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Teaching English in China's Higher Education System:

A Content-based Immersion Approach

Yu, Weihua

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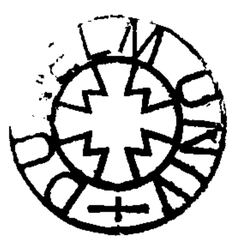
A thesis submitted in requirement for the degree of

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Teaching English in China's higher education system: A content-based immersion approach

Yu, Weihua

Abstract of thesis submitted to the School of Education, University of Durham, June, 2001, for the degree of Doctor of Education.

With the growing trend of globalisation, a lingua franca like English becomes a necessity for international communication. China's economic development requires large numbers of citizens competent in English to gain access to the advanced science and technology from the West to promote its economic progress. But there is a great gap between China's demand for a great number of competent English speakers and its reality in the great shortage of such speakers. The reasons might be that there exist some problems in its EFL education in the higher education system. The aim of the thesis is thus to propose a feasible EFL teaching approach to help improve China's present EFL education so that more EFL learners could become competent English speakers in international communication both for China's social, political, economic and educational needs and the students' individual academic needs for English.

The theoretical conceptions for proposing an integrated EFL teaching approach are based on the analysis of a wide range of anglophone literature on EFL methodology involving foreign language teaching approaches, bilingual education, immersion, content-based instruction and needs analysis. Based on the guiding principles of the literature a content-based EFL immersion approach is proposed to improve China's EFL education in the context of its higher education. It is suggested that the approach should be trialled and implemented for the non-English majors in their senior undergraduate and whole postgraduate study at the key universities of China's major and coastal cities where English is much needed. The approach proposes using English as medium of instruction to teach study skills and academic subjects with the immersion range from 30% to 70% of the curriculum depending on various needs and contexts.

The contextual setting for China's EFL education where the proposed approach is to be adapted and implemented is introduced. First, a historical overview of its EFL education before 1949, the founding of P.R. China and the development of its EFL education since then is given. The overview shows that the development of international trade, the advanced science and technology and the introduction of foreign culture are the three motivations for China to implement its foreign language education. The overview demonstrates that China's EFL education after the founding of the Communist Party is politically oriented and that political, social and educational environments are able to determine more or less the destiny of China's future EFL education. After the historical overview, its present EFL education has been discussed. On the one hand, China's open policy and economic development have pushed forward its EFL education. On the other, there still exist some problems in its EFL education today. The thesis argues that these existing problems are closely associated with China's various social, political and

educational contexts. The content-based immersion approach is proposed not only based on the analysis of the anglophone literature on EFL methodology, but also on some theories of comparative education and the context of China's EFL education.

To identify the EFL learners' needs and their views on the feasibility of the proposed approach and because of the nature of the topic and the practical constraints, I choose qualitative approach as my empirical study. I draw on the respondents' EFL learning experiences both when they study in China and abroad and their perceptions of China's EFL education. The data collection instruments are mainly semi-structured interviews with some email replies. The criteria of assessing qualitative research in the process of collecting data involving reliability, validity, triangulation and relevance are discussed and ethical issues that should be observed in qualitative research considered. Some strengths and weaknesses of the data collection procedures have also been pointed out.

The method of my data analysis draws upon grounded theory and other approaches to qualitative data analysis (Glaser and Strauss,1967; Spradley, 1979). I draw on the work of various anglophone scholars (Swain 1998; Ellis 1999; Biggs 1999; Entwistle 2000) on EFL learning integrated with an orientation to content-based EFL immersion for theories which would complement and illuminate my empirical investigation. The analysis identifies the concepts through the respondents' talk about their experiences and perceptions of the EFL education in China's higher education. My interpretation of their concepts and the relationships between these concepts is illustrated by the words of the respondents themselves. Studying abroad has brought about some changes in them not only at their English proficiency levels, but also at their academic learning. The analysis of the empirical data suggests that there is support for the proposed content-based late partial EFL immersion approach and the respondents' views are in conformity with the theoretical and conceptual discussions.

Five implications are drawn from the data and five considerations for trialling and implementing the proposed approach put forward. The implications are: (1) ensure sufficient exposure to and create environments for using English; (2) develop students' intrinsic motivation in EFL learning; (3) adapt the advantages of the anglophone learning styles into China's higher education; (4) preserve the advantages of the traditional Chinese learning styles; (5) trial and implement the content-based late partial EFL immersion approach. The considerations include: (1) students' English proficiency levels; (2) curriculum planning; (3) evaluations and assessments; (4) pedagogy and cooperation between language and content teachers; (5) support from educational administration. The implications and considerations are integrated to explore the ways that are feasible to implement the approach in China's higher education and thus to provide a framework of what can be involved to help improve China's current EFL education based on its contexts and realities.

Finally, some limitations of the research resulting from the practical constraints of time, funding and contextual realities are pointed out and some guidelines and directions for possible future research provided.

Declaration

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I would also like to thank my colleagues, friends and students who have offered me generous help by participating in my interviews or sending me email replies. They are always in my heart. Their cooperation, support and advice greatly facilitated the empirical research. However, because of the ethical issue of preserving their anonymity and because of their relatively large number, I could not give their names here.

A List of Abbreviations

BICS = Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills

CALP = Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

EFL = English as a Foreign Language

ESL = English as a Second Language

ESP = English for Special/ Specific Purposes

IT = Information Technology

L1 = The First Language

L2 = The Second Language

LSP = Language for Special/Specific Purposes

PSA = Present Situation Analysis

SLA = Second Language Acquisition

TSA = Target Situation Analysis

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 The background of the study

As we humankind have entered the new millennium, the age of internationalisation/ globalisation, with the development of high-tech IT and media, modern society seems to have become smaller and smaller. Modern transportation, advanced means of communication and various international organisations have brought people of different countries closer and closer in real or virtual space in ways which a generation ago would have seemed impossible. The worldwide inter-relationship of economy, trade, industry, science and technology, the globalisation tendencies as well as the global market lead to the fact that employees and citizens are increasingly interacting and exchanging all over the globe. The phrase "global village" is used to refer to this smaller world both in time and space, just as if people from different countries or even continents or hemispheres were the next door neighbours.

As a result of this growing trend of internationalisation /globalisation and various kinds of cross-cultural contacts, a lingua franca thus becomes a necessity for communication because a shared language is an important bridge for people from one nation to communicate with people from other nations. English has now assured its status as such a global language, for it is now universally recognised as an unrivalled common language of international communication, being used in practically all spheres, i.e. politics, trade, industry, science and technology, entertainment and the worldwide web (Phillipson, 1992). English is today the world's most widespread lingua franca (Crystal, 1997). In our age of globalisation, Fishman's (1982:18) remark that "the sun never sets on the English language" rings more true than ever. Since successful communication depends above all on overcoming the barriers which languages can symbolise (Byram, 2000:xiii), learning and understanding English has become a prerequisite to enter this global village.

With the further deepening of her open policy, China's communication with other countries has become more and more frequent. China is now on the verge of joining the World Trade Organisation and will be more open and closer to the trend of globalisation. Two examples can illustrate the fact. On the one hand, more and more mainland Chinese are nowadays travelling overseas to further their study and research. According to the statistics from the British Embassy in Beijing, a total of 14,090 mainland Chinese students and scholars were granted entry visa to study in UK only in 1999 (sina, 2000) and five times more were granted entry visa to study in USA at the same time (Guangzhou Daily, 2000a). On the other hand, more and more worldwide international organisations and companies have come to China to establish their branches or for various investments. To take Guangzhou, a provincial city in the southern part of China as an example, there are more than 1,700 registered branches from various international organisations or companies (Guangzhou Daily, 2000b). It is estimated that in China's major cities there are now about 370,000 foreign-funded companies (People's Daily, 2001), not to mention some joint-ventures and other international institutions and organisations. Therefore, China needs a pool of citizens competent in English to meet its economic needs and to push forward its economic progress, as knowledge of English can attract not only investment from the developed industrial nations, but also enable China to gain access to the scientific and technological expertise from the developed nations. As far as the country is concerned, its economic development requires large numbers of bilingual speakers in various sectors: from scientists, engineers, teachers, government workers, managers, executives to clerks and shop assistants; jobs from translation and interpretation, correspondence, word processing to telephone and customer contacts. The establishment of local enterprises and services for international markets requires bilingual communication. The information society of the 21st century needs proficient speakers. Access to information is access to power. Whether the information is in technical journals, on large computer databases, on satellite TV or in international faxing or internet, a mastery of English gives wide access to global, social, cultural, educational, political and economic information. For individuals, being bilingual is also to gain employment to work locally for international and multinational corporations, to conduct international businesses, to gain affluence and status, to work and travel abroad (see Edwards, 1994; Crystal, 1997). Thus it is indispensable for

China to have large numbers of competent bilingual speakers to enter the global village of the 21st century.

However, there exists a great gap here. On the one hand, China's present political, social and economic situations have a great push and demand for English. On the other hand, China urgently lacks persons who could use English efficiently and appropriately to conduct international communication in various contexts both at home and abroad for its social and economic development. Besides, as the Chinese Vice-Premier Li Lanqing in charge of China's education at present commented: "EFL education in China has very low efficiency. Students began to learn English from primary school and when they graduate from university, they still cannot use it for effective communication" (Guangzhou Daily, 1998). Indeed, China's English language education has been lagging behind its economic development, its striving for economic modernisation and the further deepening of its open policy to meet the challenge of internationalisation and globalisation of the new century. The traditional English teaching methodology and teaching practice now in China really leave much room for improvement (see 3.5 for discussions). And it is argued that the gap results from some existing problems in the relatively backward EFL teaching methodology and teaching practice (Guangzhou Daily, 1998). Of course there are also some other problems concerned with China's EFL education besides the relatively backward EFL teaching methodology (see the discussion in Chapter Three). The purpose of the thesis is to attempt to analyse some of the existing problems in the EFL education of China's higher education and to propose a favourable and feasible EFL teaching approach that might be able to solve at least some of these problems so as to quicken up the steps to strive to narrow down the gap between China's urgent social and economic demands for a large number of English speakers and the reality of its EFL education in the Higher Education for the lack of success to provide such a great number. The proposed approach aims at helping improve China's EFL education in its higher education for the non-English majors at the upper university level and postgraduate level, as non-English majors are the largest university student population learning English in China. It is hoped that the approach could help meet both the country's economic and the students' academic needs for English.

As an EFL university teacher for about 20 years, I have been experiencing not only

China's open policy, her economic development, but also the gap between the EFL needs and EFL education. Though the EFL teaching methodology has been progressing, it is no doubt still relatively backward (some of the reasons will be explored in Chapter Three). At the same time I have been interested in making attempts to improve this relatively backward EFL pedagogical situation through my own teaching practice. Having read some relevant literature from an international perspective now, I found that though there are many theories and attempts to explain and improve foreign language teaching approaches from different aspects (for example, Hymes, 1972; Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Brinton et al, 1989), none of them seems to be satisfactory in terms of China's needs and reality. However, the process of reading the literature has helped me to conduct this research to incorporate some of the guiding principles from these theories into proposing a composite EFL approach which might be suitable to be implemented in China's contexts. If the thesis could reach this goal, its aim will then be realised.

1.2 The research questions

Based on what is described above about the gap between China's demand for a great number of English speakers and the reality of the severe shortage of such persons, possibly resulting from the relatively backward EFL teaching approaches being implemented at present and also in the light of my own academic interest in trying to find out a way to solve some of the EFL pedagogical problems so as to narrow down the gap, the overriding and overall aim of the thesis is thus to find out an EFL teaching approach that could help improve China's present EFL education for the non-English majors dominating the greatest English language learning population in the higher educational institutions so that both the country's social, economic and political needs and the students' individual academic and professional needs for English could possibly be met in the new century. In order to realise this aim, a research question is therefore raised as follows:

What is the feasible and favourable EFL teaching approach for the non-English majors as the largest English language learning population in China's higher educational institutions to be able to use English appropriately for

international communication to meet both the country's and the students' needs of the new century?

The above research question is raised in terms of the overall aim of the thesis. It is very general and broad and thus has to be supported by some specific subquestions for more detailed descriptions of the content of the thesis so that it is possible for more concrete analysis and discussions. These subquestions include the following five ones:

1. **What is the present EFL pedagogical trend from an international perspective and what is the nature and development of the international EFL education?**
2. **What is the EFL pedagogical situation in China's higher education both today and yesterday and what are some of the existing problems?**
3. **What EFL teaching approaches are more favourable to and suitable for China's specific contexts in the higher education?**
4. **How do we identify some problems existing in China's EFL education of its higher education and how do we investigate the feasibility of implementing a new approach in China's higher education?**
5. **Is a content-based late partial EFL immersion approach a possible solution to some of China's EFL pedagogical problems? If so, how can we get from its present EFL pedagogical situation to the effectiveness of implementing the proposed approach, i.e. what specific factors should be considered to realise the goals of the proposed approach?**

1.3 Composition of the thesis

This thesis relates the findings of some empirical work to the wider field of published knowledge relevant to the topic and centres on proposing an appropriate EFL teaching approach to help improve China's present EFL education in its higher educational institutions. The whole study can be divided into three parts and consists of seven chapters altogether. The first part of the thesis is devoted to an account of the situation of the English language teaching in Chinese universities and to the discussions of existing literature in order to see whether methodological progress for China can be

inspired by work elsewhere. The second part of the thesis turns to the methods and the results of some empirical study to identify the students' needs for learning English, the relationship between their English language learning and their academic study, and also the feasibility of implementing a new approach. The third part of the thesis draws upon some implications and raises some recommendations based on the analysis of relevant literature and the empirical study and attempts to provide a framework of an integrated EFL teaching approach.

As the first chapter, this chapter serves as an introduction to the whole thesis. It introduces the background of the study and provides the reasons and purpose of the research work.

Chapter Two gives the analysis of the literature relevant to the topic. The chapter first reviews some general theories from a global perspective regarding EFL education and attempts to form a theoretical base and foundation for proposing a content-based late partial immersion EFL teaching approach. The study draws upon a wide range of relevant theoretical perspectives including EFL teaching methodology, bilingual education, immersion theory, content-based instruction and needs analysis. Through the analysis of the literature, it is hoped that the first subquestion raised in the previous section has been answered and the theoretical basis for the research question and the whole thesis has been established.

Chapter Three introduces the contextual setting of the research. This chapter deals with the setting of EFL education in China's specific context and aims at providing a historical overview of China's EFL education in the past and at present. Some existing problems in the EFL education of China' higher education are discussed. This chapter also tries to explain the problems of China's EFL education in terms of its historical, social, cultural, economic and political conditions that evoke them (Baker, 1996), demonstrating the fact that the problems are not absolutely caused by its relatively backward EFL teaching methodology. Some problems are likely to be the results of the complex social, educational, economic and political factors of the whole system. Therefore, the chapter attempts to connect the EFL pedagogical problems with its broader perspectives of historical, social and political reasons to find out some solutions.

As the objective of the thesis is to propose a possible approach to help improve China's present EFL education in the higher education, some empirical work needs to be done to identify Chinese university students' needs of EFL learning and to discuss the feasibility of implementing the proposed approach and this forms the content of Chapter Four and Chapter Five.

The fourth chapter discusses the research methods used in the empirical study of the thesis and raises the qualitative research method as the method of the empirical study of the thesis. The need for conducting some empirical work in relation to the aim of the thesis is given. The origins for getting started with the present research and the reasons for choosing the qualitative research method to conduct the fieldwork are presented. An explanation of using the semi-structured focused research interviews as the research tool of the study is given. Specific procedures such as interview schedules, pilot phase and the research sample are introduced. Methodological issues which will arise during the course of the study are discussed. These issues include such factors as ethics, reliability, validity, triangulation and relevance that should also be considered in conducting almost any qualitative research.

The fifth chapter presents the data collected during the fieldwork. Besides some replies from emails, the data from the semi-structured interviews form the main instrument of the empirical fieldwork of the study. The data of the chapter are divided into two main categories: EFL learning and content-based EFL immersion. These categories are closely linked with the aims of the proposed EFL teaching approach. Some interpretations and discussions are given to comply with the data presentations so as to link them with the discussions in Chapter Two and Chapter Three.

Chapter Six draws some implications from the data and raises some recommendations based on the analysis of both the literature and the empirical data. The chapter attempts to employ the findings and implications from the data to explore the ways that should be feasible to carry out the content-based late partial immersion EFL teaching approach in China's higher education. A framework of what can be involved and included in the approach to help improve China's present EFL pedagogical situations in its higher educational institutions on the basis of China's specific social,

political, economic and educational contexts and realities is provided. The recommendations include various factors that should be taken into serious consideration in the process of implementing the proposed approach.

Chapter Seven, as the last chapter of the thesis, draws the final conclusions. The chapter not only gives a final summary of the whole thesis. Most importantly, it will also point out some limitations of the research, thus providing some guidelines for possible future research. Finally the possible future of implementing the proposed EFL teaching approach in China's higher education is presented.

In summary, this present chapter introduces the background of the study, raises the research questions and gives an overview of all the chapters of the thesis. In the next chapter, space is given to discussing the relevant literature which forms the theoretical basis of the proposed EFL teaching approach and on which the empirical research and the framework of the approach will also be based.

Chapter Two

Analysis of the Literature on EFL Methodology

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter One, it has been pointed out that the aim of the research is to help improve China's present EFL education for the non-English majors, being the greatest EFL learning population in the higher education so as to meet its social and economic needs and students' academic and professional interest to face the challenge of the new century. A research question around the aim is raised to find out what is the feasible and favourable EFL teaching approach for the non-English majors in China to use English appropriately for international communication to meet both the country's and the student's needs of the 21st century. Five subquestions have also been put forward to support the general research question. Of them, the first one, what is the present EFL pedagogical situation from an international perspective and what is the nature and development of the international EFL education, is the specific content and focus of what we are going to explore in this chapter.

This chapter takes on a global analysis of a wide range of literature relevant to the research and attempts to form a firm theoretical base around the whole thesis so as to be able to propose an EFL teaching approach favourable to and suitable for improving the EFL education in China's higher education. To realise the aim of the chapter, the analysis of the literature needs to take the following five questions into consideration:

1. What is the nature, the development and the trend of the mainstream EFL teaching approaches considered from a global perspective?
2. What outcomes should EFL education produce or what competence should EFL learners acquire?
3. What pedagogical methods or strategies should be adopted in EFL education?
4. What content should be included in the process of implementing the EFL education?

5. What are the students' needs in the context of learning EFL?

To comply with the above questions, five sections, i.e., a global overview of foreign language teaching approaches, bilingualism and bilingual education, immersion, content-based instruction and needs analysis, are discussed below. A conclusion, which results from the discussions of the respective sections of the chapter, is drawn as to what are the guiding principles of EFL education. On the basis of these guiding principles, a tentative composite EFL teaching approach, i.e., a content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach to be implemented in China's EFL education in the context of its higher education, is proposed.

2.2 Foreign language education: a global overview

2.2.1 Clarification of concepts

Before presenting an overview of foreign language teaching approaches, it is necessary to distinguish and clarify some terms relevant to our discussion so that we could understand why the word "approach", not some other word like "method", is chosen for our study. For example, what do we mean by the terms used in language education such as "methodology", "method", "approach", "technique" or "procedure"? In terms of foreign language education, "methodology" is the study of pedagogical practices in general, including theories and research. Whatever considerations that are involved in "how to teach" are methodological (Brown, 1994:150). An " approach" refers to the theoretical positions and beliefs about the nature of language, the nature of language teaching and learning and the application of both to pedagogical settings (see Anthony, 1963; Richards and Rodgers, 1986). This term is broader than method or technique. A method is a generalised, prescribed set of classroom procedures or techniques for accomplishing certain linguistic objectives (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Methods tend to be primarily concerned with teacher and student roles and behaviours and secondarily with such features as linguistic and subject matter objectives and materials. Methods are more specific than approaches but less specific than techniques or procedures. Techniques or procedures refer to any of a wide variety of exercises, activities used in the language classroom

for realising objectives (Brown, 1994).

For the restriction of space, we could only give a very simplistic description and explanation of these terms. Detailed discussion of the relevant terminology can be found in the works of Anthony (1963), Richards and Rodgers (1986), Celce-Murcia (1991) and Brown (1994). More space of the section should be reserved for the discussion of the developments of foreign language education and their evaluations. However, these terms and concepts are very useful to our understanding of EFL education. For example, in keeping with the notion of the context and the fact that it has not been practised in China, the content-based late partial bilingual immersion is proposed as an approach: a theory of EFL education to be used in developing syllabus, methods, materials, techniques or procedures appropriate to its higher education.

2.2.2 Historical development

Even a really simplistic discussion of the history and development of the foreign language education before the bloom of the various kinds of flowers of the recent decades in the foreign language teaching profession could demonstrate the fact that two general types of foreign language education have been competing with and shifting from each other. The first type of foreign language education lays its emphasis on language usage and linguistic analysis, i.e., teaching linguistic forms and grammatical rules and mainly includes the following models:

1. The formal study of the grammars of classical Latin and Greek texts during the Renaissance. It is very likely that the very formal method of studying classical Latin and Greek texts, with an emphasis on the teaching of grammatical rules and translation only, has contributed as one of the factors of the demise of classical Latin and Greek being used as lingua franca of Europe at the time (Howatt, 1984; Celce-Murcia, 1991; Musumeci, 1997))
2. The analytical grammar-translation method of teaching not only Latin but also the so-called 'Modern Languages' during the early 19th century. As the grammar translation method is easy and convenient for foreign language teachers with

different degrees of foreign language proficiency to teach, requiring few specialised skills and as the method is also appropriate for teaching different class sizes and for constructing various language tests, it is widespread worldwide and is still being widely used at present. However, we must realise that it is only a method for which there is no theory and research. There is no literature that offers a rationale or justification for it or that attempts to relate it to issues in linguistics, psychology or education theory (Richards and Rodgers, 1986; Celce-Murcia, 1991).

3. The reading approach (or sometimes called the New Method) began to be used in USA. Led by West (1941), this approach was the first to conduct experimental research and needs analysis surveys to form systematic theories (see Howatt, 1984 for a more detailed description). The reasons for choosing the approach were that the foreign language teachers had limited linguistic skills in the target language with other various limitations and constraints; and the practical needs of most students who were learning a foreign language were that they did not intend to go abroad.

The second type of foreign language education stresses language use and communicative skills (for the distinction between language use and language usage, see Widdowson, 1978, 1983). The historical development of this type is briefly described as follows:

1. During the early classical Greek and Medieval Latin periods before the Renaissance, teachers (for example, Guarino Guarini, 1374-1460) taught people to use foreign languages as lingua francas all over Europe and they used informal and direct teaching methods without language textbooks but original manuscripts or handouts to convey the meaning of the target language they taught so that students could become fluent speakers, readers and writers of the appropriate classical foreign language (Howatt, 1984; Celce-Murcia, 1991; Musumeci, 1997).
2. In the 17th century, European vernaculars began to be taught as foreign languages based on the utility needs of communication. Jan Comenius, a Czech, practised his teaching techniques between 1631 and 1658, emphasising the use of imitation, repetition, practice and meaning instead of rules only. For Comenius, foreign language teaching must be meaningful and a foreign language can only be

meaningful if it refers to reality and needs (Howatt, 1984; Musumeci, 1997; Hullen, 2000).

3. By the end of the 19th century, the Direct method emerged and stressed the ability to use rather than analyse a foreign language as the goal of foreign language instruction. Gouin, a Frenchman, published his work concerned with the method in 1880. The practice of Gouin's method was put into effect mainly through the efforts of Berlitz a generation later. The method also crossed the Atlantic in the the United States in the early 20th century (see Stern, 1983; Howatt, 1984; Richards and Rodgers, 1986).
4. Around the middle 20th century, the audio-lingual approach in USA and the situational approach with similar but improved content in Britain appeared, based on the structural linguistics and behaviourist psychology. The method advocated organising structures around situations that would provide the learner with maximum opportunity to practice the target language (see Rivers, 1964, 1981; Stern, 1983; Hawkins, 1987 for more detailed description of the method). A parallel development also took place in France with the audio-visual method (see Reinfried, 2000)

In addition to the above two competing and contrastive types of foreign language education, there are three more recently developed mainstream foreign language teaching approaches. Each of them integrates language use and language usage(Widdowson, 1978, 1983) to a certain degree. These three are introduced below:

1. Cognitive approach. This approach considers language as rule-governed cognitive behaviour, not habit formation. It emerges as a reaction to the behaviourist features of the audio-lingual approach and an application of cognitive psychology (Richards and Rodgers, 1986; Nunan, 1991).
2. Affective-humanistic approach. In this approach, learning a foreign language is a process of self-actualisation and of relating to other people. The approach recognises the affective nature of language learning experience and emerges as a reaction to the general lack of affective considerations in the audio-lingual approach (Moskowitz, 1978; Stern, 1983; Stevik, 1990; Grundy, 2000).
3. Comprehension-based approach. This approach considers that foreign language learning is very similar to the first language acquisition and language acquisition

occurs if and only if the learner comprehends meaningful input (Krashen, 1985; Celce-Murcia, 1991).

Besides the three more recent EFL teaching methods mentioned above, there is still one more recent EFL teaching approach dealing with the nature of language, language learning and teaching and also the aims and purpose of language learning and teaching. The approach is broader and more umbrella in scope than the above three and is introduced as follows.

Communicative approach: the essence of communicative approach is the engagement of learners in communication to allow them to develop their communicative competence. For communicative approach, language is first and foremost a system of communication and the purpose of language and thus the goal of language teaching and learning is communication. Communicative approach can be said to derive from a multi-disciplinary perspective that includes at least linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology and educational research. The focus has been the elaboration and implementation of programmes and methodologies that promote the development of functional language ability through learner participation in communicative events. Communicative approach is not exclusively concerned with face-to-face oral communication. Its principles apply equally to reading and writing activities that involve readers and writers engaged in the interpretation, expression and negotiation of meaning. The goals of communicative approach depend on learner needs in a given context (see Hymes, 1972; Halliday, 1973,1994; Savignon, 1972, 1997; Widdowson, 1978; 2000 and many others).

The above brief discussion has introduced the historical development of the mainstream foreign language teaching methods or approaches. The focus and emphasis has been laid on the Communicative Approach as it has touched upon the nature of language, language development and language instruction. In the subsequent part of the section, some implications will be drawn upon the mainstream foreign languages teaching methods and approaches discussed above.

2.2.3 Implications

The implications we can draw from the above simplistic discussions could be as follows:

1. Each of the approaches or methods before the four more recent ones either emphasises the language usage or language use. Each one arose in reaction to the perceived inadequacies or impracticalities in an earlier approach without attempting to integrate language use and language usage together in an organic way. Therefore, only one side of the coin of the nature of language is stressed in each approach or method.
2. Each of the four recently-developed approaches is grounded on a slightly different theory or view of how people learn foreign languages and how people use languages, with the communicative approach being the most popular of the four in the EFL teaching profession. Each of the four approaches links language usage and language use (Widdowson, 1978, 1983) together as a whole with different levels of focus and emphasis of its own.
3. Through several decades of development of the profession, we have come to recognise the fact that no single EFL teaching approach was and will ever be a panacea for all EFL teachers. For example, since the four more recently developed EFL teaching approaches discussed above are not necessarily in conflict or totally incompatible with each other, it is possible to conceive of an integrated one which would include attention to rule formation, affect, comprehension and communication and which would view the learner as someone who thinks, feels, understands and has something to say (for the discussion of an integration of focus on form and focus on meaning or task-based and content-based communicative teaching, see Long and Robinson, 1998; Long and Norris, 2000; Long, 1991, 1996, 2000 a and b, 2001 a and b; Widdowson, 1998 a and b, 2000; Swain and Lapkin, 2000; Lightbown, 2000; Ellis, 2000; Muranoi, 2000; Lynch, 2001 and many more. Also see the following sections of this chapter for more discussions). In fact, the complexity of language learners in multiple worldwide contexts demands an eclectic blend of tasks each tailored for a particular group of learners in a particular place, study for particular purposes in a given amount of time. Therefore, instead of adopting a single EFL approach, we should learn more about various EFL teaching approaches to adapt the appropriate ones to suit our own

contexts. This is both the starting-point and the goal of why we propose an integrated EFL teaching approach to meet China's context of its EFL education in the higher education.

2.3 Bilingualism and bilingual education

2.3.1 Introduction

Having briefly discussed the historical development of the mainstream foreign language teaching approaches from a global perspective and drawn some implications relevant to the study, some subsequent questions will come up like the following: "what goals should EFL education reach? Or what outcomes should EFL education produce?"; "what competence should EFL learners acquire?"; and "should native speakers be the best model?". Of course, it is not easy to give a simple answer to these questions. However, based on the research question in 1.2, if students in China in the context of our study could use English appropriately for international communication, they would certainly be successful bilinguals. In fact, one in three of the world's population routinely uses two or more languages for work, family life and leisure (Li Wei, 2000:5; also see Hoffmann, 1991; Romaine, 1995). If we count people who have learnt a foreign language at school and only occasionally use it for specific purposes as bilinguals, then monolingual speakers would be a tiny minority in the world today. Though it is not a difficult task at all to be a bilingual if the definition is minimalist and requires simply the ability to use two languages in the simplest way, an advanced level of bilingual competence is difficult to acquire and should be the aim of the EFL education. Therefore, how to reach the level, what level of bilingualism is necessary and how to decide what level is necessary, are the focus of discussion in this section.

2.3.2 Bilingualism and bilingual competence

A. Definition of bilingualism

Bilingualism is a very flexible term and is often used to designate the use of two or

more languages. The use of a language can range from native speaker competence through to minimal ability to survive in simple transactions and encounters. Therefore a definition of bilingualism varies. The famous linguist Bloomfield is the first person to give a classic definition of bilingualism. He mentioned bilingualism as "native-like control of two languages". However, he also admitted: " of course one cannot define a degree of perfection at which a good foreign speaker becomes bilingual; the distinction is relative" (Bloomfield, 1933:55-6). Diebold's (1964) minimalist definition of incipient bilingualism----early stages of bilingulism where one language is not strongly developed (see Baker, 1996:16; Romaine, 1995:11 for the explanation of the term)----allows people with minimal competence in a second or foreign language to squeeze into the bilingual category: tourists with a few phrases and business people with a few greetings in a second or foreign language would be incipient bilinguals. Weinreich (1968:1), one of the founding fathers of bilingual studies, offers one of the shortest definitions: "the practice of alternatively using two languages will be called bilingualism". In his article, Mackey (1970:555) offers a definition that incorporates and expands Weinreich's definition of bilingualism: "we should therefore consider bilingualism as the alternative use of two or more languages by the same individual". This definition also puts multilingualism into the category of bilingualism.

B. Bilingual competence

If we start our discussion of the definition of bilingualism in terms of horizontal bilingual competence and vertical levels of proficiency (Council of Europe , 2001), there are traditionally four basic linguistic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Early language theories of the 1960s tended to concentrate on these four skills and the components of English knowledge such as grammar, lexicology and phonology (see Lado, 1961; Caroll, 1968). Baker (1996:6) fits these four skills into two types of bilingual abilities: receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) skills; oracy (listening and speaking) and literacy (reading and writing) skills. Besides the traditional four linguistic skills, Skuttnabb-Kangas (1981) argues that thinking should be the fifth area of language competence. This is a step forward for later cognition theory.

However, language skills cannot be produced in a vacuum. They can never be divorced from a context. Language is essentially used in the context of and for communication (Hymes, 1972; Halliday, 1973). Therefore, communicative competence, instead of the four basic linguistic skills only, should certainly be included in the category of bilingual competence (Hart, Lapkin and Swain, 1987). Bachman (1990) proposed a model of language competence which incorporates language performance. The model includes not only such linguistic competence as grammar but also knowledge of how to use language in a particular communicative context. Bachman describes communicative language ability as consisting of both knowledge or competence and the capacity for implementing or executing the competence in appropriate contextualised communicative use. In addition to Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983, 1984)'s description of four components of language competence, Van Ek (1986, 1987) outlines six forms of language competence to be acquired for communication purposes. These six forms have included Canale and Swain's four components. Besides the **linguistic competence** described above as the four language skills, **sociolinguistic competence** concerns the awareness and ability to communicate accurately in different contexts with different people and when there are different intentions in the communication. **Discourse competence** is the ability to use appropriate strategies in constructing and interpreting different texts. **Strategic competence** is the ability to use verbal and nonverbal communication strategies to compensate for gaps in the language user's knowledge. Strategic competence concerns the ability to use body language to give meaning when verbal language is not at a level of competence to convey meaning. **Sociocultural competence** is the awareness of the sociocultural context in which the language concerned is used by native speakers and the ways in which the context affects the choice and the communicative effect of particular language forms. Finally **social competence** is the ability to use particular social strategies to achieve communicative goals.

Theories from Hymes, Halliday, Bachman, Canale, Swain, Van Ek and other scholars on communicative competence have greatly developed earlier theories of foreign language education. They have raised some new useful dimensions worth considering in the foreign language classroom practice of bilingual foreign language education. Further than the above scholars, Byram (1997 a and b; Byram and Zarate, 1997;

Byram and Fleming, 1998; Byram and Risager, 1999) proposed the concept of **intercultural competence** which should also be included in the foreign language communicative competence. Intercultural competence is the ability to interact effectively with people from other cultures that we recognise as being different from our own. It involves more conscious capacity to mediate between two or more cultures to see similarities and conflicts, to create a relationship between them for oneself and also for others, to take on the mediator role. Rather than becoming a native speaker of two or more cultures and languages, an intercultural speaker is a mediator able to engage with people of different cultures both for himself and on behalf of others who do not have that capacity. According to Byram (1997b:3), intercultural competence is more complex than communicative competence precisely because it focuses on establishing and maintaining relationships instead of communicating messages or exchanging information. Furthermore, he distinguishes "savoir s'engager" (critical cultural awareness) as the centre of his model, which he describes as a "rational and explicit standpoint from which to evaluate" (Byram, 1997b:54). Obviously, intercultural competence could be the final stage of communicative competence students should develop or achieve in receiving their bilingual instruction. Intercultural competence thus becomes a necessity for successful intercultural/international communication.

All the components discussed above about bilingual competence act and interact to make effective communication. From the above discussion we could realise that all simple definitions about bilingualism and bilingual competence are misleading and arbitrary to a greater or lesser extent (Hoffmann, 1991:18) and what is categorised as a bilingual or not will depend on the purpose of the categorisation (Baker,1996:7). Bilingualism as a concept has an open-ended semantics (Beardsmore, 1982:1). Generally speaking, earlier definitions tended to restrict bilingualism to equal mastery of two languages while later ones have allowed much variation in competence (Edwards, 1994). Let's move away from the multi-colored canvas of the range of bilingual competence of definition to levels of foreign language proficiency to portray the everyday use of two or more languages.

If one thinks in terms of the traditional distinction between competence (underlying knowledge) and performance (language in use in context) (see Chomsky, 1965:4)

there is a fundamental problem in providing a set of operational categories in that competence cannot be directly observed or assessed. Assessment should focus on observable features in a performance from which one can generalise about the position of the learner concerned in relation to the categories and levels used to profile current communicative language proficiency. The most that can be generalised from an assessment is proficiency which can be thought of as what happens when competence is put to use (Council of Europe, 2001). Proficiency is thus something between competence and performance. Van Ek (2000, a, b and c), Van Ek and Trim (1991, 1998, 2001) propose three levels of foreign language proficiency: waystage, threshold and vantage. The Council of Europe Modern Languages Project (Council of Europe, 2001) proposes a more detailed six levels of foreign language proficiency which could still be further subdivided to suit local needs. The six levels of foreign language proficiency include A (Basic users): A1 (Breakthrough) and A2 (Waystage); B (Independent user): B1 (Threshold) and B2 (Vantage); C (Proficient user): C1 (Efficient proficiency) and C2 (Mastery). In terms of China's context of its EFL education and the students' needs, it is hoped that the final aim of its EFL education should be B2 and C1. However, it would be satisfactory at present and in the near future if the majority non-English major university and postgraduate students could reach the level between the threshold and vantage level (see more detailed discussions in Chapter Six).

Since few bilinguals are equally proficient in both languages and one language tends to be stronger than the other, we should recognise the fact that the vast majority of bilinguals do not have native-like competence in both languages but still regularly use both languages and that many bilinguals themselves feel they are not sufficiently competent in one or both of their languages compared with monolinguals (see Baker, 2000:83). From this perspective, native English speakers should not be the model of learning English as a foreign language. An effective use of English to conduct international communication should be the goal of EFL education in today's age of a global society. The discussion on the native speaker as model for the language learners nonetheless continues (see Davies, 1991; Kramsch, 1997, 1998; Medgyes, 2000).

2.3.3 Bilingual education

Bilingual education refers to instruction in two languages and the use of two languages as mediums of instruction for part or all of the school curriculum (Edwards, 1994). It is generally used where two languages are used to transmit the curriculum. Jacobson (1990:4) argues that the notion of bilingual education can be expanded to mean instruction of bilingual students where a bilingual is interpreted as the home language dominant and limited foreign language competent. Teaching such bilingual students in their weaker language has recently been viewed as a means of upgrading their skills in the target language. Byram (1997a) thinks that this distinct and different kind of bilingual education is to be found in the majority language education as opposed to bilingual education for linguistic minorities which has dominated the literature in the past decades. In this kind of bilingual education the use of another language as the medium of instruction has a different purpose from the traditional bilingual education for linguistic minorities where the purpose of bilingual education is either to train minority language speakers to master the majority language or to keep the minority language from extinction (Baker, 1996). According to Byram (1997a), Ferguson et al (1977), the purpose of this kind of bilingual education with the dominance of the home language and limited foreign language competence is: (1) to develop competence in a second or foreign language in young people who would otherwise remain monolingual; (2) to enable students to communicate with the outside world and to assimilate them into the mainstream of a global society and to socialize them for full participation into it; (3) to provide language skills which are marketable, aiding trade and professional development; (4) to preserve their different linguistic and cultural communities so as to deepen understanding of language and culture; (5) to spread the use of foreign languages into the greater population but also to strengthen elite groups and their positions in society. Therefore, it is possible to envisage the introduction of this kind of bilingual education into the teaching of non-English majors in China's higher education.

If we then argue that bilingual education of some kind could be appropriate to the target group, the next stage is to consider what form of bilingual education would be appropriate. One early and detailed classification of bilingual education was raised by Mackey (1970). His account of 90 different patterns of bilingual schooling considers

the languages of the home, of the curriculum and of the community in which the school is located and the international and regional status of the languages. Baker (1996) portrays ten different types of bilingual education programs. Some of the types which are instructive and relevant to our study are described as follows:

1. Mainstream education with foreign language teaching. In this model foreign language education for several hours a week may constitute its sole diet. Mainstream education with such a kind of foreign language teaching could rarely produce competent bilingual students. A very limited form of fluency in a foreign language tends to be the typical outcome for the mass in the model.
2. Two way/dual bilingual education. It occurs when approximately equal numbers of language minority and majority students are in the same classroom. In USA, the program contains approximately 50% students who are English language learners and the remaining students are language majority students fluent in English. In such schools, students are expected to acquire proficiency in language informally throughout the curriculum and through interaction with students who are both effective first language role models. Though the kind of dual native language interaction is not directly related to the study of the thesis, one thing we could learn from this type of bilingual education is the use of each language for half of the curriculum as the medium of instruction sufficient to assume bilingual development.
3. Bilingual education in majority languages. This model comprises the joint use of two majority languages in a school. The aims of such schools usually include bilingualism or multilingualism, biliteracy and cultural pluralism. Such schools are in societies where much of the population is already bilingual or multilingual. The use of Mandarin-Chinese and English in some Singaporean schools is one example. However, there are also schools where a majority language and an international language coexist as teaching mediums. Bilingualism in that language and an international language is the aim and outcome of formal education. For example, China may have Mandarin-Chinese as one dominant language with a desire to introduce a second international language like English into the university's academic education. The international language will be used as a medium of instruction alongside the native language. The aim is for fully bilingual and biliterate students through an additive enrichment bilingual education program

where an international language is being learned and the first language/ the mother tongue language is maintained (see Lambert, 1975).

Each type of the bilingual programs introduced above has its own advantages for its own purposes and different focuses. But these programs have also betrayed some limitations (Baker, 1996:174): (1) They address the inputs and outputs of the educational system but rarely the process; in particular they lack specific and systematic approaches and principles based on theories. (2) They do not explain the success or failure or the relative effectiveness of bilingualism. (3) These models suggest only static systems. As bilingual classrooms and schools constantly develop and evolve, there could be many variations even within one particular model.

One well developed and successful model with well researched experiments and theories of the bilingual programs seems to be the immersion program. In the subsequent section, immersion will be introduced and a brief discussion will be given as to whether and how it could be applied in China' context of the EFL education.

In summary, this section has discussed the definition of bilingualism with its focus on the analysis of bilingual competence. An effective use of a lingua franca like English to be able to conduct international communication appropriately, not a native speaker model, should be the goal of bilingual competence. Then the aims and types of bilingual programs in developing bilingual competence are introduced. Of all the types of bilingual education, immersion, which is to be discussed in 2.4, seems to be the most successful model.

2.4 Immersion

2.4.1 Historical development

The term "immersion" was first used to describe the intensive language programs mounted by the armed forces in the United States during the World War Two and is still used widely in relation to intensive language study and acquisition. It is also used in relation to language learners who go to live and study in the target community, thus

immersing themselves in the target language and culture (Swain and Johnson, 1997). However, in a strict sense, these two uses of the term "immersion" should not belong to our discussion as first of all, immersion within the target culture and community is the antithesis of the classroom-based learning of the immersion programs the prototype immersion bilingual education focuses on, and secondly, immersion in our category of the study is content-based rather than purely language-based. In fact, immersion within the category of bilingual education is a relatively new development. This type of bilingual education derives from Canadian educational experiments started in 1965 (Lambert and Tucker, 1972). It is a bilingual program in which students receive all or part of their schooling entirely through a foreign language (Edwards, 1994).

By the middle of the 1960s, it was already becoming apparent to the English-speaking population of the Canadian province of Quebec that economic survival there would require high levels of proficiency in French. French was and still is Quebec's official language spoken by the majority of its population. However, large enclaves of English speakers knew little French. Many had studied the language in school, but the amounts provided and the focus on grammar, memorisation and drills had not provided them with sufficient skills to work in French or to socialize with French speakers (Swain and Johnson, 1997:2). Therefore, a group of parents in St. Lambert, Montreal, Quebec started to lobby and persuade the school board and the district administrators for improvements to the teaching of French as a second language. They proposed to the school board a program in which from the first day of school in the kindergarten, their monolingual English-speaking children would be instructed in French. The aims were for students: (1) to become competent to speak, read and write in French; (2) to reach normal achievement levels throughout the curriculum including the English language; (3) to appreciate the traditions and culture of French speaking Canadians as well as English-speaking Canadians. In short, the aims were for children to become bilingual and bicultural without the loss of achievement (Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Baker, 1996:180).

Therefore, an experimental kindergarten class of 26 children was set up by the school district administrators to comply with the parents' request. The original goals of the St. Lambert parents were to initiate a school-based program that would promote

among their children additive bilingualism----the learning of a L2 while developing and maintaining their L1 (Lambert, 1975). For the most part, French immersion in Canada has served the economic, political and social aims of the middle and upper middle class English speaking majority.

By the late 1960s, the rest of Canada was becoming aware of the value a knowledge of French might have ----economically, politically and socially. Much of that growing awareness was stimulated by Canada's federal government which not only appointed a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, a commissioner of official languages but also provided funds for the evaluation of immersion programs and the dissemination of information about their outcomes (Swain and Johnson, 1997:2).

As news about the French immersion program initiated in Quebec spread through the media and through academic journals, French immersion spread to other parts of Canada. Because of parental and administrative concerns, variations in format were also implemented. Immersion education spread widely and rapidly in Canada during the late 1970s and early 1980s and is still being more widely implemented today (Swain and Lapkin, 1991, 1998, 2000; Noels, 2001).

