

# Research and Practice on College English Oral Test—A Case Study of Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology

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## Abstract

Based on the description of implementation of College English oral test from the points of the necessity, feasibility, and implementation process, this study analyzed the current situation of university students' oral English, oral English ability, the college entrance examination results, and a band-4 written test and established their correlations according to the data of Test of English Proficiency Oral (TEP oral) in Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology (BIPT). Furthermore, we carried out a requirement analysis through questionnaires on teachers' and students' oral ability. The current research presented the data and the problems of the college English oral test. Finally, we emphasized the issues of the implementation process and elaborated the new implementation idea of TEP oral.

**Keywords:** test of English proficiency oral, Beijing institute of petrochemical technology, implementation, English application, College English curriculum requirements

## 1. Introduction

Along with the speeding up of economic globalization and the increasing of China's external exchange, people are essentially recognizing the importance of communication in English (Cai, 2010; Shi, 2010, 2011; Xu, 2014). In 2007, Ningbo University business school (Zhou, 2008) conducted a survey to the 80 employers. The data showed that 51.32% of the respondents considered English speaking skill as the most important quality of college graduates in the aspect of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). However, survey results also indicated that the oral English quality of college graduates was precisely the weakest link in English ability. The phenomena could be explained by the following: Since college English education, for a long time, has been focusing on teaching College English to cultivate students' ability to read and write, and ignoring the ability to listen and speak, which resulted in poor students' English listening and speaking ability (Yang, 1999; Xu, 2000; Zhao & Qian, 2001).

Neglect is also reflected in the language of the English proficiency test. For years, College English test has been rather biased towards the examination of language knowledge and language skills of candidates, less examined the use of language and building capacity. The oral interview was conducted in the College English Test (CET) (band-4 and band-6), and it has played a certain role in improving college students' oral English training awareness and perfecting the oral English test. (Liu & Han, 2000; Zhou, 2008), However, the limitation is still existed, i.e., little coverage of the interview project, test eligibility restrictions and other factors. Role to mobilize the enthusiasm of the students and improve their speaking ability is limited, it failed to get mass promotion in colleges and universities. Language testing washback was also observed in language teaching. For example, if the test was not examined to a certain capacity, the inevitable result is that teachers and students will ignore this ability of students.

In recent years, with the development of Linguistics and language testing theory, communicative language testing (Psycholinguistics, socio-linguistic testing) system has become the mainstream test. Bachman, representatives of communicative language testing theory, pointed out (1990): "communicative competence is as to the scenarios combining language knowledge and language use, ability to create and explain the significance of "a person's language ability system included not only his knowledge, more depends on its specific language

environment, using a variety of strategies to complete the task. Then, language test not only focused on students' language knowledge, but also examined at student's ability to complete the task and the appropriateness of using language, which is the current trend of language testing (Liu & Han, 2000). Thereafter, by exemplifying the TOFEL exam, IELTS exam from abroad, the Public English Test System (PETS) (band 1-5 in China) to evaluate candidates' English proficiency by the Ministry of Education Examination Center has gradually established a scientific and standardized set of format and assessment system. Generally speaking, this oral testing and/or oral mode of communication is used, more emphasis on the communicative function of language, with authenticity, functional, social, situational, and comprehensive common characteristics.

"College English Curriculum Requirements (CECR)" (trial) was promulgated by the Ministry of Education in early 2004. CECR requested that "College English teaching goals are to develop students' English language proficiency, particularly listening and speaking skills, so that they can effectively use English oral and written communication in their work and social exchanges in the future." Therefore, the college English test is "to fully assess students' ability to use language and to communicate." Test of English Proficiency (TEP) project is designed to test students' English proficiency and follow the CECR guideline (Xu, 2000). This article will focus on the project background, the feasibility of implementation, the implementation process, and implementation results analysis in Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology, and provide the oral English teaching strategies and ideas for the future.

## **2. TEP Oral Background of the Project and Its Feasibility in Our School**

### *2.1 TEP Oral Background of the Project*

In order to meet the needs of social development and the Beijing urban construction in China, under the guidance of the College English curriculum requirements, the Beijing Municipal Education Commission launched a College English teaching reform project "study of college English application ability test" in 2011. The aim of the project was to measure the non-English major college students' oral English, so as to further strengthen the teaching of English to non-English major students' English application ability, especially listening and speaking ability of students.

Beijing Municipal Education Commission entrusted with Beijing Second Foreign Language University as the delegate lead, Capital Normal University, Beijing City University, and other colleges and universities participated in the TEP project. The object of this experimental research focused on the students of non-English majors with the Beijing Second Foreign Language University, Capital Normal University, and other colleges and universities. The new test analysis theory, instructional theory, and demand theories were applied in teaching research study in College English teaching to explore how to train students' practical ability in English, especially listening and communication skills. Project group has developed a set of Test of English Proficiency (TEP Oral) system to guide College English teaching and learning and achieved the requirements of College English teaching goals.

The key work points in higher education released by the Beijing Municipal Education Commission in 2013 proposed to focus on the reform of College English teaching mode and set up new evaluation mechanisms in favor of English application ability for college students. In May of 2013, the BIPT officially joined the City Board of education TEP project group, as one of the 19 TEP pilot universities in Beijing.

### *2.2 TEP Oral Feasibility of Projects in Our School*

Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology leaders had played an essential role to reform college English teaching and cultivate students' practical ability in English. The school was approved to implement "personnel training project to meet national special needs" institutions, the first batch of "Engineering Education Excellence program" reform in colleges and universities. TEP Oral project objectives designed for our school to "build a distinct development objective of high levels of application-oriented universities" have a positive role. The school and Foreign Language Department in 2013 were earnestly to submit the Oral pilot applications for TEP, as one of its main tasks. School under Professor Zhansheng Han (Vice president of the school in charge of academic affairs) convened the Dean personally for teaching Foreign Languages Department and the Dean of academic administration to discuss this issue. This would help in the implementation of projects and provide a strong policy and financial guarantee.

