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基于项目合作的 外语培训国际化模式 策略研究

周震◎著



**Project-based Foreign Language
Training Programme
for Chinese Companies and Organisations:**
Towards Effective International Communication Strategy

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中国社会科学出版社

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This book is dedicated to my beloved parents

Mr Zhou Zhaoliang and Mrs Zhu Youyun

As well as my dear wife Windy Ding Wenying and daughter Sabrina Zhou Zihan.

Preface

When they develop training strategies for Chinese professionals, providers and managers should be prepared to assign a significant role to project-based foreign-language training; this is a key inference to be drawn from Prof. Zhou's investigation into the modalities through which professional training programmes in the People's Republic of China can foster effective business-related language skills.

In testing and then endorsing the underlying rationale for this recommendation, his investigation embraces wider implications beyond the demands of language training pure and simple; it takes account of the need to develop language skills in tandem with a subtle range of business and personal skills that must now be considered vital for professionals in Chinese enterprises and organisations whose operational performance demands an effective international interface, or stands to gain from one.

Importantly, the approach that emerges from Prof. Zhou's study represents a significant step towards reconciling enhanced cultural sensitivity with procedural pragmatism. Interplay between cross-cultural legitimacy and intercultural praxis has rightly come to attract considerable attention from researchers in recent years, and informs core components in standard business education programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level. This developing interest has accrued from a more refined understanding of the challenges encountered by those who participate professionally in the proliferating intercultural relationships that characterise today's globalised business community.

Establishing challenges is one thing; striving to import due acknowledgment of them into a mutually accepted *modus operandi* for organisations, trainers and learners is another. While coherence between these two realms may at times appear an unachievable ideal given the complexity of individual and organisational interactions across the globe, Professor Zhou's work will leave readers with a sense that valuable further progress has been made.

Indeed, the research and conclusion she presents provide a signpost towards improved efficacy in the design of future language training, and in so doing question the currency of approaches that are frequently adopted in the training of professional clients in full-time employment. A persuasive plea to rethink the provision they receive emerges.

Quite how radical a departure this is from features of contemporary language training that are widely accepted as familiar and conventional may come as a surprise. Classroom-based use of authentic or quasi-authentic stimulus material from the world of business and commerce and the exploitation thereof in a guided interactive manner that simulates workplace discourse and praxis no doubt seem robust techniques, commonly employed in foreign language acquisition for vocational purposes, and underpinned by the credentials and expertise that training providers have established.

They may, however, yield to different precepts as Professor Zhou's research seeks to recast such models in order to accommodate greater scope for the customisation of work-based training, the empowerment of learners, and the diversification of the skills they develop. It is a route towards the optimisation of learners' progress that calls for imaginative innovation in programme design.

With its enlightening evocation of the cultural, educational and vocational traditions that influence the Chinese workplace, its demonstration of the need for training programmes consistent with these traditions, the statistical rigour with which the accompanying data is presented, and the resulting authority

with which it constructs its rationale for change, Professor Zhou's account will furnish both training managers and providers with insights that influence their practice in years to come.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colin Beaven".

Colin Beaven

Formerly Principal Lecturer (Portfolio Responsibility Languages)
Southampton Solent University, UK

Abstract

The rapid development of China's economy has seen increasing demand for foreign language training in Chinese companies and organizations. Nevertheless educational institutions across the world have struggled to design appropriate foreign language training programmes for Chinese companies and organisations. Many models have been proposed and put into practice. However, little work has focussed attention on the actual needs of Chinese staff and the real demands of Chinese organizations and companies, so there is a continuing dilemma in terms of satisfying expectations of both training providers and trainees.

In this book, we account for the development and test of a project-based foreign language training model for Chinese employees. The model aims to develop the ability of foreign language training suppliers to establish a management strategy for project-based training involving international educational communication. A series of propositions have been generated based on the two-tier levels of project-based training model designed in this research, which is based on the literature review of Chinese foreign language education, Chinese learning styles, organisational learning objectives, project-based foreign language learning theories and existing programme models. The book also includes an initial research which was conducted to identify where training and development needs and deficits lie within China's organisations and companies. Chinese staff and managers are chosen to investigate their attitudes. A mixed method of combining quantitative and qualitative analysis was employed in the study in order to validate these propositions.

