

A Brief Analysis of the College English Teaching in Privately Owned Colleges for Postgraduates upon the Demand Analysis

Shanshan Jia

City College of Wuhan University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, Hubei, P.R.C 430000

Key words: the postgraduate cultivation (PC) in POCs and ICs; experimental teaching; demand analysis

Abstract: In the year 2011, China Administration issued The Cultivation Program of Talents of Special Requirements in which 5 privately owned colleges and universities are approved to recruit postgraduates. Since then, many independent colleges (ICs) and privately owned colleges (POCs) began to apply for the authority of postgraduate recruitment due to its importance in cultivating advanced applied technique oriented talent professionals (ATOP) which is of great significance for the development of POCs in its further establishment of first educational products. Although the appliance of postgraduate recruitment means more opportunities for the development of POCs and ICs, it confronts those institutes of higher education with more problems worth wide attention. Therefore, the current situations including challenges and opportunities for ICs and POCs in their advanced ATOP cultivation were elaborated in this paper, based upon which the significance and demands of College English Teaching (CET) for postgraduates in POCs and ICs were analyzed in detail. Further, the current CET in A College taken as the case, an experimental teaching procedure was designed for the cultivation of professional masters. Supported by the results of contrastive testing between experimental group and control group and the data collected from the questionnaire during the experimental teaching, the experimental teaching should be verified in the hope that it may provide reference for the operation of postgraduate education in ICs and POCs, so as to pave the way for their establishment of educational brand in cultivating advanced ATOP.

The Analysis of Postgraduate Educational Quality in ICs and POCs

In the year 2011, China Administration issued The Cultivation Program of Talents of Special Requirements in which determined the rights and status of advanced talents cultivation for ICs and POCs. Since then, a large number of ICs and POCs has begun to apply for the recruitment of professional postgraduates according to their own disciplinary advantages and the local economic features where the campus is located. Thus, the scale of postgraduate education has been on a booming, which contributes much to the cultivation of advanced professional talents in China.

The current status of postgraduate cultivation in ICs and POCs

Since 2011, ICs and POCs which are approved to recruit professional postgraduate students have spared no effort in directing their connotative development. The subject range permitted to recruit postgraduate students as well as the scale of recruitment are on a drastic booming, which has much to do with the great importance attached to the development of postgraduate education in colleges and universities. The current situation accords with the following trends:

A. The number of authorized centers for professional graduates students cultivation is increasing. In 2011, the first 5 POCs approved to have PC have only one authorized center for professional master's degree whereas up to 2015, the above 5 colleges have altogether 18 centers.

B. The recruitment scale of professional postgraduate students in ICs and POCs is on a booming. According to the report from China Administration of Education, the recruitment scale in Beijing

City University in 2015 was 280, that in Xijing University is 60, 100 in Jilin HuaQiao University of Foreign Languages, and 60 in Hebei Institute of Communications.

C. The number of candidates for postgraduate education has been on an increase. Since the establishment of PC in ICs and POCs, due to the limit of specialization recognition of candidates for ICs and POCs, the candidates recruited comes at a large extent from adjustment, which is a booming for the scale but a negative impact on the quality of recruitment. However, with the time passing, the PC in ICs and POCs has been gradually accepted by candidates inside China. This is reflected in the net recruitment in some regional ICs and POCs such as Beijing City University and Xijing University in 2015, both of which didn't accept adjusted candidates and the recruitment in some colleges was very competitive, 19.7:1, which is over 7 times more than that of the national average, 2.7:1.

1.2 The bottleneck for the PC in ICs and POCs

Although the scale and number of authorized centers for professional PC and recruitment is on a booming thanks to the administrative support from the government and investors of ICs and POCs, lots of problems are still left unsolved which have become the bottleneck for the development of PC in ICs and POCs.