The Department of Foreign Languages has a strong faculty team and it is a vibrant, collective unity. Existing full-time teachers of college English include 29 faculty members, 10 people with senior titles, including 2 professors, 8 associate professors. 90% per cent of teachers have a master's degree and above, 41% teachers with foreign visiting background. The Foreign Language Department annually employed 3-4 foreign teachers from

Europe and America. 70% of the young teachers are under 40 years of age and they have a great passion on teaching reform and interest. This internationalization of young with energetic team for implementation of the project in our school provides a strong personnel protection.

The teachers of Department of Foreign Languages strive for making progress. As an illustration, many teachers were awarded more than basic skills of young teachers in Beijing city-level and school-level competition, “teachers Club Cup” national competition of foreign language teaching in colleges and universities, and the national award-winning multimedia contest. More people accessed to university-level teaching award for outstanding teaching and school achievement awards. Teachers of practical experience in the academic level provided quality assurance study on the spirit of unity and cooperation for the project.

At present, the major work of demonstrable administration under the TEP project in our school, has completed the oral examiner training, three simulated tests, statistics, surveys, and school-based test development work. Teaching material development, model-building, and information management platform will be carried out in the next stage.

### **3. Project Implementation**

#### *3.1 Implementation of Process Design*

Prior to declare early pilot universities, school set up a “Test of English Proficiency (TEP Oral) studies” project leading group for simulation tests. The group was composed of the vice president in charge of academic affairs (principal responsible), teaching faculty representatives, and the director and vice-directors of Teaching Affairs Office. The Foreign Language Department is responsible for implementing the coordination of functions of the organization. This would help in planning simulation tests to be carried out in our school.

Advanced Research: in order to understand the TEP, in March of 2013, the English teachers of Foreign Language Department visited Beijing Second Foreign Language Institute, Beijing Technology, and Business University for the related study and research.

Examiner training: in June 2 of 2013, 10 faculty members participated in Test of English Proficiency (TEP Oral) examiner training hosted by the Beijing Second Foreign Language Institute. In order to protect a large simulation examinations smoothly, with support from the director of Teaching Affairs Office, Foreign Language Department invited the group (7 people, project team) of Beijing Municipal Education Commission in November 27, 2013, including Professor Xihua Zhang (project manager of Beijing Second Foreign Language University). They came to our school for a TEP Oral examiner training for teachers of English to enable all teachers to recognize the importance of this work and obtain the examiners qualifications. On December 13, Jiaolan Yan (Deputy Director of Foreign Language Department), head of the project, trained examiner on simulation scores and examiner consensus on criteria to ensure the fairness and impartiality of the test.

Test question selection: as noted in College English curriculum requirements: College English teaching is categorized into three levels: general, higher demand, and highest requirement. English speaking skills is an important part of English comprehensive ability. TEP Oral was designed to check if students have reached the oral English teaching of the College English curriculum requirement goals and promote the training of students’ English application ability in College English teaching. TEP Oral tests are divided into elementary (Level c), intermediate (Level b), and advanced (Level a) three levels, one for each teaching oral ability in general, higher demand, and highest requirement. Our school belongs to the college of the second level in the nation, three-mode option exams are used as primary (Level c). The first and second practice test questions were provided by the TEP project group from Beijing Second Foreign Language University; our own school practice test questions were chosen as the third one.

Training in coordination with candidates before the test: The training was organized, i.e., coordination meetings prior to each exam, full mobilization of the examiners and exam officers, division of labor, layout, arrangement and coordination of specific implementation plan, the examination room, examination personnel arrangements, and emergency plans, etc. Exam mobilization for students who intend to take part in tests, surveys and training were also arranged.

Rigorous examination process and specification: It was required that the examiner will be in strict following with the examiner directions both applied exam and score standard score. Two examiners and two candidates were compulsory to complete an oral examination process and keep all the video and audio recordings.

After the test reporting and continuous improvement: The Division of core members of the project team is responsible for collecting, collating data in simulation test, including student grades, questionnaires, and organizing sampling simulation tests, the scene photographs, and audio-visual materials. Project leader after the

first practice test was required to present the practical test to the school leadership team; the second and third presentation was to the related competent teaching Dean and Dean's Office, respectively. After each practice test, organization will hold a TEP summary Oral practice test and discuss improvements with pilot teaching to perfect the next.

To learn from other colleges and universities and develop together: In the course of project implementation, the team encountered some problems and confusion. To promote TEP Oral project in a thoroughgoing way and learn from other colleges, in the afternoon of June 11, 2014, the head of our project group led a total of 10 backbones of TEP team members to visit the Department of Foreign Languages of Beijing Union University. On June 16, 2014, invited by the Beijing Construction University, core members of our project team went to there and exchanged TEP Oral project experience of our school. On June 19, 2014, nine examiners were invited to Beijing Construction University to be the major examiner there and communicate with other colleagues for college English teachers learning and communication platform. This would be beneficial to improve teachers' comprehensive qualities.

### 3.2 Performance

With the help of TEP project team at Beijing Second Foreign Language Institute, in particular Dr. Hua Yang, professor Xihua Zhang, and by the efforts of our project team members to work together and the co-operation, we had successfully carried out three TEP practice tests so far and the school's 800 students participated TEP Oral simulation test.

The first test (TEP oral) was conducted on June 28, 2013, the participation of 102 students from the School of Information Engineering, Chemical Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering. From December 18 to 27, 2013, according to the plan, the school's second TEP Oral simulation test was organized, 506 students in our school for the TEP Oral testing, divided into five fields (involving 206 candidates in 2012 class A, 210 candidates in 2013 class A, and 90 pilot class of 2013). From June 3 to 8, 2014, the third TEP Oral was organized, divided into nine fields (involving total 462 candidates, 73 in 2012 class B, 209 in 2013 class A, and 180 students in an experimental class of 2013).

