

ELTEACH IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

YUNNAN NORMAL UNIVERSITY

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Front Cover:

Credit: Steve King

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Challenge and Program Selection

In China, as in many countries around the world, ministries of education and local education authorities struggle to keep pace with the demand for highly qualified teachers of English while also meeting ministry goals to improve the quality of English language instruction overall.

In Yunnan Province, educational bureaus recognize this problem, and often seek to partner with universities for professional development training. Yunnan Normal University (YNU) in particular has an excellent track record of providing training to in-service teachers throughout the province.

It was recognized by Professor Peter Yuan at YNU that teachers need to develop both the language of the classroom as well as the practical methodology needed to teach English effectively in English.

At a symposium in Beijing in 2015, Professor Yuan learned of the implementation of ELTeach's English-for-Teaching and Professional Knowledge for ELT programs at school districts elsewhere in the country. The program was first piloted extensively in 2012 with over 2,200 pre- and in-service teachers in China, and has now been implemented successfully in over 20 municipalities and districts in the country, in 11 provinces to date. In late 2015, ELTeach received an endorsement from Professor Chen Xiaotang and other notable thought-leaders in Chinese English education from BNU and other leading organizations.

In 2015, the program was then selected for 54 in-service teachers in Yunnan Province, from the Jinghong, Luxi, Tengchong, Xundian, and Yiliang districts. The program was integrated with the requirements of the National Teacher Training Program, and the teachers received credits under those guidelines.

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Implementation

Both programs were implemented in late autumn 2015, and culminated in the student teachers sitting for either the *Test of English-for-Teaching™* (TEFT™ Assessment) or the *Test of Professional Knowledge for ELT™* (TPK™ Assessment) in June 2016.

The teachers were selected for either ELTeach's *English-for-Teaching* or *Professional Knowledge for ELT* programs by Professor Yuan after a short interview. They then received a program orientation by their professor, and studied independently for the duration of the program. In June 2016, the student teachers took the TEFT™ and TPK™ Assessments at facilities in Yunnan, and received their certificates and score reports approximately one month after this date.

The content in the program is arranged as follows:

Domain	Learning Materials	Assessment	Outcome
Language Teaching Methodology <i>Professional Knowledge for ELT</i>	-9 sections, estimated at 30-40 hours -Foundations of Language Learning and Teaching -Essentials of English -How to teach reading, writing, speaking, listening, vocabulary and grammar	TPK™ Assessment (1.5 hours)	Certificate, Score, and Summary Reports
Classroom English Proficiency <i>English-for-Teaching</i>	-7 sections, estimated at 30-40 hours -Managing the Classroom -Understanding and Communicating Lesson Content -Giving Feedback to Students	TEFT™ Assessment (2.5 hours)	Certificate, Score, and Summary Reports

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Results

Performance on the assessments were strong, with 38% of the teachers in the *English-for-Teaching* group achieving Band 3, the highest band. A further 48% of this group also placed into Band 2.

Engagement by the teachers with the program was also very good. Teachers in both groups spent an average of 30.5 hours on program content, and completed an average of 93.8% of program content.

Of the 54 teachers who enrolled in the program, 50 completed the program to assessment stage, for a program completion rate of 92.5%.

The score reports the student teachers received also provided them with valuable personalized feedback.

In the *Professional Knowledge for ELT* group, the participants received feedback on their grasp of foundational knowledge and core teaching practice, as well as a measurement of the knowledge obtained in the program through their band placement.

In the *English-for-Teaching* group, participants received feedback on band their classroom English knowledge, as well as a personalized breakdown on their level of knowledge in the topics of classroom management, understanding and using lesson content, and giving feedback to students in English.

Band	1	2	3
<i>TEFT™</i>	14%	48%	38%

Figure 1: Band scores on *TEFT™* Assessment.

They also received feedback on their relative strengths in listening, speaking, reading and writing English for the classroom.

Reflecting on the program, participants spoke positively about their learning experiences. One teacher from the *English-for-Teaching* program stated: “In the past, I spoke very little English in my English classes. Because I am a non-English major, I was always afraid of making mistakes. After doing the program, with more practice, I gained some confidence, especially when my voice recording was accepted by the program, I was really happy. Gradually I tried speaking more English in some of my classes. I was happy to see these changes.”

“*English-for-Teaching* better meets the needs of the beginning teachers and non-English major teachers, which helps to raise their confidence to use more English in the class and improve their pronunciation, intonation and the diversity of their expressions. The *Professional Knowledge for ELT* program, however, works better for the more experienced teachers and teacher educators in that it provides them with more theories about English language teaching and learning.”

**– Professor Yuan,
Yunnan Normal University**

Professor Yuan from YNU also summed up his experience of working with teachers on this program.

“The *ELTeach* program is generally effective and helpful to all teachers. *English-for-Teaching* better meets the needs of the beginning teachers and non-English major teachers, which helps to raise their confidence to use more English in the class and improve their pronunciation, intonation and the diversity of their expressions. The Professional Knowledge program, however, works better for the more experienced teachers and teacher educators in that it provides them with more theories about English language teaching and learning. Of course, the advantage of such on-line course is easy to recognize as it allows the teachers to approach to it at any time, and any place they feel comfortable.”

Another participant, a teacher trainer, mentioned that the connection with the National Teacher Training program was a useful motivator in encouraging peer observation and connecting the work done in the program and with the reading on the national program to classroom work. She observed: “I am both a teacher and a teacher educator myself. After I learned more about the theories of English teaching and learning, I started to understand more things happening in my classroom. That was very encouraging and I started to think more about such things.

“It was also helpful when I went to observe the class of other teachers. When I had to give comments, I somehow was able to use, or at least quote, some of the theories learned. And that made me seem to be more professional. But I think they didn’t just come out of the program itself, because I also read such books suggested by the teachers in the National Teachers’ Training Program. The *ELTeach* program is very helpful, I think, and I am thankful for that.”

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Next Steps

In August of 2016, Professor Peter Yuan and Mr. Steve King from National Geographic Learning visited with several of the participants of the program.

They spoke with them about their experiences and gained valuable insight into the viability and construction of future programs. It is hoped that this program can be implemented with more teacher-training universities and colleges across China as they partner with in-service teachers in their districts in the coming years.



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