A. The source of students: Although with the development of PC in ICs and POCs, various preferential policies aiming at attracting candidates have come into being, ICs and POCs are difficult to be accepted by the general candidates in China. For instance, before 2015, East University of Heilongjiang, Ji lin Hua Qiao University, and Hebei Institute of Communication took pains to satisfy their recruitment via adjustment. Before 2014, Xijing University also had the same difficulty. The source of recruitment concerns much about the survival and development of ICs and POCs. The property of severe shortage of candidates is actually the low recognition in China among the candidates. However, seen from the development of Beijing City University and Xijing University, the geological advantages and assistance and aid policies are conducive to the attraction of candidates, which is in the short term a relieving strategy, but not sustainable for the development of advanced higher education catering in ICs and POCs. Therefore, it is urgent that a brandish educational programme for the establishment of distinguished reputation for those ICs and POCs in PC shall be of great significance, for their sustainable development.

B. The instability of candidates For the preparation of the study in this paper, in the hope of investigating the current statues of candidates in ICs and POCs, 60 postgraduate students from A College were interviewed, with the data collected in the table below:

Table 1. The questionnaire for the satisfaction of students in A College

The motivation			Willing/Unwilling		Degree of recognition		
Adjustment	Knowledge pursuing	Just to get a diploma	unwilling	willing	accepted	unaccepted	not sure
45	12	58	48	12	5	48	7

Seen from the above data collected, The candidates in College A are largely adjusted, most of whom are unwilling to register. Therefore, the resource of recruitment is instable. Besides, lots of candidates are supposed to be cultivated in a theoretical way, not professionally, which is their current direction. The graduate students naturally would underestimate their academic scheme due to the mood of disappointment. That is to say, the graduate student cultivation approved in ICs and POCs are foremost the professional ones, instead of theoretical, which betrays the original intention of those candidates and will naturally lead to the instability of those candidates.

C. The supervisors have no practical experience The cultivation goal of professional graduate

students is to equip them with sturdy theoretical basis and certain practical skills, techniques and working experience so as to make them the advanced talents for professional fields. To be brief, those who are cultivated to be the professional graduates are supposed to be qualified with practical working positions where large amounts of working experience and certain theoretical knowledges are required. Currently, seen from the distribution of supervisors in ICs and POCs inside China, most of the supervisors are of theoretical teaching faculties due to their education background. Namely, because most of supervisors are graduated from the state-owned universities and colleges, they are adept at writing research thesis but fairly weak at directing their graduates to cope with the reality during their working. This dilemma has now become a serious bottleneck for PC in ICs and POCs.

The Current Situation of CET in ICs and POCs

1. The general status of CET in ICs and POCs. ICs and POCs are competitive supplement for the higher education in China. Since 2004, ICs and POCs have continued to appear in large numbers. However, impacted by the society and influenced by the educational operation goals, the traditional educational modes in the state owned universities and colleges can not accommodate the needs that regional colleges have which aims at serving the local and regional economic development. Taking the CET for graduate students in ICs, the low efficiency and poor quality has become the most serious problem. This has also aroused wide range of attention inside China.

2. Huang et al. (2012) advocated that the CET for professional graduate students should focus on the practicability and the application of English in the professional fields[1]. Shen (2013) further pointed out that the professional graduate student cultivation is the essential need for the development of ATOP cultivation. Therefore, all the courses for general purpose including English should be differentiated with the ones conducted in the state owned colleges and universities[2]. Wu (2013) elaborated on the solutions of PC for ICs and POCs, and discussed in detail the dilemma in general courses teaching represented by English, holding that the reason why the teaching effect in the English teaching for ICs and POCs is poor is due to the limitations from the traditional teaching procedures, the quality of student resources, financial support and the purpose of maximization of benefit for the investors[3]. Therefore, the usual procedure adopted during teaching is usually the traditional Prescription-Presentation-Practice method (PPP method) and Teaching in Big Class. Wang (2014) analyzed the shortcomings of PC in ICs and POCs from the perspective of supervisor selection, advocating that the reason thereof is the unqualification of teaching faculty's knowledge framework towards the basic purpose of PC[4]. Cui et al. (2014) taking X College in Heilongjiang Province as the case, emphasized the importance of CET in the PC process in ICs and POCs and held that the cultivation of postgraduate students is absolutely necessary for the purpose of serving the local economy. However, the teaching reformation for general courses is so significant that it contributes much to the establishment of educational brands for ICs and POCs[5, 6]. Feng (2015) analyzed the educational quality of PC in the aforementioned 5 colleges and universities in a quantitative way, advocating that most of the candidates and graduates are unsatisfied with the current PC, among which, the most unsatisfying aspects lie in the student-teacher ratio, and the fact that the teaching content in class for College English is disjointed with the actual production needs[7]. He thought that only by downsizing the class in teaching and rearrange the teaching contents in a hierarchical way from EGP to ESP can contribute to the career development for those professional master candidates in the future.