Since the early 1970s until today, bilingual immersion education has been practiced in a number of countries and contexts around the world and has presented case studies of immersion programs from different linguistic, cultural, social, economic, and political settings that offer varied and comprehensive illustrations of immersion education and identify it as a distinct category within bilingual education (see Johnson and Swain, 1997). The use of the term has spread to contexts in which the medium of instruction is a foreign language with the purpose of achieving higher levels of target language proficiency. The initiative has occurred with languages traditionally taught as subjects, as with the English immersion program in Hungary (Duff, 1997) and the French immersion program in Australia (de Courcy, 1997). There have also been immersion programs of this kind in Europe for many years, for example in Bulgaria, Luxembourg (Beardsmore, 2000) and Belgium (Byram and Leman, 1990). Immersion programs in various languages have sprung up in the United States, each serving the majority English-speaking population in its own cultural context (Met and Lorenz, 1997). With variations to suit regional and national contexts, the Catalans and

Basques (Artigal, 1997; Arzamendi and Genesee, 1997; Arnau, 2000), Finnish (Bjorklund, 1997), Japanese (Oka, 1994; Muranoi, 2000), Swiss (Stotz and Andres, 1990), the Gaelic speakers in Scotland (MacNeil, 1994; Johnstone et al, 1999) and the Welsh and Irish (Baker, 1988, 1993) immersion bilingual programs have emulated the experiment with similar success.

Just as immersion programs can be used to enable students to communicate effectively within particular language communities with minority group members or with individuals from foreign nations, they may also be used to enable students to communicate across linguistic and cultural boundaries. In Singapore, where English has been established as both an intranational and international lingua franca, immersion has provided an important means for accomplishing the aim of crossing the linguistic and cultural boundaries (Eng et al, 1997). In Hongkong, the role of English is essentially international, but immersion has played a major role in providing the Chinese-English bilingualism the international center needs (Johnson, 1997). In South Africa, the immersion program also aims to ensure the development of a high level of proficiency of a target language (Nuttall and Langhan, 1997). Therefore, with variations and the use of different languages (mainly the use of English as a second or foreign language), the immersion bilingual education has existed not only in Canada and USA, but also in Europe, Africa and Asia. It has proved to be an educational experiment of unusual success and growth worldwide.

2.4.2 The prototype models and the essential features

Canadian bilingual immersion education is actually an umbrella term. Within the concept are various prototype programs generally differing in terms of the following types (see Baker, 1996; Johnson and Swain, 1997):

1. In terms of the level of age, early immersion starts at the kindergarten or at the infant age; delayed or middle immersion starts from at nine to ten years old; late immersion starts at secondary level.
2. In terms of the amount of time of exposure to immersion and the extent of immersion, total immersion usually commences with 100% immersion per week in

the second language, after two or three years reducing to 80% per week for the next three or four years, finishing junior schooling with approximately close to 50% immersion in the second language per week. Partial immersion provides close to 50% immersion in the second language throughout infant and junior schooling.

There are variations in any of the types for the program administration and planning, pedagogy and learning outcomes and it is possible to combine the two types of immersion. It is reported that early total immersion is the most popular entry level program followed by late and then middle immersion (Canadian Education Association, 1992). The early total immersion is also the most successful model (Lambert and Tucker, 1972).

The essential features discussed below are based on Swain and Lapkin (1991, 1998), Baker (1996) and Johnson and Swain (1997). They should be best seen as a continuum. A prototypical immersion program would be one that, in terms of social contexts, curriculum, pedagogy, and teachers' and students' characteristics, implements each of the following features to its fullest.

1. Immersion in Canada aims at bilingualism in two prestigious majority languages (French and English). This is intended to produce an additive bilingual education at no cost to the home language. By the end of the program, L1 proficiency should be comparable to the proficiency of those who have studied through the L1. In addition, a high, though not native speaker, level of proficiency is achieved in the L2. This "additive" feature differentiated immersion from L2 medium programs that result in "replacive" or "subtractive" bilingualism, i.e., where L2 proficiency develops at the expense of the L1.
2. The L2 is a medium of instruction. This feature differentiates immersion, along with many other forms of bilingual education, from contexts where the L2 is taught formally only as a subject.
3. Students in immersion education experience the same curriculum as mainstream core students. The immersion curriculum consists of content subjects such as mathematics, science and geography taught through the L2. The L2 medium curriculum follows the L1 medium curriculum and is defined in terms of L1 speakers' needs, aspirations, goals and educational norms.

4. The teachers are competent bilinguals. Students can therefore communicate with the teacher in their L1 as and when necessary while the teacher has the language proficiency necessary to maintain the L2 as medium of instruction to support and motivate the use of the L2 by the students.
5. Students start immersion with similar and limited levels of L2 proficiency. Most are monolinguals. Students commencing schooling with relatively homogeneous language skills not only simplifies the teacher's task, it also means that students' self-esteem and classroom motivation is not at risk due to some students being linguistically more expert.
6. Immersion appears to thrive on conviction not on conformity. The conviction of parents plus the teacher's commitment can aid students' motivation. Immersion bilingual education was set up not under compulsion of the federal government but based on the parents' request to comply with the social, cultural and economic needs of the local community.
7. The classroom culture is that of the local L1 community. The classroom culture of the prototypical immersion program is that of the community from which the students are drawn, not that of a community where target language is spoken.
8. Exposure to the L2 is largely confined to the classroom. In the immersion program in Canada there was limited or no exposure to French outside the classroom. There is no compulsion to speak French outside the classroom. Children in early immersion are often allowed to use their home language for up to one and a half years for classroom communication. In this respect, though it is a good thing that the child's home language is appreciated and not belittled, this kind of bilingual program is at a disadvantage and has some limitations which will be discussed subsequently in 2.4.3.

2.4.3 Evaluations

Immersion is a relatively new development within bilingual education, but it is an option and a term that is being adopted more and more widely. Immersion programs aim to provide the quantity and quality of involvement in the use of the target language that ensure the development of a high level of proficiency. Bilingual immersion education has been in existence long enough to have acquired a distinct

identity and a body of theory and research, but it is still young enough to be evolving in new directions through new applications of theory and in response to emerging problems. The term "immersion" can be legitimately and usefully applied beyond its purely historical origins in Canada to a wide range of programs despite differences in their aims, socioeconomic contexts and manner of implementation. Cummins (1996, 2000) estimated that there have been approximately a thousand studies on immersion in Canada alone. Swain (2000) has noted that almost every new immersion program generated its own research study because parents and educators wanted to know, in their program: (1) students would learn the L2(French) through its use as the medium of instruction as opposed to having it taught specifically as a language; (2) the curriculum content could be adequately covered through a language in the process of being mastered; (3) the L1 (English) could be adequately maintained and developed.

The rapid spread of the immersion education resulted from factors such as the success of the original St. Lambert program; the research and evaluation results (Lambert and Tucker, 1972) and a strong perception, particularly among influential English-speaking groups in Canada, of the potential economic, political and social value of a high level of proficiency in French. Under conditions favourable to immersion, claims based on research have gone beyond additive bilingualism to include cognitive, cultural and psychological advantages (see Genesee, 1998; Swain and Lapkin, 1998).

Though immersion programs have achieved great success not only in Canada but in many parts of the world as well and a lot of experiments and research evidence indicates children who follow an immersion program not only become fluent in French but also their home language does not suffer, with additive bilingualism (Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Johnson and Swain, 1997; Swain and Lapkin, 1998, 2000), various authors have recently highlighted some possible limitations and problems in immersion education:

1. The fact that the immersion program in Canada was limited or had no exposure to French outside the classroom may put immersion students at a disadvantage (Swain and Johnson, 1997): they cannot get the chance to practice and use French outside the classroom. Also, since they learn French only from textbooks within the classroom, they cannot learn the authentic, real-life communicative language

with the native speakers.

2. Immersion students do not always become grammatically accurate in their French (Selinker, Swain and Dumas, 1975). Immersion students also tend to lack the social and stylistic sense of appropriate language use which the native speaker poses as certain forms of language do not naturally nor regularly occur in the classroom.
3. Surveys of graduates of immersion programs tend to find that relatively few students make much use of French after leaving school (Harley, 1994; Wesche, 1993). This partly reflects opportunity, partly a lack of confidence in their competence in speaking French and partly a preference for English use. Also, immersion students do not tend to interact significantly more with Francophones than students in mainstream programs. Ability in French is not frequently translated into use of French outside the school gates.
4. Immersion programs may have effects on mainstream schools (Baker, 1996). For example, effects may include: a redistribution of classroom teachers and leaders; a change in the linguistic and ability profile of mainstream classes, discrepancies in class size with increasing numbers of mixed aged classes.
5. Heller (1994) has argued that immersion schools provide anglophones with the linguistic and cultural capital for increased social and economic mobility and for political power. Such education is about gaining advantages in Canadian society: educational, cultural, linguistic, social, power, wealth and dominance advantages. Hence, immersion education may produce conflict with the minority francophone community rather than the harmonious unity and "bridge building" that bilingualism aims to achieve in Canadian society.
6. There is also a danger in generalising from the Canadian experience to elsewhere in the world. In Canada, immersion concerns two major high status international languages: French and English. In many countries where bilingualism is present or fostered, the situation is different. Often the context is one of a majority or a minority language/languages coexisting. This links with additive and subtractive bilingual situations (Baker, 1996).

Some authors have also provided some solutions to the above limitations and problems. For example, Stern (1992)'s characterisation of the analytic-experiential dimension in second language pedagogy could be adopted. Genesee (1998) proposed

that an effective second language program should (1) incorporate explicit and systematic planning for language development; (2) encourage extensive interaction; and (3) integrate content and language instruction. Swain and Johnson (1997:15) pointed out that we need a much clearer understanding than we have at present of those approaches to curriculum development and to teaching and learning processes that optimize the potential of immersion programs, of how these approaches and processes might need to be varied in different contexts and the differences in outcomes likely to result from such variations.

A successful and effective EFL education, as Genesee (1994) pointed out, should integrate content and language instruction. In the previous analysis, communicative language teaching and immersion have been discussed as well-developed EFL teaching approaches. Then what should characterise content in language instruction and what could we learn from content-based instruction? These questions are what we will explore in the next section.

2.5 Content-based instruction

2.5.1 Clarification of concepts

An understanding of content-based instruction should begin with the term "content" in the context. Of course, definitions of content vary. By some definitions, anything that is taught through the medium of the target language or culture is content (Genesee, 1994). However, language elements or functions as content is not usually what most educators have in mind in a content-based language program. Most definitions tend to include topics, themes or material that traditionally have not been part of the language program. In a narrow sense, or in the context of the content-based instruction, content may be defined as subject matter selected for student interest or need or it may be very specific, such as the content course materials which students are currently studying (Snow, 1991:315). According to Met (1998a), "content" in content-based programs represents material that is cognitively engaging and demanding for the learner and is material that extends beyond the target language or target culture. Thus content is defined as the content of mandated curriculum for

disciplines other than a foreign language and as material that is generally outside the realm of the traditional course material of language programs.

Content-based instruction is then defined as the integration of particular content with language teaching aims. More specifically, it refers to the concurrent teaching of academic subjects and second language skills (Brinton et al, 1989:2). As such, many content-based programs use the L2 as the medium for learning the content of specific academic subjects (such as mathematics, science, art, or social sciences), shifting the focus from language as course content to language as the medium of instruction. The language curriculum is based directly on the academic needs of the students and generally follows the sequence determined by a particular subject matter in dealing with the language problems which students encounter. The focus for students is on acquiring academic information via the second or foreign language and in the process, developing their academic language skills, academic study skills and learning styles. Thus, both in its overall purpose and in its implementation, content-based instruction aims at eliminating the artificial separation between language instruction and subject matter classes which exist in most educational settings (see Brinton et al, 1989).

2.5.2 Prototype models

There are at least three distinct prototype models of content-based instruction that have been developed in the foreign or second language instructional settings (Brinton et al, 1989; Brinton et al, 1997). These three models are briefly and respectively discussed below.

1. The theme-based model: a type of content-based instruction in which selected topics or themes provide the content for ESL/EFL class. It refers to a language class in which the syllabus is structured around themes or topics, with the linguistic items in the syllabus subordinated to the umbrella organising function of the theme which has been selected. From these themes or topics, the EFL/ESL teacher extracts language activities which follow from the content material. Since the topics or the themes selected provide coherence and continuity across skill areas and allow work on higher level language skills (e.g. integrating reading and

writing skills), this model is particularly suitable in a language institute or in the college or university setting where ESL/EFL classes are often composed of students of diverse language backgrounds and interests whose common goal is to attend college or university in an English-speaking community or environment (Brinton et al, 1989; Snow, 1991).

2. The sheltered model. Sheltered courses currently exist in a variety of secondary and post secondary settings in both Canada and the United States. The term "sheltered" derives from the model's deliberate separation of second language students from native speakers of the target language for the purpose of content-based instruction. Such bilingual courses have the dual goal of teaching subject matter and academic language skills. The course is team taught by the content professor and an ESL/EFL teacher. The content professor is usually a native speaker of the target language and the EFL/ESL teacher should be a bilingual instructor. Frequently, all the students in a sheltered class are learners of the second/foreign language, distinguishing sheltered instruction from approaches in which language learners are instructed in content alongside students learning it in their mother tongue. In USA, sheltered content classes are commonly found in schools that help minority language students make academic progress while they are acquiring English. Sheltered courses at the university level in USA serve a similar purpose. In contrast, sheltered courses in Canada have pioneered the model for teaching French and psychology to speakers of the majority language, English. According to Brinton et al (1989), Snow (1991) and Met (2000), the sheltered courses, when properly handled, can offer an effective approach to integrating language and content instruction for intermediate ESL/EFL students whose language skills may not yet be developed well enough for them to be mainstreamed with native English speakers in cognitively demanding courses. Their research results show that comparisons of sheltered psychology students with students attending more traditional ESL/EFL classes have found no significant differences in the gains of the two groups in second language proficiency despite the fact that sheltered students did not "study" the second language consciously. In addition to their gains in second language proficiency, the sheltered students demonstrated mastery of the content course material at the same levels as comparison students enrolled in regular native speaker sections of psychology. Furthermore, the sheltered students reported greater self-confidence in

their abilities to use their second language as a result of participation in the sheltered class.

3. The adjunct model. This model is a content-based approach in which students are concurrently enrolled in a language class and a content course, with the idea being that the two courses share the content base and complement each other in terms of mutually coordinated class assignments. Second language learners are sheltered in the language course and integrated in the content course where both native English and nonnative English speakers attend the same lecture. The adjunct model is typically implemented in post-secondary settings where such linking or "adjuncting" between language and content departments is feasible. A key feature of the model is the coordination of objectives and assignments between language and content instructors. The language class becomes content-based in the sense that the students' needs in the content class dictate the activities of the language class. Content and language instructors work collaboratively to ensure that students learn content and gain the language skills necessary for successful content learning. For example, besides the instruction of the academic and professional lexical terms and a check of the understanding of some content materials, the EFL language classes could focus on general academic development of study skills and writing skills before the content professor's arrival and then coordinate with the content course once it is under way. Research results (Brinton et al, 1989; Snow, 1991; Snow and Brinton, 1997) show that after taking the adjunct courses, ESL students performed as well as the native students on an exam which tested listening and reading comprehension and required the higher order thinking skills of synthesis and evaluation in the composition of the essay.

Of the above three models, the theme-based model is appropriate at virtually all levels of language proficiency. The other two options are somewhat more restricted in their own implementation in that they rely on a setting in which content courses are offered. Neither of these models is appropriate for lower levels of second/foreign language proficiency because of the inherent linguistic and conceptual complexity of academic subjects. Variations should be made when the three prototype models are to be implemented with different contexts in different countries. For example, to implement content-based instruction in China's EFL education in higher education, the three prototype models may be adapted with different variations based on the

students' year of study in the university (senior undergraduate level or postgraduate level), their selected major/specialty (social sciences or engineering), or even different universities (a language institute or key university). For the early stages of the senior undergraduate students or students from a language institute, the theme-based model might be more suitable as the model is more concerned with the development of linguistic skills and generic study skills. Since the sheltered model and the adjunct model aim at integrating the instruction of academic subjects with the development of the minority language students' majority language proficiency as compared with the native students from the majority language, much of the context is not comparable to China. However, the main theories and techniques such as the integration of content and language, the coordination of content and language instructors could be instructive to the EFL education in China's higher education for non-English majors, especially for students of science and engineering. The detailed discussion of the adapted techniques will be given in Chapter Six while the rationales and some evaluations of content-based instruction are to be discussed below.

2.5.3 Rationales and evaluations

Content-based instruction is a natural concomitant of communicative language teaching that emphasises the use of a language to interpret, express and negotiate meaning (Savignon, 1991; Swain and Lapkin, 2000). Communicative classrooms are characterized by activities and tasks that have a purpose and require an authentic exchange of meaning. Many of these purposes reflect the real-life needs of learners who must be able to function in a variety of survival situations in the target culture. As such, using language to communicate about content is both consistent and supportive of the communicative language teaching. Learning a language through content provides students with opportunities to use language as it functions in the real world: to communicate authentic meanings, for authentic purposes and to accomplish authentic tasks, with "authentic" being defined as real-life interactions that involve real-life meanings exchanged for real-life purposes (Met, 1998b:36).

Allied to the idea of language as a medium of instruction is the idea of language across the curriculum (Corson, 1990; Diakidoy and Kendeou, 2001; Kneser and

Ploetzner, 2001). This is a view that language plays a central role across the medium. In all curriculum areas, students learn study skills, learning styles, academic knowledge, concepts and attitudes mostly through language. Thus every curriculum area develops language competence. All subject areas, from music to mathematics, science to sport, contribute to the growth of a child's language. At the same time, mastery of a particular curriculum area is partly dependent on mastery of the language of that area. Obtaining fluency in the language of chemistry, psychology or mathematics, for example, is essential to understanding that subject.

In recent years constructivist theory has provided a strong rationale for content-based instruction as it is holistically-oriented and meaning-based and as learning takes place through experiences provided in meaningful contexts. The holistic perspective is based in part on research which suggests that the brain stores information in networks (Caine and Caine, 1991; Widdowson, 2000; De Beaugrande, 2001). The greater the number of connections and the stronger the connections among bits of information or the networks themselves, the deeper and more powerful the meaning. From this constructivist perspective, learning is strengthened when students can perceive the connections among the many concepts and facts they are learning; when they can see how the parts both fit in the whole and relate to one another. Through thematic, topical and problem-solving approaches, students are enabled to see how what they are learning in one subject relates to what they are learning in others. For language educators, this can imply that the integration of the academic subject matter with the development of language proficiency is meaningful in making connections between the dual purposes. Given the importance of context, meaning and the connections among the information to be learned, a communicative and a constructivist approach would suggest that vocabulary and grammar be taught in clusters related to given contexts, themes or topics as opposed to lists of vocabulary or isolated rules of grammar divorced from how they are used in authentic communicative interactions. Students are most likely to be successful learners if the tasks they engage in require attention to meaning. In so doing, the cognitive demands of tasks require students to call upon their existing knowledge, concepts, skills and strategies. This strengthens the connections between the elements of language being practised/learned and previous knowledge. Research (Met, 1998a; Mugler and Landbeck, 2000) indicates that strengthening and making connections among concepts and knowledge increases

learning and retention. Therefore, the association between the application of existing knowledge to solving relevant problems, the relationships among cognitive engagement, cognitive demands, meaning and context in language practice are perhaps among the strongest arguments for content-based language instruction. Thus this kind of content-based language instruction also involves the adaptation of the anglophone teaching and learning styles if it is to be implemented into China's EFL education. I must point out here that throughout the whole thesis I am mainly using the word "anglophone" to refer to "Western", as I am aware that I have used very little, if at all, literature from other Western countries such as France and Germany.

Content-based instruction certainly fulfills a number of conditions which have been considered as necessary for successful second language acquisition. According to Krashen (1984, 1985, 1994, 1998), second language acquisition occurs when the learner receives comprehensible input, not when the learner is memorising vocabulary or grammar rules. Krashen argues that the teacher should provide students with large amounts of language input that is easy enough for them to understand so that students will then induce the rules from comprehensible input without any conscious learning just as is the case for the first language learning. As his arguments are not based on direct tests through controlled experimentation (Long, 1988), his theories have remained controversial. Swain (1985, 1995, 1998, 2000) suggests that in order to develop communicative competence, learners must have extended opportunities to use the second language productively. In addition to receiving comprehensible input, they must produce comprehensible output. She maintains that learners need to be "pushed toward the delivery of message that is conveyed precisely, coherently and appropriately" (Swain, 1985:249). Content-based instruction can provide this push since students learn to produce language which is appropriate for both content and language. More recently, Long's (1996) updated version of the Interaction Hypothesis, with its emphasis on the contributions of incorporating both modified comprehensible input and modified comprehensible output and its recognition that interaction works best by connecting input and output through the negotiation of meaning in the process of conducting communicative tasks and content, is obviously a major advance not only on the early version of his own theory, but also on the second language acquisition theory. Based on their research findings, Long and some other SLA scholars (for example, Long, 1998, 2001; Long and Norris, 2000; Norris and

Ortega, 1999; Skehan, 1998; Spada, 1997; Doughty, 2001; Doughty and Williams, 1998; Robinson, 1996, 2001; Ellis, 2000; Swain and Lapkin, 2000; Nassaji and Cumming, 2000; Haenen, 2001; De Almeida Mattos, 2000; Lam and Wong, 2000; Storch, 2001; Kneser and Ploetzner, 2001 and many others) have made some new developments in integrating second language acquisition theories with classroom practice. They propose an approach called "focus on form" (not forms) based on specific tasks and meaning which allows teachers and students to complete interesting and motivating courses dealing with content they recognise as relevant to their needs, while still addressing language problems successfully. The task-based focus-on-form approach is in fact one aspect and also one of the aims content-based instruction has been striving at. In content-based instruction, the focus is on the subject matter. It should provide students with opportunities for meaningful use of the academic language needed for current or future study. But sometimes, for the purpose of understanding the meaning, some kind of focus-on-form language instruction is necessary (see Swain, 1998; Doughty and Varela, 1998).

Task-based focus-on-form language teaching involves the use of focused communicative tasks designed to stimulate the use of specific grammatical form in the context of message-oriented communication. This is a way of integrating a focus on grammatical form and on meaning-making through output enhancement (Ellis, 1999; Lightbown, 2000). This kind of formal instruction works best and helps promote more rapid L2 acquisition and so contributes to higher levels of ultimate language achievement when it is linked with practice opportunities for authentic and natural communication. This kind of focus on form often consists of an occasional shift of attention to linguistic features---by the teacher and/or one or more students---triggered by perceived problems with comprehension or production (see Long and Robinson, 1998:23). Learners' attention is drawn precisely to linguistic features as necessitated by a communicative demand (Doughty and Williams, 1998:3). A good example of focus on form that was carefully operationalised and implemented into a content-based ESL class in USA was reported by Doughty and Varela (1998). The teacher in the treatment group analysed students' writing in their weekly lab report in which they were asked to summarise the problems, steps, hypothesis, results and conclusions of a science experiment performed earlier that day or on the previous day. The teacher gave negative evidence in the form of recasting and also offered content-

based comments on the written lab report taking account of all comments. The focus on form designed for the study was well integrated into the normal activity of a content-based ESL science class with the science learning proceeding as normally as other science lessons. The results show that it is possible to incorporate focus on form to improve students' language achievement, particularly students' writing ability, with no risk to the curriculum as long as the tasks are carefully created and incorporated into authentic content lessons already in place.

Students who speak English as a second or foreign language need to master more than conversational, interpersonal communicative skills in order to do academic work in English. We also need to provide students with meaningful content area instruction and contexts upon which to base their language skills. They must be able to use English to read science books, do mathematical word problems, or reflect upon and evaluate history lessons. These skills, referred to as Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) by Cummins(1976, 1981, 1984, 1996, 2000), take longer (five to seven years) to develop than Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS). By using academic content as a basis for language lessons, teachers can focus attention on higher order thinking skills such as analysing, synthesising or predicting and can provide students with the appropriate language labels and conventions for participating in content classes. Research (for example, Spada, 1997; Long and Robinson, 1998; Norris and Ortega, 1999) suggests that second language learning is facilitated when the learner is taught using meaningful input, when new information is presented and linked to already known information and when the learning environment is relaxing and motivating (Christian et al, 1990:44).

The roots and origins of content-based instruction should also come from such areas as English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and immersion. In fact, some authors (for example, Met, 1998a; Snow, 1991) have put ESP and immersion into the category of content-based instruction in spite of the fact that ESP and immersion appeared in the 1960s while content-based instruction emerged in the middle 1980s (see Brinton et al, 1997). The ESP type of language program has been most notably developed in Britain and most common at the university level in occupational settings (Robinson, 1991; Johns, 1991). ESP courses are particularly suitable for adult clients with identifiable second language objectives as a response of academic as well as commercial language

teaching programs to the specialised requirements of postsecondary students and those engaged in business or other occupations. In ESP courses, the primary emphasis has traditionally been on language content which reflects the second/foreign language needs of learners for whom the learning of English is auxiliary to some other professional or academic purpose (Widdowson, 1983; Lynch, 2001). Materials are usually created in relation to a systematic analysis of the learners' second/foreign language needs. ESP courses generally serve specific occupations, fields or levels of study (see Spratt and Leung, 2000). Content-based models follow a methodology similar to that of the ESP courses through the frequent use of authentic materials and attention to the real-life purposes of the learners (Brinton et al, 1989:7). The immersion program, as is discussed in 2.4, is a carefully researched example of content-based second/foreign language instruction at the elementary and early secondary levels which focused on teaching subject matter through the medium of the second/foreign language. For such children, constant and intensive exposure to the target language ensures its continued development throughout their school years.

In summary, content-based instruction, with its firm theoretical rationales, offers a viable approach to meeting the academic learning needs of language learners in the higher education. As I said earlier in 2.5.1 and 2.5.3, it could provide teachers with the means to create an anglophone teaching style and instructional environment that prepares second/foreign language students for the academic tasks they will encounter in their academic study. It also provides a necessary reorientation to both language and content teachers as it integrates both content and language so that it could overcome the weaknesses of the traditional EFL instruction which Mohan (1986:1) has pointed out: "In subject matter learning we overlook the role of language as a medium of learning. In language learning we overlook the fact that content is being communicated." With all these values, however, content-based instruction has some possible limitations if it is to be successfully adapted in China.

1. The prototype models are mostly discipline/subject-based rather than curriculum-based. They have very low percentage of immersion as they mostly focus on the integration of language with one academic subject only. These models based on the learning of a single academic subject might be appropriate for the minority language immigrant students intending to use the majority language as they have

the residing environment to communicate at any time. For a country like China where English is used as a foreign or international language, these models based on one discipline instruction cannot provide sufficient comprehensible input and output that is needed in the language learning context of the EFL education. Constant, sufficient and intensive exposure to the target language is an important factor in mastering a foreign language for Chinese EFL learners.

2. Both the sheltered and the adjunct model of content-based instruction are created for the minority language students studying at the same universities as the majority language students. The setting is not suitable for China. Therefore, modifications must be made to integrate some concepts, theories and features of content-based instruction with those of the bilingual immersion programs to meet the needs of the EFL education in China's higher education. These modifications must be feasible in terms of both the students' and the country's needs. To comply with the identification of needs in the context, a clarification of needs analysis is necessary and this will be the discussion of the section to be followed.

2.6. Needs analysis

2.6.1 Clarification of concepts

The concept of needs analysis (also called needs assessment) has existed in the world of language education for two or three decades, coming from LSP (Language for specific purposes), though LSP is by no means the only educational enterprise which makes use of it. The first model of needs analysis in the language education, proposed by Richterich (1972) and based on a set of categories for establishing learners' communicative requirements in the future context of language use, appeared in the 1970s in the context of the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project. The information was then used to define the content and objectives of the program of language instruction closely identified with the LSP movement during the 1960s and 1970s. The pedigree of needs analysis in language education is thus rooted in evaluation studies and research (Suarez, 1994). Needs analysis can be used, for example, to: identify students' instructional needs; ascertain weaknesses in students' achievements; provide information on in-service needs; determine where deficits exist

so that they can be addressed; and identify areas for expenditure and educational development (Cohen et al, 2000:90).

Various authors have discussed the different meanings of needs. First, needs can refer to students' study or job requirements, i.e., what they have to be able to do at the end of their language course. Those "goal-oriented" definitions of needs (Widdowson, 1981:2) are perhaps more appropriately described as objectives (Berwick, 1989:57). Secondly, needs can mean what the user-institution or society at large regards as necessary or desirable to be learnt from a program of language instruction (Mountford, 1981). Thirdly, "what the learner needs to do to actually acquire the language is a process-oriented definition of needs and relates to transitional behaviour, the means of learning" (Widdowson, 1981:2). Fourthly, we can consider what the students themselves would like to gain from the language course. Berwick (1989:55) notes that such personal needs may be and often are devalued by being viewed as "wants and desires". Finally we interpret needs as lacks, i.e., "what the students do not know or cannot do in English" (Robinson, 1991:8).

Needs analysis is then the process of diagnosis for subsequent planning in the vein of evaluative research, concerned with gathering information on the problem, for problem and need definition. Needs analysis is research designed to render decision-making informed rather than conjectural and speculative (Cohen et al, 2000: 391; Brindley, 2000:438).

2.6.2 Key models and data collection procedures

Needs analysis involves the collection before and during instruction of both objective information (relating to the learner's biographical data, learning purpose and language proficiency) and subjective information (relating to the learners' attitudes, preferences, wants and expectations) (Brindley, 2000:439). A needs analysis which focuses on students' needs at the end of a language course can be called a target situation analysis (TSA) (Chambers, 1980). The best known model for a TSA type of needs analysis is formulated by Munby (1978) who presents a communicative needs processor, a complex and very detailed analytic tool that allowed course planners to

build up a profile of a learner's communication needs. These needs were then translated into lists of language skills and micro functions which formed the basis of the target syllabus specification (Brindley, 2000:439). As a complement to TSA, a present situation analysis (PSA), sometimes called a language audit, seeks to establish what the students are like at the start of their language course, investigating their strengths and weaknesses. Richterich and Chancerel (1977) give the most extensive range of devices for establishing the PSA. They suggest that there are three basic sources of information: the students themselves, the language teaching establishment and the user institution, for example, the students' place of work. For each of these we shall seek information regarding their respective levels of ability; their resources, for example, financial and technical; and their views on language teaching and learning. We might also study the surrounding society and culture: the attitude held towards English and towards the learning and use of a foreign language. For McDonough (1984), the PSA involves fundamental variables which must clearly be considered before the TSA. In practice, one is likely to seek and find information relating to both TSA and PSA simultaneously. Thus needs analysis may be seen as a combination of TSA and PSA.

A variety of procedures are used to collect information for needs analysis (see Cohen et al, 2000; Brindley, 2000). These range from traditional research instruments to informal classroom methods, including:

1. Quantitative data: structured surveys and interviews; "key person" (informants) surveys; data from official public sources and documents; test, assessment and examination data; application, attendance, retention, withdrawal and success rates.
2. Qualitative data: semi-structured interviews; observations and case studies; public meetings; collection and linguistic analysis of authentic spoken and written texts which are typically found in the future context of language use.

Qualitative data are useful for determining the nature of the need while quantitative data are necessary in determining the extent of the need. Ideally needs analysis should try to obtain information of various sources and viewpoints. Brindley (1989) suggests that a range of types of information be sought from learners, teachers and others.

2.6.3 Evaluations

During the 1970s and 1980s, critics questioned the complex and time-consuming nature of the needs analysis involved, the lack of concrete information on how to translate the lists of micro-skills into actual discourse and the failure of the models to take into account real life constraints such as availability of resources (West, 1994). Despite its concern with individual language needs, the Munby model ignored the learning needs of the learner since the cognitive and affective variables such as the learner's attitudes, motivation and learning styles were deliberately excluded from the needs analysis. This highlighted a major gap in content-based approaches such as Munby's: even though they were able to produce a detailed target syllabus, they did not provide an actual teaching/learning syllabus (Brumfit, 1979).

Therefore, subsequent and most recent approaches to needs analysis have addressed many of the deficiencies of the Munby model by broadening the focus of data collection to include not only objective data, but also information on learners' current deficiencies, learners' preferred learning strategies and learning styles, learners' wants and expectations of the course and the environment in which the course is to be conducted (Dudley-Evans and St. Johns, 1998; Young, 2000).

Another potential problem in conducting needs analysis derives from the different perspectives of the various stakeholders in the program concerning the goals, content and methods of language instruction (Berwick, 1989; Young, 2000). For example, a group of learners may feel that they need instruction in one area of language (for example, grammar) while teachers may be of the view that their weaknesses lie in elsewhere (for example, listening comprehension). Even individuals within the same class will not have the same needs and priorities. This highlights the importance of discussion and negotiation between the various participants in the language program in order to clarify the nature of the needs and identify ways in which they can be met (Brindley, 1989; Tudor, 1996).

Despite the potential difficulties involved in collecting and interpreting information on learner needs, the idea of using needs analysis as a basis for determining course

content and methodology has met with wide acceptance both in foreign language education and in ESP context. Researchers in this field are continuously involved in attempts to improve their approaches. The literature is filled with proposals for new methodologies and critiques of existing ones. For example, in line with developments in learner-centred instruction, contemporary approaches to needs analysis can be seen as a way of raising learners' awareness of their own needs and goals and hence of developing their own autonomy (see, for example, Tudor, 1996; Dudley-Evans and St. Johns, 1998). More recently, Waters and Vilches (2001) have proposed a needs analysis framework for implementing EFL innovations in which they argue that the quality of the EFL innovation implementation process depends on the picture of needs underpinning it. They distinguish between two main levels of needs: "foundation-building" vs. "potential-realising" needs and point out that it is important to proceed in a "bottom-up" fashion, from the "foundation-building" to the "potential-realising" needs, in order to take account of the psychology of the innovation process. Their view is in conformity with the process of implementing the proposed innovative EFL teaching approach into China's EFL education (see Chapter Six for detailed discussion).

In this section, because of the limitation of space, I have deliberately omitted the discussion of the operationalisation of needs, the interventions that should be involved and the main steps that should be taken in conducting a needs analysis. A discussion of these points could be found from books by Richterich(1972), Munby(1978) and Cohen et al(2000).

2.7 Conclusions

2.7.1 A summary of the chapter

This chapter gives an analysis of the literature relevant to the study. Section 2.2 deals with the nature and development of EFL education with the emphasis laid on the communicative language teaching while section 2.3 puts bilingual education into the scope of EFL education for discussion, focusing on the analysis of bilingual competence. Section 2.4 introduces immersion as a well-developed, well-researched

and successful bilingual program. Section 2.5 points out that content-based instruction could be a pedagogically new reorientation in bilingual EFL education as it integrates the teaching of content with the development of language proficiency and uses the second/foreign language as the medium of instruction. Content-based instruction is thus a refinement of the theory of immersion in that it pays more attention than in much immersion research to the relationship between the medium of instruction and the curriculum being taught. Content-based instruction is also based on the needs of students' present academic study and their future profession. To understand the meaning of needs in the context, section 2.6 introduces the concept of needs analysis. When introducing theories of literature in each section, the connections between the sections are established and some evaluations of each concept introduced. Also, some possible limitations of some relevant concepts to be implemented in China's context are discussed so that they could be avoided and overcome when a possible integrated EFL teaching approach suitable for the context of the study is raised. In this concluding section of the chapter, some tentative guiding principles based on the discussion of the previous sections will be put forward so that they could serve as the theoretical foundations of the proposed teaching approach for the EFL education in China. Then a broad and general introduction of the proposed teaching approach proper will be presented.

2.7.2 Theoretical foundations

The following five points are drawn as a summary of the concepts discussed from the previous sections. They could serve not only as a response to the questions raised at the beginning of the chapter to a greater or lesser extent, but more importantly they are regarded as the guiding principles that are able to form the theoretical foundations for the study of the thesis as well.

1. Language is a system of arbitrary symbols with conventionalised meanings used for the purpose of human communication.
2. The nature, purposes and aims of EFL education should be the instruction of the use of the target language/English for international communication as English has become a recognised world language.

3. To produce desirable outcomes of EFL education, EFL educators should try to create a bilingual immersion environment to increase their students' constant and intensive exposure to learning the target language so as to be able to acquire as much comprehensible input and produce as much comprehensible output as possible.
4. EFL education should integrate the students' study of academic content/subject matter with the development of their language skills in clearly argued and explicit ways so that they could develop and acquire a bilingual competence.
5. EFL education should adopt a learner-centred instructional methodology, based on the analysis/assessment of students' academic and professional needs and interests.

Based on these guiding principles that serve as the theoretical foundations of the study, a proposed integrated EFL teaching approach, i.e., a content-based late partial bilingual immersion program, is introduced below. I must point out that throughout the whole thesis I am using "late" immersion to refer to the proposed EFL education in China's higher education, which is different from the so-called "late, late" immersion raised by Burger et al (1977) (it might be inappropriate, but I think late immersion could include the tertiary level immersion education).

2.7.3 A proposed integrated EFL teaching approach

What we propose in this study is a content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach to be carried out in China's higher educational institutions. As the approach integrates all of the above guiding principles, it is thus a really composite EFL teaching approach waiting to be practised in China's context of its higher education. To be more exact, the approach is to be implemented for non-English majors in their senior (third and fourth year) undergraduate and postgraduate study. These students are from the key universities of China's major and coastal cities where English is much needed. The approach adapts theories from the discussions of the previous sections of the chapter as its theoretical foundations and proposes that students should receive instruction for approximately half of their senior undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum in English so that they could have more opportunity to use English to associate their English learning directly with the study of part of their

curriculum. More specifically, the approach proposes using English as a medium of instruction to teach study skills and academic subjects such as chemistry, physics, trade, law etc. The proposed immersion range is to cover from 30% to 70% of their curriculum depending on different factors, needs and contexts such as the availability of qualified teaching staff, different learning stages, different specialties, different universities and different regions within China. The proposed approach has several purposes and aims. The first and foremost is of course to improve students' English skills through the immersed study of their academic subject matters. The second purpose is to cater for their future academic and professional needs. Thirdly, it also has an intention to promote China's quality education by introducing some anglophone teaching and learning styles to improve China's overall teaching quality so that China might catch up with the global trend of education with greater strides with it. Of course these purposes are interrelated and cannot be separated from each other.

As content-based language programs are perhaps best reflected by bilingual immersion programs (Met, 1998a) and our students are senior undergraduates and postgraduates, using English to learn 30% to 70% of their academic curriculum, we refer to our program as a content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach. The reasons we propose this integrated EFL teaching approach are:

1. Content-based instruction integrates the teaching of academic subjects with the development of students' language proficiency in using the target language. Directly based on students' academic and professional needs and used for the post-secondary level, it is a new reorientation in EFL education, reforming the traditional EFL pedagogy of teaching English as a subject.
2. The bilingual immersion programs in Canada have often been quoted as a well-developed, well-researched and most successful example of second language acquisition. One of the aims in these immersion programs is to increase students' comprehensible input and output by constant and intensive exposure to the target language, which is indispensable in mastering a foreign language.
3. We aim to find out an appropriate EFL teaching approach to improve China's present situation of its EFL education.

However, it must be pointed out that much of the context of the prototype models both from the content-based instruction and from the bilingual immersion programs are different from that of China. Content-based instruction is mostly discipline/ subject--based rather than whole curriculum-based and the bilingual immersion programs are mainly used for primary and secondary level students. Besides, they are both, for most cases, used for the minority language immigrant students to master the majority language. These facts mean that adaptations are necessary if they are to be introduced and implemented in China where the context is mainly to teach English as an international language to meet the trend of globalisation..

After the analysis of the literature, then, in the following chapters, first we will introduce the situation of China's EFL education as the contextual setting of the study. Then we will make an analysis of some data collected based on the investigation of students' needs in learning English and the feasibility of implementing the proposed approach in China. And finally some recommendations will be given as to how to adapt the proposed approach to improve the present situation of China's EFL education.

Chapter Three

The Contextual Setting: EFL Education in China

3.1 Introduction

As we have already shown in Chapter One, the aim of the thesis is to find out a feasible and favourable EFL teaching approach to help improve China's EFL education so that students should be able to appropriately use English as an international language for international communication to meet the trend of globalisation and to face the challenge of the global society in the new century. To realise this aim, an integrated EFL teaching approach, i.e., a content-based late partial immersion approach, based on the global analysis of a wide range of relevant literature, has been proposed in Chapter Two. To put the approach into successful practice, we must first of all take the context of the study, i.e., various specific contextual factors concerned with China's EFL education, into serious account. For example: What is the present situation of China's EFL education? How does the situation evolve from yesterday? What are the existing problems in China's EFL education? These questions are very crucial to the discussion as to the appropriateness of the proposed approach. On the basis of these questions, this chapter attempts to explore the contextual setting of the research.

First we will make an investigation of the historical development of China's international/ intercultural exchanges with their effects on the foreign language education. Then, the present development and situation in China' EFL education since 1949, the founding of the People's Republic of China, are presented. The discussion links its foreign language education with its concurrent historical and political context. Finally some problems that exist in China's EFL education will be discussed and a tentative solution based on some relevant Anglophone literature will be raised. These problems not only overlap with each other but are closely related with their

historical, social, educational, economic and political context as well. Therefore, the two aspects should be considered at the same time in adapting the proposed EFL approach.

3.2 Historical overview before 1949

At first glance, foreign language education seems purely a pedagogical issue. However, if we investigate the history of China's foreign language education, it is obvious that the purpose of foreign language education has always been determined by China's relations with other countries in the world. Foreign language education exists in the political contexts of questions such as: What does China want from the outside world? What does the outside world want from China? How does China enter into productive relations with other countries?

China is a country with ancient civilization and a history of more than 5,000 years of written records. Exchanges between China and other countries can be traced back more than 2,000 years (Zhou, 1988). One of the earliest and most well-known events was the establishment of the Silk Road. During the Han dynasty (206BC—220AD), silk, one of the most remarkable products of China's civilisation, along with other merchandise, was traded with other countries. The international trade needed people who knew foreign languages so that communication could be possible. International trade was almost certainly the first motivation for people to learn foreign languages.

While exporting products, China imported Buddhism into the country. Chinese authorities at the time did not reject it, as Buddhism, to some degree, was in harmony with Confucianism. It strengthened rather than undermined the traditional relations among people. It consolidated rather than weakened the ways of life which the existing authorities supported (Fan, 1979:16).

Due to the development of international trade and the introduction of religion into China, foreign language learning was promoted and the development of translation began. The translation approach became the dominant means of learning a foreign language at the time. For example, during the Tang dynasty, when the monk Xuan

Zhuang returned from the West with the Buddhist Scriptures to China, he immediately taught people to translate them and organised a large group of translators and spent the next 19 years translating 1,335 volumes of Buddhist Scriptures into the Chinese versions. His translation work was encouraged by the authorities (Fu, 1986:4). This example demonstrates the fact that foreign language teaching and learning was initially motivated by a desire to learn something new from foreign countries and that when a country has the desire to learn from other countries, foreign language education becomes important. The example also demonstrates the fact that the translation method was the first method to be employed in China's foreign language education.

During the Yuan dynasty (1271—1368 A.D.), when the Venetian traveller Marco Polo visited China, the first foreign language school appeared. The school was established in 1289. About fifty students selected from noble or rich families were taught the Persian language and trained to work as translators of religious books and government documents and to serve as professional interpreters of international trade (Fu, 1986:8). During the Ming dynasty (1368—1644A.D.), the Chinese government-supported ocean-going activities had been a great success when Zheng He, as a government trade representative, went to Southeast Asia with a large fleet. This trading activity must have required a large number of people who understood foreign languages. Interpreters were needed to accompany traders on their journey to assist communication. Documents about those countries and the books which were brought back to China needed translators. In order to meet these needs, the Ming government established a foreign language school in 1407, known as Siyi Guan, involving both translating and language teaching (Liu, 1957:26).

From the late Ming to the early Qing dynasty (1644—1911), apart from traders, more and more missionaries arrived in China as a result of the discovery of the new sea route, These western missionaries had to respect Chinese traditions and to win the favour of Chinese authorities and Chinese people by introducing Western advanced science and technology before they could disseminate Christianity. Science and technology were learned by Chinese as something new from foreign countries (Li, 1953:2). Hence, the motivation to learn foreign science and technology became a force for promoting foreign language learning and teaching. In addition, the numbers

who were keen on learning science and technology seemed much bigger than those engaged in international trade and those interested in new religion. Foreign languages seem to be learned more widely for scientific and technological purposes than for any other reason (Chen, 1999:6).

