

湖南大学青年社科学者文库

胡志雯 著

教育信息技术与 外语教师职业发展研究

*ICT, EFL Teacher Development and College English
Reform in China : an Implementation Study*

湖南大学出版社

湖南大学青年学者学术著作出版资助项目



ICT, EFL Teacher Development and College English
Reform in China: an Implementation Study

教育信息技术与外语 教师职业发展研究

胡志雯 著

湖南大学 出版社

内 容 简 介

以大学英语改革为背景,探讨新形势下大学外语教师的职业培训和发展现状是否能满足改革的要求(特别是将现代教育信息技术与课程相结合)及教师终生职业发展的需求。同时论证了教育信息技术既可以作为教师教育的内容来提升英语教师的信息素养,又可以作为教师教育和发展的有效手段使教师教育和发展具有可持续性、协作性和终身性。

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

教育信息技术与外语教师职业发展研究/胡志雯著.

—长沙:湖南大学出版社,2011.11

ISBN 978-7-5667-0084-1

I. ①教… II. ①胡… III. ①高等学校—外语教学:计算机辅助教学—师资培养—研究 IV. ①H09 ②G645.12

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2011)第 214866 号

教育信息技术与外语教师职业发展研究

Jiaoyu Xinxu Jishu yu Waiyu Jiaoshi Zhiye Fazhan Yanjiu

作 者:胡志雯 著

责任编辑:王桂贞

特约编辑:卢付林 刘 东

责任校对:祝世英

出版发行:湖南大学出版社

责任印制:陈 燕

社 址:湖南·长沙·岳麓山

邮 编:410082

电 话:0731-88822559(发行部),88821343(编辑室),88821006(出版部)

传 真:0731-88649312(发行部),88822264(总编室)

电子邮箱:wanguia@126.com

网 址:<http://www.hnupress.com>

印 装:长沙瑞和印务有限公司

开本:710×1000 16开

印张:18.75

字数:451千

版次:2011年11月第1版

印次:2011年11月第1次印刷

书号:ISBN 978-7-5667-0084-1/G·515

定价:40.00元

版权所有,盗版必究
湖南大学出版社凡有印装差错,请与发行部联系

Key Acronyms

AAO	Academic Affairs Office
CALL	Computer-Assisted Language Learning
CBAM	Concerns-Based Adoption Model
CED	College English Department
CET	College English Test
CoP	communities of practice
CPD	continuing professional development
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
GER	gross enrolment rate
HE	higher education
HEIs	higher education institutions
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICTLE	ICT for language education
IELTS	International English Language Test System
INSET	in-service education and training
LoU	Levels of Use
METC	Modern Educational Technology Centre
MoE	Ministry of Education
PC	personal computer
PD	professional development
PO	Personnel Office
SoC	Stages of Concern
TD	teacher development
TMO	Teaching Management Office
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

Preface

As the supervisor of Dr Hu Zhiwen's doctoral research at the University of Nottingham, I am delighted to have this formal opportunity to celebrate the publication of her book, which is based upon her PhD thesis.

The successful completion of any PhD is an achievement to be proud of. To do this in a foreign country (with all that implies by way of adjustment), in three years, and in a language other than one's own, is reason to be even prouder. The fact that Hu Zhiwen was able to accomplish this feat is testimony not just to her scholarly qualities but also to her personal qualities. No study that is conducted over a period of three years is unproblematic, and family and the rest of life has to be fitted in somehow. Yet throughout the period of her studies in Nottingham, Hu Zhiwen maintained a very positive outlook and a very clear sense of purpose. For me, she was in many ways the model student, hard-working and self-disciplined, willing to listen to advice but also—as she gained in confidence—prepared to use her own initiative. In time, those ideas took shape as the original contribution to knowledge that is required for the award of a PhD.

