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RESEARCH•REFLECTIONS•REVIEWS

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CONTENTS

WELCOME TO THE 9TH ISSUE OF ENGLISH TEACHING IN CHINA (ETiC)!

This issue sees some comings and goings. Going is unfortunately our wonderful Chief Copy Editor, Jennifer Howard, who has managed to do a fabulous job despite her many other workplace hats. We hope we can find someone equally as good to take her place. On the positive side, we are happy to welcome Chris Macallister, Eoin Jordan, and Lia Blaj-Ward to the Editorial Board.

Issue 9 contains the usual genre of submissions but the content has highlighted how diverse English teaching in China really is. In this issue we get a chance to sit in the EAP classroom, to participate in teacher training, and to evaluate online English teaching modes in the Chinese university system. In addition, interestingly, though not by design, the Issue has more of an ESP flavour this time round, with the topics of Physical Education and Medicine being the focus of a couple of papers.

As always it is great to see such a positive response from our authors, some of whom are external to XJTLU. We also are fortunate to be able to publish more and more papers from Chinese teachers of English, whose papers are not only informative, but also bring an important cultural grounding to this journal. Although this is an XJTLU-funded and run publication, we are always wanting to expand both the readership and the contributions to all English teachers in China, no matter where you work, no matter what kind of English teaching you do.

We would like to promote our newish feature, Readers' Response, launched in Issue 8. Any reader that wishes to comment or critique a previous paper, would be welcomed with open arms. In this way we can build more of a research community, with authors receiving feedback as to how their paper has influenced a reader's practice, or has identified areas needing further research. For those of you who have thought about dipping your toe into writing a paper, but have not had the time or courage to write from scratch, this may be a gentle way to break into the world of publishing.

Please see our "Call for Papers" section for ideas for submissions and how to submit. As in the last two Issues, there will be no fixed submission deadlines, but of course the earlier you submit, the better the chance of getting published in the next Issue.

Finally, thanks go out to not only our authors, but also to our Editorial Team, who worked voluntarily and tirelessly to give feedback and edit the submissions, helping the authors polish their work for your reading pleasure.

We hope you enjoy the fruits of our labour!

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TEACHING THE TEACHER: ENGLISH TRAINING FOR CHINESE PE TEACHERS

Michelle Ives

ABSTRACT

Training academic staff to teach in English as a form of workplace training is relatively rare, as the ability to teach using English as a medium, if important, is established at the staff recruitment stage. However occasionally there is a need for such training as a form of professional development. Even at English as a Medium of Instruction institutions in China, Physical Education (PE) is a subject mainly taught by Chinese teachers, in Chinese. This reflective article describes one particular PE Centre's desire to enable their staff to improve their English and the Staff English course that was created to meet this need. Challenges to both the English teacher and her PE Staff English students were many, relating to: the linguistic nature of PE as a subject, the logistics of teaching PE, the PE-teachers themselves as students, and to some degree the role of PE teachers within the University.

重视英语教学能力的岗位在招聘时往往会明确的对此能力提出要求，因此，教职工的在职培训一般不会把用英语教学列为培训内容。然而，偶尔也会有这种职业培训的需要，因为即使是在用英语作为教学语言的高校，体育课程一般也由中国教师用中文教授。本文描述了某体育中心提供的员工英语课。该体育中心希望能够通过这种培训提高员工的英语水平。在此期间，英语教师和体育中心的员工学员遇到了多方面的挑战。这些挑战涉及到体育课程的语言本质，体育教学的后勤准备工作，体育老师的学生身份，以及一定程度上体育老师在大学的角色问题。

INTRODUCTION

The following is a discussion of a reflection on my 2-year experience (2014-2016) training Chinese Physical Education (PE) teachers how to teach PE class in English, instead of Chinese, at Xi'an Jiaotong Liverpool University (hereafter XJTLU or "the University"), a Sino-British English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) University. As these students were teachers, this experience could be viewed as relating to issues involved in teacher training, or even work place training, yet the English that was taught was of a specific purpose – for teaching PE – and therefore could also be viewed as covering issues related to teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP). For these reasons, and due to a lack of previous research, this paper does not attempt to place its observations within a specific theoretical framework; rather, it is more a description and reflection of a unique teacher training situation. This article aims to provide an outline of both my experience creating and delivering the PE Staff English (PESE) course and recommendations for those wishing to embark on similar Academic Staff English training programmes.

THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION CENTRE (PEC) AND THE PE STAFF ENGLISH STUDENTS

PE is compulsory for Chinese students in the first year of the undergraduate degree at XJTLU, yet although other classes at this EMI university are taught in English, PE instruction tends to be taught mainly by Chinese teachers, using Chinese language. Although at the time of the PE Staff English course there was no official requirement for PEC staff to teach in English (P. Zhao, personal communication, 2016) because almost all students are Chinese and the international students did not have to take PE classes, the student body at EMI tertiary institutions such as XJTLU is changing, as more non-Chinese international students are being recruited (Feng, 2012; Onsman, 2013), necessitating PE classes

to eventually be held in English (Zhao, Personal Communication, 2016). At the same time, in XJTLU there is an increasing demand for the PEC staff to communicate with their colleagues in English, and better English would also enable these teachers to attend conferences and read scholarly journals written in English, thereby increasing their knowledge in the field. These were the major reasons why the PESE course was created.

The nature of the PEC within the University meant that although the employees were teaching, they were considered Administration Staff, so were subject to the additional demands of such a role, such as a high student pastoral care load (P. Zhao, personal communication, 2016). This meant that attending a Staff English course was another demand on their time. Even so, the Team Leader of the PEC (Zhao) was highly positive and supportive of the PESE course, as his desire was for his fellow PE teachers to be more proficient in English, thus raising the profile of the Centre throughout the University.

Each PE teacher was in charge of teaching one particular sport and there were ten of these (badminton, tennis, roller skating, Ultimate Frisbee, Latin dance, basketball, fitness and body building, football, and ping pong). At the time the course was run, the PEC had one native English speaker, employed to teach golf; the other sports were all taught by Chinese (Mandarin-speaking) teachers. The PESE class, of about 17 students, had a variety of English levels, ranging from about IELTS 4.5 to 7, a gender ratio of 2:1 male to female and an age range of early 20s to late 30s. The length of time they had been teaching PE at the university varied from one to three years (P. Zhao, personal communication, 2016).

PE STAFF ENGLISH (PESE) COURSE DESIGN: CONTENT, TEACHING METHOD AND ASSESSMENT

The PESE course provides teacher training focusing on pedagogy, PE as an ESP, as well as Workplace English. The course that was designed focused mainly on the latter two aspects, but pedagogical skills were also taught when needed (refer to Figure 1).

Few texts or research that could inform design and content of a Staff English course for PE teachers were found. In terms of texts, General English books often had a chapter about sport/ hobbies/ past times, but PE teaching texts, as used in high schools in the UK or the US, were far too complex (for both the PE teachers and their students) and tended to mainly focus on concepts related to physiology or ethics, which were not covered in the PE programme at this university at the time. Perhaps reflective of the lack of suitable texts, one research paper found, based in Iran, was in fact using English for Academic Purposes (EAP) books to teach their MSc PE students (Hashemi, Lamir & Namjoo, 2011).

Therefore, the PESE course was set up from scratch and underwent modification from semester to semester, according to student feedback and progress, over the 2014-2016 period. PESE classes were held twice a week, an hour at a time, and unless they included demo lessons, held in a regular classroom. Teaching materials were adapted from General English texts or created by the teacher.

YEAR 1 (SEMESTER 1 AND 2) OF THE PE STAFF ENGLISH COURSE

Teaching Approach

The classes tended to be teacher-centred with about 80% teacher-talk-time. Although research has argued that PE teaching tends to not have enough of a holistic and critical-thinking approach, instead merely focusing on teaching skills and related language (Sun, 2011; Fazio, Isidori & Bartoll, 2015), in the beginning, the PE Staff English course focused on the basics, and this was mainly related to lexicon. Developing sports- ▷

related vocab was vital before students could even try to instruct others in English. Due to the practical nature of the vocabulary taught, classes usually included games and "Simon Says" kind of activities. In the first year, little explicit teaching or practice of reading or listening were incorporated in classes due to the lack of time and the fact that the PE teachers mainly needed spoken and written English skills in their job.

Most of the first semester concentrated on teaching the vocabulary for each of the ten sports, one sport each class, to be followed by a skill demo in the following class, which would show the usage of this new language. Each teacher taught a PE subskill related to their sport, using English, to their PESE classmates and the PESE teacher, who acted as PE students.

Content

As can be seen in Fig. 1, the learning and usage of relevant vocabulary and general spoken and written English skills was a major part of Semester 1 Year 1, however general pedagogical and work-related skills, such as writing emails, were also covered. As part of their job, some of the PE teachers had to write emails in English to communicate with colleagues and students about sports days, for example. In the past, these were often too informal or missing vital information.

In the second semester of Year 1 of the programme, grammar and general English vocabulary were the focus. Improving basic writing skills consolidated the work that had been done on email writing in Semester 1. One benefit of the training is to create handouts and materials for PE class where no handouts are used traditionally. General teacher training principles were also added to the course design in order to change what had been observed as a traditional teacher-centred class to a more student-centred class. How to give a presentation and to take part in a formal meeting in English rounded out the Semester 2 course.

Assessment

Most assessment tasks were formative; however, some of the assessment was more formalised and given a grade. As an example of a less formalized assessment, the PESE students were asked to send me an email (inviting XJTLU staff to participate in a particular sports event), which was given

SEMESTER ONE	
PE as an ESP	**Vocabulary related to:** • Parts of the body • Equipment needed in each sport • Verbs and prepositions to describe particular movements in a sport – for teaching or giving correction e.g. "Straighten up your arm" • Instructional Language e.g. "pair up"
Pedagogical Skills	• Use of gestures to reinforce commands to PE students during class • Involving students in class
Work-place English	• Writing emails
SEMESTER TWO	
Pedagogical Skills	• Designing hand outs and Power Point slides
Work place English	• Participating in a meeting • Giving a presentation
General English	**Grammar:** • Use of imperatives • Expressing comparison/ contrast • Language of instruction • Language of sequencing • Giving advice • Error correction of common errors in the tests **Vocabulary:** • Concepts of synonyms • Concepts of prefixes and suffixes **Writing skills:** • Paragraphing • Topic sentences • Punctuation

▲ Figure 1.: Year One PESE course content outline

feedback on. More formalised assessment took the form of two written tests testing the material covered in class, a presentation on a topic related to their sport and feedback on observations of their actual PE classes with XJTLU students.

The observations were not only an assessment tool; they gave the students a chance to put into practice what had been learnt in class. During the observations, students were supposed to teach at least 20 minutes of their regular timetabled 50-minute PE class in English; some spoke for more than 20 minutes, some for less. For efficiency, as I was unable to observe all students directly, the classes were video recorded, watched later, and written and oral feedback were given to each student. The feedback related to: the amount of English used (both during the demonstration phase and the practice phase of the lesson), the accuracy of grammar, word usage, and pronunciation. The majority of the teachers spoke in English 90-100% of the time during the demonstration phase and 70-100% of the time during the practice phase of the lesson. Most students had two observations and in the second they were asked to give their students handouts they had created, to demonstrate what they had learnt from the 'materials design' lesson in class.