In 1840, as a result of losing the Opium War, China's door was forced to open by foreign guns and canons, the advanced science and technology. After that, more and more foreign missionaries could come to China freely to practice their religion by establishing the church-run educational institutions and implementing foreign language education. By the end of 1926, there were 8325 missionaries in China (Fu, 1986:40). In the church-run schools, all the teachers and students had to use English for communication and to integrate the study of English with their academic subjects. EFL education at the time served the purpose of learning purely foreign life style and ideology mostly imposed on the students by ignoring the value of the Chinese ways of life and ideology (Fu, 1986: 42). At the same time, the Yangwu group consisting of Chinese warlords and feudal bureaucrats, rose up. The group wanted to make the country stronger through its own efforts by learning advanced Western science and technology (Fan, 1962:206). A number of technical schools and military academies were opened to learn the Western advanced science and technology such as machine-making, navigation, medicine and telecommunication through the medium of foreign languages. Meanwhile, students were sent by the government to foreign countries such as USA to learn advanced technology (Qian, 1996). Foreign language education was greatly strengthened at the time. Tongwen Guan, a government-run modern language teaching institution started teaching English in Beijing and the grammar-translation method was adopted to teach the foreign languages there (Fu, 1986:15).

The revolution led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen destroyed the feudal system which had lasted for about 2,000 years and the Republic, as a new system learned from the outside countries, was founded in 1912. During the May 4th Movement, the so-called New Culture Movement, in China in 1919, foreign language learning became unexpectedly popular and the use of foreign languages to learn from Western ideology and the Western science and technology went in various directions. "Frenziedly, the young people of China studied foreign languages—English, German, French, Japanese—hunting for the key to the new way. They plugged into Ibsen, Tolstoy, Dickens, Shaw,

Kropotkin, Tagore, Maupassant, John Dewey, the Russian Narodniks, the Anarchists, Bakunin, Bertrand Russell, Marx, Engels and with the dramatic events of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, Lenin, and Trotsky" (Salisbury and Suares, 1983:43).

After the May 4th Movement of 1919, a new era of revolution appeared. In the next 30 years, which included three civil wars and World War Two, Chinese history witnessed the founding of the Chinese Communist Party and its splits with the Nationalist Party. Likewise, there were two paradigms of teaching and learning foreign languages.

One paradigm was followed in the educational institutions controlled by the Chinese Nationalist government. Substantially, in a very wide field including curricula, teaching materials and teaching methods, the model was a reproduction and combination of American and British models. The model lasted without significant changes until 1949 in mainland and beyond 1949 in Taiwan (Fu, 1986:55). Foreign languages with the English language as the first priority, were made compulsory in the curricula from junior high schools to tertiary institutions. It was made clear that at all levels the purpose of teaching English as a foreign language was to "promote learners' interest in foreign cultures in addition to having a new language experience" (Fu, 1986:56). This purpose of learning a foreign language was very similar to Jespersen's point of view (1904:9): "the highest purpose in the teaching of languages may perhaps be said to be the access to the best thought and institutions of a foreign nation, its literature, culture—in short, the spirit of the nation in the widest sense of the word". As a matter of fact, during that time Jesperson (1904) and Palmer's (1917, 1921, 1922) theories on foreign language teaching were introduced into China and were tried in the government-controlled schools. Imported foreign language textbooks were widely used. The prime attention was given to the development of language skills. The direct method and reading method were employed to teach English at the time (Fu, 1986:56). However, the Japanese invasion during the second world war disrupted foreign language education in the Chinese institutions. Many universities withdrew to the Southwest of China with the Nationalist government. In a word, foreign language education under the Nationalist regime was strongly influenced by Western capitalist ideas.

Another paradigm was practiced in the educational institutions run by the Chinese

Communists. Foreign language education in those institutions had a special political significance. The purpose of teaching foreign languages was seen to directly serve Chinese goals of establishing a new order, rooting out what were considered to be the causes of Chinese internal weaknesses and exploitation by the outside world (Chen, 1999:22). The reasons for the Chinese Communists to learn foreign languages at the time were primarily ideological and non-material. The aim of foreign language education was to train personnel for the Chinese revolution.

According to Fu (1986:40), early in 1920, a special foreign language school known as the " Foreign Language Society" was established in Shanghai, The major subjects of the curriculum of the school were Russian and Marxist theory. Shanghai University (1922) was another early foreign language institution run by the Communists. Most students in the university majored in sociology. During the period of Anti-Japanese War (1937-1945), the task of the Communist Party was to drive out the Japanese invaders. For political and military reasons, special schools to teach Japanese was set up in the Communist bases. In 1944, when Zhou Enlai, one of the Chinese Communist leaders, returned from Chongqing to Yanan after his talks with the Nationalist Party to prepare for the U.S ambassador's visit, he proposed to the Central Committee of the Communist Party that foreign language education should be strengthened in order to meet the needs of the current and future political situations. Hence the Yan'an Foreign Language Institute came into being (Fu, 1986:55). As we can see, at the very beginning, teaching and learning a foreign language was politically oriented in schools run by the Communists. In those politically-oriented schools, foreign language education was for the purpose of utility and practicality. For some students majoring as interpreters, the direct method was employed to emphasize the listening and speaking ability, while for others majoring as translators and sociology, the reading method and the grammar-translation method were adopted. In those schools, authentic materials such as newspapers, language textbooks and teachers' handouts from the target language were used for teaching. Both Chinese teachers who had been abroad to study Marxism and Literature and some native-speaking teachers of the target language were employed to teach foreign languages (Fu, 1986: 48-51).

The two paradigms employed by the two political parties stand for different directions

in foreign language education and different political views. However, in spite of the differences, both had a common feature: Foreign language education is determined by both internal and international relations based on China's reality and needs. The direction of foreign language education should be politically influenced and serve as a means to realize political goals. Both paradigms from this period had an impact on subsequent foreign language education after the founding of New China in 1949.

The above brief historical overview of China's EFL education before 1949 could tell us that the development of international trade, the introduction of religion/foreign ideology/foreign culture and the advanced science and technology are three motivations for China to implement its foreign language education. Foreign language education serves its own function and the purpose of utility, i.e., a foreign language is best seen as an instrument to serve the Chinese needs and to preserve Chinese culture and ideology and foreign language education served this purpose. The selection of foreign language teaching approaches is also directly associated with the social, cultural and political environment of the society and the country.

3.3 Recent developments since 1949

The founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 brought about a unique situation for Chinese people. The revolution had destroyed an old system and a new system had to be built. Since the ideology learned from the Soviet Union had been so successful in bringing about the overthrow of internal and exploitative forces, it was natural to continue to look to Russia. The Chinese were called to follow in the footprints of the Soviet Union (Mao, 1949:1418). Meanwhile, radical changes in the political system in China brought about the breaking of diplomatic relations with most Western countries. Apart from that, during the Cold War, Western countries participated willingly in breaking relations with China and an economic blockade was undertaken. China closed its door to the West for ideological reasons—the Western bourgeois ideology was no longer allowed in a socialist country. The Cold War aggravated mutual prohibition between the East and the West (Salisbury and Suares, 1983). Starting from the beginning of the 1950s and accompanied by increased cultural learning from the Soviet Union, the teaching of Russian was dramatically

promoted. In contrast, after the international relations with the Western countries came to an abrupt halt, the teaching of English and other Western languages declined. Russian language learning was introduced into the curricula of secondary schools, even in some metropolitan primary schools. In the 1950s, Russian departments were first established in nineteen tertiary institutions all over China.. After 1952, seven special language institutes sprang up, together with Russian departments in seventeen comprehensive universities and nineteen teacher training universities and colleges. At the tertiary level, the aim of teaching Russian was to teach professional personnel who had a good command of Russian (Fu, 1986:68). In 1953, to meet the need for increased numbers of interpreters and translators for Russian experts in many fields who came to China to help with its first five-year construction plan, the Chinese government issued Instructions on Russian Language Education (Ministry of education, P.R.China, 1954). This was the first government document concerning foreign language education after the founding of the new China. It listed details on teaching goals, objectives, teaching methods and curricula to be used in institutions at different levels.

Foreign language education in China at the time was strongly influenced by the trends in teaching foreign languages in the Soviet Union. Chinese foreign language educators seemed to take over whatever could be derived from the Russian model of foreign language education without carefully thinking and investigating whether it fitted the context in China (Price, 1987). Chinese foreign language teachers adopted the dominant teaching method used in the Soviet Union at the time, i.e., the conscious-comparative method. According to Hingley (1963), this method emphasised grammar, translation and comparison of the foreign language with the vernacular. Analytic reading, i.e., philological dissection of text with a search for forms, became the core of this method. In addition, much of the content of the textbooks used for teaching Russian as a foreign language in China was originally from textbooks for teaching Russian as the native language in Soviet schools (Chen, 1999).

Around the late 1950s and early 1960s, with the pressure the Soviet leaders put on China to follow their directions and with the withdrawal of Russian experts from China when China refused to follow the Soviet Union blindly, China broke relations

with the Soviet Union completely and began to work out its own way of reconstruction. In 1957, the Chinese Communist Party put forward its own education policy. The policy declared explicitly that education should serve proletarian politics and be associated with production and labour. The education innovation following 1958 led Chinese foreign language education away from the Soviet path. Because attention was given to both politics and the Chinese context, the content reflecting Chinese politics and reality occupied the dominant position in foreign language curriculum. There were few authentic teaching materials written by native speakers. Under such circumstances "the foreign language the students learn could not be idiomatic" (Fu, 1986:74).

Although the Chinese foreign language educators had changed the content of foreign language teaching, namely, using content about Chinese ways of life, they kept on repeating the old Russian foreign language teaching method. Cultures in English-speaking countries that had been substituted by Russian culture before were now replaced by Chinese culture. Foreign language teaching and learning was divorced from its target culture and authenticity. In the early 1960s, the Chinese government realised these problems and took measures to modify them. Meanwhile a method from some Western countries, i.e. the audio-lingual method (Brooks, 1960, 1964: Rivers, 1964; also see 2.2), was introduced and believed to be a cure for the "deaf-mute disease" which had plagued the grammar-translation classroom. In 1964, another important government document, The seven year plan for foreign language education (Ministry of education, P.R.China, 1964) was published. In the following year, a special conference was organised by the Chinese Ministry of Higher Education to discuss how to carry out the seven year plan. To give a rightful place to teaching foreign language education, four principles were defined at the conference (He and Zeng, 2000:100): emphasising foreign language teaching both for professional and general purposes; juxtaposing formal with informal foreign language education; defining English as the most important foreign language and readjusting the allocation of hours for foreign language teaching in higher education; attaching special importance to the quality of foreign language education. Unfortunately, these principles and many other good ideas at the conference had not been put into much practice when the infamous and destructive Great Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) broke out. Foreign language education suffered badly at the early stage of the Great

Cultural Revolution. In the first four years from 1966 to 1970, foreign language education no longer existed. "We can run a machine without knowing ABC" (The English alphabet representing the English language in their eyes) was the password among the young people who thought that foreign languages were the last thing in the world they should learn.

After a few years, China realised the harmful effects of cutting off contacts with the outside countries. A gesture was made to the West to reestablish diplomatic relations. The West responded promptly since they also realised that to resume contacts with China would result in mutual benefits: The West wants markets and China needs the material products and technology. Since 1970, diplomatic relations have been restored between China and many Western countries among which were English-speaking countries like Canada, USA, UK, Australia and New Zealand (Fu, 1986:84). During the time, China won back its legal seat in the United Nations. President Nixon visited China in 1972. The new international situation made China hungry for more and more experts understanding English. Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and other leaders of the People's Republic of China showed great concern for foreign language education. In order to meet the needs of international communication, foreign language departments in a number of universities were permitted to reopen. Some universities and colleges began again recruiting students and offering the English language education.

However, during the time, great emphasis was given to controlling language content within the domain of the Chinese context and current politics. Consequently, the curricula used in those universities consisted entirely of political indoctrination courses. Students were crammed with highly political teaching content which was strictly checked by the authorities. As a result, "Chinese foreign language learners were only good at lots of political slogans, but knew very little about the expression of daily life, let alone idiomatic English" (Fu, 1986:85). The artificially forced combination of foreign language form and the content of Chinese politics resulted in communication difficulties in the process of intercultural communication with native speakers of the target language. Of course, the English learned in the political environment of China, with the Chinese political content used as textbooks lacking authentic materials and purely from Chinese teachers was not sufficient nor even efficient in bringing about mutual understanding.

Two simple examples could illustrate the results of the kind of English language learning. For the first example, during the middle 1970s, an American delegation visited China and met a group of Chinese college students majoring in English. They were impressed by the students' good command of English grammar and excellent pronunciation. However, they were surprised by the students' intercultural ignorance. It was really shocking that Chinese students were curious about the blond hair of one delegate, rudely asking whether the blond colour of the hair was due to old age or suffering form a disease (Lehman, 1975). Also, in USA, an American professor invited a visiting Chinese professor and his wife to the American professor's house as guests. The American professor welcomed the Chinese couple and then said to the Chinese professor "Your wife is pretty" as a compliment. He was very surprised and puzzled to hear the answer to the compliment was "where, where" (a literal translation of polite Chinese answer, meaning in the context: "Thanks. I'm afraid she is not so.") and had only to reply: "Everywhere, everywhere" (Deng and Liu, 1989).

The above brief discussion about the recent developments of China's EFL education since 1949 could show how much politics could determine the destiny of China's EFL education and how politically oriented China's EFL education during the period was. In the following section, we will know the present EFL education in China today has begun to take on a vast scene of normal development, though still politically oriented to a certain degree.

3.4 Present situation

China's situation today is different from it was before. Since 1978, China's door has been reopened wider and wider. International trade has been dramatically increased. Foreign investors, businessmen and professionals have been invited into China. Huge numbers of Chinese have gone abroad to learn advanced science and technology and business management (see 1.1). Never before in Chinese history has EFL education attracted so much importance as it does today. English has become the most commonly taught foreign language in China, overwhelmingly taking over the previously dominant place of Russian in the 1950s. China has realised that from the

historical experience, prohibition only leads to political and economic backwardness. Facing the ever-changing international competition, China has to increase its pace of modernisation. As a result, China's economy has been developing very fast in the recent years. Currently it has been made clear that the aim of China in communicating with foreign countries is to speed up its modernisation. EFL education has been required to serve this goal. In order to meet the national and individual needs to realise the goal of modernisation, China needs more personnel who should be both "specialised in various fields and in good command of one or more foreign languages" (Ministry of education, P.R.China, 1979:1). In 1978, a national foreign language education conference was held in Beijing to discuss the overall planning for foreign language teaching at which Some propositions on strengthening foreign language education was passed as a decision. The decision claimed that "the high level of foreign language education is not only an important component for promoting the scientific and cultural standard of the whole Chinese nation, but also a necessary pre-condition of being an advanced country and race" (Ministry of education, P.R.China, 1979:1). This understanding helped push China's foreign language education forward, raising as a whole its quality and standard as shown by

1. Raising the structural and professional level of the foreign language education based on the purpose of utility and needs by improving the practical language skills of teachers and professional scholars and sending them to study abroad.
2. Strengthening communication with domestic and international foreign language teaching communities; sending scholars to attend domestic or international conferences on foreign language education; inviting foreign language teaching specialists from abroad to give lectures; encouraging universities to establish friendly intercollegiate relations with their counterparts or universities of similar nature abroad.
3. Enhancing the construction of foreign language teaching materials and modern teaching devices, improving the conditions and environments for foreign language education.

(see He and Zeng, 2000:100)

For the 20 years from early 1980s up to the present, we must recognise the fact that the scale of China's EFL education has expanded. Achievements in EFL education

during the period are also seen in the following aspects (He and Zeng, 2000:100):

- Academic research developed. Teachers and researchers take an active part in different levels of academic research in EFL education. More monographs and articles and books on foreign language education have been published, covering a wide range of topics and themes, including teaching procedures and techniques, theoretical principles, language policies, curriculum and syllabus designs, etc.
- Symposiums and conferences have been sponsored and organised to discuss EFL education in China. For instance, an international symposium on Applied Linguistics and EFL education was sponsored in Guangzhou in early 1980s, the first of such seminars since the birth of new China. The first and second international symposiums on EFL education in China were held successfully in Guangzhou in 1985 and in Tianjin in 1992. The first conference of the China Association of Foreign Language Audio-visual Education was held in Beijing in 1985.
- Different types and levels of syllabus for EFL education have been published and various levels of textbooks used for EFL education compiled. For example, six types of College English Syllabus both for English majors and non-English majors have been published, which absorbed the merits and experience of traditional teaching materials at home and abroad. Advanced and professional textbooks prevail in major cities. Textbooks of linguistics and literature have also been increasing rapidly.
- Testing services and means of assessment have been utilised. Two types of nationwide college English tests both for English majors and non-English majors have been conducted twice a year from 1987. Examinees have amounted to more than 90,000 each year in recent years.
- Modern technology is applied. Language laboratories and audio-visual equipment have been installed in almost all tertiary institutions and most key secondary schools. The application of computers in foreign language education is no longer limited to data retrieval and language testing, but rather it has begun to be extended throughout the whole teaching process. In some universities, some software libraries of considerable scale have begun to appear as well.

In addition to what is described above about the achievements and advances made in

the field of EFL education in China since the early 1980s, various teaching theories, approaches, methods, procedures and techniques in the EFL education profession have also been introduced from the West at the same time. A brief discussion about such introduction is given below.

EFL education in China had traditionally adopted a teacher and a book-centred grammar-translation method as mentioned in 2.3. The method has also been strongly influenced by one of China's greatest ancient thinkers, Confucius (Jin and Cortazzi, 1998a; Cortazzi, 1998; Sham and Woodrow, 1998). Confucian philosophy emphasises the seeking of knowledge through book-learning and this laid the foundation for education in China. Campbell and Zhao (1993:5) argue that these beliefs in teaching dominated and will continue to dominate the EFL education in China. Though textbooks and classroom exercises are often tedious, there is no other way to learn a foreign language. The teacher should dominate the classroom while the students listen passively and engage in exercises only on command. In the 1950s, foreign language education in China was still dominated by the traditional grammar-translation method. The method improved students' reading comprehension, but had little beneficial effect on their speaking ability. This method might have met the needs of the learners at the time when they had little opportunity to come into contact with native speakers of English. However, in the modern world with its freedom of movement and access to travel, internet and various media sources, learners must feel frustrated when they cannot communicate freely with native speakers because their interlanguage competence has reached a fossilised plateau level (Ellis, 1997:29) which the teaching method cannot help them to move beyond any more.

By the late 1960s, in China, the text-based emphasis had come to be regarded as somewhat ineffective on the teaching and learning of English as a spoken language. After studying English for several years, it was admitted that learners might have gained the ability to analyse sentences grammatically and do translations, but they still felt disadvantaged when they tried to communicate in the spoken language with native speakers (Rao, 1976:460). Such dissatisfaction encouraged some transfer to the fashionable structuralist, stimulus-response feedback theory of language learning and the rise of audio-lingual method. Here the emphasis was laid on the practice of pattern drills and the training of the students' listening and speaking ability through model

sentence pattern, with little recourse to formal grammar (Campbell and Zhao, 1993). This method was popular until middle 1980s in China. Then it became apparent that the audio-lingual method was in reality only appropriate for the earlier and rudimentary stages in language teaching. The students trained by this method could probably perform controlled exercises correctly, but they made various kinds of errors in free communication activities. More specifically they could not generate appropriate sentences in spontaneous communication freely, for what they learned was mostly fit only for limited classroom use. What they lacked was bilingual communicative competence (see 2.3).

To comply with China's reform and open policy, by the middle of 1980s, the EFL education in China had begun to turn to the Communicative Approach for inspiration. By the time, China's international contacts through medium of English had been widening and gaining in frequency. English had become an indispensable instrument for exchanging information in science and technology for China's construction and modernisation programs. Therefore, the attention in the field of EFL education began to be focused around the Communicative approach based on Western theories concerning the nature of language and the process of language learning (see 2.2). The arrival of the approach may be seen as a response to the problem of the students who may be structurally competent yet unable to communicate appropriately. Theoretically, in the communicative approach, because of teacher withdrawal and the increased responsibility by students involved in the approach, they gain confidence in using the target language in general. Students feel more responsible for their own learning while their motivation comes from their progress in using meaningful ways to handle meaningful topics (Larsen-Freeman, 1996). The onset of the communicative approach marked the beginning of the shift of China's EFL education from aiming at language proficiency through text-centred grammar-translation method to achieving language proficiency by attention to wider perspectives of communicative competence. Although the current EFL syllabuses both for middle schools and universities compiled by the Ministry of education in China (1986, 1989, 1991, 1995) now aim to develop students' communicative competence which includes linguistic competence (see 2.3) and students are required to master not only the reading skills, but also the skills of listening, speaking and writing, students' authentic use of English is still relatively poor. For various reasons (some of them will be discussed in

the next section), not many EFL teachers are really able to put the Communicative Approach into classroom use, especially in the field of EFL education for non-English majors and primary and secondary school students.

The reasons for the present progress made in the field of EFL education in China today lie in the fact that English has been recognised by all sectors of the Chinese population as an important international language for communication with the outside world. Knowledge of English is not only a way of showing that one is a member of the elite with status but also essential for career advancement, academic promotion or the easy access to receive higher education both at home and abroad (Chen, 1999). Chinese government leaders have also realised that widespread use of English in China could allow it to plug itself into the international grid of business and finance, increase its edge into the global village for greater international trade and develop its science and technology. The increase in the use of English is thus a marvelous instrument of making a country economically stronger (Brown et al, 1997). English language learning has been seen as a means of upward social and vocational mobility, redressing economic imbalances and influencing young minds into an international attitude of the future.

Despite its relatively quicker recent developments, there still exist various problems in the field of China's EFL education, some of which will be dealt with in the following section. A tentative solution to some of these existing problems based on the borrowing and adaptation of some anglophone educational models, will also be raised.

3.5 Existing problems and a tentative solution

3.5.1 Existing problems

Though English has continually increased its importance since the 1970s in China and China's present political, social and economic circumstances have a great push for learning the language, the ideal and satisfactory bilingual phenomenon as Chinese leaders expect and as Lord (1987) predicts that "English may well become the world

lingua franca, a language that everyone everywhere whoever has any sort of white collar prospect has adequate command of" (quoted from Martha et al, 1994:56) has not come to China yet. It is still not the case as Edwards (1994:59) says that "With the right social conditions, then, bilingualism becomes just as 'natural' as monolinguals and is a capacity available to any one of normal talents". China still urgently lacks EFL speakers who could conduct appropriate international communication in various contexts for its economic development. There is a great gap between China's urgent demand and the sufficient supply of competent bilingual speakers (see 1.1). Why cannot China train a sufficient supply of qualified bilingual speakers to meet its needs? The reasons could be various and far from simple. Some of them may result from China's social, cultural, economic and political system as we have described above. Others may come from China's EFL education itself. Some of the possible problems that exist in the field of China's EFL education are listed below. They are mostly based on my own observations and reflections as a university teacher in China since there is little academic discussion or research on these matters at present.

1. There is a great conflict between China's rapid economic development and the lack of the overall, consistent and long-term planning for the English language teaching profession. China has a specific plan for its economic development (for example, the tenth five-year plan for the development of its national economy, see Guangzhou Daily, 2000c), but there is no such specific long-term or even short-term plan for the development of EFL education in its national curriculum or within the plan for the development of China's national economy.
2. The English language teaching in China's higher education has been focusing most of its attention on the study of the English majors. Most of the well-known professors and scholars in China have been teaching English majors throughout their lives. Even the only one nationwide investigation of the present situation of the EFL education for the undergraduate students in China in 1990s was based on the empirical data drawn from the undergraduate English majors (Wu and Liu, 1993). Besides, most of the published articles with highly academic, theoretical and empirical research are aimed at how to improve the EFL education for the English majors. A glimpse of the current issues of the three most influential professional journals of China's EFL education---Modern foreign languages, Research in foreign language teaching and learning, Foreign language world---could

demonstrate the fact. However, in order to meet the economic needs of China's modernisation for English, non-English majors should be the main objects of the research in the profession of China's EFL education in the new century and the study of how to improve the EFL education for non-English majors should be the main targets, as the non-English majors dominate China's English language learning population in the higher education.

3. As bilingual speakers in China have many chances of upward vocational mobility (see1.1), as there are too many students eager to learn English and as teacher's salary is relatively low, many English language teachers are either leaving the teaching force for joint-ventures and foreign funded companies where the salary is much higher or they will teach overtime to make more money, resulting in the consequence that there is not only a greater and more severe shortage of English language teaching staff, but also very few EFL teachers are willing to be engaged in regular developmental work on teaching practice and academic research.
4. English is still being taught as a subject at all levels. How to integrate students' English language learning with their academic study and future vocational and professional needs, i.e., the integration of content and language in EFL education, has not even been mentioned in the various levels of the national English syllabuses (see Ministry of education, 1986, 1989, 1990 and 1995 for various syllabuses). As we have discussed in 2.3, the mainstream education with foreign language teaching and learning without constant and intensive exposure to English could rarely produce competent bilingual speakers. This point suggests that China's current approaches of EFL education cannot satisfy the overall increasing demand of its modern society.
5. With insufficient amount of money invested into the EFL education, insufficient amount of systematic academic research has been conducted in the field as to how to push forward the theoretical level of China's foreign language teaching, raise its quality and guarantee its effectiveness. Of the published academic and professional EFL articles and books, very few, if any, empirical investigations, i.e., qualitative as well as quantitative research and surveys, have been done. Very few experimental results or empirical data have been collected and analysed to provide evidence for the theories of the research. A statistical figure shows that during the period of 1990-1995, less than 7% of the published articles from China's three most influential professional journals on English language teaching and learning, i.e.,

Modern foreign languages, Research in foreign language teaching and learning, Foreign language world, contained empirical data (Liu, 1999). EFL educators in China seem to be more enthusiastic about the summaries and descriptions of EFL teaching techniques and procedures or introduction of various EFL teaching theories from the West with few concrete empirical investigations of how they might be adapted to meet the specific contexts of China's EFL education.

6. Despite being increasingly subject to theoretical introductions and pedagogical reforms, EFL educators in China have remained strongly influenced by a mixture of the traditional grammar-translation method and the audio-lingual approach (see 2.2). The emphasis in English language teaching in most schools and universities is still on linguistic competence—the ability to formulate pattern drills and memorise rules and language points. The EFL teaching method is more or less restricted to linguistic forms and rules, such as explaining vocabulary and language points, paraphrasing sentences, reading and elaborating the text and practising drills. To a certain extent, this process remains both mechanical and monotonous. The reasons why the grammar-translation method and the audio-lingual approach are still prevalent in China's EFL education may come from China's economic, educational, cultural and linguistic environments. Chinese EFL teachers have to strive very hard to create an authentic language environment, which is not very easy for them as many of them have never been abroad and are not familiar with the cultures and academic and educational environments of the English-speaking countries (Burnaby and Sun, 1989:232). Class size is also a barrier to the reformation of EFL education (Jin and Cortazzi, 1998b). Usually in one class there are 50 or so students so that it is difficult for the teacher to involve all the students in a classroom activity. The student-centred interactive learning process seems to have been neglected. In addition, as we have discussed above, the Confucian ideology such as the textbook and teacher-centred, examination-dominated pedagogy may still inherently exist in the teachers' thinking process and teaching practice.

3.5.2 A possible solution

The problems discussed above are not at all exhaustive and some of them may overlap. However, the identification of the problems that exist in China's EFL

education should help us find out ways to solve them. Just as there could be various problems existing in the field of China's EFL education, there might be various solutions. For example, we could raise the EFL teachers' salary. We could send the undergraduate and postgraduate students abroad to study for a while. We could train more EFL language teachers to supply the present severe shortage of the English language teaching staff. Or we could find out ways to improve the current English language teaching methods. As an exploratory probe and one of the possible solutions to the existing problems and with an aim to improve China's EFL education and promote the quality in its higher education by adapting the anglophone teaching and learning styles into its higher education system, this study suggests a content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach for non-English majors to meet both the country's and the students' needs in this global society where various new means of communication requires the consideration of the adaptation and borrowing of some new EFL teaching approaches (see 2.7). The history of China's EFL education suggests that needs and utility are the two contextual factors to consider the purpose of China's EFL education. Therefore, the proposed model is based on China's needs and utility of its EFL education, adapts some theories from anglophone bilingual education and second language acquisition and proposes that students should begin to receive their English language learning in their late primary and secondary school education alongside with the learning of their mother tongue, the Chinese language, so that when they enter university their English linguistic proficiency should be more or less basically developed. At the senior undergraduate and postgraduate level, students should receive a content-based immersion education for about 30% to 70% of their curriculum within their academic field with English used as the medium of instruction until they graduate to be able to use English as well as their mother tongue Chinese for their professional and vocational needs and for appropriate international communication. It is hoped that in this way, more students could master English associated with their profession and vocation so as to meet both the country's and the students' needs for English.

As we are proposing to introduce a new EFL teaching approach from the anglophone countries, it is thus necessary to consider whether and how this transfer will be successful. According to some theories in comparative education (for example, Sadler, 1906; King, 1979; Robinsohn, 1992; Reynolds and Farrell, 1996; Vidorich et

al, 2000), the borrowing, transplantation and adaptation of the proposed EFL teaching approach from the anglophone education system into China's education system is useful, beneficial and likely to be successful. The rationale and theoretical principles for this process of adaptation is in correspondence with what they describe about the purposes of comparative education. From their point of view, the borrowing, transplantation and adaptation of different education systems are helpful because we could learn from other education systems and make them useful to our own education system to meet the international competition and global challenges in the new century. This is most important to China today. If China aims to enter the global society, its education must keep pace with international standards, students at university in China must face the challenges of the new century and catch up with the trend of globalisation. China's academic teaching and learning styles in its EFL education as well as in its whole education system should not fall behind the Western advanced countries. Students should develop their global academic learning styles at the same time as they are improving their English. In fact, lots of anglophone research and investigations have explored the feasibility of the mutual borrowing and adaptation of different education systems. For example, Marton et al (1993, 1996), Meyer (2000), Chan and Mok (2001) have argued that the paradox of the Chinese learners suggests that some educational principles in China's traditional education system are very useful and beneficial to developing student's deep strategic learning in the West. At the same time, quite a number of anglophone scholars have successfully attempted to adapt the teaching and learning styles into higher education for either some overseas Chinese students or students in China (for example, Brinton et al, 1989; Tang, 1998; Jin and Cortazzi, 1998b; Biggs, 1999). The global society of this century, with its closer and closer intercultural communication, will make the mutual borrowing and adaptation of different education systems more feasible and more frequent. In Chapter Six, some more specific discussions of the adaptation of the proposed EFL teaching approach will be given and further clarified.

The above brief discussion on comparative education and the brief historical introduction to China's EFL education suggest that it is possible to adapt this proposed EFL teaching approach into China's higher education. The historical evaluation of the chapter shows that China's EFL teaching methods and approaches have lots of direct and indirect links with the Western ones. Some of them have been

more or less successfully used in China to serve different needs and different purposes of utility at different times and epochs. Therefore, the historical evaluation tells us that this proposed approach might also be contextually and conceptually acceptable at present in China's EFL education in the higher education. First, China's various means of communication with the outside countries have become more and more frequent. University undergraduate and postgraduate students and professionals have more and more opportunities to come across an authentic environment of using English as an international language, especially in China's coastal and major cities (see 1.1). Secondly, the historical overview also tells us that the selection of an EFL teaching approach is mostly determined by some economic, cultural, social and educational factors. China's economy has been developing at a faster pace at present. Its cultural concepts of dominating confucianism means that the children and the students should respect and listen to the parents, the teachers and the authorities and the parents and teachers should also respect and listen to the superiors and the authorities so as to form a collective and harmonious social hierarchy (Jin and Cortazzi, 1998a; Cortazzi, 1998; Hu, 1999). This relatively more obedient and respectful characterisation of the traditional Chinese cultural concepts could make it easier for the proposed approach to be trialled. Thirdly, both the parents and the students now in China have great enthusiasm and urge to learn English and China's present social and economic environments will certainly welcome the implementation of the proposed approach (see 1.1). Of course, as any new inventions and new ideology may come across some setbacks and difficulties, so does the proposed approach. For example, some teachers, especially some of those from the older generation, might have some conservative educational values that might prevent the adaptation of the proposed EFL teaching approach. Just as the famous educationist Dewey (1916/1985) said almost a hundred years ago, education can be conservative, i.e., it preserves a society as it is. However, just as he said at the same time, education can be progressive, i.e., it promotes change for the better in a society. As long as the educational administrators and most teachers at all relevant levels have the determination for change, these setbacks and difficulties could be resolved. In fact, it is their determination to change the status quo and to innovate their beliefs and behaviours that count most to implement the proposed approach (see Fullan, 1991, 1993; Musumeci, 1997; Morrison, 1998, Chan and Mok, 2001).

3. 6 A summary of the chapter

This chapter has introduced the contextual setting of the research—EFL education in China. Section 3.2 gives a historical overview of China's EFL education before the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The overview tells us that the development of international trade, the introduction of religion/foreign ideology and the advanced science and technology were three motivations for China to implement foreign language education. Section 3.3 discusses the development of China's EFL education since 1949 after the founding of the People's Republic of China. The discussion illustrates how politics could determine the destiny of China's EFL education and how politically-oriented China's EFL education was. Section 3.4 presents the present situation of China's EFL education, demonstrating the fact that on the one hand, China's open policy has pushed forward its EFL education and its present EFL education has made great advances; on the other hand, there is still a great gap between China's economic needs for English and the reality of its EFL education. Section 3.5 puts forward some problems that exist in the field of EFL education in China today and proposes the integrated EFL teaching approach as a possible solution. The whole chapter links the existing problems of China's EFL education with its historical, social, cultural, political and economic contexts for discussion, showing that the existing problems in the field of EFL education are not only inseparable by themselves but are closely associated with various contextual factors as well. When we are trying to find out approaches to solve the problems, we should also take these contextual factors into serious consideration. The chapter also shows that it is conceptually possible to implement the proposed approach in China's present context.

Now that the possible EFL teaching approach for improving China's EFL education has been proposed and that the contextual setting of the research has been introduced, we should then do some empirical investigation to discuss whether the proposed approach could meet the country's and the students' present and future needs and whether the approach is feasible to be implemented in China's present and future context. The empirical study will focus on the purposes and the aims of the approach proposed in Chapter Two and also further identify the possibility of the conceptual

acceptance of the proposed approach discussed in Chapter Three. Based on these empirical data, we could draw some implications and raise some suggestions as to how to implement the proposed approach in China's context of its higher education.

Chapter Four

The Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

So far, I have relied on the conceptual analysis of the existing problems in China's EFL education and the possible solutions based on the relevant literature. In addition, I want to collect the views of people who have been non-English majors in China to see if they can throw more light on the potential success and problems of the model I propose. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to explain how I decided to collect the views and what data collection methods I decided on and why I chose the methods. To be more specific, in this chapter on the research methodology, the following questions will be answered:

1. Why was a qualitative method chosen to conduct the study in preference to a quantitative one?
2. Was the research interview the appropriate tool for the investigation?
3. What criteria should be considered in assessing the qualitative research?
4. What techniques or procedures were used to conduct the research?
5. What ethical issues should be considered in this research?

Each question will correspond to one section of discussion. Section 4.2 will introduce the main features of qualitative and quantitative methods and explain why the qualitative research method was chosen to conduct the empirical study of the thesis. Section 4.3 will point out the reasons why the research interview was adopted as the main tool of conducting the empirical investigation. Section 4.4 will probe the main issues that should be considered in conducting qualitative research. They include issues such as reliability, validity, triangulation and relevance. Section 4.5 will introduce the techniques that were used in the process of conducting the empirical study. They include the interview schedules, pilot study, research samples, strengths

and the weaknesses of the research. Section 4.6 will deal with the ethical issues that were considered in doing the present research. Finally, a summary of the main content of the chapter will be given at the end of the chapter.

4.2 Qualitative v.s. quantitative research

Before attempting to point out some differences between qualitative and quantitative research, it seems necessary and useful to clarify some terms that are commonly used in doing a research and that are relevant to our discussion of the present section so that we could make some distinction between the terms like 'paradigm", "method" and "methodology". In educational research, generally speaking, a paradigm or a model refers to an overall framework for looking at reality, an explanation of social phenomena. A method is just a specific research technique or procedure. Methodology is an umbrella word describing the different methods used in any research. It refers to knowledge about methods and a very general approach to studying research topics (see Cohen et al, 2000:22; Silverman, 2000: 77 for further explanation).

Within the social sciences, there are two seemingly competing research paradigms: the quantitative research and qualitative research. Quantitative research is aimed at assessing the strength of relationships between variables and is based on the experimental method which aims to control and manipulate (see Campbell and Stanley, 1966; Hopkins et al, 1996). Qualitative research seeks understanding by observing phenomena in their natural settings rather than those set up specifically for the purpose of research and can provide insights not available through research such as an experiment or a test (Hammersley, 1998; Cohen et al, 2000). In recent years, increasing numbers of researchers have argued that the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research is simplistic and naive and that the two traditions are complementary in research and even indistinguishable in many respects (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989; Silverman, 2000). Nevertheless, the distinction continues to be observed and debated.

The quantitative scientific paradigm rests upon the creation of theoretical frameworks

that can be tested by experimentation, replication and refinement. The qualitative paradigm seeks to understand and interpret the world in its actors' own terms and consequently as interpretative and subjective (see Seliger and Shohamy, 1989). Quantitative research is criticised for failing to capture the true nature of human social behaviour, as Hammersley (1998:10) points out:

> because it relies on the study of artificial settings; because it seeks to reduce meanings to what is 'observable' and because it reifies social phenomena by treating them as more clearly defined and static than they are and as mechanical products of social and psychological factors.

As far as methodology is concerned, the qualitative method is employed in this study to probe students' perceptions and understanding of their need for English and to confirm whether they believe that the proposed EFL teaching approach could be implemented in China's higher education. The decision to use the qualitative method for the research was governed by several factors of its appropriateness. As already stated, qualitative research focuses on discovering truth and underlying meanings and depth and patterns of relationships whereas a quantitative method emphasises causes and relationship demonstrated statistically (Babbie, 1983:537). The choice of qualitative methods seemed appropriate to the conditions of the present research. In a criticism of the overuse of quantitative methods in education, Spindler (1982:3) states that:

> …experimental and correlational approaches that isolate variables from context and overlook the all-important dimensions of meaning in human behaviour have been overworked.

Therefore, it seemed that for a study which focused on context and seeking significant meaning and contribution, the qualitative paradigm was more suitable. One of the rationales for qualitative research has been that it can capture the nature of human social life more accurately than quantitative methods (Cohen et al, 2000; Silverman, 2000). Ethnographic/qualitative writing takes account of the ' native or insider point of view' by including quotations from informants, but maintains the researcher's interpretative omnipotence. The central goal of qualitative research is often conceptualised as providing analytic, theoretical or in-depth description.

As the aim of the thesis is to find an appropriate teaching approach to improve China's present EFL education, it represents human reality and phenomena that only in-depth, intensive and interview studies in the fieldwork could provide new insights for understanding, perceiving and reflecting on the present natural settings of China's EFL education. Besides, as the proposed EFL teaching approach is one that waits for implementation, it has to begin with qualitative research. At a later stage, we might combine quantitative research and qualitative research. Actually the two paradigms could be usefully integrated to have complementary strengths and weaknesses. As Seliger and Shohamy(1989) says, alternative and necessary use of both quantitative and qualitative research in fieldwork is an ideal cyclic process.

4.3 The research interview

The research interview is used as the tool of the empirical study in the thesis. It is not just that the research interview is regarded as the gold standard of qualitative research and has become one of the most widely used procedures in social research as a method of serious data collection (Silverman, 2000:292). The central value of the interview as a research procedure is that the interview allows both parties to "explore the meaning of the questions and answers involved" (Brenner et al, 1985:3).

As Cohen et al (2000:267) remark, an interview is an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest, sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production and emphasises the social situatedness of research data. Interviews enable participants—be they interviewers or interviewees—to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view. The research interview involves the gathering of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals and has been defined as "a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining relevant information and focused by him on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation" (Cannell and Kahn, 1968:527).

The above discussion of the features of the research interview shows that the research

interview may serve the purpose of this study as an appropriate tool. It can be used as the principal means of gathering information having direct bearing on the research objectives already stated in 4.2. The research interview in the present investigation is just as Tuckman (1972) describes, " by providing access to what is inside a person's head, it makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge and information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs) (from Cohen et al, 2000:268). Thus, the value of the interview lies in its ability to obtain information about people's knowledge, feelings, attitudes, beliefs and expectations. It allows for greater depth than is the case with other methods of data collection. Oppenheim (1992:82) suggests that interviews enable more to be said about the research than is usually mentioned in a covering letter to a questionnaire, and they are better than questionnaires for handling more difficult and open-ended questions. Furthermore, it enables the interviewer to establish rapport with the respondent. This rapport creates a more relaxed atmosphere in which more complex and probing may be asked than other types of data collection (Robson, 1993:229; Hopkins, 1993:125).

Despite its advantages, the research interview has its disadvantages in that there are ample opportunities for bias to occur (Brenner et al, 1985:4) and it is prone to subjectivity and bias on the part of the interviewer (Cohen et al, 2000:269). In the next sections, there will be some discussions about how to minimise the disadvantages of the research interview by various means.

There are four main kinds of interviews that may be used specifically as research tools: (a) the structured interview (see Bogdan and Biklen, 1982:133); (b) the unstructured interview (see Robson, 1993:229); (c) the non-directive interview (see Seliger and Shohamy, 1989:167); and (d) the focused interview (Cohen et al, 2000:272). The structured interview is one in which the content and procedures are organised in advance. The unstructured interview displays greater flexibility and freedom in an open situation without formulating questions in advance. The focused interview is particularly appropriate in educational settings with which both the interviewer and the respondents are familiar. As the various types of interviews suggest a fitness for purpose and could be set along a series of continua, based on the openness of their purpose, their degree of structure, the extent to which they are

exploratory or hypothesis testing, whether they seek description or interpretation, whether they are largely cognitively focused or emotion-focused, the semi-structured focused interview seems to be the most appropriate to explore in depth the group of Chinese respondents' educational experiences both in China and in UK/USA. This is particularly so as I am also familiar with both contexts and with the respondents comprising the research sample.

4.4 Criteria of assessing qualitative research

In conducting qualitative research, there are various factors that need to be taken into account. The first and foremost ones should be reliability and validity. Traditionally reliability and validity are the two factors that should be considered in conducting quantitative research (see Campbell and Stanley, 1966; Cook and Campbell, 1979; Kerlinger, 1986). They are two important criteria for assuring the quality of the data collection procedures. First, validity was developed in the context of experimental and quasi-experimental research where the central concern is with hypothesis-testing and how research can be designed so as to rule out various types of threat to validity. Some qualitative researchers (for example, Cohen et al, 2000; Silverman, 2000) believe that the standards which are normally applied to quantitative research are also appropriate for qualitative research.

In quantitative research, traditionally, validity refers to the accuracy of measurement. It was essentially a demonstration that a particular instrument or data collection procedure measures what it purports to measure (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989:208). More recently validity has taken many forms: for example, in qualitative research validity might be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the disinterestedness or objectivity of the researcher (Cohen et al, 2000:105). Actually, in qualitative research the issue of validity is usually posed in terms of what constitutes a credible claim to truth, as Hammersley(1998:62) claims:

> By validity, I mean truth: interpreted as the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers. … The use of the term 'truth'

> implies the possession of knowledge that is absolutely certain (that is proven beyond all possible doubts).

Broadly speaking, in quantitative research, internal validity refers to whether within a particular experiment the treatment administered actually caused the predicted outcome. It can be used in qualitative research as well to seek to demonstrate that the explanation of a particular event, issue or set of data which a piece of research provides can actually be sustained by the data (Hammersley, 1998:58). According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994:100), internal validity in qualitative research refers to the degree to which findings correctly map the phenomena in question. The findings must accurately describe the phenomena being researched. External validity refers to whether this relationship can be generalised to other cases. It refers to the degree to which the results can be applied to the wider population or situations (see Hammersley, 1998:58; Seliger and Shohamy, 1989:106). Thus, it is important in qualitative research to provide a clear, detailed and in-depth description so that others can decide the extent to which findings from one piece of research are generalisable to another situation.

