Debates over the paradigm shift from EGP to ESP in mainland China and Implications

Jigang Cai, Fudan University
• Provide a detailed account of debates which have taken place in the paradigm shift from EGP to ESP

• Analyze the underlying causes for the hindrances to the shift.

• Illustrate the measures taken to implement EAP
# Teaching objectives of *College English Syllabus/Curriculum Requirements (CES/CECR)* between 1980 and 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syllabus</th>
<th>Teaching Objectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CES (1980)</td>
<td>CET aims to assist students in laying solid linguistic foundation which can <strong>enable them to read books and journal articles of science and technology</strong> so that they could access information that relates to their disciplinary studies.</td>
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<td>CES (1985)</td>
<td>CET aims to develop students’ relatively stronger ability of reading with better linguistic foundation and higher language proficiency <strong>so that they are able to use English as a tool to access information needed in their disciplinary studies.</strong></td>
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<td>CES (1999)</td>
<td>CET aims to help students to lay solid linguistic foundation and improve their cultural literacy as well as high level of five micro skills of reading, listening, speaking, writing and translating so that they can meet the socioeconomic needs.</td>
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<td>CECR (2007)</td>
<td>CET is to develop students’ ability to use English in a well-rounded way, especially their listening and speaking ability so that in their future studies and careers, they will be able to communicate effectively and show good cultural literacy.</td>
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• Specific, EST or ESP (1980,1985)

• General, EGP(1999,2007)

• How ESP has gone down hill since 1999?
English for general purposes (EGP) vs. English for science and technology (ESP) (1978-1999)

EST in mainland China was initiated almost simultaneously with EST globally with the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-1978).

Foreign language education = Rapid development of science and technology.

- EST courses mushroomed in tertiary institutions under the umbrella term of Zhuanye English, or rather discipline-based English.
• A nationwide controversy:
• Should CET be oriented towards EGP or towards EST/ESP?
Xu, the past president of China English Language Education Association

Yang, the past president of National College English Test Committee
• ---to narrow the gap between China and advanced nations in the field of science and technology, university students should be equipped with the ability of accessing information from international scientific journals directly. (Xu, 1978, Yang, 1978)
• Policy-makers in the field of CET argue against EST.
• Two opponents are
• Li (1987), the past chair of the MOE’s Advisory Committee on CET (MACCET) and
• Dong (1986), a past vice chair of the MACCET
They justified implementing EGP for three reasons.

---Discipline-based ESP instruction won’t be effective considering that freshmen’s English proficiency is still low though ESP might meet immediate needs.

---EST materials are boring with many technical terms. The scientific texts are not suitable for recitation and memorization on which language learning heavily depends.

---ESP will restrict the development of freshmen who will change their mindsets in the choice of their majors in the later academic years.

(Li, 1987, Dong, 1986)
Li (1992) administered a questionnaire to scientists working for the China’s Science Academy. Almost 100% of over 20 respondents agreed that CET program should be EGP-oriented.

R1: Solid GE foundation can help students to communicate effectively in their future careers

R2: EST could be self-taught when students are engaged in their academic studies if they have solid general English foundation.

R3: EST should not be replaced with general English which include the elements of culture.
The MOE (1999) released the CES, establishing EGP as the orientation of CET:

“CET aims to help students to lay solid linguistic foundation and improve their cultural literacy as well as relatively high level of five micro skills of reading, listening, speaking, writing and translating so that they can meet the socioeconomic needs.”
Two reasons for EST failure:

1) Zhuanye English were taught by subject specialists

2) A standardized GE-based College English Test (CET-4) was implemented in 1987.
English for liberal education vs. English for academic purposes (EAP) (2002-2015)

• Coupled with economic globalization is the internationalization of higher education.
• A substantial rise in the number of international students in China in recent years.
• In 2012, there were about 328,330 foreign students from more than 200 countries studying in the 690 tertiary institutions in mainland China.
• In 2015, the figure reached 400,000, 46% read for degree programs.
• (Yang & Ding, 2016).
To adapt to the globalized academic environment, the MOE initiated extensive promotion of EMI courses at tertiary level:

“Tertiary institutions should make attempts to use EMI in the undergraduates’ courses, especially in the disciplines such as information technology, biotechnology, new-material technology and foreign trade to meet the needs of our country’s accession to the WTO. All the disciplines should increase its number of bilingual or EMI courses to 5-10% within 3 years” （MOE,2001）.
Outline of National Program of Education Reform and Development (2010-2020),
University graduates are required “to able to maintain international competitiveness” in their disciplines. To accomplish the goal, the Outline encourages tertiary institutions

“1) to attract the world-class experts and scholars to participate in teaching, research and management; 2) to make specific plans to hire academic experts and disciplinary teams overseas; 3) to introduce outstanding teaching materials from abroad and to raise the proportion of foreign instructors” (2010).

Nationwide criticism, because ESP is widely synonymous with Zhuanye English.

To facilitate the paradigm shift, therefore, I (2010, 2012a) turned to the concept of EAP which might be accepted as it is more generic than ESP.
English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

General English (GE)

English For Academic Purposes (EAP)

English For Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP)

English For Specific Purposes (ESP)

English For Occupational Purposes (EOP)

English For General Academic Purposes (EGAP)
• Serving as chair of the SACCET in 2012, I began to initiate EAP implementation in Shanghai tertiary institutions with the support of Shanghai Municipal Education Commission.
A drastic departure from traditional CET triggered a fierce nationwide controversy immediately.

They rejected the validity and necessity of EAP.

Wang (2013.2014), the current chair of the MACCET,
Hu (2014), a vice chair of the SACCET, and
Wen (2014), the president of CELEA
and other policy-makers in China TEFL
1. EAP does not suit Chinese contexts where content courses in the majority of universities and colleges are taught in Chinese. Hence, the implementation of EAP instruction is neither urgent nor necessary (Wang, 2013, Hu, 2014).

2. Most English language instructors in mainland China are unqualified to teach EAP courses which require them of specialized knowledge and expertise of the target disciplines (Yang, 2013).
3. The materials of EAP are usually science and technology-oriented and the themes and topics are boring compared with less technical EGP texts which easily interest students by the general topics of humanities and literature. Therefore, EAP will not benefit English learners (Hu, 2014).

4. Most of Chinese undergraduates have low English proficiency and what they need is basic grammatical knowledge and skills of reading and writing. EAP is too hard for the majority of undergraduates with very limited English proficiency (Hu, 2014).
5. A student with good general English proficiency can be well qualified for their academic studies in English since there is no big difference between EAP and EGP except terminologies and passive constructions (Hu, 2014).

ESP and EGP might co-exist

1. EGP can best address the individualized needs as there is a more linguistically and disciplinarily diverse student population with different academic or professional purposes upon graduation. Therefore, EGP and EAP should co-exist in CET programs. (Wen, 2014; Wang, 2015).
2. EAP should not replace EGP because (i) it is necessary for freshmen of low English proficiency to continue EGP instruction and (ii) EGP highlights the cultivation of one’s encyclopedic knowledge which EAP lacks (Wen, 2014).

EAP only highlights the language function as a tool while the CE programs is part of liberal education, aiming to develop broad educational competencies with global perspectives and cross-cultural awareness (Wang, 2014, Wen, 2013, Hu, 2014)
• Three underlying causes

• 1) The perceptions can be attributed to their understanding of the nature of foreign language education which is conceived as part of quality-oriented education, or liberal education.

• --- “English for liberal Education (EGE) should be a new orientation of CET and will become a turning point in history of Chinese foreign language education” (Wang, 2010).
2) The attitude to EAP reflects the general feeling of hostility toward EMI courses among many Chinese scholars.

