

# Research On University English Teaching Under The Reform of CET

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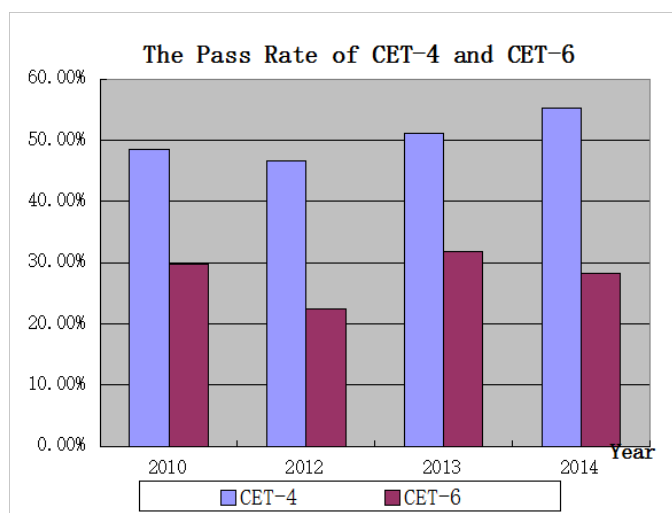
**Abstract.** In recent years, as the domestic economy is growing continuously and steadily, China's international competitiveness is also increasing. China is playing an important role in the world development. More and more big corporations enter into China. The Ministry of Education has reformed CET, which is vital to college students, in December, 2013, in order to make the students better adapt to the increasingly internationalization. This paper analyzes from three aspects: the feature of CET under the reform, the reform's influence on university English teaching and the reform's enlightenment on college teaching, to improve the healthy development of university English teaching.

CET is a unified national examination for college students. It is published by the Ministry of Education and carried out since 1987. It is an authoritative test, which plays an important role in the teaching task of domestic universities. There is no doubt that CET is a vital test which concerned students' reward and employment.

However, with the development of China's economy and society, some aspects of CET can not meet the needs of the development, such as the form, content and structure. Based on the situation, the Ministry of Education starts the reform of CET--College English Test Band Four and Six in 2013.

## 1 The characteristics of CET-4 and CET-6 under the reform

The university English test has been offered for years in China. By some accounts, the population of college students who take part in CET is over ten million every year. But the pass rate is not very high through out the country. The statistics of the pass rate of CET from 2010 to 2014 is as shown in Picture 1.



Pic 1. The Pass Rate of CET-4 and CET-6

From the picture above, we can see clearly that the pass rate of CET-4 and CET-6 is not high in China. Thus, in order to meet the needs of the society and the development of college students' personality, the Ministry of Education launched new policies to reform CET-4 and CET-6 in 2013. It is a radical reform no matter in forms, contents or structures. The features are as follows:

Firstly, reduce the pressure and difficulty.

Though CET maybe easy for students of Peking University, Tsinghua University and some other first-tier universities in the past, it is rather difficult for most of the students in ordinary universities. Therefore, the primary goal of the reform is to reduce students' pressure and difficulty. This is indicated in the reform of 2013. For instance, compound dictation is replaced by the dictation of words and phrases. This kind of change greatly reduced the difficulties of the listening part in CET and increased the scoring rate, so that students can be urged to put more emphasis on combining the dictation with spelling.

Secondly, keeping up with the times and improving the ability of extracting information.

Go to college---study abroad, or go to college--- go to graduate school--- study abroad. The former is a certain way for student whose family condition is good. And the latter is the best way for modern college students who want to gild themselves. Hence, IELTS and TOEFL are essential for them.

This time, CET is changing to follow the trend of the times and the reform this time is for students' long-term development. Taking the reading comprehension as an example, fast reading is replaced by passage reading. The information of the ten sentences, which are coming after the chapter, comes from some part of the passage. But the corresponding paragraph is not one and only. Maybe several questions are corresponding to one paragraph. Matching the paragraph information is a reform according to IELTS, and the biggest splash is its great confusion. Time for reading comprehension is not sufficient in CET-4 and CET-6. Thus, to finish lots of questions in a short time, students need to be skillful---have the ability of extracting information.