As we prepare our qualitative study, we should not be overly defensive. Validating the results is only one of the important components of analysing qualitative data. This suggests that the validity of much qualitative research should be considered together with the methods of reliability, triangulation and relevance.

In quantitative research, reliability refers to the consistency of measurement (Kerlinger, 1986; Fitz-Gibbon and Morris, 1987). The criteria of reliability provide information on whether the data collection procedure is consistent and accurate. The researcher will employ the procedure of internal consistency reliability to provide the information whether all the items measure the same thing (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989:187). As part of the process, the researcher applies measures of reliability in order to verify and confirm that the scheme had been applied accurately to the data without being influenced by possible biases of his own. Thus, reliability is essentially a synonym for consistency and replicability over time, over instruments and over respondents. It is concerned with preciseness and accuracy. In qualitative research reliability can be regarded as a fit between what researchers record as data and what

actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched, i.e., a degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of coverage (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992:48). It refers to the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions (Hammersley, 1992:67).

To assure the quality and the value of qualitative research, scholars conducting qualitative research have raised triangulation as one of the criteria of qualitative assessment. Triangulation is an important partner which bridges concurrent validity and reliability. Triangular techniques in the social sciences attempt to map out, or explain more fully the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint (Cohen et al, 2000:112). Seliger and Shohamy (1989:105) say that confirmability is concerned with the ability of the researcher to confirm findings by demonstrating the same findings through different sources and this process is referred to as triangulation. Silverman (2000:177) defines triangulation as the attempt to get a "true" fix on a situation by combining different ways of looking at it or different findings. Thus, the use of a variety of methods or techniques to collect data allows the researcher to validate findings through triangulation. In triangulation, the same pattern or example of behaviour is sought in different sources. Use of the process increases the reliability of the conclusions reached. By having a cumulative view of data drawn from different contexts, we may be able to triangulate the "true" state of affairs by examining where the different data intersect.

Following the six categories of triangulation in Denzin's (1970) typology, Cohen et al (2000:115) raised four categories frequently used in education: time, space, investigator and methodological triangulation. The respondents of the present interview study come from different parts of China before and are now studying in UK/USA, experiencing a different culture. Their reflection, comparison and perception of their learning experiences in China and in UK/USA should provide a kind of time and space triangulation. In conducting the present interview study, I invited two of my colleagues to conduct some interviews together with me and asked them for their opinions and discussed with them the interview processes. I also invited three other colleagues to discuss the findings of the interview study and my proposed EFL teaching approach. This process provides a degree of investigator triangulation.

The present research uses the semi-structured focused interviews and also uses some email replies as a kind of complement to assure some kind of methodological triangulation.

Of the various categories of triangulation, the methodological triangulation is the one used most frequently and the one that possibly has the most to offer. However, in terms of Denzin's (1975) definitions of methodological triangulation, I don't think I have fully met the criteria. Therefore I could only try to compensate this criterion by meeting other criteria.

Triangular techniques are suitable when a more holistic view of educational outcomes is sought. Triangulation has special relevance where a complex phenomenon requires elucidation. Silverman (2000:99) criticises the overemphasis on triangulation by saying that:

> Triangular techniques are often adopted in the mistaken hope that they will reveal the whole picture. But the whole picture is an illusion which speedily leads to scrappy research based on under-analysed data and an imprecise or theoretically indigestible research problem. We cannot simply aggregate data in order to arrive at an overall truth… It is usually far better to celebrate the partiality of your data and delight in the particular phenomena that it allows you to inspect.

Though ultimately the objectivity which means the extent to which findings are free from bias should be the common aim of all social sciences (Kirk and Miller, 1986:10), even triangulation does not assure consistency or replication. It does not necessarily increase validity, reduce bias or bring objectivity (see Fielding and Fielding, 1986). Therefore, no two theories will ever yield a sufficiently complete explanation of the phenomena being researched. Given the contested nature of the social science, any account of qualitative research cannot claim to describe everything. Instead, it has to be prescriptive. Silverman (2000:283) points out that biases are properly relevant to research if they can help us to establish a clear set of criteria through which to evaluate our own and others' work. According to Hammersley (1998:59), commitment to naturalism is often taken to imply that the sole assessment criteria should be whether the account accurately captures the phenomena being described.

Another criterion of assessing the quality and value of qualitative research should be

relevance. Hammersley (1998:70) points out that

> To be of value research findings must not only be valid but also relevant to issues of actual or potential public concern, that is, to shared values... It was not sufficient for the findings of an ethnographic study to be true for them to have value. Equally important is that they make a contribution to knowledge that is relevant to some public concern.

According to Hammersley (1998:111), there are two aspects of relevance:

- The importance of the topic. The research topic must relate (however remotely) to an issue of public importance. The justification for social research lies in solving either practical or conceptual problems.
- The contribution of the conclusions to existing knowledge. The research findings must add something to our knowledge of the issue to which they relate. Research that merely confirms what is already beyond reasonable doubt does not make much contribution.

Importance and contribution are necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for relevance. Hammersley (1998:112) claims that the idea of "contribution" does not deny the value of all studies that confirm previous findings. Ethnographic studies fill in a gap in the literature, in the sense of dealing with a phenomenon about which there has been little previous research. Studies may be related to one another in that they contribute to the development and testing of the same theory. It is in terms of various sorts of relationship between the findings of a study and existing knowledge that we need to assess the contribution made by those findings.

This section has dealt with four criteria of assessing and assuring the quality of qualitative research: the true and accurate description of the natural phenomena being studied, the consistency of the findings, the confirmability of the study through various sources and the relevance of the study to public concern. The criteria are employed throughout the discussion of the whole thesis rather than only the chapter of the data analysis to confirm the feasibility of the proposed content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach. In the next section of discussing the data collecting procedures, some explanations will be given as to how I made use of some of these

criteria to assure the quality of the study.

4.5 Data collection procedures

In qualitative research, a section dealing with data collecting procedures is a necessary component of the methodology chapter. Silverman (2000:175) points out:

> Unless you can show your audience the procedures you used to ensure that your methods were reliable and your conclusions valid, there is little point in aiming to conclude a research dissertation.

Kirk and Miller (1986:72) also claim: "For reliability to be calculated it is incumbent on the scientific investigator to document his or her procedure". It is not only for the purpose of reliability in qualitative research as Kirk and Miller pointed out. It is only natural that our readers should expect us to tell them how we collected our data, what data we ended up with and how we analysed them. The data collecting procedures of this study involves the following stages: (a) interview schedules; (b) pilot phase; (c) research sample; and (d) weaknesses of the procedures.

4.5.1 Interview schedules

After determining the initial main research design of the whole thesis and the main research tool, I began to formulate some interview questions relevant to the research objectives. In designing the interview questions and their categories I considered the following factors:

- The interview schedules and questions for the interview phase of the study is greatly influenced by the experience of my prior observation as an EFL university teacher.
- The interview schedules and questions were designed to meet the research objectives as well as the requirements of the interview situation, i.e., the interview questions should not only be relevant to the research questions, they should also enable the gathering of the perceptions of information, use and

communication held by the respondents (see Wilson, 1985:76). In a word, the elements to be sorted into the interviews should depend on the research questions.

- Categorisation plays an important role in designing the interview schedules and questions (see Mostyn, 1985:137). As the study aims to find out the existing problems in China's EFL education, to propose an EFL teaching approach based on the anglophone models and to investigate whether the approach could be adapted in China's EFL educational context, the interview schedules and the categorisation of the interview questions should meet the objectives and to ask Chinese students and teachers' learning experience both in China and in UK/USA and their perceptions and opinions of the proposed EFL teaching approach to be implemented in China. This involves translating the research objectives into categories and assigning relevant items into questions based on the objectives, as the categories and questions should adequately reflect what the researcher is trying to find out (see Cohen et al, 2000:274).

The design of the interview schedules and questions is one of the most important elements in research through interviewing. The success or failure of the interview as a research method depends heavily on the thorough preparation of schedule and question and an understanding of the subject topics (see Hook, 1981). Questions should elicit the essential relevant information and direct the focus to topics of interest.

There are various kinds of questions which may be used in interviewing. The two most basic are open-ended and closed questions. The most commonly used type in interviewing is the open-ended questions, inviting the interviewees to participate in the conversation and to gather substantial data. Maykut and Morehouse (1994:88) point out that it is essential to ask open-ended questions while the closed questions may be engaged as a valuable supplement. What they said is adopted in the procedures of the interview schedules of this study.

Open-ended questions have a number of advantages. According to Cohen et al (2000:275), they are flexible; they allow the interviewer to probe so that he/she may go into more depth if she chooses, or to clear up any misunderstandings; they enable the interviewer to test the limits of the respondent's knowledge; they encourage

cooperation and help establish rapport; and they allow the interviewer to make a truer assessment of what the respondent really believes. Open-ended questions can also result in unexpected or unanticipated answers which may suggest unthought-of relationships or hypotheses.

Questions may take a direct or indirect form and may invite factual answers and opinions. Tuckman (1972) suggests that by making the purpose of questions less obvious, the indirect approach is more likely to produce frank and open responses and opinions. Brandt (1972:171-2) lists a variety of question types which are commonly used in interviews. The variety of questions which are useful to this study are listed below, illustrated with examples from the questions of the present study (see Appendix II).

- Leading questions, used at the beginning of the topic, but the interviewer should try to ask such questions in a general and non-directive way so as not to exert pressure on the respondents (see Brenner, 1985:152). Example: What problems do you think the English language education in China's higher education have?
- Comparative questions, where choice or preference is involved. Example: Of the anglophone teaching and learning styles and the traditional Chinese ones, which do you prefer?
- Recall-of-past event questions, seeking respondent's recollection of types of events. Example: How many hours did you spend learning English every day and every week at university when you were in China?
- Recall-of-past respondent behaviour questions, used to develop a picture of the respondent's typical behaviour. Example: What did you do when you could not understand the teacher's lecture in class in China?
- Cause-effect questions, assessing the respondent's reasons for events. Example: What do you study English for?
- What-was (is)-there-about-it questions, used to obtain further information about the respondent's relations or happenings. Example: What do you think are the possibilities and difficulties about adapting the anglophone teaching and learning styles into China's context?
- Would questions, used to assess the respondent's beliefs. Example: Would you prefer the teaching and learning styles in UK to the traditional ones in China?

- Should questions, used to assess beliefs about the preferred actions. Example: What criteria should be used to select a content teacher to teach a content-based immersion course?
- Why questions, widely used for a variety of questions, but especially for probing questions to tease out more detail. Example: Why do you think it is necessary to integrate some intercultural concepts into the instruction of some content-based immersion courses?

As Cohen et al (2000:278) points out, it is important to bear in mind that more than one question format may be employed when building a schedule.

The framing of questions for a semi-structured focused interview will also need to consider prompts and probes (Morrison, 1993:66). Prompts enable the interviewer to clarify topics or questions while probes enable the interviewer to ask respondents to extend, elaborate, add to, provide detail for, clarify or qualify their response, thereby addressing richness, depth of response, comprehensiveness and honesty that are some of the hallmarks of successful interviews. Most of the questions in this study have some prompts and probes to serve the purposes

To sum up, the process of the design of the interview schedules and questions of the study has considered the following aspects: (a) the categories/topics to be discussed; (b) the specific possible questions to be put for each category/topic; (c) the issues within each category to be discussed together with possible questions for each issue; (d) a series of prompts and probes for each issue and question. What is also considered in designing the interview schedules is that in using the questions the interviewer must be able to ensure that the interviewee selected will be able to furnish the researcher with relevant information required (see Cohen et al, 2000:278)

4.5.2 Pilot phase

After finishing the initial design of the interview schedules and questions for the subsequent semi-structured focused interviews, I carried out a pilot study on a small sample. Pilot study is essential as the reliability of interviews can be enhanced by

careful piloting of interview schedule (Cohen et al, 2000:121). Interview schedule and questions can be typically developed by means of pilot research (Brenner, 1985:153). Seliger and Shohamy (1989:184) advise that in the pilot phase the researcher could examine the different data collection procedures in order to avoid problems during the administration of the actual research. Results of the pilot phase can therefore be used to revise the data collection procedures and the research as a whole.

During the pilot phase of this study, three respondents, one undergraduate student studying tourism at Bristol University who came from Shenzhen, a coastal city in the south of China, one MA student studying management at Leeds University who came from Guangzhou, one of the biggest cities in China, and one Ph.D. student studying engineering at the University of Durham who came from Beijing, the capital city of China, participated in my pilot interviews and were asked to point out places which they thought needed clarification or improvement. At the same time, my supervisor, Professor Michael Byram and two of my Ph.D. colleagues studying education at the university of Durham kindly perused my questions and interview schedules and gave some valuable advice for further improvement. According to the results of the pilot interviews and the advice from my supervisor and the two colleagues, the following changes were made to the research schedules and the questions (see Appendix I and II):

- In the pre-interview/pre-reply letter attached to the questions and triggers, the words "complete confidentiality and anonymity" were changed into boldface so that the respondents could give a more faithful and truer answer when they are rest assured of their confidentiality and anonymity. Besides, in order to enable the respondents to better understand the proposed EFL teaching approach and to avoid the possibility that some respondents might misunderstand some categories and questions, the contextual cues and some explanations of the proposed approach were added in front of the relevant categories and questions. Originally these explanations and contextual cues were only put in the pre-interview letter. The purpose of the change lies in the hope that the respondents might provide higher degrees of reliable and valid responses if they could be guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity and understand the content of the questions better before the interview really starts (see Cohen et al, 2000; Silverman, 2000;

Hammersley, 1998; Brenner et al, 1985).

- The wording and diction of some questions were rearranged to be clearer in meaning so as to avoid some possible ambiguity and misunderstanding. For example, in the third category of the interview questions about the proposed content-based immersion approach, the words like "the content-based late partial bilingual immersion" were added in front of the word "approach" in every relevant question of the category. Originally only the first question of the category had these words while the rest of the questions of the category had only the words like " the proposed approach". Besides, more triggers (prompts and probes) were added to some questions (for example, question No. 7). These changes are important, as the interview questions should be phrased in a simple, clear and unambiguous way. I follow Best and Kahn (1986:79) as they point out:

  > Basic to the validity is asking the right questions phrased in the least ambiguous way. The meaning of all items must be clearly defined so that they have the same meaning to all respondents.

- In order to make the categories more relevant to the research questions (see Brenner et al 1985; Silverman, 2000), the original category " culture learning" was cancelled and two questions of the category closely linked with language learning were put into the category "language learning" and the category about language learning now becomes "language learning and target culture awareness". Some irrelevant and repetitious questions were also deleted from the questionnaire.
- Some more specific questions concerning the respondent's academic subject study and the content-based immersion approach (for example, question No. 12; question No. 23) were added to interview schedules and the questions based on the theoretical and conceptual analysis of Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. The addition of some of these questions partly came from my reflection after finishing writing the first two chapters and partly from Brenner's (1985:153) claim that once the interview questions are cognitively located, then the investigator may study the scientific or other writings on the questions, thus leading to a more thorough sorting and ordering of the interview questions. The sorting procedures were presented with respect to both their theoretical origins and their numerous applications to open-ended interview situations.

- The order of some questions in each category was also rearranged so that the simple and general questions came before the more specific and complicated ones. Thus the open-ended questions to be put to the respondents were presented via the "funnel" approach (see Brenner et al, 1985; Silverman, 2000; Cohen et al, 2000). Tuckman (1972) comments that specific questions, like direct ones, may cause a respondent to become cautious or guarded and give less than honest answers. Non-specific questions may lead circuitously to the desired information but with less alarm by the respondents. The present questionnaire design followed his advice.

The pilot phase not only enabled me to have an opportunity to improve the design of the interview schedules and questions. More importantly, through the pilot phase, I gradually came to understand how I could conduct the research interviews in a better way. For example, I should try my best to avoid leading the interview and giving my own standpoint in the interview so that the respondent has greater freedom to explore his/her unique experiences and perceptions in greater depth (see Brenner et al, 1985; Cohen et al, 2000). In a word, I learned a lot both about improving the design of the interview schedules and questions and about the interview skills from the pilot phase so that I could use what I have learned to administer the following stage of interviews.

4.5.3 The research sample

The aim of this interview study attempts to gain information on the respondents' retrospective experience of their English language learning and academic subject study both in China and in UK/USA and to investigate the necessity and feasibility of adapting the proposed content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach based on the anglophone theories and concepts in China's key universities in the big and coastal cities to improve China's EFL education. First, this study should no doubt have great relevance, one of the criteria of assessing the quality of qualitative research (see 4.5). It is of social significance to public concern as it could make contribution to the existing EFL education in China. Second, as it is impossible for the study to interview the whole population, the sample should be chosen to represent the aim of the study. Both Mostyn (1985:126) and Seliger and Shohamy (1989:188) point out

that the data collection procedures and sampling must be representative enough of some relevant population so that the sample chosen could be generalisable. As my proposed approach intends to be implemented in the higher education of China's major or coastal cities and as my theoretical foundations are based on the anglophone EFL education, the respondents chosen for the interviews should meet these requirements and should be representative of the larger population. Based on these considerations, the full complement of the respondents, their residence in China, their study area and university in UK/USA, their length of stay abroad, their ways of answering the questions, are listed below. English names have been adopted to assure their anonymity. Each interview lasts about half an hour. The data is recorded and transcribed. It must be pointed out here in UK that Guangzhou, Beijing, Shanghai and Wuhan from Figure 4.1 are the biggest cities in China while Dalian and Shenzhen are the two well-known big coastal cities. Therefore, the respondents from these cities should be representative of the population of this study. Besides, the respondents all graduated from the key universities of these regions and are all studying for a higher degree than a BA or B.Sc. in UK/USA now. This means that they should meet the requirements of the sampling of the study.

I also used five email replies as some complementary data and the complementary research sample. It is hoped these email replies could provide a kind of space triangulation discussed earlier. The questions I sent them by emails (see Appendix II) are in English and are more or less the same as those used in the research interviews and their replies are in English, too. However, both the questions I used in my interviews and the interview process are in Chinese and there were of course some minor spontaneous modifications and changes in the way of asking questions in conducting the interviews (see Appendix III and Appendix IV for a sample interview transcript and a sample email reply).

Figure 4.1 Research Sample

Name	*Residence in China*	*Study area in UK/USA*	*University in UK/USA*	*Length of stay in UK/USA*	*Ways of response*
Johnson	Shanghai	Ph.D. (economics)	York	3 years	Interview
George	Shanghai	Ph.D. (Finance)	Oxford	10 years	Interview

Bill	Wuhan	Professor in Finance	Northumbria	6 months in UK, 12 months in USA	Interview
Michael	Dalian	Engineering	Durham	3 years	Interview
Tony	Dalian	Maths	Durham	2 years	Interview
Hellen	Beijing	MA (Finance)	Durham	two years	Interview
Julie	Beijing	MA (Management)	Durham	9 months	Interview
Steve	Beijing	MBA	Durham	9 months	Interview
Jane	Guangzhou	Professor in Law	Durham	9 months	Interview
Robson	Shenzhen	MA (economics)	Durham	9 months	Interview
Dora	Wuhan	MA (education)	San Diego (USA)	10 months	email
Emma	Guangzhou	MA and lecturer in Journalism	Leeds	12 months	email
Simon	Guangzhou	Ph.D. and lecturer in linguistics	Reading	9 months	email
Stuart	Guangzhou	MA(management)	Leeds	10 months	email
Robert	Shenzhen	MA(management)	Bristol	9 months	email

To triangulate , the results of the interviews were compared with the email replies to find some regularities and consistencies (Potter and Mulkay, 1985:248). Also, two respondents who had been interviewed were invited to be present at one interview to express some of their comments for the purpose of investigating triangulation as discussed earlier. Three of my colleagues and friends were invited to be present at two of the interviews for the same purpose and the investigator had discussions with them after the interviews. These triangular procedures were taken to assure greater consistency of the results (see 4.4 for triangulation).

4.5.4 Weaknesses of the procedures

A single teacher-researcher, working without any research funding, is necessarily restricted in terms of time and money available for the research. I could only get access to very limited regions and a relatively small number of participants for my

research. A larger sample from more various regions studying in UK/USA might have offered more significant findings. Though small scale research lends itself particularly well to qualitative methods (see Guba and Lincoln, 1989; Mertens, 1998), it would have been more preferable to have obtained a larger sample and to have made a more detailed study of a smaller group.

I have decided not to conduct a longitudinal study, as the practical issues and constraints would have made the process of the data collection and analysis virtually impossible for me. However, in working through the data I do have, I discovered that my respondents have already made explicit reference to the progress and improvement of both their EFL learning and their academic learning they have experienced and perceived in themselves over the time they have been studying abroad. Also, they are able to give retrospective reflections and recalls to their EFL learning at home in China. They all speak of their personal and professional development of studying abroad. I consider this to be both valid and relevant in respect of the concepts being examined when I discuss my respondents' statements.

Another difficulty associated with my study is the fact that what is proposed has not been implemented in China. Although the interviews could allow the respondents to reflect upon their experiences of learning English and their academic subjects inside and outside the classroom both in China and in UK/USA and although the research could seek causal links between their experience and learning and explain them from the point of view of the learner (Mertens, 1998:160), the evidence for the future implementation of the approach is much more nebulous. However, in a country where so little research in this respect has been carried out and where the necessity for improving its EFL education is widely agreed, it seems that any attempt to uncover relevant and useful data is better than none. Besides, the open recognition that there should be a change in the way of teaching EFL in China makes it more likely, more convenient and more useful to implement any future changes in pedagogy or assessment on the basis of as much empirical knowledge about the present situation as possible.

The last weakness of the research lies in the fact that only the semi-structured focused interview is used as the main technique of the research. This might be appropriate for

the early stage when the approach has not been implemented (see Brenner et al, 1985). If the access is possible, it might be better to employ and combine more varieties of research techniques such as classroom observation and quantitative approach to conduct some further research. My purpose of the present research is only to propose an integrated EFL teaching approach that could be implemented in China and as already stated, the best piece of research is to "make a lot out of a little" (Silverman, 2000), it might be difficult for such a small piece of research to aggregate different varieties of data. That's why I gave up some other varieties of research techniques and finally decided to adopt the research interview as my main research technique.

4.6 Ethical issues

Of the various ethical issues which arise during the process of qualitative research, as far as the interviewing of the present study is concerned, the following were the particularly significant ones: (a) informed consent; (b) trust and confidentiality; (c) reciprocity.

4.6.1 Informed consent

Informed consent is defined by Berg (1995:212) as follows:

> Informed consent means the knowing consent of individuals to participate as an exercise of their choice, free from any element of fraud, deceit, duress, or similar unfair inducement or manipulation.

According to this definition, informed consent should be unproblematic in my interviewing. First I gained an approval from the ethics advisory committee of the school of education, University of Durham before conducting the research interviews. A formal pre-interview/pre-reply covering letter (see Appendix I) together with the questions and research schedules was sent to each respondent not only to seek the written permission before the interview, but also to enable him/her to become familiarised with the content of the interview. As all the respondents are either my

former students in China, or colleagues or friends, access was no problem. Everyone replied by email, expressing their interest in being interviewed. I certainly did not manipulate any respondent, deceive any of them or deliberately put anyone under any "duress". The term "deliberately" is added here because in its most thorough sense, I don't think I might have ensured 100% informed consent: In my case, the fact that I was a former teacher and colleague to some of the respondents might be more influential than the letter itself. In such cases, some respondents might not be really in a position to withhold their consent and the official written consent might be little more than a token gesture.

4.6.2 Trust and confidentiality

The ethical issues of trust and confidentiality were equally significant in the study. Fetterman (1989:132) regards the importance of trust simply as: "Ethnographers need the trust of the people they work with to complete their task." Trust is the basis of human relationships with people involved in the research and those relationships are essential to the development and completion of the study. Trust leads to its own ethical minefield, however. As far as possible, in the interviewing, I did not record any comments which were obviously intended as private information. The basic principle of not causing any harm to or betray the trust of the respondent I was involved with guided my research.

In addition, I considered it my responsibility to assure confidentiality. At each interview, permission was sought to record and anonymity was assured. Three types of confidentiality were considered in the writing of the thesis (see Fetterman, 1989:132). The first is the confidentiality of respondents. Delamont (1984:31) advocates the use of pseudonyms. To ensure anonymity, throughout the research process, anonymity is assured through the replacement of Chinese names by English names.

The second type of confidentiality is the confidentiality of information. Throughout the writing process of the thesis, I never quote from documents which were marked "confidential", though I might have used information gained from some documents to

triangulate or inform some discussion of related issues. Likewise I never quote things which people told me in confidence, although these things might have altered my perspectives on related themes. The third issue of confidentiality is the confidentiality of location. In my case, it was impossible to assure the confidentiality of location as I must point out the city where the respondent resides so as to show that the respondent is representative enough of the population from the big and coastal cities in China which also will be the location to implement the proposed EFL teaching approach. I hope that through assuring two of the three types of confidentiality in the thesis, I have managed not to breach the relationship of trust with either my former students, colleagues, friends or even the government.

4.6.3 Reciprocity

Reciprocity is another ethical issue which is concerned with my study. Fetterman (1989:134) points out that ethnographers use a great deal of people's time and they owe something in return. I did not feel very much parasitical in the interviewing as my primary function of the research is to attempt to improve the English language teaching in the higher education in China which could benefit China's EFL education if it could be implemented. Also, I had been the respondents' teacher, colleague and friend and helped them with their English language learning and academic subject study both in China and in UK in one way or another. However, only when the two roles of teacher and researcher are separated do the doubts about how reciprocal the relationship was with them begin to emerge. I really took a huge amount of data from them and I gave them back very little help. In terms of reciprocity of the research, I should say I am still in debt to my students, colleagues and friends as my respondents. My only hope is that my proposed EFL teaching approach could be implemented in China as early as possible and could be brought to some fruition so that some kind of reciprocity could be realised indirectly.

4. 7 A summary of the chapter

In this methodology chapter, my intention has been to give some serious methodological considerations involved in conducting the empirical study, i.e., what

techniques I have chosen to conduct the research, why I have chosen those techniques, how I could assure the quality of the research, what weaknesses exist in the research and what ethical issues I have considered in conducting the research.

Obviously the chapter has been selective in that it focuses on the issues and techniques of the research process which were pertinent to my own study. As will be clear by this stage, the process of actually doing fieldwork was far from perfect. I tried hard to make my study methodologically sound, but there are several points of the research which still cast doubt on the degree of achieving this attempt. I have clarified these points in this chapter in order to make them explicit. Being reflexive about these potential flaws does not actually make them disappear. Walford (1991:2) points out in a discussion of literature on the methodology of educational research that:

> The social dimension of research is omitted and the process is presented as a cold analytic practice where any novice researcher can follow set recipes and obtain predetermined results.

As a novice researcher, I followed some set recipes from some methodology books to a certain degree. However, at the same time, I became intensely aware that the social dimension was still far more powerful. I acknowledge that this study has flaws and limitations. Nevertheless, I hope that the analysis resulting either from the relevant literature, the EFL teaching context in China or the fieldwork of the study will be considered valid enough to have some significance as a contribution to the development of the EFL education in China's higher education.

Chapter Five

Data Analysis and Interpretation

5.1 Introduction

Before beginning to analyse and interpret the data, it seems necessary to remind our reader what we have already discussed and where our discussion has come to so as to link the previous chapters with the present one. It has been pointed out in Chapter One that the aim of the thesis is to propose an EFL teaching approach to help improve China's EFL education to meet the country's and the students' needs in the new century. In Chapter Two, a tentative integrated EFL teaching approach for improving China's present EFL education in its higher education, i.e., a content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach, has been proposed based on the analysis of the relevant literature. In Chapter Three, the contextual setting of the research, i.e., a historical overview of China's EFL education in the past and at present, has been introduced and some existing problems in China's EFL education in its higher education have been pointed out, together with a discussion of the potential for transferring another anglophone EFL teaching approach into China. In Chapter Four, the reasons for seeking the views of the representatives of the potential population were explained and the research methodology that was used for the empirical investigation has been discussed. The reasons why the qualitative semi-structured interviews were used for collecting the data and the interview process including the research sample have been given. The present chapter will then provide an analysis and interpretation of empirical data collected in the process of conducting the semi-structured interviews. The chapter will use the theoretical concepts from Chapter Two as the basis for analysis and interpretation. In particular, I am looking for some empirical evidence from these data relating back to the aims and the research questions, explicit or otherwise of the study raised in Chapter One. In this chapter, I intend to use some empirical evidence to identify whether the proposed EFL teaching approach could

meet China's and also the students' needs and whether the approach could possibly be implemented in China's present and future context. In order to investigate the feasibility of the proposed EFL teaching approach, of course, I will therefore need to identify the Chinese students' learning goals and learning needs or difficulties in their EFL learning. Therefore, the categories and sub-categories of the data analysis and interpretation of this chapter will be classified and divided to comply with the aims and the research questions of the thesis.

First, the method of analysis which was used for analysing and interpreting the data will be introduced. Then the analysis and interpretation of the data will be divided into two categories. Section 5.3 will discuss the data around the first category: i.e., the EFL learning. This section will subdivide the category into three sub-categories: i.e., EFL learning goals, EFL learning difficulties and EFL learning theories. Section 5.4 will use the data to identify whether the proposed EFL teaching approach could possibly be implemented in the context of China's higher education. It is hoped that the analysis and the interpretation of the data could provide a general picture of the EFL learning in China's higher education and the possibility of implementing the proposed content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach in China's appropriate context.

5.2 The methods and the process of data analysis

5.2.1 The methods of analysis

The method of analysis was part of the research approach and the paradigm. As the data I collected belong to the qualitative type, it seems reasonable and necessary to use a method of analysis appropriate to this kind of interpretative hermeneutic research which aims to demonstrate the respondents' meanings without distorting their individual interpretation (see Mertens, 1998; Cohen et al, 2000). As the description of the hermeneutic research is what I endeavour to do in the analysis and interpretation of the data, the approach I adopted parallels Glaser and Strauss' (1967) famous account of grounded theory in some way. I took some inspiration from grounded theory in the process of interpreting and analysing my data, though the

whole process of my data analysis and interpretation cannot be said to be purely based on grounded theory, but an integration of grounded theory with taxonomic/typological analysis (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993) and content analysis (Mostyn, 1985). A simplified model of grounded theory involves the following three stages:

- an initial attempt to develop categories which illuminate the data
- an attempt to 'saturate' these categories with many appropriate cases in order to demonstrate their relevance
- developing these categories into more general analytic frameworks with relevance outside the setting

(quoted in Silverman, 2000:144)

These three stages were what I followed in my data analysis. I prefer the theory to emerge from and to be grounded in the data, as Cohen et al (2000:152) say: "the interpretations of data are grounded in the data".

Many researchers have written about the mechanics of analysing qualitative data (for example, Spradley, 1979; Hammersley, 1993; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983; Miles and Huberman, 1984; LeCompte and Preissle, 1993; Silverman, 2000; Cohen et al, 2000). All of them have a concern that the researcher should not impose meaning on the participants'/ respondents' statements, but rather seek to identify and make explicit the meaning within their statements. A researcher should endeavour to "make sense of the data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situations" (Cohen et al, 2000:147) or as Beail (1985:xi) puts it: "stand in the shoes of others". With these words in mind, I aim to give a fair rather than distorted representation of the data and context in so far as possible in my respondents' own words. And from their words I then need to analyse the concepts and the conceptual categories which are not always evident at face value and to "note patterns, themes, categories and regularities" (Cohen et al, 2000:148).

A number of models have been put forward principally in the field of qualitative research for the process of systematic examination or mapping of concepts and conceptual categories (for example, Spradley, 1979; Mostyn, 1995; Werner and Schoefle, 1987; Tesch, 1990; Mertens, 1998). Tesch (1990:78) summarises the models

for qualitative analysis in four groups according to the researcher's focus of interest, progressing down the list from more or less structured and formal, more quantitative to more qualitative, less to more humanistic. For a novice researcher like me who was interested in seeking the meaning of the interviews, the respondents' EFL learning experiences and perceptions, Tesch's words started my reflection on the method and process of the data analysis.

Both Spradley (1979) and Werner (in Werner and Schoefle, 1987:22) agree that by asking questions of the data it is possible to categorise the respondents' words and phrases in such a way that their view of the world, their understanding of meaning, is revealed as a pattern. Spradley advocates a systematic process to begin to draw up the map (1979:132). Within the body of data the researcher uses a staged series of analytical tasks to identify "domains" (Spradley, 1979:195) in the respondents' thinking. The elements which make up a domain are the "folk terms" (Spradley, 1979:108) expressed by the respondents, a folk term being the way in which someone refers to something they experienced. These domains and folk terms might be seen as the main categories or themes and the subcategories or the key words or phrases of the data of the present study.

Carrying out a typological or taxonomic analysis (Spradley, 1979:137; LeCompte and Preissle, 1993:257) reveals the way in which folk terms relate to the domain and how they relate to one another. For example, folk terms might be "cover terms" or "terms being used from more than one thing" (Spradley, 1979:104) and might then need to be "unpicked" or terms that might be grouped into "subsets" (Spradley, 1979:144), subcategories or sub-themes. In effect, Spradley's "cover terms" are the main categories of the data in the present study.

Spradley (1979) suggests that establishing domains can be achieved by four analytical tasks: (a) selecting a sample of verbatim interview; (b) looking for the patterns of things; (c) identifying possible terms from the sample; (d) searching through additional notes for other items to include (adapted from Cohen et al, 2000:149). The four analytical tasks suggested by Spradley are akin to Cohen et al's (2000:152) suggestion following Lazarsfeld and Barton (1951) and Lofland (1970) that a typology can be developed in terms of an underlying dimension or key characteristics.

Cohen et al (2000:152) argue that in creating typologies, the researcher should: (a) deliberately assemble all the data on how a respondent addresses a particular issue; (b) disaggregate and separate out the variations between the ranges of instances; (c) classify these into sets and subsets; (d) present them in an ordered, named and numbered way for the reader.

This is how a researcher may work out the concepts which the respondents have about a particular topic and how the concepts are grouped into categories and sub-categories, distinct or inter-related. The researcher may consequently build up a picture of the respondents' understanding of meaning by revealing the structure of their concepts and this is what I did in analysing the data.

To begin to gain an overview of the respondents' interpretations of their experiences as a whole, researchers (for example, Spradley, 1979; Mostyn, 1985; LeCompte and Preissle, 1993; Cohen et al, 2000) suggest establishing the links and the relationships between domains, main categories or themes. The method which those researchers suggest is to list the categories, then ask questions of yourself, or of the researcher respondents if there is the opportunity to identify how the themes are linked; for example, whether they are linked together within a broader theme which has not been explicitly mentioned. Here I found that a certain amount of creative thinking was required. It was my job to endeavour to provide categories on the basis of the evidence I had. I first took my respondents' statements from their interviews and email replies and built up their concepts as a form of structuring in order to see how they thought about their EFL learning experiences and the EFL education in China. Secondly, I adopted the role of interpreter and decoded the symbols (words, phrases, metaphors) used by the respondents. I identified the "meaning systems" (Spradley, 1979:99) underlying their statement. I will describe this process in greater details in the subsequent sub-section.

To sum up, I have used mainly the grounded theory as the method of analysis to present and interpret my data. But there are certain categories and subcategories of the data that I am going to analyse in this chapter that come from my research questions, the aims of the study and relevant literature from Chapter Two and Chapter Three. Therefore, my analysis and interpretation of the data can only be said to be a modified

grounded theory.

Furthermore, as I pointed out in Chapter Four, my semi-structured interviews were conducted all in Chinese. The extracts and quotations are translations from Chinese. In qualitative analysis translation could raise some potential problems, i.e., I have the possibility of losing some original ideas from my respondents or adding some words or even ideas, though I have made my greatest efforts to try to be faithful to my respondents' Chinese transcriptions.

Having discussed and decided the methods of data analysis, I will now turn to the discussion of the process of my data analysis.

5.2.2 The process of the data analysis

As Cohen et al (2000) have pointed out, the process of data analysis is iterative rather than sequential. It was not a completely ordered, staged process, but a much more cyclic one, involving me in covering the ground again and again with later thoughts and data lending new insights to my review of data collected early on. This process is just as what Spradley (1979:22) describes:

> From the beginning of data collection the qualitative analyst is beginning to decide what things mean, is noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows and propositions…. Conclusions are also verified as the analyst proceeds.

My data analysis actually began well before the analysis of the main data. As part of the pilot study I was looking for patterns and categories: comparing, constructing, aggregating, and ordering, establishing linkages and speculating about the early data (see LeCompte and Preissle, 1993:238). This analysis informed the process of the main research. As soon as I designed the main research, I was making "analytical choices" (Spradley, 1979:21) and beginning the process of data reduction, deciding, for example, who was to participate in the research, how many people to involve in the semi-structured interviews, how many email replies I would like to request, and how long I should spend on completing each semi-structured interview. I have already

discussed some of this process in Chapter Four.

The analytic choices and reduction continued: at each stage of collecting my data, I processed it, consciously reducing it to a more readily accessible format for closer examination and cross-referencing in due course. For example, I sifted through each interview and email reply again and again, focusing each time on a different theme, copying the respondents' phrases into new theme-based documents, minus any writings or recorded utterances which I deemed irrelevant to the theme (see Mostyn, 1985:144; Cohen et al, 2000:285).

I started by reading through the interviews and email replies again and noting any themes or categories--- potential domains--- which seemed to emerge, either because of a number of references by one person or because of individual references by a number of different respondents. Interspersed with working through the interviews, the email replies and my research journal, I read again those researchers who had sought "meaning systems" in my field (for example, Byram, 1989, 1997; Swain, 1998, 2000; Long, 1991, 1996, 1998; Ellis, 1999). Where they had made statements which seemed to echo what my respondents were saying, I noted them down for the interpretations of the data.

I worked through my respondents' actual words and phrases under emergent category headings and made a first attempt at putting the categories into "families" of super-ordinate and subordinate themes. I read through the interviews and email replies again to check that I had not missed anything significant. Cohen et al (2000:148) describe this process as "progressive focusing". They argue that

> progressive focusing starts with the researcher taking a wide angle to gather data, and then by sifting, sorting, reviewing and reflecting on them the salient features of the situation emerge. These are then used as the agenda for subsequent focusing. The process is akin to funneling from the wide to the narrow… They (researchers) then should assemble chunks or groups of data, putting them together to make a coherent whole… The intention is to move from description to explanation and to theory generation. (Cohen et al, 2000:148)

As I worked through the interviews and email replies, they became more and more interesting by comparison and contrast. Tesch (1990:96) has noted that "the main

intellectual tool is comparison" in this form of hermeneutic research and I found this to be the case. Tony's interview was extremely hard to work on as his statements in the interview made me very ill-disposed towards him. Was it because he was not "saying" what I wanted? Or was it because I sensed an underlying dislike towards him? In the end, I realised that it was because I felt a growing personal antipathy towards someone who was so clearly prejudiced in his conceptions as to think that: (1) a language teacher was unable and unnecessary to do much successful research and that (2) it is absolutely impossible and redundant for a foreign language teacher to cooperate with a content teacher in the implementation of content-based instruction as it is absolutely impossible for a foreign language teacher to understand a content-teacher's study area, and that (3) much social research is plagiarism to a greater or lesser extent and therefore is not much valuable and useful to the progress of the society. I had anticipated the analytical process as being clinical, detached, objective, and was surprised at the way my own feelings threatened to colour my interpretation of the data.

Jane's interview, the last to be analysed, yielded a considerable amount of useful data. It prompted me to go back once more through the earlier interviews. Bill's interview, which was the first one that I conducted, seemed at first reading not to yield much of interest. Yet when I re-read Bill's interview again, I found that despite my earlier negative appraisal, his interview actually yielded a number of very interesting statements about the difficulty and feasibility of implementing content-based EFL immersion and instruction in China's higher education that I would have missed if I had not read it all through at least once again and not been in a position to compare his statements with those of --- particularly --- Michael and Hellen, whose conceptions of implementing the proposed content-based EFL teaching approach in China's higher education, were stark by contrast.

I kept taking a break from the analysis so that I did not miss significant words or phrases. I reread the interviews and email replies periodically to remind myself of the time, the context, the respondents and to refresh enthusiasm, the process being the "language soak" advocated by Hall (1975:3). I read through each interview and email reply noting interesting comments, then again to highlight what I felt were the key words and phrases, which were eventually to become the sub-themes or sub-

categories within the domains. I debated as to whether or not to report on the respondents as individuals or as groups; either approach would have been valid and interesting (see Cohen et al, 2000:151). Although I analysed each individual's data separately, I chose to treat my respondents both as a distinct group and as individual cases, noting their individual responses while providing some shared ideas and conceptions with constant comparison and contrast. My justification for treating my respondents first of all as a group rests on the following:

- They are people who have had very similar EFL learning experiences both in China and here abroad;
- They see themselves as a group distinct from their Anglophone peers;
- They are also seen both by their Anglophone peers and other international students as a group.

This is in keeping with the theory concerning social groups developed by Barth (1969; also see Spradley, 1979). Because they are a distinct group, they have their shared common identity and perceptions. However, for the present study, my respondents also show their individual, peculiar and unique EFL learning experiences and perceptions of the EFL education in China. Therefore, they are also treated as individual cases.

I recorded each stage of the data analysis in my research journal, a glance through which reveals that my comments on the preliminary analysis, reflections in passing, interwove the continuing data collection process. While transcribing the interview data, following Byram, my supervisor's advice, I circled words or phrases which seemed to me to be significant or to beg further explanation in the context of the EFL learning in China's higher education. I then took some interview transcripts back to some respondents, asking them again to clarify or explain any apparent ambiguities. Later I would take all the circled items from both the pilot and the main research interviews and begin to group them in potential themes or categories, in other words, making a preliminary domain analysis (Spradley, 1979). Using the process I was able to compare and cross-refer both similar and contrasting statements made by individuals on different occasions either from the semi-structured interviews or from the email replies.

Finally I had all my data assembled and could engage in one last "tidying up" as Romagnano has put it (quoted in LeCompte and Preissle, 1993:235). This was an exciting moment. Although I had an inkling of some of the views generally held by most of the respondents, it was absorbing and intriguing to dig below the surface meaning of their words and seek out the underlying concepts.

I have chosen to present my findings on the basis of my reading of the respondents' interpretations of their EFL learning experiences and their perceptions of the EFL education in China. It is generally agreed that it is not possible to carry out an exhaustive study of a whole topic (see Silverman, 2000), even such a small topic as the feasibility of the content-based EFL immersion teaching approach in China's higher education. So in keeping with the standard practice of doing qualitative research, I chose for some time to focus on only two domains for intensive study. The rationale for my choice of the domains was as follows. In Chapter One, I have already pointed out that the aims of the study are: (1) to propose a feasible and favourable EFL teaching approach to help improve the current EFL education in China's higher education so that students are able to use English appropriately in international communication to cope with the challenges and the needs of the new century of globalisation; and (2) to identify whether a content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach is a possible solution to some of the existing pedagogical problems in China's universities at present. The domains yielded by the data and listed below appear to relate to these aims and it is for this reason that I chose to discuss these, rather than other domains in detail:

- EFL learning
- Content-based EFL immersion

These two aims are interconnected as the aims of a content-based EFL immersion approach are to integrate the specific academic learning content or subjects with the foreign or second language learning (Brinton et al, 1989). Under each domain I drew together all the statements, phrases, words recorded by the respondents which seemed to belong in that domain. Although it is not possible to say that each individual thinks of everything within the domain, they do say similar things, so to the extent it is

possible to treat these similar things together as they would appear to share similar EFL learning perceptions and experiences.

Having explained and discussed the methods and process of data analysis, I will now come to my analysis and interpretation of the data proper, taking each of the two domains in turn.

5.3 EFL learning

5.3.1 Introduction

Having introduced above the methods and the process of data analysis, I will now begin to analyse and interpret the data proper. As has already been pointed out several times earlier in the thesis, the aim of this study is to propose a feasible and favourable EFL teaching approach to help improve the EFL education in China's higher education. According to some Western researchers in the field of learning theories (for example, Bloom et al, 1956; Laurillard, 1993; Biggs, 1999; Ellis, 1999), teaching is defined as mediating and supporting learning and the aim of teaching is to make student learning possible, it is thus important to base a teaching approach on an understanding of learning. Similarly, in order to improve the EFL teaching, we should first of all understand students' EFL learning.