## 4. Results and Analysis

### 4.1 Score Analysis

Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology has so far carried out three TEP simulation tests. As test data accumulated, we made a gradually in-depth and comprehensive analysis of the data. After the first-two simulation test, data analysis focused on three areas: reliability analysis of questions, examiner and deputy examiner for consistency analysis, and descriptive statistics. Following the third simulation test, the data analysis also included the communication effects of candidates, pictorial description, topic presentation, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary and the correlation analysis between the scores of candidates. In addition, since we had the same group of students participated in the second and the third time simulation test, this group of students was 2012 A student, they simulated examinations during the interval of the two TEP by professional Test-Prep Guide. To study the pro forma effects, retest and posttest scores were analyzed on two occasions. Details are as follows:

#### 4.1.1 Reliability Analysis

Since no re-test groups in our TEP Oral simulation test was established, we could not conduct test-retest reliability analysis and factor analysis. Test-retest reliability analysis was mainly by studying the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient calculation results. It is generally believed that test-retest reliability coefficient between 0.5-0.9 is a reliable; if greater than 0.9, and test-retest reliability is excellent. Result from the first simulation test was 0.958, result of the second test is 0.887, and the third test result for 0.9393. Data indicated that the test test-retest reliability is excellent.

#### 4.1.2 Consistency Analysis between Examiner and Deputy Examiner

School project team had conducted the paired sample t-test for all the examination room (examiner rotation, examiner, and deputy examiner). The data analysis indicated that the correlation coefficient was significant, *i.e.*, the first simulation test,  $r$  (coefficient number) = 0.724, and  $p < 0.05$ ; the second test  $r = 0.643$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ; and the third test  $r = 0.676$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . Obviously, the test scores were consistently reliable and the simulation test score was fair and effective.

#### 4.1.3 Statistical Description

Based on the 3-time simulation test scores, project group had conducted statistical analysis (only the first test data showed in Table 1). Particularly the highest test score, the lowest score, mean, standard deviation, variance, and asymmetrical coefficient were analyzed, all of the data was within the reasonable range. For example, 102 samples of the first test were analyzed and the pass rate was 49.1%, the highest and the lowest was 4.38 and 1.61 respectively; 372 of second test and the pass rate was 52.9%, the highest and the lowest was 4.7 and 0 respectively; 277 of third test and the pass rate was 63.17%, the highest and the lowest was 4.5 and 0.2 respectively.

Table 1. The first test statistics data

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Integrated performance examiner	1.00	4.50	2.7990	.78746	.620
Picture description Deputy examiner	1.00	4.50	2.8088	.78678	.619
Communication Deputy examiner	1.00	4.50	3.1275	.71645	.513
Topic statement Deputy examiner	.00	4.50	3.1127	.78003	.608
Pronunciation and intonation Deputy examiner	2.00	5.00	3.2500	.62438	.390
Grammar and vocabulary Deputy examiner	1.00	4.50	3.0735	.64638	.418
Scores deputy examiner	1.35	4.35	3.1147	.60781	.369
Total score	1.61	4.38	2.9884	.63131	.399

#### 4.1.4 The Correlation Analysis between the Observation Points and the Total Score

After the third simulation test, the correlation analysis between the total score and the communication effect, pictorial description, topic presentation, pronunciation intonation, and grammar and vocabulary of the candidates was also conducted. Results showed that correlation coefficients were 0.876 (communicative effect), 0.889 (picture description), 0.887 (topic presentation), 0.516 (pronunciation and intonation), and 0.911 (grammar and vocabulary), respectively. At  $p < 0.05$  level, they demonstrated highly significant correlation.

#### 4.1.5 The Analysis of Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores of Candidates with Training

We were lucky to have students (2012 class A) participated both the second and the third test. In addition, they were trained by professional Test-Prep Guide during the interval of the two TEP tests. In order to check the preparation of training effect, we analyzed their test scores in the second and the third test. The results illustrated that the training preparation had a certain role. However, it was not significant. The details were listed below (Table 2a, 2b, and 2c).

Table 2a. Paired sample statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Pre-test	2.9748	143	.62980	.05267
Posttest	3.4048	143	.53879	.04506

Table 2b. Paired sample correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 Pre-test and post-test	143	.416	.000

Table 2c. Paired samples test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	pre-test and post-test	-.4301	.63609	.05319	-.5352	-.3249	-8.085	142	.000

#### 4.1.6 The Correlation Study between TEP Score and College Entrance Exam Score

Project team had conducted statistical analysis between TEP oral and college entrance exam (CEE) score of 102 students (Table 3). No significant correlation was existed (i.e.,  $r = 0.320$ ,  $P < 0.005$ ). The data further indicated that the high college entrance exam English score did not mean high TEP oral score, implying the necessity of the project.

Table 3. Correlations

		TEP	College entrance exam (CEE)
TEP	Pearson Correlation	1	.320 (**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.001
	N	102	102
CEE	Pearson Correlation	.320 (**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.
	N	102	102

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

#### 4.1.7 The Score Correlation between TEP and English Band-4 Score

Table 4. Statistical analysis data

		TEP	Band-4
TEP score	Pearson Correlation	1	.600 (**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	59	59
Level-4	Pearson Correlation	.600 (**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	59	59

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Project group had analyzed the correlations between the TEP oral and the band-4 English scores of 59 students (Table 4). The correlation coefficient was 0.600, obtaining a significant level ( $P < 0.05$ ). The result demonstrated the importance of emphasizing the spoken English in our English education for years and the investment being yielded good results.