As will be clear from the title of this book, 'ICT, EFL Teacher Development, and College English Reform in China: an Implementation Study', her study deals with the vital issue of educational innovation. One of the innovative features of the new curriculum for College English in China, a hugely significant reform within the national education system, is that both teachers and learners are expected to make increased use of information and communication technology (ICT). Against a background of theories of curriculum innovation, Dr Hu set out to explore what actually happened when this innovation was implemented, using a case study of a single university and focusing on teacher attitudes, readiness and response. While the findings indicate that teachers had

initially held positive attitudes towards ICT and been stimulated to improve their technical competence, their early enthusiasm had started to wane in the face of inadequate support and training. One of the dominant themes is that teachers are central to the implementation of curricular innovations and their continuing professional development (CPD) needs must be met if implementation is to be successful. This requires thought not only about what those needs are, but also by what method(s) they can be met. The needs analysis conducted by Dr Hu revealed that teachers differ in their (self-reported) levels of technical competence, as well as in their attitudes to ICT, and their confidence, and she concluded that a one-size-fits-all approach was therefore unlikely to be effective, a conclusion that seems likely to be valid for many more institutions. However, technical competence is not the only requirement if teachers are to implement the reform. Teachers' needs are also pedagogic and subject-specific (how to exploit the technology to teach English? how to integrate technology-based episodes into a lesson?) -and from a teacher's perspective these questions are probably more significant than those of a technical nature. Moreover, because the pedagogy envisaged by the reform extends to learners also making self-directed use of ICT, teachers must also give thought to the relationship between what they do in class and what learners will do out of class, and how they can best equip learners to take on a more active role in their own learning. The design and delivery of a CPD programme which addresses such concerns may not be easy, but—as with all educational innovations—one of the key factors in successful implementation is the quality of the practical support available during the early stages. In this sense, the design of effective CPD is a prerequisite for successful educational innovation.

A number of other conclusions are drawn which also have significance for national and institutional policy-making and for international understanding of factors influencing the success of large-scale innovations.

Dr Hu is now an associate professor of the School of Foreign Languages and International studies, Hunan University. Her doctoral examiners thought highly of her study, and it is no surprise, therefore, that conference proposals and journal submissions based on the thesis have met with a very positive international response. Two papers have already been published in international peer-reviewed journals, and she has made presentations at three major interna-

tional conferences, with two papers subsequently appearing in selected conference proceedings. It is my belief that the publication of this book will make a valuable contribution to the literature both locally (in China) and internationally.

I wish Hu Zhiwen every success in her academic career, and look forward to seeing her name on other publications in the years to come.

Dr Ian McGrath
Visiting Associate Professor
English Language & Literature,
National Institute of Education, Singapore

23 September, 2011

Acknowledgements

This is a journey of personal and professional development, full of challenges, dilemmas, frustration, excitement, joy and harvest. I am grateful to all who helped and supported me throughout the whole journey.

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to my supervisor; Dr Ian McGrath, for his guidance, advice, inspiration, encouragement in the past difficult time. Without his support and help, I would never have been able to complete my study and publish this book.

Special thanks go to Hunan University, China and Kin-Kwok Chung Education Foundation, who provided me with the sponsorship to study in the University of Nottingham and enabled me to obtain a PhD there. My thanks also go to ‘Social Science Foundation for Youth Scholars of the Ministry of Education, China’ (Grant No. 10YJC740042) and ‘Special Research and Publication Grants to Youth Scholars of Hunan University’, who provided funds and made the publication of this book possible.

I am grateful to colleagues and friends in the UK: Dr. Richard Pemberton, Dr. Qing Gu, Professor Christopher Day, Dr Chau Lam, Dr Vesile Alkan, Dr Musa Khaldi, Dr Nadeem Khan, Mr. Tony Fisher, Ms Lucy Cooker, Ms Vanessa Hayward, Mr LeRoy Hill, Ms Jackie Stevenson and Ms Jodie Smith. Their valuable advice, suggestions, timely encouragement and generous help are so important in this long journey.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the colleagues and students in China whose participation in the questionnaire survey, classroom observation, individual interviews and focus groups provided necessary data for this research project. Special thanks must be paid to Professor Liu Zhengguang, Professor Xiao Yunnan, Professor Zhang Jinxin and Professor Liao Ying who offered me so much inspiration, care and support. My appreciation also goes to the follow-

