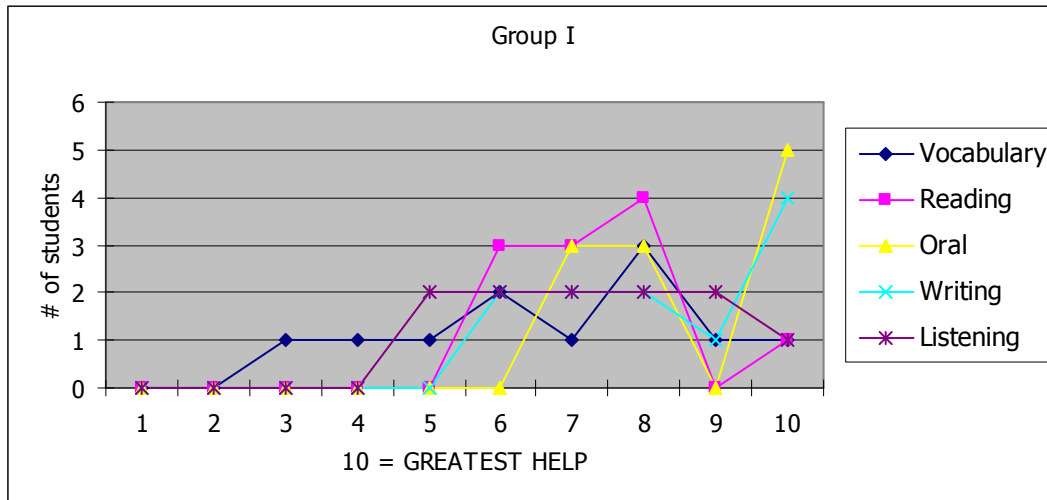


Chart 6

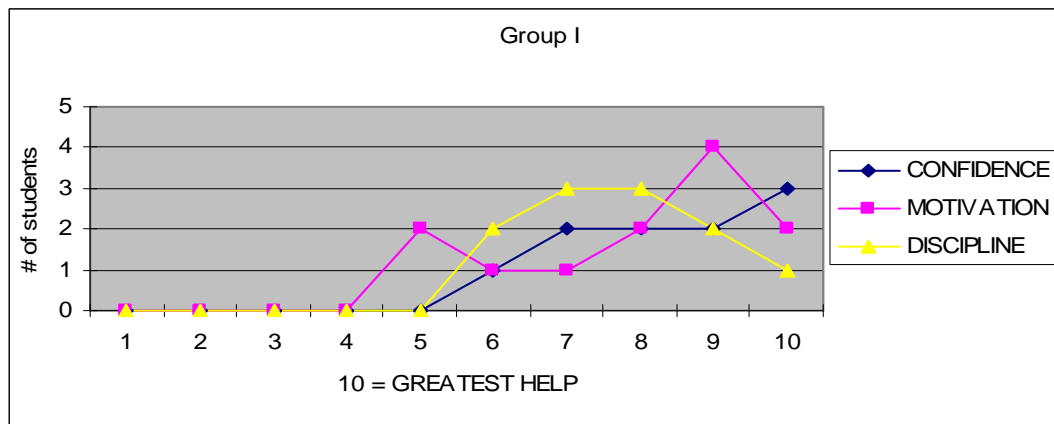


Chart 7

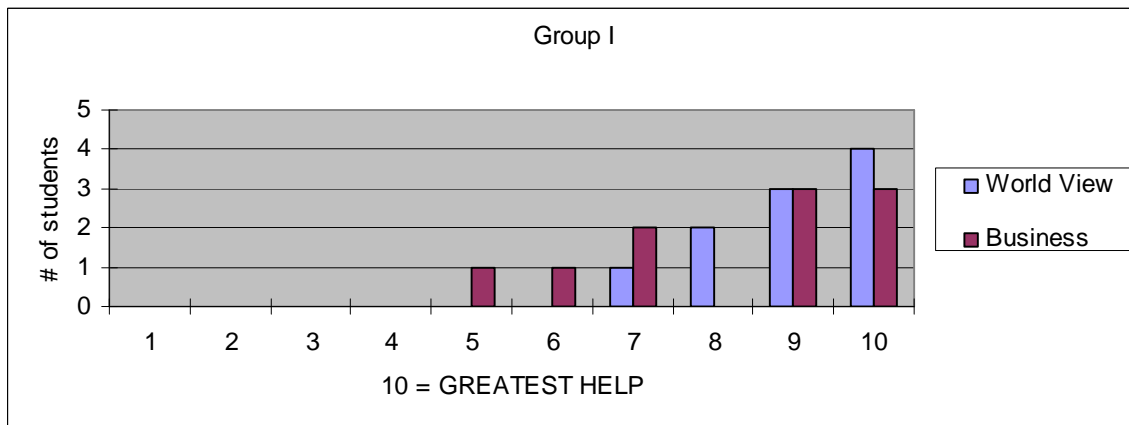


Chart 8

TRAINEE SUGGESTIONS FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

The group suggested the following campus improvements:

1. Create English speaking environment
2. More foreign teachers and less Chinese teachers
3. Improve food quality

On the last day of the program T2 evaluated the trainees' English proficiency as follows:

TRAINEE	T1	T2	PM	Project End
1	45	75	65	85
2	55	80	70	75
3	75	95	85	95
4	75	92	90	95
5	65	90	85	94
6	65	90	85	94
7	60	75	70	80
8	60	80	70	80
9	60	75	70	80
10	60	75	65	75
11	55	70	60	75

Chart #10

GROUP #2 (Commencing September 16, 2008)

PROJECT TEAM

Eleana Xu Xiao Wen, B.A. Project Leader; Heather He Li Ling; Garry Huang Zhi Yong; Agatha Chen Bai Yu; Jenny Wang Jun Hong; Crystal Xu Hai Jing; Lily Li Li Ling; May Qiu Mei Xin; Herbert Png Xuanchun, MBA; Martin Wolff, J.D.

TRAINEES:

Group #2 consisted of 42 company employees selected for further English training in a six month program. The group consisted of 7 women and 35 men, ages ranging from 25 to 43. All trainees had graduated from a Chinese university and had studied English for 1 to 24 years. Only 15 of the Trainees had ever previously had a foreign teacher. 17 of the trainees had passed CET 4; 13 had passed CET 6; and 7 had not passed either CET 4 or 6.

FOREIGN TEACHERS:

A 26 year old male L2 speaker from Singapore with one year teaching experience in China (T1) and a 60 year old male native of the USA with six years teaching experience in China (T2).

T1 taught six periods per week of “Culture and Language” using teaching materials gathered from internet sources.

