

# **The Impact of ELT on Ideology in Post-Mao China**

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Philosophy

University of Tasmania

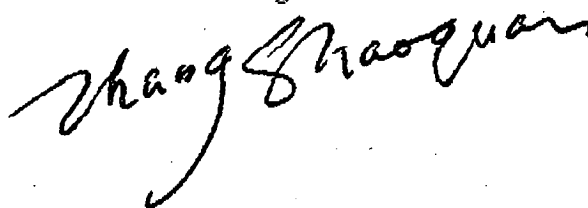
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## **Statement**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis takes a political approach to English Language Teaching (ELT) in post-Mao China. It was prompted by two parallel developments in the past twenty years or so: the expansion of ELT and changes in ideology. The thesis looks into the hitherto scarcely explored political aspects of ELT and finds that ELT has significant impact on both the official ideology and the people's belief system. The study fills in a gap in the research of contemporary Chinese politics by revealing the political consequences and implications of ELT. Findings of the study on the one hand de-mythologize the political innocuousness of ELT, and on the other hand throw light on the more general questions regarding the causes and process of ideological change in post-Mao China.

The thesis draws on a number of concepts and analytical tools. The most important one is the model of pure ideology versus practical ideology developed by Franz Schurmann in the 1960s. With some modifications, the model views the ideology of the Chinese Communist Party as made up of possibly conflicting elements, which are located at different levels of abstraction. It also sees ideological change in terms of the shifting of some elements of the ideology from the realm of pure ideology into that of practical ideology or vice versa. Schurmann's model is used here to define both "ideology" and "ideological change", and it serves as theoretical framework for the thesis. Another important concept is the three mechanisms of positivism, technicalization and marketization as dominant features in ELT. (A. Pennycook 1994) In the Chinese context, these mechanisms serve to create an effective channel for the

influx of Western ideologies into China, and this influx in turn may pose serious challenge to the official Chinese ideology. Finally there is the concept of textbooks as ideological discourse with ideological functions. (Elena Lisovskaya and Vyacheslav Karpov 1999) This concept is used for discussing how English-language textbooks serve as impetus of ideological change.

The scope of the research covers three areas of ELT in post-Mao China:

English-language textbooks, English literature, and ELT impact at social level. In each and all these three areas the thesis finds that ELT has significant impact on ideological change. In the English-language textbooks, with the removal of the more orthodox communist ideological symbols and the insertion of symbols associated with Modernization and Western ideologies, the general trend is one of de-radicalization in ideology. In literature, challenged by the introduction of Western Modernist writers, the previously dominant Marxist discourse has become practically irrelevant in terms of policymaking and policy outcome. At the social level, the thesis looks into the cases of the Voice of America and George Orwell, and finds that on the one hand ELT functions in breaking Chinese political/ideological taboos, forcing the authorities to adopt a double standard towards heterodox ideas. On the other hand ELT has led to a “lily-pond effect” in terms of growing influx of dissenting Western ideologies.

Finally, drawing on findings of this study and taking into account the current pace of development of ELT, the thesis predicts an even greater ELT impact on ideology in the future.

## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to express my gratitude to the University of Tasmania for providing me with a scholarship to complete this thesis. The School of Asian Studies was also generous in supplying me with many kinds of support, ranging from funding for a fieldwork trip and conferences to various logistical assistances.

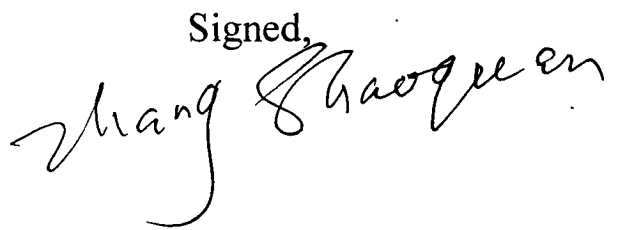
I feel grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Mobo Gao, without whom this thesis could not have been completed. He was generous with his time and provided much needed conceptual, factual, and editorial advice throughout the past three and half years.

My deep thanks also go to Dr. Maria Flustch, my academic consultant, David Owen, who read most chapters of the thesis and offered valuable advice, Hisako Umeoka, secretary of the School, Jane Broad, international student adviser, and all my friends/colleagues here at the School of Asian Studies, whose kindness and support I will always remember.

## **Declaration**

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university, and it contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Signed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Zhang Shaoquan". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Zhang" and the last name "Shaoquan" connected.

Shaoquan Zhang

## Abbreviations

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CET	College English Test
CPE	Chinese Pidgin English
ELT	English language teaching
HSK	Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi
JEFE	<i>Junior English for China</i>
NCE	<i>New Concept English</i>
NXGZE	<i>New Xu Guozhang English</i>
PEP	People's Education Press
PRC	the People's Republic of China
UNDP	United Nations Developing Program
VOA	the Voice of America
WSK	Waiyu Shuiping Kaoshi (Foreign Language Proficiency Test)
XGZE	Xu Guozhang (compiles) <i>English</i>
YDYE	Yu Dayin (compiles) <i>English</i>
ZHXAE	Zhang Hanxi (compiles) <i>Advanced English</i>

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# Chapter One

## Introduction: The Politics of English Language Teaching in China

### Research Problem

This thesis deals with the politics of the English language teaching (ELT) in China in the post-Mao era.<sup>1</sup> Its main aim is to find out in what way and to what extent ELT has impacted on ideological change. The research project is prompted by two major developments in post-Mao China. One is the expansion of ELT and the other is the change in both the official ideology and the ordinary people's belief system. I will start with the first development.

The expansion of ELT has been one of the most impressive developments in China over the past twenty-odd years.<sup>2</sup> "ELT" is used here in a broad sense, covering not only the teaching but also the learning of English, and other ELT-related activities. English is a compulsory course from the junior middle school right to the graduate school.<sup>3</sup> On average, a Chinese

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<sup>1</sup> The situation in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau is not discussed here.

<sup>2</sup> This development would appear even more significant if it is seen from a historical perspective. In the early years of the People's Republic of China, when the Soviet Union was regarded as China's ally and model for development, Russian became the first foreign language of the country. Though the teaching of the English language went on, it was confined to colleges and universities with a limited number of learners. It was not until 1956 that English was restored to the curricula of middle schools. Following the split between the Chinese Communists and their Soviet counterparts, English replaced Russian to be the primary foreign language of the country. However, during the Cultural Revolution (1966-69), with education as one of the sectors most affected by political events of the country, English language teaching suffered a serious setback, and as part of formal education, it was practically non-existent. See Zhang E. Shaoquan and Gao Mobo, "De-politicisation in the Teaching of English in China" in *Pacific-Asian Education*, vol. 12, no. 1 (2000), pp. 60-74.

<sup>3</sup> In many capital and coastal cities, ELT starts at primary school.

student spends 1200 hours learning English at middle school,<sup>4</sup> 380 hours (minimum) in undergraduate study<sup>5</sup> and another 320 in post-graduate study.<sup>6</sup> To promote the learning of foreign languages nationwide, of which English is undoubtedly the primary one,<sup>7</sup> a foreign language is deemed an essential qualification for all scientists, academics and professionals working in state sectors. It is a prerequisite for promotions and granting of academic titles.<sup>8</sup> It is not uncommon to see senior lecturers, doctors and engineers near retiring age sitting in the classroom learning or improving their English. In short, ELT in China is the object of a national campaign backed by state policy, with the participation of tens of millions of people. In view of this scale and intensity, it is likely that the significance of this phenomenal development of ELT will be not only educational but also social and political.

The second important development during this era is the change in the Chinese official ideology and the ordinary people's belief system. In the 1980s Chinese political leaders and academics acknowledged the emergence of a crisis in the belief system of the people, particularly of the younger generations. The crisis was summed up as *san xin weiji* (three crises in faith), meaning a decline in belief and confidence in socialism, communism and the Communist Party itself. In the field of Chinese studies in the West this is referred to as

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<sup>4</sup> *Yingyu jiaoyu dagang* (English syllabus), Beijing: People's Education Press (1993), revised edition 2000.

<sup>5</sup> Working Team on Revision of Syllabus of College English, *Daxue yingyu jiaoxue dagang* (College English syllabus), Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, and Beijing: Higher Education Press, 1999. This syllabus is for non-English majors.

<sup>6</sup> So far there is not a national English syllabus for the post-graduate level. Normally M.A. students take 320 hours in the first two years of the three-year study.

<sup>7</sup> According to statistics from the Information Center of the Ministry of Education, 99% of the 67 million secondary school students in China study English as a foreign language (2001), and at tertiary level, English majors amount to 84.52% of foreign language majors (1999). See Hu Wenzhong, "A Matter of Balance: Reflection on China's Language Policy in Education" in *Asian Englishes*, Vol. 4, no. 1, 2001, pp. 66-79.

<sup>8</sup> Exceptions are made of teachers of primary and middle schools and people whose fields of study are typically "Chinese," such as traditional Chinese medicine and classic Chinese language and literature.

the “the collapse of the Communist belief system”, and the emergence of an “ideological vacuum” or a “void.” This ideological change is termed as “capitalist restoration”,<sup>9</sup> “the end of ideology”, “economics in command” (in contrast to the previous “politics in command”),<sup>10</sup> “the decline of Communism in China” and “legitimacy crisis”,<sup>11</sup> “crises of ideological legitimacy”,<sup>12</sup> and “ideological crises” (among the youths).<sup>13</sup> While Western specialists in the field of Chinese studies tend to identify the causes for ideological change as “internal” and Chinese by describing it as the result of the Cultural Revolution, corruption among Party and government officials, and the growing irrelevance of the official ideology to the Chinese realities, Chinese authorities on the other hand point to Western influence as the main cause. Political catchphrases like “spiritual pollution”, “bourgeois liberalism”, “peaceful evolution” and “infiltration of bourgeois ideology” all carry a connotation of Western influence. Despite the differences in orientation and in assessments, however, there is consensus that changes in both the official ideology and the people’s value and belief systems are significant.

To indicate the extent and process of the changes, let us examine the evolution of terms referring to different stages of the economic reform agenda. What was called “socialist planned economy” became the “planned commodity economy” (1984), then “the primary stage of socialism” (1987), then “socialist commodity economy” (1988), and finally “socialist market economy” (1992). Here each step of change reflected the CCP’s efforts to

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<sup>9</sup> Michel Chossudovsky, *Towards Capitalist Restoration?* New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1986, pp. 201-220.

<sup>10</sup> John Gittings, *China Changes Face*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989, pp. 240-260.

<sup>11</sup> Ding X. L., *The Decline of Communism in China: Legitimacy Crisis, 1977-1989*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

<sup>12</sup> Lucian W. Pye, “The State and the Individual: an Overview Interpretation” in Brian Hook (eds.), *The Individual and the State in China*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, pp.16-42.

<sup>13</sup> Paul Nesbitt-Larking and Chan Alfred L., “Chinese Youth and Civil Society” in Brook Timothy & Frolic B.

make the Chinese model look different from Western models by the qualification of “socialism”. But the boundaries between “socialism” and “capitalism” became more and more blurred, and although the change seemed to be gradual at each step, the end result was a fundamental change of the economic ideology.<sup>14</sup> A more recent development is the formulation of the theory of *san ge daibiao* (the Three Representations).<sup>15</sup> One of the implications of *san ge daibiao* is that now private business owners and other members of China’s increasingly diverse society are allowed to join the Chinese Communist Party.<sup>16</sup> In other words, the Party is now open to those people that are “capitalists” in orthodox Marxist terms. Again the formulation of the Three Representations is the cumulative product of a long process of ideological change.

So on the one hand there is the expansion of ELT and on the other hand there is change in ideology, both of which appear very impressive. It is the need to interpret, to define the connections between these two developments that had prompted this study. As a starting point, the present author makes the hypothesis that there is a cause-effect relationship between ELT and ideological change, with the former being the cause and the later being the effect. Put in the form of questions, the hypothesis involves the following: What is the relationship between these two parallel developments? Is there a cause-effect relationship between them? If there is one, which development is the cause and which is the effect? In

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Michael (ed.), *Civil Society in China*, Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1997, pp. 149-171.

<sup>14</sup> Yan Sun, *The Chinese Reassessment of Socialism, 1976-1992*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995, p. 210.

<sup>15</sup> *San ge daibiao* refers to “the representations of advanced production force, advanced culture, and the interests of the people.” See General Party Secretary Jiang Zemin’s speech marking the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of the CCP in *People’s Daily*, 1 July 2001. Some translate the *san ge daibiao* as “Three Represents”.

<sup>16</sup> Jia Qinglin, Party secretary of Beijing Committee, announces at the city’s Party Congress that in Beijing there are already more than 90 *qiyejia* (entrepreneurs) who have applied for Party membership. *China Business Times*, 22 May 2002.

what way and to what extent does ELT have an impact on ideology? And is the ELT case typical of ideological change in post-Mao China in general?

While a more common approach may regard political and ideological change as crucial for the expansion of ELT, thus being the cause for the latter, this thesis approaches the issue the other way round. As shown above, it poses the question whether it is also possible that ELT is the cause in the relationship, namely the spread of ELT has been an important factor contributing to ideological change in post-Mao China. This hypothesis does not reject the view that political and ideological developments in post-Mao China have shaped ELT as it is, but it suggests a due recognition of the complexity and interaction involved in such a relationship. Therefore the thesis sets out to find theories and evidence that would support the above hypothesis.

## **Research Gap**

To the best of my knowledge, there have been few systematic studies of the political aspects of ELT in post-Mao China, either by ELT academics or by political scientists. Indeed this study has found there is a wide research gap to be filled. It is true that many people think that the expansion of ELT is very impressive, and China's efforts in promoting ELT are well received. Hayhoe, for example, believes (in the Chinese case) "The vision of a broad dissemination of opportunity for English language learning demonstrates a sensitivity to the fundamental cultural dynamics of knowledge transfer."<sup>17</sup> Ju Yanan argues in a similar vein "China has been doing one thing in basic education right. That is the

teaching of foreign languages".<sup>18</sup> There is also awareness among some that ELT has broad sociopolitical implications in addition to its more immediate educational effects. Donald Ford, for example, believes that the spread of English in China would narrow the difference between the China and the West.<sup>19</sup> Ross, and Adamson and Morris point out that the dissemination of Western ideologies via the spread of English may undermine the official ideology and therefore may be viewed by the authorities as a threat.<sup>20</sup> However, these have occurred mainly as passing comments and speculations rather than focused studies, and despite the awareness indicated by some studies, the issue of the political impact of ELT has been hardly addressed.

The lack of systematic study of the issue may first be the result of the assumption held among ELT academics that ELT is apolitical and is essentially a technical and skills-based subject with concerns in applied linguistics and pedagogy.<sup>21</sup> As Robert Phillipson argues,

The belief that ELT is non-political serves to disconnect culture from structure. It assumes that educational concerns can be divorced from social, political, and economic realities. It exonerates the experts who hold the belief from concerning

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<sup>17</sup> R. Hayhoe, *China's Universities And the Open Door*, M. E. Sharpe Inc. 1989, p.122.

<sup>18</sup> Ju Yanan, *Understanding China*, State University of New York Press, 1996, p. 121.

<sup>19</sup> Donald J.Ford, *The Twain Shall Meet: Current Study of English in China*, McFarland & Company Inc. Publishers, 1988.

<sup>20</sup> Heidi Ross, "Foreign Language Education as a Barometer of Modernisation" in Ruth Hayhoe (eds.), *Education and Modernisation: the Chinese Experience*, Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1992, pp. 239-250, and *China Learns English: Language Learning and Social Change in the People's Republic of China*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993. Bob Adamson and Paul Morris, "The English Curriculum in the People's Republic of China" in *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 41, no. 1, Feb 1997, pp. 3-27.

<sup>21</sup> Hu Wenzhong's comments regarding China's foreign language policy may throw light on the issue here. According to Hu, "Language policy is a topic little touched upon at China's ELT conferences or in Chinese academic journals on FL (foreign languages) teaching. A search of the electronic databases of the National

themselves with these dimensions. It encourages a technical approach to ELT, divorced even from wider educational issues.<sup>22</sup>

Indeed, as will be discussed later in this thesis, there are some mechanisms in ELT, namely a positivistic discourse, the instrumental approach, and marketization, which do give ELT the appearance of being non-political and technical. As a result it is not common for teachers and researchers to look into the political aspects of ELT, still less so to approach it in terms of its impact on macro politics. The majority of the scholarly studies appear “pedagogical” and “professional” in orientation, addressing ELT issues within the domain of ELT itself and with the aim to improve teaching/learning efficiency.

On the other hand, researchers in political science seem to have seldom stepped into the field of ELT, their studies showing little awareness of developments that suggest significant political consequences and implications of ELT. There were reports of English being used as a political weapon in China, as found in Merle Goldman and Ding Xueliang’s studies,<sup>23</sup> but these reports only treat the events incidentally. Even when the issue of the

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Library of China yields only a few articles.” Hu Wenzhong, “A Matter of Balance: Reflection on China’s Language Policy in Education” in *Asian Englishes*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2001, pp. 66-79.

<sup>22</sup> Robert Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (first edition 1992) 1996, p. 67.

<sup>23</sup> M. Goldman reported that in the campaign against bourgeois liberalization, an article by Liu Binyan that was to be published in *Wenxue pinglun* (Literary criticism) in January 1987 was ordered deleted. However, the English-language table of contents in the issue retained the title of Liu’s article covered over ineffectively in black ink, to the authorities’ great displeasure. Liu was one of the principal targets of the campaign. See Merle Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds of Democracy in China: Political Reform in the Deng Xiaoping Era*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994, pp. 214-216. Another example is that during the 1989 Tiananmen movement, student protesters often wrote their slogans and posters in both Chinese and English. Some banners even had large English letters and small Chinese characters. The action was interpreted by some as showing that educated Chinese demonstrators were interested in addressing a foreign audience rather than the average Chinese. Ding Xueliang, however, has a different interpretation, “It looked as though they were speaking to the outside, but actually they were targeting the inside: They intended to increase their

sociopolitical influence of ELT did become the focus of attention, that attention seemed inadequate and did not lead to in-depth investigations. For instance, in “New Languages, New Symbols”, which is part of a study of ideological change in post-Mao China, the author refers to the influence of English, “They [Chinese writers of novels and stories] used English in the text to give it a high-taste and high-class tone.”<sup>24</sup> In addition, “Translation of many Western books, particularly those in philosophy, political thought, and modern scientific management, brought hundreds of new words to the Chinese people, stimulating the mind and refreshing the value system with new concepts and ideas.”<sup>25</sup> However, having said that, the author stopped short of advancing any further analysis. In brief, the political consequences and implications of ELT in the post-Mao era have hardly been explored, if they have been explored at all, and our understanding of the issue is, because of this, limited.