Thirdly, starting with translation and putting emphasis on traditional culture.

Putting emphasis on traditional Chinese culture has been a hot topic since the 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congress. Traditional Chinese culture is the soul of the construction of the socialist core value system. As a soft power, culture is related to the harmony of the society and the stability of the country. Therefore, reviving traditional Chinese culture is of great urgency. The CET reform this time thoroughly reflects the attention on culture. For example, the translation part has been changed. Paragraph translation, which takes the place of sentence translation, is related to China's economy, culture, history, social development and so on. The difficulty of this part is increased, so the scoring rate is decreased. Students are supposed to accumulate more words of Chinese traditional festivals, customs, history, culture and daily life, if they want to get high marks.

In addition, the reform puts more emphasis on the full play of students' subjectivity and initiative and the development of reading, listening and expression, in order to change "Dumb English" to "Smart English".

## **2 The influence on college English teaching brought by the reform of CET**

CET is the abbreviation of College English Test Band. It is authoritative and professional, for it is organized by the Ministry of Education---the highest education authority of China. With the expansion of universities' enrollment, the number of students who take part in CET-4 and CET-6 is increasing. Consequently CET has been the largest exam all over the world. According to the statistics, the number of the candidates is increased to over ten million from tens of thousands. This large scale examination has a huge effect on college English teaching in China.

### **2.1 English examination is favorable to the development of college English teaching**

First of all, CET is the exam presided by the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education in the early days of the reform era. CET was officially carried out in 1987. At the beginning, it is used to check whether the college students can meet the requirement of the syllabus after the studying of college English. College English was not taken seriously before the policy is launched. It is only considered as a public course like politics. The speed of the development of college English was rather slow among universities. As the outline was launched, the pass rate of CET-4 and CET-6 and the quality of English teaching were contacted closely. The outline was regarded as the standard to measure the quality of college English teaching. Nearly all of the universities were taking English teaching seriously since then.

In order to increase the pass rate of CET-4 and CET-6, schools were taking steps to increase the quality of English teaching, such as spending a lot of money to employ famous teachers from other places and hiring foreign teachers. These measures have improved the quality of college English teaching in China for decades, and inspired students' enthusiasm on English studying, improved their English.

## **2.2 English examination has changed the pattern of college English teaching**

The popularity of CET-4 and CET-6 make contributions to the improvement of college English teaching in China. It not only inspires students' enthusiasm on English learning to some extent, but also promotes the improvement of English. However, shortcomings also exist.

Firstly, analyze from the content of CET.

Though CET meets the needs of the social development as much as possible under the continuous reform. A large proportion of questions in the examination-oriented education such as grammar, the meaning of the words and multiple choice questions still exist.

Secondly, to deal with CET, most of the teachers teaching in a single teaching method, they only make explanations about the content of CET.

Moreover, many universities in China set up courses on reading, writing and listening of CET in the first year and second year in college. And the teachers usually teach grammar and words in traditional mode---mode of examination-oriented education. They sometimes only teach students some skills of answering the questions of CET. Under the circumstances, the communications between teachers and students are little in class. The mechanical type of teaching makes the students learning in a passive state. In fact, this mode of teaching leads to the low efficient of college English teaching.

What's more, the excessive attention on CET makes schools consider the result of CET as an important part in the estimate of university teaching. The result of CET has been a standard to measure the quality of college English teaching and the standard of teachers' promotion and salary. Students even can not graduate or get the degree unless they pass CET. This leads college education to a wrong direction, not only violate the basic rule of the development of quality-oriented education but also bad for the development of students. Students learn the skills seriously and do a lot of practice, only to get the result of high scores, low abilities, not different from the examination-oriented education before.