T2 taught six periods per week of “Holistic English” using the Holistic English Workbook series, modified for the specific three and one-half month program.

Immediately prior to commencing the teaching program, the foreign teachers and the project manager (PM) interviewed each trainee and evaluated their English comprehension and oral communication ability. The trainees themselves (Section III above) gave a fairly accurate self-assessment of their English capabilities that is consistent with the foreign teachers’ and PM’s evaluation. CHART #6 reflects the English skills evaluation of each individual trainee by both foreign teachers and the PM.

TRAINEE	T1	T2	PM	TRAINEE	T1	T2	PM	TRAINEE	T1	T2	PM
1				16	70	85	70	31	60	60	55
2	60	60	55	17	80	90	90	32	70	80	75
3	65	70	65	18	80	85	85	33	65	75	70
4	60	70	60	19	70	70	70	34	60	60	60
5				20	75	85	75	35	70	75	70
6	70	80	70	21	75	80	80	36	65	85	70
7	55	80	60	22	75	75	70	37	70	80	70
8	55	60	55	23	75	75	75	38	70	70	75
9	55	80	65	24	70	65	65	39	70	70	70
10	50	50	50	25				40	75	85	70
11	50	65	60	26	70	80	70	41	70	60	55
12	50	65	50	27	65	75	65	42	55	60	55
13	50	65	55	28	65	75	70	43	55	55	55
14	55	65	55	29	60	65	60	44	55	65	55
15	65	80	65	30	60	60	55	45			
								46	50	60	55

CHART # 11

Based upon the intake evaluations, written examinations and other considerations, the trainees were divided into 2 preliminary groups for Phase I of the program, approximately 4 weeks. T1 and T2 had no input into this selection and assignment process. Those highlighted in grey were assigned to Group A and the remainder were assigned to group B, with Group A immediately commencing the Holistic English course. Group B was initially scheduled for four weeks of remedial English before commencing the Holistic English program.