## 4.2 Student Questionnaire

### 4.2.1 Study Objects and Methods

In order to identify the problems of students in College oral English learning and verbal learning needs, a survey was conducted for non-English majors in first grade, second grade students on spoken English learning needs by TEP Oral project group of the school of Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology. The purpose of this was to provide a useful foundation for improving College oral English teaching. The questionnaire format designed by a college English application ability test was provided by the project team of College oral English learning

needs survey (student). TEP project group of the school handed out 800 questionnaire survey forms in June 2013, January of 2014, and in June 2014, respectively and received 722, recovery rate was over 90%. Questionnaire was categorized into two parts; part I was collecting basic personal information, including age, gender, year of English learning, learning oral English class type, specialty, most recently participated in the English band four test scores, most recently to participate in CET exam results, whether to participate in the TEP Oral simulation test questions; Part II (a total of 54 issues) was involving five dimensions, on oral English learning status, of oral English learning motivation, difficulties in oral English, problem-solving way, and the needs of graded examinations in spoken English.

#### 4.2.2 Results and Analysis

##### 4.2.2.1 Present Situation of Oral English Learning

Table 5. Current situation on oral English study

	Strongly disagree	Do not agree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I can express my ideas in simple English.	5%	6%	14%	54%	21%
6. I can use English as the general topic discussions such as news, cultural practices, etc.	9%	25%	34%	26%	6%
9. I have developed learning objectives	10%	27%	35%	23%	5%
11. I can talk to aliens in everyday English	10%	21%	39%	24%	6%
14 I can chat with my family, classmates or teachers on my feeling for spoken English learning	13%	29%	31%	20%	7%
16. I can be in a complex social environment to be able to use English to communicate	15%	29%	36%	14%	6%

In the evaluation of the present situation of college students' learning (Table 5), most students thought that their spoken English was not fluent, with 54% students generally agreed with this issue. The most of the students said "uncertain" or "disagree" for the following issues: "I can express my thoughts in plain English," "I can speak in English on the general topic, such as current events discussions, cultural practices, etc.," "I set learning targets," "I can make everyday English conversation with foreigners," "I can chat with my family, classmates or teachers on my feeling for spoken English learning" and "I can be in a complex social environment to be able to use English to communicate." It was easy to see from the data, the vast majority of students were aware of the shortcomings of their speaking, but there was no specific response

##### 4.2.2.2 The Motivation of Oral English Learning

Table 6. Motivation of oral English learning

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I learn spoken language in order to understand foreign culture.	13%	31%	23%	24%	10%
7. I learn spoken language in order to study abroad.	23%	30%	31%	14%	2%
12. I learn spoken language for graduate study.	16%	23%	23%	33%	5%
17. I am speaking for future graduate job search.	6%	6%	23%	46%	20%
22. I learn spoken language in order to promote professional learning.	7%	13%	28%	40%	12%
28. I learning English in order to work with in the future.	5%	8%	19%	45%	23%
31. I learn spoken language in order to pass the English oral test.	8%	14%	18%	41%	20%
34. I learn spoken language in order to pass the Cambridge business English Certificate (BEC) exam.	15%	33%	27%	16%	8%
37. I learn spoken language in order to make foreign	12%	24%	30%	25%	8%

friends.					
40. I learn spoken language in order to pass the Public English Test System (PETS) oral test.	11%	18%	35%	25%	11%
43. I learn spoken language in order to talk to foreigners for routine.	6%	20%	29%	27%	16%
46. I learn spoken language in order to communicate with foreign counterparts in my major field.	13%	15%	33%	28%	11%

In terms of oral English learning motivation of college students (Table 6), 46% of the students thought that learning speaking English is for future graduate job-seekers; 45% of the students agreed to work with in the future; 41% students agreed to pass an English oral examination. The most of the students said “not sure” for the following: ‘Interest in oral English learning,’ “making foreign friends,” and “in everyday conversation with foreigners.” Thus, only a small portion students expressed interest in oral English, learn spoken because I like; but most students with a “tool” motivation, that is, employment, examinations, or future use.

Motivation is directly related to students’ internal power to learn. Everyone had his/her own motivation. However, the common need of improving oral English is the same. When asked about the students’ average speaking time spend per day to communicate in English with others, it was found that average time used to practice speaking English every day basically was all less than 1 hour. Many students did not use English to communicate with other people. These students did not spend enough time on the practice of oral English, they had needs but no action, which inevitably led to their poor English speaking skill. Language learning is a gradual process, if not persistent, it is difficult to reach the learning objectives.

#### 4.2.2.3 The Difficulties in Oral English Learning

The data (Table 7) indicated that 52% students agreed and 27% students strongly agreed that vocabulary was not enough when asked about “the greatest difficulty encountered in speaking practice.” 16% students basically agreed and 39% strongly agreed that grammar was the biggest obstacle in their oral English. 36% of people basically agreed with and 12% totally felt tone of voice was not good enough. In addition, approximately 50% students considered their poor psychological quality (a shy, afraid of making mistake) resulting they were unable to improve their spoken English. Meanwhile, the problems of language teaching were also reflected in the above table. For example, most students thought that the oral English classes and spoken material were not sufficient enough, few opportunities and speaking practices after class in the classroom. This documented that the school for non-English majors’ English was uneven, with individuals varied enormously. A large proportion of students was with poor pronounce, confused grammar, and vocabulary, seriously impairing their development of English communicative competence. Some students lacked of confidence in English learning, weak language capacity, and shortage of the pragmatic competence, such as the correct pronunciation and intonation. Students usually did not look for the speaking practice opportunities. Survey also recorded the students’ demand for oral forms of teaching materials and textbooks were imperative. They wanted outside of college English in addition to their regular textbooks; teachers could add to a rich corpus of interesting material, as far as possible to meet the knowledge needs of students with different professional and personal interests.