Above all, the CET in ICs and POCs is filled with both challenges and opportunities, the reformation of which could be conducive to the establishment of educational brand for ICs and

POCs in China, represented by CET. If summarized, the CET in ICs and POCs are of the following shortcomings:

The teaching content follows the traditional version in the public or state owned colleges and universities, which goes against the school operation to serve the local economy and the features of their students.

Since the purpose of running a college for most of the investors in China is to maximize the benefit, the fund input in the hardware construction and the teaching force establishment is quite limited, which restricts the development of PC.

Moreover, the graduates in those ICs and POCs will handle professional and practical work in their posts. Therefore, the teaching content should be arranged in a hierarchical way from English for General Purpose (EGP) to English for Special Purpose (ESP).

To sum up, the CET for graduate students in ICs and POCs is not ideal, hence, reformation needed urgently.

3. The demands of CET from the professional graduate students. In order to find out the real demands of those students in having CET, 200 candidates from A College were interviewed, with 150 valid questionnaires collected, which is represented in detail as follows:

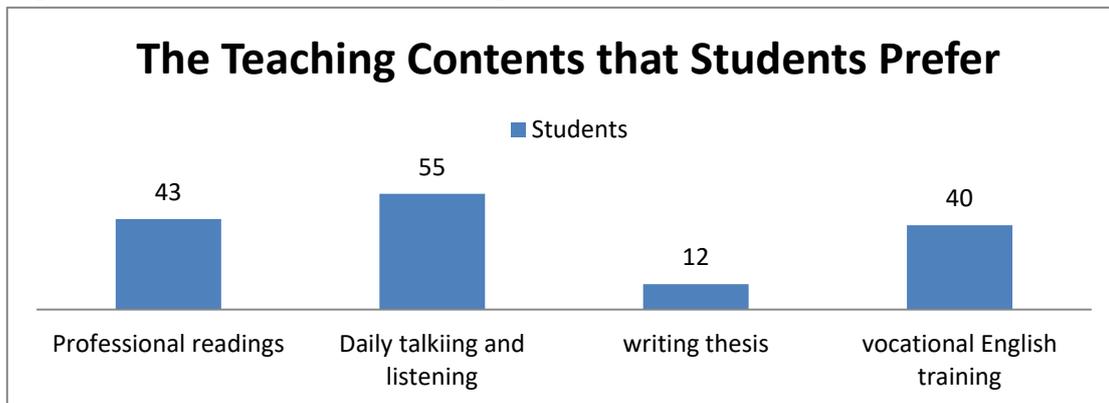


Fig.1 The Teaching Contents that Students Prefer

Seen from the above graph, some students (43) prefer to have reading practice in CET. They hope to complete the recognition towards their work in the future. So via reading, they are inclined to absorb new theoretical knowledge abroad.

Meanwhile, most of the interviewees think that the class scale should not exceed 30 people, indicating that students are eager to have more chance to practice their linguistic abilities during class. A large part of students hold that beside professional reading, the daily communication in English is quite important. They think it important to practice their daily talking and listening. Also some other students think it important to learn vocational English since it plays a significant role in their future career development. only a few students (12) hold that EGP for thesis writing is important since they will probably have further education as doctoral candidates.

Therefore, obviously, the CET in ICs and POCs should meet the needs for students' vocational development, satisfy the needs of daily communication in their working, as advanced ATOPs.