Based on the Western concepts of learning theory, much of our data in this chapter will be concerned with student learning. First, I will analyse and interpret data on Chinese students' EFL learning goals. Then data based on the feasibility of implementing content-based EFL immersion will be presented.

The present section on Chinese students' EFL learning will be divided into three sub-categories or sub-themes: EFL learning goals, EFL learning difficulties and EFL learning theories. They will be discussed separately below based on the data.

5.3.2 EFL learning goals

As Bloom et al (1956) and Laurillard (1993) point out, various aspects of the learning process only make sense with the direction provided with a learning goal. This is also true of the EFL learning as all the learning processes share the same features. Academics most easily approach the definition of learning goals via the definition of learning aims followed by a series of learning objectives. In defining goal-oriented objectives (also see Robinson, 1991), teachers must consider what students need and will be able to do as a result of learning and how much students have understood as they are meant to.

As for Chinese students' responses to the issue of their EFL learning goals, eleven out of the fifteen students referred, either spontaneously or in response to a question, to their EFL learning goals and objectives as the curriculum requirement. Some of their responses given below could illustrate this point:

> I began learning English as the curriculum requirement. When I was in the secondary school, I had to learn English to pass the university entrance examination. English was and still is one of the three most important subjects to be examined. At university, English is an important subject as well. If you cannot pass the national college English band 4 and band 6 tests, not to mention the end-of–the-term examinations, you cannot graduate from a university. (Johnson, 08/02/01)

> I first began to learn English because it was a subject at university. So I had to learn it, but I did not make much conscious efforts at the time. After graduation, as I did not have much opportunity to use English, I gradually forgot almost all the English I had learned at university…. (Steve, 09/02/01)

> When I first began to learn English, I did not have specific goals or objectives. I considered English only as a subject I had to learn to pass various English examinations. At university, as I did not want to become a postgraduate student at the time, I did not attach much importance to EFL learning. (Jane, 17/02/01)

> I was assigned to the English department after the National College Entrance Examinations. So I had to learn English. (Dora, email reply)

Learning English as the curriculum requirement for the purpose of passing examinations is a type of extrinsic motivation. The quality of learning is usually low under extrinsic conditions (see Biggs, 1999:59). Students' focus is on the

consequences rather than the process of learning English: obtaining reward for a pass or avoiding punishment for a failure (see Weiner, 1992). That is why Steve did not make much conscious effort to learn English and after graduation he forgot almost all his English. For the same reason, Jane did not attach much importance to learning English, either.

However, learning English as the curriculum requirement can lead to positive and satisfactory results with successful and rewarding engagement (see Biggs, 1999:60) if an EFL teacher is able to arouse students' interest in their EFL learning process. In fact, our data shows that several respondents' interest in learning English was aroused by their EFL teachers.

> My original purpose to study English is simply because English is one of my favourite subjects and my English teacher at the middle school teaches well. Compared with the Science subjects, I'd like English as my major. At least I feel better when I study English. (Stuart, email reply)

> I chose to study English because my aunt is an English teacher. I was influenced by her and my interest in learning English was also aroused by her. I became more and more fascinated by English. I learn it because I enjoy it. (Emma, email reply)

> One of the main reasons of my starting to learn English is because my English teachers at high schools were good at English and good at teaching it to me. With their help, I liked English and made progress in my English studies. Later at college, I continued my English learning because I needed the training to become an English teacher. (Simon, email reply)

It is very interesting and should also set us thinking to find the phenomenon that these three respondents through emails all became English majors later when they were at university. They learn English because at first their interest in learning it was aroused either by the teacher or by the subject proper. Later they became motivated into learning English by themselves. It illustrates the fact that if we EFL teachers could transfer the extrinsic motivation into students' intrinsic motivation by arousing their interest, then the whole EFL learning process would become more fruitful and the EFL learning goals and objectives might become more readily realised because intrinsic motivation could drive students' deep learning and bring the best academic results (see Biggs, 1999:60).

In addition to the curriculum requirement and interest as the initial motivation to learn English, some respondents have raised other aims and objectives for them to learn English. However, it must be pointed out that these aims and objectives are mainly not the ones that initiated their motivation to learn English. These respondents did not realise the importance of these aims and objectives either until when they were in their senior undergraduate years or until after they had graduated from university or until when they had come abroad.

For example, Robson, Jane and George began to become aware of the importance of learning English only when they were in their third year of university.

> …When I was in my third year at university, I began to reflect: What's the use of learning English for only passing examinations? I may get high scores in TOEFL or ELTS. But when I listen to the native English speakers I still cannot speak or talk with them. I am still as good as a dumb. By that time, for the purpose of going abroad to be able to use English for my future study and for communication with native English speakers, I began to work hard at English. (Robson, 17/02/01)

> …When we were in our third and fourth year at university, we were divided into two EFL learning groups: those who want to learn English for passing the postgraduate entrance examination had to go on learning their College English at advanced level and those like me who did not want to take part in the postgraduate examinations had to choose the so-called "Professional English" (a kind of English concerned with students' study area at university) which had only two hours a week. I chose it because I had hoped that it would be useful and beneficial to my future work. This is the initial aim of making up my own decision to some kind of English useful to my future work. (Jane, 17/02/01)

> When I was studying at university in China, especially in my later years at the undergraduate level, I began to use English to read some literature relevant to my study area to help me gain some useful professional information. So my purpose of learning English was to know more information from more sources. (George, 14/02/01)

Although all of the above three respondents began to realise the importance of learning English at university, their EFL learning goals were different. Robson was learning English for the purpose of going abroad. Jane chose to study the kind of English which she thought might be useful to her future work. George was learning English to be able to read more professional literature. Other respondents in our study

share more or less the same EFL learning goals: to find a better job, to study abroad, and to gain various sources of global information. However, they began to be interested in learning English at different times.

> …In 1992, after two years of my graduation from university, my company assigned me to develop business in Europe. By that time I began to be conscious how poor my English was and how important it is to have a good command of English. Even in a country where English is not a native language, it is still used as a lingua franca or an international language for the purpose of communication between people from different countries… (Steve, 09/02/01)

> I began to realise how important it is to have a good command of English only when I came abroad. I must know English well enough to survive and to communicate with English speakers. I must use English to collect information on my academic literature. Whether in my reading or in my writing I must use English all the time. (Michael, 08/11/00)

Julie's statements seem to be able to cover and summarize most of the aspects of the respondents' EFL learning goals:

> Learning English first of all comes from the motivation of the stress of the curriculum. We must learn English to pass examinations to go to university and we must learn English to graduate from university. But this should not become the main reason and motivation of learning English. As a university student to face the new challenges of the new century, no doubt , if we can have a good command of English, we can make our country's great civilisation and culture known to the world and vice versa. English is the most widely-used international language at present. We can use English to read a large amount of literature both in natural sciences and social sciences. Currently, more than 70% of the information from the internet, television or satellite are presented in English. If we don't understand English, we cannot know the advanced Western science and technology; we cannot adapt the advantages and strong points of other countries to serve our own needs and improve our backward situation. What's more, with English, we can make more friends with people from various cultures. We can know and compare different cultures and merge ourselves into the global society. So learning English is very beneficial to university students in China. (Julie, 10/02/01)

The above extracts show that the respondents have made valuable remarks about their EFL learning goals. The data also show that they did not realise their EFL learning tasks or goals and were not motivated to learn English when they were studying at university in China or until they came abroad. That could be one of the reasons why they had come across a lot of EFL learning difficulties. And EFL learning difficulties

became the greatest problems when they first came abroad. This point is what we are going to discuss in the next section and in the next chapter I will further discuss this issue on the importance of EFL learning in developing students' intrinsic motivation and their goal or mastery orientation.

5.3.3 EFL learning difficulties

Some Western scholars (for example, Bloom, 1956, 1964; Laurillard, 1993) have argued that it is impossible for teaching to succeed if it does not address the students' learning needs and their understanding of a subject (also see 2.6). Generally speaking, in a narrow sense, learning needs refer to the students' learning difficulties or their misconceptions or misunderstanding of a subject (see Robinson, 1991; Laurillard, 1993; Cohen et al, 2000). Laurillard (1993:189) points out that we teachers have to rely on data to discern various forms of students' misconceptions and learning difficulties and then he goes on saying that:

> So far, this (the means of getting data to show students' performance indicator) has always been an extended interview with students eliciting their fullest explanation of a topic event or situation, designed to indicate the nature of their understanding. (Laurillard, 1993:189)

Students' EFL learning difficulties could be discerned more clearly when they are abroad because they have been thrown into the authentic context of language communication. As we can see from the data presented below, the first and the greatest learning difficulties Chinese students have come across when they are abroad are the various forms of EFL problems. As has been discussed in Chapter Two, for the convenience of the present study and based on some earlier linguists' study, there are essentially four basic linguistic skills in terms of language competence or aptitude or proficiency despite various other divisions and arguments: speaking, listening, reading and writing. I will now start the analysis of the data with regards to these four skills at first.

Ellis (1999:1) points out that oral language skills constitute the primary purpose for our species-specific language capacity. In some sense, oral interpersonal interaction is

basic to human communication, as all communities, whether literate or not, engage in it. From this view, speaking should be the first EFL learning difficulty students face when they are abroad.

> …When I talk with British people, they often complain about my pronunciation. They would say they cannot understand me through my pronunciation. They say my pronunciation should be corrected and improved. They always say I have some difficulty in pronouncing some English words clearly. In terms of pronunciation I really have some difficulty pronouncing some consonants of words like "this" and "that" and some vowels for words like "sad". For example, I would always pronounce "sad" as "said". So some British friends always find it hard to understand me when I speak English. It hinders communication. I don't think pronunciation problems exist only within me. In terms of pronunciation, most Chinese are unwilling to open their mouths wide enough when they speak English. That's the reason why they cannot pronounce some words clearly. (Hellen, 10/02/01)

Here we could see Hellen has the pronunciation problem while the data below will show that Bill and Jane have the difficulty finding some English expressions to express themselves clearly when they speak English.

> I think I am very poor in my oral English skills, especially in making daily conversations with British friends. As I said just now, I deliberately chose "Professional English" as my subject to study English in my later undergraduate years and I had also been using and teaching "Professional English" in my university as my teaching profession. Therefore, I did not have much difficulty with my professional English when I came abroad. I am now still very confused and puzzled by some commonly used daily English expressions. I always find some difficulty in using some daily English expressions, words and phrases to express myself in making conversations. I did not have the opportunity and the environment to speak English in China. Some conversational idioms and peculiar ways of expressing ideas are very strange to me here…. (Jane, 17/02/01)

> …I feel depressed when I can't express what I want to say. Sometimes I can't find a proper word after opening my mouth and then I'll have to be silent for some time, trying to find a word to express myself. At that time, I always feel embarrassed. Sometimes when I talk to my British friends, I will forget my English for the moment. I cannot speak properly. Sometimes, you think of something in your head and when you say it, it is something different…. (Bill, 18/01/01)

The above statements from the respondents show that they all have some problems with their oral English. Some peculiar oral English expressions not only prevent some Chinese students from expressing their English appropriately but also hinder their

listening comprehension. More respondents have expressed the difficulty of being able to listen to British speakers when they are abroad. Some of their statements concerning their listening difficulty are presented below.

> My greatest difficulty when I am abroad is the problems of my English. Even though I got more than 600 marks in the TOEFL, my first term in Britain seemed as if I had been sitting on a plane, being at a loss at where I was and what the professors had been lecturing. I could understand only half of the lecture content even by the end of my first term…. (Johnson, 08/02/01)

> When I came to Britain, the first greatest difficulty was that I found my listening and speaking skills too poor to be able to communicate with British students. If you want to survive here, first of all, you must understand what British people say. You must possess the basic listening skill. You might be able to understand standard American English and standard British English from the radio or television. You could not understand what the local people were saying, including their local accents, local words and expressions, in a word, the dialect. So, listening is the first and greatest difficulty that I came across when I came here. (Julie, 10/02/01)

From these two extracts, we know that Johnson had the difficulty understanding the professor's lecture when he came to UK while Julie had the difficulty communicating with British students because she could not understand their local accents and dialects. Even Robson who thought his English were good enough when he was in China thinks that British people speak so quickly that he often could not get the in-depth understanding of British people.

> …British people speak very quickly either in a discussion or in a daily conversation. In class I sometimes found I could not understand some professors' lecture content and their special expressions. I always feel confused about their concepts, some of the expressions they use and some technical terms they say in class. I often cannot get the kind of in-depth understanding when I talk with British people. Listening was the most difficult for me when I came here. They speak with local accents different from the Received Pronunciation. It took me half a year or more to get over my listening and speaking problems even though I made great efforts. (Robson, 17/02/01)

All of the respondents have pointed out that they have difficulty understanding the local accents whey they are abroad. Even those like Robson who think their English is sufficient in China have come across this kind of language problem. And twelve out of the fifteen respondents complained that when they were at university in China they

did not receive sufficient EFL training in their listening and speaking skills and some respondents (non-English majors) say that they did not have any oral English lessons at university. This means that something should be done in the EFL education at university in China, especially for the non-English majors. We will discuss this point again in the subcategory "EFL learning theories" and also later in the section "content-based EFL immersion" of the chapter.

When the respondents have stayed abroad for a period of time and have more or less got over their listening and speaking difficulties, their experience of the EFL learning difficulties then varies, depending on their experience of the EFL learning in China. Some respondents say they have come across the problem of reading because they found there are too many readings for them to read in UK.

> I find my curriculum here in UK is too demanding. There are too many new words. I have to spend a lot of time learning lots of new words, frequently looking up new words in a dictionary and cracking my brain to understand some new concepts. (Hellen, 10/02/01)

> The teacher covers a lot of content within one lecture and moves very fast. He can cover about 100 to 200 pages of the content of a book or several chapters in one lecture or sometimes even the content of several books in just one lecture. After class you are given lots of handouts with articles for you to read at home. You have to read a lot. I feel too much reading to understand everything. I sometimes have to stay overnight reading some articles. (Johnson, 08/02/01)

Hellen thinks that the vocabulary from the curriculum in UK is too large for her. She has to look up new words from a dictionary frequently. Johnson thinks that the teacher in UK covers too much content within one lecture so that he sometimes has to stay up late for further understanding and reading. Both of them have come across some reading difficulty. As for Robson, he has got more than one type of reading problems. In addition to the reading problems Hellen and Johnson has come across, Robson has sometimes met the difficulty of being unable to find exact meanings from a dictionary. A dictionary usually only tells you the fixed and basic meanings. In real communication, one sometimes has to acquire a language sense to guess the implied meaning of some words. Robson does not seem to have acquired this language sense.

> I have come across several types of problems in terms of reading. First of all I

have come across some technical and professional terms and vocabulary in finance and economy which have lots of different meanings. I will have to look them up in a professional dictionary for the exact meaning in the professional context. Secondly, some of the peculiar idioms and phrases or even some words may have special meanings I cannot understand. I cannot find out the exact meaning even from a dictionary. What British people mean or what the book means is sometimes totally different from what the dictionary says. Thirdly, I will always be given a reading list either before or after the lecture. The teacher only touches the key points or just one point of many arguments. If I want to understand and appreciate a topic or an issue, I will have to read through the reading list. This is too much pressure and too demanding for me. The reading list is very long, usually with ten to twenty authors on one topic. When I read, I also have to understand the depth of the meaning. That means I have to pay attention to the quality (depth) of the reading and the quantity of the reading as well. It is just impossible for me to finish the reading list. Sometimes I could read only some most important articles or content of a book. At other times I could only finish reading the summary, conclusion, introduction or the abstract. (Robson, 17/02/01)

This rather long paragraph said by Robson has covered almost all the essential points of the reading problems that Chinese students might have come across when they are abroad. Some respondents (for example, Robert and Michael) thought there should be no problem of reading when they are abroad as they thought reading should be their strong area in their English linguistic skills. But they found they were wrong and had to face huge amounts of readings when they were abroad. As some respondents in our investigation pointed out, the problem of reading that Chinese students have met when they are abroad may originate from the traditional lecturing and learning styles of the higher education system in China which require students to have a careful, intensive and detailed study of one issue at a time without paying much attention to the quantity of reading. There is only one textbook for most of the academic subjects students learn in China.

In addition to reading, writing should also become a problem for Chinese students studying abroad. But not all respondents in our investigation have realised this problem. Only eight out of the fifteen respondents mentioned writing as a problem of their EFL learning. Let us look at some of their typical statements below.

In terms of writing English, the greatest difficulty comes from the fact that I cannot write idiomatically. The writing styles required here are different from those in China. If you are studying for a taught degree, you have a lot of writing assignments to do. You have to write frequently. If you are studying for a research

> degree in Science, like me, even though you don't have so much writing assignments, you will have to hand in lab reports in English regularly. You still have to write regularly, too. Writing academic English is something new for Chinese students studying for a degree in UK. In China, we paid little attention to writing in our English course for the non-English majors. (Tony, 28/10/00)

> Writing academic essays is the biggest problem for me in my study in UK. Sitting in written exams and writing within the required time constraints are a great challenge for me as well. (Emma, email reply)

Both Tony and Emma have the difficulty with their "academic EFL writing". Tony's problem is that he cannot write idiomatically in keeping with the writing styles at university in UK. Emma's problem is that she seems to be feeling difficult to finish writing her academic essays within the required time constraints. In the following two extracts, George and Michael have the problem of academic EFL writing, too. But, their problem is a little different from Tony and Michael's. Both George and Michael have the difficulty in "diction", i.e., how to choose appropriate words to express their ideas clearly.

> Although listening can be the most difficult problem at first, writing should be the most difficult all the time. I find it still the most difficult for me even though I have been in UK for more than ten years now. Sometimes you cannot find the appropriate way of expressing yourself in your writing. At other times, you don't know how to choose the appropriate diction. (George, 10/02/01)

> …Sometimes we don't know how to use the exact meanings of some words to express ourselves clearly and in great depth in our writing. Problems of writing come out at this time. Academic writing is a great problem for me. Every time when I write something in English, my supervisor has to spend some time helping me to improve my writing. (Michael, 08/11/01)

Writing belongs to intrapersonal interaction. It requires higher levels of cognitive thinking (Ellis, 1999). Obviously writing should be a problem for Chinese EFL learners. However, we find that those who realised the importance of writing in English are either respondents who were English majors at university in China or those who have stayed in UK for more than one year. Those respondents who have stayed in UK less than a year and who were non-English majors at university in China did not seem to have realised this problem. I could not figure out the reasons. It might be that they have not spent as much time writing English or that they have not come to the stage of writing their dissertations or theses.

In fact, these four basic linguistic skills cannot be separated from each other. Skehan (1998:5) and Ellis (1999:138) point out that language aptitude or competence should be best viewed as a complex construct, involving both a more specific linguistic dimension and a general cognitive dimension. They both postulate the close connection between each component of language aptitude and a stage in the flow of information processing involved in language acquisition. Some respondents have also realised that language competence should be more than four basic linguistic skills.

> I'm afraid language is my biggest problem, either in communication with British people or in learning my curriculum. Language is the main barrier to my study. I have to spend a lot of time overcoming language problems. At the same time, I have to study the same content as the British students do. I have to make double efforts. If my English level had been closer to the native British students, my study of the curriculum would have gone far more smoothly, in greater depth and with wider scope. Because various aspects of the language problems and because of the restriction of time and energy, I have to force myself to focus on only a small portion of my study. (Steve, 09/02/01)

Here Steve is talking about his language problem in general. It has affected his academic study both in depth and in scope.

> I don't think it is a proper and scientific way to divide language competence into four linguistic skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. I don't think we can rigidly divide language competence into just four skills. I think language competence should go far beyond them. For example, language competence should also include the ability of understanding of dialects and intercultural communication. (George, 10/02/01)

George has made a good point here. He is the only one who does not use the four linguistic skills as a way of conceptualising. What George challenges here is the traditional way of teaching the four linguistic skills. He is experiencing something different from the traditional four linguistic skills which are still the way most EFL university teachers in China have been teaching at present, especially for the non-English majors.

Language is used for the purpose of human communication and communication certainly involves more than linguistic skills. As Chapter Two has pointed out, communicative competence is a much broader category than language competence.

As Byram (1997) argues, intercultural competence should also be included in the category of communicative competence. Only a few respondents in our investigation find difficulty in intercultural communication. Most respondents actually have shown that they have already developed certain aspects of intercultural competence defined by Byram (1997, also see Chapter Two) to a greater or lesser extent. They have noticed certain aspects of cultural differences and have shown that they could adapt themselves into the intercultural communication without finding much difficulty. The reasons might be that they come from China's big or coastal cities open to the Western society; they are the young generation easier to adapt themselves to the new environment; or it might be that some of them have found their language problems are so big that problems of intercultural competence have been covered up and have become obscure.

We can say Robert has come across some problems in intercultural competence when he says:

> …Sometimes I feel a little being discriminated by the same generation here in Britain. They sometimes seem to be snobbish and look down upon us Chinese students and don't want to communicate with us. I don't know why. (Robert, email reply)

Michael seems to be able to provide an answer for this view raised by Robert:

> Some of our Chinese students think that British people sometimes have some cultural or racial discrimination against our Chinese. Actually, in most cases, that's because we have the language gap with British people. We don't know how to transmit and express our concepts, ideas and messages. We cannot express ourselves with clarity and great depth. Also our ways of expressing our concepts and our modes of thinking are different from the British ones. These may result in British people feeling bored or impatient or having an aversion to reply to us. So that means they just don't want to talk with us. Besides, British people speak quickly. We Chinese speak slowly. This may cause some gap and misunderstanding. In a word, if our English is good enough, in most cases problems can be solved. I don't think British people have racial discrimination against us. (Michael, 08/11/00)

Obviously Michael's above statements show that he has developed some aspects of intercultural competence defined by Jensen et al (1995) and Byram (1997) because he could mediate between cultures. A working definition of intercultural competence

given by Jensen et al (1995:41) is: "the ability to behave appropriately in intercultural situations, the affective and cognitive capacity to establish and maintain intercultural relationships and the ability to stabilise one's self identity while mediating between cultures". According to this definition, Jane also has shown some aspects of intercultural competence.

> …I did not feel much difficulty in intercultural communication. Let me give one example. I feel it is quite normal to ask a British friend questions like: "Do you like drinking?"; "Do you like going to pubs?" or "Did you go to the pub last night?". But some Chinese told me I should not have asked British friends such questions. They would be unhappy to hear them. It is impolite to ask such questions. The fact is that my British friends did not think I was impolite. On the contrary, I think it would be incredible to be so guarded in our speech as to refrain ourselves from doing lots of things, being afraid of embarrassing British people or making them feel we are impolite. I think too much guard in our speech will make British people feel we are isolated. They will feel it too hard to make close friends with us. I have made various kinds of British friends. When I stay with them, I just do and say what I want to. But before I do or say something, I will sometimes tell them: "I am a Chinese. When I speak English, I may still speak as a Chinese and use some Chinese ways of expressing myself. I may offend you. But I do not intend to offend you. Please tell me if I say or do something wrong or different from your culture. (Jane, 17/02/01)

It should be very evident from Jane's statements above that she has developed some aspects of intercultural competence. She could not only mediate between two cultures but also behave appropriately in some intercultural situations (see Jensen et al, 1995). From the point of view that intercultural competence should include the affective and cognitive capacity to establish and maintain intercultural relationships, Hellen has developed some aspects of intercultural competence as well, as she has been able to make lots of British friends and maintain their relationships, in addition to the fact that she has noticed lots of cultural differences through intercultural communication such as modes of thinking, values, entertainment such as going to pubs, food, money spending, etc while being able to maintain her own cultural identity.

> I have made lots of British friends and can get along with them quite well. But I think I can never completely merge myself into the British society even though I can get a green card and go on living here. I have already had my own traditional Chinese cultural values and attitudes firmly fixed in my mind as I am now over 30 years old. But my daughter's generation might be able to merge into the society if they come here, say, about three or five years old at such an early age… (Hellen, 10/02/01)

The above analysis of the data should be able to tell us that first of all language competence is an important and necessary factor in developing intercultural competence. Without it, it is impossible to communicate with British people, as Michael says above: "in most cases, if our English is good enough, problems can be solved." However, as soon as the EFL learners have possessed BICS (basic interpersonal communicative skills), some aspects of intercultural competence can help develop their CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency) in their EFL learning (for BICS and CALP, see Chapter Two for a discussion or see Cummins, 1976). Both Jane and Hellen have made use of their intercultural competence to make lots of British friends. Their communication with their British friends could certainly further help improve their English. George has expressed his point of view about the usefulness of intercultural competence:

> Intercultural competence can deepen our understanding of the depth of the meaning of the target language. Target cultural knowledge may have great impact on the depth and range of your mastery of the target language. For example, a word may have lots of meanings. A target cultural knowledge may help you master certain meanings as some words have cultural background. Without its cultural knowledge, you may only know the commonest meaning for the most basic communication. (George, 10/02/01)

Since the EFL learners in China have come across so many EFL learning difficulties when they are first abroad, the issue of how English ought to be learned or taught to overcome at least some of these difficulties when they are still learning English in China should be addressed. In the next subcategory of the EFL learning section, I will analyse the data concerning the respondents' perceptions of how English should be learned and taught and then compare their EFL learning theories with those discussed by some theorists in the field of EFL learning.

5.3.4 EFL learning theories

As we have already pointed out at the beginning of the section, teaching is mediating learning. In a sense, the study of EFL teaching should become the study of EFL learning. According to SLA theorists like Ellis (1999), learning is seen as a function

of association, concrete and abstract, which learners generate between the motivated drive or stimulus and prior experience. When such associations are developed long-term memory occurs and also learners are able to transfer information to new contexts and problems. Furthermore, language interaction can be seen as a device for inducing deep processing because it creates the conditions under which EFL learners can establish links between unfamiliar items in the input and their existing knowledge (see, Ellis, 1999:29).

With regards to the issue of how English should be learned, the respondents in our investigation have expressed lots of perceptions and arguments and some of the arguments are really valuable and insightful to the EFL learning and teaching in China. I will present some of these arguments below. First George's EFL learning theory goes like this:

> I think EFL learning should depend on what EFL stage an EFL learner have come to. For the first stage, I think vocabulary learning is the most essential. Only when you have grasped a certain amount of vocabulary can you begin to improve your speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Of course, the increase of vocabulary depends on large amounts of readings. When you have increased your vocabulary, you should focus your attention on writing. (George, 14/02/01)

As I said earlier in this section, linguistic skills and the components of language aptitude are inseparable. EFL learning is a cyclic stage. Phonemic or phonetic skills should be the first stage for EFL learners (Long, 1991; Schmidt, 1990). However, vocabulary learning is important, indeed. Here George's argument that vocabulary learning should depend on reading echoes what Sternberg (1987:89) says that most vocabulary is learned from context and what Ellis (1999:28) says that information processed at semantic level could lead to better memory and mastery. However, if vocabulary learning could be integrated with speaking and listening, it could achieve even more effective and fruitful results as information that is elaborated both semantically and visually/acoustically could be remembered best of all (Ellis, 1999:29). Joe (1998:374) investigated ESL vocabulary learning and concludes that "tasks which encourage learners to retrieve the target form during recall and to provide an original sentence, using the target word will give learners extra opportunities to practice using the word-to-be learned".

George says in the above extract that EFL learners should grasp a certain amount of vocabulary before we could further improve our language skills. SLA theorists have said this, too. Obviously EFL learners need to have built up a sufficient L2 vocabulary to enable them to make use of the contextual clues available in the linguistic input. For this reason, Coady (1997) suggests that EFL learners probably require a working vocabulary of 5,000 words in order to learn new vocabulary through inferencing from written texts. EFL learners with a well-developed vocabulary will find it easier to infer the meanings of unknown words from context and thus will acquire them more easily and rapidly than those with more restricted EFL vocabulary.

George goes on arguing that when EFL learners have increased their essential vocabulary, the focus should then be shifted to writing. What George says is still similar to the current formal theories by linguists (see Chapter Two). Writing is really important for EFL learners studying abroad, not only because they need writing skills to finish their assignments and thesis in English, but also because writing involves a higher cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) (see Cummins, 1984). Writing belongs to intrapersonal interaction that requires cognitive challenges (Ellis, 1999:252). Many respondents who have stayed abroad for a rather longer period of time point out that they still find themselves weak at writing English.

Hellen thinks that learning individual English words by heart and recitation of texts are good ways to learn English well in a context where there is no language environment for EFL learners to practice their oral skills. She also argues that repetition, recitation and memorisation in China's EFL learning context could help create a language sense and avoid making spelling mistakes:

> I think we should try to read aloud to create a language sense in order to learn English well. Besides, we should try to recite as many texts as possible. Recitation means that you have to have a repeating cycle of practising English. I think this should be a very good method to learn English in China. That's why many schools in China now asks students to recite every English text. It's a proper way. British students are not used to learning individual words by heart and reciting texts. That's why they often make some spelling mistakes. When you repeat memorising an English word or phrase or some texts for hundreds of times, you can never forget. In a context where you have to learn English without the language environment, I prefer learning English by heart by reading aloud and repeating. Of course, before the process, you must understand what you are going

> to recite. In a word, in my opinion, recitation, repetition and memorization are very necessary in learning English in China's context. (Hellen, 10/02/01)

As Hellen has said above, for EFL learners to master a second or foreign language, recitation, repetition and memorisation are essential. SLA theorists have also had similar but deeper discussions in this perspective. According to cognitive psychological and socio-cultural theory, recitation and memorisation belong to private speech involving intrapersonal interaction (see Vygostky 1978, 1981; Ellis, 1999; Lantolf, 2000). Tasks that require learners to recall and summarise materials they have read result in deeper cognitive processing. Tasks that require learners to read a text, formulate a set of questions about the text and then answer them also promote elaboration of the input stimulus (Ellis, 1999:27). Recitation and memorisation based on understanding should promote higher levels of deep cognitive processing than reading. They are not mechanical or rote learning. If they could be integrated with self-questioning and self-inferencing, learners could achieve even greater results as self-questioning and self-inferencing strategy could be seen as a form of mediation that enables learners to use private speech to achieve self-regulation and promote deep processing of input (see Ellis, 1999:29).

However, even Hellen herself thinks that it is not enough for EFL learners to engage themselves in recitation, repetition and memorisation, i.e., the intra-personal interactional private speech as SLA theorists describe. Language communication must proceed in a dual way. Interpersonal interaction is necessary to learn a foreign language well. For interpersonal interaction to take place, a number of respondents have talked about various subcategories on "language environment" and see language environment as a necessary factor to learn English well.

First, there is general tendency from the respondents to see language environment as a significant factor in learning English. For example, Tony and Robert think that:

> When you are in UK, you are learning English all the time… (Tony, 28/10/00)

> When you are learning a foreign language in its original country, a lot of factors will force you to learn it. (Robert, email reply)

Some respondents describe the concept in more details. Hellen talks about "natural language environment" under which an EFL learner is obliged to use English:

> Certainly the language environment in UK is much better. Actually I did not seem to have begun to be really learning English only after I came here. I was learning English at the language centre at Cambridge University. At that time, I was the only Chinese student in class. My English was really too poor then. I could not use English to make correct sentences. Whenever I spoke English, my grammatical orders would be wrong. I would stammer. I could not understand much English either. I felt very suppressed. But under those natural circumstances, you can make rapid progress. You are forced to use English to respond and to think. In China you say "zuoye", but in UK you have to say "assignment". (Hellen, 10/02/01)

Hellen's view on the importance of language environment in learning English is shared by all other respondents. For example, Johnson interprets language environment above all as the context where an EFL learner is learning English through the degree content courses. Even though the EFL learner is not learning English deliberately at the time, he/she is making progress in English. This view seems to be related to our proposed EFL teaching approach, i.e., a content-based EFL teaching.

> When you are abroad, you are using English to learn your degree courses and do your research. When you are reading a book or an article, you are learning English. Even though you don't think you are learning English deliberately, your English is gradually improving. It's because language environment plays the key role. (Johnson, 08/02/01)

Julie seems to suggest that EFL learning needs an environment of language immersion where an EFL learner can use English for daily communication while she thinks that China's present EFL learning and teaching context cannot provide such an EFL environment of immersion. This view seems to be related to our proposed EFL teaching approach as well, i.e., a late partial immersion approach.

> When you learn English in China, you may have lots of reading and listening materials. But the greatest disadvantage is that you don't have the authentic environment: You may use English in class. But you are using Chinese for your daily communication in China. The problem is that when you are learning English in China, you are not thrown into the ocean of the English language. You have not immersed yourself into the environment. That's why I think the greatest difference lies in the environment of immersion. (Julie, 10/02/01/)

Steve is relating language environment to being able to get access to practising specific linguistic skills such as listening, speaking and reading while Emma refers to language environment as the exposure to the target language and target culture which is further in depth in her view.

> The difference between learning English in China and in UK is very great, as the language environment has totally changed. In China, reading is the access one can get for most of the time. You cannot get much access even to listening, not to mention speaking. In UK, you are in front of various accesses to English: television programmes, radio broadcasts and newspapers, etc. It's a totally different language environment when you are in UK. (Steve, 09/02/01)

> As a foreigner learning English in a native speaking country, the environment there encourages me to use English, The exposure to the language and the target culture there improved my language ability. Besides, I have overcome the fear to speak to English speakers. (Emma, email reply)

Bill talks about language environment as having more practice opportunities for active participation.

> When you are learning English in China, you don't have the language environment. You have to learn English either through the teacher or study by yourself. In UK, you have the environment for active participation and more practice opportunities. (Bill, 18/01/01)

According to Dekeyser (1998:50), the term "practice" is used in second or foreign language learning in the sense of engaging in an activity with the goal of becoming better at it. If we want our students to achieve fluency in the EFL learning in the sense of automatic procedural skills, then according to cognitive theory, we must enable them to engage in the practice of using the language in the sense of communicating something in that language while they keep the relevant declarative knowledge in working memory. In fact, practice, production, output and interaction, are all similar in concepts to certain extent or degrees. The issue of having more opportunity to use and practice English and a language environment for more active participation is shared by the respondents, too. All the respondents have mentioned that practice is the best and only way to learn English well or that exposure to the target language is very important.

For example, Jane thinks that the language environment in UK enables her to practice her English through daily communication with British people and to arouse her logical thinking when attending lectures:

> … I've never spent so many hours learning English in my life when I was in China. Every week I spend six hours attending lectures. I spend two days discussing issues with my British friends. That means I spend at least twelve to sixteen hours learning English every week in UK. The environment here forces me to use English for communication and for logical thinking. I could feel I am obviously making progress in English. (Jane, 17/02/01)

It seems that the best way for Stuart and Tony to learn English is to seize every possible opportunity to practice their English actively, which they think is effective for them:

> The best way for me to learn English is to practice as much English as I can, to seize every opportunity to use English in the daily communication. It works well for me in UK. (Stuart, email reply)

> Learning English means that you have to exert great efforts to seize every possible chance to try to use English. (Tony, 28/10/00)

Robson talks about learning English through various kinds of media:

> In UK, I didn't spend any time learning English deliberately. I am attending my taught degree courses. I am reading a lot of English and doing assignments in English. I spend some time watching television, listening to the radio or reading some newspapers. This is the way I am improving English in UK. (Robson, 17/02/01)

From the above extracts we know that the respondents have raised a lot of specific subcategories and various ways of how they are learning English and how English should be learned. The respondents have all realised the importance of language environment in practising and using English. These subcategories are certainly very useful and closely related to the proposed EFL teaching approach of the thesis. These subcategories put forward by the respondents should set the EFL teachers in China' higher education thinking: How much has our current EFL education provided for the subcategories the EFL learners need and have raised above? From this perspective, I

think my purpose of looking at the correspondents' perceptions and experiences of their EFL learning needs has been reached. If only the EFL teachers in China could put these EFL learning theories into their EFL teaching practice for non-English majors! If only the EFL theorists in China could do much more empirical research and field investigations based on students' EFL learning needs. Actually the EFL teachers and researchers should really learn something from the Western, particularly the anglophone theorists in the field of EFL learning. They have done a lot of empirical research involving EFL learning theories. I have already discussed some of the EFL learning theories in Chapter Two and in the next chapter I will have some further discussions on some EFL learning theories relevant to what the respondents in our investigation have raised above so that we could make a comparison and show how insightful the EFL learners in our investigation are in their perceptions. In the next section on content-based EFL immersion, I will present some data on some similar views further.

5.4 Content-based EFL immersion

5.4.1 Existing problems in China's EFL education

In section 5.3, I have presented some data which show that Chinese students came across various EFL learning difficulties when they came abroad. These difficulties might result from some existing problems in China's EFL education. In Chapter Three, I have discussed some problems that exist in China's EFL education at present. In this section, first of all, I would like to identify from the respondents' experiences of their EFL learning in China whether there are any problems in China's EFL education. If the respondents' replies are the affirmative "yes", then what are some of these problems? And are they the same as those identified from different perspectives in Chapter 3?

Both Stuart and Steve point out that the EFL education in China cannot arouse students' enthusiasm and interest in learning English because the teacher-centred teaching styles in China are passive, boring and annoying.

> For me, the most annoying problem in China's EFL education in its higher education is the teacher-centred teaching methods which have greatly stifled our students' enthusiasm and interest in learning English. (Stuart, email reply)

> I think the EFL education I received at university in China was passive and boring. The EFL teaching there could not arouse students' interest and enthusiasm in learning English. The EFL teachers were forcing students to memorise English words for passing examinations. In fact, nowadays, we should have lots of EFL teaching and learning aids, means and media such as films, videos, songs. But for our non-English majors, we did not receive any of this kind of EFL education. (Steve, 09/02/01)

Steve's extract also suggests that China's EFL education for non-English majors is monotonous in that it does not use audio-visual teaching aids and means. Their view on the monotonous teacher-centred teaching styles being unable to attract students' EFL learning interest is shared by Tony.

> In China, only the English majors have some native Anglophone teachers to teach them. We non-English majors normally don't have native English speakers to teach us. So we cannot learn authentic English. We cannot have the chance to talk directly with the native-speaking anglophones and to communicate in English. This is a big problem for Chinese non-English majors. In most cases, the EFL education in China is neither flexible nor active but just teacher-centred. The EFL teacher explains everything for you. (Tony, 28/01/00)

In addition, Tony talks about the lack of practice opportunity for authentic interaction and communication with the native English speakers because he did not have the chance to have the native English speakers teach him English. All other respondents share Tony's view that authentic language environment is very helpful in EFL learning. They all complain that China's EFL education could not provide them with such EFL learning environments.

Besides the teacher-centred teaching styles being unable to attract student's interest and enthusiasm in learning English, many respondents point out that many EFL teachers still focus on the grammar-translation method without providing students with enough practice opportunities for using English.

> The main problem in China's EFL education should be that the EFL teachers' modes of thinking should be transformed. The focus of teaching should be shifted from the grammar-translation method to the use of English for communication in

> various contexts so that the EFL learners are able to apply their English to the daily use and communicative needs after learning English. For example, when an EFL teacher is teaching English writing, some grammatical analysis of English language structure might be useful and necessary for students' writing assignments. Non-English majors don't need much analysis of linguistic forms in their listening, speaking and reading. An EFL teaching method focusing on practical use and communicative purpose should be adopted in China's EFL education. (Bill, 18/11/01)

In this extract Bill expressed his hope that an EFL teaching approach focusing on developing students' language competence on the use of English for communication in various contexts should be adopted in China's EFL education. Bill also seems to see a mutually exclusive relationship between the two approaches rather than a combination. His view that China's present EFL education for non-English majors still mainly focuses on teaching linguistic knowledge is shared by other respondents such as Robert.

> In most cases, the EFL teachers in China are teaching most of English in Chinese. For the whole class hour the teacher usually spends about 70% of the time speaking Chinese, only less than 30% of the time speaking English. The content the teacher focuses on usually is grammar, phrases, language points and translations. The teaching method really lacks practice in oral English. I think only oral English skills can promote EFL learners' face-to-face communicative skills. (Robert, email reply)

Robert's extract above suggests that like Bill, he also thinks that communicative competence should be the focus of China's EFL education. He complains that the EFL teacher speaks too much Chinese in class and gives students too few practice opportunities. It has already been pointed out in the discussion of Chapter Two and in Section 5.3 of this chapter that both Western linguists and Chinese EFL learners have realised the importance of "practice" opportunity in learning a foreign language.

> I think most EFL teachers in China have spent most of the teaching time letting students do lots of examination papers to prepare for the national CET-4 (College English Test, Band 4) and CET-6 (College English Test, Band 6). These examination papers focus on vocabulary and reading. Non-English majors are learning mute and dumb English. In fact, we non-English majors in China don't have the oral English classes. (Johnson, 08/02/01)

In my opinion, China's EFL education has not paid much attention to the development of students' writing ability. Of course there are various reasons for

it. The first reason is that Chinese students have not been given much time to read a large amount of academic literature by themselves. Language textbooks could only teach students shallow linguistic knowledge. They cannot provide students with much in-depth practice for the professional academic writing ability. I feel that many Chinese students had only mastered some basic vocabulary when they came abroad. They could not go into the depth of professional communication, especially academic exchanges. In a word, academic writing is a big problem for China's EFL education because students could not have much practice for it. (George, 14/02/01)

In the two extracts above, both Johnson and George argue that China's EFL education could not provide EFL learners with sufficient practice environment and opportunities. Johnson points out the lack of oral practice opportunities for interpersonal interaction in China's EFL education while George talks about the importance of developing students' academic writing ability for which he thinks China's EFL education has not provided enough practice opportunities. Besides, Johnson put forward his view that China's EFL teachers have spent too much time letting students do too many examination papers in order to let them pass the CET-4 and CET-6. Other respondents have similar experiences as well.

> China's EFL education is examination-oriented. Exams are still students' main purpose of learning English. The EFL teaching and learning process requires a lot of mechanical memorisation. This problem may partly result from the traditional Chinese lecturing methods and styles which have paid too little attention to the training of students' creativity. (Simon, email reply)

The above extract demonstrates that Simon not only has the view that China's EFL education is examination-dominated. He goes further on to suggest the association between the examination-dominated education system and the lack of the training of students' creativity. Julie has similar experiences and perceptions. She also makes some points about the problems that exist not only in China's EFL education but also in the academic learning in general within the whole education system.

> I think the biggest problem in China's EFL education is that it does not focus on the development of students' critical thinking. It confines itself only to the surface level of teaching students to pass examinations. This kind of education leads to the result that students can get high marks in TOEFL, GRE and GMAT, but students' conversational ability, communicative competence and academic writing skills are very weak. They are bound to face language problems when they come abroad to study. From this point, China's EFL education cannot focus only on the basic linguistic skills but should attach great emphasis on the

> development of students' overall communicative competence and composite learning ability. (Julie, 10/02/01)

In addition to the problems raised above about the teaching practice in China's EFL education, some respondents have pointed out that many Chinese EFL teachers teaching non-English majors are not qualified enough. Hellen and Jane are among these respondents. Hellen thinks that her EFL teacher at university was not qualified in the oral English while Jane argues that EFL teachers could teach better if they have the experiences of living and studying abroad. Jane thinks that not many EFL teachers teaching non-English majors in China's higher education have the experiences.

> First of all, I think the EFL problem in China's higher education lies in the fact that many EFL teachers are not qualified. The English teacher who used to teach me when I was at university in China could not pronounce English correctly and speak English fluently. How could such EFL teachers come to teach EFL learners?… (Hellen, 10/02/01)

> In my opinion, the first problem in China's EFL education is that many EFL university teachers teaching non-English majors do not have the experience of studying and living abroad. Under such circumstances, it is not easy for an EFL teacher to be qualified to teach English in China… If the EFL teachers have the experience of studying and living abroad, they would use their own authentic living and study experiences in their teaching practice so that the EFL teaching atmosphere and environment would be much better. In classes taught by such EFL teachers, students could usually be more motivated by and interested in the teachers' own experiences and students will usually get much more practice opportunities. (Jane, 17/02/01)

To sum up, Many respondents have referred to China's EFL teaching as "boring", "teacher-centred" and "concentrated on grammatical knowledge" which they see as incompatible with the development of their EFL fluency. Some of the respondents feel that their EFL teachers are "under-qualified" and that they need some experience abroad as part of their qualifications. All the extracts above from the respondents obviously demonstrate the fact that there exist a lot of problems in China's EFL education for non-English majors at university level. These problems are not only related and in conformity with students' EFL learning difficulties and their EFL learning goals discussed in Section 5.3 of the chapter but also in conformity with some of the problems that exist in China's EFL education in its higher education discussed in Chapter Three.