Table 7. The difficulties in English learning

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree
1. During English oral communication, we don’t understand each other.	11%	24%	39%	21%	5%
8. When spoken, my vocabulary is not enough.	1%	6%	13%	52%	27%
13. When spoken, my grammatical errors.	2%	17%	25%	39%	16%
18. When speaking, I can’t get the pronunciation.	5%	20%	27%	36%	12%
23. When spoken, I’m afraid, and nervous.	10%	16%	23%	44%	7%
27. I have no communicates.	3%	15%	18%	43%	21%
29. When spoken, my expression is not smooth.	6%	9%	27%	43%	15%
32. When speaking, I wouldn’t even read skimming.	7%	18%	25%	36%	14%

35. When speaking, I cannot appropriately express.	4%	19%	29%	35%	13%
38. When speaking, I cannot organize the content.	7%	15%	34%	32%	11%
41. My lack of cultural background.	6%	17%	23%	37%	16%
44. My expertise is not enough.	4%	15%	24%	40%	16%
47. Oral communication, I was afraid of losing face.	11%	22%	27%	31%	9%
49. Speaking lesson is enough.	7%	13%	23%	32%	25%
51. Class materials (textbook, read information, additional information) is not enough.	6%	20%	32%	32%	10%
53. Less speaking practice in English class.	4%	13%	17%	40%	25%
54. Less speaking practice after class.	4%	6%	10%	40%	39%

#### 4.2.2.4 Ways to Solve the Problem

In the aspect of solution to improve the oral English oral learning (Table 8), 38% students basically agreed and 20% completely agreed that they can learn “through movie, TV, and network channel;” 38% of students agreed “through repetition, with read audio, and video material to improve oral;” only 21% of students wanted to “through participate in English speech, and debate game, to improve oral.” Only 21% students were to think about “by English speech and debate tournament to improve their spoken English” and 24% students thought of “by participating in the English-language stage play to improve your spoken English.” It was clear that students were rarely through extracurricular activities to improve oral ability and level. First, the English learning in class restricted the effectiveness of learning due to time and space limitations in some extent. Thereafter, the construction of the second class is an extension of the necessary and complementary. Through a variety of extra-curricular activities, such as contest, English speech, drama performances and lectures in English, could create a friendly atmosphere for learning oral English, so that students would have more opportunities to speak the language. Strengthening the construction of the second class can give full play to the enthusiasm of the students to make English learning from passive to active, enhance learning, and cultivate the independent innovation ability of the students.

Table 8. Ways to solve the problems

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	agree	Strongly agree
1. I seek a real English speaking environment.	6%	14%	27%	39%	14%
24. I can't find the foreign students' oral English practice partner.	20%	30%	32%	11%	7%
25. I actively learn spoken English through movies, television, the Internet, and other channels.	8%	13%	20%	38%	20%
26. I like speaking English.	7%	20%	27%	31%	15%
30. I read books, newspapers, and magazines to improve spoken English.	7%	20%	33%	32%	7%
33. I read and read audio, video material to improve your spoken English.	8%	21%	33%	31%	7%
36. I learn English by speech and debate tournament to improve my spoken English.	19%	32%	28%	18%	3%
39. I attend English theater to improve my oral English.	17%	33%	25%	20%	4%
42. I read aloud to improve our oral English.	6%	11%	26%	42%	14%
45. I improve my spoken English by attending English corner.	16%	25%	27%	23%	8%
48. I will apply some language rules in English of Chinese.	4%	15%	31%	34%	15%
50. I often use the possession of set phrases and sentences in my oral communication.	5%	8%	27%	43%	15%

#### 4.2.2.5 Graded Examination Need in Spoken English for Student

As to the demand for graded examinations in spoken English (Table 9), the 47% (32% generally agree with; 15% completely agree) students thought that “in college I wanted to attend an English oral exam;” 39% (27% generally agree with; 12% completely agree) students “interested in test of spoken English;” 76% (42% generally agree with; 34% completely agree) students “thought of College oral English test certificate helped me graduate job seekers;” 70% (46% generally agree with; 24% completely agree) students emphasized “attend the oral exam prompted me to strengthen the learning of spoken English.” Obviously, the vast majority of students were consistent with oral language test with a positive attitude.

Table 9. Graded examination need in spoken English

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree
1. In college I wanted to attend an English graded examination in spoken English.	10%	13%	30%	32%	15%
10. I'm interested in English oral examination.	11%	18%	32%	27%	12%
15. I think CET spoken (certificate of English test) helps my graduate job search.	5%	5%	14%	42%	34%
20. English speaking test prompts me to strengthen oral English learning.	9%	2%	18%	46%	24%

#### 4.2.3 Student Questionnaire Summary

In the aspect of oral English learning needs, there was no significant difference existed between class-A and class-B students of 722 sample surveyed. Similarly, there was no significant difference between the students majored in science and non-science, both in terms of willingness to learn goals and in the learning difficulties. English learning style for most non-English-major college students was traditional and rigidly adheres to the forms. They spent most of their time in learning English grammar exercises, vocabulary, and memory. Among them, the outstanding students tried to balance the distribution of oral and written skills training time and effort, and adept at using the resources available to learn spoken language. However, most of the learners had realized the importance of listening and speaking ability, and also wanted to improve in terms of oral. It seems that under the influence of traditional passive knowledge of learning styles, the action is delayed, not positive.

#### 4.2.4 College English Teaching in China

##### 4.2.4.1 Advice for Learners

College students desired to have a chance to practice the language and want to practice in real exchange, in a free and an open atmosphere. 1) changing in attitude. As the subject of the learning process, learners should recognize the learning, establish a correct study motivation; changing the attitudes of past passive knowledge into a proactive learner; 2) operation. Students should put a shift in consciousness into practice; then action will follow, e.g., to rationally arrange the time, optimizing the use of resources to improve your spoken English; and 3) learning mode. In addition to learn basic knowledge and basic skills, students should pay more attention to their language ability and the cultivation of practical abilities, good habits to develop cooperative learning, and independent study.