Students can be skillful due to the everyday practice and can get high marks in the exam of CET. However, they can not communicate with others or translate foreign-language books well. The situation of "Dumb English" can be found everywhere.

Hence, we can come to the conclusion. If you do not want to make CET a terrible thing for college students, the most essential thing is to change the situation of taking the pass rate of CET as the only standard to measure the quality of college teaching, to measure the teacher and to measure students ability in learning English. We are supposed to view it in a right way, and make it an effective way to improve college English teaching.

## **3 The enlightenment of CET reform on college English teaching.**

CET depend the direction of college English teaching. It not only decides the curriculum design of college English, but also have a great effect on the direction of the research by college English teachers. CET has a far-reaching significant on college English teaching.

### **3.1 English teaching needs to adapt to the development and necessity of the society.**

The world is changing continuously in this era of internet, especially after China's join in WTO. And the relationship of economy, culture and trade is more closed between China and other countries in the world. More and more foreign enterprise and joint venture is entering into China for maximum benefit. At the same time, Chinese domestic enterprises want to be strong enough to enter foreign countries and regions.

In the process of bring in and go out. English has been a common standard for companies to

measure the graduates. Companies need staffs with solid specialized knowledge, abundant working experience and flexible contingency ability, especially the person whose English is good. To meet the needs and the development of the society, recent reforms of CET put emphasis on the development of students' practical ability.

For instance, from the content of CET, the biggest splash of the CET reform in December, 2013 is the change of the structure of the exam. The vocabulary part is canceled. It is known to us all that the grammar can be checked by the vocabulary part. This great action best exemplified the requirement to adapt to the social development that has been mentioned above. The reading and listening part has also been changed. The proportion of listening is increased, and the related proportion is declined. This indicates that CET puts more emphasis on students' ability in communication.

### **3.2 Needs of science and technology in English teaching.**

With the fast development of science and technology, computer science has been full used in college. With the help of massive media, the boring and abstract learning of English can be more intuitive by the using of animation, picture and video. Students' enthusiasm about learning can be increased greatly in this way. Apply technology to practical English teaching can not only make the teaching resources be in full use wherever at anytime, but also good for college students to learn English anywhere at any time by using modern science and technology.

Besides, network examination has been an essential way of CET. According to the latest requirement of CET reform, students take CET exam on computer. The major form is the interaction between students and examiner and between students themselves. The content includes the dialogue of self-introduction, speech by way of pictures, discussion and so on between student and computer.

Moreover, no matter the registration or the publication and query of the result are all made on internet. These all indicated that the demand of science and technology of English teaching is absolutely necessary in the future.

### **3.3 The improvement of English teachers' comprehensive accomplishment.**

Today, the promotion of the comprehensive national power is more depends on the development of economy and education. As a saying goes: The education policy is based on teachers. Talent training relies on education, and teacher is key in the development of education. English level is an important standard to measure if the person is talented or not. As English is a compulsory public course in college teaching, English teacher has duty-bound responsibility. It is initial for teachers to improve their quality to meet the needs of times and society, and to know more about the modern education technology.

In addition, moral education on English teachers is an important part to enhance their comprehensive quality. College English teachers are supposed to have noble occupation morality, strong sense of mission, the responsibility to study English hard, and be confident in and enthusiastic about English teaching and be passion for English class.

The teaching quality of college English class and the English level of college students are all depends on the quality of teachers group. Therefore, college must provide teachers with a favorable atmosphere of learning, and give English teacher the chance of taking part in the competition, studying abroad and training on the job in a large scale. In this way, the comprehensive quality of the teacher can be improved.

College English teaching is a big project which is complicated and systematic. It should be reformed in many aspects such as the English evaluation, examination, teaching environment, language application. In brief, college English teaching must meet the needs of the development of times and society, so that the talent training goal can be promoted, and each link of college English teaching can be connected. In order to make the reform of college curriculum and the reform of CET-4 and CET-6 reach the win-win situation.

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