ing friends: Dr Hu Ling, Dr Chen Zehang, Dr Zhang Yue, Dr Chen Shen, Dr Xu Jun, Dr Li Ying, Ms Lu Rongrong, Ms Chen Jiaolin, Ms Quan Ying, Ms Lu Qian, Ms Zhou Liying, Ms Li Shen, Ms Yang Cheng, Ms Li Yuchang and Ms He Rundong, whose friendship would be valuable in my life. The list is endless if I continue but I do owe thanks to so many.

Last but not the least, my gratitude goes to my family who have given me every support and encouragement in this journey. My heartfelt thanks go to my beloved parents, my brothers, and my parents-in-law for their endless love and support. Thanks especially to my husband Chen Jie for taking full responsibility in looking after the family and my son Luzhe for allowing me to concentrate on my research even during weekends and holidays. Without their love, I would never have been able to start this journey, let alone finish it.

Contents

Key Acronyms

Chapter One Introduction

1.1	Background	1
1.2	Key Terms	3
1.2.1	Change, Reform and Innovation	3
1.2.2	ICT & ICTLE	4
1.2.3	Teacher Training, Education and Development	6
1.3	Focus of the Research	8
1.4	Significance of the Research	9
1.5	Structure of the Book	10

Chapter Two Educational Innovation: ICT Use and Continuing Professional Development

2.1	Introduction	11
2.2	Theories of Innovation/Change	12
2.2.1	The Theory of Diffusion of Innovations	12
2.2.2	The Theory of New Meaning of Educational Change	20
2.2.3	The Concerns-Based Adoption Model	25
2.3	The Implementation of ICT in Education	28
2.3.1	The Impact of ICT	29
2.3.2	Practice: ICT in Language Education (ICTLE)	33
2.3.3	Factors Influencing Implementation	41
2.4	Continuing Professional Development for ICT	56
2.4.1	The Role of ICT in Teacher Development	57
2.4.2	Elements of CPD	60
2.4.3	Models for CPD	70

2.4.4	ICT-Related CPD for Language Teachers	80
2.5	Conclusion	83
2.5.1	Review	83
2.5.2	Conceptual Framework	85
Chapter Three The Chinese Context: College English Reform and EFL		
Teacher Development		
3.1	Introduction	89
3.2	English Teaching & Learning in Chinese Higher Education	89
3.2.1	Chinese Higher Education	89
3.2.2	English Language Teaching and Learning	92
3.2.3	ELT Pedagogy in Higher Education	94
3.3	The College English Reform	97
3.3.1	Materials	99
3.3.2	ICT Pedagogy	101
3.3.3	Evaluation	105
3.3.4	Course Design and Administration	108
3.4	EFL Teacher Development in China	110
3.4.1	A Brief Summary of Teacher Development in China	110
3.4.2	EFL Teachers' Professional Development	113
3.4.3	EFL Teacher Development for ICT	114
3.5	Conclusion	116
Chapter Four Research Methodology		
4.1	Introduction	117
4.2	Research Design	117
4.2.1	Why Mixed Methods	118
4.2.2	Why a Case Study	120
4.3	Selection of Case Study Site	122
4.4	Selection of Participants	124
4.4.1	The Questionnaire Sample	124
4.4.2	The Classroom Teaching Sample	125
4.4.3	The Management and Administrative Staff Sample	127
4.4.4	The Student Sample	128
4.5	Methods Design	129

4.5.1	The Questionnaire	130
4.5.2	Classroom Observation	133
4.5.3	Semi-Structured Interviews	137
4.5.4	Focus Groups	140
4.5.5	Reliability, Validity & Triangulation	142
4.6	Data Collection Process	147
4.7	Data Management and Analysis	147
4.8	Ethical Issues	150
4.9	Conclusion	150