##### 4.2.4.2 Advice for Teachers

In English teaching, teachers should change simply impart knowledge into training and developing students' language proficiency and thinking skills, so that students could change passive study to active study. It was popular that most teachers were more focusing too much content and knowledge transfer, and entering the text, emphasizing knowledge, systematic; while ignoring the development of students' communicative competence and linguistic output capacity. To improve students' oral communicative competence in English is to be taught and spoken English in college English courses combining training, combining input and output capacity of language ability. It is imperative to reform the teaching concept of teachers, stress on the cultivation of students' English application ability, analyze students' learning needs in a timely manner, and create an open and active classroom atmosphere.

In the field of teaching activities, we need to advocate the coordination of both teachers and students and achieve

learning spoken English qualitative leap, leading to success in teaching English.

#### 4.3 Teacher Questionnaire

In June of 2014, Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology TEP project group on the part of the school teachers college spoken English conducted a survey in college English teaching and testing questionnaires, aiming at school of college English teachers' oral English teaching present situation and existed problems of a more comprehensive investigation, analysis, and promoting the teaching of spoken English.

A total of 19 questionnaires were received. In the teachers filled out questionnaires, 8 were associate professors, 11 lecturers. 7 were 1-10 years of English teaching in colleges and universities: 10 with 11-20 year's experience; 2 with 21-30 years. 16 had rich experience in teaching English at the University and did not attend special class. The numbers of students were taught in the order: engineering, science, economics, management science, and literature.

The survey used a college English application ability test provided by the project team of College oral English teaching and testing questionnaires (teacher). Beside of personal information section in the questionnaires, a total of 58 objectives multiple choice questions were chosen, dividing into the present situation of oral English teaching, oral teaching concepts, problems, oral teaching method in oral English teaching and methods, and oral exam requirement in five aspects. Results are as follows:

##### 4.3.1 The Present Situation of Oral English Teaching

The data in Table-10 clearly indicate: more teachers realize the importance of speaking on college students' English, specialized courses. The specialized courses should be offered for students (approximately 89.47% teachers agree or totally agree). Students should have specifically spoken English textbooks (approximately 73.68% teachers agree or strongly agree with this statement). However, the amount of students' oral English training was far from enough. For example, 52.63% teachers in an English class thought of students without adequate oral practice; 57.89% of the teachers held the opinion that students do not have enough extracurricular oral practice.

Table 10. Present situation of oral English teaching

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree
1. Students quite like the current oral English class.	0.00%	15.79%	36.84%	36.84%	10.53%
6. Students should have specialized oral course.	0.00%	0.00%	10.53%	57.89%	31.58%
11. Currently students in our English class have plenty of oral practice.	10.53%	52.63%	26.32%	10.53%	0.00%
16. Students have plenty of extra oral practice.	15.79%	57.89%	15.79%	10.53%	0.00%
21. Students are interested in learning spoken English.	10.53%	10.53%	36.84%	26.32%	15.79%
26. Students should have specifically English spoken textbooks.	0.00%	5.26%	21.05%	52.63%	21.05%
31. I often use specialized oral English textbooks in teaching.	0.00%	31.58%	42.11%	15.79%	10.53%
36. The oral video clips are often used as my teaching materials.	0.00%	10.53%	26.32%	47.37%	15.79%
41. The English News are often used as my teaching materials.	0.00%	10.53%	31.58%	52.63%	5.26%
46. The literary works were used as my teaching materials.	5.26%	26.32%	36.84%	15.79%	15.79%
49. Student oral examinations were conducted per semester at the basic stage of college English teaching.	0.00%	26.32%	15.79%	42.11%	15.79%

In terms of classroom content design, oral video clips are often used as teaching materials of 63.16% teachers and the oral English News are often used as teaching materials from 57.89% teachers. However, less oral literary works was used as teaching materials for teachers, approximately 31.58%. 47.37% of the teachers think that students like spoken English class.

As the college English was grade teaching, individualized in our school, so the final grade examination format was changing. The oral test was conducted by 57.89% teachers each semester in the basic stage of college English teaching.

#### 4.3.2 Oral English Teaching Concept

English teachers are teaching English setters. Their knowledge, skills, and ideas of teaching oral English teaching play a vital role in the success. Survey results (Table 11) show that oral teaching ideas of English teachers in our school are more advanced; teachers pay more attention to students' communicative competence and linguistic awareness; cultivate students' oral confidence. 73.68% teachers can promote the teaching of the multimedia teaching courseware; 89.47% of teachers pay attention to foster students' oral fluency; 73.68% teachers emphasize students' intonation accuracy; 68.42% teachers pay attention to foster students' oral language accuracy; 84.21% teacher foster students' oral communicative strategies; 89.47% of teachers pay attention to foster students' oral communicative confidence, laying emphasis on arousing students' interest in oral communication and increasing students' cultural background; 47.37% of teachers pay attention to the grammatical accuracy of students' oral English.

Table 11. Oral teaching concepts and statistics

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree
2. I think multimedia courseware can contribute to oral English teaching.	0.00%	5.26%	21.05%	63.16%	10.53%
7. I pay attention to foster students' oral fluency.	0.00%	0.00%	10.53%	63.16%	26.32%
12. I pay attention to cultivating students' intonation accuracy.	0.00%	5.26%	21.05%	68.42%	5.26%
17. I pay attention to the cultivation of students' oral grammatical accuracy.	0.00%	15.79%	36.84%	47.37%	0.00%
22. I pay attention to the cultivation of students' oral language accuracy.	0.00%	5.26%	26.32%	63.16%	5.26%
27. I pay attention to foster students' oral communication strategy.	0.00%	5.26%	10.53%	57.89%	26.32%
32. I pay attention to foster students' oral communicative confidence.	0.00%	5.26%	5.26%	68.42%	21.05%
37. I pay attention to arousing students' interest in oral communication.	0.00%	5.26%	5.26%	73.68%	15.79%
42. I focus on increasing students' cultural background knowledge.	0.00%	0.00%	10.53%	57.89%	31.58%

#### 4.3.3 Problems in the Oral English Teaching

The problems are serious in current oral English teaching and students' English language skills are not solid. Survey results (Table 12) show that all teachers basically agreed to the point of students' lack of real language training environments. 94.74% of teachers believe that more syntax errors were in students' oral expression. 89.47% of the teachers think that students do not understand spoken English communicative strategies, lack of vocabulary, lack of self-confidence, and shy of speaking. 84.21% of teachers indicate students' poor pronunciation and intonation. The lack of cultural background knowledge and thinking ability of students are confirmed with 68.42% and 57.89% teachers respectively. 78.95% of teachers believe that an oral English class size is too large, students' lack of classroom speaking opportunities. 73.68% of teachers point that the oral English teaching is not active. It is clear that reform is imperative in order to improve the students' oral language skills and competence.