T2 was asked to show two movies each week. T2 advised that the Holistic English Program was designed for one movie every two weeks and that the trainees did not have sufficient English language capabilities to handle two movies each week. T2 was instructed to show one movie each week. When T2 requested that the movies be shown on Friday evening he was informed that was impossible because the building was closed and unavailable on Friday evenings.

At the end of three weeks, Group A requested more class time to discuss the movies. The Project Manager unilaterally decided to have the trainees watch the movies on their own time, on their personal laptop computers. (There was no consultation or discussion with T2.) However, the class time previously used to watch the movies was cancelled and there was no increase in the discussion time. When T2 explained the realities of this change to the trainees, they demanded that the prior schedule be reinstated and it was. The trainees also requested a free choice movie be shown every Friday evening. This request was rebuffed. Access to a multi-media classroom was denied, as was a request to fund either an outdoor movie theater or a video wall.

However, with the commencement of week five, T2 was not assigned to teach Holistic English to Group B and Group A was removed from the Holistic English Program over the strenuous objections of the trainees. The Project Manager explained that the group had to concentrate on learning how to pass an examination.

Upon termination of the Holistic English Program T2 was instructed to simply show an English movie every Wednesday evening, with no preparation, introduction or post-viewing discussion. T2 explained that this was a mere projectionist job and the trainees would receive no educational or language acquisition benefit from watching movies they would not understand. T2 provided all leaders and staff with a copy of a previously published article that disparaged this use of movies for babysitting purposes.¹⁸

T1 and T2 were not allowed to give any final examination or to evaluate the progress of the trainees during their four weeks of instruction.

TRAINEE EVALUATION

With the abrupt and premature termination of the Holistic English Program, the trainees were asked the following question:

“How do you feel about the termination of the Holistic English Program?”

The following are representative and unedited trainee responses:

Trainee # A

It is regretted that the Holistic English lessons are taken away from our training course. After having more than one month’s Holistic English lessons, I found them valuable and had some ideas about them.

...

In fact, you are the best foreign teacher I have ever met. I am impressed by the effort you have made for us. So do other trainees. If you knew we have ever tried to have you back our classroom, you would learn how much we like you.

¹⁸ “China EFL: The Use of Movies To Teach English” (4/07) Qiang/Teng/Wolff, English Today Vol. 23 No. 2 Cambridge University Press

Trainee # B

Thank you for your E-mails. I admire your work passion. Many foreign friends around me performance actively in their work. I always deeply impressed by them.

I have received both the E-mails concerning Holistic English. Because I was busy in English study and felt it's difficult to express my thoughts clearly, I didn't reply it when I received the first E-mail. But I think it better to reply. You do need some information form students, especially your chinese students.

I hard to say in simple words why chinese student are not good at englishi even after years of diligent study. Many reason contribute to the pity results. Such as:

1. Chinese people don't like change. Just as you mentioned. They prefer Chinese than English.

2. English isn't our offical language, there is a lack of wide English circumstance and practices in our daily life.

3. Chinese education system is not a successful one. Every one knows it. We are still study in a test-oriented environment: Study is just study, to pass the test is the only goal. All our knowledge is in the book and text papers, not our brain. But it couldn't be changed overnight, though we all hate it.

However, it is not so disappointed. We chinese are like to adapt new condition, though the change is very slow. Most chinese student are diligence. They can take a great progress if they get more chances. I agree thatf foreign teachers can help us.

If I can often communicate with foreign friends,I can improve my listening and speaking at least. So it is very regreted that the Holistic English was cancelled. To the other hand, it's a hard decision to the Center. They must obey the superior and assure the test pass rate, or they will face a even hard situation.

I do understand your feeling. Both of you did your best and perfomence excellently. I wish I can learn more from you.

English and Chinese are both culture. The different culture's mutual understand and compromise are difficult and a long-term progress.

Despite such sad time, there are many pleasure in our life. We also can do something to make it better. Just lookahead.

An old saying:"when in Rome do as the Romans do ". What do you think about it? Maybe doing these can make you happier.

Thank you again! Wish you have a good time.

Best Regards!

Yours sincerely

Trainee # C

I am very disappointed too, I think holistic English is very helpful for my English acquisition, it makes me feel easy and free in English learning. But we have no choice! Anyway thank you very much for communicating with us!

Trainee # D

I hope you are very well.
I want to talk my view on holistic English this e-mail.