Progression in Skill Level and Course Feedback

The Staff English courses are generally an informal and voluntary part of a staff member's personal development. Therefore, there was no stringent measurement of progress or the efficacy of my teaching approach. Although the observed lessons were a subjective 'snap shot' of their usage of English in the class situation, the results were still impressive, especially from some of the PESE students who were initially very unconfident in speaking English. All students who had two observations increased the amount of English they spoke over the two observed

classes and, in general, students improved their scores over the two tests. Email writing in particular improved greatly, especially in terms of including relevant details. Therefore, it can anecdotally be concluded that progress was made in both confidence and PE-related English and workplace English skill levels over the period of the course.

At the end of the first year a bilingual written questionnaire was given to the students to gain feedback to help design the following year's course. In general, the students enjoyed the English vocabulary games, writing emails, and learning sports-related language. Even though many were not initially confident with their speaking, the course feedback mentioned "Giving a Presentation" as one of the most beneficial skills they learnt, as 99% of the students totally agreed or agreed with "Learning to give a presentation was useful for me as an individual" and "Learning to give a presentation was useful for me in my job". However, there was disagreement about the need for testing, homework and explicit grammar teaching, so apart from the testing, these course components were dropped from the following year's course design. Students also wanted more speaking practice on topics relevant to their field.

YEAR 2 (FIRST SEMESTER ONLY) OF THE PE STAFF ENGLISH COURSE

In response to course feedback, a greater amount of speaking practice was given to the students in the second year of the course. Once their confidence grew, classes tended to be focused on integrating skills, discussing controversial topics based on readings or recordings related to sport, such as "Doping during the Olympics", thereby trying to incorporate a more holistic, analytic and social content focus, and modelling a more student-centred teaching technique, as recommended by the research (Sun, 2011; Fazio et al., 2015).

Assessment tools used in this year of the course were two tests, similar in style to the first year but containing a 100-word writing component.

Due to staffing reasons, the second semester was taught by another teacher.

CHALLENGES

Although I have a background in health science and am keen on sport, once I started planning this course I realised what a complicated teaching task this was. The challenges were several: the purpose of PESE classes, the class profile, the nature of PE teaching, PE English as form of ESP, and L1 interference.

The purpose of PE Staff English classes and the PEC Teachers

The provision of free English lessons to staff is not to be taken for granted. The University is to be commended for giving staff the opportunity to improve their English for both professional and personal reasons, especially during their working hours. However, the purpose of these classes, and the addition of them on top of their normally heavy workload, proved challenging at times for all involved. This was complicated by trying to formalise the course, both by myself and the PEC Team Leader.

The PEC staff's dual role as teachers and administrators reflected on their, at times, poor attendance and an inability to complete homework. As homework was rarely able to be finished, the course outline had to be altered halfway through the first year to reflect this. The change from being a class in the evening to one during the day, in Year 1 Semester 1, initially solved the attendance problem. However, even though permission to attend and hold the class during working hours was obtained from Senior Management, attendance was still often erratic as the students struggled to meet the various demands on their time. Moreover, in the second year attendance ▷

was optional and of the 17 or so teachers in the PEC, there was only a core of about 5-10 regular attendees.

During the second semester of the first year the PEC Team Leader wished to link the PESE course to promotion opportunities. This added a new dimension the course, both in terms of the attendance level expected and type of assessments given. The second test in the second semester of the first year was added as a more objective way of measuring performance (as could be compared to the results in the first test) and then used to inform the PESE course student's performance as a PEC employee under the XJTLU Professional Development Review system (PDR). While this not only proved problematic logistically in terms of fitting the PESE results into the PDR criteria, the usage of performance from a reasonably informal English class to inform a PDR evaluation had ethical implications that I was uncomfortable with, so the test was only tied to the PDR for one semester of the two-year programme. This is something to keep in mind when designing Staff English courses; often the purpose of the course and the definition of its success differ between the teacher, the students, and other stakeholders (Hashemi et al., 2011; Cargill, O'Connor, & Li, 2012).

A challenge to student-centred teaching and course design content was the nature of the PE teacher-students themselves. Although they were very enthusiastic and personable to teach, in terms of English skills, they were a mixed-ability class. In addition, some teachers seemed to have no grounding in sport in general and the concepts associated with it, such as nutrition, which limited possible PE Staff English course content. They also tended to only teach one sport, so some did not see the point in learning about other sports. The students seemed to be kinaesthetic learners and disliked to sit still too long, nor have too much of a reading/

writing or grammar focus, which was a challenge to a teacher used to teaching English for Academic Purposes. To cater for their learning style, where possible, classes were kept light-hearted and active.

The Nature of Teaching PE as a Subject

Teaching PE is not like teaching in other subjects – the content and method is highly practical, visual and physical, and teaching usually takes place outside of a classroom. Therefore, there was no whiteboard, no PPT or handouts, students did not bring pens or paper to class, nor was there anywhere for them to sit to take notes on any new language. In fact, there seemed to be no expectation that they would take notes or ask questions and the classes were very teacher-centred and the students passive. As a result, part of the PE Staff English course in both years included some basic teaching techniques to ensure students were more involved in the PE class and could better understand the English being used by their teachers.

PE English as a Form of ESP and L1 Transference

In terms of content design, the amount and variety of sports-specific vocabulary and grammar needing to be taught was immense and at times overwhelming. Language associated with PE teaching and practice could be viewed as ESP in its own right with its own discourse, and the effect of this, therefore, will not be focused on here (for further information see Pirsl & Pirsl, 2014). However, the effect of L1 transference on learning will be touched upon.

L1 transference affected both grammatical and vocabulary accuracy. The fact that in Mandarin prepositions can be used on their own as verbs (Concise English-Chinese Chinese-English Dictionary, 2011), lead to incorrect utterances such as "up your arm". In Mandarin, the universal "qiu" (ball) is used for all sports including badminton, so getting

the badminton teacher to stop calling the shuttlecock a "ball", required some patience.

THE FUTURE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The students' English skills and confidence progressed well throughout the period, and from student feedback it seems they gained both personally and professionally from the course, with comments such as:

"From these [sic] course I have learned many [sic]: PE vocabulary, presentation skills, participating in meeting in English, how to write a good email, the difference between Chinese and English, and my speaking English have [sic] improved very much."

Unfortunately, although gains were made in the PEC students' English ability and confidence communicating in both oral and written English, this has not been transferred as of yet to their teaching; PE classes are still taught mainly in Chinese (P. Zhao, personal communication, 2016). The main reason for this is there is still no official requirement from the University for staff to teach classes in English. Moreover, due to the teachers' lack of fluency in English, they feel more comfortable teaching in Chinese (P. Zhao, personal communication, 2016). However, discussions are underway at XJTLU regarding the addition of PE classes to the undergraduate curriculum for international students (P. Zhao, personal communication, 2016) which will bring challenges to staff in terms of the design and delivery of PE classes.

Recommendations

For those who may wish to design a similar course, my advice would be:

1. Determine the purpose of any Staff English (SE) training and get stakeholders agreement on this.
2. Sit in on a few of the SE students' own classes as a form of needs analysis.
3. Ensure classes are active and

THE AUTHOR WITH HER STUDENTS

try to schedule classes during the day, to ensure a greater likelihood of attendance and concentration.
4. Make use of the SE students' learning styles and general life experience for more meaningful and effective learning to take place.
5. Be flexible about attendance, homework and content.
6. Ask for feedback from both SE students and their supervisor to ensure needs are being met.
7. Be willing to adapt the course to meet the needs of the students as the course progresses.

In terms of PE Staff English courses, there is a real need to develop ESP and teacher training materials. Research into whether Chinese PE teachers at other EMIs are teaching their students in English, and if not, what Staff English training is being provided would also be of value.

Although at times challenging, teaching on this PE Staff English course was the highlight of my week; the enthusiasm of the students, the relatively quick gains in language skill level and the practical content made for very satisfying teaching. There is much to be gained from EMI universities running courses such as this for their staff. ○

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A REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF CHINESE QUALITY COURSES OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDIES: 2003—2016

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ABSTRACT

The National Quality Courseware Project has been a key strategy along the reform and development agenda for higher education in China since the beginning of the 21st century. With the implementation of the project, 240 quality courses of foreign language studies, most of which being English language courses, have been constructed by Chinese higher education institutions by 2016. The statistical data, together with the academic literature on the construction and development of these courses indicate that a wide range of foreign language studies have been covered by the project and a large number of teachers and institutions at different levels have been mobilized to participate in the project. On the other hand, the statistical and literature data also elicit three problems existing in the project. Therefore, a review and evaluation of the courses should provide some insights not only into the Quality Courseware Project, but also into the foreign language teaching, especially EFL teaching in China.

自21世纪以来，国家优质课件项目已经成为中国高等教育改革发展的重要战略之一。随着此项目的开展，到2016年，中国高校已经开设了240个外语研究尤其是英语的精品课程。统计数据以及对于这些课程的设立及发展的研究均表明，该项目已经涵盖了多个外语研究领域，众多教师和各级高校也都积极的参与了此项目。另一方面，数据和研究还指出了此项目存在的三个问题。所以，希望对此项目的回顾和评估能够对精品课件项目和外语教学，尤其是中国的英语教学提供一点意见。

INTRODUCTION

The National Quality Courseware Project (NQCP, Jin Pin Ke Chen) has been one of the key projects of the reform agenda in the Chinese higher education sector. The project aims to provide open and free educational resources via online platforms. Many Chinese higher education institutions (HEIs) have been mobilized by the project to create or adapt some of best courses for free use online. The sources of the courses include not only teaching syllabi, learning materials and assessment, but also classroom video recordings. Although the courses are not credit bearing, they have been widely used as supplementary teaching sources in many college classrooms and by self-study learners (Zhao, Wang, Meng, Xiao, & Wu, 2017). Therefore, a review and evaluation of the courses should provide some insights not only into the Quality Courseware Project, but also into the status quo and prospects of English language teaching in China.

By June of 2016, 8,040 national-level and over 20,000 provincial and institutional-level courses had been constructed and published by the Ministry of Education, covering almost all the disciplines in both undergraduate and vocational curricula. These courses are branded as quality courses (QCs, most of the materials are text-based), resource-sharing courses (RQCs, the materials are partly text-based and partly video-based), or video quality courses (VQCs, the materials are mostly video-based). Foreign language courses, especially English language courses, compose a significant part of this project. Although there have been a number of studies that review and evaluate the courses (e.g.: Luo, Cai & Liu, 2003; Wan & Zhang, 2008; Kong, Wang & Luo, 2010; Li, 2011; Sun & Gu, 2015), most of them are qualitative studies focused on specific courses. Therefore, in this study, we will try to review the courses on a macro scale by focusing on and evaluating the construction of the national-level quality courses of foreign language studies from a quantitative perspective.

We will first report the statistical data about the courses (updated before June 30th, 2016), including distribution of the courses in foreign language disciplines, the developmental phases of the project, the involvement of HEIs, the professional background of the keynote instructors of the courses, and the availability of the course resources via the internet. Afterwards, we will conduct content analyses of academic literature related to the project, that is, the published research studies about the construction of courses, to obtain in-depth data about the courses and their construction agenda, as well as reflections and feedback from course constructors and instructors. The statistical report and the content analyses of the literature underpin the evaluation of the program in terms of its achievements, problems and challenges. The report and the evaluation should provide reference for not only researchers of open educational resources and foreign language studies, but also educational administrations in terms of policy making for the further development of NQCP.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The evaluation of the construction of foreign language quality courses (hereafter referred as to QCs) is based on the statistical data of the courses and the academic literature related to the project. First, we collected related data which was available from public websites before June 30, 2016. Most of the data were directly collected from websites affiliated with the national project.1

The statistical data was processed in Microsoft Excel in order to sort the detailed information of the courses, including the name of the course, year of publication, course category, level of the institution, and the course instructors' academic background such as professional title, academic

degree, executive position and publications. We also tested the availability of the online courses by visiting the websites individually.