### **Rationale and Significance**

As suggested earlier, the research started with the hypothesis that there is a certain cause-effect relationship between these two developments of the expansion of ELT and ideological changes in post-Mao China. There are two arguments for making this hypothesis. First, while the development of ELT can be viewed as part of China’s drive for modernization, it can also be a channel for Western influence. The dissemination of

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bargaining power (with added international sympathy) in dealing with their rulers.” In spite of the difference in interpretation, there is little doubt that the demonstrators had used the English language in the political struggle in China. See Ding X. L. *The Decline of Communism in China: Legitimacy Crisis, 1977-1989*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 212.

<sup>24</sup> Lin Jing, *The Opening of the Chinese Mind*, Westport: Praeger, 1994, p. 88.

Western ideologies via the spread of English may undermine the official ideology and therefore might be viewed by the authorities as a threat. The tension of English being both a tool for modernization and a channel of Western influence is in parallel with what happens in macro politics, namely the conflict between China's reform/opening-up policy and the Four Cardinal Principles of the Communist Party. The solution or even a response to this tension involves political and ideological change. Secondly, the long and extensive exposure of a large populace to "Western ideas" through the channel of ELT poses the question of whether the experience will bring changes to the make-up of the people's belief system. As Andre Beteille has observed, the effect of exposure to a foreign culture can be very significant.<sup>25</sup> Although ELT is normally treated as a skills-based subject, it involves much more than a vocabulary, a grammar and a set of skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing. English also means a foreign culture with ideas and values possibly different from those of the indigenous land to which it spreads. ELT can hardly be a pure academic issue with mere linguistic and pedagogical concerns. It appears so only when people choose to overlook, or are unconscious of the ideological differences involved in ELT activities. When differences in values and ideas are so great that they may trigger a major ideological conflict, people take "political" actions to reject, to modify the English text, or alternatively to adapt themselves by becoming more tolerant to the English text. They may change the English text or change their own attitude toward the text, but either action carries political import. Therefore, a political study of ELT in post-Mao China seems relevant.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid. pp. 88-89.

<sup>26</sup> Andre Beteille thinks "Even more than in the case for persons who move from one class to another, the exposure to a variety of intellectual perspective has a marked effect on those who move from one civilization context to a different one. This can be seen quite clearly in the situation of western-educated intellectuals in

The significance of this study will be threefold. Firstly, findings of the study will de-mythologize the political innocuousness of ELT popularly held among academics in the field of ELT and will call for a due political awareness of the issue. Secondly, the findings may serve as a case that will throw light on the more general questions of why and how ideological change is taking place in post-Mao China. Third and finally, as will be explained next in the section on methodology, the approach adopted in this thesis is different from some dominant research models in the study of contemporary Chinese politics, therefore the study may open new possibilities in the research area.

## **Methodology**

In terms of methodology, the research adopts a micro-politics model, which takes ELT as a micro world in relation to the macro world of Chinese politics and ideology. The model sees a dialectical relationship between the micro and the macro, assuming that while ELT is conditioned by the political and ideological conditions, it does pose significant impact on the latter.

The micro-politics model is developed from two sources, Alan Isaak's micro approach and R. M. Thomas' politics-education reaction model. According to Isaak,

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the countries of Asia, Africa and also Latin America." Andre Beteille, *Ideology and Intellectuals*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980, p. 3.

If we use smaller- or lower-level units to explain higher-level ones, such as the personalities of senators to explain the decision of the Senate, we have a micro approach; if we use higher-level units to explain lower-level ones, like the structure of the Senate to explain the voting behaviour of individual senators, we have a macro approach.<sup>27</sup>

Alan Isaak is suggesting that politics can be studied at different levels and with different points of departure. The distinction of the micro/macro world is a useful concept and analytical tool. However, it should not be carried too far. The empirical world of research can be more complex than the micro/macro distinction may suggest. In reality, the two worlds merge and the boundary between them becomes obscure, and the research may need the use of either or both of the approaches. As far as this study is concerned, at a certain stage the approach adopted here may appear to be a macro one, in particular when it uses political concepts as explanatory models for what happens in ELT. However, the end result is still a micro approach, because what happens in ELT is meant as a case and will be used as such to reveal and illustrate a more general pattern of ideological change in post-Mao China.

In Thomas' politics-education reaction model, education is seen as enveloped in a political-ecology setting, which consists of governmental groups (national, regional, local, and legislative, executive and judicial) and non-governmental groups (ethnic, religious, and of special interest, mass communication media, social class, etc.). Each element of the

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<sup>27</sup> Alan C. Isaak, *Scope and Methods of Political Science*, Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1985, p. 188.

setting may have some influence on education. However, while politics may have strong influence on education, education, too, may influence politics.<sup>28</sup> In this thesis, the focus is naturally on how ELT functions as a factor for political and ideological change.

At the operational level, given the nature of the study, this thesis combines conceptual analysis with data interpretation and textual analysis. Conceptual analysis is used in defining the structure of the official ideology, the nature of ideological change and the relationship between ELT and ideology. Data interpretation is used on the two cases of the Voice of America and George Orwell, as well as other cases, in order to find how ELT has contributed to the de-radicalization of political discourse in China. Textual analysis involves a number of nationally influential ELT textbooks. It is done in order to find evidence of ideological change as shown in the ELT case. In the chapter on the evolution of the Chinese Marxist discourse of English literature, a combination of the three methods is used.

### **Alternative Approaches**

This thesis views ELT as an important vehicle for ideological change and provides evidence for this view. As such it differs from two major approaches in terms of research methodology. The first approach is mostly found in the educational sector, which studies Chinese education in general and ELT in China in particular in terms of political influence. This approach gives due attention to the prevalent influence of Chinese macro politics on

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<sup>28</sup> R. M. Thomas, "The Symbolic Linking of Politics and Education" in R. M. Thomas (Eds.), *Politics and*

education, and interprets the relationship between politics and education in terms of a model of politicization, hyper-politicization and de-politicization.<sup>29</sup> Fraser, writing in the late 1960s, observed that the essence of Chinese education was Marxist-Leninist-Maoist, and therefore political and ideological.<sup>30</sup> This view is still shared by some regarding the situation in the post-Mao era. Commenting on the statement that “politics and education are one and the same in Nicaragua”, Iannaccone cited China as a like example.<sup>31</sup> Some researchers of this approach, however, hold a more moderate view and recognize that the political influence on education is somewhat balanced by the factor of economic development. Chen noticed the co-existence of two models in Chinese education. One is revolutionary and the other is academic. The two models constantly run into conflict and during periods of political campaigns, the revolutionary model dominates over the academic.<sup>32</sup> James Wang holds similar views,

Two important factors have influenced, if not dominated, Chinese educational policies since 1949. First, education has been used as an instrument for the inculcation of new values and beliefs to build a new socialist revolutionary society. Second, changes in the content and form of education invariably have been intertwined with the shifting policies and strategies of economic development.<sup>33</sup>

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*Education; Cases from Eleven Nations*, Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1983, pp. 25-47.

<sup>29</sup> Barry Sautman, "Politicization, Hyperpoliticization, and Depoliticization of Chinese Education", *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 35, no. 4 (November 1991), pp. 669-689.

<sup>30</sup> S. E. Fraser (eds.), *Education in Communist China*, Hong Kong: International Studies Group, 1969.

<sup>31</sup> L. Iannaccone, *Political Legitimacy and the Administration of Education*, Victoria: Deakin University, 1984, p. 10.

<sup>32</sup> Chen T. H., *Chinese Education Since 1949*, New York: Pergamon Press, 1986.

<sup>33</sup> Wang James C. F., *Contemporary Chinese Politics*, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall International, Inc., 1989, p. 273.

In general, the above approach emphasizes political influences over education. The approach taken in this thesis, however, involves an examination of how education influences politics. In other words, this thesis differs from the above approach in research focus and orientation, and will deal with how ELT has contributed to political and ideological change.

If the first approach is found mostly in the educational field, the second approach is found in studies of Chinese politics, where three models seem to dominate, namely the rational choice model, the power struggle model and the bureaucratic institution model. The rational choice model interprets policy outcomes as results from a selection of decision-making alternatives that optimizes a policy outcome.<sup>34</sup> The power-struggle model views policy outcomes as a result of elite power struggles. Pye's analysis of the dynamics of Chinese politics is a characteristic example of this model.<sup>35</sup> Finally the bureaucratic institution model interprets China's reform as a process driven by those bureaucrats attempting to strengthen their own institutional interests and positions.<sup>36</sup> Of course there is difference among the three models themselves, but they share one thing in common that makes them all different from the approach adopted in this thesis. It seems that the three models all focus on the top levels of the Chinese political ladder, so much so that they seem to suggest only political elites, decision-makers, officials and bureaucrats count as political

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<sup>34</sup> Dorothy J. Solinger, *Regional Government and Political Integration in Southwest China 1949-1954: a Case Study*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977.

<sup>35</sup> Lucian W. Pye, *The Dynamics of Factions and Consensus in Chinese Politics: a Model and Some Propositions*, Santa Monica, CA.: Rand, 1980.

<sup>36</sup> Lampton D. M., *Policy Implementation in Post-Mao China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982. Kenneth Lieberthal & Michel Oksenberg, *Policy Making in China: Leaders, Structures, and Processes*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University press, 1988.

actors.<sup>37</sup> The implication of the dominance of these models in China studies is that what happens outside the political arena and far down from the “top” may be overlooked, though the influence of such happenings on the political process is also significant. This thesis takes a different approach and looks at the bottom instead, where the hustle and bustle of social life, or a “lived ideology” as termed in the next chapter, has proved to be a significant driving force in political and ideological change. In short, if those models can be described as looking from top down, this thesis looks from bottom up.

Another implication of the dominance of the three models in Chinese studies is that the importance of ideology in post-Mao China is overlooked. Ideology in general is important because “For a government or a party or a leader to have no ideology is to betray the lack of a coherent vision of the future and an articulated plan of action—in short, a lack of principle.”<sup>38</sup> Drawing on the case of India, Andre Beteille further argues

To criticize a person or a party for having no ideology is also to say that the party or the person has no clear vision for a better future, and hence neither the will nor the ability to construct a better society. In this kind of usage ideology is seen as a pledge, as it

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<sup>37</sup> Even when attempts were made as in some studies to be “different” from these dominant models, the focus of these studies seems to be still on the elites, though of another kind. Ding Xueliang, for instance, approaches the subject of “the legitimacy crisis” on the part of the CCP in terms of a conflict between the ruling elite of the Communist Party and what he calls “counterelite,” which was made up of politically aware members of the intellectual and professional classes. Ding notices that while the political elite attempted to win support from different social and political groups by making various appeals to them, “ironically these appeals created the political space for the counterelite to make counterappeals, which resulted in social consequences contrary to what the ruling elite expected.” Viewed in this light, the conflict Ding describes is largely “intraelite”. His focus obviously is on elite politics, though more on what he calls the “counterelite” than on the political elite, despite his view that the former had received insufficient attention in previous studies in this field. (Ding, 1994: 4) Ding’s model, like the ones he attempts to be different from, takes no account of the “silent majority”—those “politically unaware” members in the Chinese society who are not consciously or actively involved in politics.

were, of this will and this ability. Without an ideology, change will lack direction, and, lacking direction, it will quickly run its course.<sup>39</sup>

Unexceptionally, ideology in post-Mao China is of crucial importance, no matter how it is defined.<sup>40</sup> Some people may believe that Marxist-Leninist ideology is dead in China, as shown in the pronouncement of the “end of ideology” in China. However, there is strong evidence to the contrary: ideology not only remains an important legitimating tool for the Communist Party but continues to serve as a major mode of discourse and dialogue among certain intellectuals.<sup>41</sup>

The importance of social life as dynamic of politics and of ideology as an aspect of politics, as assumed in this study, can be best summed up in Andre Beteille’s words,

In the modern world politics has greatly extended its scope: the struggle for power among princes can no longer be confined to the court, insulated from the day-to-day

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<sup>38</sup> Andre Beteille, *Ideology and Intellectuals*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980, p. 5.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. p. 6.

<sup>40</sup> Here are some of the more influential definitions of “ideology” in the Chinese context. “[It is] a manner of thinking characteristic of an organization... and a systematic set of ideas with action consequences serving the purpose of creating and using organization.” (Franz Schurmann 1966: 18) “[It is] the articulation of the general vision, toward which the leadership is attempting to steer the political system, (thus sometimes referred to by Chinese participant-observers as a ‘road’). (Lowell Dittmer 1990) “It is essentially a set of ideas with a discursive framework which guides and/or justifies policies and actions, derived from certain values and doctrinal assumptions about the nature and dynamics of history. (Zhang Weiwei 1996: 5)

<sup>41</sup> For the view that ideology remains important in Post-Mao China, see David Shambaugh, *Beautiful Imperialism*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991, pp. 36-38. Zhang Wei-wei, *Ideology and Economic Reform under Deng Xiaoping 1978-1993*, London: Kegan Paul International, 1996. Feng Chen, *Economic Transition and Political legitimacy in Post-Mao China*, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995, and “An Unfinished Battle in China: the Left Criticism of the Reform and the Third Thought Emancipation”, *The China Quarterly*, no. 158, June 1999, pp. 447-467.

concerns and demands of ordinary people. In other words, politics has to strive continuously to relate itself to the fluid and amorphous values of a changing society; it is, as it were, constantly on trial in the arena of public life. The sheer struggle for power cannot be its own justification today; at the very least it has to be camouflaged by the promise of a better social order for the people. Nor is this promise merely a camouflage, for in the age of democracy politics can hardly hope to succeed unless it takes the concerns and the demands of the people seriously.<sup>42</sup>

Therefore the difference between the present study and the existing models lies not only in focus, but also in assumptions and orientations. It is not a goal of this thesis to reject any of those models, which are all ways of looking and ways of explaining, and have undoubtedly made important contributions to the understanding of the extremely complex Chinese case. However it seems appropriate to point out the limitation and/or weakness of those models because they remain dominant in the study of contemporary Chinese politics.

### **Organization of the Thesis**

Following this introduction, Chapter Two is a literature review that aims to provide international and historical perspectives on the politics of the spread of English in China. Focusing on three major phases of development--the early spread of English, the initiation of formal foreign language education, and ELT in the Maoist period—the chapter identifies

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<sup>42</sup> Beteille, Andre, *Ideology and Intellectuals*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980, p. 9.

a “foreign language dilemma” throughout the history of ELT, namely English was both a gateway to Western science and technology, which China needed for its modernization, and a channel for Western ideologies, which were feared as a threat to the existing order.

Chapter Three provides a theoretical framework for the thesis. It draws on Franz Schurmann and views the CCP ideology in terms of a pure ideology versus practical ideology model. Under this model, the CCP ideology may contain possibly contradictory elements, which are located at different levels of abstraction, and ideological change can be the shift of some elements of the ideology from the realm of practical ideology into the realm of pure ideology, or vice versa. Ideological shift takes place when formal ideology responds to new realities created by its antithetical “lived ideology”, that is, the hustle and bustle of social life.

Then there are three chapters with findings and analyses that support the hypothesis of ELT impact on ideological change. The areas researched are related to English-language textbooks, and English literature, and the cases of the Voice of America (VOA) and George Orwell. The study finds there has been a consistent de-radicalization in the English-language textbooks, which involves both the removal of the orthodox communist ideological symbols and the insertion of “new” symbols associated with the Modernization discourse and Western ideologies. Regarding the reception and presentation of English literature, due to the challenge from the introduction of Western Modernist literature, the previously dominant Chinese Marxist discourse has become less important in terms of policymaking and policy outcomes. In addition, the cases of VOA and George Orwell

show that the apparently non-political and skills-based ELT has significant political and ideological implications. On the one hand ELT functions in breaking Chinese political and ideological taboos, forcing the authorities to adopt a double standard towards heterodox ideas. On the other hand it leads to a growing influx of dissenting Western ideologies.

Finally the thesis concludes with a summing-up of the study, a review of the more recent developments in ELT, and a discussion of the scenario of even greater ELT impact on ideology in the future.

## Chapter Two

### Historical Background: The Foreign Language Dilemma<sup>1</sup>

#### Introduction

This is a review of existing literature that deals with the political aspects of the spread of the English language, both worldwide and in China. As stated in the previous chapter, there is not a lot of work done specifically on ELT impact on ideology simply because researchers in political science seem to have seldom stepped into the field of ELT while ELT teachers seldom look at the issue from a political point of view. Thus I had faced a different task than those who must deal with a large quantity of existing literature of the field, and had to take a much broader approach. The reviewed literature falls into two categories, those viewing the issue from an international perspective and those from a Chinese historical perspective. The international perspective is represented, among others, by studies on the discourses of “linguistic imperialism”<sup>2</sup> and neo-colonialism.<sup>3</sup> The Chinese historical perspective, on the other hand, mainly involves the “Ti-Yong Formula”<sup>4</sup> in the late Qing era and what I call in this thesis the “Chinglish phenomena” in the

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<sup>1</sup> Most of this chapter is accepted for publication in the year 2002 in Shaoquan Zhang and Mobo Gao, “The Foreign Language Dilemma: the Case of the Voice of America” in the forth-coming book *Re-Reading America: an International Symposium on American Studies*, which is the product of a conference jointly sponsored by China’s Guangdong University of Foreign Studies and American Consulate General in Guangzhou, May 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (first edition 1992) 1996.

<sup>3</sup> Alastair Pennycook, *English and the Discourse of Colonialism*, London and New York: Routledge, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> The learning of foreign languages, like the learning of science and technology from the West, was then carried out under the framework of the Ti-Yong Formula *Zhong xue wei ti, xi xue wei yong* (which I

Maoist period.<sup>5</sup> The purpose of this literature review is, among other things, to find from both the international and the historical perspectives some insight into the political nature of ELT in post-Mao China.