Chapter Five Data Analysis and Discussion

5.1	Introduction	151
5.2	Attitudes Towards ICT Use and the Reform	151
5.2.1	Demographic Information	152
5.2.2	ICT Use by EFL Teachers	155
5.2.3	Teachers' Attitudes	159
5.2.4	Summary	179
5.3	Profile of the Implementation of the Reform	179
5.3.1	Perceptions of New Teaching & Learning Materials	180
5.3.2	Availability of ICT Resources	186
5.3.3	Grasp of ICT Knowledge and Skills	192
5.3.4	Effects of ICT-Integrated Teaching and Learning	194
5.3.5	Institutional and Departmental Support	198
5.3.6	Overall Impact of the Reform	206
5.3.7	Summary	207
5.4	CPD Policies and Practices	208
5.4.1	Institutional Policies for CPD	209
5.4.2	Teachers' Experience and Perceptions of CPD Provision	212
5.4.3	Teachers' Needs for ICT-Related CPD	224
5.4.4	Summary	235
5.5	Further Discussion	235
5.5.1	The Role of ICT	235
5.5.2	The Role Change of Teachers	238
5.5.3	Learner Autonomy and Teacher Autonomy	239

5.5.4	An Implementation Model	240
5.5.5	An ICT-Based CPD Model	244
5.6	Conclusion	246
Chapter Six Conclusions		
6.1	Introduction	248
6.2	Research Questions and Main Findings	248
6.3	Contributions of the Research	250
6.4	Limitations of the Research	253
6.5	Recommendations for Further Research	255
6.6	Conclusion	256
Appendix 1	.....	258
Appendix 2	.....	259
Appendix 3	.....	265
Appendix 4	.....	266
Appendix 5	.....	267
Appendix 6	.....	269
References	.....	272

Chapter One Introduction

1.1 Background

Following its entry into the WTO in 2001 and successful bids for the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008 and Shanghai World Expo in 2010, China has become a world power with social and economic needs for professionals at different levels, among them qualified graduates who can use English competently. Of particular importance is proficiency in listening and speaking for effective communication in global interactions. However, the results of English language learning in Chinese higher education (HE) are generally recognised to have been disappointing in this respect, since most students graduated with ‘deaf and dumb English’ (Liu & Dai, 2003: 8). It is clear that the old curriculum, syllabus and traditional pedagogy, i. e. prior to 2002, were not producing graduates with the level of English skills necessary to satisfy society’s needs and their personal needs for career development. This point will be discussed further in 3. 2. 3.

A further problem is that Chinese HE has experienced a rapid expansion of student numbers in the last few decades, and particularly in the last decade there has been a boom in enrolment. With more and more students coming into nearly 2000 higher education institutions (HEIs), the teacher-student ratio has increased sharply, particularly that of English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers and students whose majors are not English (for further discussion, see 3. 2. 1). To present this fact in a slightly different way, the rapid expansion of enrolment resulted in a great shortage of EFL teachers in colleges and universities, with the EFL teacher-student ratio standing at nearly 1 : 200 in 2006 (Zhang, 2006).

In order to change the so-called ‘time-consuming but low-efficient’ English learning situation in the country and solve the shortage of qualified EFL teachers, in 2002 the Chinese Ministry of Education (MOE) undertook a reform of College English, a basic and compulsory course for all college students in Chinese HEIs (further information on which will be provided in 3. 2). A more economical and effective methodology in language teaching which was based on the use of ICT was recommended in the reform. There were two reasons for this emphasis on ICT. One was its potential to support and assist language teaching and learning. The other was that if ICT was used for self-access learning, this would make it possible to reduce teacher contact hours and thereby enable institutions to cope with the increase in student numbers and the shortage of EFL teachers (this point will be developed further in 3. 3).

This study started in 2006, when Chinese College English was undergoing reforms nationwide. The introduction of ICT made great demands on HEIs and the teachers as change agents, who have had to respond to a change in their traditional roles and pedagogy in the new computerised, Web-based English teaching and learning environment.