Afterwards, in order to collect more data for evaluating the construction of courses, we conducted content analyses of the existing literature that takes the construction of the courses as the research subject. The literature was retrieved from CNKI (Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure)2. We searched for academic journal articles with the keywords "quality course", "quality courseware", "resource-sharing quality course", "video quality course" as well as the name of different languages. A literature of 221 academic papers available on the CNKI website was retrieved and reviewed briefly as content analyses.

The analyses and findings from this existing literature, together with the statistical data, contribute to our evaluation of the construction of foreign language quality courses in China.

EVALUATION BASED ON THE STATISTICAL DATA

Distribution of courses

According to the data collected, 240 courses were published from the launch of NQCP in 2003 to the end of June 2016, accounting for 2.93% of the total number of national quality courses constructed. These 240 courses, including 132 QCs, 96 RQCs and 12 VQCs, cover both undergraduate curricula (195 courses) and the vocational curricula (45 courses). The majority of the courses were English language studies (189 courses), although nine other languages were also covered. The English courses can be classified into six types according to their syllabi: comprehensive courses such as College English, Integrated English, English Listening and Speaking, courses for special purposes such as Business English and Tourism English, courses of translational studies, courses of foreign literary studies, courses of foreign linguistics, and courses

of foreign cultural studies. These data indicate that the courses have provided a wide coverage of topics in foreign language studies at the higher educational level.

However, it is also noted that undergraduate courses for foreign language majors and vocational English majors are limited in number although such programs cover a much wider scope. For instance, 87 courses for English majors included over 20 topics, including linguistics, communication studies, contemporary literature, literary history, English thesis writing, Western ideology and thought, Western essays, Western drama, Western poetry, and translation. The other eight foreign languages are taught in 38 courses, covering all the necessary skills from reading and listening to writing and speaking. For vocational courses, 36 courses have been constructed to teach 13 topics including English for tourism, English for management, English for navigation, English for conference and exhibition, English for hotel management and English for automobile engineering.

Developmental phases

Through the analysis of the data collected, it was found that the development of foreign language quality courses was in accordance with the overall agenda of the NQCP project. In the first phase of the project (2003 – 2010),

3,834 national-level courses were constructed and published in total, among which 132 were foreign language courses. The second phase was launched in 2013 and the key focus has been on the construction of resource sharing QCs and video QCs; to the middle of 2016, 108 foreign language courses had been published.

Throughout the first phase, the number of the courses launched online was growing while its proportion in the total courseware decreased from 6% of the total at the very beginning to 3.45% in 2010, though the figure fluctuated slightly (Figure 1).

Since the beginning of the second phase, an increasing number of RQCs and VQCs have been published in different batches while the number of foreign language studies maintained at a relatively low rate. By the end of June 2016, 96 out of 3,104 RQCs and 12 out of 1,102 VQCs were contributed by foreign language courses. Foreign language RQCs contributed to no more than 4% of the total each year while VQCs claimed an even smaller share in the project—they only accounted for 1.09% of the total3.

The data in this section indicates that the construction of foreign language quality courses could not keep pace with the progress of the overall national project. Moreover, although the courses

showed relatively good starts in the construction of QCs and RQCs, the development was not maintained effectively, leading to decreasing shares every year.

Involvement of institutions and teachers

By the end of 2015, the number of Chinese vocational colleges reached 1,341 and universities increased to 1,2194, including 116 "Project 211" universities - these institutions offer programs for four-fifths of doctoral students, two-thirds of post-graduate students, and one-third of undergraduates in China and they receive around 70% of scientific research funding every year provided by the Chinese government (Gu, Li & Wang, 2009). After the launch of the National Quality Courseware Project, 92 Chinese HEIs have been involved in the construction of foreign language quality courses, including 46 "Project 211" universities, 28 non-211 universities and 18 vocational colleges. These HEIs can also be classified into comprehensive universities (36), foreign studies focused universities (10), teacher-training focused universities (11), science and technology focused universities (15), vocational colleges (18), and continuing education-focused colleges (2). In other words, each of these institutions has constructed 2-3 courses.

According to the data collected, 167 teachers from the 92 HEIs participated in constructing the courses as keynote instructors. In this team, 43% of the instructors hold doctoral degrees and 40% of them hold master's degrees. 138 of the keynote instructors holding professorship have instructed 199 courses; 25 instructors with associate professorship instruct 38 courses; two lecturers and one foreign teacher have instructed one course each. In other words, most of the teachers have instructed 1-2 courses on average. Moreover, by the time we finished our data collection in June 2016, these teachers had published 3,350 academic papers accessible at CNKI, among which 2,075 are

on "core journals"5. Around 70% of these instructors were holding executive positions in their departments and faculties and 68 of them were members of various academic boards under the Ministry Education, such as the National Foreign Language Teaching Advisory Board, the College English Teaching Advisory Board, and the Vocational English Teaching Advisory Board. Therefore, it is indicated that most of the instructors have a high-level professional capacity in foreign language teaching and research.

It is also demonstrated in the data that an increasing number of associate professors and lecturers started to join the project as instructors after 2007. Three quarters of these staff are from vocational colleges and the courses they instruct are featured with the specialties of their institutions, such as English for Automobile Manufacturing offered by Zhejiang Institute of Economics and Trade, and Secretary English by Guangdong Polytechnic of Water Resources and Electric Engineering.

The data in this section illustrates that the construction of foreign language quality courses in China has mobilized a large number of HEIs of various types as well as teachers at different levels. The extended involvement offers a platform for the teachers and institutions to show and share their teaching specialties and experiences.

Availability of the courses

In order to examine the availability of the quality courses, we conducted two rounds of tests. We first tested the accessibility of the webpages of all the 240 courses and the result showed that 13 of them were totally inaccessible; either the links to these course homepages

were severed or no course material was displayed on the pages (Table 1).

According to the quality course evaluation criteria issued by the Ministry of Education (2008, 2011, 2012), all the webpages of the quality courses should include the course materials, an interaction platform, a learners' self-assessment system, a feedback channel, and a course maintenance system; the five systems should work together to support the learners' use of the resources.

However, when reviewing the websites, we noted that several course websites had problems regarding the five systems. For the 227 courses whose websites were accessible, although all of them provide learning sources such as course video recordings, teaching syllabi, course overviews, audio and video materials, and references, the construction of the other four systems were problematic. To be more specific, 33 courses do not offer interaction platforms; 13 courses do not have after-class exercises; 51 courses do not give online assessment tools; 55 courses have no homework submission channels; and 58 courses have no learning process recording system. As far as the course maintenance system is concerned, 36 courses do not provide links to other websites, 45 courses do not have a bulletin board, and 57 courses are not facilitated with any study tools such as a search engine. Such failures in accessing the courses indicate that the availability of the courses is not satisfactory.

EVALUATION BASED ON THE CONTENT ANALYSES OF FLS-NQC LITERATURE

Due to the lack of firsthand data about the details of the courses and the limitation of the scale of this study, a review of the

existing literature was conducted as secondary data analyses. 221 articles published before June 30, 2016 were retrieved, the research focus of which include English courses and other foreign language courses for undergraduate and vocational curricula, which corresponds with the categories of quality courses.

Through an analysis of the research focus and research methodology of articles, we found that the literature can be divided into three categories. The first category consists of 28 articles that focus on the technological aspect of either internet/computer science technology issues (12 papers, for example: Zhou, 2004; Deng & Zhu, 2007; Ding & Chen, 2011) or pedagogical technology issues (16 papers, for example: Xu, 2006; Li, 2011; Wang, 2015). The second category is case studies: papers reviewing or examining a course from certain perspectives (91 papers, for example: Chen, 2006; Wan & Zhang, 2008; Li, 2011). The remainder (102 papers, for example: Luo et al, 2003; Kong et al, 2010; Zong, 2010) are more general and comprehensive; they focus on the impact of the quality course project in different respects of higher education such as the reform of foreign language teaching, development of foreign language teachers, disciplinary development, and students' learning capacity. It is worth mentioning that the research topic of all these papers are focused on but not limited to the three categories mentioned above.

Through the content analyses, two consensuses were identified to have been reached by the literature. First, more than 70% of the articles are positive about the effectiveness of the project in promoting the reform of foreign language teaching in China. 22 ▷
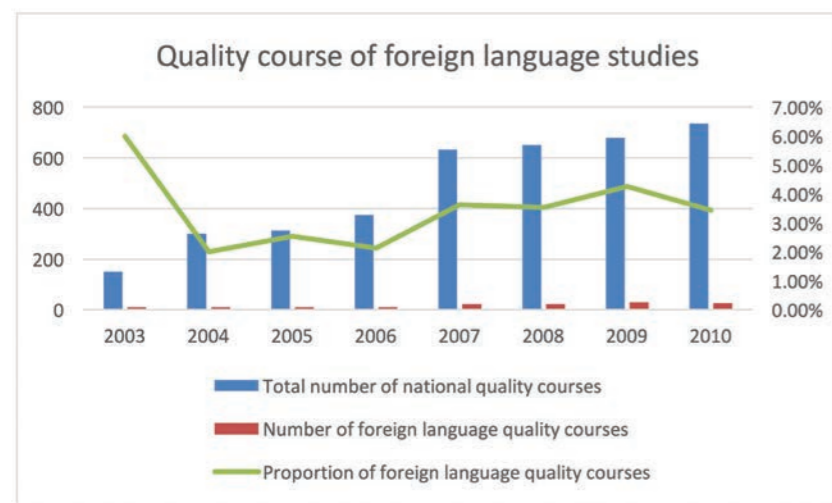
▲ Figure 1.: Quality course of foreign language studies (2003 – 2010).

EMPLOYMENT GOAL	NQC 2003	NQC 2004	NQC 2005	NQC 2006	NQC 2007	NQC 2008	NQC 2009	NQC 2010	RQC 2013 -16	VQC 2013 -16	TOTAL
Accessible	8	4	8	8	20	20	27	26	96	12	227
Inaccessible	1	2	2	0	3	3	2	0	0	0	13

▲ Table 1.: Accessibility of National Quality Courseware Webpages

papers based on quantitative or qualitative methodologies have proved that the construction of quality courses has improved the sharing of educational resources. For example, Wan and Zhang (2008) state that when they were constructing the quality course of English Interpretation, they created new teaching modes and also applied the modes into other language courses, which improved the teaching efficiency and effectiveness of the whole curriculum. Luo and his colleagues (2003) acknowledge that after constructing the quality course of College English, their team changed their understanding of teaching and started to give more emphasis to the overall learning outcomes and the students' autonomy in class; they also reported on their achievements from the process of course construction, including the development of teaching materials, publication of research papers, and improvement of students' performance in exams, which evidenced the effect of the quality course project in foreign language teaching.

Another achievement highly appreciated by the researchers is teachers' professional development. Kong et al's study (2010) describes how their faculty integrated the teacher development with the teaching program development through the process of constructing a quality course. Li (2011) conducted her research based on the theories of educational philosophy and analyzed how teachers should be motivated to join the project and become more passionate about teaching. When reflecting on the ten-year experience of constructing their quality course, Sun and Gu (2015) state that the team developed through the process is the most valuable achievement for the faculty because the team members are now leading various programs of teaching and research.