Hu (2002) and Ma (2006), two well-known scholars working respectively for Renmin University of China and Nankai University argue against using English as medium of instruction in universities:

--EMI or bilingual instruction should be forbidden in Chinese tertiary education as it involves national sovereignty and safety, and it is illegal according to the Education Law of the People’s Republic of China.
3) The reluctance of the majority of CET policymakers of different levels to embrace EAP practices results from their academic backgrounds and research interests being American/English literature or linguistics.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course category</th>
<th>Foundation courses (Required)</th>
<th>English for Liberal Education (elective)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credits</td>
<td>50-60%</td>
<td>40-50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course titles</td>
<td>-College English I</td>
<td>-British and American Culture,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-College English II</td>
<td>-British and American Literature</td>
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<td>-College English III</td>
<td>-Western Cultural</td>
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<td>-College English IV</td>
<td>-American Novels and Poetry</td>
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<td>CET-4</td>
<td>-American Movies</td>
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<td>-English Public Speaking</td>
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Strategies adopted to implement EAP

1. A local definition of EAP

- “language and associated skills that students need to undertake study in higher education through the medium of English” (Gillett, 2004, p. 11)
- The use of EAP in “classroom interactions (from teacher feedback to tutorials and seminar discussions)” and “student writing (from essays to exam papers and graduate theses)” (Hyland, 2006, P. 1)
EAP instruction should be different in the inner circle, outer circle and expanding circle (Kachru, 1982)
• EAP instruction is to improve students’ language proficiency for the purposes of participation in higher education.
2. A wide-angled approach

A wide-angled approach Vs. A narrow-angled approach

EGAP vs. ESAP

“EGAP refers to the teaching of the skills and language that are common to all disciplines; ESAP refers to the teaching of the features that distinguish one discipline from others” (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998, p. 41)
• Hyland (2002), insists on the notion of specificity.
• Hyland (2009), there is “considerable disciplinary variation in academic language use”
• Soft discipline(Philosophy, Sociology, Marketing, Applied Ling.)
• Hard discipline(Elec Eng., Biology, Mech Eng., Physics.)
However, To implement EAP instruction from the pedagogical perspective, especially in mainland China, has to take the following constraints into consideration.

1. There is a general misconception that EAP is synonymous with Zhuanye English. Both language instructors and subject specialists believe that EAP “cannot be divorced from the teaching of the subject itself” (Paltridge, 2009, p. 291) and is beyond the ability of language instructors.
• Potential EAP teachers in a dilemma:
2. Language instructors are unwilling to be EAP teachers. Most English teachers are trained in linguistics or literature studies.

--- In general English

--- In ESP teaching

--- Literature or linguistics studies is viewed as content teaching while language teaching as non-academic.
Different Tracks of Promotion

• Content teaching
  - professors

• Language teaching
  -- lecturers
3. There is no immediate utility of academic English skills. In the inner circle countries vs. in expanding circle countries.

The needs of EAP skills are immediate and the requirement is compulsory.

The use of EAP skills in Chinese context might be potential, or the requirement is optional since the proportion of EMI courses is quite low.

Students are unwilling to take EAP courses which, they find, are not only more linguistically demanding but also practically valueless.
4. Management of CET centers does not want to commit to ESAP programs. Short of language faculty members, they would prefer a centralized, cross-discipline EGAP program to the decentralized ESAP program.
If a wide-angled approach is adopted, however,
1. The universal topics with less technical materials vs. the samples of genres of a discipline will more specialized vocabulary and contents,

2. Generic academic skills and critical thinking skills are more important than knowledge itself in today’s society.
3. EGAP can be offered in a large-sized class composed of learners from multiple disciplines. It seems that the subject-specific approach might not be effective in such mixed-discipline and large-sized classes.
• 4. EGAP pedagogy will address students’ needs in their multidisciplinary or inter-disciplinary studies.

• 5. EGAP could satisfy the needs of the majority of students for accessing information rather than writing RAs.