As the title of this chapter suggests, the most important outcome of the literature review is the formulation by the present author of the concept of the “foreign language dilemma”. Essentially the foreign language dilemma means that English, the primary foreign language in China most of the time, was both a gateway to Western science and technology, which China needed for its modernization, and a channel for Western ideologies, which were feared as a threat to the existing order. The historical Ti-Yong Formula and Chinglish phenomena were intended to solve this dilemma.

As will be shown in the next chapter and elsewhere of the thesis, the foreign language dilemma has continued to manifest in the post-Mao era, generating tension, which nevertheless may provide dynamic for ideological change. Through unearthing some of the political and ideological roots of that dilemma, this literature review is expected to

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translate as Chinese learning for the fundamental principles, Western learning for practical application). The Ti-Yong Formula was best known as formulated by Zhang Zhidong in 1898 in his essay “*Quan xu pian*” (Exhortation to study). However, a generation earlier, Feng Guifen had expressed similar ideas regarding the adoption of Western knowledge. “If we let Chinese ethics and famous (Confucian) teachings serve as an original foundation, and let them be supplemented by the methods used by the various nations for the attainment of prosperity and strength, would it not be the best of all procedures?” Feng Guifeng, “On the Manufacturing of Foreign Weapon” in Teng Ssu-yu & John Fairbank, *China’s Response to the West*, Harvard University Press, 1979, pp. 52-53.

<sup>5</sup> The term “Chinglish” is coined by the present author from the words “Chinese” and “English”, and is used here to crystallize the ELT policy and practice in the Maoist era, which was “learn the foreign language without learning foreign ideas” or “learn the foreign language with Chinese ideas.” As evidence of this policy, Chen Yi (1962), then vice premier, offered the following advice to an audience of English majors. “You must work hard to break the barrier of foreign languages and temporarily set aside the Chinese way of expression. Foreign languages, (however,) are prone to have a connection with politics. We want you students to be able to distinguish politically what is right from what is wrong regarding the major issues.” See Chen Yi, “An Earnest, Well-meaning Talk on the Study of Foreign Languages” (1962) quoted

throw light on politics of ELT in post-Mao China.

### **International Perspective**

If one looks at the global spread of English, one would find that political power is the chief reason for that spread, and more importantly the spread in turn may have political implications for the indigenous land. In other words, both the cause and the results of the spread could be “political”. In a sense the case of English actually exemplifies the political nature of the spread of language in general. “A language becomes an international language for one chief reason: the political power of its people—especially their military power.”<sup>6</sup> This is true for the historical cases of Greek, Latin, Spanish, Portuguese, and French, among others. Greek became a language of international communication in the Middle East over 2,000 years ago not because of the intellects of Plato and Aristotle, but because of the swords and spears wielded by the armies of Alexander the Great. It was thanks to the legions of the Roman Empire that Latin became known throughout Europe. Similarly, to the question why Spanish, Portuguese, and French found their way into the Americas, Africa and the Far East, the answer lies in the colonial policies and the way these policies were ruthlessly implemented by armies and navies all over the world.

In the case of the English language, it had taken a military power like Britain to establish

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in Fu Ke, *Zhongguo Waiyu Jiaoyu Shi* (History of China's foreign language education), Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1986, p. 104.

it as a global language and it has taken an economic power like the U.S. to maintain and expand it. According to David (1997),

British political imperialism had sent English around the globe, during the nineteenth century, so that it was “a language on which the sun never sets”. During the twentieth century, this world presence [of English] was maintained and promoted, almost single-handedly, through the economic supremacy of the new American superpower. And the language behind the dollar was English.<sup>7</sup>

The politics of the global spread of English, though often overlooked in ELT academic circles,<sup>8</sup> has drawn focused studies by Robert Phillipson, Alastair Pennycook, among others, who emphasize the political nature of English, and interpret the spread of English in terms of the discourses of imperialism and colonialism. The discourse of imperialism as in Phillipson’s study is different from some of the more traditional views that regard imperialism either as a political system or as an economic one.<sup>9</sup> Here it refers to an “English linguistic hegemony”, namely “the dominance of English [which] is asserted

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<sup>6</sup> Crystal David, *English as a Global Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 7.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. pp. 7-8.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Phillipson, explaining why he wrote the book *Linguistic Imperialism*, believes “Language pedagogy, the scientific study of language learning and language teaching, has been isolated from the social sciences for too long, and ELT needs to be situated in a macro-societal theoretical perspective.” Robert Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (first edition 1992) 1996, P. 2

<sup>9</sup> For the earlier views on imperialism, see Lenin’s definition “If it were necessary to give the briefest possible definition of imperialism we should have to say that imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism.” V. I. Lenin (1916), *On Imperialism and Imperialists*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1973, P. 49. Also see how Raymond Williams unravels some of the competing meanings of imperialism, “If imperialism, as normally defined in late 19<sup>th</sup> century England, is primarily a political system in which colonies are governed from an imperial centre, for economic but also for other reasons held to be important, then the subsequent grant of independence or self-government to these colonies can be described, as indeed it widely has been, as ‘the end of imperialism’. On the other hand, if imperialism is understood primarily as an economic system of external investment and the penetration and control of market and sources of raw materials, political changes in the status of colonies or former colonies will not greatly affect description of the continuing economic system as imperialist.” R. Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford: Oxford University

and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities of English and other languages".<sup>10</sup> In ELT, linguistic imperialism is found in the explicit and implicit values, beliefs, purposes, and activities which characterized the ELT profession and which contribute to the maintenance of English as a dominant language. It is not simply a crude deliberate manipulation, but a more complex and diverse set of personal and institutional norms and experienced meanings and values.<sup>11</sup> The affect of this linguist imperialism could be very significant. For among other things, "it has a subtle way of warping the minds, attitudes, and aspirations of even the most noble in a society and of preventing him from appreciating and realizing the full potentialities of the indigenous languages."<sup>12</sup>

Alastair Pennycook's study shows affinities with Phillipson's work in that it shares the latter's sentiments and views of post-modernism and post-colonialism. It questions the assumed universalities of Western thought by tracing how they have been produced and what other possibilities they have denied in the process. Tracing historical roots while examining the present situation, Pennycook has found there were close connections between ELT and colonialism. Such connections are established first because ELT was always a significant part of British colonial policy. The growth of the British Empire implied a massive growth in ELT, and consequently where the empire spread, so too did English. Second, much of what people do today as ELT teachers and applied linguists and so on, may be directed by some popular discourses on language and education that

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Press, 1977, p. 156-157.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (first edition 1992) 1996, P. 47.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. p. 73.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p. 56.

circulate as part of European or Anglo-American culture and have their origins in the same colonial context as ELT.<sup>13</sup>

Besides its connections with colonialism, ELT is “political” in another sense-- it may involve conflicts in international and cultural politics. Quoting Harris (1991), Pennycook believes “English is not just a language, any more than Islam is just a religion. The Names English and Islam, whatever else they may be, are names of two very big battalions when it comes to the international power struggle for control of the Middle East”.<sup>14</sup> In Malaysia, a country currently at a juncture where the call for Islamization and emphasis on English as a means for economic development meet, there is an advocacy for an “Islamic approach to teaching English as a foreign language.” It comes from those who think there is a disparity between the objectives of teaching English and the aims of Muslim education. This Islamic approach implies “Learning English which is based on the Islamic faith, thought and conduct and excluding anti-religious and irreligious ideologies”.<sup>15</sup> The Malaysian case is actually just one of many similar cases found in the Middle East and in some African countries.<sup>16</sup>

### **Chinese Historical Perspective**

When we turn from the international perspective to the Chinese historical, we find the spread of English in China is unexceptionally also “political”. Since the very beginning

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<sup>13</sup> Alastair Pennycook, *English and the Discourse of Colonialism*, London and New York: Routledge, 1998, pp. 22-25.

<sup>14</sup> Alastair Pennycook, *The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language*, London and New York: Longman, 1994, p. 205.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. p. 208.

<sup>16</sup> Ali A. Mazrui, *The Political Sociology of the English Language*, The Hague, Netherlands: Mouton &

the spread had involved Western influence and Chinese response, in particular the Western missionary efforts to propagate Christianity and the Chinese concern over the influx of Western ideologies. Ways in which the influence was exerted and the response was made changed over time, but the same dichotomy of Western influence and Chinese response remained.

In what follows we will focus on three major phases or stages in the history of the spread of English in China. The first covers the early days when Chinese Pidgin English was developed. The second is the late Qing period when formal foreign language education got started under the framework of the Ti-Yong Formula. And the third is the Maoist era, during which the “Chinglish” phenomena developed and dominated the ELT policy and practices. These three stages are chosen because they stand out as more revealing cases of the political nature of the spread of English in China. Another reason is that they seem to be more related than other periods do to the discourses of imperialism and colonialism discussed above.

### **Chinese Pidgin English**

Although formal English education did not start until 1862 when Tong Wen Guan and a number of other “new schools” were established, the spread of English had taken place much earlier. The early spread of English resulted in Chinese Pidgin English (CPE), a modified form of English developed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century for use as a trade language or

lingua franca between the British and the Chinese.<sup>17</sup> CPE got its start in Canton after the British established their first trading post there in 1664. Because the British found Chinese an extremely difficult language to learn and because the Chinese held the English in low esteem and therefore disdained to learn their language, Pidgin English was developed by the English and adapted by the Chinese for business purposes. The term Pidgin is commonly said to be a corruption of the English word business. It continued in use until about the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when Pidgin came to be looked upon by the Chinese as humiliating (because English speakers considered it ridiculous) and so preferred to learn Standard English instead.<sup>18</sup>

CPE is a linguistic entity, but it is more than that. It had gained significant social, cultural and political import in its history of development, in particular in terms of the relationship and contacts between China and the West during that period. In the first place, why was CPE used for communication instead of either Chinese or Standard English? One may think the period was long enough for the development of learning either English or Chinese as a lingua franca. Yet as said earlier formal foreign language education did not start in China until Tong Wen Guan was established in 1862. Though Standard English or Chinese would have been much better means of communication, communications between the British and the Chinese were conducted mainly through CPE.

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<sup>17</sup> Chinese Pidgin English is based on a vocabulary of about 700 English words, with a small number of words from other sources. Grammar and syntax are simple and positional; that is, grammatical categories are indicated by the position of words in the sentence rather than by inflectional endings, prepositions, or the like (e.g. in English "John loves Mary" is distinguished from "Mary loves John" by the position of the words in the sentences). Typical sentences in Chinese Pidgin are Hab gat lening kum daun (There is rain coming down); Tumolo mai no kan kum (Tomorrow I can't come); and Mai no hab kachi basket (I didn't bring a basket). <http://www.encyclopediabritannica.com>

For the absence of the use of the Chinese language in communications, one reason was that many Westerners who came to China then, either thought the Chinese language too difficult, or viewed it with contempt as the language of “heathens”, and consequently the majority of them did not learn adequate Chinese either in advance or afterwards.<sup>19</sup> On the Chinese part, in order to prevent contact with foreigners for fear of spiritual contaminations of its people, the Qing court forbade teaching Chinese to foreigners. When the Protestant missionaries initiated their work in China at the beginning of the nineteenth century, some attempted to learn Chinese, but because of the official ban, “their study of the language had to be carried on almost clandestinely with whatever Chinese were willing to brave official displeasure by teaching the despised foreigners. The officials in Canton were said to have gone so far as to behead one Chinese teacher for giving lessons to foreigners. Robert Morrison, the founder of the first Protestant mission to China, was obliged, as protection to his own teacher, to study at night in a room with the lights carefully screened.”<sup>20</sup>

A similar reason is found for the absence of the use of standard English-- a government that would not allow its people to teach their native language to foreigners would not allow its people to learn a foreign language, either. Yet here a ban was hardly necessary. The Chinese, proud of their civilization and nationality, would not have become seriously interested in learning the language of the “barbarians” but for their humiliating defeat in

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> One missionary described the learning of Chinese as would take “lungs of steel, the patience of Job, and the lifetime of Methuselah”. Franke Wolfgang (R. A. Wilson translates), *China and the West*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967, p. 87.

the Opium War and a number of other battles with foreign powers.<sup>21</sup> English was then viewed as a “barbarian language.” “No self-respecting Confucian scholars would be caught dead studying the foreign language.”<sup>22</sup> Cultural pride was an important reason for the absence of foreign language education, but it became secondary when compared with the fears on the part of the Qing court for ideological contaminations brought by contact with foreigners, in particular with the missionaries. As mentioned earlier, the Qing court also forbade the teaching of the Chinese language to foreigners, of which the Chinese would have been very proud.

Those Chinese who used CPE and acted as interpreters were called “the linguists.” As such, they were limited in many ways. Not only the CPE they used was inadequate for any serious and sophisticated communication, but also they were poorly educated in terms of the Chinese language and Chinese culture. Feng Guifen, a reform-minded scholar/official who had served as assistant and secretary to top Qing officials Lin Zhexu and Li Hongzhang, showed his contempt for the “linguists.”

The Chinese officials have to rely upon the stupid and silly ‘linguists’ as their eyes and ears. The mildness or severity, leisureliness or urgency of their way of stating things may obscure the officials’ original intent after repeated interpretations. Thus frequently a small grudge may develop into a grave hostility. At the present time the most important administrative problem of the empire is to control the barbarians,

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<sup>20</sup> John De Francis, *Nationalism and Language Reform in China*, New York: Octagon Books, 1972, p. 17.

<sup>21</sup> Dzau Y. F., *English in China*, HK: API Press, 1990, p. 11.

<sup>22</sup> Ranbir Vohra, *China's Path to Modernization: a Historical Review from 1800 to the Present*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1987, p. 72.

yet the pivotal function is entrusted to these people.<sup>23</sup>

Feng no doubt thought CPE was inadequate for any serious communications. Worse still, CPE misrepresented the Chinese mind.

In addition, CPE was a cause of misunderstanding in forming the Chinese image of the West. Jerome Chen thinks the inadequacy of CPE, the lingua franca used in contacts between Chinese and foreigners, had contributed to the persistence of the myth of the “foreign devil.” The elites of China shared the same image of the foreigners with the common people. “The Pidgin English was at its best inadequate even for communication on trade and everyday matters. It was not possible to disperse the Chinese image of the physically hideous and socially repulsive foreigners.”<sup>24</sup>

Although CPE as lingua franca had long passed into history, its ghost remained to haunt the twentieth century Chinese mind. CPE had been used in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries largely for two purposes: trade and religion, or more precisely, the opium trade and Christianity, both of which were evils in the Chinese eyes. Trade was one-sided in the beginning because the Chinese agrarian-based economy was relatively self-sufficient, and there was practically no demand for European goods in China. Later, it was opium that the Western traders found selling well in China, whose demand increased from 150,000 pounds in 1767 to six million pounds in 1838.<sup>25</sup> Christianity encountered no less hostility

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<sup>23</sup> Feng Guifeng, “On the Manufacturing of Foreign Weapon” in Teng Ssu-yu & John K Fairbank (eds.), *China's Response to the West*, Harvard University Press, 1979, pp. 52-53.

<sup>24</sup> Ch'en Jerome, *China and the West: Society and Culture 1815-1937*, Hutchinson of London, 1979, p. 59.

<sup>25</sup> Vohra, *Ibid.* p. 26.

in China. If the missionaries had believed they had the duty, the “burden” to convert the heathens there to Christianity to save their souls and to give them Western knowledge and techniques to save their bodies, the Chinese saw things differently, and had serious doubts about the sincerity of the missionaries’ proclaimed goals. There was a pernicious association of the opium trade, the Christian mission and the accomplice role of English. The following incident was telling for that association.

[In 1843] a ship belonging to Jardine, Matheson & Co. sailed into the region north of Amoy with the well-known missionary Dr. Karl Gutzlaff on board as interpreter. From one side of the ship, Dr. Gutzlaff distributed Christian tracts to the Chinese, while opium was unloaded from the other side.<sup>26</sup>

CPE became more “political” the moment it was associated with the opium trade and the Christian mission, which in turn were associated with imperialist invasions of China and the humiliating unequal treaties for China.<sup>27</sup> Further more, what happened at this stage shows that even before the initiation of formal foreign language education, the missionaries were among the first to feel the need to spread English in China. The Qing authorities, on the other hand, were well aware of the detrimental effects of foreign ideas. There were both the missionary efforts to spread the foreign language in order to spread the foreign ideas and the Qing government’s efforts to ban language teaching in order to

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<sup>26</sup> Franke Wolfgang, *China and the West*, p. 77.

<sup>27</sup> They included the apology missions, which means Chinese envoys were sent to Britain, France, Japan and Germany to apologize for wars fought within the Chinese territory. Also included were annexations and leases of territories to foreign countries, indemnities, and other privileges like establishment of consular jurisdiction and direct control of Chinese customs by foreigners. Wenshun Chi, *Ideological Conflict in Modern China: Democracy and Authoritarianism*, New Brunswick and Oxford: Transaction

stop the influx of foreign ideas. However, the situation then did not pose a dilemma to the Qing government. All it needed to do was put a ban on the propagation of Christian ideas, and a supplementary ban on the teaching of the Chinese language to foreigners.<sup>28</sup>

### The Ti-Yong Formula

The foreign language dilemma emerged when political developments compelled the Qing authorities to start formal foreign language education. The establishment of Zongli Yamen (1861) meant for the first time in Chinese history there was an office dealing exclusively with foreigners. Increasing contact between the Zongli Yamen and the foreign governments meant that Beijing could no longer rely on the untrained Guangzhou “linguists”, whose English was often appalling, or on foreigners as translators. The Tianjin Treaties (1858) had stipulated that all British and French communications with Beijing would be both in English and French and that the texts in these languages would be held as authoritative.<sup>29</sup> So Chinese translators were needed. To meet this need, Tong Wen Guan and other foreign language schools were set up in Beijing, Shanghai and elsewhere to train translators and interpreters for the government.

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Books, 1986, pp. 1-3, and Bickers, Robert, “Chinese Burns: Britain in China 1842-1900” in *History Today*, vol. 50, no. 8 (London August 2000), pp.10-17.