The second consensus of the literature is the concerns about problems with the courses and the reasons behind them. It is stated that the internet platforms supporting the courses are not well-developed; some of the drawbacks commonly identified include the lack of self-assessment systems, slow update of materials, and lack of online self-test modules (e.g. Zhou, 2004; Deng & Zhu, 2007; Ding & Chen, 2011). Around 10% of the researchers elaborate on the overlap between different courses, stating directly that some courses have been repeating information while some topics have not been covered sufficiently (Kong et al, 2010; Zong, 2010; Li, 2011; Wang, 2015). A number of authors cited their own experience with course construction to illustrate problems such as a lack of training for teachers' computer management skills, which may be essential to the maintenance of the course websites. For example, in Qi's study (2009), it is identified that more effort has been given to the construction of the course instead of its management.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION AND DISCUSSION

The statistical report and the content analyses of the literature demonstrate that the development of quality courses has achieved some success. The courses have a wide coverage of foreign language studies, with English courses taking dominance. Moreover, the courses have mobilized nearly half of the high-ranking institutions and many eminent professors and experts in foreign languages in the early years and involved more younger and junior teachers in vocational colleges later, which has offered opportunities for the institutions and the teachers to learn from each other and reflect on and reform their teaching. Therefore, it is not surprising that some of the research has verified that the quality course programs have initiated changes in teaching and learning in some institutions and that professional development of teachers has been enhanced through constructing quality courses.

However, there are also a few problems with the construction of the courses. First, compared to the development of the overall National Quality Courseware project, the statistical data has illustrated that the construction of foreign language quality courses is not fast enough, especially in terms of RQCs and VQCs. Second, the distribution of the courses in different disciplines is inequitable. For example, there is apparent repetition in the construction of the general English courses for non-English undergraduate majors. 65 of the courses are named College English, accounting for almost one third of the total number. Our review of these courses also demonstrates that the majority of them are similar in syllabus though course content and teaching method varies slightly.

The last problem, highlighted above, is that the availability of the online course platforms is not satisfactory; a number of the courses could not be accessed during our test and some of the learning or pro-learning systems were not working efficiently, which may impair the effectiveness of the project.

CONCLUSION

In summary, as a part of the national quality courseware project, the project of constructing quality courses of foreign language studies has made achievements and brought about positive effects to the teaching and learning of foreign languages, especially English, in a few aspects at the higher education level in China. However, for the further development of the project, it is advisable that the existing problems be solved, such as the low availability of some online platforms and the repetition of particular courses. Although our data could not illustrate the causes of the problems, it is likely that the slow development of FLS-NQCs is due to these facts. Finally, it should also be noted that our study is limited in that the data collected were for the quality courses at the national-level and may not represent the status at the provincial or institutional level; also, the rapid development of the project may have witnessed changes since our data collection in June 2016. ⭕

NOTES

1. Some of the websites include:
1) National Quality Courseware Project (www.jingpingke.com): the key official website for the National Quality Courseware Project;
2) icourse (www.icourse.cn): the official website for RQCs and VQCs;
3) NetEase Open Courses (http://open.163.com): the largest online platform for open educational resources in China, providing links to both national and international open resources;
4) Baidu Baike (http://baike.baidu.com): the largest Chinese online encyclopedia
5) Websites of universities and colleges: Tsinghua University, Peking University, etc.

2. CNKI is the largest online academic database in China.

3. The data was updated to June 30th, 2016 and most of the courses were published in the last quarter every year from 2013 to 2015.

4. Retrieved from http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2016-07/06/content_5088866.htm

5. This is an index offered by CNKI to indicate the level of journals.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING IN AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACADEMIC WRITING COURSE: A STUDY WITH TERTIARY STUDENTS OF A LOW LEVEL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Ying Zhou, Juming Shen, Kathy Schneider, Josephine Chan

ABSTRACT

This research focuses on an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) writing course to explore to what extent this can contribute to the development of critical thinking (CT) skills for students at levels A1, A2, and B1, which are the three lowest English language competency levels in the Common European Framework of Reference for languages. Quantitative research methods were employed to investigate the effectiveness of the course in developing students' CT skills. The results show that over half of the research participants, though with a low level of English language abilities, could express themselves more critically after the intervention of this EAP writing course which specifically involves the teaching of skills in conducting research, being critical, and writing academically. Hence, for colleges and universities offering English language courses and attempting to improve students' CT skills, an EAP writing course of this type can be an effective way of teaching CT skills, provided it can be successfully incorporated into the schools' English curriculum design.

本研究以学术英语的写作课程为重点来研究写作课程在多大程度上能够促进学生批判性思维能力的发展。本文以A1，A2以及B1的学生，也就欧洲语言共同参考框架定义下三种最低的英语能力的学生为研究对象。本文采用定量分析来确定该课程对学生的批判性思维发展的影响程度。研究显示超过半数的研究对象，即使英语水平较低，也认为学术英语写作训练让他们比以前更加具有批判性思维。这些写作训练包括了如何开展研究，发展批判性思维以及学术写作。所以，对于提供英语课程并希望提高学生批判性思维的高校来说，只要能够成功的在英语课程设计中加入学术英语写作课程，就能有效的教授学生批判性思维技巧。

INTRODUCTION

Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956) categorizes thinking into six different levels, i.e. knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation, with the last three higher thinking orders considered as essential elements of critical thinking (CT) skills. The term critical thinking has been more specifically defined in several ways. In 1989, the Delphi Project launched by the American Philosophy Association reached a consensus that the core of CT consists of six cognitive skills including interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation and self-regulation (Facione, 1990). Another definition, as Paul & Elder (2006) state, is that CT is an ability to think consciously by using appropriate criteria and in the end to draw reasonable and justified conclusions. Though there are difficulties in defining this term, it has been generally agreed that CT in an educational context means tertiary level students should have the abilities to "identify issues and assumptions, recognize important relationships, make correct inferences, evaluate evidence or authority, and deduce conclusions" (Tsui, 2002, p. 743). This paper will focus on these five core CT skills and exemplify how they can be incorporated into an EAP writing course.

Based on Chinese overseas students' performance in class, there has been an assertion among English native speaking teachers that Chinese students are weak at CT (Atkinson, 1997; Foster & Mu, 2011). In fact, further studies have shown that Chinese students may have failed to demonstrate their CT abilities because of their insufficient experience and training of being critical (Durkin, 2008; Gu & Schweisfurth, 2006; Tian & Low, 2011). Due to the importance of being critical in a tertiary academic environment and the shortcomings in Chinese traditional education, Foster and Mu (2011) believe that it is a necessity for Chinese higher education (HE) authorities to assimilate the teaching of CT into curriculum design. From a cognitive perspective, there is a positive link between the development of students' CT skills and their metacognitive strategies (Mall-Amiri & Ahmadi, 2014). Metacognitive strategies, defined as "higher order executive skills that may entail planning for, monitoring, or evaluating the success of a learning activity" (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994, p. 135), are considered to be essential for critical thinkers due to their positive impact on the learning process, especially the abilities to direct learning, find the most efficient ways to practice, and utilize what has been learned (Chari, Samavi, & Kordestani, 2010). Therefore, with enhanced CT skills, students who are weak at English should be more capable of strategizing their studies of English language skills and other academic courses.

As CT is a concept which originated in the English-speaking world, a promising solution to the problem may be to incorporate CT into the English language courses that are widely offered in China for students in different majors. Our research focuses on investigating an EAP writing course that can be integrated into the English curriculum design for HE institutions. Combining data collected from a comparative evaluation and a questionnaire, we aimed to find out to what extent the course contributed to the development of CT abilities for students at low levels of English language proficiencies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing has been recognized as an effective way of developing CT skills. Wells (1990) argues that the epistemic property of written text can be used as a tool for thinking and developing new understanding, which is usually achieved through the communication between the reader or the writer and the text. Chaffee's (2015) 'Thinking-Writing Model', which consists of a three-layer circle defining Writing Process as the basic level layer, Thinking Creatively, Critically and Thoughtfully as the second layer, and Purpose, Audience, Subject and Writer as the third layer, further specifies the relationship between thinking and writing.

Though the relationship between thinking and writing has been recognized, it is by no means easy to integrate CT with writing in pedagogical contexts. According to Bean (2011), good writing should be more than a grammatically correct summary of other's ideas gleaned from outside sources; instead, he believes that the key to assimilating CT into writing lies in "the generation of ideas and the production of one's own arguments" (p. 21). In addition, McPeck (1990) claims that it is only when the person has enough background knowledge that CT skills such as selecting useful information, evaluating sources, and analyzing the materials will develop, which is similar to a common educational belief acknowledging that the learning of CT skills works more efficiently when there is a sufficient input of subject knowledge (Moore, 2004; Facione, 1990; Bloom et al., 1956). Furthermore, an even higher requirement for critical thinkers is that they should "go beyond challenging the opposition in an effort to build new understanding, to advance new theory, and to determine what will portend the future" (Roy & Macchiette, 2005, p. 272).

Another challenge of nurturing CT abilities is claimed to be connected with Chinese students' English language skills. Jones, Robertson, and Line (1999) observed that international students in Australia who were speaking English as a second language did not perform as critically as English native speaking students. Another study conducted by Rashid and Hashim (2008) among Malaysian undergraduates shows that English language proficiency is significantly correlated with students' CT skills, which means

students at a high English language level are more likely to be critical. Other researchers (Cheng, 2000; Durkin, 2008; Gu & Schweisfurth, 2006) have also shown that inadequate language proficiency is a main factor influencing the improvement of Chinese students' CT abilities. In brief, the existing literature has revealed that students with weak English language skills may have problems in demonstrating their criticality.

As a matter of fact, Shirkhani and Fahim (2011) believe that the training of CT for students who are weak at English should not be underestimated or even avoided due to its importance in promoting effective language learning. However, more evidence is needed to prove this theory. The evaluation of the impact of an English academic writing course delivered to students at low English language competence on the development of CT skills, should contribute to this research gap.

METHODOLOGY

The research participants were comprised of 21 students enrolled in an International Foundation Program (IFP) from a private vocational college in Suzhou and majored in either International Business Management or Computer Science. This one-year two-semester IFP study is to equip students who intend to do overseas studies in the future with both general and academic English language skills. Each semester in the program requires an accomplishment of four compulsory modules. The Oxford English Placement Test was conducted at the beginning of each semester with the purpose of placing students in an appropriate stream based on the test results. The research commenced at the start of the second semester in the participants' IFP studies in 2016 Spring and the test results showed that their English levels were at CEFR A1, A2 or B1, which are the three lowest levels. The research participants were selected based on convenience sampling, which

is "the least rigorous sampling, involving the selection of the most accessible subjects" but the most cost-effective one "in terms of time, effort and money" (Marshall, 1996, p.523).

To measure the change of students' CT levels revealed in their writing, the data was analysed using a comparative evaluation, with the intervention being a 14-week English language academic writing course known as "Integrated Project" (IP). A comparative evaluation is a research method defined by Salminen and Lehtinen (1982, as cited in Vartiainen, 2002) as a means of "analyzing similarities and differences in communities and human systems" (p. 360), and other researchers (Ragin, 1987; Mayer, 1989) emphasized that comparisons are made for the purpose of understanding and explaining different phenomena. Thus, this study used a comparative evaluation to analyze the changes in research participants' CT levels over two writing tasks. In addition, a questionnaire survey was administrated at the end of the semester to generate data about the research participants' self-perceptions of their CT skills after taking the IP course, since the questionnaire is a significant research tool in social science to acquire information on participant beliefs pertaining to a study (Bird, 2009).