• Deconstructing texts requires less genre knowledge than reconstructing texts
A Framework of Reference for EFL Teaching at Tertiary Level in Shanghai (Trial Implementation) (2013)

New objective is

“to provide students with the necessary academic English language skills to enable them to succeed in their academic studies and future careers”

It is suggested that except for students with relatively low level of English proficiency, who are advised to take the enhancement EGP courses,

the majority of the freshmen should immediately start EGAP courses (required) and then gradually move to ESAP courses (elective).
Jordan (1997), ESP can be divided into EGAP and ESAP. The former is more generic, and teaches the core skills which are transferable across disciplines. The latter is more specific, and teaches the skills which are appropriate to a particular discipline.
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<th>Foundation courses</th>
<th>Core courses</th>
<th>Selective courses</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EGAP (elective)</td>
<td>EGAP (required)</td>
<td>ESAP (required/elective)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credits</td>
<td>0-10%</td>
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<td>Course titles</td>
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<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>English for</td>
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<td>Listening</td>
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<td>Medicine</td>
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<td>Writing,</td>
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<td>Presentation</td>
<td>English for</td>
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<td>Engineering</td>
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<td>English Public</td>
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<td>Speaking</td>
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3. A top-down imposition

- Faced with the resistance, We need the government’s support.
- the relationship between EMI / EAP and the development of Shanghai as the hub of international finance, commerce, technology and transportation
- the importance of equipping students with their disciplinary competitive competence in international contexts.
- Finally Shanghai government issued a reform document in Feb 25, 2013 to “dictate” the tertiary institutions to implement EAP
• Wait and see
• Pay lip-service
• Write anonymous letters
4. EAP teacher development

- Instructors’ perceptions of EAP are of extreme importance in addition to the government and institutional support. The SACCET has planned a series of training programs:
  - (1) organize workshops annually, inviting international ESP scholars and experienced instructors to deliver lectures and offer in-service training courses,
  - (2) organize EAP demonstration classes so that novice EAP instructors could share teaching experience with each other,
  - (3) fund the EAP research projects and overseas studies for EAP practitioners and
  - (4) develop some demonstration EAP courses and teachers.
What is EAP?

“Teaching English specifically to facilitate learners’ study or research through the medium of English”

Harry Lyons (2011)

- Who are the learners?
- What do we mean by “facilitate”?
- What aspects of the medium of English are important in study or research?
- Who decides what is “study or research”?
- Is it the same in every country, university, school?
5. Project-based student forums and conferences

- To motivate students to learn EAP in the context where EAP skills might not be used in EMI courses.

  Project-based instruction in EAP classes

  Literature review-based Mini-research-based

  They are required to read literature—conduct survey--collect data--write reports---present results

  ---applying academic language skills to practice

  --- creating collaborative, autonomous learning environments.
Project-based instruction, initially class-based, has gradually been developed into discipline-based forums such as the student forums on Medicine, Finance and Engineering, the forums which have been organized on different campuses in Shanghai in recent years.
• The International Collegiate Conference was created and held
• in June, 2015 in Shanghai.
• In June 2016 in Shanghai
• --To provide undergraduates from various disciplines with opportunities to interact and share their views on the issues
• --To foster their ability of using English for their disciplinary study, research and work in the international context.
Undergraduates form home and abroad presented their papers on such themes as “Environment and Sustainability” and “Challenges and Prospects of Urbanization”.

All papers, when submitted, are especially required to include IMRD (Introduction—Methods—Results—Discussion) elements.
• ---Plenary sessions
• ---Parallel presentations
• ---Poster presentations
• Each presenter has 20 minutes to present their papers plus Q & A sessions.
• Those who are unable to attend parallel sessions are required to make poster presentations in the lobby of the conference hall.
Public participation for college students in the process of air pollution government

Abstract

Although the air pollution has been the heated issue of the government seems long and chronic and public participation guarantee participators as the basic factor in action need. A large portion of 700 college students were asked a questionnaire and 90(12.9%) responded. The results reveal that most participators are of awareness and responsibility towards the air pollution caused by traffic transport, partly due to the low degree of engagement. However, lack of studying, is unable to relate current contaminate, reason for them to have a low level of awareness and responsibility. In other words, the data of the present research are consistent with the study of Turner-Bowker et al. (2012). The reasons for the above conclusion are as follow: the lack of awareness among students, the respond rate of questionnaires, the result of investigation is not clear. The investigation results and the field research are valuable for their contribution to public participation and environmental awareness.