5.4.2 Feasibility and implementation of the proposed EFL teaching approach

In order to help improve China's EFL education and try to solve at least some of the EFL problems that exist in China's EFL education and which have been experienced and perceived by the respondents, and based on the analysis of relevant literature on EFL methodology, I proposed a content-based EFL immersion approach (see Chapter Two for discussion). The proposed EFL teaching approach is mainly adapted from the education systems of the anglophone countries where there have been successful innovations and empirical studies in this domain. I have already discussed whether in principle the proposed approach could meet the EFL learners' learning needs and their methods of learning from the previous section. Below I shall consider whether the students themselves think this is likely to be a successful approach as a consequence of their study abroad, whether the transplantation and adaptation of the proposed EFL teaching approach from one education system into another is likely to be successful.

The rationale and definition of the proposed EFL teaching approach had been briefly explained to the respondents (see Appendix I and II) either in a pre-interview/pre-reply letter or in the process of conducting the semi-structured interviews before they expressed their perceptions and views. The answers and replies the respondents gave, as we could see from some extracts below, do not differ much in the possibility and necessity of implementing the approach. All respondents think that the approach is possible to be implemented in China. For example, Julie talks about the complementary benefits when language and content are being learnt simultaneously. She also talks about the necessity of mastering anglophone learning styles and study skills in the process of implementing the approach which should be an integral part of content-based EFL immersion.

> Content learning and language learning seem to be in conflict with each other on the surface. On the one hand, we might think that we have to spend more time learning English and even more understanding professional academic subjects in English. This is too demanding. On the other hand, some students who would like to study advanced English rather than learn English through professional academic subjects might think that they will have less practice opportunities for using English. In fact, language learning and content learning can be

> complementary, which can be exemplified from our own experiences of the academic study in UK. We are improving our English through learning our academic subjects. So I think students' English can no doubt be greatly improved through learning their academic subjects in English. What's more important is that both the language teacher and content teacher should also teach students how to study and help students master learning strategies so as to increase their learning efficiency. The mastery of learning strategies could help students make substantial progress. In a word, it is possible for students to improve their English through learning academic subjects in English. (Julie, 10/02/01)

The next two extracts show that both Tony and Johnson are not only confident with the implementation of the proposed approach. Both of them also say that in several most influential universities in China some professional content courses have begun to be taught in English.

> This approach is certainly very good. To teach academic subjects in English can help students understand professional literature. Students can learn many technical and professional terms through the English instruction in class. Students' writing ability could be enhanced as well. I think we should make the greatest efforts to promote the proposed content-based EFL immersion approach and let as many teachers as possible to be able to adopt the approach in their teaching practice. This approach is no doubt feasible. Actually, several most influential key universities have already begun to adopt this approach for some of their postgraduate courses. But the professional courses that have adopted this approach are too few to be able to be called "immersion" as you told me. I have a friend in Qinghua University majoring in biochemistry and a brother in Zhejiang University majoring in Information Technology. They both told me that some professional courses in these two universities have begun to be taught in English for the past several years. Students who have taken these courses have high English levels and most of them could get 660 marks in TOEFL and 2400 marks in GRE. So most of them have been recruited as Ph.D. students by American universities with full scholarship before they graduate from their study in China… (Tony, 28/10/00)

What Tony says in this extract agrees with what I read recently from the Internet (Sina, 2001) that more than 50 professional science courses out of over 1500 courses in Qinghua University (in Beijing, the so-called best university in China) have begun to be taught in English and in Zhejiang University (in Shanghai, the present biggest university in China, merged from the previous three key universities in Shanghai) all the professional courses will be taught in English at the postgraduate level. These two universities will employ either teachers who have been abroad or native anglophone professional content teachers to teach the professional courses so that students can not only improve their English but also become familiar with the anglophone teaching

and learning styles. However, just as Tony said above, there are too few professional courses to be taught in English even in these two universities, not to mention other key universities in China's big cities and coastal cities. Second, these two universities' methods of having only some professional courses to be taught in English without an EFL teacher's cooperation and division of complementary tasks, is not exactly the same as what I propose as the content-based immersion in the thesis. As I will say in Chapter Six, only professional content instruction in English cannot be really called what I propose as content-based EFL immersion, in a strict sense. What is more important is that this could be a good beginning. Tony's extract could be further confirmed by Johnson.

> I think this approach is absolutely feasible. In fact, several most influential key universities in Shanghai have begun to have some professional courses to be taught in English at the postgraduate level. Usually teachers who are teaching these professional courses are those who have been abroad for several years or just foreign professors from the English speaking countries. However, the implementation of the approach on a larger scale will face some difficulties. Most professional content teachers in China are not qualified to teach content courses in English, answer students' questions, discuss professional topics with students and evaluate students' assignments all in English. (Johnson, 08/02/01)

Besides the feasibility of the approach, Johnson also points out the difficulty that not enough qualified professional content teachers could be employed to teach the professional content courses. This point given by him is shared by most other respondents about which I will present some further data subsequently. Of course this is true to a certain extent, but they don't seem to have noticed the fact that China has been sending more than 1,000 to 2000 university teachers and scholars to study abroad every year since 1978, not to mention those self-funding university teachers who have got their degrees abroad and have returned to China. According to Sina (2001), in the most influential 36 key universities in China, around 70% of their teaching staff have been abroad studying for at least more than half a year. In the 100 key universities out of the total 1200 universities in China, the average number of teachers who have been abroad and have studied abroad for more than half a year has reached 30%. Even though some of those content teachers who have been abroad could not become fluent in English, they could still adapt some anglophone teaching styles in their teaching practice which is also needed in the proposed content-based EFL immersion approach.

Like Johnson, thirteen out of the fifteen respondents did point out that there will be various degrees of difficulties in the process of implementation and these difficulties should be taken into serious account if the approach is to be successfully implemented. These various factors about the difficulty of implementing the approach could be subdivided into the following categories.

A. Teaching qualifications.

In the following extract, Michael talks not only about the importance of implementing the proposed approach but more about the teaching styles and the qualifications of both the EFL teachers and professional content teachers. His view shares that of Robert's extract below.

> It is really useful to carry out the approach in China. When we communicate with our supervisors, we find difficulty in using technical terms and in writing academic English. The anglophone teaching methods and lecturing styles are useful to China's higher education. Group discussions, presentations are important academic learning skills. Teamwork can promote high efficiency. Participation, discussion and presentation all needs team or group cooperation. But I think it is not so easy to put the approach into practice. We must assess the difficulties. Both the content and the language teachers' teaching styles and qualifications should be the keys to the effective and successful implementation of the approach. (Michael, 08/11/00)

In the extracts below, Robert seems to suggest that since there should be a great demand for qualified university teachers both in the content and language field if the approach is to be implemented, how to guarantee enough qualified teaching staff should be the factor to be considered.

> Of course it is very necessary and feasible. Actually, I don't think there should be many difficulties or any disadvantages of implementing the approach. But there will be a great demand for qualified university teachers both in the language field and in the content field. (Robert, email reply)

Jane at first points out that there will be insufficient qualified teaching staff to teach a very high percentage of academic subjects in content-based EFL immersion. Then she

argues about the difficulty of becoming qualified professional content teachers.

> It is no doubt necessary to implement the approach into China's EFL education. Seen from my own experience and perceptions, in the key universities in China, it is possible to have 30% of the undergraduate curriculum in the third and fourth year and 70% or even more of the postgraduate curriculum to be taught in English. But it would be difficult to realise if we intend to have 70% of the undergraduate curriculum to be taught in English, even in the key universities because I don't think we have enough qualified teachers to teach so many content courses in English. In fact, I think it is really demanding for most professional content teachers if they are to teach professional content courses in English. First, they must have profound professional knowledge which keeps pace with the relevant international standard of their own professional domain. Besides academic English, a professional content teacher must demonstrate high oral English skills, which are really the weaknesses for most professional content teachers… (Jane, 17/02/01)

Jane goes on to suggest that it is more authentic and thus better to employ more native professors from English-speaking countries to teach content courses if funding is enough.

> If there is sufficient funding, it is no doubt a good way to employ native professors from English-speaking countries to teach content courses. In fact, some professional subjects at the postgraduate level in some most influential key universities in China at present have been taught by professors from these countries. But these anglophone professors usually don't teach undergraduate professional courses when they are in China… (Jane, 17/02/01)

Her view of trying to employ as many native teachers from English-speaking countries as possible is shared by most respondents. For example, Robson points out that the advantages of employing native teachers from English-speaking countries to teach professional content-courses lie in the fact that they could go into the depth of their professional teaching because they are using their native language to teach.

> …Only native teachers from English-speaking countries could go into the depth of their professional subjects in the process of instruction because they are using their mother language to teach. Thus only anglophone teachers might be able to drive students home to the points. It is difficult for most Chinese teachers to make penetrating analysis in English because of the language barrier. Chinese university teachers teaching professional subjects have to possess highly qualified oral English skills as well as interactive and communicative language competence to be able to teach such courses, in addition to understanding professional literature and writing professional articles in English. This is really demanding

for most Chinese professional content teachers. (Robson, 17/02/01)

Tony suggests a second option: choosing teachers (1) who have received regular and systematic academic training abroad and (2) who have stayed abroad long enough to have mastered the target language and (3) who are rich in teaching experience, to teach content courses if we cannot have sufficient funding to employ as many anglophone teachers as required. Like Michael and Julie above and also many other correspondents in the investigation, Tony also makes the point that the anglophone learning styles should become an integral part of the content-based immersion teaching.

> …An alternative might be to employ Chinese teachers who have already had their regular and systematic Ph.D. study abroad for 3 to 5 years and who have been rich in teaching experience to teach content courses. These teachers should not only be fluent in their oral English, proficient in academic writing. But also they should be able to teach students anglophone learning styles to promote students' critical thinking and creativity by various means of flexible, interactive and hands-on teaching methods and styles and audio-visual aids. Content-based EFL instruction should also include the introduction and application of the advantageous anglophone teaching and learning styles. (Tony, 28/10/00)

In the aspect of employing Chinese teachers to teach professional content courses, Tony's suggestion has something in common with what Stuart says in her extract below, though her view is different from Tony's in some way. Stuart points out that when we employ teachers from English speaking countries to teach professional content courses we must ensure that they should be qualified, too. Otherwise, Chinese teachers who are near-native in English are better than native English speakers if the Chinese teachers are experts in the professional content because Chinese teachers could understand their own Chinese students better.

> Of course I agree that it would be better to employ native speakers from English-speaking countries to teach professional content courses. But the prerequisite is that the native speaker should have sufficient professional knowledge and teaching experience. If the native English speaker is not an expert in his/her professional teaching area, he/she is not qualified to teach content-based immersion courses. Otherwise, a Chinese teacher who is near-native in English will be better to teach such a course if he/she is an expert in the professional teaching area. In some cases, a bilingual Chinese professional content teacher is more appropriate because he/she might understand students better. (Stuart, email reply)

In addition to the teaching qualifications, Robson points out the importance of commitment and enthusiasm in content-based EFL immersion.

> Of course the approach is feasible in China's higher education. The first thing that should be considered in the process of implementation is to employ enough qualified teaching staff. Only those who have studied abroad for a relatively long period of time and who have strong enthusiasm and commitment to professional development and pedagogical promotion could be employed to teach both the content and language in the content-based immersion approach. We should never employ those who cannot find work abroad and cannot find an ideal job in a foreign-funded company in China without much teaching experience, commitment and enthusiasm to teach content-based EFL immersion courses ... (Robson, 17/02/01)

B. Co-operation between language and content teachers.

As for the issue of cooperation between language and content teachers, the respondents in this investigation differ to a certain degree. Some respondents think it is difficult for the EFL teachers and professional content teachers to cooperate with each other. Others think it is possible for the two to cooperate.

Jane points out the difficulty of cooperation between a professional content teacher and an EFL teacher because she thinks it is difficult for an EFL teacher to understand a content teacher's profession. Her second view is that EFL teachers could teach some general content courses while professional subjects from students' study areas should be taught only by professional teachers. She thinks it is difficult for a professional teacher and an EFL teacher to cooperate teaching the same course.

> ... I don't think a professional content teacher can easily cooperate with an EFL teacher. It would be very difficult for a language teacher to understand a content teacher's profession. I think most of the general content courses could be taught by EFL teachers. They may include world geography, history, target cultures, literature, etc. These courses are easier for EFL teachers to teach, but I don't think it easy for a professional teacher teaching professional subjects of students' study areas to cooperate with an EFL teacher, as it is difficult for an EFL teacher to understand the content teacher's profession within a short period of time. (Jane, 17/02/01)

Bill seems to suggest that it should be easier to implement the approach if the professional content teacher and the EFL teacher could focus on different aspects of instruction. Bill thinks that an EFL teacher and a professional content teacher could cooperate in some way in the process of implementing the approach if they could focus on different aspects of the teaching content. He also raises some other factors that should be considered in content-based immersion such as the selection of textbooks and teaching materials.

> An EFL teacher could be responsible for various aspects of language teaching such as the development of students' listening and speaking and writing in a professional content course. Generally speaking, professional content teachers' English in China is very weak, especially their oral English skills. More than 80% of Chinese teachers who have studied for a few years abroad are still not qualified to teach professional content courses if they are required to focus on both content and language teaching. Professional content such as reading, lecturing and professional tutorial could be the focus of the Chinese professional content teachers. I don't think it worthwhile to ask professional content teachers to focus on language teaching as well. It will have great pressure for them as they are not familiar with language teaching. Besides, professional content courses should use authentic and latest English textbooks and teaching materials in the original to keep pace with international level... (Bill, 18/01/01)

Johnson also thinks it is possible for a professional content teacher to cooperate with an EFL teacher. He thinks it is even possible to set up a team to teach content-based EFL immersion courses to ensure high teaching quality and to teach the goals of content-based EFL immersion.

> I think that the ideal way of reaching the goal of content-based immersion is to set up a team where a Chinese EFL teacher, a professional content teacher from English-speaking countries and a professional content Chinese teacher cooperate with each other to instruct a professional subject. They are each assigned with different focuses of instruction. This ideal way guarantees the highest quality of content-based immersion. However, if there is no sufficient funding, I think it is also possible to form a two-person team where an EFL teacher and a professional content teacher whose English should be good enough cooperate with each other. If the EFL teacher does not understand some professional content, he/she may ask some help from the professional content teacher. Of course both of them should be given some time to discuss how they could cooperate and how they will each assign the teaching focus. (Johnson, 08/02/01)

These two extracts from Bill and Johnson suggest that they think it possible for an EFL teacher and a professional content teacher to cooperate with each other in some

way. These extracts echo the investigations and teaching practices described by some anglophone researchers in the domain of content-based instruction and bilingual immersion (for example, Brinton et al, 1989; Christian et al, 1990; Burger et al, 1997; Doughty and Varela, 1998; Hoecherl-Alden, 2000). They all point out that it is necessary and certainly possible for an EFL teacher and a professional content teacher to cooperate with each other. For the cooperation of an EFL teacher with a content teacher, there is a similar problem faced by ESP teachers with their colleagues (see Robinson, 1991, 2000b and 2.5.3 of this thesis).

C. Curriculum planning.

In terms of curriculum planning, Robson argues that the selection of academic subjects to be taught in English should depend on the investigation of students' learning needs. He also points out the importance of developing student's meta-cognitive skills which could serve as a guide to students' life-long learning. This view seems to echo some anglophone educationists' (for example, Brown et al, 1997) view that in a global learning society, life-long learning is a necessity.

> I think the selection of academic subjects to be taught in English in content-based immersion should depend on students' learning needs. Different students have different outlook and considerations for their future. For example, some students who wish to study abroad would like to know more about knowledge in intercultural communication. Those who do not intend to study abroad may hope to learn more about some vocational and professional subjects relevant to their future work. Both groups of students may need some essential common knowledge they might use in intercultural communication and some learning strategies that could guide their future career, professional development and lifelong learning. These learning needs from students should be considered before content-based immersion starts. (Robson, 17/02/01)

Julie also points out that content-based EFL immersion should focus on the development of students' meta-cognitive skills, i.e., an integrated learning ability of knowing how to study academic subjects. She thinks professional subjects from a student's study area don't have to be the most essential part of content-based immersion.

> Actually EFL learning should become a process of developing students' composite academic learning abilities. Students should be able to use English as a tool for various international exchanges and communication in various daily as well as academic contexts. Therefore, professional subjects from students' study areas don't have to be the focus of content-based immersion… (Julie, 10/02/01)

Stuart makes a point that students' English level should be an important factor to be considered in content-based EFL instruction. Otherwise, she thinks that it will not be of much value to apply content-based immersion into China's higher education. Her view seems to echo the views from some Anglophone experts in this domain (for example, Brinton et al, 1989; Met, 1997): An intermediate level of English should be required before students are able to participate in the content-based immersion curriculum.

> For Chinese university students, concepts of some academic subjects such as chemistry and mathematics are already difficult to understand even when they are taught in Chinese. If they are taught in English, the situation will be worse when their English is not good enough. That will be like adding insult to the injury. Students will encounter more difficulties; i.e., they will come across not only the difficulties of academic subjects but also the language barrier. The language barrier will have negative impacts on students' understanding of academic subjects. So language proficiency should be a factor to be taken into serious account before the implementation of the approach. Otherwise, in my opinion, it will be of little value to apply it into China's higher education. Students may end up for nothing, either in English or in content. (Stuart, email reply)

Robson also seems to suggest that some basic English proficiency level is important in receiving content-based EFL instruction in order to be able to participate in classroom discussions and do assignments in English.

> … Another important thing that should be considered is students' English level. They might be unable to understand academic subjects taught in English, let alone participating in the discussions and doing assignments all in English. (Robson, 17/02/01)

When asked what content courses should be taught in English, some respondents think that content only refers to students' professional subjects in their own study areas. Many respondents suggest that content should contain wider scope. For example, George thinks that content-based immersion should not be limited to the use of English as a means of instruction only for students' professional subjects in their

own study areas.

> …Technical and professional terms are usually limited, though they may appear difficult for a non-professional. But it should not be so difficult to learn for a professional student of the study area as he/she should repeatedly use them in his/her academic study. For example, in my study area in economics, I find the technical terms easy. I think it is the same for students of mathematics and chemistry. Though professional subjects of students' study areas should be taught in English as an essential part of content-based immersion, it is not enough to be restricted only to the study of these areas. (George, 14/02/01)

Bill and Tony have more or less the same views about what academic subjects should be taught in English. Tony also points out that some courses in the curriculum will have to be taught in Chinese. Thus the content-based EFL immersion should be bilingual.

> Content-based immersion should start with those academic subjects with an orientation to international exchanges and communication, for example, trade, diplomacy and the most advanced technology with international reputation. (Bill, 01/18/01).

> Content-based immersion should focus on those academic subjects that require the latest scientific knowledge, the most rapidly-developing technology, the most competitive international challenges and the widest international applications; for example, computer science and information technology. Some academic subjects such as Chinese language learning and governmental education policy will have to be taught in Chinese. (Tony, 28/10/00)

Jane points out that content-based immersion should include two aspects of academic subjects. One type of content could be general courses that students of all majors should know and the other type of content should be students' own area of study.

> Certainly content-based immersion should include instruction of the Western cultural values, customs and behaviours in English. Subjects like world history, geography, world literature, and computer science should become part of the academic subjects to be taught in English as well. The other type of content could be around students' study areas to develop their understanding and application of professional knowledge in English… (Jane, 17/02/01)

The above extracts about what academic subjects should be taught in English in content-based immersion seem to echo in some way the definition Met (1994, 1998)

put forward, i.e., "content" in content-based instruction represents subject matter of the curriculum that is cognitively engaging and demanding for EFL learners and extends beyond the target language or target culture. The respondents' views are more specific than Met's definition and are more in connection with China's reality.

D. Late immersion.

As for this issue, Johnson's view is that content-based immersion should begin to be implemented at the postgraduate level. He also gives his justification for his view.

> At present, it is better to implement the approach at the postgraduate level. It is too early and impossible to start the approach from primary school and secondary school. Junior secondary school students are busy with examinations to be able to enter senior secondary schools. In the big and coastal cities in China, only 40% of them are able to study at the senior secondary schools. Others will have to go to vocational or technical schools. Senior secondary school students are busy with university entrance examinations. At the undergraduate level, the implementation of the approach requires endless amount of funding and a huge number of qualified teaching staff. Postgraduate students have fewer academic courses and more free time for self-study. Besides, there are far fewer students at the level. So I think the above factors make it easier to implement the approach at the postgraduate level. (Johnson, 08/02/01)

In the extract below Bill suggests that the proposed approach should be implemented at the undergraduate level. He also seems to suggest the importance of selecting authentic textbooks in content-based EFL instruction.

> It is really very necessary to implement the EFL teaching approach into China's higher education and it is also very feasible. This approach is just wonderful. At the same time I think we could hope that professional content teachers could only gradually adapt themselves towards the goal you have proposed. It is unlikely that the approach could be successfully implemented overnight. We cannot expect to change the present situation in China's EFL education so quickly. Those professional areas with international orientations and the strongest professional areas of the key universities could adopt the approach more easily. The approach should be implemented not only at postgraduate level but also in some undergraduate professional content courses so that more students could be trained to keep pace with international standards in their academic learning. Authentic English textbooks in the original should be used for most of the professional content courses. The approach could increase students' practice opportunities for using authentic English. (Bill, 18/01/01)

Hellen talks about what time is appropriate to implement the content-based EFL immersion approach. She thinks content-based EFL immersion should begin from the third and fourth year of students' undergraduate studies.

> I think it is absolutely necessary to start teaching professional academic subjects in English from the third and fourth year of students' undergraduate studies. (Hellen, 10/02/01)

Robson has similar views with Hellen. What's more, he has given the reasons why the approach should begin even at the last semester of the undergraduates' second year study: by the time, students have not only adapted themselves to the university academic environment, but also their English level has reached the intermediate level which they think should be the minimum requirement for the proposed approach.

> I think it will be too early if we are to implement the approach as soon as the students enter university. It is very appropriate to start implementing the approach from the last semester of the undergraduates' second year study, gradually increasing the professional academic subjects taught in English. By that time students have adapted themselves to the university academic environment. Those who are poorer in English should have made progress through their own efforts. Their English by then should have reached the level of understanding professional academic subjects in English. So the last semester of the undergraduates' second year study should be the best time to implement the approach. (Robson, 17/02/01)

E. Partial Immersion.

When asked whether total or partial immersion should be adopted, Robert thinks that early and total immersion is the best way.

> Content-based immersion should begin from primary school or even earlier. If one receives English education when one is still at the very young age, the result will certainly be more profitable. One might be able to use the language automatically when one grows up, just as a baby learns how to speak its first language. So I think early and total immersion is the best way. (Robert, email reply)

In principle, Robert's view certainly echoes what researchers in the domain of

bilingual immersion education (for example, Swain, 1998; Swain and Lapkin, 1998) have discussed. However, taking China's reality into account, it is very difficult to realise the goal even in China's big and coastal cities. It might be possible in some private bilingual schools in China. Therefore, many respondents express their views different from Robert and these views are more realistic. For example, Dora's answer goes like this:

> Total and early immersion is no doubt more desirable but may be impractical and even impossible under China's reality. (Dora, email reply)

Emma's answer is more specific. She thinks that early and total immersion has no necessity in China as it requires too much funding and investment. She gives some reasons for her view.

> Late and partial content-based immersion is more realistic and suitable. English is not even a second language in China. It is not necessary to teach every academic subject in English even at the postgraduate level, as the investment on teacher training and various other requirements for funding will be too enormous for the government. (Emma, email reply)

Simon has the similar view with Emma but he argues that Chinese university students still need to learn some courses in Chinese to preserve their national identity.

> Partial and late immersion is more suitable because Chinese university students still need to learn some courses in Chinese and teachers must teach some courses in Chinese to preserve Chinese national identity according to some Chinese government policy. At early stages the pupils and students need to prepare for different kinds of entrance examinations. (Simon, email reply)

Bill has the similar view as Simon. He points out the importance of partial immersion in terms of retaining some curriculum to be taught in Chinese to preserve the traditional Chinese culture. In addition, Bill talks about partial immersion in terms of curriculum planning.

> I think there are a few other factors that should be considered in the process of implementing the content-based immersion approach. First we should not throw away the traditional Chinese culture while we are using authentic textbooks and teaching materials. Second, it is not necessary to have all the curriculum to be taught in English. A bilingual partial immersion should be more appropriate. It is

> more realistic to begin implementing a partial immersion approach from the third and fourth year of students' undergraduate study. Partial immersion approach should start with academic subjects with an orientation to international communication and with international reputation, such as trade, diplomacy, computer, advanced science and technology… (Bill, 18/01/01)

Johnson argues that a total immersion approach should be adopted at the postgraduate level.

> I think total immersion should be adopted at the postgraduate level, as most of postgraduate students have reached the level of understanding content-based instruction in English. (Johnson, 08/02/01)

Stuart's reply is a summary of the above extracts on late and partial immersion.

> In my opinion, under China's context, early partial immersion is more suitable. The reasons are: (1) due to the government policy, it is difficult to adopt a total immersion approach in China; (2) partial immersion approach can benefit students both to improve their English and to maintain their mother tongue; (3) the earlier a person begins to learn a language the more easily he or she will master the language. So, theoretically, early partial immersion should be implemented. However, China's reality is that children begin to learn English after 10 or 11 years old. Those whose English has reached a better level are senior undergraduate and postgraduate students. There is a paradox here, Maybe at present it is more realistic to adopt a late partial immersion approach, but in the future early partial immersion should be better. (Stuart, email reply)

Both Tony and Jane give a specific percentage of the curriculum that they think should be taught through content-based immersion. Tony seems to suggest that only sufficient exposure could ensure satisfactory results in content-based EFL instruction.

> I think the ideal and most desirable immersion should be total, if possible. However, since it is not realistic at present in China, it is better to have 70% to 80% of the undergraduate curriculum and all the postgraduate curriculum to be taught in English. Without sufficient exposure, I don't think the results from content-based immersion will be satisfactory. (Tony, 28/10/00)

> I think for the key universities in China a goal to have 40% to 50% of the undergraduate academic subjects to be taught in English and to have 70% to 80% of the postgraduate curriculum to be taught in English could be realised within a few years. Nowadays key universities in China could usually guarantee relatively more sufficient amount of funding. If we intend to have more than 50% of the undergraduate curriculum to be taught in English, we will not have enough qualified teaching staff. After all, there are far fewer postgraduate students and

> their learning initiative and motivation are much higher. (Jane, 17/02/01)

According to some researchers in the field of bilingual education (for example, Genesee, 1983, 1994; Swain, 1998; Baker, 1996, 1998), late partial immersion is an additive value to students' language learning at no cost both to their first language and the target language. Besides, late partial bilingual immersion could also achieve satisfactory results. Seen from this perspective and based on China's reality, late partial immersion put forward by most respondents could find some empirical evidence and theoretical support from the investigations by the anglophone researchers of the domain.

F. Transformation of conservative educational values.

Julie points out that the change of the conservative traditional Chinese educational values should be the prerequisite in the process of the implementation.

> I think the inherent traditional Chinese conservative and backward educational values from teachers, students and even the whole society should be changed first. This is the most fundamental. Without the change of these conservative values, it would be futile to implement the approach. Suppose if teachers and students have no motivation or even aversion to the approach, the implementation will certainly result in failure. So I think the implementation should be integrated not only with students' academic subjects, but more with the investigation and study of how to promote students' learning interests, meet their learning needs and change the teachers', students' and the whole society's conservative values. (Julie, 10/02/01)

Jane has the same opinion as Julie in this respect. Like Tony, both Julie and Jane seem to suggest that the teacher should use the Anglophone lecturing styles to motivate and develop students' anglophone learning styles in content-based EFL instruction.

> The traditional conservative educational values and lecturing styles have been instructing and influencing students in China for thousands of years. It is certainly difficult to accept a totally new EFL teaching approach and hope to change these values at one go. They could become hindrances to the successful implementation of the approach. (Jane, 17/02/01)

Both Julie and Jane's view echoes what we have discussed in Chapter Three and in

Section 5.4 of this chapter about the importance of changing the conservative educational values of the society (see Dewey, 1916/1945; Fullan, 1991; Musimeci, 1997; Morrison, 1998).

Finally, in his extract, Steve points out that successful implementation of the approach should first of all depend on whether all levels or relevant levels of Chinese educational administrations attach importance to the promotion of the approach.

> It is no doubt possible. But first of all it would be better to get approval from China's educational administrations. If they attach importance to the promotion of the approach, it will be bound to succeed in China. China's current educational system is mainly dominated by examinations. To implement the approach means to develop students' critical thinking and creativity and also means to change the traditional Chinese education system to a certain degree. It will be far easier to implement the approach if China's educational authoritative administration agrees with it. (Steve, 09/02/01)

What Steve says above echoes not only Biggs' (1999) view that an innovative program could achieve better results if the education system could come to support it. Steve's extract also complies with one of the traditional Chinese cultural values which attaches great importance to authority (see Jia, 1997).

In summary, this section deals with the data around the proposed EFL teaching approach proper. First, existing problems in China's EFL education that might result in students' EFL learning difficulties are presented. These problems include lack of sufficient practice opportunities for participation and interaction in classroom teaching so that EFL learners could have a language environment to use English, teacher-centred teaching styles, and examination-dominated EFL learning system. Then I analysed and interpreted the respondents' data concerning the content-based EFL immersion approach that I propose to try to improve China's EFL education and hope to be able to solve some of the problems in China' EFL education. The data show that all respondents think it possible to implement the approach in China's higher education. However, some difficulties should be taken into serious account and dealt with in the process of the implementation. These difficulties include lack of sufficient qualified teaching staff, funding, resources such as the latest professional literature and the hindrance of the conservative Chinese educational values. Based on China's

reality, most respondents suggest that a late partial bilingual content-based immersion approach should be more appropriate and more practical. Finally, respondents' suggestions about how to implement the proposed EFL teaching approach are presented. These suggestions include: (1) the employment of qualified teaching staff. For example, only native professors from English-speaking countries or the Chinese professors who have received regular and systematic academic training abroad could teach the professional content courses. (2) the cooperation between EFL teachers and professional content teachers. Some respondents argue it might be difficult for the two to cooperate while other respondents say it is possible for the two types of teachers to cooperate with each other if they are assigned with different focuses of instructional content.

5.5 A summary of the chapter

This chapter gives an analysis and interpretation of the empirical data collected mainly through the semi-structured interviews. The chapter aims to investigate whether in the views of the respondents, the proposed EFL teaching approach could help improve China's EFL education in its higher education to meet the country's as well as students' needs for English in the new century, whether the aims and the methods of the proposed EFL teaching approach could meet the EFL learners' learning needs and their learning styles, whether therefore the adaptation of the approach from the anglophone education system where there has been successful empirical evidence, investigations and innovations into China's education system is likely to be successful.

Section 5.2 points out that a modified grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) rather than a pure grounded theory was adopted as the method of data analysis as I had already had certain categories and theories before the analysis of the data. The process of selecting, reducing, categorising and subcategorising data in a cyclic stage while trying to be faithful to the original data in the process of analysing and interpreting the data has been introduced in the section.

In Section 5.3, data around the respondents' EFL learning goals, EFL learning

difficulties and EFL learning theories have been presented. The data of this section show that most respondents, especially the non-English majors, could not be intrinsically motivated by the direct EFL classroom instruction in China's higher education; i.e., the EFL education most respondents received at university in China could not motivate their inherent interest in learning English. The lack of intrinsic interest in learning English might result in some of their EFL learning difficulties abroad. The data show that all respondents came across various degrees of EFL problems when they came abroad. They had to spend some time coping with their language problems. From their own experiences the respondents raised lots of EFL learning theories, such as the importance of practice opportunities and language environments in learning English. Most of these EFL learning theories coincide with the discussions and investigations on EFL learning theories by anglophone linguists and researchers (for example, Ellis, 1999; Swain, 1985, 1998).

In section 5.4, the data concerning the proposed EFL teaching approach proper, i.e., the content-based EFL immersion approach, have been analysed and interpreted, linking them with the data presented in Section 5.3 about EFL learning. First, problems that exist in China's EFL education are linked with the EFL learning difficulties in 5.3. Then data concerning students' perceptions of the feasibility of implementing the proposed EFL teaching approach into China's higher education have been presented. The data show that all respondents think it feasible to implement the approach into China's higher education. The data also demonstrate that taking China's present reality and specific context into account, it is more appropriate to adopt a late partial bilingual immersion approach.

The empirical investigation of the chapter suggests that the respondents believe in the feasibility of the proposed EFL teaching approach and the data are in conformity with the discussion in Chapter Two and Chapter Three.

In the next chapter, I will draw some implications that result from the data of the chapter and raise some suggestions about the implementation of the proposed content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach.

Chapter Six

Implications from Data and Considerations for Implementation

6.1 Introduction

In Chapter Five, based on the respondents' replies, the following questions were considered: (1) What do the EFL learners in China learn English for? (2) What are some of the EFL learners' learning needs? (3) Do students feel it is feasible to adapt the content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach into China's higher education? The data presented in Chapter Five demonstrate the facts that there exist some problems not only in China's EFL education but also in its whole education system. These problems result in Chinese students' EFL learning difficulties in international /intercultural communication. If China aims to catch up with the trend of globalisation in the new century, these problems must be solved to keep pace with the international academic standards. From this perspective, to further clarify and highlight some points from the data and try to provide some tentative but justified solutions to some of the problems in China's EFL education, this chapter will answer the following two questions: What implications can we draw from the data? And what factors should be considered to implement the proposed EFL teaching approach to be able to solve some of the problems in China's EFL education so that China could keep abreast of the international trend in its higher education as it aims to?

To correspond with the answer to the two questions, the chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part is in fact a concluding summary of the most essential points of the data presented in Chapter Five that are worthwhile to be further discussed with theoretical evaluations supported by relevant literature. In the second part of the chapter, some factors that should be taken into serious account in the process of implementing the approach will be put forward. Integrated with the implications drawn from the data, this section could provide more or less a framework of what can

be involved and included in a proposed feasible EFL teaching approach to help solve some of the existing problems in China's EFL education. These considerations for the implementation of the proposed approach will try their best to be feasible and to be able to meet China's specific contexts and realities.

6.2 Implications from the data

Based on the data presented in Chapter Five, the following implications can be drawn: (1) ensure sufficient exposure to and create environments for using the target the language; (2) develop students' intrinsic motivation in EFL learning; (3) adapt the advantages of the anglophone teaching and learning styles into China's higher education; (4) preserve the advantages of the traditional Chinese learning styles; and (5) implement and trial the content-based late partial EFL immersion approach in China's context. These implications will be discussed respectively below.

I. Ensure sufficient exposure to and create environments for using the target language.

The data from Chapter Five show that target language is the biggest problem to Chinese students either in daily conversation or in their academic learning in their intercultural/ international communication. These language problems at least partly result from China's EFL education where the teaching styles are message transmitting, teacher-centred and examination-dominated. From the data, we could see that all the respondents think that the EFL learners should be provided with as many practice opportunities for using the target language as possible and an authentic language environment. The respondents' views are in conformity with the theories discussed by some Anglophone SLA linguists. I have already had some discussions on these theories in Chapter Two. Below I will use some theories from the chapter to try to establish a brief link with Chapter Five to support the respondents' EFL learning theories and to stress the importance of practice in EFL learning

As we have already pointed out in Chapter Five, learning is seen as a function of

association and interaction which learners generate between the motivated drive and prior experience. When such associations and interactions are developed, long-term memory occurs and learners are able to transfer information to new contexts and problems. Language interaction can be seen as a device for inducing deep processing because it creates the conditions and environments under which the EFL learners can establish links between unfamiliar items in the input and their existing knowledge, and it enables the EFL learners to devote more attentional resources to the higher levels of cognitive processing (see DeBot, 1996; Ellis, 1999). In fact, in SLA theories, practice, participation, involvement, interaction and output are all similar terms in certain ways.

If we want our students to achieve fluency in EFL learning in the sense of automatic procedural skills, then according to cognitive theory, we must enable them to engage in the practice of using the language in the sense of communicating something in that language while they keep the relevant declarative knowledge in working memory. Thus the goal of each EFL teaching and learning activity should be turning declarative knowledge into something qualitatively different through practice, or automatizing such knowledge further in the sense that it can be done even faster with fewer errors and less mental effort in the automaticity of processing (see Dekeyser, 1998:62). Swain (1985, 1995, 1998) also argues that "pushed output" can induce learners to engage in the kind of cognitive processing for extending interlanguage development. Language production prompts EFL learners to notice the gap between what they can say and what they want to say, enabling learners to test hypotheses in promoting reflection that permits them to control and internalize linguistic knowledge. Mackey (1995) found that only active participation results in effective language development. In exchanges between learners, one learner's modified output is another learner's comprehensible input. Scholars favoring the Interaction Hypothesis (for example, Long, 1996; Lightbown, 1998) seek to identify the environmental conditions and context that pertain to EFL learning. They point out that EFL learners remember best when they are back in the context where the interaction takes place.

Socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978, 1981; Lantolf, 2000) also favours the entailment of active participation and involvement in language learning. According to the theory, interaction can sometimes provide scaffolding, i.e., a collaborative process

by which one person assists another to perform a function that he/she could not perform alone. Donato (2000) points out that instructional conversations involve wide range of communicative and cognitive functions. In scaffolding, an "expert" assists a "novice" to perform a difficult task through interaction and learners, interacting among themselves, can collaboratively manage a task that would be beyond any of them acting as individuals. Swain and Lapkin (1998) and Ohta (2000) reported their studies, showing how scaffolding could help learners perform and produce complex grammatical structures in the second language learning process.

According to Ellis (1999), teaching is a process of classroom communication. Ellis suggests that topic-oriented classroom interaction affords practice opportunities for EFL learners to take control of the discourse. Giving EFL learners control of the discourse is one way of making classroom acquisition rich. EFL teachers, especially those teaching non-English majors in China, who seek to control the discourse by means of closed questions and reactive feedback, interrupt the flow of the discourse and learners' interactive work, and thereby, interfere with interlanguage development. One way of creating a focus on topic is by means of task-based language teaching advocated by Skehan (1996). In this sense, tasks are meaning-based topical activities. This is a way of ensuring that learners have control of the discourse and thus practice opportunities for language learning. EFL teachers in China who wish to assert teachers' authority may be reluctant to engage in classroom discourse where learners are in control. Yet teaching should be seen as the provision of practice opportunities for learning through interaction that occur in the classroom, since the fundamental goal in the classroom is to teach language for communication. This point has also been justified by the respondents. The more interaction there is the better it is for EFL learning. An instructional language program needs to provide activities that learners can undertake outside as well as inside the classroom (see Ellis, 1999:250). Johnson (1995) suggests providing ample opportunities for students to use the target language, helping EFL learners to participate in language-related activities beyond their current level of proficiency and offering a full range of contexts that cater for a full performance of the language.

The above analysis suggests that the EFL learning theories expressed by the respondents in our investigation in Chapter Five have been explored more deeply by

Anglophone researchers in the field of EFL learning. EFL learning works best when it is integrated with topic or task-based communicative activities and content-based immersion through providing sufficient practice opportunities, i.e., pushed output and active participation in the classroom environment. What the EFL teachers should now do in China is to implement these significant EFL teaching principles and theories both from the EFL learners/respondents and the Anglophone SLA theorists into their teaching practice.

II. Develop students' intrinsic motivation through classroom EFL teaching.

Motivation theory is the study of thought and action. It addresses why behaviour is initiated, persists and stops as well as what choices are made (see Weiner, 1992). In educational settings, motivation on socio-cognitive goal theories has become one of the most dominating theoretical approaches (see Weiner, 1992; Leo and Galloway, 1996; Galloway et al, 1998). This latest development of motivation is starting to illuminate how school, university and classroom context can influence motivational processes. This kind of task, goal or mastery orientation theory is closely related with our discussion of the Chinese EFL learners' learning goals.

The data from Chapter Five show that most respondents (non-English majors) were not intrinsically motivated with their learning goals or tasks by direct EFL classroom instruction and teaching practice to become interested in learning English. The EFL education most EFL learners received at university in China could not motivate the respondents' inherent interest in learning English. The lack of intrinsic motivation in learning English resulted in some of their EFL learning difficulties when they were abroad. The respondents' EFL learning experiences suggest that if the EFL teachers in China could try to understand the EFL learners' learning interests and intrinsic motivations and take advantage of them in their EFL classroom instruction and if the Chinese EFL teachers could constantly study how university and classroom contexts could influence the EFL learners' motivational learning processes and make them become more interested in learning their English curriculum, then students will be able to study more confidently, actively and efficiently since the mastery goals for learning their EFL curriculum could become an adaptive motivational style according

to the socio-cognitive goal theories in the field of motivation.

Under motivating EFL learning circumstances, mastery or goal-oriented students could perceive themselves as making progress and see difficult tasks as challenging and intrinsically motivating rather than take a perfunctory EFL learning attitude only for passing English examinations. Both Pintrich et al (1993) and Seifert (1995) argue that focus on mastery and learning goals can result in deeper cognitive processing on academic tasks. Their findings suggest that students who are mastery and goal-oriented tend to behave in a self-regulatory way. A greater degree of mastery or goal orientation is associated with greater strategy use, higher confidence, willingness to engage in more problems and a tendency to take credit for success. Mastery and goal-oriented students report more frequent use of deep processing strategies. Students are more aware of cognitive factors--- namely, effort and strategy---which lead to success. They would recognise which strategies work and which don't and may be more willing to try out new strategies for completing tasks. Dweck (1986) and Seifert (1995) point out that adaptive mastery and goal-oriented learning patterns are characterised by effort, challenge-seeking and highly effective persistence in face of obstacles. These theories briefly discussed above on goal or task mastery orientation in the field of motivation demonstrate that it is necessary to adapt this motivational style of goal or mastery orientation into China's EFL classroom instruction to develop the EFL learners' intrinsic motivation so as to reach the EFL teaching goals in the content-based immersion approach.

III. Adapt the advantages of Anglophone teaching and learning styles into China's higher education.

The data from Chapter Five show that all respondents think that teaching methods and learning styles under the anglophone higher education system could promote their critical thinking, creativity and the ability of applying existing knowledge to solving unfamiliar problems by means of discussions, participations, hands-on experience and deep-reflexive assignments. The data obviously have demonstrated the respondents' experiences and perceptions of the advantages of the anglophone teaching and learning styles. This complies with the research on academic learning explored by

some Anglophone scholars in the domain.

Student learning research originated with Marton and Saljo's (1976) study of surface and deep approach to learning. The main characteristics of the research is that it seeks to portray the experiences of the participants--- staff and students. The starting point was to find ways of describing some of the main differences in how students think about learning and carry out their learning. The concepts and categories were initially identified through interviews with students and focused on what students believe learning to involve and how they go about everyday academic tasks, such as reading academic articles or writing essays. The interviews have generally encouraged students not just to report their ways of tackling academic tasks, but also to reflect on their approaches in considerable depth (see Biggs, 1999; Entwistle 2000; Meyer 2000).

The conceptions of learning students hold substantially affect the ways in which they tackle everyday academic tasks. In the deep approach, the intention to extract meaning leads to active learning processes that involve relating ideas and looking for patterns and principles on the one hand, and using evidence and examining the logic of argument on the other. The approach has also been found to involve monitoring the development of students' own understanding (Krashen, 1981, 1982; Entwistle et al, 2000). Students are actively performing and transforming material in the process of making sense of it (Biggs, 1999; Entwistle and Walker, 2000).