<sup>28</sup> The ban on the teaching of Christianity was largely effective, for in up to 1840 there were only 20 foreign missionaries in all China, but after the ban was lifted in February 1846, the number of missionaries increased to 618 in 1853 and to 1296 in 1889. Li Liangyou, Zhang Risheng, and Liu Li (ed.), *Zhongguo Yingyu Jiaoyu Shi* (A history of English language teaching in China), Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1988, p. 5.

<sup>29</sup> Ranbir Vohra, *China's Path to Modernization: a Historical Review from 1800 to the Present*, Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1987, p. 72.

The politically imposed practical needs in dealing with foreigners was only part of the colonial impact on China which had been channelled into a broader vision of China's need to learn from the West, not only in terms of science and technology, but also in terms of culture. "Why are they [Western powers] small and yet strong? Why are we large and weak?" The early mentioned reform-minded Confucian scholar Feng Guifen asks, and he finds the following reasons.

In making use of the ability of our man power, with no one neglected, we are inferior to the barbarians; in securing the benefit of the soil, with nothing wasted, we are inferior to the barbarians; in maintaining a close relationship between the ruler and the people, with no barrier between them, we are inferior to the barbarians; and in the necessary accord of word with deed, we are also inferior to the barbarians.<sup>30</sup>

Feng recognizes the importance of foreign language not only as the gateway to Western knowledge, but also as a means dealing with the foreigners. Thus there was urgency in developing foreign language education.

During the last twenty years since the opening of trade, a great many of the foreign chiefs have learned our written and spoken language, and the best of them can even read our classics and histories. They are generally able to speak on our dynastic regulations and government administration, on our geography and the state of the populace. On the other hand, our officials from generals down, in regard to foreign

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<sup>30</sup> Feng Guifeng, "On the Manufacturing of Foreign Weapon" in Teng Ssu-yu' & Fairbank, *China's Response to the West*, Harvard University Press, 1979, pp. 52-53.

countries, are completely uninformed. No wonder that we understand neither the foreigners nor ourselves.<sup>31</sup>

To meet the needs in foreign languages, Feng suggests,

If today we wish to select and use Western knowledge, we should establish official translation offices at Canton and Shanghai. Brilliant students up to fourteen years of age should be selected from those areas to live and study in these schools on double rations. Westerners should be invited to teach them the spoken and written languages of the various nations, and famous Chinese teachers should also be engaged to teach them classics, history and other subjects.<sup>32</sup>

At Feng's suggestion, a school of Western languages and sciences was established in Shanghai in 1863, one year after the establishment of Tong Wen Guan in Beijing. Students there had the foreign language as their main subject while studying Chinese classics, history, geography and sciences. After three years of study, the graduates were assigned to work as interpreters in trading offices and customs.<sup>33</sup>

Now with different goals and intentions, Chinese reform-minded officials and intellectuals joined the missionary efforts to spread English in China. As Ross argues, from the outset ELT was therefore the handmaiden of both imperialism and indigenous

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Fu Ke, *Zhongguo Waiyu Jiaoyu Shi* (History of China's foreign language education), Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1986, p. 18.

reform, an important means to religious salvation, on the one hand, and national salvation, on the other.

Two groups of educators initiated formal English language instruction in China: English-speaking missionaries, who view foreign-language training as the path of least resistance through which to bring the hearts and minds of the Chinese people to God, and nineteenth century Chinese reformers, who regarded foreign language competency as necessary for mastering technical expertise and diplomatic procedure.<sup>34</sup>

The immediate effect of the initiation of formal foreign language education was a surge of translation. A generation had passed since the language school, the Tong Wen Guan, had begun after 1861 to publish the first translations of Western books. From technology, mathematics, and international law the translators had passed on to the classic works of European culture and politics, until by the 1890s most of the main ideas of the West were available in Chinese or in Japanese.<sup>35</sup> In the field of foreign literature, there are specific figures. The last decade of the Qing Dynasty had witnessed a surge in the translation of foreign literature. It reached highs in 1906 and 1907, with 110 and 126 titles translated respectively.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Heidi Ross, *China Learns English: Language Learning and Social Change in the People's Republic of China*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993, p. 18.

<sup>35</sup> Jack Gray, *Rebellions and Revolutions: China from the 1800s to the 1980s*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, pp. 126-127.

The final result was hardly one that would strengthen the superiority of Chinese values as Feng and Zhang had expected. Foreign ideas, as it were, fermented in Chinese society. The relevance of these ideas was argued daily in new, Western-style newspapers in Chinese. A telling example was MacKenzie's *The Nineteenth Century: a History*, an uncompromising glorification of the European idea of progress. This was a notion that challenged traditional Chinese concepts of a static society in which the maintenance of stability was the criterion of success. In questioning the Chinese notion of stability as basis of social and political morality and as test of successful governance, the intellectual foundation for reform was laid.<sup>37</sup> The spread of English had far more complicated political consequences and implications than the proponents of the Ti-Yong Formula had thought, who then had the aim to preserve rather than undermine the Chinese tradition with the introduction of Western science and technology. ELT meant the creation of a significant channel for Western ideas, which were to pose a serious challenge to the already weak Qing order and to speed up the process of social change then going on in China. In addition, "The attempt to adopt no more than the technical and military devices on which Western power was built, was bound to fail, because the basic requirements of technological thought, and a social and political structure which could make technical development possible, were lacking."<sup>38</sup>

### **The Chinglish Phenomenon**

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<sup>36</sup> Wong Wang-chi, "An Act of Violence: Translation of Western Fiction in the Late Qing and Early Republican Period" in Michel Hockx (Eds.), *The Literary Field of Twentieth-Century China*, Richmond: Curzon Press, 1999, pp. 21-40.

<sup>37</sup> Jack Gray, *ibid.*

Since this is not a chronological presentation of the development of ELT in China, here we will but treat the Republican period very briefly, and then will deal with the foreign language dilemma in the Maoist era. First the Republican period was noted for the great importance placed on English as a foreign language. At middle school English was a key subject taking up fifteen to twenty percent of the class hours, a percentage similar to that of Chinese. In the years of 1902, 1903, 1912, 1922, 1928, and 1940, English even had a higher percentage than that of Chinese.<sup>39</sup> Second, during this period education in general was heavily influenced by foreign, in particular American educational models, and it seems ELT was no exception. In connection with the great importance attached to English and the large extent of the acceptance of Western educational models, there was a massive absence of discussion of the foreign language dilemma, at least among publications and at the official level.

It was in the Maoist period that the foreign language dilemma re-emerged. In this period one may argue that the fear of and the concern with the detrimental effects of Western ideologies were even more pronounced because of the extreme antithesis between Chinese Communist ideology and the Western capitalist ideology. The Communist authorities were facing the same dilemma the late Qing authorities had faced in history. On the one hand they understood the importance of foreign languages, including the English language, for the Chinese revolution and modernization. On the other hand, however, the authorities had their fears and concern about the undesirable effects of the

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<sup>38</sup> Franke Wolfgang, *China and the West*, p. 106.

<sup>39</sup> See "Comparative Table of Weekly Hours for English and for Chinese at Middle School (1902-1948)" in Li Liangyou, Zhang Risheng, and Liu Li (ed.), *Zhongguo Yingyu Jiaoyu Shi* (A history of English language teaching in China), Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1988, pp. 229-230.

English language, among others, in particular the influx of some Western ideologies that were perceived to be alien, decadent, hostile, and even threatening. Such fears and concerns came from the Communists' "extraordinary faith in the power of ideas to change social reality" and their belief that "changes in values and consciousness must necessarily precede social, economic and political changes."<sup>40</sup> Since the Communists set such great store on the power of their own ideology, they were also the people who were most afraid of "foreign ideas", namely western ideologies. In short, in the eyes of the authorities, some *sixiang* (ideas) embodied in the English language was less welcome than the language itself.

Ideological concern had affected China's policy in foreign language education, and in the early years of the People's Republic of China (PRC) it was undoubtedly one of the main reasons for the privileged status of the Russian language as in contrast to the lowered status of the English language. Top officials like Lu Dingyi, Chen Boda and Guo Moruo had all exhorted the Chinese intellectuals to the study of Russian.<sup>41</sup> Though the teaching of the English language went on, it was confined to colleges and universities with a limited number of learners. It was not until 1956 that English was restored to the curricula of middle schools.<sup>42</sup> Later with the emergence of an ideological rift between the Chinese Communists and their Soviet counterparts, among other things, English gained an equal status with Russian. According to an official document in 1959 concerning the enrolment of new students by institutions of higher learning, "The foreign

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<sup>40</sup> Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China and After*, New York: the Free Press, 1986, p. 13.

<sup>41</sup> S. E. Fraser (eds.), *Chinese Communist Education*, NY: Jhon Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1965, p. 234.

<sup>42</sup> Heidi Ross, "Foreign Language Education as a Barometer of Modernisation" in Ruth Hayhoe (eds.) *Education and Modernisation: the Chinese Experience*, Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1992, pp. 239-250.

language in which candidates are to be tested may be either Russian or English, according to the option of the candidate.”<sup>43</sup> Then following the split in the early 1960s between the Chinese Communists and the Soviet Communists, English replaced Russian to be the primary foreign language of the country.<sup>44</sup>

Russian at first did not pose a foreign language dilemma. Instead, in the heyday of Russian, it was regarded as the language of China’s “socialist elder brother”, and the influx of Russian materials had never encountered check-up or censorship. From 1952 to 1956, 1400 textbook titles were translated, and a further 2746 literary works were translated between 1949 and 1956. If a textbook of the Russian language was ever adapted or abridged, it was out of pedagogical necessity.<sup>45</sup> The case with English is different. English is taken as the bridge to Western technology as well as a channel of bourgeois ideology. Eyed with wariness and suspicion, it was a necessary evil at most.

When Chinese authorities later felt the importance of the English language, they devised many ways to deal with the foreign language dilemma, and a Chinese way of learning the English language was developed. “Chinglish” may fittingly summarize the dominant ELT activities and experiences in the pre-reform era, during which great efforts were made to strip the foreign language of “foreign ideas” so that students would learn the foreign language without learning “foreign ideas.” Chinglish was based on the assumption that language could be simply a useful instrument and its function as such could be separated

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<sup>43</sup> Ministry of Education, “On the 1959 Enrolment of New Students by Institutions of Higher Learning” in S. E. Fraser (eds.), *Chinese Communist Education*, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1965, p.189.

<sup>44</sup> Hu Wenzhong, “A Matter of Balance: Reflection on China’s Language Policy in Education” in *Asian Englishes*, Vol. 4, no. 1, 2001, pp. 66-79.

from its cultural and political import. Fu Ke, who was for many years one of China's policy-makers in foreign language education, explains,

We must thoroughly criticize the objectives, principles and methods of imperialist education in China. We must also expose how the imperialists used the foreign languages as tools to enslave the Chinese people. However, language itself, being a tool, a weapon, does not belong to any particular class. The enemies can use it in their interest, and we can also use it for our revolution and construction.<sup>46</sup>

Fu was echoing Chen Yi, the vice premier,

Don't treat the foreign language simplistically as if it only involves skills. The foreign language is a tool in political struggle. With the mastery of the foreign language we can introduce the good points of foreigners into China for the development of our economy and culture. On the other hand, with the foreign language, we can introduce the revolutionary experience of China to the outside world, expanding the influence of our revolution and dealing a heavy blow to imperialism.<sup>47</sup>

One of the ways to keep students away from undesirable "foreign ideas" was the

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<sup>45</sup> S. E. Fraser (eds.), *Education in Communist China*, Hong Kong: International Studies Group, 1969.

<sup>46</sup> Fu Ke, *Zhongguo Waiyu Jiaoyu Shi* (History of China's foreign language education), Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1986, p. 44.

<sup>47</sup> Chen Yi, 1962 "An Earnest, Well-Meaning Talk on the Study of Foreign Languages", quoted in Fu Ke, *Zhongguo Waiyu Jiaoyu Shi* (History of China's foreign language education), Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1986, p. 44.

extensive use of translated Chinese materials in ELT. Another way was the application of political criteria in selecting Western authors and texts. Below is a story of how Mao learned his English. Though Mao himself never intended it to be a model for Chinese learners, his way of learning English was characteristic of the ELT experiences in Maoist China. According to Zhang Hanzhi, one of Mao's English teachers in the 1960s,

Mao Zedong's English lessons started the following afternoon, a cold, windy Sunday in January 1964. I had no idea how to begin, but Mao seemed to know what he wanted. He handed me copies of the English translations of some political essays repudiating the 'Soviet revisionists,' which had been distributed for Party and government staff to study. The translations were in very formal language with a lot of heavy political vocabulary. I did not dare tell Mao that if he really wanted to use English, this kind of language was not suited for beginners.<sup>48</sup>

Here Mao was learning a foreign language without "foreign ideas", or English with "Chinese ideas". If Mao as a national leader had made his choice of what to learn from the foreign language, the ordinary learners of English had to follow a policy of "learning the foreign language without learning foreign ideas"<sup>49</sup> According to a report,

The English department of Beijing Foreign Languages Institute has compiled, on a large scale, textbooks of a comprehensive nature and has translated a great variety of teaching materials, reflecting important current political affairs and the new men and

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<sup>48</sup> Zhang Hanzhi, "Mao Zedong" in photocopy.

<sup>49</sup> R. F. Price, *Education in Communist China*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975, p. 171.

new things emerging from the Great Leap Forward. For instance, the [national leaders'] reports made at the National People's Congress, the report on the communes, articles dealing with the Japanese people's opposition to the Japan-U.S. Military Alliance Treaty, articles on *For the Sake of the Sixty-one Class Brothers*, and the heroic deeds of Xu Xuehui and Liu Wenxue have all been compiled and prepared in time for use as teaching materials. Three days after the appearance in the newspapers of the dispatch *Chairman Mao's Concern over the Learning of Reading and Writing by Soldiers*, it was translated into English for teaching in class.<sup>50</sup>

The result was a large portion of Chinese content as English study materials. Using translated Chinese materials in learning English was meant to protect the students from bourgeois contamination and to indoctrinate Chinese official ideology as well.

Meanwhile texts written by Western authors were also selected on political and ideological ground rather than on pedagogical ground. A study of a set of popular English textbooks originally produced during the 1960s finds that approximately fifty percent or seventeen out of the thirty-six texts were thus selected. Some texts were expositions of a Marxist theory or a Communist Party policy. Others readily fell into such conceptual categories as class struggle and racial discrimination in Western countries. The English texts were selected with the intention of falling in line with the official ideology.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> *Guangming Daily*, 4 July 1960.

<sup>51</sup> Zhang Eric S. Q. and Gao Mobo, "De-politicization in the Teaching of English in China" in *Pacific-Asian Education*, Vol. 12, no. 1 (2000), pp. 60-74.

In a curious way the foreign language dilemma seemed to have been solved during the Maoist era in that English was taught and learned while “foreign ideas” were successfully or unsuccessfully screened out. However, the solution must be viewed against the fact that in those pre-reform days, China’s need for English was but a very modest one. In addition, the solution was achieved more or less at the expense of the study of the cultural aspects of the English language. In some more extreme cases, as shown by samples collected by John Cleverley of ELT texts used during the Cultural Revolution and its aftermath, the text did not fit for the purpose of learning the foreign language.<sup>52</sup>

While the Ti-Yong Formula proved inadequate for solving the dilemma because the Western “means” and “functions” had threatened and helped overthrow the Chinese “essence” and “values”, Chinglish was by no means a better solution. The two developments emerged from different social and political conditions and ended with different results. In terms of their relevance to the present study, however, both the Ti-Yong Formula and Chinglish are important because together they provide a historical

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<sup>52</sup> Texts

Text 1

I Want to Study for the Revolution Chairman Mao, oh, Chairman Mao, you are the red sun in our hearts. The Chinese people love you. We study hard for the people. We study hard for the revolution. I want to study “Serve the People, In Memory of Norman Bethune and the Foolish Man Who Removed Mountains”. I want to hold high the great red banner of Mao Tsetung Thought. We must follow Chairman Mao’s teaching. Unite to win still greater victories.

Text 2

A: Hullo, Comrade Li, what are you doing now?

B: I am studying a quotation from Chairman Mao, ‘Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun’.

A: That’s fine. Many foreign friends are studying this great teaching, too.

B: Yes, they are fighting against imperialism, revisionism and reactionaries of all Countries. Victory belongs to the revolutionary people of the world.

See John Cleverley, *The Schooling of China*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin Pty. Ltd., (first edition 1985) 1991, pp. 186-188.

perspective that throws light on the politics of ELT in post-Mao China.

## Conclusion

The literature review would further support my statement in the last chapter that there is a research gap in studies of political aspects of ELT. The international perspective represents some of the rare efforts in addressing the political aspects of ELT. Yet despite those efforts, the wide separation of ELT from more general sociopolitical issues remains largely unchanged. On the other hand, studies on the history of the spread of English in China, such as by Fu (1985), Li (1988), and Dzau (1990) have been concerned mainly with chronological presentations of what happened during different periods of history. One sees no conceptual link between the different periods as proposed here. Nor do these works suggest any bearing history has on ELT in post-Mao China.

Second this literature review has shown that the spread of English has had political/ideological implications and consequences both internationally and in China. It suggests that the global spread of English should by no means be seen merely as a natural historical process by itself, but rather should be understood within the larger framework of the discourses of imperialism and colonialism. Furthermore, as Pennycook argues, in a sense ELT is a product of imperialism and colonialism not only because these two isms had produced the initial conditions of the global spread of English but also because they had produced many of the ways of thinking and behaving that are still part of Western culture.<sup>53</sup> Situated in international perspective, the ELT case in post-Mao China is not something isolated and incidental, but a typical example of the political and ideological

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<sup>53</sup> Alastair Pennycook, *English and the Discourse of Colonialism*, London and New York: Routledge, 1998, p. 17.

conflicts between the West and transitional societies and modernizing nations. As will be shown in the conclusion chapter of the thesis, the current debate in China over the sociopolitical effects of ELT has made more evident the relevancy and significance of such an international perspective.

Finally, this literature review suggests that the concept of the foreign language dilemma formulated here may have multi-functions. It may serve as a useful tool in viewing the spread of English in post-Mao China in terms of its connections with its international and historical parallels. It underlines the political nature of the spread and highlight ideological differences and conflicts as roots of the dilemma. It also makes the historical perspective more relevant for the study being undertaken here. Above all, as the foreign language dilemma continues to manifest in the post-Mao era, and tension generated from the dilemma becomes a cause for ideological change, such a concept may provide important insight into the issue of ELT impact on ideology in post-Mao China.