The research participants were informed about the purpose of the study. With their agreement, research data was kept confidential and anonymous. In addition, in order to gather reliable data, it was explained clearly to the participants that they should answer the survey questions based on their own fair assessment.

The IP course was an academic writing course conducted in English by means of both lecture and tutorial, and it was allocated with four teaching hours and two office hours each week. The final assessment was to write a 1500-word paper on a topic related to

the students' majors and prepare a 10-minute presentation about their paper. These students have already acquired some basic academic writing skills in the first semester through modules such as General English and Communication Skills; however, due to the challenge of the tasks, students at very low levels of English abilities could still encounter various problems when they were lacking necessary research and CT skills. Therefore, it was designed so that the first half of the course included training to equip the students with research and CT skills, and the second half of the semester focused more on academic writing skills. Based on the CT definitions (Bloom et al., 1956; Facione, 1990; Paul & Elder, 2006; Tsui, 2002) that specify the essential CT abilities that students need to have, students were equipped with necessary research and CT skills from week 1 to week 7. These seven weeks of teaching concentrated on three main areas, namely, choosing an appropriate essay question, finding and reading critically about the sources, and forming arguments. In the first two weeks, students were scaffolded about how to select a suitable essay question, starting from narrowing a broad topic, examining strong and weak sample questions, identifying an issue in business or IT world, writing an essay question, and ending with constructing a working thesis. Following that, three weeks were assigned to: using internet search strategies, searching broadly to gather background knowledge, listing sub-questions to clarify research needs, reading critically about the sources and selecting useful information. The last teaching focus was about training students with argumentative abilities by stating their stances, and then debating and refuting counter-opinions to reaffirm their arguments. Starting from week 8, most of the teaching contents were on reviewing academic styles of writing.

Comparative evaluation

At the end of Week 2 of the 2016 Spring Semester after the essay

questions of the final paper were chosen and the writing of a focused thesis statement was taught, the research participants were given the task of producing a minimum three-paragraph draft on the chosen topic. With limited teacher intervention, the following two weeks (both in-class and out of class) were given to these students to find sources and produce a three-paragraph problem-solution essay of around 500 words. For the second writing task, the research participants had week 11 and 12 to independently produce another three-section paper on the same essay question at similar length. These two essays were used for the comparative evaluation.

This study employed the Generic CASE Rubric written by the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Committee (Burkett & Bryce, 2012), as a detailed approach to evaluate students' CT levels demonstrated in their first and second writing tasks. This CASE rubric, as emphasized by Burkett and Bryce (2012), is composed to assess college students' CT abilities in their written arguments. In

this rubric, CT skills developed by Delphi (Facione, 1990) are refined into four categories, namely skills of "clarifying issues and thesis, arguing with reasons and evidence, situating perspectives, and explaining implications and applications". The four categories correspond with, yet are more specific than, "generation of idea" and "production of arguments" in Bean's (2011) stance, and more importantly, they are aligned with the five requirements of developing CT skills for tertiary level students (Tsui, 2002). This generic rubric was not disclosed to the students during the research process in order to prevent reactive effect. The change of the participants' CT levels was measured through comparing the difference of the scores marked in the two pieces of writing.

All 42 papers were analyzed based on this Generic CASE Rubric. Each individual paper was examined and marked in the four categories mentioned above, and marked against five bands '0-No score; 1-Insufficient; 2- Sufficient; 3-Proficient; 4-Exemplary', which

depended on how sufficiently the paper had met the four criteria. In order to maintain consistency, the two markers from the research team were assigned to mark all the papers, and marking was done anonymously. Standardization of the rubric was done before the marking, and the marks were then compared for consistency. In case of marking disputes, negotiation among all the researchers took place to maintain consistency and reliability.

Survey

After the completion of the second writing and before any result of the final essay was released, the research participants were invited to complete a survey to self-evaluate their CT skills in the second paper. Adapted from the criteria in the Generic CASE Rubric (Burkett & Bryce, 2012) and the definitions of CT, ten survey questions were designed in a four-point Likert scale to explore the research participants' self-perception of their CT progressions. Table 1 illustrates the link between the survey questions and the relevant CASE Rubric ▷

SURVEY QUESTION	CASE RUBRIC CRITERION / DEFINITIONS OF CT
1. I introduce my topic clearly at the beginning of the paper.	Clarify the issue and state the thesis
2. I have a clear thesis and road map.	Clarify the issue and state the thesis
3. I support my arguments with expert opinions from reliable sources.	Argue with reasons and evidence
4. I ask myself 'how' and 'why' questions as I'm writing my paper.	Argue with reasons and evidence
5. I provide examples and details to express my view.	Argue with reasons and evidence
6. I acknowledge and refute points of view that are different from my own.	Situate perspectives
7. I use the instructor's feedback to develop my paper.	"Synthesis" in Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom et al., 1956)
8. I give thoughtful recommendations at the end of the paper.	Explain implications and applications
9. I can explain the importance of my topic.	Explain implications and applications
10. I can apply my knowledge about the academic paper writing process to new situations.	"Self-Regulation" in Delphi Project (Facione, 1990)

▲ Table 1.: Relationship between survey questions and theoretical frameworks

criterion / definitions of CT.

The overall possible score of the survey was 40. After standardization among the researchers, it was decided that research participants who scored themselves between 31 - 40 meant they perceived themselves to have a high (H) level of CT, 21 - 30 meant a medium (M) level, and 10 - 20 and below meant a low (L) level of CT ability. The survey results were cross-checked with the second writing task results in equivalence of bands '0-No score' and '1-Insufficient' as L, '2-Sufficient' as M and '3-Proficient' as H, so as to find out whether the students' self-assessments were consistent with the researchers' evaluation of the students' CT skills.

FINDINGS
Comparative evaluation
Figure 1 illustrates the research participants' average scores of the first and second writing tasks in the four categories of the Generic CASE Rubric for Critical Thinking. It can be seen that, in general, there were obvious improvements in the four aspects of criticality in the participants' written arguments.

Overall, after taking this course for one semester, it is clear that on average the research participants were able to demonstrate a level of 'sufficient' criticality with their writing in at least three aspects, as the CASE Rubric demands. Unfortunately, although significant improvement occurred, most participants were not able to develop their writing of 'situating perspectives' into a sufficient level through the training of this course.

Survey
The survey results show that 52% of the participants perceived themselves as having a Medium level, and 48% of them a High level, of CT skills. The results indicate that almost half of the participants were very confident about their performance in their second writing task. In contrast with each participant's average score given by the researchers in the second writing, 48% of the participants had a relatively accurate evaluation of their CT levels; while interestingly another 48% of them had higher self-perception. Only one student had lower perception.

DISCUSSION
Comparative evaluation
The positive results reveal that, by incorporating research skills, CT training and academic writing into the course design, the delivery of this IP course appears to have contributed to the research participants' CT progression. First of all, having the ability to "clarify issues and thesis" is a prerequisite for students' development of CT. Students were taught early in the course about how to find sources online and were required to gather reliable sources related to their essay topics. They were encouraged to write their working thesis based on the knowledge they learned from the sources, which is aligned with the emphasis that subject knowledge is the foundation for the development of CT skills (Bloom et al., 1956, Facione, 1990; McPeck, 1990; Moore, 2004).

Secondly, the ability to put together a coherent argument is an important aspect to be examined when evaluating CT in academic writing (Vyncke, 2012). For the purpose of forming sound argumentations, five consecutive weeks of the IP teaching

emphasized teaching students how to find, read, choose, evaluate, and integrate the sources. This teaching process is designed to facilitate the progress of students' CT from a lower level to a higher level as with what Bloom's Taxonomy has classified (Bloom et al., 1956), and also to guide students to integrate CT into their writing by generating ideas and producing arguments (Bean, 2011).

With regard to the ability to "situate perspectives", students were taught in week 7 that when presenting a complete argumentation, they need to firstly support their own claims with reasoning, then recognize opposing viewpoints by showing acknowledgement, and in the end, accommodate and refute the opposite perspectives. This was perhaps the most difficult task for students to reach a 'Sufficient' level of mastery, among the four criteria in the comparative evaluation. However, without this higher order thinking ability, as Roy and Macchiette (2005) point out, students may not be able to generate new opinions and speculate about the future.

Lastly, to draw conclusions and generate implications is one of the key CT skills (Paul & Elder, 2006). Students were advised in week 10 about how to write an effective conclusion, and they were required to conclude their papers with a brief summary and provide some final thoughts which could be call for actions, suggestions or warnings. It was found in the research participants' second writing that most of them could restate the key points from their writing but some were still weak in giving implications.

Survey
Compared with the second CT scores finalized by the researchers, the self-evaluation survey results show that approximately half of the research participants could accurately assess their accomplishment of this learning activity, which is a development of their metacognitive strategy

(Chamot & O'Malley, 1994). This strategy should motivate them to keep developing their CT skills in the future, as Mall-Amiri and Ahmadi (2014) report that there is a close relationship between the development of positive metacognitive abilities and the success in critical thinking. With the ability to evaluate the accomplishment of a task and make the right assessment, learners can better strategize their learning process in future studies (Chari et al., 2010).

CONCLUSION
Expressing CT in English is a skill that has in the past mainly been taught to students having a high level of English language ability. However, this research has demonstrated the possibilities for students at a low level of English language proficiency to be nurtured with CT skills through a carefully designed English language academic writing course. After one semester of training, it is found that this course can help facilitate the development of students' CT abilities, though students may have not been able to fully master all the necessary elements of CT in 14 weeks. It cannot be denied, however, that there are some limitations of this research. One is that the development of students' CT skills would have been more accurately assessed if there had been a control group. In addition, the teaching content of other courses in the program might have affected the students' CT development; thus, it cannot be concluded that the improvement of the research participants' CT skills can be completely attributed to the IP course. Lastly, due to the constraints of financial and personnel resources, the convenience sampling method employed for selecting research participants may have impacted the ability of generalization of the research findings.