Table 12. Oral English teaching problems

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree
3. Students' poor pronunciation and intonation.	0.00%	0.00%	15.79%	47.37%	36.84%
8. Lack of vocabulary In students' oral expression.	0.00%	0.00%	10.53%	26.32%	63.16%
13. Syntax error in students' oral expression.	0.00%	0.00%	5.26%	42.11%	52.63%
18. Students lack background knowledge.	0.00%	10.53%	21.05%	31.58%	36.84%
23. Students do not have spoken English communicative strategies.	0.00%	5.26%	5.26%	68.42%	21.05%
28. Students' poor thinking ability.	0.00%	26.32%	15.79%	21.05%	36.84%
33. Lack of real language training environment for students.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	73.68%	26.32%
38. Students lack self-confidence, not speaking.	0.00%	5.26%	5.26%	63.16%	26.32%
43. Short of ideas of oral English teaching in the classroom speaking activities.	5.26%	10.53%	15.79%	57.89%	10.53%
47. Shortage of enthusiast ices in oral English teaching in the classroom.	0.00%	10.53%	15.79%	57.89%	15.79%
50. Equipment is comparatively backward in the teaching of oral English.	5.26%	10.53%	31.58%	36.84%	15.79%
52. Oral English teaching and teaching materials are not practical.	5.26%	10.53%	26.32%	52.63%	5.26%
54. Lack of classroom speaking opportunities due to too many students in a single class.	0.00%	15.79%	5.26%	31.58%	47.37%

## 4.3.4 Oral English Teaching Approaches and Methods

Table 13. Oral English teaching approaches and methods

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree
4. I usually spot students to correct oral errors.	5.26%	21.05%	31.58%	31.58%	10.53%
9. I often tell students to correct oral errors.	5.26%	0.00%	31.58%	47.37%	15.79%
14. I'm often a combination of speaking and listening training.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	57.89%	42.11%
19. My oral English teaching, often involves English-speaking events.	0.00%	21.05%	31.58%	36.84%	10.53%
24. The activities of the regular English dub were used in my English oral teaching class.	5.26%	36.84%	26.32%	26.32%	5.26%
29. The discussion activities were often carried out in my oral English class.	0.00%	0.00%	10.53%	63.16%	26.32%
34. Role-playing exercises was performed.	0.00%	15.79%	21.05%	26.32%	36.84%
39. Ongoing poetry reading events.	0.00%	36.84%	26.32%	36.84%	0.00%
48. Debate activity is often used.	0.00%	10.53%	31.58%	47.37%	10.53%
51. Personal speaking is encouraged.	0.00%	0.00%	21.05%	63.16%	15.79%
53. Pair exercise was encouraged.	0.00%	0.00%	10.53%	52.63%	36.84%
55. Group exercises are allowed.	0.00%	0.00%	10.53%	57.89%	31.58%
56. Regular oral interaction between teachers and students are encouraged.	0.00%	0.00%	5.26%	57.89%	36.84%
57. Regularly English corner activities encouraged.	0.00%	15.79%	31.58%	36.84%	15.79%
58. English-language stage play performances were organized.	0.00%	31.58%	15.79%	42.11%	10.53%

The data in Table 13 clearly demonstrated the following: Almost all teachers are in favor a combination of speaking and listening in oral teaching. 94.74% of teachers encourage teacher-student interaction; 89.47% of teachers in oral teaching, frequently allow student group practice, pair practice, and the activities of discussion. 78.95% of teachers are in favor of students' personal speaking. 63.16% teachers often conduct role-playing exercises. English debate is often adopted by 57.89% teachers. English corner activities and English-language theatre performance activities were organized of 52.63% teachers. English personal speaking, poetry readings, and dubbed activities were conducted by 47.37%, 36.84%, and 31.58% teachers, respectively. The correct of spoken errors after spot (63.16%) and on the spot were 63.16% and 42.11% respectively.

#### 4.3.5 The Requirement of Students' Oral Exam

Table 14. Requirement of students' oral exam

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree
5. Necessary at the basic stage of college English teaching per semester to students oral examinations.	0.00%	0.00%	10.53%	57.89%	31.58%
10. Students at the college level have the necessary English graded examinations in spoken English.	0.00%	21.05%	21.05%	26.32%	31.58%
15. English oral grade test helps improve students' oral English learning motivation.	0.00%	10.53%	10.53%	57.89%	21.05%
20. English spoken test certificate helps students graduate job search.	0.00%	5.26%	15.79%	52.63%	26.32%
25. Participate in the oral examinations can motivate students to enhance learning of spoken English.	0.00%	5.26%	21.05%	57.89%	15.79%
30. Speaking test can make positive changes in students' attitudes towards learning.	0.00%	10.53%	15.79%	57.89%	15.79%
35. Oral testing is an effective means of assessing the quality of College oral English teaching.	0.00%	5.26%	15.79%	57.89%	21.05%
40. Oral test helps improve students' oral English proficiency.	0.00%	10.53%	10.53%	57.89%	21.05%
45. College English oral examination contribute to quality-oriented education.	0.00%	10.53%	15.79%	52.63%	21.05%

On oral English test is with high recognition of school teachers and the TEP oral language exam has more pressing needs. Survey results (Table 14) show that 78.95% of the teachers think that the oral test was an effective means of assessing the quality of College oral English teaching and oral tests will help improve students' spoken English and students' learning motivation. College English oral test certificate helps student graduate job-seekers. 89.47% deemed that it is necessary at the basic stage of college English teaching for teachers per semester to interview students. 73.68% of the teachers think the speaking test can make positive changes in students' attitudes towards learning, enable students to enhance learning, and even improve the quality education; 57.89% of the teachers think that it is necessary for students at the college level to participate in oral English proficiency test.