Language acquisition is much better than language learning. It is the best way to master a language, and children learn their native language this way.

Holistic English which you are carrying on is really good for language acquisition. Yes, there are lots of difficulties to create holistic English. Such as: 1. after class, students or trainees would rather speak Chinese than English, because it is easier to communicate each other. 2. There are few conditions for English. 3. It is impossible to create an English environment successfully. All these difficulties which you have anticipated are not strange. It doesn't mean we can't overcome it. You have been doing a lot for it: the huts, the banners...

One day in the future, all the people in the campus are speaking English. It becomes the most famous English training center of non-English speaking countries. How wonderful that day is!

Now, it is just a beginning. The way is long and rough, let us try our best together! So my view on how to create an English environment is perseverance, like Coach Carter. We love Coach Carter, we love you!

We appreciate what you did, what you are doing and what you will do for us.
If there are any mistakes in my e-mail, please forgive me. That is not my intention.

GROUP #3 (Commencing November 5, 2008)

PROJECT TEAM

Dean Heather He Li Ling, B.A. Project Leader; Eleana Xu Xiao Wen, B.A.; Agatha Chen Bai Yu, B.A.; May Qiu Mei Xin, B.A.; Garry Huang Zhi Yong, B.A.; Laura Lian Song Qing, B.A.; Margaret Xia Ying; Francis Chen; Herbert Peng Xuanchun, MBA; Martin Wolff, J.D.

TRAINEES:

Group #3 consisted of 18 "experts" defined as managers and other technical experts of high rank or position in the company.

FOREIGN TEACHERS:

A 26 year old male L2 speaker from Singapore with one year teaching experience in China (T1) and a 60 year old male native of the USA with six years teaching experience in China (T2).

Immediately prior to commencing the teaching program, the foreign teachers interviewed each trainee and evaluated their English comprehension and oral communication ability. The trainees themselves (Section III above) gave a fairly accurate self-assessment of their English capabilities that is consistent with the foreign teachers' evaluation. CHART #8 reflects the English skills evaluation of each individual trainee by both foreign teachers and the PM.

TRAINEE	T 1	T 2	PROJECT MGR *
1	45	15	
2	20	5	
3	65	35	
4	60	25	
5	70	55	
6	55	15	
7	NA	NA	NA
8	60	60	
9	55	40	
10	60	45	
11	60	50	
12	NA	NA	NA
13	50	25	
14	55	25	
15	65	60	
16	0	0	
17	20	10	
18	60	65	

CHART #11

* The Project Manager never provided an evaluation.

At the commencement of the program for this group T2 was informed that Holistic English would not be offered. T2 was informed that he would show an English movie every Monday, Wednesday and Friday¹⁹ evening, with no introduction and no homework before watching the movie and no discussion of the movie afterwards. T2 complained that this was a mere projectionist job and the trainees would receive no educational or language acquisition benefit from watching movies they would not understand. T2 provided all leaders and staff with a copy of a previously published article that disparaged

¹⁹ Permission to show movies on Friday evening had previously been denied because the building was locked and unavailable.

this use of movies for babysitting purposes.²⁰ T2 violated the admonition against providing an introduction to the movies and gave a 10 minute introduction to the first three movies.

At the end of the third movie the trainees asked T2 why he was assigned to technical work that others were capable of performing. They further inquired if T2 was also a teacher.

Previous to showing the 4th movie, T2 was informed that the trainees were complaining about two of their classes. They were not pleased with their oral English class and they were unhappy that they only played games, like kindergarteners, in another class. The trainees demanded that T2 teach them oral English. Consequently T2 was asked to teach one hour of oral English every morning. T2 declined. T2 requested a class schedule that would allow utilization of the Holistic English Program. In addition to showing an English movie every Monday, Wednesday and Friday evening, T2 was assigned to two hours every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday afternoon from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. for movie discussion.

The Holistic English Program was designed for one movie every two weeks but this new schedule called for three movies each week. T2 advised that the trainees had an insufficient English language capability to handle such an intense schedule.

In the second week of the program T2 was asked to prepare 10 hours of business management lectures for the last two days of the program. T2 sourced resource materials from abroad and invested 60 hours preparing a power point presentation. One week prior to the scheduled presentation, T2 was informed that the business management lecture was cancelled in favor of a special test to be administered by CNPC staff from Beijing. T2 was dealt with in a most cavalier manner that showed great disrespect and a complete lack of modern human resource management practices.