In summary, based on the research findings, it has been shown that students at a low level of English language proficiency can to some

extent develop their CT abilities through EAP writing, which refutes the belief held by some researchers that CT is more suitable to be developed among advanced English language learners. Therefore, having such an English language academic writing course incorporated into the English curriculum at universities, colleges and vocational HE institutions can be a valuable tool to train students at tertiary level with certain CT abilities, even those with a low level of English proficiency. ⭕

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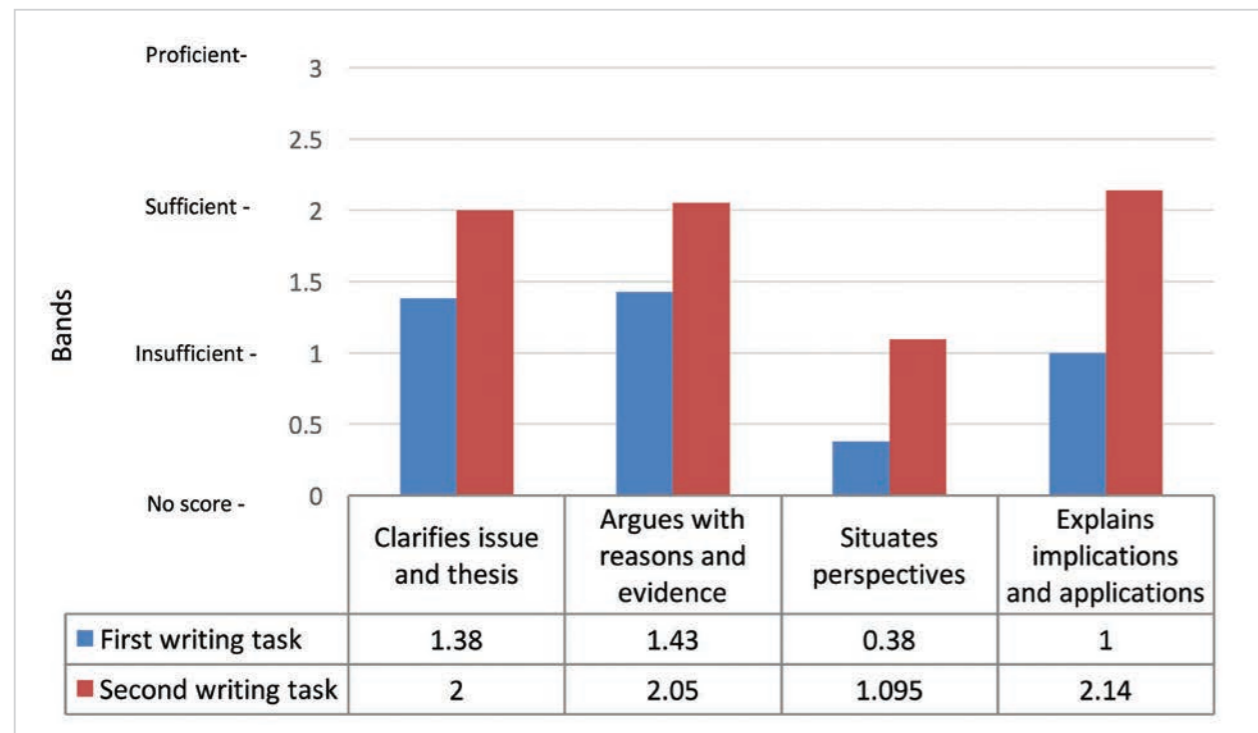
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▲ Figure 1.: Average scores in the four categories

	Clarifies issue and thesis	Argues with reasons and evidence	Situates perspectives	Explains implications and applications
First writing task	1.38	1.43	0.38	1
Second writing task	2	2.05	1.095	2.14

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KEY CONCEPTS: ENGLISH FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES (EMP)

Michelle Ives

Key Concepts is a regular feature which aims at providing a concise overview / introduction to an area relevant to English teaching in China. The inaugural piece, in Issue 8, examined a key element of Second Language Acquisition theory using examples from Chinese; in this issue, English for Medical Purposes and the situation in China is the focus. If you are interested in submitting a Key Concepts article, the list of possible topics is almost endless, but please bear in mind that you should show China relevance. You are advised to contact the Editors in the first instance to confirm the suitability of topic.

English-speaking countries are becoming more desirable places for health professionals to immigrate to (O'Neill, 2011). For Chinese nurses, socioeconomic factors and the underdevelopment of the profession in China are pushing practitioners to immigrate (Ma, Quin Griffin, Capiulo, & Fitzpatrick, 2010). Ma et al (2010) note that China-trained nurses are the fastest growing group of immigrant workers in the US and will soon replace Philippinos as the most common International Medical Graduate (IMG) group. However, gaining registration is not easy (Rumsey, Thiessen & John, 2015), and even after becoming registered, there are linguistic and cultural challenges to be faced.

At the same time, the number of non-Chinese speaking expats and clinics catering for foreigners are expanding in China. Although these patients may not be all native–English speakers, English is used as a lingua franca, necessitating Chinese nurses and doctors working with these patients to be confident and competent in using English.

Currently, there are two main kinds of English tuition related to the field of medicine in Mainland China. One is via the compulsory College English system, in which in years 3 and 4 of a medical student's degree content moves from general English tuition to more of a focus on medical-related terminology (Zhao, 2012). The other is the training of medical translators, who are not medically-trained and graduate as Arts students (Zhang, 2015). Within the field of nursing, the majority of teaching still takes place in Chinese (He, Xu, & Zhu, 2011). A bilingual approach to nursing education does exist, where the aim is to have the majority of the class and clinical situation taught in English, but as of 2011, that aim had not yet been met (He et al, 2011).

It thus appears that there is a need in China both for designing and delivering English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses that are targeted at the field of medicine – known as English for Medical Purposes (EMP).

WHAT IS EMP?
Definition
EMP as an ESP has quite a wide definition and includes English for a variety of medical and allied health professions. Any search will turn up an extensive amount of research papers, albeit the majority of those written in English relate to nursing. This probably reflects the greater global need for, and mobility of, this profession, as noted in the literature (e.g. Oulton, 2006 as cited in He, Xu, & Zhu, 2011). In contrast, although literature on EMP for mainland Chinese doctors is abundant, it is rare that it is written in English. Yet, where possible, in this article, links to the situation in Mainland China are made, often via literature from Taiwan or Hong Kong.

For this article, the discussion of EMP will focus on the fields of nursing and medicine as firstly they overlap in terms of language and communication skills, and also it is in these disciplines where the bulk of literature can be found. Depending on the learner and educational context, EMP can be a 'pure' form of ESP or a kind of EOP (English for Occupational Purposes).

Types of Learners
1. Nursing / Medical students studying at an English as a Medium of Instruction university in China (ESP)
2. Nursing / Medical students studying their major in English, at a Chinese university (ESP)
3. International Medical Graduates (IMGs) interested in working in English-speaking countries (EOP)
4. Local medical graduates (LMGs) working with English-speaking foreigners in China (as a form of workplace training or professional development / continuing medical education) (EOP)

CONTENT OF EMP COURSES
This will depend on the discipline (that is, nurse or doctor), the type of learners, (that is, undergraduates, LMGs or IMGs), and the length of the course. However, most of these content and skill areas below are suitable for an EMP course. A needs analysis will give a guide as to which areas to emphasise.

Vocabulary
Medical jargon is obviously a feature of EMP. Words such as adduction or anoxia are not used in other fields; and this jargon may even differ from medical field to medical field. Language tends to be nominalised and consists of compound words and multi-word units, for example, myo-cardial infarction, transient ischaemic attack (Milosavljevic & Antic, 2015). However, the mastery of the common or lay names for these, such as "breathlessness" for "dyspnea", may be even more challenging (Popa, 2013). The latter was noted by others (e.g. Dahm, 2011; Dahm & Yates, 2013; Staples, 2015) as causing difficulties when dealing with patients, who tend to describe symptoms using lay language.

Reading and Writing skills
As with most scientific writing, EMP style is depersonalized and objective with strong use of the passive form (Milosavljevic & Antic, 2015). It includes various receptive and productive genre such as form filling (for example insurance forms, admittance / discharge forms) and the writing and reading of: patient files (and use of internationally and locally-accepted medical abbreviations), referral letters and prescriptions (Cross & Smalldridge, 2011). Reading academic journals and scientific writing for publication are also important for higher level students. Research has found that without a good command of English it is difficult for IMGs and LMGs to make progress in their professional life, as English is the language of publication and international ▷

presentations and accessing continuing medical education opportunities is difficult, as much information in the medical field online is in English (Zhang & Wang, 2015; Popa, 2013).

Speaking and listening: functional language and pragmatics

Obvious functional skills related to listening and speaking are: getting a history from a patient, diagnosing conditions, advising and instructing patients, presenting cases, receiving and making referral phone calls (Antic, 2015). What may be less obvious, are the pragmatics associated with these. Research has found NNSE have difficulties with the pragmatics of language related to patient care (for example, showing empathy, understanding slang used by patients and working within a patient-centred care model (Dahm, 2011; Dahm & Yates, 2013; Staples, 2015). As found by Staples (2015), if English is spoken, the framing of questions can feel invasive and empathy is not clearly expressed.

Furthermore, the discourse of describing an illness is very different from dealing with a patient with this illness (Slater & Butler, 2015), that is, there is a greater focus on functional language skills in the latter. 'Bedside manner' language is quite different from what is learnt and taught in the classroom and EMP teaching thus needs to reflect these two distinct but related aspects. In particular, students need to be made aware of register and tone and how this would differ when talking to a patient, a colleague or when giving a presentation (Antic, 2015).

Popa (2013) feels students are also not taught how to function within the discourse of their field, especially in an international context, as most teaching and research into EMP (in Romania) focusses on language-based descriptions, but these are often decontextualized. She supports Gee's belief that students need to

acquire how to use the language they gained within a clinical setting and the practice of medicine; this usage of language in a realistic context will then bring them closer to becoming a member of the target discourse community (1990, as cited in Popa, 2013).

IMGs often also face many challenges adapting to the new culture and workplace, not only in terms of linguistic issues but also in non-verbal cues. Both IMGs and LMG practitioners may have problems with adapting to the westernised hospital culture and working with English-speaking colleagues, for example, the usage of small talk (Zhou, Windsor, Theobald, & Coyer, 2011). The teaching of language skills needed to allow IMGs and LMGs to work in multi-disciplinary teams, in a different cultural context, and make appropriate small talk with peers at conferences or in the workplace, is therefore of great importance as weaknesses in these areas can cause stress and misunderstanding (Ma et al, 2010; Zhou et al, 2011; Bosher & Stocker, 2015).

TEACHING APPROACH AND CURRICULUM DESIGN

Like content, this will depend on: the needs analysis, the type of learners, the length of the course, cultural background of the students, the study environment (university or workplace), the language environment (EFL, English as a lingua franca or English as an official language), teachers, and teaching resources. Due to the nature of the discipline, teaching takes place both in the classroom and in a clinical environment, using simulated teaching case studies and live patients, to teach practical skills. There are a variety of different teaching approaches available and courses may combine several of these. Approaches that have been used previously are: collaborative teaching (Cross & Smalldridge, 2011), problem-based (Antic, 2015), a genre-approach (Milosavljevic & Antic, 2015), a lexical approach

via creation of an EMP Academic Word List (Lei & Liu, 2016), and a blended-learning approach, incorporating online learning (Arani, 2014; Tang, Wong, & Wong, 2015).

Regardless of the teaching approach, a good relationship between the EMP and content teacher is vital, to clarify roles and even to extend this concept to joint or collaborative teaching (Johns & Dudley-Evans, 1980 as cited in Luo & Garner, 2017; Antic, 2015). Although it could be argued that an ESP teacher does not need a background in the content material they teach, familiarity with the basic knowledge of their students' subject both in linguistics terms and discipline specific skills is important if it is to provide learning opportunities related to the workplace/ field of practice (Kennedy & Bolitho, 1992 as cited in Luo & Garner, 2017; Antic, 2015).

TEACHING CHALLENGES SPECIFIC TO THE CHINA CONTEXT

Challenges to implementing EMP in China are numerous. Although Medical English courses exist and are compulsory for medical undergraduates (Hull, 2015; Zhang & Wang, 2015), they tend to focus on translation and learning of medical terminology, which as Hull (2015) states is not the same as learning Medical English. In addition, these courses are relatively new additions to the field of medical education in China, therefore practitioners who are not recent graduates may be lacking in general and Medical English skills (Chen, Liao, & Chen, 2012). In many cases, for doctors in regular Chinese hospitals a translator may be used, negating the need and motivation for the medical professional themselves to be trained in EMP.

In addition, as noted in Tang et al's (2015) study, it is difficult to meet the need of everyone's communicative workplace demands. In Hong Kong, for example, often medical records are filled in using English, yet communication with local patients

is, naturally, in the local language. Access to western clinical experiences may be limited, and in Mainland China these tend to just be in the larger cities (He et al, 2011). There is also the dilemma, noted by He et al (2011), of students needing to treat English-speaking patients to improve their English, yet their English not being of a level where they could treat such patients.

