

**A study of university public English policies and education
in China**

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Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction	3
2.0 Literature review	4
3.0 Methodology	6
References	8

1.0 Introduction

Engaging in the study of university “public English” policies and education in China is important. According to Bolton and Graddol (2012), the English language is becoming increasingly important in China given its growing profile of globalization and internationalization. Therefore, Chinese universities are placing a strong emphasis on English language education as a way of preparing students for an increasingly globalized world. Proceeding on this understanding, the aim and research objectives of the study are as follows. The aim of this study is to analyse the university public English policies and education in China. The specific research objectives used to explore this aim are as follows:

1. Exploration of the Current State of Public English Policies and Education in Chinese Universities: This objective aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the development, implementation, and impact of public English policies within the Chinese higher education system. It will involve a detailed examination of how these policies have evolved over time, the mechanisms of their implementation, and the extent to which they have influenced the educational landscape in Chinese universities. The study will also assess the reach and effectiveness of these policies in achieving their intended goals.
2. Investigation of Factors Influencing the Formulation and Implementation of Public English Policies and Education: The research will delve into the various factors that shape the creation and execution of public English policies in Chinese universities. This includes an analysis of political, economic, cultural, and educational influences. The study will consider how national and international political climates, economic development strategies, cultural values, and educational priorities contribute to the formulation of these policies. Additionally, it will explore how these factors interact and impact the implementation process and outcomes.

3. Examination of Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing Public English Policies and Education: This objective will identify and analyze the key challenges and opportunities that Chinese universities encounter in their efforts to implement public English policies and education. Challenges may include issues related to curriculum development, teacher training, assessment, and evaluation. The study will also explore opportunities for improvement and innovation, such as the integration of technology, collaboration with international institutions, and the development of new pedagogical approaches.
4. Assessment of the Effectiveness of Public English Policies in Improving the Quality of English Language Education: The final objective is to evaluate the effectiveness of public English policies in enhancing the quality of English language education in Chinese universities. This will involve an assessment of the policies' impact on students' language proficiency, academic performance, and future academic prospects. The study will consider various indicators of effectiveness, such as standardized test scores, graduation rates, and employability outcomes. It will also examine whether the policies contribute to a more inclusive and equitable educational environment for all students.

2.0 Literature review

Examining the present state of public English policies and education in non-English-speaking countries shows significant variance across different countries and region. Nonetheless, Rahman, Singh and Karim (2018) suppose there are some common trends observed. For example, Li et al. (2022) intimate that across many non-English-speaking countries, there is a growing recognition of the value of English language proficiency in a globalized world. This view is supported by Salaxiddinovna (2021) who affirms that non-English-speaking countries believe that English is the language of the world given that it is

commonly used in the context of conducting trade, diplomacy, and higher education. Consequently, and as informed by Kamwangamalu (2010), many countries across the world have developed public English-speaking policies, whose goal is to promote the teaching and learning of English in their education systems.

Moreover, examination of the factors influencing the formulation and implementation of public English policies and education in non-English speaking countries points towards a number of areas. For instance, Ahmad and Hussain (2017) suppose that economic factors and political factors that emphasize the role of English language learning for economic competitiveness and the influence of English in national identity are influential. Souriyavongsa et al. (2013) identify other factors such as social and cultural factors that include societal attitudes towards English language education and the perceived value of language diversity as fundamental influences of public English policies. Other scholars such as Nguyen (2013) identify education system factors and globalization and internationalization factors as influential in English language learning.

Furthermore, examination of the challenges and opportunities that non-English-speaking countries face in the implementation of public English policies and education based on the views of Vu and Burns (2014) reveal that challenges include limited resources and cultural and linguistic barriers. This view is corroborated by Anyidoho (2018) who points out that limited resources reduce the ability of non-English-speaking countries to invest in English language education. Likewise, Martinez (2016) believes that limited funding for English language programs and inadequate infrastructure coupled with a shortage of qualified teachers can significantly hamper the implementation of public English policies.

Lastly, the effectiveness of public English policies in improving the quality of English language education has elicited a number of factors. According to Samson and Collins (2012), clear objectives for the learning process, quality of teachers and curriculum development are

fundamental factors that inform effectiveness in improving the quality of English learning. In the same vein, Darling-Hammond (2010) point out that the quality of English language teachers is a critical factor in the effectiveness of public English policies. Furthermore, Ghavifekr and Rosdy (2015) believe that public English policies should support the development of appropriate English language curriculum that is aligned with international standards and considers the needs and interests of students.

3.0 Methodology

Semi structured interviews will be used for data collection in the study. The choice of the semi structured interviews is informed by their ability to provide rich and detailed data regarding the subjective experiences, beliefs, and perspectives of research participants (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2022). Hence, this will help enrich the exploration of the current state of public English policies and education in Chinese universities.

In identifying the research participants of the study, purposive sampling will be used. The rationalisation for the choice of the purposive sampling method is the need to identify a sample size that has the necessary characteristics or experiences to answer the research question (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim, 2016). In this regard, the population of focus will be the tutors in Chinese universities. Therefore, it is important to identify tutors who possess relevant information and awareness of the states of public English policies and education in Chinese universities. It is expected that this research will identify five research participants using the purposive sampling technique.

The data analysis method that will be used by the study is thematic analysis. The rationale for the choice of thematic analysis is its provision of a systematic and rigorous approach to analysis of qualitative data (Terry et al., 2017). Therefore, using thematic analysis, this research will identify common patterns or themes within the data set informing the study of

university public English policies and education in China that can be used to interpret themes in relation to the research questions formulated.

This research will also observe principles and the guidelines of ethical research. Therefore, it will ensure that informed consent is obtained from research participants, confidentiality of research participants is guaranteed, research participants have a right to their privacy and that the study minimizes potential avenues of causing harm to participants.

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