## Chapter Four

### Impetus of Change: the Ideological Functions of English-Language Textbooks in Post-Mao China<sup>1</sup>

#### Introduction

Previous studies suggest that textbooks in general can be ideal empirical objects for studying ideologies. In former communist states like the Soviet Union, school textbooks served as instruments of ideological indoctrination, and their representation of history, society, and culture was designed to match the ideology of Leninism.<sup>2</sup> With regard to China, a number of studies have dealt with the influence of dramatic ideological changes and conflicts on Chinese education. Barry Sautman views Chinese education since 1949 in terms of its intimate connection with politics as shown in what he calls “politicization, hyper-politicization and de-politicization” in education.<sup>3</sup> Empirical studies by Julia Kwang and others have provided ample evidence of political influence on the contents of teaching materials, suggesting that as products of a given period, textbooks are embodiments of the dominant ideologies of the period and thus are capable of reflecting ideological changes over different

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<sup>1</sup> Part of this chapter has been published in Eric Shaoquan Zhang and Mobo Gao, “De-politicization in the Field of English Teaching in China: a Comparative Study of Two English Course Books” in *Pacific-Asian Education*, vol. 12, no. 1 (2000), pp. 60-74.

<sup>2</sup> Elena Lisovskaya & Vyacheslav Karpov, “New Ideologies in Post-communist Russian Textbooks” in *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 43, no. 4 (November 1999), pp. 522-545.

<sup>3</sup> Barry Sautman, “Politicization, Hyperpoliticization, and Depoliticization of Chinese Education”,

## **Chapter Three**

### **Ideology and Ideological Change**

The introduction chapter has introduced the hypothesis that ELT has been an important cause for ideological change in post-Mao China. In order to test the hypothesis we need to delimit the scope of our study and to define our point of reference. Therefore this chapter will discuss the political and ideological conditions under which ELT plays out this role. Structurally this chapter will serve as a framework of reference for the thesis, while the rest of the thesis will support the hypothesis with findings and analysis.

Drawing on Franz Schurmann, this chapter views CCP ideology as consisting of different levels of abstraction and containing possibly contradictory elements. Accordingly it defines ideological change in terms of the “abstraction” of ideas, namely some key components of the ideology become “abstracted” to the extent to be less relevant in policy-making and in social life. Ideology and ideological change defined as such not only explains why ELT could contribute to political and ideological change, but also how it determines the way ELT does it.

## Pure Ideology and Practical Ideology

In his seminal study of Chinese CCP ideology, Schurmann makes a distinction between pure ideology and practical ideology.<sup>1</sup> “Pure ideology is a set of ideas designed to give the individual (or organization) a unified and conscious world view; practical ideology is a set of ideas designed to give the individual rational instruments for action.”<sup>2</sup> Though different, pure ideology and practical ideology are closely linked. Without pure ideology, the ideas of practical ideology have no legitimacy. But without practical ideology, an organization cannot transform its *Weltanschauung* into consistent action. In this sense pure ideology serves as the guiding principle while practical ideology is aimed at generating policies and actions. This is of course an analytical distinction. In reality, ideas change status by moving between these two realms. In other words, under certain conditions, some ideas of pure ideology may move to the realm of practical ideology while others may move in the opposite direction. In Schurmann’s model, Leninism as an ideology shifted to the realm of practical ideology at the CCP’s Eighth Party Congress in 1956 and shifted back to pure ideology since 1960.<sup>3</sup> Major political events between those years, such as the Anti-Rightist Campaign and the Great Leap Forward, were manifestations and consequences of the former shift. Originally published in 1966, Schurmann’s study did not take into account the Cultural Revolution and its aftermath (1966-1976). However, the Cultural Revolution would only support rather than weaken Schurmann’s position regarding ideological shifts. For we could see that Leninism during

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<sup>1</sup> Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, Berkeley: University of California, 1966.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

the Cultural Revolution again shifted to the realm of practical ideology, given that the term Leninism can be defined flexibly.

The analytical distinction between pure ideology and practical ideology provides a model for explaining apparent conflicting policies and actions. When in conflict with an ideology, a policy or act must find legitimacy in another realm of ideology for it to continue or to become effective. If it can not find legitimacy in either realm of ideology, the policy or practice is unlikely to proceed. The case of China's Nanjie Village may illustrate the point. Nanjie, a village in Henan province, is certainly an anachronism in China under reform. At sunrise the villagers hear the song "The East Is Red"; at sunset, "Socialism Is Good". Houses, fields and business enterprises are managed collectively. Only necessities of livelihood are sanctioned for private ownership. Salaries are deliberately kept low, and people are discouraged from holding personal bank accounts. Meanwhile, villagers enjoy free housing, health care and education. And all this was happening in China in the late 1990s, twenty years after the people's commune was dismantled. When the villagers chose this mode of living and production, the government found it hard, or chose not to, intervene because what the Nanjie people did was undoubtedly in line with Mao Zedong Thought, which the Party claimed to uphold. Ironically, the village head justified their anti-mainstream policies by invoking Deng Xiaoping's favorite phrase, "Seeking truth from facts."<sup>4</sup> The Nanjie model was contrary to the reform policy, but had found legitimacy in the realm of what Schurmann called "pure ideology" and was able to continue.

This example shows the usefulness of Schurmann's model for explaining present day Chinese politics. Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought and much of the legacy of Deng Xiaoping form what Schurmann calls pure ideology. The CCP leadership will turn to the pure ideology when necessary, but the pure ideology has had no binding power over them ever since the defeat of the CCP "two-what-ever" faction in the late 1970s.<sup>5</sup> "Seeking truth from facts" was a slogan Deng Xiaoping used to defend his pragmatism against the ideological whims of Maoism.<sup>6</sup> As a result, policies in the past two decades or so have been noticeable for their pragmatic nature. The remaining power of the pure ideology sometimes seems more symbolic than real. On the other hand, however, the very fact that Deng was using "seeking truth from facts", a time-honored Chinese Communist tenet, to justify an ideological or policy innovation suggests that ideological constraints were still very strong.

The reform era is characterized with divergent, shifting and conflicting policies—which lead to equally divergent and conflicting actions—as a result of divergence and tension at higher levels of ideology. Major policy shifts indicate that certain components of the ideology have moved further upward in terms of abstraction, further into the realm of 'pure ideology', becoming more symbolic than real.<sup>7</sup> However, this moving upwards

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<sup>4</sup> Anthony Spaeth, "Back to the Future", *Time*, 5 Feb. 1996, p. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Headed by Hua Guofeng, Mao's successor, the faction held that whatever Mao had decided should be carried out and whatever Mao had said should be followed. The Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (December 1978) marked the defeat of the faction and the re-emergence of Deng Xiaoping. See Michael Schoenhals, "The 1978 Truth Controversy", *China Quarterly*, 1991, no. 6, pp. 243-268.

<sup>6</sup> The CCP's "Resolution on Certain Issues in Party History since the Founding of the PRC" passed at the Sixth Plenary Session of the Eleventh CCP Central Committee in June 1981 defined "seeking truth from facts" as the core of Mao Zedong Thought as well as of Marxism.

<sup>7</sup> We acknowledge that there is another type of abstraction, in which "abstracted" ideas do not necessarily become less relevant. In this case, initially partial, unsystematic ideas are gradually elaborated, modified

does not mean the end of those components. They don't disappear, but rather they stay and are capable of moving backwards and downwards and coming into the spotlight again. This changing of place in the ideological stratum is significant because it corresponds to the cyclic changes in contemporary Chinese politics. For example, those who are surprised at China's efforts at modernization in the reform era may have forgotten that such efforts had been made in the Great Leap Forward and earlier, and modernization has been a major theme in Chinese ideology for well over a century. Similarly, those who were surprised that Chinese students should "have turned wild" when the Chinese embassy in Belgrade was bombed by American-led NATO forces may have forgotten that students in the 1919 May-Fourth Movement were much "wilder". The theme of anti-imperialism does not disappear simply because China needs Western technology and capital for its development.<sup>8</sup>

The dominant Chinese official ideology in the Maoist era was of course Mao Zedong Thought. As said earlier, during the reform era, much of Mao Zedong Thought has moved to the realm of pure ideology and exercises only symbolic power. Now two of the key elements that give the official ideology an "identity" seem to be what I call the discourse of Modernization and the Four Cardinal Principles of upholding Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, the Communist Party leadership, the socialist road and the people's

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and codified into a more formalized doctrine. In this sense, the ideas retain their relationship with reality and remain relevant.

<sup>8</sup> This cyclic model is shared by quite a number of people studying contemporary Chinese politics. Zhang Weiwei, among others, observes that the course of ideological change in the reform era is characterized by cycles with periods of advance and periods of retreat. According to Zhang, "The whole period from 1978 to 1992 can be usefully divided into four cycles, and each cycle begins with reformist values, initiatives, and experimental implementation to be followed by ideological criticism and readjustment. Subsequently, pressure is built for a new round of reform initiatives." Zhang Wei-wei, *Ideology and Economic Reform under Deng Xiaoping, 1978-1993*, London: Kegan Paul International,

democratic dictatorship.<sup>9</sup> With the shift of focus of the party's policy from revolution and class struggle to the development of the economy, the Four Cardinal Principles serves as guidance during the reform era and belongs to the realm of "pure ideology." It mostly serves as a qualifier, as in "socialist modernization", and as a balancing factor to the reform and open-door policy in the modernizing process.

We say "mostly" because in the past two decades or so it did move closer to the realm of "practical ideology" for a few times.<sup>10</sup> Otherwise it has remained in the realm of pure ideology. As a vision and ideal, the Modernization discourse shares some of the qualities of "pure ideology." However, in the post-Mao era the Modernization discourse is much more than a vision and ideal. The reform and open-door policy at the operational level has created a link between the vision of modernization and the hustle and bustle of social life. Thus events and activities in economy, education and other fields are interpreted in terms of their relationship with the discourse of Modernization. Achievements are often called "contributions to the (socialist) modernization" while failures are viewed as setbacks to modernization. In short, with qualifications, Modernization can be viewed as a practical ideology whereas the Four Cardinal Principles are pure ideology.

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1996, pp. 8-9.

<sup>9</sup> Since the early stage of reform, Deng had insisted that there is a limit, particularly with regard to reform in the political system and ideology. "In order to achieve the four modernizations we must keep to the socialist road, uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat, uphold the leadership of the Communist Party, and uphold Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. The central Committee considers that we must now repeatedly emphasis the necessity of upholding these four cardinal principles, because certain people (even if only a handful) are attempting to undermine them. In no way can such attempts be tolerated. No Party members and, needless to say, no Party ideological or theoretical workers, must ever waiver in the slightest on this basic stand. To undermine any of the four cardinal principles is to undermine the whole cause of socialism in China, the whole cause of modernization." See Deng Xiaoping, "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles: a Speech at a Forum on the Principle of the Party's Theoretical Work (March 30, 1979)." In *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping: 1975-1982*, Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1984, pp.179-184.

<sup>10</sup> In the wake of 1989 Tiananmen crack down, for instance, for a brief period it even became ideology in action.

## The Dialectic of Change

The structure and make-up of Chinese CCP ideology thus depicted have great implications for ideological change. On the one hand changes in the ideology are possible but on the other hand the changes must be structurally constrained. Many cases in the reform era can be explained with this ideological innovation/constrain model. Deng Xiaoping's idea of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" is one characteristic example. In the West quite a few variations of interpretation have come out of Deng's catchphrase to depict the Chinese phenomena, such as "capitalism with Chinese characteristics", "socialism with capitalist characteristics" and so on.<sup>11</sup> These variations may highlight the "capitalist" elements that are downplayed in Deng's phrase, but they have to modify the (Western) capitalist elements with "Chinese characteristics" and "socialism." Despite the difference in focus and emphasis, these Western terms of references also indicate a constraint. Another example is the former CCP General Secretary Zhao Ziyang's placement of China at the "primary stage of socialism",<sup>12</sup> a major ideological revision to justify the introduction of market reform. Here again one can find both the serious attempts for an ideological breakthrough and the equally serious ideological constraints.

The innovation/constraint model also suggests that it is possible for new and innovative elements to be incorporated into the CCP ideology without fundamentally changing the

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<sup>11</sup> John Gittings, *China Changes Face*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989, and Michel Chossudovsky, *Towards Capitalist Restoration?* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986.

ideology. As Tang Tsou's study suggests, historically there were some singularly Chinese communist innovations in the pre-1949 revolution, such as peasant-based revolution, the rural surrounding the cities and the mass line, which had become important components of Mao Zedong Thought. They were different from the Leninist models of Russia and were not found in Marx.<sup>13</sup> Yet despite these innovations, the ideology of the Party remained Marxist-Leninist in nature.

In a renewed effort to define Mao Zedong Thought, Tang Tsou (2000) suggests that the Thought was

the Chinese Communist movement's discourse interacted with its own actions, choices and policies and with the Marxism-Leninism it borrowed from abroad. Mao Zedong Thought was neither a static reflection of the social world nor an intellectual framework imposed on reality; it was the revisable ingredient and outcome of the movement's action sequence.<sup>14</sup>

This definition, as Tang says, is developed from both a definition of his own earlier work in 1968 and one by Wuthnow in 1989. According to the latter, the Thought was "the movement's discourse interacted with its own activities and with its broader theoretical agenda: ideology was neither a static reflection of the social world nor an intellectual framework imposed on reality; it was the revisable ingredient and outcome of the

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<sup>12</sup> Zhao formulated the idea at the Thirteenth party Congress in November 1987, and it had been controversial since. In the more recent years, however, the Party had reaffirmed the idea of China being at the primary stage of socialism.

movement's action sequence.”<sup>15</sup> In both Tang and Wuthnow's definitions the emphasis seems to be on the importance of “action” and “reality” in shaping the CCP ideology. This emphasis is not unlike Chinese Communist Party's own emphasis on the value of practice and adaptation to realities as shown in its claim that Mao Zedong Thought is the outcome of the application of the “universal truth of Marxism-Leninism” to “the concrete conditions of Chinese revolution and construction.” If it is true that ideas/ideologies are flexible in adapting realities and in formulating actions, it is also true that ideas do not operate unfettered by material constraints and that change in ideas is always rooted in the emergence of new social conditions.

The innovation/constraint model represents the dialectic of ideological change. Without fundamentally altering the CCP ideology, it makes strategic and tactical shifts easier and allows China's decision-makers a wider range of choices in response to the specific circumstances. The reform and opening-up, and the Four Cardinal Principles in the post-Mao era are similar manifestations of this model. None of these policies and ideological constraints were merely modelled on precedents, yet none of them were iconoclast either, for they all took place within the limits and constraints of the ideological umbrella and social conditions. In short, the CCP ideology is not a closed system but is open to change. Challenge and innovation can have positive effects

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<sup>13</sup> Tang Tsou, “Interpreting the Revolution in China: Macro-history and Micro-mechanisms”, *Modern China*, Beverly Hills, vol. 26, no. 2 (2000), pp. 205-238.

<sup>14</sup> Tang Tsou, *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Tang Tsou (quotes), *ibid.*

regarding its development, but the scope and extent of change is ideologically constrained.<sup>16</sup>

### **Modifications: Alternative Approaches**

Schurmann's ideological model has been influential in studies of Chinese politics. It was particularly influential before the reform era, when China was considered as a "revolutionary regime" and the study of ideology appeared extremely pertinent.<sup>17</sup> Some, however, have expressed doubts about Schurmann's approach to ideology in China, finding it "too rigid and mechanistic to use as a framework to understand changes in ideology."<sup>18</sup> Into the 1990s, Lowell Dittmer (1990) and Feng Chen (1995), among others, developed alternative models for the study of Chinese CCP ideology, in particular to explain the gap or discrepancy between officially promulgated ideology and actually implemented policies.

Lowell Dittmer further breaks down the concept of ideology in terms of levels of abstraction, that is, from "theory", "thought", and "line" down to "policy". According to Dittmer,

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<sup>16</sup> Political realism may also at work in putting a limit to ideological change. "Chinese reformers might wish to discard many of the orthodox tenets and implement the reform program, but knowing that the risks for abandoning official conventions are too great, they tend to adopt ideological renovations within a Marxist framework." Zhang Wei-wei, *Ideology and Economic Reform under Deng Xiaoping, 1978-1993*, London: Kegan Paul International, 1996, p. 2.

<sup>17</sup> John B. Starr, *Ideology and culture: an Introduction to the Dialectic of Contemporary Chinese Politics*, NY, Harper & Row Publishers, Inc. 1973, pp. 8-12. Wang James C. F., *Contemporary Chinese Politics*, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall International Inc. 1989, pp. 45-46.

<sup>18</sup> Examiner 2, "Review and Comments" regarding this thesis.

“Theory” (*lilun*) is the most abstract dimension, referring to the internationally valid (ostensibly) intellectual edifice of Marxism-Leninism. “Thought” (*sixiang*) refers to the adaptation of theory to the particular circumstances of a given nation-state (as in “Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought”). A “line” (*luxian*) consists of the selective application of thought to a historical period of three to nine years. Finally, “policy” consists of the application of the line to a functionally specific area.<sup>19</sup>

When applied to the reform era, however, this model has a weakness that precisely lies in its elaboration of those levels. If treated at face value, Chinese words like “*lilun*” “*sixiang*” and “*luxian*” can be misleading in an empirically complicated and ever-changing world, and the explanatory power of the model is limited in cases where the same term means different things or the same thing takes different terms. For instance, in the Chinese political language, Deng’s legacy is called a “theory” (*Deng Xiaoping lilun*) while Mao’s legacy remains to be a “thought” (*Mao Zedong sixiang*). Yet it is the former, which is supposedly more abstract, that has generated more concrete policies and actions during the reform period than the latter does, which is supposed to be more concrete in Dittmer’s approach. Similarly, “Three Representations” formulated by Jiang Zemin in 2001, which we will discuss later, is also called a “thought” (*san ge daibia de sixiang*), but it is by no means on the same level of abstraction as *Mao Zedong sixiang*. Therefore, though Dittmer’s model seems more nuanced it has limited explanatory power.