He et al (2011) found two further major barriers to EMP in nursing education in Mainland China, related to teaching materials and teachers. Firstly, they feel it is inappropriate to use textbooks from other countries, as the content organisation of these does not match the diseases covered by each department in Chinese hospitals. For example, foreign texts often separate out intestinal, pancreatic, bilary and hepatic diseases , whereas Chinese texts cover all of these in one chapter, as they are usually all treated in the same department of a Chinese hospital. Although the content and organisation of texts is important (because the teaching in the first instance needs to meet the needs of the local market), if students / practitioners want to work in international clinics in China or work overseas, they need to be exposed to different hospital organisational systems, so the use of foreign texts is equally important.

The second significant barrier is the lack of nurse educators with language skills adequate enough to teach their students in English. This could be reflective of Yang's finding that: "nearly 90% of nurses in Mainland China could not speak or write in English and they had difficulty understanding foreign patient's requests" (p 61, 2011 as cited in Tang et al, 2015).

In conclusion, the teaching of EMP is much-needed globally, but even more so in China as its population is choosing more and more to live and work in English-speaking countries and more English-speaking foreigners are choosing to

both visit and live in China. To this end, EMP and bilingual medical courses aim at not only meeting the need to treat increasing numbers of English-speaking patients in China, and addressing the global shortage of health professionals (by making the Chinese work force more mobile), but also allowing Chinese practitioners access to western medical knowledge and the ability to disseminate their own knowledge and experience via participation in international conferences and publishing in English journals. However, EMP as a field and the English language ability of Chinese health professionals both need a significant amount of development before those needs can be met. ○

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INSITES

Jackie Hemingway & Sarah Butler

This section highlights useful learning and teaching websites that can help with planning, teaching, and professional development. This time we look at self-access tutorials and a resource for developing writing skills.

**THE LEARNING HUB (UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND)**

http://learninghub.une.edu.au/tlc/aso/aso-online/learning-strategies/

http://learninghub.une.edu.au/tlc/aso/aso-online/academic-writing/

http://learninghub.une.edu.au/tlc/aso/aso-online/academic-reading/

The University of New England's (UNE) Academic Skills Online Programme of free self-access tutorials builds on core academic skills. There are three areas currently available:
• Learning Strategies
• Academic Writing
• Academic Reading

Each of the three sections has an introduction that includes student perceptions of common problems and areas of concern. This has the effect of helping users feel more comfortable seeking additional support. Each section also has a drop-down menu with a list of choices, and each separate workshop has an outline of the session aims, which is helpful in deciding how it will be beneficial to the user.
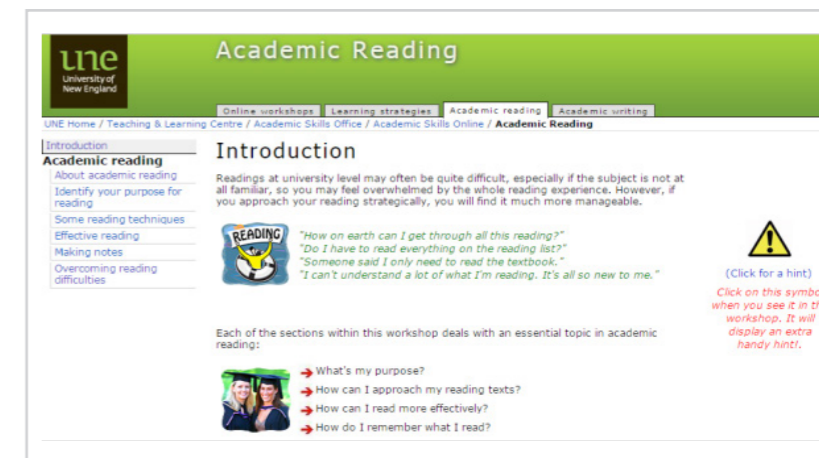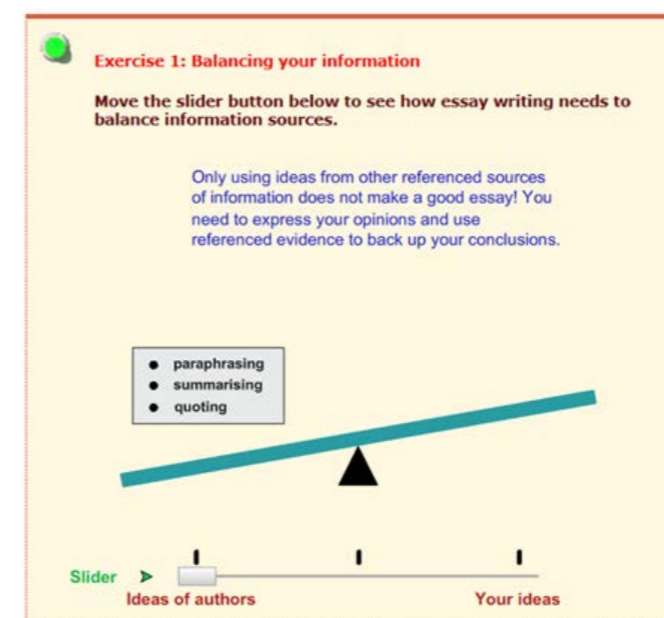

▲ Figure 1.: Home page of the Academic Reading section

The Learning Strategies section has a specific focus on dealing with workloads and exams. This section also gives an overview of expectations at university and provides a number of exercises and practical tips that are easily implemented. For example, in the time management section, users can complete a time audit exercise to determine how they manage their time. This is followed by a choice of study plans tailored for those who work more effectively either in the day time or evening. The section on lectures provides useful practice for students with limited experience in attending lectures. The interactive activities within the unit - including strategies on listening to podcasts - are engaging. Some of the material

▲ Figure 2.: Sample exercise on synthesising: https://aso-resources.une.edu.au/academic-writing-course/information-basics/synthesising-evidence/

in the Exam section is specific to the UNE, but there are a number of useful resources, particularly planning for assessment and exam strategies.

The Academic Writing and Academic Reading sections (see figs 1 & 2) are more fully populated with materials and include a variety of activities and quizzes. The Academic Reading workshops guide the user through a number of useful strategies and approaches. Some of the exercises have time limits, which help develop speed reading. There is a useful exercise focusing on scanning skills where the text appears for a limited amount of time, after which users have to answer specific questions about the text. Although the number of exercises can be limited, some sections offer links to more resources. One or two of the links for additional materials were broken at the time of this review, but overall there is a wide variety of resources for users to select from.

The Academic Writing section has the most resources, with topics ranging from thesis statements to plagiarism, and it deals with areas that can be challenging for students new to university study. The material on synthesising is particularly useful and deals clearly with a difficult topic. The note taking demonstration and sample paragraphs synthesising a number of sources demonstrates how students can build up their skills in using source texts.   ▷

The integrated quizzes that check understanding are accessible, and the suggested answers and advice are clear and succinct. There are well-chosen links to other resources: the vodcasts on paraphrasing from the University of Technology Sydney being a good example.

Students are effectively guided through a good mixture of content and practical activities to consolidate and supplement learning, and the printable checklists included in some sections are useful. However, users need Adobe Flash Player and Acrobat Reader in order to fully exploit the tasks and activities. Some of the materials make reference to UNE workshops, which users may be unable to access, but this does not significantly affect the activity or content. Overall, this is a useful resource for students who would like to consolidate their skills in these specific areas and gain more practice and insight.

WRASSE: WRITING FOR ASSIGNMENTS E-LIBRARY

https://wrasse.plymouth.ac.uk/
Wrasse from Plymouth University is an e-library providing authentic examples of good student writing from a range of disciplines. The collection has been formed to give students and teachers easy access to examples of good student writing in order to improve students' writing skills. Each assignment in the collection features detailed comments by lecturers to give insights into what makes it effective (see fig 3). The resource currently has over 25 sample assignments, but the collection is expected to grow as users are invited to submit their own examples.

The collection can be searched by subject, level, or keyword. The subject areas covered are arts and humanities, health and social care, STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), social sciences and professional (e.g. accounting). The levels of text are categorised

according to the UK's independent Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and range from levels 3 to 8. One weakness, however, is that the Wrasse website does not provide any introduction to this benchmarking system for those unfamiliar with it.

As well as providing a range of essays and reports, assignment types which many students may be unfamiliar with are included. For instance, examples of a literature review, an abstract, and a comment posted to an electronic discussion forum may be useful for students faced with such tasks for the first time.

After an assignment is selected, highlighted sections of the text can be clicked to reveal comments. The comments are clearly colour-labelled by category: function (describe; analyse; evaluate), quality (structure; authority; voice), general, or other. This categorisation appears to have been informed by academic writing research and helps draw attention to those aspects likely to affect grading during assessment. The help page states that the terms used have been based on research into student writing although no specific research is cited on the website.

One key strength is the thoroughness of the comments.

▲ Figure 3.: Sample essay comments: https://wrasse.plymouth.ac.uk/extract/essay-how-fair-is-fair-value

For example, an essay on fair value accounting of 750 words is accompanied by comments of approximately the same total length. Despite a high level of detail, the webpage design prevents the length of the comments from being too overwhelming. The use of colour coding, a comments key on the sidebar and the option to view comments one-by-one in text or categorised on a separate page improve usability. Some assignments are also accompanied with an overall reflection from the marker, which gives a clear overview of the strengths of the writing.
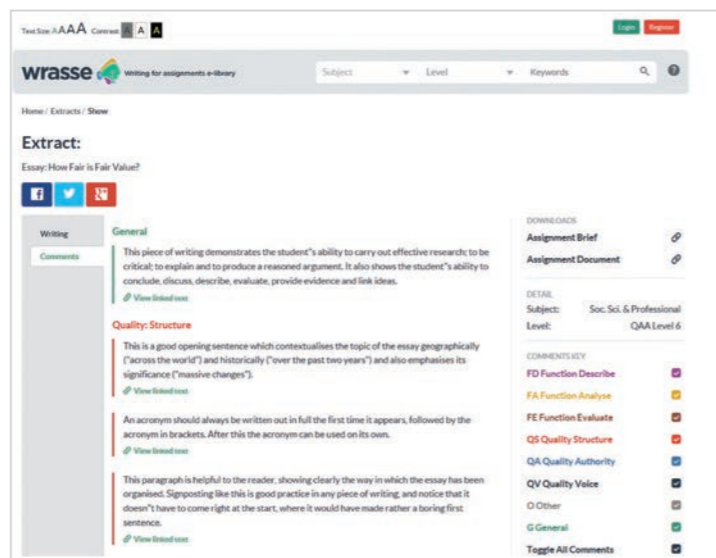
The assignments cover a range of disciplines and all appear to be specific, authentic tasks. This has the effect of illustrating some of the complexities and varieties of academic writing rather than providing a model or one-size fits all template approach. Some longer assignment types such as dissertations are included, but text submissions are limited to 1000 words so that extracts are of a more manageable length. The website's clean, simple design and the search functions make it easy to navigate.

For students, this resource can help build awareness of differences between academic writing genres and the features of good content and organisation for

specific assignment types. Since there is a limit to the amount of individual feedback that a teacher can provide, this site can increase students' exposure to genuine teacher feedback. The search functions mean that it is easy to use and could be used as a self-access resource for students, particularly for higher-level students who have already been introduced to the fundamentals of academic writing.