At the end of the program, the groups monitor and two other group members invited T1 and T2 to dinner. The monitor apologized for the poor treatment the foreign teachers had received by the Training Center leadership.

On the last day of the program T2 evaluated the trainees' progress as follows:

²⁰20 "China EFL: The Use of Movies To Teach English" (4/07) Qiang/Teng/Wolff, English Today Vol. 23 No. 2 Cambridge University Press

TRAINEE	T 1	T 2	PROJECT END
1	45	15	55
2	20	5	5
3	65	35	75
4	60	25	25
5	70	55	85
6	55	15	75
7	NA	NA	5
8	60	60	70
9	55	40	70
10	60	45	70
11	60	50	80
12	NA	NA	90
13	50	25	55
14	55	25	55
15	65	60	90
16	0	0	0
17	20	10	15
18	60	65	85

Ch art #12

Trainees # 2, 7, 16 and 17 showed no interest in improving their English and their attendance was sporadic. The remainder of the trainees had a perfect attendance record and completed most of their homework.

GROUP #4 (Commencing April 20, 2009²¹)

PROJECT TEAM

Eleana Xu Xiao Wen, B.A. Project Leader; Jenny Wang Jun Hong; Garry Huang Zhi Yong, B.A.; Martin Wolff, J.D. (The remainder of the staff assigned to this project are unknown because three requests to identify the team members were ignored.)

TRAINEES:

Group #4 consisted of 70 company mid-level managers 57 of whom were selected for further English training in a six month program. The group consisted of 4 women and 66 men, ages ranging from 35 to 41. All trainees had graduated from a Chinese university and had studied English for up to 16 years. 11 of the trainees had passed TEM 4; 38 had passed CET 4; 4 had passed CET 6; and 8 had not passed TEM 4, CET 4 or CET 6.

²¹ On March 1, 2009 it was rumored that a new group of trainees would arrive March 20, 2009. As of March 18, 2009 there was no confirmation that a group was even coming and there was no teaching assignment or schedule available.

FOREIGN TEACHERS:

A 60 year old male native of the USA with seven years teaching experience in China (T2). (A 26 year old male L2 speaker from Singapore with one year teaching experience in China (T1) was terminated March 1, 2009 due to a global economic crisis.) T3 is a middle aged woman from Russia who teaches Russian language.

Three weeks prior to commencement of the program, the Project Leader met with F1 to work out an appropriate teaching schedule and to make certain teaching materials were prepared well in advance. This was a welcomed departure from the previous management style of - edict handed down from on high. However, in the ensuing three weeks, the schedules for the welcoming ceremony, intake interview, group photo and orientation class changed no fewer than 5 times. The helter skelter management style resurfaced and put the complete program on an unfortunate footing.

T2 was asked to prepare a 4 minute welcome speech for the opening ceremony but half way through the Chinese language ceremony, and quite by accident, T2 discovered his welcome speech had been intentionally deleted from the program without any notification.

The welcome ceremony was all in Chinese, with a Chinese welcome banner. Although the Training Center refuses to spend any money creating an English Speaking Environment, all of the Chinese staff and trainees were outfitted in custom made military style uniforms and every trainee had a professional identification name plate on the desk before them, in Chinese. The justification for the military type uniforms was the desire to create a military type training atmosphere at the Training Center because these trainees were going abroad and needed to be prepared for terrorist activities.. This military type training atmosphere is the antithesis to a 2nd language acquisition environment. Later it was discovered that the trainees were even issued military camouflage exercise uniforms. (Not bad for an institution that refused to spend one single rmb creating an English speaking environment.)

The foreign teachers were excluded from the intake interview, which reverted to a formal test format. The foreign teachers had no input into the class assignments or student composition of any class.

The Dean prohibited a minimal attempt to create an English speaking environment suggested by the Catering Manager.

T2 was given a teaching schedule that required viewing a 2 ½ hr movie in 1 ½ hours, an impossibility.