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<sup>19</sup> Lowell Dittmer, “Beyond Revolution: Political Development in the People’s Republic of China” in Joyce K. Kallgren (eds.), *Building a Nation-State: China After Forty Years*, Berkeley: Regents of the University of California, 1990, pp. 41-65.

<sup>20</sup> We will come to discuss the Three Representations later.

Feng Chen's study of ideology and economic reform in post-Mao China stands out as more influential.<sup>21</sup> Feng Chen approaches CCP ideology in terms of "fundamental principles versus instrumental principles." In Feng Chen's model, the fundamental principles of the CCP's ideology involve only a small number of belief elements, which define the "identity" of the ideology and play a key role in unifying it. The instrumental principles can be grouped into three types in terms of their relationship to fundamental principles: dogmatic, pragmatic and divergent.

The former are the core of the ideology, which sets the tone and parameters of political life in society. Fundamental principles tend to resist any significant change, for such a change might inevitably alter the nature of the regime. In this sense, fundamental principles become equivalent to the regime itself. Characteristically, fundamental principles epitomize fixed elements, which are rigid, dogmatic and impermeable to argument and evidence. Instrumental principles function to interpret the nature of current tasks that confront the leadership and to justify current policies, thus indicating how political actors perceive, diagnose, prescribe, and make choices in specific problem areas.<sup>22</sup>

Feng Chen acknowledges that the fundamental-instrumental distinction to some extent provides the leadership with flexibility to maneuver policies, and create room for new ideas to be practised in a variety of policy areas. However, he is dissatisfied with the pure and practical ideology model, arguing that this model, among others,

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<sup>21</sup> Feng Chen, *Economic Transition and Political legitimacy in Post-Mao China: Ideology and Reform*, NY: Sate University of New York Press, 1995.

seemed to assume the adaptability of CCP ideology to changing reality and to believe that this ideology could be modified to accommodate socioeconomic modernization. ...[It] failed to take into consideration the potential conflict between the two dimensions of ideology. They interpret the function of flexible application of ideology as if it would always strengthen the ideology and, therefore, do not allow for a crisis of ideology that may arise when the conflict between the two dimensions of ideology becomes irreconcilable.<sup>23</sup>

Feng Chen seems to have serious doubt about the possibility of the CCP's ideological self-adjustment in the longer term and takes it as "the hard fact" that with the penetration of rival capitalist ideas, the discrepancy between fundamental principles and instrumental principles is no longer one of degree, but one of kind. The reform leadership "cannot prevent the official economic ideology from becoming indistinguishable from its antithesis—capitalism".<sup>24</sup> Politically the ideological crisis generated by the fundamental-instrumental discrepancy only leads to what he calls the "legitimacy crisis" because the CCP still relies on ideology for its self-claimed legitimacy.<sup>25</sup>

The problem with the fundamental-instrumental principles model is that it implies that the repudiation by the CCP of fundamental principles such as the Four Cardinal Principles is the sole solution of the crisis-generating discrepancy and overlooks other

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid. p. 10.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. pp. 11-12.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. p. 12.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p. 18.

possibilities in its prediction of the outcome of the interaction between ideology and reform. A close look at the China's reform history, however, seems to suggest that ideological reconciliation, adaptation and innovation are as important as ideological decay and transformation in defining ideological change over this era. The cyclic feature mentioned earlier also suggests that ideological change can take other forms than incessant tension building-up and crises.

This thesis, drawing on Schurmann's model, focuses on ideological change in terms of both ideological adaptation and the "abstraction" of ideas. In the former case CCP ideology adapts itself to meet the challenge from changed realities. In the latter case some key components of the ideology become "abstracted" or less relevant in policy-making and in terms of their relationship with realities. Furthermore, it holds that adaptation and abstraction are no less relevant than the official repudiation or abandonment of key components of CCP ideology as models for interpreting ideological change in post-Mao era.<sup>26</sup>

However, it is not a goal of this thesis to reject either of these alternative approaches, which had different research goals and focuses and undoubtedly have furnished important insights into Chinese politics and ideology. Rather, the author of the thesis thinks that a flexible and inclusive attitude toward alternative research models would benefit the present study. Actually, the difference between Schurmann's model and the two

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<sup>26</sup> At the early stage of reform, repudiation of 'the perceived ideological distortions and dogmatic excesses of the Maoist era', as well ideological adaptation, had been a main objective of the party-state leadership. Gordon White, "The Decline of Ideocracy" in Robert Benewick and Paul Wingrove (ed.), *China in the 1990s*, Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999, pp. 21-33.

alternatives is more apparent than real, for the latter do share some basic assumptions with the former, such as the two or multi-dimensions in the make-up of the ideology and the likely conflict generated by the gap between different dimensions.

### **The Interaction between Formal Ideology and “Lived Ideology”**

The pure ideology and practical ideology model throws light on the general issues of how and why political and ideological change can possibly take place. When we come to the more specific issue of how ELT could have impact on ideological change, we need yet to look at the relationship between ideology and ELT in terms of an interaction between them, and here we will draw on Michael Billig’s concepts of formal ideology and “lived ideology”.

In his *Ideological Dilemmas*, Billig puts forward the concepts of “intellectual or formal ideology” and “lived ideology.” Intellectual ideology, according to Billig, is a formalized philosophy. To illustrate his point, he quotes from Raymond Aron the French sociologist that “An ideology presupposes an apparently systematic formalization of facts, interpretations, desires and predictions.”<sup>27</sup> One such example is

The ideology of liberalism is not represented by those who might be contemplating voting for a liberal party at a general election. It will be expressed by the great theorists of liberal philosophy such as Voltaire, Locke and Adam Smith: in other

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<sup>27</sup> Michael Billig, *Ideological Dilemmas*, London: Sage Publications Ltd., 1988, pp. 28.

words, by those who have attempted to construct the ideas of liberalism into a systematic philosophy.<sup>28</sup>

Lived ideology, on the other hand, is unformulated. It is more like the total mental structure of a particular age or of a concrete historical-social group, consisting of beliefs, values, cultural practices and so on. In this sense, lived ideology is not unlike culture, and

It might be said that ordinary people living in a particular society partake of the general cultural patterns of that society, and their thinking is shaped by these patterns. The possibility that these people may not possess a formal system of political thinking does not prevent them from partaking of the social and political values of their society.<sup>29</sup>

If CCP ideology can be viewed as a formulated or formal ideology, we can further draw on Michael Billig and regard the various sectors of social life as an un-formulated or “lived ideology”, of which ELT is but one sector. The distinction of these two forms of ideology makes it possible to pose two related questions. The first is whether the ideas of the formal ideology can travel beyond the political arena in order to enter into the hustle and bustle of social life, and the second, which is more important for this study, is whether lived ideology can in turn travel into the political arena and influence the formal ideology.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. pp. 29-30.

While CCP ideology is similar to other ideologies in that it functions to legitimate the existent order as well as to provide a vision of the future,<sup>30</sup> the singular importance it assumes in Chinese society is unmatched by other ideologies. Politicization has been a dominant feature of Chinese society. Lucian W. Pye observed in 1968 that “Historically, politics and government have invaded a segment of social life in any society; but the Chinese seem determined to politicize everything and to make their political culture coterminous with all of life.”<sup>31</sup> Thirty-one years later, commenting on “the deadening effects of (China’s) ideological conformity”, the same author writes

It is clear that a dominant theme in its history has been the sovereign role of ideology. It was an unrelenting, mobilizing and disciplining force during the Mao era, and it has been something that the leaders of the reforms have not been able to abandon for all their reputed pragmatism.<sup>32</sup>

Formal ideology in China travels through many channels to reach to all corners of society. Its channels include the media, education and political study meetings, to name but a few. China is one of the few countries in the world in which the state assumes almost total control of the media, though that control has been challenged and eroded by both a market orientation in the media and the repeated call from the media for “more respect

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<sup>30</sup> Karl Mannheim proposes a distinction between “ideologies,” which are contrived to justify and preserve the status quo, and “utopias,” which are designed to transcend and transform it. See Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: an Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1936.

<sup>31</sup> Lucian Pye, *The Spirit of Chinese Politics*, MIT Press, 1968, p. X.

<sup>32</sup> Lucian Pye, “An Overview of 50 Years of the People’s Republic of China: Some Progress, but Big Problems Remain.” *The China Quarterly*, no. 159, (September 1999) pp. 569-579.

for the journalistic profession”.<sup>33</sup> In education, private institutions are limited in number and in other aspects.<sup>34</sup> As a result, the “ordinary people” are fairly familiar with the gist of the formal ideology, which is stylized or becomes conventional as summed up in a few catch phrases. When Donald Ford (1988) came to China in the mid-1980s to research on why the Chinese study English (and how), the answer he got in most cases was “for the four modernizations of China”.<sup>35</sup> Extensive interviews by J. A. English-Lueck with Chinese intellectuals also indicate there is an overwhelming influence of state politics and formal ideology on the ordinary people. Between late 1980s and early 1990s English-Lueck interviewed over one hundred intellectuals, mostly scientists and university teachers, and asked, among other things, what they thought China would be like in the near future.<sup>35</sup> She found the majority of them shared a remarkably homogenous view as seeing “China becoming a major world power with a strong scientific and economic base and a distinct possibility for democracy”. In addition, they all expressed “an almost mystical belief in the power of science”. Much of the terminology and descriptions “sounded as if they were pulled right out of endless Party pronouncements on China’s glorious future as a result of the Four Modernizations”.<sup>37</sup>

On the other hand, such a close link between Chinese politics and society can become an important mechanism of counter influence, through which “lived ideology” can impact

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<sup>33</sup> Jaime A. FloCruz, “Profit, Not Propaganda” in *Time*, no. 44 (June 1998), p. 27.

<sup>34</sup> By the year 1999, there were 2000 non-governmental or *minban* (people-run) institutions of higher education in China, but only 37 of them were entitled to confer higher education certificates. Source: *China Education Daily*, Oct. 11, 1999.

<sup>35</sup> Donald J. Ford, *The Twain Shall Meet: Current Study of English in China*, McFarland & Company, Inc. Publishers, 1988.

<sup>35</sup> Lawrence R. Sullivan, (review of) “Chinese Intellectuals on the World Frontier: Blazing the Black Path”, Ann Arbor, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 57, no. 4, pp. 1118-20.

on the formal ideology. With this link, the answer to the second question whether lived ideology can in turn travel into the political arena and influence the formal ideology becomes more affirmative than without. Because of this close link, otherwise non-political issues can have political implications and consequences for state politics and official ideology. Also because of this close link, not only does counter-influence from lived ideology become possible, but the formal ideology also responds more readily and is more susceptible to lived ideology. The final result from the interaction between formal ideology and lived ideology is a dialectic dynamic process. Despite the apparent dominance of the CCP ideology and the Chinese conformity to that ideology, “lived ideology”, the hustle and bustle of social life, does pose differences from, and challenges to, that ideology, and thus creates new conditions for ideological change.

The case of how the Chinese commune system was dismantled supports the view of the counter-influence of lived ideology. Dismantling the commune system was one of the first steps in China’s economic reform, and took place in the rural areas in 1978. However, the initiator was not the Party leadership but some peasants in Anhui province, who had secretly divided the commune land and distributed it among themselves years earlier.<sup>38</sup> The practice did not attain any national significance until 1978 when it was sanctioned by the central leadership and designated for nationwide implementation. At that stage a major decision made by the political center became the driving force for the practice, and a “lived ideology” became part of the formal ideology.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

The dismantling of the commune system had more far-reaching implications than it was initially thought or expected to have. In the rural area the event was followed by economic developments like the expansion of rural enterprises, and, later, by political developments like the emergence of the village election system. Thus the first reform was initiated from grassroots, and its significance is many-fold. Here, we see one step of reform acting as a driving force for other changes that were not intended.

“First, [it] proved that reform policies were necessary and feasible. Second, [it] provided a direction for change in other sectors of the society. Third, [it] gave the government the go-ahead to expand the reform further and to institute innovative measures that would boost motivation and improve productivity. Finally and more importantly, peasants’ relationship with the state was beginning to change.”<sup>39</sup>

The case discussed above indicates that what is “lived ideology” at outset has the potential to become formulated ideology and may have more implications than it first appears to have. What I want to argue in this thesis is that ELT also has far-reaching implications that were not intended initially, and that these implications are particularly significant in view of the scale and intensity, and the pace, of the expansion of ELT.

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<sup>38</sup>Yang Mingqing & Tian Xuexiang, “Cong Xiaogang heihui dao Wanli bianfa” (From the underground Xiaogang meeting to the Wan Li reform), *Hainan Jishi* (Hainan reportage) no. 2, (Jan. 1989), pp. 2-11.

## The Foreign Language Dilemma in the Post-Mao Era

The foreign language dilemma discussed in the literature review chapter continues to manifest itself in the post-Mao era. This is because on the one hand, despite China's economic reform and modernization drive, the importance of ideology in post-Mao China does not diminish. On the other hand, the increased scale and intensity of ELT in this era means greater Western influence via the channel of ELT. Therefore the foreign language dilemma, far from being resolved, may well intensify during the reform era.

More specifically speaking, the foreign language dilemma re-emerges in the post-Mao era because of the coexistence of two possibly contradictory key components of the CCP ideology, the discourse of Modernization and the stipulated Four Cardinal Principles. While the logical contradictions between the ideas of Modernization<sup>40</sup> and the Principles do not preclude ideological coherence on the part of the CCP ideology,<sup>41</sup> they have different implications for ELT, and more importantly, as to be shown in this thesis, ELT also has different implications for them respectively.

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<sup>39</sup> Lin Jing, *The Opening of the Chinese Mind*, Westport: Praeger, 1994.

<sup>40</sup> There are some who identify "Modernization" with "Westernization", while the Chinese authorities defend their version of Modernization by pointing to its Marxist roots. Liu Kang, "Is There an Alternative to (Capitalist) Globalisation? The Debate about Modernity in China." in Fredric Jameson and Masao Miyoshi (ed.), *The Cultures of Globalisation*, Durham and London: Duke University Press 1998, pp. 165-188.

<sup>41</sup> Elena Lisovskaya and Vyacheslav Karpov, among others, think that logically incompatible and mutually exclusive ideas may co-exist under the umbrella of one ideology as long as they provide meaning and justification to action. Moreover, ideologies are seldom logically coherent bodies of ideas. CCP ideology, for example, permitted mutually exclusive ideas as reflected in such contradictory constructs of "democratic centralism" and "democratic dictatorship". The power of ideology is not in its rationality but rather in its persuasiveness. Elena Lisovskaya & Vyacheslav Karpov, "New Ideologies in Post-Communist Russian Textbooks" in *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 43, no. 4, Nov. 1999, pp. 522-47.

That the discourse of Modernization is a key component of the official ideology has significant implications for ELT. The national goal of modernization as defined by the state and the CCP has both political and economic implications, of course, but it is the discourse of Modernization that provides the primordial impetus and ultimate purpose for learning foreign languages. With economic reform and development on top of China's agenda, education is called to supply a sufficient number of qualified personnel needed to bring about the four modernizations.<sup>42</sup> The foreign language policy made to serve this goal assumes that the foreign language is a useful tool and the learner will be a more productive worker once s/he gets it. The policy defines the foreign language and its study as strictly functional and pragmatic, with emphasis on linguistic goals rather than on educational and cultural goals,<sup>43</sup> and has been one of the most important driving forces for the expansion of ELT. Being associated with the all-important goal of modernization, ELT in post-Mao China also has become extremely important.

The Four Cardinal Principles, on the other hand, also have great implication for ELT. The Principles themselves only state what they are to uphold briefly. They do not specify what they are to combat. However, Hu Qiaomu, for many years one of those representing the political and ideological orthodoxy of the Communist Party, had elaborated some forbidden practices and values in the campaign against bourgeois liberalization (1981). The forbidden zones were quite extensive, involving both the institutional and the attitudinal. They covered in Hu's terms bourgeois parliamentary system, two-party

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<sup>42</sup> The four modernizations refer to those of agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defence.

<sup>43</sup> The pragmatic nature of the foreign language policy is seen in the national syllabuses, either for secondary or for tertiary education. More on this topic is in the next chapter.

system, electoral system, bourgeois freedoms of speech, publication, assembly, and association, bourgeois individualism, materialism and profit orientation, bourgeois way of living and hedonism, moral and artistic standards, concept of “natural rights”, and worship of capitalist system and the capitalist world.<sup>44</sup> For people like Hu, the dissemination of Western ideologies via the spread of English may seriously undermine the CCP ideology, and ELT is at the best a necessary evil, and at the worst a threat. Therefore the issue of ELT as a channel of Western influence, though often overlooked as shown in the research problem discussed in the previous chapter, is equally relevant in defining the relationship between ideology and ELT. How successful Hu and his comrades were in combating the perceived “bourgeois practices and values” is beyond the concern here. But Hu’s elaborations indicate conflict and tension may emerge in the relationship between the Principles and ELT.

The penetration of Western ideologies has significant implications and consequences for both the Chinese official ideology and the belief system of the people. Nowhere is Western influence made more manifest than in the case of China’s economic reform, in which Chinese intellectual and political elites managed to incorporate capitalist thinking into the official ideology to accommodate capitalist practices.<sup>45</sup> When capitalist economic ideas are filtered and reshaped to meet the policy needs of a regime still claiming to be communist, they permeate into the policy thinking of decision-makers, making differences in the policy process. More importantly, the absorbed new ideas,

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<sup>44</sup> Yan Sun, *The Chinese Reassessment of Socialism, 1976-1992*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995, p. 222.

<sup>45</sup> Feng Chen, *Economic Transition and Political legitimacy in Post-Mao China*, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995, p. 4.

especially those ideas that are unacceptable to the existing ideological system, can become challenging and erosive to the later. In short, ideas, here Western ideas, count and have unintended consequences.

In terms of the extent and intensity of Western influence on Chinese society, Immanuel C. Y. Hsu describes the influence as “pervasive” and “ever-growing.”