Discussion and recommendations

The small base of population in this questionnaire may cause a certain amount of inaccuracy. The mean time for the college students were around 70% underestimation. The low accuracy has the potential risk of inaccuracy. The investigation can help to focus on the origin of air pollution. In the first place, the public participation in the air pollution government means that citizens have the right to participate in related activities through certain channels and exert influence on their environment. The public participation can increase the public awareness of air pollution. Moreover, the public participation can make the public responsibility and awareness of air pollution.

Results

Table 1 shows the weekday times of taking public transportation and private transportation for college students. Most of college students(52.7%) travel around to the most advanced city. A few students(37.0%) reported that they have traveled in the most advanced city. Table 1 reveals that the public transportation is the main way of travel for college students.

Table 2 shows the media of information about air pollution. The public participation in the air pollution government means that citizens have the right to participate in related activities through certain channels and exert influence on their environment. The public participation can increase the public awareness of air pollution. Moreover, the public participation can make the public responsibility and awareness of air pollution.

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Methods

The questionnaire will be sent by email to provide the identity of participators and the random selection from the students. The questionnaires are on-line. The following is the content of our questionnaire:

Table 1 shows the weekday times of taking public transportation and private transportation for college students. Most of college students(52.7%) travel around to the most advanced city. A few students(37.0%) reported that they have traveled in the most advanced city. Table 1 reveals that the public transportation is the main way of travel for college students.

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---Received more than 120 papers from mainland China and abroad (June, 2015)

---Finally 98 participants, some of them coming from the U.S.A, Swedish, Japan, Australia, Taiwan and Hong Kong read their papers in the conference.

--Many papers manifested their originality and received the government’s attention.

--We publish a collection of students’ papers, but each one followed by detailed revision and comments (about 1000 words). Many EAP experts, both China and abroad are invited to do the work.
• Student participants:
• --- highly praise of the conference as a rehearsal to help them go international and strengthen their confidence to attend international conferences in their disciplines and submit their research papers to the international journals.

--Students as well as their instructors benefit linguistically and academically from the participating in this experience.
6. Development of the EAP tests

To promote positive washback effects, the test of English for Academic Purposes (TEAP) was developed in 2015. The test is composed of four sections.

- Section I. Reading
- Section II. listening
- Section III. Writing. two tasks:
  - (1) to synthesize the information from the sources and then
  - (2) to make comments on the topic by citing the relevant ideas