Nine days into the program and the staff had not determined which trainees would study Russian language and which would participate in Holistic English. Sixty-seven trainees were instructed to participate in the first Holistic English class but only 64 attended. At the end of the first class, which started thirty minutes late due to administrative error, eight of the trainees asked if they could continue in the Holistic English Program even if

they were assigned to learn Russian. Imagine someone learning Russian while acquiring English in a military type learning environment. During the first orientation class only 12 of the trainees were able to correctly complete a simple demographics questionnaire.²²

22 INDIVIDUAL DEMOGRAPHICS

CHINESE NAME: _____ ENGLISH NAME _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____ GENDER: _____ MALE _____ FEMALE

MARRIED: _____ YES _____ NO CHILD: _____ BOY _____ GIRL

DATE OF UNIVERSITY GRADUATION _____

UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR _____

I HAVE PASSED:

TEM 4 _____ YES _____ NO

CET 4 _____ YES _____ NO

CET 6 _____ YES _____ NO

MY CURRENT JOB TITLE IS - _____

I HAVE WORKED FOR MY CURRENT EMPLOYER FOR _____ YEARS.

MY HOME PROVINCE IS - _____

I CURRENTLY WORK IN THE CITY OF - _____

I HAVE VISITED OR WORKED IN THE FOLLOWING FOREIGN COUNTRIES -

MY CURRENT JOB DUTIES ARE -

MY ENGLISH IS:

VERY POOR _____

POOR _____

GOOD _____

AVERAGE _____

VERY GOOD _____

EXCELLENT _____

I HAVE STUDIED ENGLISH FOR _____ YEARS.

Nineteen days into the program it was finally conveyed that 57 trainees would participate in the Holistic English Program.

The staff steadfastly refused to speak to the trainees in English in the dining hall or other locations on campus outside of the classroom.

For the most part, the trainees spoke Chinese when entering the classroom, spoke Chinese as soon as the class was over, and when in their small discussion groups they spoke Chinese when they thought the teacher could not hear them. They would even joke, “Speak English, the professor is here.”

The conversation classes were assigned to room 202 even though rooms 203 and 204 (which the foreign teacher decorated at his own unreimbursed expense, specifically for Holistic English) were not being used. When inquiry was made as to why room 203 could not be used, the reply was “Room 202 is our room.” This room assignment was changed after the trainees were made aware of the situation. However, after gaining entry to room 203 it was discovered that the administration had placed new Chinese signs on the front wall. Demands for removal were ignored.

Although the Training Center has two theaters where the trainees could watch the movies in a relaxed atmosphere, the administration insisted that the movies be shown in a learning classroom where only half of the trainees could actually see the movie and read the subtitles.

There was a total lack of appreciation for the principles of 2nd language acquisition and a complete disregard for any expert advice.

The administration, following traditional English pedagogy,²³ divided the 57 trainees into 3 groups: One group of 17 trainees with very poor English ability; one group of 20 trainees with poor English ability; and one group of 20 trainees with “good” English capability. The advice of T2 to create 2 groups with mixed English capability was ignored. The administration seemed determined to ignore modern 2nd language acquisition pedagogy and methodology. No English Department administrator at the Training Center has any degree higher than a B.A. from a 3rd or 4th tier college yet they refuse expert advice from someone with a much higher degree and many years of practical 2nd language acquisition experience.

After the trainees’ discussion of the first Holistic English movie the project manager asked the trainees how they would like to change the Holistic English Program. Since the trainees have been out of college for at least 10 years, what criteria they used to judge the efficacy of the Holistic English Program is unknown and amounts to a complete insult to those who endeavored for 7 years developing the program. Suggested changes followed traditional language learning and the leader seriously proposed the changes.

²³ This traditional English learning has failed to produce English speakers for more than 25 years but Chinese administrators steadfastly adhere to it in the belief that someday it will work.

Coincidentally, the trainees' proposed changes were identical to the changes supposedly requested by Group 2, also with the same project manager. This coincidence is not surprising due to this project manager's history of untruthfulness.

Pandering to leaders and trainees is a clear sign of management without a plan or strong knowledge of pedagogy and methodology and amounts to helter skelter administration without regard for sound teaching.

This pandering is a repeat of this leader's prior project that ended in disaster. Acting to please leaders and trainees, without any goals or objectives, is not proper administration.

Further efforts to implement the Holistic English Program were terminated by the resignation of T2 on May 13, 2009.

GROUP 5 (Commencing May 20, 2009)

PROJECT TEAM

Garry Huang Zhi Yong, B.A Project Manager; Martin Wolff, J.D.