In [Chinese] society at large, there was a craving for anything Western. Almost anything foreign was attractive: political thought, social theories, futurology, novels, plays, art, fashion, and even such mundane things as Coca-Cola, Maxwell House Coffee, and Kentucky Fried Chicken. There is no denying that Western influence was pervasive and growing stronger by the day.<sup>46</sup>

A telling example of Western influence on the people's belief system is Zhou Weihui and her semi-biographical novel *Shanghai Baby*. The novel was first published in China, and it quickly sold 100,000 copies. But the book was soon banned for being “decadent” by the authorities and all the remaining copies were destroyed at the order of the authorities. However, an estimated 500,000 pirated copies were sold within two years despite the ban. Zhou Weihui the author said in an interview with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (the ABC) that she just wanted to speak for her generation who grew up in the era of economic reform and under Western influence. “Unlike the generation of our parents, who had the experience and memories of the Cultural Revolution, we just want to be ourselves and want to be honest to ourselves. I speak for the young generation, for

those young women, who want to be socially as well as sexually liberated.” Zhou Weihui cared about traditional Chinese culture and said she felt “crazy” about the Chinese dress *qipao*, but she also liked Western culture, from Henry Miller, Dylan Thomas, Allen Ginsberg to Madonna and the Beatles. As a matter of fact, each chapter of *Shanghai Baby* begins with a quote from Western literary and other works or pop songs. In particular, she said Henry Miller, the American writer noted for his candid treatment of sex and his espousal of the “natural man”, was her idol. She thought the best outcome’s he hoped from the encounter between Chinese culture and Western culture is a synthesis of a new culture based on the “good things” of both cultures.<sup>47</sup>

As a result, what we see is a very curious relationship between ideology and ELT. The implications of such a relationship are twofold. First heterodox acts might be tolerated so long as they can be justified by some elements of the ideology while not viewed as a serious threat to other elements. ELT is in line with the Party/state’s modernization drive and therefore it is encouraged and promoted by the state. When it poses ideological differences and challenges, even significant ones, these differences and challenges can be largely tolerated. In other words, because of its association with the Modernization discourse, the other function of ELT as channel of Western influence, although unintended and perceived to be heterodox, could be accepted or ignored.

The above discussion provides a framework for the thesis by addressing three related questions: how to define the CCP ideology, how to interpret ideological change, and how

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<sup>46</sup> Hsu Immanuel C. Y., *The Rise of Modern China*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, p.882.

to define the interrelationship between ELT and ideology. Under Schurmann's model, the CCP ideology is a complex and open system containing possibly contradictory elements, which are located at different levels in terms of "abstraction" or relevancy to policy-making and action sequences. This view of the CCP ideology puts more emphasis on the flexibility or adaptability of the ideology on the one hand and its susceptibility to what happens in the hustle and bustle of social life or "lived ideology" on the other. In accordance ideological change is defined in terms of the shifting of key ideological components from the realm of practical ideology into that of pure ideology or vice versa. The more recent approaches by Lowell Dittmer and Feng Chen, despite their difference from, or dissatisfaction with, the model of pure ideology and practical ideology, support the idea expressed in this thesis that the model remains relevant and important in the post-Mao era.

The foreign language dilemma continues to manifest itself in the post-Mao era simply because ELT means more than a tool for modernization. Embodied in the foreign language, namely English, there are Western ideologies that may pose significant challenge to the CCP ideology. This dilemma actually represents tension between the two key components of CCP ideology, the discourse of Modernization and that of the Four Cardinal Principles, with the former as practical ideology and the latter as pure ideology. If ELT is ever to have an impact on ideology, that impact would be seen in how ELT brings about the shift of the Four Principles further into the realm of pure ideology.

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<sup>47</sup> Sources are from the "7:30 Report" program of ABC Television, 30 July 2001, and from the "Arts Today" program of ABC Radio, 31 July 2001.

periods.<sup>4</sup> In the field of ELT, macro politics has significantly influenced the development of the English curriculum and pedagogy in China, so much so that there is a correspondence between macro politics and the English curriculum in China in terms of both curriculum development and pedagogy promoted.<sup>5</sup>

This chapter aims at revealing a more dynamic function of English-language textbooks, namely textbooks are more than just results, reflections or embodiments of dominant ideologies as previous studies seem to imply. They are also impetus of further political and ideological change. To achieve this aim we first draw on a study by Elena Lisovskaya and Vyacheslav Karpov, which views textbooks in general as ideological discourse with ideological functions. Then we look into a number of English-language textbooks used in post-Mao China, and find there has been a consistent ideological de-radicalization in the contents of these textbooks. The findings seem to suggest that this de-radicalization, while being the result of changes in macro politics, can and do serve as impetus for further political and ideological change. There is a positive feedback between ELT and macro politics.

### **Frame of Reference: Textbook as Ideological Discourse**

In a study of textbooks in post-communist Russia, Elena Lisovskaya and Vyacheslav Karpov formulate the concept of textbook as ideological discourse.<sup>6</sup> To support this

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*Comparative Education Review*, vol. 35, no. 4 (November 1991), pp. 669-689.

<sup>4</sup> Julia Kwang, "Changing political Culture and Changing Curriculum" *Comparative Education*, vol. 21, no. 2, 1985, pp. 197-208.

<sup>5</sup> Bob Adamson and Paul Morris, "The English Curriculum in the People's Republic of China" in *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 41, no. 1, (Feb 1997), pp. 3-27.

<sup>6</sup> Elena Lisovskaya and Karpov Vyacheslav, "New Ideologies in Post-communist Russian

concept, Lisovskaya and Karpov first suggest that textbooks can be viewed as cultural phenomena that are collectively produced and that they exist independently from the individual parameters of their authors. In this sense textbooks are anonymous products of an institutionalized publication process with little authorial identity. Because of this anonymity, textbooks have met a prerequisite of their ideological functioning. The fact that specific individuals originally author textbooks is no longer important, for “textbooks appear to be messages from a highly authoritative social institution, ‘the school’”.<sup>7</sup>

Then Lisovskaya and Karpov conceptualize ideology as also supra-individual, that is, irreducible to individual beliefs and values. This view of ideology is widely shared. Andre Beteille, for example, defines ideology as “that set of ideas and beliefs which seeks to articulate the basic values of a group of people—what they cherish for themselves and for others—to the distribution of power in society.”<sup>8</sup> The supra-individuality of ideology is commonly found in textbooks, which as said earlier are but collectively produced cultural phenomena, existing independently from the individual parameters of their authors. This shared attribute supports the concept of textbook as ideological discourse.

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Textbooks”, in *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 43, no. 4 (November 1999), pp. 522-545.

<sup>7</sup> The concept of textbooks being anonymous is fully applicable to the Chinese context, in which one frequently finds the agency of individual authors insignificant in shaping ideological content of textbooks. John Bryan Starr, studying contemporary Chinese politics, notes the great influence dominant ideologies may have on intellectual life. “A function that an ideology performs within the social system is that of providing a set of dominant paradigms within which the intellectual and artistic life of the system must operate.” (John Bryan Starr, *Ideology and Culture: an Introduction to Dialectic of Contemporary Chinese Politics*, New York: Harper & Row, 1973, p. 38.) Consequently authorship is made insignificant in textbook production. Take for example the textbook *Junior English for China* (JEFC), which is adopted by most secondary schools nationwide. JEFC was the product of a project involving Chinese agencies like the People’s Education Press (PEP) and foreign agencies like Longman International Publishing Company and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The PEP provided the chief editor and a team of writers and Longman supplied a consultant and two writers and the UNDP funded the venture. (Bob Adamson and Paul Morris 1997)

<sup>8</sup> Andre Beteille, *Ideology and Intellectuals*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980, p. 8.

In terms of how textbooks are related to ideology, Lisovskaya and Karpov further argue that ideology can exist as a body of symbols embodied in educational texts. Though not necessarily logically consistent with each other, the symbols are expressed as values and ideas that consistently appear in more dogmatic portions of the texts and reflect patterns of thinking about historical, sociopolitical, and cultural values. Therefore, Lisovskaya and Karpov believe, it is possible to study ideology through text analysis, namely the detection, description and interpretation of ideological symbols found in textbooks.

As ideological discourse textbooks perform ideological functions. Lisovskaya and Karpov suggest that textbooks are capable of two major ideological functions: instrument of socialization and instrument of distortion.<sup>9</sup> Textbooks can be viewed as symbolic formations used within the framework of relationships between the dominant and the subordinate social groups. As instruments of socialization, they introduce new generations to the existing social order with its relations of power and domination; in this sense, they legitimize the status quo. As instruments of distortion they introduce selected and distorted versions of culture that coincide with the dominant political worldview. Seen in this light, the second function of textbook is also legitimizing, for distortion in most cases is meant to provide meaning and justification to action. It seems that the two authors have seen the ideological

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<sup>9</sup>As a linguistic genre, textbooks share the ideological functions of language in general as argued by G. Kress and R. Hodge. According to these authors, "Language is an instrument of control as well as of communication. Linguistic forms allow significance to be conveyed and to be distorted. In this way hearers can be both manipulated and informed, preferably manipulated while they suppose they are being informed. Language is ideological in another, more political, sense of that word: it involves systematic distortion in the service of class interest." See Gunther Kress & Robert Hodge, *Language as Ideology*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979, p. 6.

function of textbooks mainly in terms of legitimating the status quo, and hence they share the view that ideologically the textbook is “a conservative genre.”

We differ from Lisovskaya and Karpov in one aspect, namely the ideological functions of textbooks. We believe the concept of textbooks being ideological discourse is inseparable from how ideology works generally, and should be analyzed within a larger framework. In other words, the ideological function of textbooks should also be put in the light of the functions commonly found in ideology in general. Ideology has two seemingly contradictory but nevertheless equally important functions: it can be instrument for the maintenance of the status quo as well as engine of change. These two functions are so important that they become distinguishing hallmarks of ideologies. According to Andre Beteille, “Of all the distinctions that may be made among ideologies today, it would appear that the most important is the one between ideologies of change and of the status quo.”<sup>10</sup> In other words, ideology not only can legitimate the status quo, but also can challenge the status quo by promoting the idea of change.<sup>11</sup>

Regarding the first function of ideology, instrument of the status quo, Beteille refers to the “habits of minds.”

The resistance to change comes not only from established political authority and

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<sup>10</sup> Andre Beteille, *Ideology and Intellectuals*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980, p. 6.

<sup>11</sup> Beteille's concept is similar to what Karl Mannheim proposes as “ideologies,” which are contrived to justify and preserve the status quo, and “utopias,” which are designed to transcend and transform it. See Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: an Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1936.

entrenched economic interests, but also from habits of minds that are set in the mould of particular ideas and beliefs. These ideas and beliefs, which support the existing order of society, also have their systematisers, but their role is seen as being somehow covert and subtle in contrast to the open and forthright positions adopted by those who propound ideologies of change.<sup>12</sup>

The ideology of change, on the other hand, relates to the ideology of status quo as a thesis relates to its antithesis. It poses an alternative value structure to that which prevailed in the old order of society. These values are appealing because they promise a solution to the crises in which the old society finds itself. As the alternative value structure is accepted and then acted upon by an increasing number of members of the society, changes in value of society as a whole start to occur.<sup>13</sup>

In the Chinese context, the co-existence of the two dominant themes in ideology, the Four Cardinal Principles and Modernization discourse, is a most salient feature of the reform era. While the Four Cardinal Principles stands for ideological orthodoxy, stability and status quo, the Modernization discourse stands for change. Though what both themes entail may be logically incompatible, they co-exist in reformist China and both perform ideological functions, justifying and rationalizing vested social, political and economic interests and roles of various social groups. The two themes as such will provide an analytical framework for defining the ideological functions of English-language textbooks and for interpreting the findings from the textbooks.

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<sup>12</sup> Andre Beteille, *Ideology and Intellectuals*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980, p. 6.

<sup>13</sup> John Bryan Starr, *Ideology and Culture: an Introduction to Dialectic of Contemporary Chinese Politics*, New York: Harper & Row, 1973, p. 44.

To summarize, the concept of (English) textbook as ideological discourse is based on the supra-individual nature of both textbook and ideology. It also involves the assumption that ideology or sets of ideas can exist as symbols embodied in educational texts. As for the ideological functions of textbooks, however, it is our view that they should be defined in terms of the two major functions of ideology in general, that for the status quo and that for change. From a theoretical point of view, if textbooks are to serve as ideological discourse, they should be capable of the two functions of ideology, and not simply a conservative genre.

### Sources of Data<sup>14</sup>

In this chapter, four sets of English-language textbooks were selected for content analysis. They were *English* (Books 5, 6) by Yu Dayin (YDYE),<sup>15</sup> *Advanced English* (Books 1, 2) by Zhang Hanxi (ZHXE),<sup>16</sup> *English* by Xu Guozhang (Books 1-4) (XGZE),<sup>17</sup> and *New Xu Guozhang English* (Books 1-2) (NXGZE)<sup>18</sup>. These textbooks are typical of the English-language textbooks for students of English as a foreign language at tertiary level. In addition, they are among the most popular and influential

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<sup>14</sup> Data sources here are limited to English-language textbooks produced in a "Chinese" context, namely those compiled by Chinese authors and published in China. English-language textbooks originally published abroad like *English 900* and *New Concept English* have also been popular and influential, but ideologically they represent another dimension and form a different relationship with Chinese macro politics. Therefore, overseas-produced *New Concept English* will be discussed separately later.

<sup>15</sup> Yu Dayin, *English* (Books 5, 6), Chongqing: Chongqing Science and Technology Press, (First edition, Beijing: Commercial Press, 1961) 1990.

<sup>16</sup> Zhang Hanxi, *Advanced English* (Books 1, 2), Beijing: Commercial Press, 1980, revised edition, 1992.

<sup>17</sup> Xu Guozhang, *English* (Books 1-4), Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, revised edition 1979, 1998. (First edition, Beijing: Commercial Press, 1961)

<sup>18</sup> Xu Guozhang, *Xin Bian Xu GuoZhang Yingyu* (New Xu Guozhang English) (Books 1-2), Beijing:

English-language textbooks in China, in particular XGZE, which perhaps has the largest circulation of the kind nationwide.<sup>19</sup>

These textbooks fall neatly into two categories by date of publication. Two sets of the textbooks were originally published in the early 1960s, a period between the two very radical periods of the Great Leap Forward (1958-1959) and the Cultural Revolution and its aftermath (1966-1976). In the early 1960s there was an emphasis on education quality and economic development, and consequently there was marked reduction of overtly political content in the English-language textbooks.<sup>20</sup> The other two sets were published in the reform era, which started in the late 1970s, and in a sense picked up where the early 1960s left off by re-emphasizing the importance of formal education and by reintroducing and expanding the economic modernization drive.<sup>21</sup> However, the difference between these two categories of textbooks is not only chronological but more importantly also ideological. In choosing textbooks for the study here, we had taken into account the fact that ideologically divergent English-language textbooks have been in use in reformist China and as a result, there was a more balanced approach in sampling.

## Methodology

Methodology seems to be of particular importance in regarding the study of ideology

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Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, (first edition 1993) 1999.

<sup>19</sup> Publishing statistics show that XGZE had 22 printings of 1.15 millions between 1992 and 1996 by the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press alone. In addition, Commercial Press and some other publishers in China have also been engaged in publishing XGZE.

<sup>20</sup> Fu Ke, *Zhongguo WaiyuJiaoyu Shi* (History of foreign language education in China), Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1986.

and ideological change. Ideology seems to be one of the most elusive concepts. One survey asserts that in the definition of ideology there are at least twenty-seven elements or components for the term,<sup>22</sup> and the word “ideology” itself has dozens of definitions.<sup>23</sup> The elusive nature of ideology can make its study difficult and findings sometimes unconvincing. Therefore one of the prerequisites for a study of ideology is to make ideologies or sets of ideas more visible and describable. To meet this prerequisite, the method adopted here is based on the argument that ideologies or sets of ideas and beliefs are expressed through symbols,<sup>24</sup> in particular, through symbols embodied in educational texts. Betelle thinks that ideological symbols are crucial in representing value-laden ideas explicitly or implicitly proclaimed in ideologies. Citing Clifford Geertz, he argues for “the due recognition of the symbolic elements contained in each and every ideology.”<sup>25</sup> At the pragmatic level, this argument bridges the gap between the general concept of ideology and specific textbooks.

In this study selected texts were subjected to qualitative thematic content analysis with elements of quantification.<sup>26</sup> Although the analysis was predominantly qualitative and interpretive, it was in some cases supplemented with simple quantification. The texts were selected because they contained ideological symbols as described above. Not every idea is represented by a symbol, but symbols do make

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<sup>21</sup> Bob Adamson & Paul Morris, “The English Curriculum in the People’s Republic of China”, *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 41, no. 1, 1997, pp. 3-27.

<sup>22</sup> Zhang Wei-wei, *Ideology and Economic Reform under Deng Xiaoping 1978-1993*, London: Kegan Paul International, 1996, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: an Introduction*, London: VERNON, 1991, pp. 1-2.

<sup>24</sup> See A. N. Whitehead, *Symbolism: Its Meaning and Effect*, New York: Capricorn Books, 1959.

<sup>25</sup> Andre Beteille, *Ideology and Intellectuals*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980, p. 11.

<sup>26</sup> The method was a modified version of the one used by Elena Lisovskaya and Vyacheslav Karpov in their study above-mentioned. Dealing solely with Russian textbooks, they nevertheless think their method “may be applicable to studies of educational change in the context of other strongly contested post-communist transitions.” Elena Lisovskaya and Karpov Vyacheslav, “New Ideologies in Post-communist Russian Textbooks”, in *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 43, no. 4 (November

ideas more visible and describable. For example, the presentation of China in some texts involves what Starr calls “a retelling of history in order to depict the origins and development of a nation or movement and its place in the world in a way that coincides with the self-image of its founders and leaders and confers legitimacy on the leaders and their structure of government.”<sup>27</sup> The symbols used for this “retelling of history” range from the uniqueness of China in terms of land and population to the Marco Polo China-trip story (NXGZE Book 2, Lesson 11) and to a foreign visitor’s impression of Beijing (XGZE Book 3, Lesson 13). Therefore this study was first concerned with the detection and interpretation of ideological symbols contained in the English-language textbooks. Then a comparative method was used to find in the English-language textbooks differences and similarities in their coverage and presentations of these symbols. When the similarities and differences between sets of textbooks are associated with the appearance, disappearance or persistent presence of certain value-ideas, they can be interpreted as symptoms of ideological change and/or stability.