The more recent version of the research into the Anglophone approach to learning describes an idealised deep approach to academic learning as combining the original deep learning and also the strategic learning while excluding any elements of surface learning; this can now be called deep strategic learning (see Entwistle 2000; Entwistle and Walker, 2000; Entwistle et al, 2000). In strategic academic learning, the emphasis is on reflectively organising time and effort to meet the perceived assessment requirements and to maximize reward in terms of grades. The deep strategic learning arises from a felt need to be engaged in the task appropriately and meaningfully so that students feel the need to know. They try to focus on underlying meaning and performative tasks and are required to show their understanding by performing and interacting with a novel task, reflecting on appropriate feedback given to them to see

how they can improve. In this way, the deep strategic approach to academic learning changes students' perspectives on the world. As Biggs (1999) has pointed out, education is just about conceptual change. Such conceptual change takes place when: (1) it is clear to students and teachers what the objectives are; (2) students experience the felt need to get there; (3) students feel free to focus on performing the task, not on watching their backs; (4) students can work collaboratively in dialogue with the other, both peers and teachers.

A comparison of the data in Chapter Five with the above discussion demonstrates that Anglophone teaching and learning styles obviously belong to the deep strategic approach to academic learning. It is possible and worthwhile to adapt the advantages of this approach into China's higher education. In fact, from the anglophone literature of this domain, we could find that quite a number of scholars have successfully attempted to adapt the anglophone teaching and learning styles into the higher education for either some overseas Chinese students or students in China (for example, Tang, 1998; Jin and Cortazzi, 1998b; Biggs, 1999). Their successful attempts and research show that the teaching and learning activities with formative criterion-referenced assessments could access students' higher cognitive processing resulting in a deep strategic approach to learning despite the assumed cultural impediments. Using groups and particularly learning partners could provide culturally acceptable ways of allowing the kind of anglophone teaching and learning style to do its work in China's context.

IV. Preserve the advantages of the traditional Chinese learning styles.

The data presented in Chapter Five show that most respondents think that there are some disadvantages in the traditional Chinese education system. Its disadvantages are represented by the teacher-centred and examination-dominated teaching and learning styles. However, as some anglophone educationists (for example, Marton et al, 1993; Biggs, 1999; Meyer, 2000) claim, there is a paradox in the traditional Chinese education system. There exist some advantages from its apparent disadvantages. Below I will discuss some advantages that exist in the traditional Chinese educational culture.

First, the teacher-centred teaching style in China's educational culture could provide Chinese learners with a firm theoretical foundation. A systematic and detailed analysis of declarative knowledge and theories could be an advantage. Some anglophone scholars in the field of learning theories have done lots of research in this respect. For example, Laurillard (1993:43) points out that university teachers should enable students to develop their epistemological beliefs, their conceptions of learning and abstraction of theories. Biggs (1999:4) also argues that university knowledge is declarative, abstract and conceptual. It deals with labelling, differentiating, elaborating and adjusting. From these discussions, we could see that the traditional Chinese educational culture has some advantages to offer.

Second, as for China's examination-dominated education system, anglophone scholars have some research as well. For example, according to Biggs (1999:142), learning for the examination is bad learning only if the examination is bad. Students' learning may also be as good as the assessment tasks they are given, in which case backwash becomes positive. Assessment could reinforce learning and is the senior partner in learning and teaching. The best assessment method is the one that best realises the teaching objectives. The basic principle of good assessment is to ensure that the assessment is aligned to the curriculum. Backwash works positively when assessment tasks are deliberately and firmly referenced to learning standards contained in the curriculum. From this point, we could see that the examination-dominated system could promote deep strategic learning if it could be put to good and appropriate use.

Third, some respondents complain that the Chinese education system focuses on the cramming of facts and rote learning requiring lots of memorisation and repetition. It is true that students from the traditional Chinese educational culture engage in much repetition and memorisation. The culture demands them. Biggs (1999) and Meyer (2000) argue that learning several thousand Chinese characters in common use requires more memorisation than learning the 26 letters in the Latin alphabet. However, memorisation can be in service to understanding and repetition is a route to understanding. Memorisation after understanding is likely to exhibit higher levels of cognitive processing and academic achievement on the basis of learning engagement (see Meyer, 2000). Repetition as a strategy of coping with complexity or as a strategy

for recall is a well-established way of coping meaningfully with the world (Biggs, 1999:127). Thus we could see that Chinese students using repetition and memorisation as learning strategies are likely to be even deeper learners if their memorisation and repetition are aligned with deep strategic understanding and learning.

In addition to the above advantages of the traditional Chinese educational culture, such as the solid theoretical foundation and examinations, memorisation, repetition, there are still some other likely advantageous characteristics of the culture. Indeed, the confucian heritage of the dominant Chinese educational culture has prepared Chinese learners for learning styles very different from those of the anglophone culture. Many characteristics of the traditional Chinese culture have some advantages as well as disadvantages. That's why some scholars call this phenomenon the "paradox of Chinese learners" (see Marton et al, 1993, 1996; Meyer, 2000). First, its collectivism and focus on harmonious relationship make it easier to promote a cooperative motivational classroom environment (Johnson and Johnson, 1995). Secondly, the effort attribution retraining principle of emphasising the efficacy of students' efforts could find application in Chinese educational culture where success is attributed to effort and failure to lack of effort (Lee, 1996). In fact, there are quite a few Chinese sayings about this aspect such as "Diligence makes up for inability" and "A foolish bird could be the first to learn to fly". This conception is very useful to the advocation of students' active and confident motivational behaviour. Lastly, Chinese culture emphasises power and authority and responsibility which make it possible for teachers to carry out intervention means to improve teaching quality as students are mostly more obedient and humbler than Western ones.

The paradox of the traditional Chinese educational culture suggests that its advantages introduced above could work best when it is integrated with the advantages of the Anglophone teaching and learning styles with the focus on the promotion of critical thinking and creativity, collaborative discussion and participation, performative problem-solving ability on professional work. Under such circumstances, then the Chinese education system could generate even deeper and more strategic approaches to academic learning (see Biggs, 1999; Meyer, 2000; Entwistle, 2000).

V. Implement and trial the content-based immersion approach.

The data presented in Chapter Five show that Chinese students have come across various target language problems when they first came to study abroad. These problems may at least partly result from some existing problems in China's EFL education and its whole education system. Therefore, we must find out ways to solve at least some of the problems and try our best to improve China's EFL education. Of course, there are various ways to do so. Content-based immersion might be one of the most appropriate ways as its aims are in conformity with those that try to solve some problems in China's EFL education. The greatest aim of content-based EFL immersion lies in its application and one of its basic principles is that content is selected according to the EFL learners' learning needs and interests (see Brinton et al, 1989; Robinson, 2000, a and b). Below I will further elaborate some theoretical concepts discussed by some Anglophone researchers in this field, taking further the discussion introduced in Chapter Two. It is hoped that through the discussion it should be clear that these concepts tally with some aims of proposing an EFL teaching approach to solve some problems in China's EFL education.

One of the aims of content-based EFL immersion is to develop students' required language skills for participating in all aspects of academic learning so that the students could strive to keep pace with the international standard in content mastery as well (Christian et al, 1990:141). Many scholars (for example, Swain, 1998; Genesee, 1994; Met, 1998) have found that combining language and content instruction can be an effective way of helping students progress towards both goals. Christian et al (1990) argue that in content-based EFL immersion classrooms two educational goals can exist side by side: the learning of English and the acquisition of content knowledge and academic learning skills. By integrating language and content, academic learning skills and language learning skills are developed during the learning process at the same time. English is learned most effectively when used as a medium of instruction to convey informational content of academic interests, professional needs relevant to the learner (Brinton et al, 1989:vii).

In light of the assumption that language can be effectively taught through the medium

of subject matter, the content-based EFL immersion approach views the target language largely as the vehicle through which subject matter content is learned rather than as the immediate objective of the study. According to Brinton et al (1989:75), in content-based EFL immersion, students are not only given rich practice opportunities to learn to write and learn to read but are also encouraged to write to learn, read to learn and speak to learn. That means that the study skills and the deep strategic learning styles are also important. These integrated objectives necessitate the active interaction between teachers and students, peer students and also the fruitful cooperation between the language and content teacher in order to promote students' higher levels of cognitive processing. Seen from the above perspectives, content-based EFL immersion has similar claims to those of the ESP/LSP (See Robinson, 1991, 2000 a and b; Johns, 1991; and also 2.5.3).

In a word, content-based EFL immersion focuses on the development of students' target language proficiency, academic learning abilities with their cognitive and metacognitive skills required in the Anglophone learning styles and the ability to study the professional academic subjects directly through using English as a tool. From the above discussion we could see that these principles comply with the aims of the proposed EFL teaching approach to improve China's EFL education. However, though early and total immersion is the ideal approach to ensure the rich exposure and environment to the target language as some respondents in our investigation have said and some anglophone scholars (for example, Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Swain and Lapkin, 1991, 1998; Baker, 1996) have investigated, late partial immersion is more appropriate based on China's specific contexts and reality. Besides, some Anglophone scholars (for example, Genesee, 1983, 1994; Swain, 1998; Baker, 1996; Baker and Jones, 1998) in the field of bilingual immersion have shown that late partial bilingual immersion could also achieve satisfactory results. Late partial bilingual immersion could lead to additive value benefiting both students' first language and the target language. Most respondents in the investigation have also expressed their views that late partial immersion is more appropriate in China's context. Of course, it must be pointed out that when those anglophone scholars speak of late partial immersion, they are referring to immersion instruction received by secondary students, I am using the late partial immersion in my thesis to refer to the instruction of the undergraduate and postgraduate university students (also see 2.4 for clarification).

Finally, most respondents have pointed out that it is currently more feasible and more realistic to implement a late partial bilingual immersion approach in China's higher education, taking the various difficulties of implementation into account. In fact, Brinton et al (1989) reported that they implemented an actual content-based instructional program at a tertiary institution in Beijing, China, for some English majoring students who plan to go to study in USA after receiving the content-based English instruction for one year. The joint program by an American university and a Chinese university used the content-based English instruction to teach some social science academic subjects such as Intercultural Communications, American Values and Institutions, Informal Communications, Study Skills and Learning Strategies in American universities. The aims were to increase the students' academic English skills and language proficiency, familiarise them with anglophone teaching and learning styles and students' intercultural competence so that these Chinese students could study in USA more easily. Though the program came across the greatest implementational challenges and difficulties, it was successful in the end and all the students reported that they had gained a lot from the program. This example and also the views from the respondents in our investigation do suggest that it is necessary and possible to implement the proposed EFL teaching approach in China's higher education. In the next section, some specific factors to be considered in the process of implementing a late partial bilingual immersion approach for 30% to 70% of the senior undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum in China's key universities of the big and coastal cities will be discussed. The proposed EFL teaching approach is certainly more ambitious than what Brinton et al report in their investigation and should involve mainly the non-English majoring students.

6.3 Considerations for implementation and trialling

As the proposed EFL teaching approach has not been really implemented in China's higher education for non-English majors, these considerations are mainly speculative. However, it is hoped that they could provide a more or less general framework of how the approach might be able to be implemented in China's context. The considerations consist of: (1) students' English proficiency levels; (2) curriculum planning; (3)

assessments and evaluations; (4) pedagogy and cooperation between language and content teachers; and (5) approval and support from educational administrations. These five aspects of considerations will be discussed respectively below.

I. Students' English proficiency levels

One of the most important factors to be considered in implementing content-based EFL immersion should be students' target language proficiency levels. Many researchers in the field (for example, Brinton et al, 1989; Christian et al, 1990; Snow, 1991; Met, 1998) have pointed out that students' inadequate language proficiency levels will hinder their performance upon receiving content-based instruction. In the proposed content-based EFL immersion approach, attention must be paid to ensure that students should gain the language proficiency levels needed to meet the demands of the content. The language learning objectives of content-based EFL courses are performance-based. Students aim not only to improve their knowledge of the target language, but also to learn how to use their knowledge to perform tasks in an academic setting. University students who speak English as a foreign language must be able to use English to do academic work: to read science books, do maths word problems, or reflect upon and evaluate their academic lessons. These skills, referred to as Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) by Cummins (1981), require higher-order thinking skills such as analyzing, synthesizing or predicting. One of the aims of the content-based immersion approach is to develop students' CALP and to provide them with the appropriate language labels and conventions for participating in content classes. Thus, before developing students' CALP, students should acquire Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) (Cummins, 1981) in English. In China's context, the development of students' BICS should be the main aim of the primary and secondary EFL education, though at the tertiary EFL education, particularly in content-based EFL immersion, both facets of language proficiency can and should be developed simultaneously at a higher level.

As has already been discussed in Chapter Two, Van Ek (2000, a, b and c), Van Ek and Trim (1991, 1998, 2001) propose three levels of foreign language proficiency: waystage, threshold and vantage. Based on their categorisation, the Council of Europe

Modern Languages Project (see Council of Europe, 2001) proposes a more detailed six levels of foreign language proficiency. These six levels could still be further subdivided into finer levels to suit specific local needs of foreign language curriculum planning. Briefly, the six levels of foreign language proficiency consist of the following categories: A. Basic user includes A1 (breakthrough) and A2 (waystage); B. Independent user includes B1 (threshold) and B2 (vantage); and C. Proficient user includes C1 (efficient proficiency) and C2 (mastery). The Council of Europe Modern Languages Project also lists specific descriptors and reference points for each proficiency level and sub-level based on the traditional categorisation of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Seen from these specific descriptors and reference points for each level and sub-level and in terms of China's context and reality and on the basis of the Chinese students' current EFL learning needs, it is hoped that the final aim of its EFL education after the students have finished their undergraduate and postgraduate content-based EFL immersion instruction should be between B2 and C1. However, it would still be satisfactory in the near future if the majority of non-English majoring undergraduate students could at least reach the level between the threshold and the vantage level. The majority of non-English majoring postgraduate students could reach the level between vantage and efficient proficiency. However, before receiving content-based EFL immersion instruction, the students should have become the basic users of the target language, i.e., they should have developed at least the breakthrough and waystage English proficiency levels during their primary and secondary EFL education.

The above discussion suggests that some basic English proficiency levels are necessary before the students receive content-based EFL immersion instruction as adequate English proficiency levels enable students to study both the language and the content more easily and more smoothly at a higher cognitive level. Under such circumstances, students could make more rapid progress at both their language and content learning. As Met (1998) says: When content material is abstract and conceptually challenging and the students have minimal language proficiency, it is difficult to teach content in a way that preserves the academic integrity of the discipline. This can be a significant issue in content-driven programs where students are often expected to acquire advanced academic language proficiency in a non-native language. If the students have not developed the required basic English proficiency

level before implementing the proposed content-based EFL immersion approach, they still have some leeway to make up during their first two-year undergraduate study after they enter university.

II. Curriculum planning.

The curriculum planning for content-based EFL immersion should be based on the careful analysis of both the students' EFL learning needs and their academic learning needs (see Brinton et al, 1989) as the aim of content-based EFL immersion is to meet such learning needs from the students. Naturally, content-based English curriculum should also reflect the students' local needs. Important questions to ask when planning curriculum/syllabus are the following: (1) What content courses are most compatible with students' interests and needs? (2) Do incentives for students' enrollment in the proposed course exist? Or: Will they receive credit for the course? (3) How can the course be advertised to attract students who might not be typically enrolled? Prospective students might be invited to attend an orientation session in which program administrators introduce key personnel, explain the rationale of the program, discuss its individual components (for example, counseling, tutoring), explain placement testing procedures. Students could be allowed one or two weeks to sit in the content-based EFL course and the similar course taught in Chinese to compare the differences and to test whether they can follow the course and their English proficiency level can match the requirements of the course.

Various types of needs analysis should be considered in the design of the curriculum to identify the needs of EFL learners for academic purposes. While some students may be planning to study in English-speaking countries, others may have no intention of pursuing their studies abroad. Instead of focusing on students' eventual English needs, the curriculum developers should concentrate on the processes the learners need to go through both to build on their basic foundation in English and more generally to equip them with effective academic learning skills. The curriculum and methodology should aim to support students' studies in various study areas at university both to improve students' abilities and chances for future study abroad, and to provide an opportunity which may enhance their employment options (see Brinton

et al, 1989). Therefore, designing a content-based EFL curriculum involves a number of key factors. These factors influence not only the nature and extent of content learning but also the nature and extent of language learning. The curriculum should include both content-driven English courses and language-driven content courses (see Christian et al, 1990; Met, 1998). The selection of content should be a vitally important consideration for both language and content educators because both of them will need to consider the desired language and content outcomes that students are expected to achieve (see Met, 1998).

It is more prudent to start on a smaller scale, piloting changes with a specific student population at first. Modifications of the existing course structure rather than radical alterations might be considered more appropriate. A content-based EFL immersion program might be the best choice, assuming a more conservative attitude to institutional change from the educational institution since this allows for the possibility of retaining the essential elements of the existing curriculum/course syllabus.

In designing content-based EFL curriculum, we must first consider that students' current language proficiency level influences curriculum planning. Curriculum developers will find it helpful to select content that has the potential for successful academic learning. It should be clear from the preceding discussion that language proficiency affects the content that can be learned and the content to be taught will shape the language to be learned. The more subjects--- the greater the amount of time--- spent learning content in the target language, the greater the likelihood that a wider range of language (including social language) skills will develop over time.

While the selection of content-driven English courses like mathematics may, in some ways, constrain the development of diverse language functions or discourse styles, learning a foreign language through the social sciences may allow students to develop a wider range of language functions, structures, vocabulary and rhetorical styles. Besides, the content of many social studies courses (for example, courses like Civics, History, Geography, Literature, Economics, Intercultural Communication, General Study Skills and Learning Strategies) may have appeal to language educators. The problem of recruiting enough qualified content teaching staff might be more easily

solved if such courses could be set up as content courses. This type of social studies courses could be language-driven content courses. It must be pointed out that the social studies language-driven content courses could become the core and should play an important role in the curriculum planning of the proposed content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach.

In language-driven content courses, content is secondary to language development. It is selected to reflect the potential of content to promote language growth. It is often drawn from the curriculum to strengthen the position of language education within the general program and to provide for cognitively engaging and demanding language practice activities. Language-driven content teaching represents an effective means of structuring courses that require authentic communication, that focus on communicative purposes that are meaningful and engaging to learners, and that provide for deeper cognitive learning of both language and content (Met, 1997, 1998, 2000).

In professional content-driven EFL courses where content learning is as important as language learning, selecting professional content to be taught in the target language may be facilitated by considering the following issues: (1) sufficient time must be available for students to gain the necessary target language/professional content skills to understand both the language and the content. (2) the professional content should also provide sufficient exposure to the range of language skills learners require to meet their communicative academic needs and purposes; if not, complementary /supplementary language instruction should be made available. (3) learners should need the kind of language proficiencies that professional content will provide for their present and future professional communicative needs (see Brinton et al, 1989; Met, 1998).

In a word, both language-driven content courses and content-driven EFL courses are needed in content-based EFL immersion to ensure the development of students' EFL proficiency levels, their Anglophone learning styles and their needs for global professional communication.

III. Assessments and evaluations

As we have discussed in Section 6.2, assessments and evaluations reinforce learning and is the senior partner in learning and teaching. The best assessment is the one that best realises the objectives and the goals of the curriculum in content-based EFL immersion teaching. If the curriculum is reflected in the assessment, the teacher's teaching activities and the learners' learning activities are both directed towards the same goal. Backwash works positively when assessment tasks are deliberately and firmly referenced to learning standards contained in the curriculum (see Biggs, 1999).

Generally speaking, when implementing the content-based EFL immersion approach, an on-going formative assessment should be combined with summative assessment. Evaluation should also be an indispensable part of content-based EFL instruction. The end-of-course questionnaires provide one type of program evaluation. At the end of each session, students could be asked to complete evaluations to rate the overall effectiveness of the program and the value of its individual components. Students' responses provide strong support for instructor convictions about the merits of the program. First, placement testing procedures should be carried out before implementing the approach so as to be able to assess students' current English proficiency levels. As with any innovation, evaluation of the effectiveness of content-based EFL immersion programs is important for their ongoing development and improvement. Ongoing feedback from students during the program can lead to adjustment and improvements as it proceeds. End-of-program assessments or summative assessments may lead to changes the next time it is offered.

According to Brinton et al (1989), appropriate assessment will normally involve attention to the following areas: (1) student achievement both in language and content learning; (2) student attitude towards the program and subsequent study; (3) student language use; (4) effectiveness of teaching staff; (5) quality of curriculum and teaching materials; (6) appropriateness and feasibility of the original objectives. Also, depending on the information to be gathered, the issue as to whether there are adequate assessment instruments available to place students, measure their achievement, and determine their attitudes and language use should be addressed. For example, rating scales, interviews, questionnaires, pre- and posttests could all be used.

The kinds of tests used to measure student gains must be appropriate to the learning objectives and goals of the program--- general academic and professional learning strategies and content and language skills to be mastered --- and thus must almost always be locally developed. It will not be appropriate to judge program success according to student success on standardised tests bearing little relevance to instruction.

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching process. Its main role in instructional programs is to measure achievement (Biggs, 1999; Clapham, 2000)--- to see whether students have mastered course material and to identify areas where they need additional help. When it is seen to support the objectives of the course, to be relevant to students and to be fair, it has a positive impact in an instructional program. To be effective, the ongoing assessment of student performance should include clear communication with students about course goals, the instructor's expectations and the criteria to be used in judging student performance (Clapham, 2000). Content-based EFL immersion in which both language development and subject matter learning are central, raises special problems in deciding what to assess. With a particular emphasis on achievement testing, the language and content learning objectives of the content-based courses should be performance-based: Students aim not only to improve their knowledge of the language but to learn how to use this knowledge to perform tasks in an academic setting. That means that neither language nor content considerations can be ignored in the evaluation and assessment procedures. Instructors need to be continually aware of the interface between language and content. One of the possible evaluation procedures is to provide more frequent, briefer and less verbally demanding assignments. Weekly short answer quizzes could keep students up to date in their studies and provide useful feedback to teachers about student success in learning the academic subject matter. Essay type mid-term examination and student writing assignments are used and graded for language as well as for content. When essays or research papers are required it may be possible to integrate related practice exercises, guided library research and the preparation of early drafts into the language curriculum. It may also be possible to provide students with tutorial help after certain evaluations and assessments. An assessment principle to follow is to base student evaluation on a variety of tasks rather than just one type. This ensures that students will not be unfairly disadvantaged by one or two test formats. What is important is

that the skills assessed are in fact those which will be required to follow the content-based course. Brinton et al (1989) and Clapham (2000) point out that diagnostic assessment identifies specific areas where learners are doing well or where they need improvement. It may be done before or during the course using special tests or it may be accomplished through analysis of student performance on class assignments. Appropriate assignments on tests for diagnostic purposes are those which require students to demonstrate the knowledge or skills of learning needs and interests. Achievement assessment should be able to specifically evaluate student progress in developing language skills, academic study skills and academic subject content which are related to instructional goals and activities. In a word, assessment procedures should focus on the criterion-referenced assessments rather than the norm-referenced assessment (see Biggs, 1999; Clapham, 2000).

IV. Pedagogy and cooperation between content and language teachers.

In terms of pedagogy, language and content instruction can be integrated in one lesson, one unit or an entire curriculum. Even though the extent of implementation may vary widely, the underlying principles and procedures remain the same. In fact, teachers may start attempts with such small scale project as one lesson or unit and later pool resources with other teachers to develop a whole curriculum from the approach. To plan a single lesson, teachers can take an objective from a content curriculum such as mathematics and think about what language students need in order to be able to accomplish that objective. The language development goals should include specific professional vocabulary items such as technical terms as well as grammatical structures and language functions that are necessary for the lesson. Once the content and language objectives of the lesson have been identified, hands-on interactive activities that will accomplish both content and language objectives with rich meaningful input under the relaxed and motivating academic learning environment can be planned (see Christian et al, 1990).

Developing a unit in one academic area provides a more sustained effort than a single lesson, and developing a content-based EFL curriculum is of course the most ambitious project to undertake. By this time, close cooperation between language and

content teachers is especially helpful in the planning stage and ongoing collaboration is desirable. In most Anglophone education systems, teams of teachers regularly collaborate on curriculum development either informally or at the request of the educational administration (see Brinton et al, 1989; Christian et al, 1990; Met, 1998). Such teams could be made up of teachers who have tried combining language and content instruction in their classes so that they can pool resources and experiences. The collaboration of content and EFL teachers is particularly effective and necessary in curriculum development and instruction. Although some time-consuming careful preparation is needed in advance to plan lessons, it is well worth the efforts and attempts in China's context. Teachers might begin collaboration on a small scale such as planning a lesson or unit or a course before collaborating on the whole curriculum project or program.

All effective teachers plan for instruction. Met (1998:57) points out that planning for instruction in content-based language teaching involves both planning for content and planning for language growth. Planning for content includes identifying what students will learn and selecting instructional materials. In addition to hands-on materials, students will need print materials to support both content learning and language growth. The teachers need to select existing materials or develop their own that allow students to develop content knowledge and concepts that are within the range of their language competence. In planning for language growth, it is particularly important for professional content teachers to consider carefully language outcomes for every content lesson in content-based EFL immersion. That's where the content teacher could discuss and collaborate with the EFL teacher. Teaching should result in target language growth in content-based EFL immersion, no matter whether in content-driven EFL programs or in language-driven content programs.

The objectives and goals of content-based EFL immersion also necessitate cooperation between language teachers and subject matter teachers, with the language teachers emphasising instruction focused on language problems in reading, writing and listening to English and also oral practices, and the content teachers complementing this with activities requiring reading and writing in the process of learning the subject matter (see Brinton et al, 1989). As content-based EFL courses have the multi-purpose goals of teaching subject matter, the Anglophone learning

styles and academic English skills, it is better for the course to be team-taught by the content professor from an English-speaking country or a content professor whose English is near-native or sufficiently proficient in the target language and an EFL teacher to finish the goals. It is also vital that the professor should be sympathetic and sensitive to the EFL learners' language needs.

In addition to content knowledge, it is important for both the content and language teachers to be skilled in content pedagogy as well as language pedagogy. They should be well informed of effective instructional practices and current approaches both in the content and language discipline.

Perhaps the most obvious demand for language teachers in content-based language teaching is that teachers become familiar with the content. The language teacher, for their part, must be interested in the course content and willing to develop some expertise in it. Most EFL teachers are professionally prepared as language specialists, not as professional content specialists, just as mathematics teachers are not usually specialists in EFL development. Thus, while some EFL teachers may be able to teach some social studies courses with sufficient content knowledge, courses in science subjects can be a challenge. Hoecherl-Alden (2000) points out that although instructors of professional courses must be familiar with the basics of the professional content, yet by no means do they need to become specialists of the professional areas. On the contrary, the EFL teachers will find it very rewarding to draw on her students' factual expertise when teaching the professional courses.

The language teacher's first and most essential role is to ensure that students understand the readings and lectures in academic English. A second vital role is to encourage a positive, low anxiety learning environment and to build students' confidence in their ability to use academic English for "real-life" purposes. The language teacher must function as an assistant and consultant to the content professor. This is a shift from the traditional EFL classroom in which the teacher controls the situation, is viewed as an expert and has the task of presenting a predetermined body of information. Perhaps one of the most important adjustments demanded of language teachers is a willingness to shed this traditional classroom role of prime authority and expertise for the less predictable, often more demanding one of mediator, facilitator,

adviser, tutor or friend. The third role is to aid in the development of speaking and writing skills. In fact, as the course proceeds, more attention should be given to the development of the writing and speaking skills needed in an academic environment.

It is important that the content professor and the language teacher view their tasks as complementary and that they are willing to regularly coordinate their efforts. The language teacher may also serve as an intermediary between the students and the content professor, communicating areas of student difficulty, suggesting more effective presentation techniques, and even asking questions during class when students have clearly not understood but are unwilling to intervene. Finally, both the content professor and the EFL teacher should discuss complementary assignments and coordinating efforts to help improve students' study skills and learning styles.

If there is enough funding, a better way of teaching the professional content courses is to form curriculum and teaching teams consisting of the Chinese and Anglophone colleagues. Such teams could maximize the strengths of the individual Chinese teachers, minimize their perceived weaknesses by pairing them with native English speakers and give students an authentic communicative EFL academic learning environment. This team configuration could offer the Chinese teachers an opportunity to work closely with their Anglophone counterparts, thus providing ongoing professional development to enhance their skills for the future when the Chinese teaching staff assumes total responsibility for content-based instruction. The Chinese teachers could learn from the Anglophone partners general teaching methods, Anglophone teaching styles and content-based instructional techniques.

Staff development has general implications for all content-based EFL programs. Pre-service training sessions must include in-depth discussions of the general theoretical principles of content-based EFL instruction and specific applications to the selected context. Presentations of the academic skills, curriculum and sample lesson plans which provide models of how to integrate language and content in the skill areas by teachers experienced in content-based EFL instruction can help new teachers move from the theoretical principles to the actual classroom application (see Brinton et al, 1989; Snow, 1991; Met, 1998). Pre-service training sessions can also offer an opportunity to involve content professors more actively in the program. For example,

the sessions can provide an opportunity for the content professor to guide the language instructors on activities they wish to cover in the language classes. Conversely, these sessions can provide language instructors with a chance to give the content instructors feedback on items such as the accessibility of the reading materials to EFL learners and to discuss the amount of material which can be realistically covered. Finally the pre-service sessions could also provide an ideal time to reach a consensus among the team members about the role of the content course. As we have pointed out in Chapter Two and Chapter Five, ESP teaching has the similar problems of the staff development and the cooperation between the EFL teachers and the content teachers.

Staff development must be an ongoing process. In-service training should be built into the program design to ensure continuity in the implementation and to deal with practical issues and problems which are bound to arise. It is especially important that the underlying philosophy of content-based EFL instruction should be periodically reinforced. Demanding teaching loads are a fact of life in most settings, and there is a natural tendency given time restrictions to slip back to more traditional teaching methods which do not comply with the principles of content-based EFL innovation. Coordination time must be built into these programs to provide instructors with extended opportunities for lesson planning and material development. Finally, strong and effective leadership, especially when the teaching staff is inexperienced, can ensure that language and content objectives are followed and that instructional team works in harmonious and effective coordination and cooperation.

V. Approval and support from educational administration.

Introducing an innovation anywhere is a difficult task. Setting wheels into motion to implement content-based EFL immersion in China's higher education is likely to be a difficult process. Success depends not only on a committed and qualified teaching staff, but also in large part on the sustained support, both financial and philosophical, of the educational administration (see Fullan, 1991; Morrison, 1998; Biggs, 1999; Deem, 2001).

With financial support and relatively sufficient funding, staff development will become easier. Pre-service and in-service training for both content and language teaching staff will become possible. Up-to-date authentic textbooks, teaching material and teaching aids could be purchased directly from the Anglophone countries or developed by the teaching staff themselves. Even the logistical problems could become easier to solve. As Brinton et al (1989:20) point out, content-based EFL immersion assumes specific orientations for all teachers involved in terms of teacher training, curriculum/syllabus design and material development. Release time and/or additional remuneration for both language and content teachers is needed for curriculum planning and development of teaching materials in content-based EFL immersion teaching. All this means that support from educational administration must be available for the coordination and careful planning involved in the integrated curricula for the language and subject matter courses. A more important administrative issue is that the selection of content instructors must get the approval and support from the heads of more than one department and the whole institution since content instructors need to be particularly sensitive to the EFL learners' learning goals and abilities.

We must all realise that effective content-based EFL immersion teaching is a collective responsibility for which the institution as a whole is ultimately responsible and which it must support through proper resourcing and its reward systems. The institution is itself part of a wider system. Institutions should also be rewarded for enhancing and maintaining improved teaching and learning. When institutions are funded on the basis that their students actually do learn well as a result of the teaching they receive, then we may say we have indeed got somewhere (see Biggs, 1999).

If the education system itself supports the innovation, that's the most ideal. Both believing and practising the proposed content-based EFL teaching approach will become easiest where colleagues also believe to teach in that way and if the university environment supports the content-based EFL teaching and reward good teachers for being innovative and reflective (see Morrison, 1998). Then more and more teachers will be in the program together. To realise these goals involves the approval and support from the educational administrations and the education system. As we have discussed in Chapter Three, any new innovation and ideology may come across some

difficulties and pitfalls, so does the proposed content-based EFL immersion approach.

The considerations discussed above about the implementation of the proposed content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach are not at all exhaustive. They are simply some reflections and speculations the author of the thesis could draw based on the relevant literature analysed in Chapter Two, the current EFL situation in China's higher education introduced in Chapter Three and particularly the data presented in Chapter Five showing the respondents' own EFL learning experiences both in China and abroad, their perceptions of the problems existing in China's EFL education in the higher education and the feasibility of the proposed EFL teaching approach. These considerations must be constantly adjusted in the process of the implementation depending on the various specific contexts in China's higher education.

6.4 A summary of the chapter

This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part draws some implications from the data presented and interpreted in Chapter Five. These implications include the following five aspects: (1) ensure sufficient exposure to and create environments for using the target language; (2) develop students' intrinsic motivation in EFL learning; (3) adapt the advantages of the Anglophone teaching and learning styles into China's higher education; (4) preserve the advantages of the traditional Chinese learning styles; and (5) implement and trial the content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach. These five aspects of implications have summarised the most significant points of the data presented in Chapter Five.

The second part of the chapter raises some suggestions that should be taken into account when the proposed approach is implemented. These considerations also include five aspects. They are: (1) students' English proficiency levels; (2) curriculum planning; (3) evaluations and assessments; (4) pedagogy and cooperation between language and content teachers; and (5) support from educational administrations.

It is worth pointing out that the five aspects of implications from the data and the five

aspects of considerations for the implementation of the proposed approach could be regarded as a continuum. They should all become factors that are to be considered in the process of implementing the content-based EFL immersion approach. Therefore, the integration of the implications from data and the subsequent considerations for implementation could provide a basic framework as to how the proposed EFL teaching could be adapted and implemented in China's higher education.

Chapter Seven

Conclusions

7.1 Introduction

As the last chapter of the thesis, this chapter will be divided into three main sections. Section 7.2 will give a general summary of the whole thesis. Section 7.3 will present some reflections on some limitations of the research and Section 7.4 will discuss some possible future research.

7.2 A general summary of the study

In Chapter One, on the basis of the background and the aim of the study, I put forward the research questions of the study. I pointed out that as a result of the growing trend of globalisation and of closer and closer intercultural contacts and exchanges in the new century, a lingua franca like English becomes a necessity for international communication. China's further economic development requires large numbers of citizens competent in English to gain access to the scientific and technological expertise from the Western developed countries to meet China's economic needs and to push forward its economic progress. But there is a great gap between China's urgent demand for a great number of English speakers and its reality in the great shortage of competent speakers (see 1.1 and 3.5 for more detailed discussions). The reasons why China's education cannot produce enough competent EFL speakers might be that there exist some problems in its EFL education. The overall aim of the thesis is thus to propose a feasible and favourable integrated EFL teaching approach that could help improve China's present EFL education for the non-English majors, who are the greatest EFL learning population in China's higher educational institutions so that more EFL learners could become competent English speakers in

international communication to meet both the country's social, political, economic and educational needs and the students' individual academic and professional needs for English. The research questions were raised around this aim. More specifically, in the study I intended to

- Analyse the Anglophone literature to explore the nature and development of international EFL education and the present EFL pedagogical trend from an international perspective.
- Introduce the EFL pedagogical situation in China's higher education both today and yesterday to point out some existing problems in its EFL education.
- Based on the analysis of the Anglophone literature, propose a more favourable EFL teaching approach suitable for China's specific contexts in its higher education.
- Identify some existing problems in China's EFL education and the feasibility of implementing the proposed EFL teaching approach through the analysis and interpretation of some empirical data.
- Draw some implications from the data and raise some factors that should be considered in the process of implementing the proposed EFL teaching approach.

The theoretical foundations for proposing an integrated EFL teaching approach have been set out in Chapter Two based on the analysis of a wide range of anglophone literature on EFL methodology involving foreign language teaching approaches, bilingual education, immersion, content-based instruction and needs analysis. On the basis of the guiding principles of the various sources of Anglophone literature an integrated EFL teaching approach was proposed to improve China's EFL education in the context of its higher education system. It is suggested that a content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach should be trialled and implemented for the non-English majors in their senior undergraduate and the whole postgraduate study at the key universities of China's major and coastal cities where English is much needed. The approach proposes using English as medium of instruction to teach study skills and academic subjects with the immersion range to cover from 30% to 70% of the curriculum depending on different needs and various contexts.

Because it is hoped that the proposed EFL teaching approach is to be adapted, trialled

and put into practice in China's EFL education, the contextual setting about the EFL education in China was introduced in Chapter Three. First, a historical overview of China's EFL education before 1949, the founding of the People's Republic of China and the development of China's EFL education since then was given. The overview shows that the development of international trade, the advanced science and technology and the introduction of foreign values and ideology were the three motivations for China to implement its foreign language education. The overview also demonstrates that China's EFL education after the founding of the Communist Party of China was politically oriented and that political, social and educational environments could determine more or less the destiny of China's future EFL education. After the historical overview of China's EFL education, its present situation has been discussed. On the one hand, China's open policy and economic development have pushed forward its EFL education. On the other, there still exist some problems in China's EFL education today. The chapter argued that these existing problems are closely associated with China' various social, cultural, political and educational contexts. At the end of the chapter it is pointed out that the possible introduction from another cultural context of a content-based late partial bilingual immersion approach proposed in Chapter Two was based not only on the analysis of the Anglophone literature on EFL methodology, but also on some theories of comparative education and the analysis of the context of China's EFL education.

In order to confirm and identify Chinese EFL learners' views and perceptions on the currently existing problems in China's EFL education, their own EFL learning experiences, and the feasibility of implementing the proposed approach, I chose to carry out hermeneutic research, believing the interpretative paradigm to be consistent with my research aims. I was seeking qualitative rather than quantitative data. Even given the practical constraints of time and funding which I discussed also in Chapter Four, my empirical research generated a considerable amount of original data. I drew on the respondents' EFL learning experiences both when they were studying in China and abroad and also their perceptions of China's EFL education. The data collection instruments were face-to-face semi-structured interviews and email replies. A sample of each may be seen in the appendices. The criteria of assessing qualitative research in the process of collecting data were also discussed in Chapter Four. They involve reliability, validity, triangulation and relevance. Ethical issues that should be observed

in conducting qualitative research were considered. Some strengths and weaknesses of the data collection procedures have also been pointed out in Chapter Four and they will be further discussed and clarified in the subsequent section of this chapter.

In the early planning stages for my study my choice of research instruments was closely related to the method of analysis I would subsequently use. Glaser and Strauss (1967), Spradley (1979), Mostyn (1985) and Silverman (2000) were significant influences in various respects, especially concerning the way in which I carried out my data analysis, the method and process of which I discussed in detail in Chapter Five. Grounded theory and other approaches to qualitative data analysis were the main methods of the data analysis. I drew on the work of various anglophone scholars and researchers on EFL learning integrated with an orientation to content-based EFL immersion for theories which would complement and illuminate my empirical investigation. The selected data represented the concepts which could be identified in the respondents' talk about their experiences and perceptions of the EFL education in China's higher education system. My interpretation of their concepts and the relationships between these concepts was illustrated by the words of the respondents themselves. It was from their own words that I drew examples to support the views expressed by my respondents that studying abroad had brought about some changes in them not only at their English proficiency levels, but also at the level of their academic learning styles. The analysis of the empirical data in Chapter Five suggest that the data have confirmed the feasibility of the proposed content-based late partial EFL immersion approach and the views from the respondents are in conformity with the theoretical and conceptual discussions in Chapter Two and Chapter Three.

In Chapter Six, five implications were drawn from the data presented in Chapter Five and five conditions that should be taken into serious consideration for trialling and implementing the proposed EFL teaching approach were put forward. The implications are: (1) ensure sufficient exposure to and create environments for using the target language; (2) develop students' intrinsic motivation in EFL learning; (3) adapt the advantages of the Anglophone teaching and learning styles into China's higher education; (4) preserve the advantages of the traditional Chinese learning styles; and (5) implement and trial the content-based late partial EFL immersion approach. The considerations include: (1) students' English proficiency levels; (2)

curriculum planning; (3) evaluations and assessments; (4) pedagogy and cooperation between language and content teachers; and (5) support from the educational administrations. The implications and conditions are integrated to explore the ways that are feasible to carry out the content-based late partial EFL immersion approach in China's higher education and thus to provide a framework of what can be involved and included in the approach to help improve China's current EFL education in its higher educational institutions on the basis of China's specific contexts and realities.

In the subsequent sections, I would like to discuss the limitations of the present study and possible future research. Some of the weaknesses of the present study have already been discussed in the section on data collection procedures in Chapter Four on research methodology, but will be further clarified in this chapter.

7.3 Limitations of the study

Carrying out a larger scale study based on the nature and level of the proposed approach had been a long-cherished ambition. However, the fact that I was not financially sponsored to undertake my research had both positive and negative consequences. On the one hand, there was no "hidden agenda" to my enquiries: I was quite simply fascinated and motivated by my EFL teaching profession to find out how the Chinese EFL learners involved in my investigation had learned their English and perceived their EFL education both at home and abroad. On the other hand, devising and conducting a study of this kind meant that I was limited by certain practical constraints, notably of time, funding and China's realities.

While it would have been more preferable and might have offered more significant findings to have conducted a wider range of empirical study with a larger sample, even more so an international study from more Chinese respondents studying in more Anglophone countries, I had to content myself with research mainly in limited regions and mainly rely on my colleagues, friends and students' cooperation for generating my empirical data and follow Mertens' (1998) view that small-scale research could lend itself particularly well to qualitative methods. I took account of these issues in designing and conducting my study. For example, I knew from the outset that my

research would generate data for qualitative rather than quantitative analysis, if only because of the small numbers of respondents likely to be involved. However, recognition of this meant that I worked very much on the detail of my respondents' concepts and I feel confident that I have presented an acceptable interpretation of their replies, have been able to "stand in their shoes", as it were, and to gain a privileged insight into the way in which they see the world. My interest was in interpreting meaning, not just interviewing, recording and receiving some messages. Quantitative studies do not yield this depth of analysis. As Honess (quoted in Beail, 1985:244) points out, "an intensive study of individuals is the route par excellence for developing and testing general propositions concerning behaviour or experience".

Another difficulty associated with my study is the fact that what is proposed has not been really trialled and implemented in China. Although the interviews could allow the respondents to reflect upon their experiences of learning English and their academic subjects inside and outside the classroom both in China and abroad and although the research could seek causal links between their experiences and learning and explain them from the EFL learners' views (Mertens, 1998:160), the evidence for the future implementation of the approach is still nebulous. However, in a country where so little research in this respect has been carried out and where the necessity for improving its EFL education is widely agreed, it seems that any attempt to uncover relevant and useful data is better than none. What's more, the popular recognition that there should be some change in the teaching styles of China's EFL education makes it more likely, more convenient and more useful to implement any future changes in pedagogy or assessment on the basis of as much empirical knowledge about the present situation as possible.

The fact that only the semi-structured focused interviews and some email replies were used as the techniques of the empirical study might be appropriate for the early stage of research when the proposed approach has not been really put into practice (see Brenner et al, 1985). If access is possible, it might be better to employ and combine more varieties of research techniques to conduct further and future researches. As my purpose in the present research is only to propose an integrated EFL teaching approach that could be implemented in China's higher education, it might be difficult for such a small piece of initial research to aggregate different varieties of data at such

an early stage (see Silverman, 2000). That's why I gave up some other varieties of research techniques and finally decided to use only the research interviews and some email replies as my research techniques.

I have decided not to conduct a longitudinal study as the practical issues and constraints would have made the process of the data collection and analysis virtually impossible for me. However, in working through the data I do have, I discovered that my respondents have already made explicit reference to the progress and improvement of both their EFL learning and their academic learning they have experienced and perceived in themselves over the time they have been studying abroad. Also they are able to give retrospective reflections and recalls to their EFL learning at home. They all speak of their personal and professional development of studying abroad. I consider this to be both valid and relevant in respect of the concepts being examined when I discuss my respondents' statements.

As I have already pointed out in Chapter Four, being obliged to draw my respondents from among my close colleagues, friends and students had both advantages and disadvantages during the fieldwork. As Goward says:

> Ethnographic fieldwork is subjective both in the sense that the ethnographers report selectively what they are predisposed to see, hear and record from the flood of words and events that wash over them every day in the field; and in the sense that the kind and quality of information which comes their way depends to a very large extent on the kind and quality of relationships between anthropologists and their informants (in Ellen, 1984:118)

The advantage was that access to my respondents was generally not a problem. I knew them very well and experienced the empathy between the respondents and me. But that may at times be a disadvantage. I continue to wonder to what extent my relationship with my respondents hindered, rather than helped, the interview and analysis process. I have mentioned this in Chapter Four and Chapter Five, but return to it here as I do feel it was a limitation to my study. Because I was the only researcher, I had no opportunity for standardisation or comparison of any kind of my findings with those of anyone else. I am not convinced that I have been able to eliminate my personal bias from either the ways in which I conducted interviews with them, or the way in which I analysed the data they produced. Sarchy (in Ellen,

1984:129) speaks of the particular difficulties of the balance to be struck between empathy and detachment.