The College English Teaching in Privately Owned Colleges for Postgraduates upon the Demand Analysis

1.The establishment of experimental teaching. From the aforementioned, the establishment of a teaching mode for those professional graduate students is of great significant. Thus, according to the features of Net+ currently, an experimental teaching was designed in this paper. With Small Private Online Courses (SPOC) the prototype, the mode is divided into online and offline modules. Online

module was designed for information exchange after or before class, also a channel for the teacher to collect information to adjust the teaching plan in time, whereas the offline part serves as the feedback of the practice via presentation of student groups and assessment from teachers. In this teaching mode, students were taught with ESP according to the teaching materials composed by the teaching faculties in A College. The offline part was conducted in the form of seminar presentation. The procedure is presented as below:

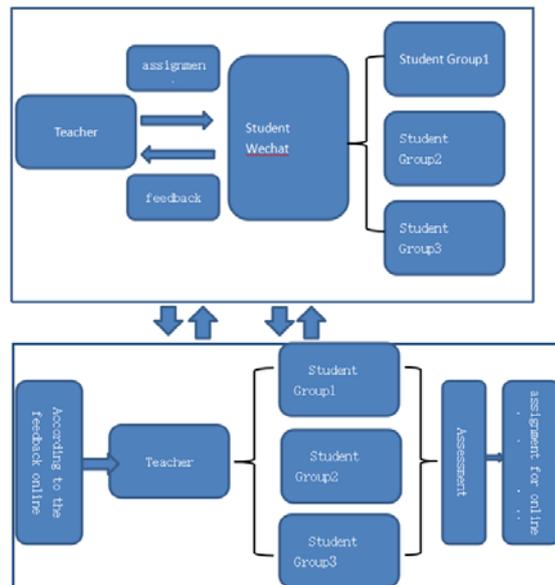


Fig.2 The Experimental Teaching

According to the above figure, the teacher will conduct the ESP teaching according to the major characteristics. Firstly in the online part, the teacher will allot the pre-lesson task to students in groups (including the situational role playing and extensive readings). After that, students are required to discuss the questions in groups, answer the questions allotted interactively, and complete the role playing before class. At the meantime, students will find out the difficulties during their preparation and feedback to the teacher, including those questions unable to fix. Then the teacher will elaborate those difficulties in detail in the offline section.

In the offline part, the teacher will have students in groups to present the situational tasks assigned beforehand and give correspondent assessment, which shall be taken down to be the reference for the next turn of online discussion. The duration of the above experimental teaching ranges from the second semester of grade one to the first semester of grade two. During the experimental teaching, a mid-test and a final test will be held. The former is to test the basic linguistic ability, whose difficulty coefficient is of CET-6 whereas the latter is taken in the forms of acceptance rate of Y Company which has a long history of cooperation with A College. (The same company for all the testees)

2. The selection of participants and evaluation criterions. In order to guarantee the objectiveness and validity of the data collection, two classes from grade two were selected and tested, which is to reallocate the classes to maintain them in the same distribution. Approved by the college, the experimental teaching lasted for one year was conducted. Class one is of experimental group (EG), taught with experimental procedures above, whereas Class two is of control group (CG), taught with the traditional PPP procedures. Both classes are required to have the self-compiled materials on campus. The Engineering English After the pre-test, the two classes were re-allotted. The difficulty coefficient for pre-test is CET-4. Another mid-test and final test were also conducted during the period of contrastive teaching, with the purposes aforementioned. Then the results were collected

and analyzed to compare the differentiation of experimental and traditional teaching, so as to determine the validity of the experimental teaching mode towards the PC in ICs and POCs.