Students are required to paraphrase and summarize the information used with in-text citation as well as its references.
In addition to the perceived benefits of genetic engineering for the industrialized nations, proponents advocate the use of genetic engineering to improve agriculture in developing countries. This strategy might help these countries bypass expensive, high-input crop production and move their traditional agriculture toward low-input sustainable practices. (Paoletti & Pimentel, 1996)
How can biotech help? Biotechnologists have developed genetically modified rice that is fortified with beta-carotene—which the body converts into vitamin A—and additional iron, and they are working on other kinds of nutritionally improved crops. Biotech can also improve farming productivity in places where food shortages are caused by crop damage attribution to pests, drought, poor soil, and crop viruses, bacteria or fungi. (Goettlich, 2004)
Malnutrition is common in third world countries where impoverished peoples rely on a single crop such as rice for the main staple of their diet. However, rice does not contain adequate amounts of all necessary nutrients to prevent malnutrition. If rice could be genetically engineered to contain additional vitamins and minerals, nutrient deficiencies could be alleviated. (Whitman, 2000)
This paper links changing global coffee markets to opportunities and vulnerabilities for sustaining small-scale farmer livelihoods in northern Nicaragua. Changing governance structures, corporate concentration, oversupply, interchangeable commodity grade beans, and low farm gate prices characterize the crisis in conventional coffee markets. In contrast, certified Fair Trade and organic are two alternative forms of speciality coffee trade and production that may offer opportunities for small-scale producers. A research team surveyed 228 farmers to measure the impact of sales on organic and Fair Trade markets. The results suggest that participation in organic and Fair Trade networks reduces farmers’ livelihood vulnerability. (Bacon, 2005)
Obviously there are many benefits of genetic engineering especially for the developing countries. Among other things, it will promote their sustained development of agriculture as it can avoid expensive, high-input crop production brought by using modern technologies (Paoletti & Pimentel, 1996). According to Goettlich (2004), by incorporating pest-resistant genes into seeds or developing drought-tolerant seeds, it can also reduce damage and improve farming productivity. Most importantly, GM food can make an efficient contribution to the alleviation of malnutrition which plagues people in many third world countries (Whitman, 2000)
Section IV. Presentation

Students need to present in microphones and then to answer three related questions according to what they hear.

A survey conducted after its administration showed that it
(1) motivated students to attend EAP courses because the certificates would be helpful in applying for further studies both at home and abroad,
(2) evaluated their achievement against the criteria stipulated in the framework, and
(3) guided novice EAP instructors who tended to confuse EAP instruction with EGP.
7. Setting up China EAP Association (CEAPA)

As EAP practice has gained growing popularity and momentum in Shanghai tertiary institutions, EAP becomes fashionable in English language instructors across the country and more universities and colleges follow the example of Shanghai, accommodating the new orientation to CET.

To promote EAP instruction and research in Chinese tertiary education, CEAPA was thus set up in January, 2015. As a nationwide academic organization, it makes EAP concepts and practices stretch beyond Shanghai and struggle their way into more campuses across the nation. In the last two years,
• organize various national EAP conferences and EAP teacher training workshops

• hold various national EAP competitions for students, such as academic vocabulary competition, citation practice competition and academic writing competition

• develop mini lectures or micro-lessons on EAP instruction and academic communication skills.

• organize many innovative activities which are indigenous to local academic settings.
• The 1st International Symposium on EAP in Asia & the 2nd Annual Conference of China EAP Association (28-29 May, 2016)

• The 2nd Shanghai EAP Teaching Demonstration and Competition at Tertiary Level (19 May, 2016)
• Students’ contests or competition
• June 4, 2016
• ---Academic Vocabulary Quiz
• ---Citation practice Quiz
• ---Academic listening Quiz
• ---academic writing Quiz
Recently the Center for Research Writing and Publishing in English was set up, aiming to improve students’ communication skills in the international arena.
Forum on Research Writing and Publishing in English

China EAP Association (CEAPA)

1 July, 2016
Designation Letter

The letter is hereby granted to

Dr. YONGYAN LEI

from the University of Hong Kong for her designation as the director of the Centre for Research Writing and Publishing in the period from 1 July, 2016 to 3
Designation Letter

The letter is hereby granted to

Dr. MARGARET MILL

from the University of Adelaide, Australia for her designation as the consultant to the Center for Research Writing and Publishing, to take effect from the period from 1 March 2023.
Concluding remarks

- A paradigm shift from EGP to EAP is far from smooth and trouble-free in the mainland Chinese context. Considering various obstacles, the implementation of the EAP enterprise has to be indigenized.
- The successful shift from EGP to EAP depends on
  - 1) the choice of a wide-angled EAP approach in the beginning stage to gain the maximal acceptance of English instructors as well as
  - 2) the administrative and institutional support with the imposition of a top-down administrative policy
• 3) the organization of many innovative activities which are indigenous to local academic settings,