There are very few negative comments at all from any of the respondents. I wonder to what extent I was really able to find out my respondents' honest views, to what extent they were "doctored" for my consumption, and whether I, as a known researcher to them, made the factor of "social acceptability" stronger. Goward (quoted in Ellen, 1984:116) reports the frustration of a number of ethnographers in this respect when he says: "Berreman, for example, discovered that some people were more concerned about creating the 'right' impression on him than others." However, I do believe that my study is a fair representation of my respondents' views. Ellen (1984:149) has summarised work in this area and highlights the importance of respondents' rights to consultation and feedback. I took account of this and have consulted my respondents, who are satisfied that they have been fairly portrayed. They are also satisfied that the level of anonymity in my writing up (Ellen, 1984:138) is sufficient to protect their identities. All I can say at this point is that I was aware of this potential bias throughout and have endeavoured to eradicate its negative effects on my findings.

Reflection, retrospection and also introspection were the features of my study, both for me and for my respondents. I have no doubt about the significant value of the data I have drawn in furthering my own learning and research in that it has in me an "emergence of a new self-awareness born out of an awareness of the relative nature of values and of the universal aspect of human nature" (Yoshinkawa, 1978, quoted in Kim, 1988:145).

In my conclusions about the value of this kind of research I would add that it had undoubtedly been of benefit to my respondents, too. During the research process they have engaged themselves in "cognitive mirroring", exploring their own structuring of meaning (Beail, 1985:271) and they have been offered an opportunity to narrate and reflect upon the narration, to analyse and interpret (Zarate et al, 1996:85).

7.4 Future research

As I have just said in the previous section of this chapter, it might be more satisfying to have a larger sample to produce more significant findings and it might be better to combine and complement more varieties of research techniques to conduct further research. In the future research, first of all, various questionnaires for quantitative quasi-experimental analysis could be designed. For example, questionnaires before the implementation could be used to analyse students' EFL learning needs. An on-going questionnaire during the implementation could lead to adjustments and improvements as it proceeds. The end-of-course questionnaire could provide a type of evaluation. As I mentioned in Chapter Six, various types of evaluation questionnaires to be integrated with various types of assessments could provide effective feedback on the results of content-based EFL immersion instruction for further improvements, thus pushing forward the quality of teaching (see Clapham, 2000; Nedkova, 2000).

In conducting quasi-experimental quantitative analysis, various control groups should be compared with the experimental groups (see Campbell and Stanley, 1966) at the various stages of the implementation to test whether the goals of content-based EFL immersion have been reached. For example, (1) the group who have been receiving instruction of content-based EFL immersion could be compared with the group that have not received the kind of instruction; (2) the group who are receiving the traditional EFL instruction could be compared with the group who are receiving content-based EFL instruction; (3) the group who are receiving systematic content-based EFL immersion education following what is discussed in Chapter Six including the content of both the general academic subjects and the students' professional academic subjects of their majoring area could be compared with the group who are receiving content-based instruction for only one or two professional academic subjects in the students' own majoring study area.

In the process of trialling and implementing content-based EFL immersion education, longitudinal studies might be employed to test the progress students have been making and whether the teaching objectives have been realised. In addition to the quasi-experimental quantitative analysis discussed above, qualitative research techniques such as various types of interviews, classroom observations, needs analysis and action research (see Robinson, 1991; Cohen et al, 2000; Allwright, 2000; Brindley, 2000; Nunan, 2000) should be used in the longitudinal study at the same

time.

Whatever research techniques or instruments are to be used in the future research of the implementation, they should begin on a small scale at first to take account of the reality and feasibility in China's context of its higher education system. In fact, as I said in Chapter Six, it is more prudent to start research, trialling and implementing the approach on a smaller scale, piloting changes with a specific student population at first, starting even with one lesson, one unit, one subject. Only when sufficient types of valid and reliable research techniques and various means of valid and reliable evaluations and assessments have been adopted so that almost the same satisfactory and convincing results can be obtained through different methods of analysis and only when various factors including the logistic and administrative ones have been taken into serious considerations could we then consider further research and implementation on a larger scale. We could then begin to consider designing syllabus and a whole curriculum. Each stage of trialling and implementation should be preceded, supported and followed by sufficient investigations, evaluations and research. In fact, while the content-based EFL immersion approach is being implemented, research should become a never-ending cyclic process with each stage of implementation supported by convincing research results for further improvements and future research. In this respect, the Canadian bilingual immersion education (see Chapter Two for further discussion) has set up a good example as it has generated a huge amount of research (for example, Baker, 1996; Baker and Jones, 1998; Swain, 1998; Swain and Lapkin, 1998).

As we have discussed in Chapter Six, introducing an innovation anywhere is a difficult task. Setting wheels into motion to implement content-based EFL immersion in China's higher education is likely to be a difficult process. Success depends not only on a committed and qualified teaching staff, but also in large part on the sustained support of the educational administration. Seen from these perspectives, we should also need sufficient research on innovation theories and management theories as the effectiveness of the approach needs to consider students, teachers and educational policy-makers together. It is important for them to be aware of how their present and future activity not only concerns students in classrooms but also fits into the overall language policy of the nation (see Fullan, 1991; Musumeci, 1997;

Morrison, 1998; Biggs, 1999). Educational administrators should be made aware that implementing the approach should be educationally feasible as it can lead to higher achievement for students across the curriculum. Content-based EFL immersion maintains their home language and culture, fosters self-esteem and self-identity by developing a more positive attitude to their academic learning. Such higher achievement may enable better usage of human resources and less wastage of talents. Higher esteem resulting from learning the content-based EFL immersion courses may also relate it to increased social harmony and peace.

While there is reason to be optimistic about the future of the approach to be implemented in China's higher educational context, it would be wrong to be complacent. Attitudes and circumstances could change very easily and what is acceptable today may be condemned tomorrow (see Musumeci, 1997; Morrison, 1998). While data obtained from the classroom is relatively easily quantified, the external factors influencing attitude and motivation of students and teachers are not. It is now true that while the national education and economic systems have become a catalyst for the development of EFL education, bilingual education itself is not openly advocated probably because traditional English language education for non-English majoring university students in China is not considered true bilingual education. The proposed content-based late partial bilingual immersion education has not been really recognised by most educators though a few have started to teach some professional academic subjects in English at the postgraduate level for non-English majors.

Once the general theoretical principles have been set up, the implications from the data drawn and the considerations for implementation put forward, the educational authorities and administrations must undertake to create conditions for putting specific measures consistent with them into practice. Specifically, if the content-based late partial bilingual immersion program is to be successfully adapted in China's higher education system, the relevant Chinese governmental agencies must undertake to publicise its merits widely in terms that can be comprehended readily by various sectors of the community. When careful research and evaluation studies have been carried out to monitor students' progress and other expected and unexpected outcomes, teachers, as well as parents and students, should be convinced of the virtues of any changes to the present traditional language-driven, teacher-focused and

examination-dominated EFL teaching styles and approaches. The implementation of the educational measures must of course be responsive to feedback gained from these research studies. All things considered, there is no reason why we cannot benefit from the approach.

7.5 A summary of the chapter

This last chapter of the thesis has not only given a final summary of the whole thesis by reiterating the aims of the study as well as the key points of each chapter. More importantly it has also pointed out some limitations of the research resulting from some practical constraints of time, funding and the contextual realities. In addition, the chapter has also provided some guidelines and directions for possible future research.

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Appendix I:

A Pre-interview or Pre-reply Letter

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms _____

As part of the requirements for the degree of the Doctor of Education which I am studying for in the School of Education, University of Durham, I shall be undertaking some small-scale research to be written up as a thesis. The thesis will be titled "Teaching English in China's Higher Education ---- a Content-based Late Partial Bilingual Immersion Approach". To put it in a simple way, this approach is based on using English as a medium of instruction to teach academic subjects such as chemistry, physics, trade, law etc for some senior (third or fourth year) undergraduate and postgraduate students in China's key universities of major or coastal cities. The proposed range of this content-based immersion is to cover from 30% to 70% of their academic curriculum and the purpose is to improve their English and academic study skills through the immersed content study of their academic subjects.

Part of the research will be carried out as case studies of comparing some Chinese students' and teachers' experience and perceptions of learning or teaching English and their academic subjects in China, the USA, and the UK. The main instrument will be one-to-one answers or interviews to my open-ended questions. To enable me to carry out the research, I am now asking you to spend some time answering my questionnaire or participating in my interviews. This is really a good way for me to find out about your experience and perceptions of learning or teaching English or academic subjects in China and abroad. I'll appreciate you very much if you can tell me as much as you can. **Complete confidentiality and anonymity** will be guaranteed and all names disguised in my report on the research. So you can tell the truth. I would of course be happy to provide you with a copy of my findings later on. I would really be grateful if you are willing to assist me with my research which could prove useful not only to my personal research but also to China's English language education, benefiting Chinese students' as well as the teachers' and the country's needs and interests.

I am looking forward to your early reply or consent either as an interview or an answer to my questionnaire. If you have anything you are not clear about or to ask about, don't hesitate to contact me either in person or by email or letter or by telephone. My email address is w.h.yu@durham.ac.uk. My residence address is Room 104, 29 Old Elvet, Durham, DH1, 3HN and my telephone number is (+44) 191 3830104.

Thanks in advance and best wishes

Sincerely yours,

Weihua Yu
Ed.D student, cohort 3
School of Education
University of Durham

Appendix II:

Questions and Triggers (for interviews and email replies)

(There are altogether 23 questions and try your best to answer all of them. You may answer these questions either in Chinese or in English)

I. Language Learning and Target Culture Awareness

1. Why do you study English? And what do you think Chinese students study English for? (in the past and at present, reasons and purposes)

2. In your experience of teaching and/or learning English or just take you as an example, how many hours do you think Chinese students usually spend learning English every day and every week? (in China, in USA/UK, any differences at home and abroad)

3. What competence (ability) do you think an English language learner should acquire for appropriate and effective oral and written communication? (linguistic, intercultural and academic)

4. What do you think are the differences between learning English in class in China and abroad?(attitude of teachers, exposure to the language, formal grammar, learner dependence/independence, environment)

5. Have you changed your mind about the best way to learn or teach English after you came to USA/UK? If so, what has made you change your mind?

6. What difficulties do you feel living in USA/ UK?(language problems—dialects, accents, academic writing, food, finance, culture shock)

7. What differences do you find between American/British and Chinese culture? (values, beliefs, behaviours, traffic, social activities like pubs, clubs and societies, formality/informality, collectivism/individualism, social customs and habits.)

II. Academic Study

8. (A) What did you do when you could not understand the teacher's lecturing content in class? (B) and what would you say when you could not answer the teacher's questions in class? (C) Are there any differences in raising and answering questions in class between USA/UK and China?

9. What differences do you think exist between the teaching and learning styles and methods in UK/USA and China?

10. Which type of teaching and learning styles and methods do you prefer and why?

11. What academic difficulties do you think Chinese students would come across when you come to UK/USA to study for a degree? (learning difficulties, give some examples from your own experience.)

12. (A) What do you think are the advantages of traditional Chinese teaching and learning styles and methods in its educational system? (B) Or are there any advantages compared with the Anglophone teaching and learning styles? (Take you as an example to illustrate.)

13. What do you think are the possibilities and difficulties of adapting the Anglophone teaching and learning styles and methods into China's context to improve its quality education?

III. Content-based Immersion

(**Contextual cues**: to put it in a simple way, a **content-based immersion approach** is based on using English as a medium of instruction to teach academic subjects such as chemistry, physics, trade, law etc for some senior (third or fourth year) undergraduate and postgraduate students in China's key universities of major or coastal cities. The proposed range of this content-based immersion is to cover from 30% to 70% of their academic curriculum and the purpose is to improve their English and academic study skills through the immersed content study of their academic subjects.)

14. What problems do you think the English language education in China's Higher Education has ?(lecturing methods and styles, teacher-centredness, exams, rote-learning, facts cramming)

15. Is it necessary to carry out the proposed content-based immersion approach in China's Higher Education? (advantages and disadvantages, economic needs and students' needs) (B) and is it also feasible?

16. What do you think are the possibilities and difficulties to carry out the proposed content-based immersion approach in China's higher education? (teachers, students, administrators, resources, feasibility)

17. Would you prefer the content-based immersion approach to the traditional method of teaching academic subjects in Chinese where English is used only as one subject at school or university ? (Give some reasons)

18. What criteria or qualifications should be used for selecting a content teacher to teach a content-based immersion approach? For example, how important do you feel it is to employ a native speaker to be a teacher to teach the proposed content-based late partial immersion approach in China's universities?

19. (A) What do you think of the idea of forming a team group (for example, a bilingual native Chinese from the English language profession, a native English speaker, and a Chinese content teacher teaching specialised subjects) to teach the proposed content-based late partial immersion approach in China's higher

education? (B) and what do you think are the difficulties if we form a team group to teach the proposed content-based late partial immersion approach? (for example, the bilingual Chinese teacher might not understand the content subject; the content teacher's English is not good enough.)

20. At what stages of a student's academic study do you think is suitable to carry out the content-based immersion approach? (primary school, junior middle school, senior middle school, undergraduate, postgraduate, and also give some specific reasons or examples)

21. Of the total or partial, early or late content-based immersion approaches, which one is more suitable to be adopted under China' context ? (reasons and possibilities)

    (**Contextual Cues**: total immersion means using English as the medium of instruction for all school subjects while partial immersion means using English only for part of the subjects; early immersion means beginning to let children learn school subjects in English in their early age while late immersion means in their later age.)

22. Do you think it possible and necessary to integrate some intercultural concepts into the instruction for such highly academic subjects as chemistry or physics? Why?

23. Could you think out some other ways of improving China's existing and dominating English language teaching methods and approaches ?

This is the end of the questionnaire and thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix III

A Sample Email Reply (from Stuart, February 2, 2001)

I. Language Learning

1. Why do you study English? And what do you think Chinese students study English for? (reasons and purposes)

Since the issue of globalization is rising in terms of economy and culture, it's very useful for us to study English. Because English is regarded as one of the most popular languages throughout the world, and honestly, it is a very useful communicational tool. In China, the people who own specific skills such as IT skills, fluent oral and written English skills will have more chances and opportunities to get a perspective job.

My original purpose to study English is simply because English is one of my favorite subjects. Compared with the Science subjects, I'd like to choose English as my major, at least I feel better when I study English.

As for the other Chinese students, in my opinion, their reasons to study English are various. Some might think it has great help with their future, some like me might choose it just because they're interested in it. Some might study it because their parent told them to do so, some might even just follow the popular trend. Say, every one is studying English, I can't be out of date, I'm going to study it as well.

There're so many reasons why Chinese students study English. I can't simply use one sentence to sum up all the reasons. But any way, English' s become a very important subject in China, no matter the students like it or not, they have to study it , at least in secondary schools.

2. In your experience of teaching and/or learning English or just take you as an example, how many hours do you think Chinese students usually spend learning English every day and every week? (in China, in USA/UK, any differences at home and abroad)

It all depends. Some students who're more interested in English will spend more time on it, while those who don't like English will spend less time on it.

I, for example, will spend more than 4 hours per day, roughly 30 hours per week on studying English now, when I was still at the beginning stage, I spent more times on it.

Since I come to UK, everyday I have to use English, I just can't simply count out how many hours I spend on studying English. In terms of academic study, roughly I'll have 8-10 hours on it every week.

Certainly, there're great differences at home and aboard in terms of EFL learning. Firstly, the language and cultural environment here do great help to improve my listening and understanding. Secondly, the frequency of using English is several times more than that in China and thus can improve the so-called English sense. By using English in daily life, my vocabularies are enlarged. Generally speaking, in order to learn English well, the best way is to put

ourselves into the English environment. Yet in China, I can hardly find the English spoken environment.

3. What competence (ability) do you think an English language learner should acquire for appropriate and effective oral and written communication? (linguistic, intercultural and academic)

Firstly, and most importantly, vocabulary is the basic requirement. Secondly, the language sense, which is far form easy to be achieved, is also very important. Furthermore, the confidence and interest in English should be taken into account.

4. What do you think are the differences between learning English in class in China and abroad? (attitude of teachers, exposure to the language, formal grammar, learner dependence/independence)

In my opinion, the main differences can be included into there aspects: first, the attitude of teachers and learners. In China, the teachers' words are always right, or at least most of them are right in students' eyes. The teachers' point of views are authorities. Students will accept them rather than question them. The students' initiatives are relatively low. In the class, they would just sit and listen to the teachers, they would seldom raise their questions and express their own ideas. Most teachers in China will not accept the students' idea if their ideas are not coherent with the textbooks. Hence the students' creativities and imaginations are greatly deprived. Here, I'm not tending to criticize the teachers' teaching methods in China, what I mean is that China's educational system and traditions constrain the students' initiatives to some extent.

On the other hand, when I come to UK, I found that the atmosphere here are totally different compared with that in China. In the class, students feel free to raise questions and express their own ideas without hesitation. The teachers in the class will let the questions being discussed by the students rather than impose their ideas on the students.

In China, my efforts were mainly concentrated on enlarging the vocabularies, and improving reading comprehensions. Since I've been here, my attentions are transferred to the daily practices such as oral practice, listening, etc. My study attitude didn't change much, but I have to confess that I tend to be more independent form the teachers. What I mean here is that self-study become more important to me, since the systems here encourages self-study.

5. Have you changed your mind about the best way to learn or teach English after you came to USA/UK? If so, what has made you change your mind?

No, the best way for me to learn English is to practice as much as I can, to use them in daily life. Since I've been in UK for 3 months, I still think this is the best way for me to improve my English, and it works.

II. Academic Study

6. What do you think are the differences between learning your academic subjects in USA/UK and China? (difficulty of academic writing in English, student-centredness, lecturing styles, student participation, use of resources, different assessment, immersion of language, workload, assignment)

In UK, most of the things are DIY-do it yourselves, so as to the study. Students are asked to find answers and resources by themselves. Teachers will just provide assistance or some suggestions instead of giving fixed answers to students. In an other word, the study is tend to be student-centred.

As to the use of resources, in UK, students are encouraged to make full use of every resources such as computers, library. While in China, students are told to focus on textbooks, other books may be the references, but not necessarily recommended.

Since I'm not quiet familiar with the assessment in UK, I can't make comparison between those in UK and in China.

The workload in China is much more heavier than that in UK. Thus Chinese students will have less time on reading extracurricular books, but on the other hand, Chinese students' basic knowledge and theoretical knowledge are more solid.

7. What differences are there between the teaching methods and lecturing styles in UK/USA and China?

Teaching methods in China is single-oriented: the teachers teach, and students accept. The teaching methods in UK are more open, and mutual-oriented: teachers raise the questions, and discuss with students, usually there're no fixed answers. So long as you can provide sufficient evidence and reasonable explanations with your answer, your answer will be accepted. Lecturing styles in UK is rather open, everyone is free to raise questions whenever they got questions. Students are encouraged to express their own ideas. Comparatively speaking, the lecturing styles in China are more boring and students are trained to accept the idea put forward by the teachers.

8. Which type of teaching and learning styles and methods do you prefer and why?

Certainly, I'll prefer the British and American styles and methods, especially in terms of higher education. This kind of methods can stimulate the students' study interest. Studying with interest is much more efficient and thus can increase the quality of teaching outcomes.

9. What did you do when you could not understand or answer the teacher's questions? Are there any differences between USA/UK and China?

Firstly, I would try my best to find the answers by myself, for instance, I'll find some related books and see whether I can find the answers after reading them.

If I still can't find the answer, I'll go directly to the teacher, ask them to explain it for me. I won't just leave the question, I would try my best, through every means, to find out the answers, and to make myself clear about the questions.The second question is not clear, do you want to know the differences on the teacher`s questions or other differences?

10. What academic problems do you think Chinese students will run into when they go abroad?

The language problem is the main one. They will probably have difficulties on understanding the different accents in UK.

Culture shock might effect a little bit, but according to my experience, this won't cause much inconvenience to Chinese students.

11. What do you think are the possibilities and difficulties of adapting the Anglophone teaching and learning styles and methods into China's context to improve its quality education?

In China's context, to hire qualified teachers to teach content-based courses are far from easy. Suppose there're qualified teachers, the problem on how much salary should they get will be the key thing to attract these teachers. The reasonable wages will be the most effective incentive to the qualified teachers. However, whether the Chinese government is willing to invest such amount of money or not, I personally doubted. Secondly, the facilities in the schools and universities are neither sufficient nor update. For instance, few schools got their own library. Even though some have libraries, yet in the library, the references can't meet the students' satisfaction and thus will be a great inconvenience to the study process. Take my fomer university as an example, in the library, the useful books are usually just one copy. As for the computer cluster, in China, few universities can provide a well-equipted computer cluster which enables students to surf the net. In short, neither the software(qualified teachers) nor the hardware (facilities) are mature enough for large-scale implementation of the approach in China. There's still a long way to go if we are going to adapt the UK's style of education. However, we could begin on a very snmall scale. That might be possible and more realistic.

IV. Content-based Immersion

(Contextual cues: to put it in a simple way, a content-based immersion approach is based on using English as a means of instruction to teach academic subjects such as chemistry, physics, trade, law etc for some undergraduate and postgraduate students in China's key universities of major cities. The proposed range of this content-based immersion is to cover about half of their academic curriculum and the purpose is to improve their English and academic study skills through the immersed content study of their academic subjects.)

12. What problems do you think the English language education in China's

Higher Education have ?(lecturing methods and styles, teacher-centredness, exams, rote-learning, cramming)

For me, the most annoying problem is the teacher-centredness methods which greatly dampened the students enthusiasm on study.

13. **Is it feasible and necessary to carry out the proposed content-based immersion approach in China's Higher Education? (advantages and disadvantages, economic needs and students' needs)**

The idea and proposal sounds really good and attractive, yet in my opinion, it's not so practical to apply it into China's Higher Education on a large scale at present. Reasons are as followed. Firstly, for the students, some knowledge of the specialized subjects such as chemistry, mathematics etc. are difficult to understand even when they are taught in the mother language, if they are taught in English, the situation will be worse, that would just like adding insult to injured, students would encounter more difficulties concerning not only the problems of subject theories but also the language barrier. The language barrier will have negative effects for the students on understanding the courses. Secondly, the qualified teachers who possess both the special subject knowledge and perfect English are rare. How many teachers are capable to teach students for the specialized subject, and what is the quality of the courses they gave, I personally doubted. What's more, the possibility that Chinese government will adopt this approach is not optimistic, i.e. in order to assure the national identity cultural education, Chinese government might prefer encouraging students to study in Chinese, and courses taught in Chinese rather than in English. This approach, in my opinion, would improve the students' English greatly and could become feasible on small scale for some courses at some most influential key universities. Yet, on the other hand, it might sometimes add some barriers on the study to some extent.

14. **What problems do you think could occur if we carry out the proposed content-based immersion approach? (teachers, students, administrators, resources, feasibility)**

My answer has given to the last question. Again, the problems are mainly focused on the competence of teachers and students' faculty of understanding and their English proficiency level.

15. **At what stages of a student's academic study do you think is suitable to carry out the content-based immersion approach? (primary school, junior middle school, senior middle school, undergraduate, postgraduate, and also give some specific reasons or examples)**

I think, this approach is much more suitable for the students who have higher academic study such as undergraduates, postgraduates. The prerequisite of this approach is English-based. Only those with solid and better English knowledge can benefit from this approach.

16. **Of the total or partial, early or late content-based immersion approaches, which one is more suitable to be adopted under China' context ? (reasons and possibilities. Note: total immersion means using English as the medium of instruction for all school subjects while partial immersion means using English only for part of the subjects; early immersion means beginning to let children learn school subjects in English in their early age while late immersion means in their later age.)**

In my opinion, under China's context, the partial and early immersion is more suitable. Reasons: (1) Due to the government restriction, it's difficult to adopt the total immersion approaches in China. (2) The partial approaches can both benefit the students to improve their English, and maintain their mother language. (3) The earlier a person begins to study a language, the easier he or she masters this language, hence theoretically, this approach should be carried out among the children who are still in their early age. However, the fact in China is that children begin to study English after 11 years old. Those who have better English level are mainly those with higher education such as undergraduates or postgraduates. There's a paradox here, it's hard for me to simply draw a conclusion that partial and early immersion is absolutely superior.

17. **Do you think it possible and necessary to integrate some intercultural concepts into the instruction for such highly academic subjects as chemistry or physics? Why?**

Yes, it is possible and necessary to do so. Since the intensive globalization and the rapidly-changing world arouse public attention, we have no reason to reject other culture's strong points. Integrating some intercultural concepts into the instruction might help the students to analyze problems form different dimensions.

18. **Would you prefer the content-based immersion approach or the traditional method of teaching academic subjects in Chinese where English is used only as one subject at school or university ? (Give some reasons)**

I prefer the proposed approach. It's rather new and attractive. It may improve students' average English level. Yet this problem is still problematic. Take Hongkong as an example, many schools use English as the teaching language. Many students would regard English as a superior language and thus reluctant to study their mother language.

19. **What criteria should be used for selecting a content teacher to teach a content-based immersion approach? For example, how important do you feel it is that the teacher to be a native speaker?**

Indeed, if the teacher is a native speaker, the problem on language is solved. I personally assumed that the native speakers would be better to give courses. But

the premise is that this native speaker should have sufficient knowledge of the specialized subjects.

20. What teaching methods or lecturing styles do you plan to use to teach a content academic course if you are employed to be a content teacher for a academic subject?

I would probably adopt a more democratic style—student centered style.

21. Could you think out some ways of improving the existing and dominating Grammar-translation method still used in China now to teach some ESP (English for specific purposes) courses?

Sorry, I have no idea.

This is the end of the questionnaire and thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix IV
A Sample Interview

17/02/2001 Jane (广州) Shinclif hall, Professor of law, Interview 7

A. 能否谈谈你最初学习英语的目的是什么？你觉得中国学生学习英语的目的是什么？

B.最初学英语并没有很明确的目的，只是有这样一门课要学，到了高中是因为要参加高考，英语是一门重要科目，所以你就必须要学好。到了大学后，一二年级时，因为当时想，我不用考研究生，英语学习也就不是很重视，一二年级的英语学习基本是在吃高中的老本。到了三四年级分开学，很多学生学英语的目的是为了应付研究生考试，像我这样不用考研究生的只好去学专业英语。学习专业英语对于自己以后从事工作有些帮助。那是我从事专业英语学习的目的。到后来到复旦学习新专业，复旦大学对英语要求比较高，而且我们还有一门专门用英语讲授的真正的专业课"英国商法"，那时候学习英语就不仅仅觉得只是一种压力了，而且也是一种动力了。就是说如果你对英国商法要有更深入的了解的话，你就必须要把英语学好。也就是从这时候开使我学习英语才开使由被动变为了主动。当你想要了解国外的东西时，学习外语的动力就来了。学好外语就能更好、更直接地了解外国的东西，怎样了解？一个是通过阅读，另外就是通过交流，如何实现与外国的同行教师进行交流？要交流就必须把英语学好。

A. 在国内时平均每周学英语的时间有多少呢？

B. 大学本科阶段每周4节英语课3年级至4年级每周才2学时。第二学位时每周8学时英语课，来英国后是自己一生中花在英语学习上时间最多的。每周听六学时的课，2天跟不同的人用英语讨论问题。每周16小时纯粹学英语的时间是绝对保证的。国内学英语主要是在课堂上学，而课后就没有英语环境了，而在这里课堂学完后，课后的大多数环境也迫使你必须讲英语，用英语交流并用英语进行逻辑思考，所以这种语言环境是国内很难找到的。即便是国内这种模拟的语言环境，所能学习到的也不一定特别地道，所以我觉得在这里虽然我们时间仅几个月，在英国阅读方面进步可能还不是特别大，但是在听力和会话方面可以说是取得了一定的进步。而这进步是很明显感觉得到的。

A. 从你个人的感受来说，你觉得学习英语最佳的方法是什么？

B. 最佳方法不好说，比较好的方法就是要有很多 practice 的机会，也许在国内学英语你只能去看，有时候只能去瞎读。但有时在这里说出来读出来的东西别人未必能懂，通过多说多交流，而且尽量要求你所谈话的对象给你指正一些所犯的错误，然后你再多 repeat, practice几次，再回忆几遍，那以后遇到这种情况，遇到这种句子我就会深有感触，有了一些 experience, 这样的 experience 比你纯粹 的死记硬背 效果来的要好。

A. 你觉得在与英国人的交往过程中，语言能力、跨文化交际能力和学习能力这三种都重要呢，还是哪种更重要？

B. 我觉得这三种都必不可少。.因为只具备其中的1项或2相都不能说你能成功地实现你的学习目的。我觉得我生活中会话的能力比较差，因为我在大学里有意识地学习过专业英语，然后用也是专业， 教授 的 也是专业英语，所以对专业英语到不是觉得特别吃力。反而是对他们生活中常用的口语时常会感到 confused ,而在 自己的生活 用词方面 更是有时感到 confused, 因为我 在国内没有机会，没 有纯 粹的 这种 英国式的或者是西方式的生活环境，所以感觉到这里生活中的一些会话，一些成语，或者独特的表达方式等，对于我来说我就觉得很陌生。那另外还有一个是不同文化之间的理解问题，我不知道是否对。很多人都讲到了这个问题。但从我这几个月的感受看来，我好象没有觉得这方面有多大的障碍。好比举例来说，你讲话时直接地问： “你昨天去喝酒了吗？” 我觉得这很正常。但 有些中国人 就跟我 说 不要这样问外国人，他们会不高兴的。我认为这有什么不高兴，我又没有说他是去酗酒了，我只是说：“你经常去酒吧喝酒吗？” “Do you like drinking? Do you like going to the pubs?” 我觉得 这都 是很 正常的问题，但有些中国人他们就认为你不应该这样问他们这些问题 it is not so polite, 但是我 就没有觉得 是 一种 不礼 貌的方式。而且就我这里周围的人士对我这句话的反应。他们也好象觉得没有什么。我这样问他反到是如果我们自己觉得不好意思、不礼貌、很尴尬的话，他们又会感到不可思义。那我觉得是不是有些中国人来到西方，在他们来之前觉得跨文化差异已经是有所熟悉，但是他们把这个问题看得很严峻、很严重。这样就促使他们在于外国人打交道的时候处处谨慎小心，这无疑有给西方人士造成一种感觉：他们会觉得你非常的 isolated. 这样他们就不 可能跟你深 交下去， 那这样你们就很难成为 close friends, 而且我在 这里我就 觉得并 不是 说只 能是同一专业，或者是同样的学院或办公室的人才会找到交流的共同点，我在这里所交的朋友各方面的朋友我都原意交往，反正我在于他们相处的时候，我是想到什么就要说什么，但是在此之前我会对他们说我是 Chinese。 我说英语时，我会说： When I speak English, I may speak like Chinese and use some Chinese ways of expressions. To do so I may trouble (offend) you. But I hope it does not matter (trouble) you much.

A. 这就证明某种程度上你具备了 intercultural competence。
B. 我就觉得在与他们交谈的时候我就会这样。我会说，反正我不知道我该怎么说，但并不是说我想表达的我不敢说，或者因为怕惹怒他们或者啥的。我就不怕。

A. 英国的课堂教学和中国的课堂教学最大的区别在什么地方。
B. 在中国课堂上学英语很多时候老是提到语法，不过这也是必要的。但是在介绍英语相关知识时，大多数老师是用汉语解释。而这无形中在国内2个小时的英语□课实际上你所得到的英语熏陶可能1个小时还不到，好一点的老师可能一个半小时，但在英国课堂上却是纯粹的学英语，专业课上没有语法讲解(我没有听过语言中心的课，我只是在听专业课)。所有讲课内容全用英语进行。在听专业课时你必须在听课之前把有关的内容预习一下，才能够很好地领会老师上课的内容这样才能参加机会参加课堂讨论，做 assignment, 当然 要想训练听力，也可以丝毫不准备就去听，检测一下自己到底能够听懂多少。

A. 到英国以后，你碰到的最大的困难是什么？
B. 我没有觉得有很困难的东西。当然语言是我来到这里所碰到的最大的麻烦，因为说的能力太弱，听的能力稍好一点。即便你能明白别人说什么，当你想表达你的感受的时候，你就感到很难。说的能力太弱，在国内学英语的时候，可能说写当时成了第一，然后听是第二，读是偶尔进行，然后几乎算是不说。 English speaking is so bad. 说的能力太差。

A. 你觉得英国文化和中国文化最明显的一些差异在什么地方？
B. 英国人在议论问题时对问题的看法更加 open 和 straightforward 一些，也就是说 we 可以 talk about their feelings in a straightforward way。但 Chinese cannot.如果对于中国人来说，或许他有这种感受，但是当他说的时候，或多或少他都会加以掩饰。他有时就干脆说出相反的感觉。所以我说的英国人说“yes”就是“yes”，“no”就是“no”就没有很多的累赘。但是中国人也许说了yes以后还有很多附带的那一些看不见模不着的隐蔽含义。

A. 中国学生和英国学生在不懂老师上课内容时，提问的方式有什么不同吗？
B. 课堂上中国人较少回答老师所问的问题，都是外国学生在回答，中国学生较少回答老师的问题，也不提出问题。实际上可以说中国学生是很好的听众。但不主动问问题，也不主动回答问题。中国学生从小就受熏陶要成为一个好的听众。也就是我们教育小孩听话就是好孩子。“听话”就意味着我说你听。 You can only follow what I say. Then tt's ok (obligation).

A. 英国和中国在教学方式上有什么区别呢？
B. 就法律来说，这里的法律教学在上课前要求学生看(读)看多的案例。如果这些案例你都度不懂，那你就很难明白这些案例争议的事项判决和确立的原则。那这样的话都不去预习，那考试就会通不过。所以这里会逼着学生课前要做大量的预习。但是在中国就没有这个习惯。中国的学生向来就是老师开使讲课了他才开始记笔记。听完课回去复习老师讲的内容就够了，而在英国就法律教学而言是必须预习在先。预习是非常重要的一步，你不预习就听不懂。那么对非英语国家的学生来说，预习尤其是更加重要。预习时还要查阅一些生词。如果不查词典，有些单词听起来就会莫明其妙，陌生，不知所云，你就整堂课下来后不知道老师或教授所说的问题所在，一点收获也没有。

A. 比较这两种方式，即中英两种教学方式，你比较喜欢那种模式？
B. 那我觉得英国的这种教学方式很好。首先在讲课前学习必须预习。预习过程中肯定会碰到一些问题。学生会主动把这些问题记录下来，然后自己进行思考。在思考不通的情况下，课堂上便有机会提问老师，或者与老师进行讨论或者辩论都是可能的。虽然在中国，老师都要求学生预习，大多数学生是不预习的，而是老师讲课时我带着耳朵去听。这样就造成在课堂教学中，中国式的教学方式就是满堂，就是老师不停的说，而学生在下面很安静地听和记，两堂课下

来，如果老师讲的比较有趣，学生还有可能全神惯注地听完下来，但是如果老师讲的不是很好的时候，很多学生就会打磕睡。

A. 中国的教学方式是否有它的优越性呢？
B. 中国的教学方式也有它的优越性。老师会把要掌握的知识系统地、概要地给学生归纳出来，学生便会一目了然。而学生也能很快地知道他所要学习的内容的 key points. 但是在这 里预习时， 在教 授讲课过程中，你就必须事先预习。而且上课时还要仔细地听教授的讲课内容，然后需要自己去抓住其中的 key points.

A. 英国的教育是否有它的弊端呢？
B. 这里也有它的一些弊端。这种讲课方式效果不一定好，但我不知道如何表达这种不太理想的课堂效果。(课堂里好象直接学不到很多东西 -comment)

A. 你觉得把英国的这种教学方式的一些优点吸收到中国的课堂中去是否可能？有什么困难吗？
B. 可能性不是没有，难处非 常大。如 果说仅仅在大学教 育采用这种方式，而中小学没有实施这种方式，我觉得会很难，因为这种教学方式不是一日就 能 定型的，而且学生是否 会接 受这种 方式也不是一 天 就能改变的。它也不 仅仅取决 于你一个 学校 本身， 还有学校以 外的家庭和社会与这些各个方面 都会有很 大的关 系，而 小学，中 学 如果都是采取中国式的教学方式，那么 你到 大学 采 取 英国 式的教学方式，我觉得可能性不会很大，除非学生从小 就能有一个比较放松(当然不一定全盘放松，放开)的宽松的环境，好比说，小学课堂上老师经常说："坐好，不要动，不要讲话，老师要讲课了，老师讲课时不能说话。"而在英国就不可能，如果一个小孩在课堂上讲话，老师不可能说"你不要讲话"，他就会说："某某同学你在说什么，站起来说给 我们大家听听好不好。" 这个小 孩他不会认为自己是犯错误，他会站起来 啪啦啪啦 地把自己想说的话或者 把当时老师 没注意到的或者是当时发生的 事就会一五一十地说 出 来，这即锻练了他一种主动性，也锻练了他课堂积 级发言 的能力。这就是从小培养出来的课堂参与意识，是一种开放式思维， 而不是一种禁锢式思维，跟着老师屁股走的思维，而是有自己的思考和观点的开放式思维。如果我们从小就有一种哪怕是稍微宽松一点的环境的话，到了中学和大学就不是很难吸收英国的这种教学方式了，或者是西方式的 教学方式。

A. 中国的英语教学你觉得存在那些问题呢？
B. 我觉得外语教学的教师很多都没有到国外亲身生活的经历和体验，要想教好外语确实不是一件容易的事情。语言教学本身还是存在一个比较大的问题，也就是实践的机会不够，练习的机会不够。不过有时也很难说，老师也很想给学生机会对话，但是学生也对话不起来，可能是因为学生的英语水平都相当或者是都不算很好，相互用英语交流起来确实有点困难。好比说我想表达自己的情感或者回答老师提出的问题。我不懂怎么回答，问邻坐的同学也都不懂，这样就很难交流。这时如果有在国外有生活经历的老师参与教学，给予实际的例子，而且采取小班教学，这样效果就会好一些。学生就会得到更多的练习机会

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A.你觉得把英语与内容，比如说文化内容，人文内容和专业课内容从30%到70% 结合起来学习是否有必要，有可能呢？
B.必要性是无疑的，可能性大学30%是有可能的。70%就有点困难。毕竟首一个是师资条件就达不到这样高的表标准。在沿海城市重点大学的师资中首先那么70%的教师就应该走出国门。要不然的话，教师都没有走出国门，要想达到70%的课程用英语教授能否实现就很难说了。

A. 你觉得什么的师资才合格教授这样的课程呢？
B.
当然英语语言文学肯定包括英美文化，肯定是要英语专业的师资来讲授，那么这些师资应不难解决，因为 本身英语 专业就 应该学这个的，他们 自 己知道怎样去教。然后一般 介绍西方风俗习惯、人文地理、历史、计算机等的公共课的老师应该也不难解决，因为来自于英语语言文学专业的老师，他们都应该比较熟悉这些方面的内容。他们可以承担这些课程的教学。如果学习英语语言文学的老师对这些内容有足够的兴趣，平时注意收集这方面的一些资料的话，由他们承担这些课程的介绍或者是教学的话，应该说不会很难。但选这些课程的教学老师应该有足够的时间备课。当然不同老师有不同的专攻和兴趣。这些都是人为的差异，也是可以改变的。有些老师就可能很容易地承担起西方风俗习惯、人文地理、历史等课程的教学。关键是其它一些专业性很强的课的英语教学来说，那对专业课的老师要求就 高 了一些。首 先从事 这方面教学的老师专业上的知识要有，而且不仅局限本国内的自己的专业内容，还要了解国外同类专业的情况，另外还要有比较高的英语技能，包括听说读写，尤其是说，这一点对于专业英语的教学来说尤为重要，而专业英语教师的说的能力相对来说是很弱的。如果说不出来，即便是能读懂专业书籍，写出专业文章，还是不能上这种专业英语课。而且你也不能拿英语专业的老师来做这方面的工作。

A. 你觉得组成一个 team 相互配合来教一门专业课怎么样呢？
B.
我觉得不太行得通。好比说让你学英语语言文学的老师给你一篇法律专业的文章给你看，说实在的词汇你都懂，但其中隐含的一些法律原则、法律观点，还有法律术语，前因后果如何，法律程序如何，哪些合理，那些不合理，英语老师就会不懂了。而且对与你来说，你还要掌握大量的专业术语，就有点困难。而英语专业的教师还有自己的专业和教学，不可能为了配合专业教师而只做这方面的工作。
(comment： 专业教师和英语教师是可以配合的证明：万鄂湘，曾会良是武大英语教师后来都成为法律专业博士生导师。他们认为英语是基础。另外见 Hoecherl Alden,2000，但专业教师看低英语教 师的观念应该改变，引用老蒋看轻英语的话到这里穿插，英语教师辅助讲授这些专业课程也可能作为一种专业研究CBI).

A. 你刚才谈到要把CBI引入中国，首先是师资有一定的困难，那么还有不有其他方面的困难呢？
B. 还有传统的教学习惯和观念，已经给学生造成了一定的影响，要一下子完全改变，实施一种全新的教学模式的话，那肯定有困难。学生长

期形成的习惯会成为一种障碍。(文化传统，上课不积级讨论不提问，不会预习和做 creative assignments 等。)

A. 你觉得实施CBI在大学的那个阶段比较好呢？
B.我觉得重点大学应该在三四年级50%的课程都可以实施用英语来讲授。而就研究生阶段70%我估计是能够实现的，因为如果有足够的师资，研究生阶段达到70%并不是很困难的，但是对于本科生能否达到70%就不可能有太大的把握了。毕竟研究生人数要少一些，而且研究生阶段学习的主动性跟本本 科生的学习主动性相比是不一样的。

A. 你觉得实施CBI从内容上强调，既加强学生的语言文学内容，也增加英美文学内容，也增加英美文化、人文地理和历史方面的英语教学，同时把更多的专业课纳入用英语进行教学这样一种综合教学模式对于目前中国的外语教　学会不会有所改进呢？
B. 当然会有所改进。因为我所在的学校在我之前没有人开设专业英语课，后来因为教育部有规定比须开设专业英语课，我们不可能找外语系的老师开设专 业外语课。即使让他们 来教他们也不敢来。可以这 么说，只　　好在本专业系里　　的老师中　　找英语比较好的老师充一下数。但是我觉得在我教专业英语时，大　多数时候我是可以说是在说汉语。但是如果我来英国一年后能提高自己的会　话能　力，那我回 去以后我就觉得读和写没多大的问题，那说也能现在说出来了，那讲授这样的课就不是很成问题了。然后如果其他高校的师资基本都能成为这样的师资的话，那研究生70%是达到不成问题的。30%我觉得对于本科普通院校这样要求还可以，对于重点院校我觉得应该用 50%来要求，最起码我在复旦读书时我觉得复旦在本科内实现 50%是绝对没问题的。

A. 现在有很多学校，当然是象复旦、清华这样的重点大学，准备在研究生阶段实施全程英语校学，你觉得怎么样？
B. 因为这些学校第一是财力雄厚，聘得起很多的外籍教师。在中国进行法律教学的时候按规定是不能针对本科生的，只能针对研究生。所以研究生的专业比如英国商法，都是来自英美本国的教师来实施教学，因为他们也愿意到中 国的重点大学 来教课。来 回免费机 票，住 房免费，每 年都有1-2次免费旅游 。尽管工资相对低一些，但他们会利用 sabbatical leave 或通过各种基金来 中国教 学，这样经 济上也 就没有损失 了。这些专业教师来后目前是不能教本科生 的，所 以本 科生的专业 英语就没有外藉教师讲授。
(comment:　　她所说的基本属实，但现在很多　　高校都有几位外籍教师教授非英语专业的英语语言课，比如口语。部分院校也开始用部分外籍教师讲授部分高年级的专业英语课。)