The book also has offered a number of successful outcomes relating to its aim and objectives.

- Firstly, individual project creation by Chinese trainees is a creative approach to meet learning objectives.
- Secondly, foreign language programmes need to aim to develop work-related or professional skills alongside language skills rather than learning the foreign language only.
- Thirdly, the divergence of perceptions in terms of training needs analysis and on-going assessment among Chinese staff and managers is discovered.
- Fourthly, pedagogic design needs to blend formal instruction and independent learning.
- Fifthly, joint evaluation by bringing trainees, training providers and partners together customises evaluation.
- Sixthly, decision-making within Chinese organisations and companies involves top-down and bottom-up orientation.
- Additionally, understanding the operational structure of a training partner is important to the success of implementing a training programme through international educational management.

These contributions will add updated knowledge to education management and also enable further value to international educational institutions and practitioners.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Foreign language training is becoming big business in China, particularly in English, as the language of global commerce (Dean, 2005; Gross, 1998; Jin, 2003; Liu, 2006; Nunan 2002). The Economist (2006) commented that the rapid development of Chinese business is fuelling a market that comprises everything from foreign language materials and textbooks to language training programmes. Increased demand for foreign languages comes from a broad spectrum of society including companies and organizations. Foreign or domestic investors are moving into China in a cluster to serve the growing group of Chinese who believe they have both the interest and the means to learn a foreign language, and who see it as vital for improving their future (Chee, 2000/2003; Taylor, 2006). Foreign language training is compulsory in many organisations (Hu, 2002a; Ireland, 1991) and people of different professions are learning the foreign language and taking it as a tool or a path to build a better career in future (Jin, 2003; Kealey, 2009). Chinese companies and organizations are pushing their employees to learn English (Chen, 2001; Dean 2005).

The demand for personnel with foreign language competences has resulted in increasing demand for a professional layer of personnel with the competences relevant to operating in an international market economy. These include high foreign language proficiency and the knowledge of operating international

businesses. In particular, among those competences, the knowledge of foreign languages is among those with greatest potential to help the Chinese to develop successful businesses because they enable one to obtain better information about the business environment and new ideas about production, raw materials, marketing and trade channels (Hagen, 2007). As part of China's preparations for increased participation in the global economy, it has been reported that there is an explosion of Chinese overseas students and training participants from a wide range of job occupations in English-speaking countries who are attending various kinds of training programmes; according to a recent report (Xinhua, 2010), the Chinese government has decided, for example, to send 300 officers to the Harvard Kennedy School over the next five years, and many local enterprises such as Bank of China, People's Insurance Company of China (PICC) and some large companies such as the China Petroleum Company (China-Pet.) ceaselessly encouraging foreign language training programmes for their staff development (ChinaGate, 2011; Xinhua, 2011).

However, have these endeavours brought immediate benefits to Chinese companies and organisations? Or have Chinese managers and staff been slow to develop as planned and taken time to review the programmes run in the past? Have they ever considered the effectiveness of these programmes, and have they ever thought how to improve them? All these questions have been challenging Chinese companies and organisations (Jiang, 2008; Liu, 2006; Wozniak, 2003).

Specifically, two types of research initiative have helped to formulate the research rationale for this project.

Firstly, from a personal perspective, the author has been in charge of foreign language training programmes as a manager in a locally organised Chinese university in the north-west part of China for six years, and has managed ten English programmes for local companies and organisations, such as Qin Tong Xia Aluminium Manufacturer of Ningxia, Ningxia Orient Tantalum Industry, Ningxia Northwest Bearing Industry, and Pin Luo Middle School. Apart from this, the author has been involved in other programmes such as Southampton