

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

1.0 Plan

This study focuses on evaluating the implementation challenges of public English policies in Chinese universities, particularly how teacher training and pedagogical practices affect policy outcomes. As an educator in China, I have observed a persistent disconnect between national English language policies and classroom realities. While policies emphasize global competitiveness, many universities struggle with outdated teaching methods and insufficient teacher support. This gap directly impacts students' language proficiency and their ability to engage in international academic or professional settings. Addressing this issue is critical not only for aligning policy goals with practice but also for fostering equitable access to quality English education.

To ground this study, I will conduct a systematic review of academic and policy documents. Key databases include CNKI (for Chinese-language scholarship), ERIC, and JSTOR, supplemented by government white papers on education reforms. Search terms will combine broad concepts (e.g., “public English policies China”) with specific foci (e.g., “teacher agency,” “curricular alignment”). The scope spans three decades (1990s–2023) to trace policy evolution, with priority given to peer-reviewed studies from non-Anglophone contexts (e.g., Vietnam, Japan) for comparative insights.

The review will be structured around four interconnected themes:

1. Policy Design and Evolution: Analyzing how China's public English policies have shifted in response to globalization, from the 1980s “Open Door” reforms to recent initiatives like the “Double First-Class” project. Seminal works by Bolton and Graddol (2012) will anchor this section.
2. Institutional Implementation: Examining case studies of policy execution in diverse universities (e.g., tier-1 vs. regional institutions), with attention to resource allocation and administrative support.

3. Teacher Training and Agency: Critiquing the predominance of top-down training models and exploring grassroots initiatives, drawing on Martínez's (2016) analysis of Brazil's EMI challenges.
4. Cultural and Ideological Tensions: Investigating conflicts between Western pedagogical norms and Confucian educational traditions, as discussed in Souriyavongsa et al. (2013).

Existing literature heavily emphasizes macro-level policy analysis (e.g., Li et al., 2022) but rarely explores how teachers negotiate policy mandates in daily practice. My review aims to foreground this micro-level perspective, particularly the role of teacher autonomy in bridging policy aspirations and classroom realities.

2.0 Justification

China's public English policies are often framed as tools for economic modernization, yet their success hinges on educators' capacity to translate abstract goals into actionable pedagogy. This review responds to Rahman et al.'s (2018) call for more nuanced studies on policy implementation in authoritarian contexts, where centralized directives may clash with localized needs. By synthesizing findings from Asian and Latin American cases (e.g., Nguyen's 2013 work on Vietnam), the study offers a cross-regional lens to identify transferable strategies for teacher empowerment.

A key tension in the literature revolves around standardization versus flexibility. While Samson and Collins (2012) argue that standardized curricula ensure equity, critics like Kamwangamalu (2010) contend that rigid frameworks stifle innovation. My review interrogates this debate through China's unique context, where high-stakes testing (e.g., CET-4/6 exams) coexists with rhetoric about "quality-oriented education." Preliminary findings suggest that policies often prioritize measurable outcomes (e.g., exam pass rates) over pedagogical creativity, exacerbating teacher burnout.

The analysis is informed by critical language policy theory, which views policies as dynamic processes shaped by power relations (Tollefson, 1991). This framework challenges deterministic assumptions that policy success depends solely on funding or curriculum design. Instead, it highlights how teachers' interpretive practices—such as adapting textbooks to local dialects—subvert or reinforce policy intentions.

By mapping systemic barriers (e.g., uneven access to professional development), this review provides actionable recommendations for policymakers. For instance, it advocates for decentralized training programs that allow teachers to share context-specific strategies, rather than mandating uniform approaches. Such insights could reshape how China's Ministry of Education supports rural and under-resourced institutions.

In conclusion, this review does not merely catalog existing studies but intervenes in ongoing debates about educational globalization. It argues that effective policy implementation requires redefining teachers as policy actors rather than passive implementers. In doing so, it contributes a fresh perspective to discussions on language planning in non-Anglophone higher education systems.

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