Teachers may find this resource helpful for presenting authentic examples of successful student writing. Class activities could involve identifying the writing genre, matching comments to the relevant sections of a text, or predicting lecturers' comments. Teachers wishing to use the materials in class may need to be selective in finding those most relevant to their student needs and, where necessary, adapting them according to their own criteria for a successful assignment. Both the student assignment and assignment brief can be downloaded as Word documents, allowing for changes to be easily made. Some texts include features that some teachers may wish to discourage in their students' writing depending on the genre, such as the use of personal pronouns. Teachers may also benefit from seeing examples of other teachers' feedback, particularly from subject-specific lecturers. Furthermore, this e-collection may encourage teachers and institutions to form their own e-libraries as a means of sharing best practices across departments.

The Wrasse E-Library appears to be unique in providing examples of good student writing with authentic feedback from lecturers. Wrasse is a new and currently small collection but the strengths of the site are likely to grow as the resource expands. ○

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UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Although every effort has been made to supply accurate information, readers should visit the conference websites to receive the latest updates. Many conferences choose to extend the date for abstract proposals to ensure the maximum number of presenters.

Seth Hartigan

CONFERENCES WITH OPEN PROPOSAL DEADLINES

THE IAFOR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION – HAWAII 2018: SURVIVING AND THRIVING: EEDUCATION IN TIMES OF CHANGE

January 4-6, 2018, Hawaii Convention Center, Honolulu, Hawaii

Proposal due: October 24, 2017

https://iicehawaii.iafor.org/

38TH THAILAND TESOL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: DIGITAL LITERACY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

January 26-27, 2018, Empress Hotel, Chiang Mai, Thailand

Proposals open: August 15, 2017

http://www.thailandtesol.org/event/38th-thailand-tesol-international-conference/

14TH CAMBODIA TESOL (CAMTESOL) CONFERENCE ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING 2018: ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN THE DIGITAL ERA

February 10-11, 2018, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Proposal due: September 5, 2017

http://camtesol.org/

14TH ANNUAL ADVANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING CONFERENCE, TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY TEACHING, LEARNING, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

March 2, 2018, Overton Hotel, Lubbock, Texas, USA

Proposal due: January 8, 2018

http://www.depts.ttu.edu/tlpdc/Conferences/atalc.php

TESOL-SPAIN 41ST ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION

March 9-11, 2018, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Madrid, Spain

Proposal due: October 15, 2017

http://www.tesol-spain.org/en/pages/1/convention-2018.html

THE 1ST INTERNATIONAL ASEAN-ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING CONFERENCE (ASEAN-ELT 2018)

March 15-17, 2018, Hotel Equatorial, Melaka, Malaysia

Proposals due: December 31, 2017

http://www.aseanelt.com/

THE ASIAN CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE LEARNING 2018: ACLL2018

April 27-29, 2018, Art Center of Kobe, Kobe, Japan

Proposals due: February 8, 2018

https://acll.iafor.org/

GLOBELT 2018: AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

May 10-13, 2018, 88 Rooms Hotel, Belgrade, Serbia

Proposal due: January 19, 2018

http://globeltconference.com/

JAPAN ASSOCIATION FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING: JALT2018

November 23-26, 2018, Shizuoka Convention & Arts Cent "GRANSHIP", Shizuoka, Japan

Proposal due: TBC

https://jalt.org/main/conferences

7TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TEACHING, EDUCATION & LEARNING (ICTEL)

June 13-14, 2018, Nanyang Technological University, Nanyang Executive Centre, Singapore

Proposal due: December 15, 2017

https://conference.iatefl.org/2018/

THE 16TH ASIA TEFL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, THE 64TH TEFLIN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2018 AND THE 1ST MACAU ASSOCIATION FOR APPLIED LINGUISTICS CONFERENCE

June 27-29, 2018, University of Macau, Macau S.A.R., China

Proposal due: January 31, 2018

http://www.asiatefl.org/main/main.php?main=2

ACTA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2018: ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING IN A MOBILE WORLD

October 2-5, 2018, Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide, Australia

Proposal due: January 29, 2018

https://www.conveneit.com/secure/onsite/acta_2018/?pg=1

CONFERENCES WITH CLOSED PROPOSAL DEADLINES

THE 25TH ANNUAL KOREA TESOL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: "WHY ARE WE HERE? ANALOGUE LEARNING IN A DIGITAL ERA"

October 21-22, 2017, Sookmyung Women's University, Seoul, South Korea

https://koreatesol.org/ic2017

CELEA 2017: THE 8TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (ELT) IN CHINA: ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN A GLOBAL WORLD: NEW PERSPECTIVES, NEW METHODOLOGIES

October 20-22, 2017, Xi'an International Studies University, Xi'an, China

http://elt.celea.org.cn/2017/en/

THE 1ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF ASIA ESP & THE 6TH CHINESE NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON ESP: INNOVATING ESP, BRIDGING ASIA

October 27-29, 2017, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing, China

http://2017.asiaesp.com/

JAPAN ASSOCIATION FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING (JALT) 2017: 43RD ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

November 17-20, 2017, Tsukuba, Ibaraki, Japan

http://jalt.org/conference

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ESP, NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND DIGITAL LEARNING

December 7-9, 2017, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hunghom, Hong Kong

https://www.polyu.edu.hk/engl/event/ESP2017/index/

THE 3RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE TESTING AND ASSESSMENT AND THE 5TH BRITISH COUNCIL NEW DIRECTIONS IN LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE

December 2-3, 2017, Hyatt on the Bund, Shanghai, China

https://www.britishcouncil.cn/en/exams/conference

TESOL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION & ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXPO (TESOL 2018) – TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES: SUSTAINING DIALOGUES ACROSS THE TESOL COMMUNITY

March 27-30, 2018, Chicago, Illinois, USA

www.tesol.org

2018 INTERNATIONAL WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM CONFERENCE IWAC 2018: MAKING CONNECTIONS

June 4-6, 2018, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama, USA

http://wp.auburn.edu/iwac2018/

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Seth Hartigan has taught Academic English for the last ten years at XJTLU, Renmin and Tsinghua Universities. His academic interests include the philosophy of education and the science of learning.

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CALL FOR PAPERS

We accept submissions on an ongoing basis. More details about the types of article we accept, author guidelines, and our style guide are all available on our website, http://etic.xjtlu.edu.cn/index.html.

The following is a summary of what we are looking for.

SUBJECT MATTER & FOCUS

The majority of our readers spend most of their time in classrooms, teaching. They are practitioners, and we aim to publish articles that will inform their practice. We will gladly accept theoretical articles, but they should not be so esoteric as to be irrelevant to the majority of teachers. A relevance to China is, of course, a must.

If you yourself are a teacher working in a Chinese context, ask yourself if your colleagues would be interested in your topic, and in reading your piece. Better still, ask them. If the answer is unequivocally 'yes', then there's a good chance our readers will want to read it also.

If you are in any doubt, please contact us, the Editors! We look forward to hearing from every potential author, whatever stage in the process you are at. Moreover, we try to be as supportive as possible, as a large proportion of our contributors are first-time authors.

ARTICLE TYPES

Original research articles
See Dawson (2016) in ETiC Issue 7 for a good example.

Reflections on previously published research
See Huckle (2017) in Issue 8.

Book reviews
See McCallum (2017) in Issue 8 for a concise and mostly descriptive example, and McAleer (2017), also in Issue 8, for a longer and more critical example. Please contact the Editors to confirm the suitability of the book.

Materials reviews
We accept reviews of any type of teaching material. Our 'Insites' feature is a good example of what we are looking for. Please contact the Editors to confirm the suitability of the materials.

Interviews
See 'Speaking with … Dr. Stuart Perrin and Markus Davis' in Issue 7. Again, please contact the Editors to confirm the suitability of the interviewee.

Key Concepts
See Zhang (2017) in Issue 8.

Reader's Responses
Readers are encouraged to respond to anything they have read in this, or older, issues. This could take several forms: challenging an argument expounded in the journal; showing how a teaching approach featured within these pages was applied successfully or otherwise; spotlighting resources which might help other readers investigate a topic further. All constructive responses are welcomed.

Conference Reports
See Touchstone (2016) in Issue 6.

Others
We are always open to new ideas. If you would like to propose an article which does not fit into any of the categories above, please contact the Editors. We would love to hear from you!
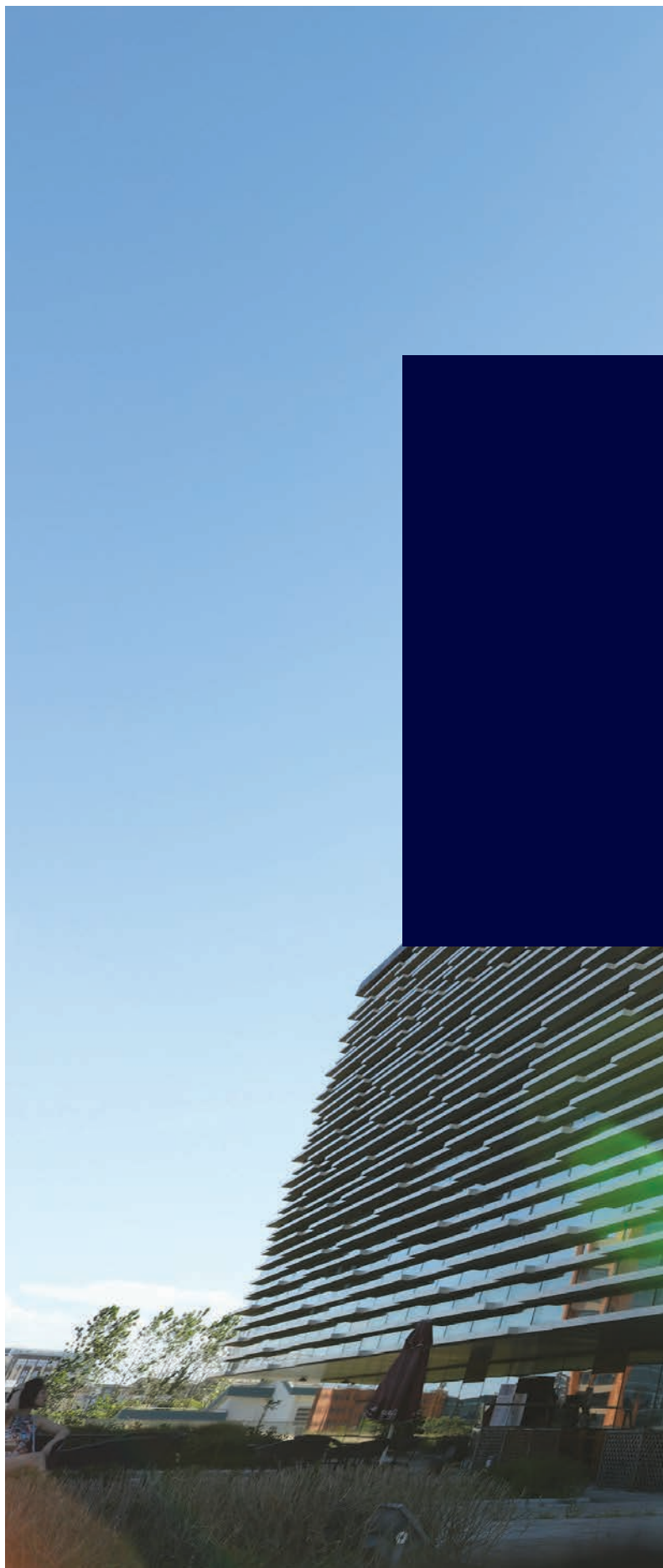
Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University
西交利物浦大学