#### 4.3.6 Thoughts and Suggestions

Through our survey analysis on college English teachers' oral English teaching, following several thoughts and suggestions were initiated:

1) Students' spoken English proficiency is not optimistic. Current University students' English skills and oral communication skills are poor, such as poor intonation and poor vocabulary, weak understanding oral communication strategy, lack of cultural background knowledge and thinking ability, lack of self-confidence, and afraid to speak. How to solve this type of problem is a key and the difficult point to improve College oral English teaching.

2) Teachers' oral English classroom teaching ideas in advanced and the teaching approach is extensively varied. However, the result is not promising. For example, teachers often encouraged student pair exercise, group topic

discussion, and group exercise. Additionally, the activities of student personal speaking, role-playing exercise, and English debating activities were organized. English corner activities, and English-language stage play performances were also conducted. On the other hand, exactly which teaching methods are more suitable for the students of our school and can really improve the students' English speaking ability, as well as the teaching methods should be used in the classroom, and worthy of further exploration.

3) Offers specialized English courses for students should be equipped with dedicated oral English textbooks. Meanwhile, the construction of the second speaking classroom, students in classroom and extracurricular opportunities to practice speaking should be guaranteed. The plenty of practice, English input-output channels, and the practice of high quality should be also strengthened.

4) Implementation of college English graded examinations in spoken English is a must in all. Oral testing is necessary each semester for students to stimulate students' motivation to practice oral English and improve students' spoken English and proficiency. By doing this, it will lay a more solid foundation for future employment.

## **5. Problems in Oral English Teaching and the Next Step**

### *5.1 Problems in Oral English Teaching*

1) College English teaching structure is fairly unreasonable. In the college English teaching outline for students of English "listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation," there are quite a few requirements. However, in the actual process of teaching, teachers focus on knowledge of English and the lack of languages communicative competence of students. In the teaching of English, basic knowledge taught is in a relative larger proportion and a smaller proportion is oral English practice. Even some teachers try to complete teaching content and without teaching oral English training links.

2) Traditional English version of textbook chapters, topics, and renew speed constraints cannot meet the requirements of the current students' oral English training, which requires teachers to prepare suitable training collateral. These teaching aids as well as fun, and daily life, and expanding classroom textbook topics, stimulating the enthusiasm of the students to communicate in English.

3) Oral test has its own specialty. Due to the larger number of students taking the oral exam and less teachers proctoring the exam, the implementation of face to face English exam is difficult. Most schools measure the English skill by written exam score only and this exam standard rarely to inspire students' oral English learning motivation. Therefore, researchers should carefully evaluate how to make the oral examination evaluation system into English, so that a fair and reasonable measure of students' English application ability.

4) All students should participate in TEP Oral examinations, or only a group of students to attend? Final exams should be executed each semester, or after University English band-4 complete? What is the exam level and the standard for each semester? Is it possible to give through one more semester of college English oral class after passing band-4 test, to have TEP oral examination as students' final Oral examination results?

### *5.2 Next Implementation Step*

Current oral English class of our school does not have a separate opening. The spoken ability was trained in intensive reading, and listening and speaking classes, according to teachers' own teaching philosophy and their awareness of the importance of spoken to arrange training sessions. Thus, the huge differences existed there. On the other hand, in the rapidly changing information technology, network-wide open course MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) era of rapid development and the cultivation of students' autonomous learning ability is very important.

The school intends to cut in from the reform of the teaching of listening and speaking course in cultivating students' self-regulated learning ability at the same time and strengthen language practice. Namely: flip the Visual-audio-oral teaching classroom instruction, according to the learning needs of the students, school should provide students with the basic concepts required to understand the framework. For example: it is designed that before classes required for new course teacher would provide students with previewed jobs, audio and video materials; then, in the class, the teacher should organize student team learning, sharing the preparations derived from and dispatched teams of representatives to share the lessons for each group member. Teachers should switch from previous mainly by audio-visual classroom to speaking classroom, provide students with the best environment for English practice activities, increase student output, and optimize output quality.

Reform of college English course assessment is urgent. The new approach is taking the TEP Oral test scores into students' comprehensive assessment of achievements to ensure that students' English proficiency, particularly

listening and speaking skills improvement.

## 6. Conclusions

TEP Oral system for assessing students' ability to communicate in English is to evaluate student learning outcomes, to correct oral evaluation means to enhance students' interest in learning English, to create a good atmosphere for learning and stimulate students' learning motivation, and cultivate students' study habits. TEP Oral conforms to language acquisition regulations by increasing the efficiency of College English teaching and the students' interest in learning English, extending the student career development platform, and following the talent market. The ultimate goal is to enhance students' competitiveness in the job market. It will be also nursing talents with comprehensive skills and global vision. Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology, in a large scale empirical had implemented the study of the oral test to help teachers understand the current oral English teaching and requirements of the school, in order to effectively carry out the school's oral English teaching and provide a valuable reference. Meanwhile, through project implementation procedure, it also trained teachers and promoted reflections on teachers' teaching of College English, enhanced the overall level and quality of foreign language teachers in our school. In the course of project implementation, communication with experts and wide-ranging research, will help teachers' reflections on the characteristics and development trend of College English teaching, deepen the reform of College English teaching and talent training model, and improve students' English proficiency.

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