The Collection and Analysis of Data

1. The mid-test. After a whole semester of contrastive teaching, both of the classes were required to take a mid-test whose difficulty coefficient is of CET-6, with the results displayed as below: (Note: The satisfaction degree (SD) of students is the ratio between the ones agreed with the teaching mode and the total of the class)

Table 2. The results of mid-test

Class	Total Score(Avg.)	Listening	Reading	Writing	SD
Class one	65.2/100	24.2/30	23.7/40	17.3/30	70%
Class two	70.6/100	18.4/30	32.8/40	19.4/30	33.3%

The results of mid-test is presented as above. The result shows that, Class two is generally superior to Class one which might be due to the experimental teaching. This is manifested as the differentiation of average total score, (Class two is 5.4 higher than Class one). The reason is that, due to the traditional teaching, students in Class one had a drastic improvement on their readings skills (9.1 higher than Class two), but no big progress in listening, which is totally contrastive for Class two (5.8 higher than Class one). The two classes remain basically the same in writing ability. (17.3/19.4) Furthermore, seen from the SD, the students in Class two show apparently more satisfaction than that in Class one, which indicates the intention of the students in having CET.

2. The collection and analysis of Final test. After a whole year of contrastive teaching, the two classes were confronted with job hunting. At this time, the Y Electronics Company Ltd., which has a long history of cooperation with the college was invited to recruit students. Here, the recruitment of Class one and two were collected. The data was as below:

Table 3. The results of final test

Class Students attending	Senior Engineer (foreign affairs)	Engineer (foreign affairs)	Assistant Engineer (foreign affairs)	Secretary (foreign affairs)
Class one 26	12	7	4	3
Class two 15	3	3	6	1

Seen from the above data, the total attendings of Class one is 26, with 26 recruited and 100% the recruitment rate, while the attendings of Class two is 15, with 13, the recruitment and 86.7% the recruitment. For Class one, 12 were employed as senior engineers, 7 the engineers, 4 the assistant engineers, and 3 secretaries. For Class two, the total attendings are of 11 less than Class one, which indicates that the vocational confidence of Class one is much stronger generally than Class two, and the differentiation of recruitment rate between two classes indicates that the competitiveness of Class one is generally stronger than that of Class two. In the employment structure, the rate of employment as engineering staffs is of 88.5%, while that in Class two is only 80%, which means the general knowledge framework of Class one is more scientific than that of Class two. Therefore, seen from what has been elaborated above, the experimental teaching in this study is more effective and easier for the professional graduate students in A college in comparison with the traditional approaches, which could also be conducive to other POCs and ICs, due to the focus on the training of students' practical linguistic capability and the combination of English as

the media of information with the professional knowledge. Therefore, during the experimental teaching, students are equipped with an enhanced vocational confidence and language capability. Therefore, Class one was superior to Class two in the final test.

Conclusions

For the purpose of POCs and ICs in their postgraduate students cultivation, which is to serve the local economy, so as to establish their own first educational brand, those ICs and POCs should set their courses according to the basic and actual needs of their students in the career development. That is, the cultivation of advanced ATP. The settlement thereof could finally form the instinctive educational features for those POCs and ICs, which could give them a sustainable development in the competition of student resources. However, all these above rely much on the teaching reform of general course represented by CET due to its fundamental properties. Meanwhile, the establishment of the CET mode upon the students' demand is the respect towards the students' willing which shall be also supported by them, so as to get its maximized teaching effort. In conclusion, represented by CET, the teaching mode upon the students' need analysis is of great significance and necessity.

Reference

- [1] Huang Honglan, Ji Huale, Sun Lei. The challenges and opportunities brought to independent colleges and privately owned colleges[J]. The Journal of Ji Lin Hua Qiao University of Foreign Languages, 2012(03):4-7.
- [2] Shen Wenming, Wu Liling. The considerations for independent colleges to be authorized to have postgraduate students[J]. China Electronic Education, 2013(01):16-17.
- [3] Wu Yanli. The Development for Independent Colleges [D]. Shandong Normal University, 2013.
- [4] Wang Xiujuan. The Challenges and opportunities confronting the supervisor selection mechanism [J]. Cyberworld, 2014(09):167.
- [5] Cui Pengfei et al., How to cultivate professional graduate students , 2014(19):82-83.
- [6] Kan Kunming. The strategies for running high-level Privately Owned Colleges[J].Huanghe University of Science and Technology, 2014(02):6-9.
- [7] Feng Jun. The Current Problems and Strategies for the Cultivation of Professional Graduate Students[D]. Xi'an International Studies University, 2015.