My own introduction to ICT-integrated instruction had come several years earlier when, in 2000, after teaching EFL for seven years in a Chinese university, I was chosen as an instructor of a new form of distance education: e-learning. Based on my own past teaching experience, many questions and doubts emerged concerning the reform. How did other Chinese EFL teachers feel about ICT-integrated English teaching? As teachers who had been used to teacher-centred language teaching for years, were they ready and willing to change their authoritative roles in class? Did they have enough ICT knowledge and skills to cope with the requirements of the reform? Had they been given enough relevant training or made a self-directed effort to develop their knowledge and skills to meet the requirement of the reform? Several years on, what effect had the reform had on English teaching and learning? These questions aroused my curiosity and stimulated me to undertake a study of these issues. I therefore took as my research focus EFL teacher development in relation to the introduction of ICT in Chinese HE in the context of the reform.

1.2 Key Terms

Three key terms used in this study are *reform*, *ICT* (Information and Communication Technology) and *teacher development*. This section will discuss these and related terms, i. e., change, reform and innovation; ICT & ICT for Language Education (ICTLE); training, education and development in the Chinese context, and comment on conceptual differences between ICT in China and in other countries.

1.2.1 Change, Reform and Innovation

Change is often ‘a result of adaptations and decisions made by users as they work with particular new policies or programmes, with the policy or programme and the user’s situation mutually determining the outcome’ (Fullan, 2001:40). It has the meaning of replacement, transformation and substitution, but not necessarily advancement. Change can be directed either forwards or backwards, and real change involves changes in conceptions and role behaviour, which is why it is so difficult to achieve.

The word ‘reform’, as defined in dictionaries such as Chambers and Oxford, means: 1) to put or change into an improved form or condition; to amend or improve by change of form or removal of faults or abuses; 2) to put an end to (an evil) by enforcing or introducing a better method or course of action. It is obvious, then, that ‘reform’ and ‘change’ are synonymous in some respects; for instance, they both mean that something becomes different from before; they are processes of shifting. Change is considered to be a process that does not involve planning (Kennedy, 1996, cited in Lamie, 2005); it may be conscious or unconscious, while reform involves a clear aim of improvement. Reform in education is not just putting into place the latest policy superficially. It means ‘changing the cultures of the classrooms, the schools, the districts, the universities, and so on’ (Fullan, 2001:7).

Innovation is defined as ‘an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption’ (Rogers, 1995:11). It repre-

sents the programme or process being implemented, implying some deliberation and consciousness (Kennedy, 1996, cited in Lamie, 2005). It does not necessarily represent something major, large, or dramatically different. Hall and Hord (1987) argue that an innovation can be something introduced several years earlier or something not expected to arrive for several years to come. Further, they classify innovations into two types: ‘product innovations’, such as new textbooks or curriculum materials, and ‘process innovations’, such as different approaches to discipline, counselling techniques, or instructional procedures (p. 9).

To summarise, change happens anywhere; it is not necessarily the result of someone’s deliberate efforts, whereas reform emphasises the introduction of a *better* form or condition; and innovation is a deliberate attempt to introduce something new. These concepts will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

In this study, reform is the key word, the specific aspect of reform in question being the introduction of ICT for the purpose of improving English learning in Chinese higher education, the broader context being the national reform of College English teaching (curriculum, pedagogy, learner assessment). As will become clear, this thoroughgoing reform has involved innovation as well as change.

1.2.2 ICT & ICTLE

ICT is a key concept in the study. This section defines the term and introduces a subsidiary concept, ICT for Language Education (ICTLE).

ICT, a well-accepted term in the West, is defined as ‘a diverse set of technological tools and resources used to communicate, to create, disseminate, store and manage information’ (Wikibooks, n. d.). These technologies include computers, the Internet, broadcasting technologies such as radio and television, and telephony. ICT is often spoken of in a particular context, such as ICT in education, health care, or libraries. It is well known that ICT products and innovations change the way we connect, communicate and make sense of our world. They draw on Information Technology, Telecommunications and Data Networking technologies to solve problems innovatively.

In the field of education, ICT generally refers to the integrated use of com-