## **Findings and Analyses**

### **Ideological Stability in YDYE**

The textbooks *English* (Books 5, 6) by Yu Daying (YDYE) can be used as a background for discussing ideological change in textbooks. YDYE represents ideological stability rather than ideological change, for it was originally published in

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1999), pp. 522-545.

<sup>27</sup> According to Starr, “Contemporary Chinese ideology has been intimately involved with the reinterpretation of Chinese history necessary to create a new national myth.” John Bryan Starr,

the 1960s, but had remained in use and even popular well into the 1990s, an indication of ideological stability. It indicates the persistent presence of an ideology, or an ideological heritage established in the early years of the PRC.<sup>28</sup> Some of the ideas expressed in YDYE may have faced serious challenge either from changed reality or newly emergent ideas in reformist China, but they were not completely rejected or abandoned. Indeed, the case of YDYE shows not only how communist ideas are expressed in English-language textbooks, but also how the pre-reform ideology continues to exist in the reform era. However, a look at YDYE is nevertheless necessary if we are to appreciate the extent and import of change as found in other textbooks

The layout of YDYE looks just ordinary. It has 34 lessons, each of which consists of one or two passages, notes, and exercises in word study, grammar, and translation. The ideological elements in YDYE, however, make it an interesting object of study.

There are six texts that are chosen obviously for their revolutionary contents. These are *Reminiscences of an Interview with Chairman Mao Tse-tung on the Paper Tiger*, *The Sun Has Risen (I), (II)*, *Lenin's Death*, *Speech at the Graveside of Karl Marx*, and *Man Alive*. Passages in this group are very "political" in that they are either exposition of a revolutionary theory or glorification of a Communist Party policy. Embodied in the passages are the familiar Maoist ideas that "imperialism and all reactionaries are paper tigers" and that "it is man's consciousness, not weapons that decides the

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*Ideology and Culture: an Introduction to Dialectic of Contemporary Chinese Politics*, New York: Harper & Row, 1973, p. 34.

<sup>28</sup> Gordon White, among others, has listed the revival of this heritage as one of the three main objectives set by the party-state reformers, the other two being repudiation of the perceived ideological distortions and dogmatic excess of the Maoist era and adaptation of the existing ideological framework to market socialism. Gordon White, "The Decline of Ideology" in Robert Benewick and Paul Wing (ed.), *China in the 1990s*, Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999, pp. 21-33.

outcome of war.” The Marxist theory on the relationships between economic base and superstructure, between man’s social being and his social consciousness is also expounded. The selection of these six texts is obviously politically motivated, with the teaching materials geared to ideological indoctrination.

Another eleven passages were chosen for similar reasons. Thematically these passages fall readily into such categories as class struggle and racial discrimination in Western countries. As a result, they are subject to the Chinese official sanction and interpretation. The purpose for selecting these texts had been “political”, though to a lesser degree than the six passages discussed earlier. This group consists of *Home Is the Soldier*, *Sister Carrie at a Shoe Factory (I), (II)*, *Monseigneur in Town*, *Song to the Men of England*, *The Colour Caste*, *Unemployment*, *What Life Means to Me (I), (II)*, *Sonnet on Chillon* and *The Song of the Shirt*. They cover such themes as the satire on the welcome home ceremony felt by a demobilized black soldier, horrible working conditions in a shoe factory, the tyranny of aristocrats, the degenerating quality of American society, the indomitable spirit of a jailed rebel against feudal tyranny, and the miseries of the unemployed and their families. These themes are often highlighted in the notes following the passages and in the translation exercises, in which related sentences or paragraphs are picked out for the purpose.

It is true that there is a difference between this group and the previous one, as seen in the fact that most of the passages here are selected from works of well-established writers, and they offer more than the official reading and interpretation. The point is, however, in a heavily politicized classroom of the Maoist era, other interpretations

were not likely to occur in the first place, and when some did occur, they were not encouraged. The difference becomes minor when put against this background, and that is why we put these two groups in the same category in terms of politicization.

The number of writings that are apparently without political connotations or objectives is remarkably small. Out of the total of thirty-six, there are only seven of them: *The Study of Words*, *On the Grasshopper And Cricket*, *How We Kept Mother's Day*, *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger*, *A Tramp Abroad*, *Mr. And Mrs. Bennett*, and *About Reading Books*. These passages can be viewed as "a-political", because they deal with topics like lexicology, love of Mother Nature, etc. They do not necessarily carry a political message. Still, the story of *How We Kept Mother's day* is aimed at presenting a satire on the uncaring or selfish members of a family, in particular the father, albeit in a humorous way. As can be seen, the criticism is exclusively directed at the capitalist society, and the notes to the texts further highlight this intention. This is a telling example, showing that in a highly politicized context, there is always only one direction of a political reading.

Now we can describe the make-up of YDYE in terms of politicization, that is, how closely they are related to the official ideology. Approximately 50 per cent of the selected writings are overtly "political" (17:36) and only 20 per cent are apparently a-political (7:36). Politicization also affected the selection of writers. Several authors are clearly labeled as "revolutionary" and/or "progressive". These include Anna Louise Strong, Feng Ma, Agnes Smedley, Frederick Engels, W. E. Du Bois, G. G. Byron, P. B. Shelley and Ralph Fox. Some of them were revolutionaries or

communists themselves (e.g. Frederick Engels, Feng Ma and Ralph Fox). Others had been personal friends of the Chinese revolutionary leaders Mao Zedong and Zhu De and had showed sympathy with the Chinese revolution over the past years (e.g. Anna Louise Strong and Agnes Smedley). Byron and Shelley are considered “progressive” because they have displayed in their poems a strong rebellious spirit against the old social order, which the Communists may have found to some extent identical to that of their own. Other Romantic poets such as Wordsworth and Coleridge, in spite of their literary merit, had little chance of being selected, precisely because their social ideals and their views about the French revolution were markedly different from or contrary to those of official Chinese ideology.

The majority of the writers are not easy to label politically, but they have one thing in common, that is, they are all critical of capitalist society. If they are not against the social system in general, they are at least critical of its evils and certain values. These include Samuel Butler, Theodore Dreiser, Bernard Shaw, Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Gaskell, Jack London and John Galsworthy. In the notes to the authors, these writers are affirmed for their condemnation of the evils of capitalist society and sympathy for the miseries of the working people, but repudiated for their hope for improvement through means of reform rather than revolution. The notes accompanying the texts also point out the limitation of these writers by their petty bourgeois world outlook and a lack of revolutionary theories.

Only a handful of writers whose works may have little to do with politics are selected. They are considered politically neutral, thus ideologically harmless to the mind of the

young. The scarcity of such writers is matched by the absolute absence of politically undesirable writers.

### **ZHXE as a Forerunner of Ideological Change**

The textbook *Advanced English* (Books 1, 2) by Zhang Hanxi (ZHXE) was first published in 1980. As ELT in China had suffered a serious set-back during the Cultural Revolution, during which there was little exchange between English language teachers of China and those in the rest of the world,<sup>29</sup> the year 1980 was still too early for new theories and methodologies like the functional and communicative approaches in foreign language teaching to take any significant effect in China.<sup>30</sup> As a matter of fact, few Chinese English teachers had been exposed to the new concepts and methodologies in ELT then. Consequently there is not much novelty in ZHXE in terms of pedagogy. Politically, however, the case was quite different. Prior to its publication in 1980 there had occurred some events that should have had great bearing on ELT in general and ZHXE in particular. First, there was the restoration of the national university entrance examination in 1977. Secondly, the CCP's decision in 1978 to discard the slogan "take class struggle as the key link" and to shift the Party's work to modernization. And thirdly there was the official establishment of diplomatic relationship between China and the United States in 1979. A textbook produced in such a context was expected to serve the goal of economic

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<sup>29</sup> Heidi Ross, "Foreign Language Education as Barometer of Modernization," in Ruth Hayhoe (eds.), *Education and Modernization: the Chinese Experience*, Oxford: Pergamon, 1992, pp. 239-250.

<sup>30</sup> Some studies see the first years after the Cultural Revolution and its aftermath as a period of "recovery" as distinguished from a later period of "development." See Li Liangyou *et al*, *Zhongguo yingyu jiaoyu shi* (A history of English language teaching in China), Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1988, pp. 360-364.

development rather than that of revolution, and to put academic objectives before overtly political ones. Hence ZHXE came out a politically different textbook.

The first difference is in ZHXE authors of the texts are selected from a broader range. Western political leaders are selected despite their anticommunist position. Included in the writings are two speeches by Winston S. Churchill and John F. Kennedy respectively. In the revised edition (1992), a passage on environmental issues by the then U.S. senator and later U.S. vice president Al Gore is selected. Also included is the writer George Orwell, a scathing critic of communist revolution and the totalitarian state with his novels *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-four*. This wide-ranging selection suggests a relative political tolerance, openness and a change in educational policies. Writers are no longer divided into political “friends” and “enemies.” Their social class origins are not mentioned. Political labels and other forms of ideological language are gone from the introductory notes. Students are encouraged as shown in the exercises to look up “who is who” dictionaries and encyclopedias for further information about the authors and to form their own opinions.

Diversity is also a feature in the selection of texts. Now to group the texts in overt Chinese political terms as in YDYE would be not only inappropriate but also impossible. Just a list of titles would illustrate this point: *The Middle Eastern Bazaar*, *Hiroshima--- the ‘Liveliest’ City in Japan*, *The Age of the Miracle Chips*, *Mark Twain--- Mirror of America*, *Love Is a Fallacy*, *In Favor of Capital Punishment*, *The Future of the English*, and the popular American historical play *1776*. To use an

earlier term, the majority of the writings are a-political and they defy a political reading in terms of ideological orthodoxy.

Contemporary issues, as introduced here, are no longer confined to unemployment and racial discrimination in Western countries. They now include issues such as the death penalty, national identity, generation gap, environmental crises, the alienation of the worker and his labor, and a host of others, with the aim to expose students to the panorama of Western society. Problems in the West, when presented, are not meant as a proof of the superiority of the socialist system, nor evidence of Western decadence and corruption, nor a justification for the proletarian revolution, but as basis for more sophisticated pondering and open discussion.

Even the exercises have changed. Questions are designed to encourage students' independent thinking, rather than to induce the expected Party rhetoric. Questions like "Do you agree or disagree with so and so?" do not invite prescribed answers. The Chinese-English translation exercises are no longer narrowed to passages from either classics or revolutionary literature. There are still some references that carry political messages in communist terms,<sup>31</sup> but such cases are only in small number and their presence should not make ZHXE less valid as a case of de-politicization.

This set of course books underwent a major revision in 1992, the first revision since its initial publication in 1980. The most noticeable change is the replacement of six texts out of a total of thirty. Why is the change? Are there any indications of further

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<sup>31</sup> A note refers to George Orwell, for instance, as "vilifying socialist society and communism." ZHXE

de-politicization, or, is there a political reversal from the 1980 edition? We find that the main reasons for the change are not political but pedagogical and academic. Take three removed passages for example. One of these was originally selected from the *Oxford Junior Encyclopedia*, and it is about the life and work of the German composer Ludwig Van Beethoven. Another is taken from a science magazine, dealing with undersea manganese nodules. These two passages are not political any way. The third is Oscar Wilde's *Ballad of Reading Jail*, a poem about prison life. Teachers without an adequate literary background may have found the poem difficult to tackle. Moreover, it has been an issue of dispute whether poems should be included in the language course or they should be left alone for the literature course. The removal of the poem can also be interpreted as a pedagogical initiative. On the other hand, the passages that replace them have a common feature: they all address modern concerns in contemporary English. Al Gore's *Ships in the Desert* is a chapter from a book about global environmental crises. Alice Walker's short story *Everyday Use* explores contrasting attitudes between two generations towards the ethnic cultural heritage. And *The Ones Who Walked Away from Omelas* deals with human relationship, though in the form of science fiction. The feature of modernity in both the theme and the language helps update the textbooks, and the reasons for the change are mainly pedagogical.

The salient feature that has set ZHXE apart from YDYE can be defined in terms of de-politicization. De-politicization in general means a retreat of politics from its previous invasion into other aspects of social life. In discussing ideological changes at the early stage of reform, Gordon White cites the "attempt to limit the intrusion of the

official ideology into the everyday lives of the population, through a process of de-politicization.”<sup>32</sup> The reform leadership aimed to reduce the range of politicization, to expand the space available for private life and to allow greater autonomy for the intellectuals and other professionals. In ZHXE one sees less emphasis on political criteria in selecting authors and texts, a decline in the visible manifestations of political ideology and a reduction of political content of the texts.

### **Ideological Adaptation in XGZE**

Publishing details show that *English* (Books 1-4) by Xu Guozhang (XGZE) first came out in the 1960s, but underwent a major revision in 1979. We took a comparative approach to the two editions and found changes involved in the revision can be interpreted in terms of ideological adaptation.

The revision was quite extensive, involving the replacement of 21 texts out of a total of 65 by way of deletion and addition. There may be more than one reason for a deletion or addition, of course, and the reasons may be not exclusively “ideological.” With a lapse of 17 years between 1962 and 1979, some texts might appear dated, hence the need to update the teaching materials. Still, the main reasons for the revision appear ideological rather than pedagogical, for many of the texts that are deleted are not necessarily more dated linguistically or pedagogically than the remnant ones. The most telling are some texts dealing with poverty and social injustice in Western countries. Although written by or adapted from twentieth century

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<sup>32</sup> Gordon White, “The Decline of Ideocracy” in Robert Benewick and Paul Wing (ed.), *China in the*

writers such as Jack London and John Galsworthy, among others, they are nevertheless deleted in the revision. In this case it is more likely that these texts are taken out because they do not fit the discourse of Modernization, and they are deleted to make ideological shifts and adaptations rather than to meet pedagogical needs.

In general, the deleted texts fall into three categories thematically: anti-imperialism, negative presentation of the West and positive presentation of China. They include, among others, *Letter from Beijing*, *Meet Violence with Violence*, *May Day, China*, *Oliver Wants More*, *The Last Letter of Patrice Lumumba*, *The Price of Coal* (in 2 lessons), *Bicket* (in 2 lessons), *Jurgis* (in 2 lessons) and *Speech at a Mass Rally Held in Beijing*.

The theme of Anti-imperialism appears in the *Last Letter of Patrice Lumumba*,<sup>33</sup> as well as in the speech at a Mass Rally. In the letter, Lumumba believes that “The day will come when history will speak. But it will not be the history which will be taught in Brussels, Paris, Washington or the United Nations.” In the notes to the text, Belgian colonialists and U.S. imperialism were condemned (Book 3, Lesson 8). Another example is the speech at a Mass Rally in Beijing, which begins with the following.

Greetings! Revolutionaries and Patriots of the People’s Republic of China and of the world. Let me, a black refugee, tell you something about the racist jungle called the “Free World.” The government of the U.S.A. is the world’s greatest

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1990s, Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999, pp. 21-33.

<sup>33</sup> Patrice Lumumba (1926-1961) was founder of the Congolese National Movement and first Prime Minister of Congo when it won independence in 1960.

hypocrite. It is the world's greatest en-slaver. It is a shame to all mankind. It is a threat to the peace and security of the world. (Book 4, Lesson 16).

In the presentation of the West, the texts show a negative attitude, focusing on poverty and injustice in Western societies. The story of *Bicket* describes the desperate situation of the unemployed. "If he did not get a job within a week or two, there would be nothing but the workhouse or the gas [for suicide]." In the notes to the text, the story is associated with what happened in Britain in 1922, "a bad year for the Bickets as for the British working class, for a million and a half people were out of work." (Book 4, Lessons 8, 9). *Jurgis* by Jack London has a similar theme, which is highlighted at the very beginning of the text-- "Here is a story of human destruction, of groans and tears." The protagonist Jurgis fled from the oppression and injustice of old Europe and went to America dreaming of liberty and equal rights. The story ends with

The story of Jurgis is a story of poor human beings destroyed by the capitalist industrial machine. It is a story of brute force and tyranny, written with sweat and blood. It tells people what America really is, the home of oppression and injustice, where the lives of millions are ruled and ruined by the law of the jungle. (Book 4, Lessons 12, 13)

The play *The Price of Coal* also deals with the miserable conditions of the working class. This theme is highlighted in a note to the play. "It is a powerful indictment against Lancashire's coal bosses. ... Accidents are so frequent, sudden deaths so common, that the old people in this mining town have learned to take them as part of their life -- that is where the real tragedy lies." (Book 2, Lessons 2, 3).

In contrast, presentation of China involves much glorification, in particular glorification of the Chinese Communist Party and Chinese communist revolution. Some passages are overt ideological language of the Communist Party.

In 1949, the people, led by the Communist Party, succeeded in overthrowing the evil rule of the imperialists and Kuomintang reactionaries. Since then they have been going all out to build socialism. 1958 was a year of the big leap forward in all fields of socialist construction. It was in that year that the people's commune rose like the morning sun. From then on, the general line, the big leap forward and the people's communes have been swiftly changing the face of the country (Book3, Lesson 3).

In another passage one finds

As we marched in the parade, flowers in hand, I couldn't help feeling proud. I felt proud of our country and of our new life. What tremendous advances we have made on all fronts in the short years since liberation! And what a bright future we have before us! My heart was filled with gratitude to the Party and to the heroic working men and women who have made all this possible (Book2, Lesson 8).

The texts that replace the deletions vary thematically. The most noticeable change, however, is the emergence of a broader picture of the world and a positivistic discourse. The broader picture involved the selection of such texts as *Asia: The Largest and Most Populous* (Book 2, Lesson 1), *The Great Pyramid* (Book 2, Lesson 8) and *Africa: Land and Civilization* (Book 3, Lesson 7). The positivistic discourse, on the other hand, stresses the importance of education, science and technology, and

presents teachers and scientists in positive images. The positivistic discourse can be found, among others, in *A High School Teacher* (Book 2, lesson 5), *Killer of Bacteria* (Book 3, Lesson 5), *Heart Transplant* (Book 3, Lesson 10) and *The Long Quest* (Book 4, Lesson 16).

If the deletions and additions indicate ideological change, the remnant texts, like many of those in YDYE, may indicate ideological stability. Some texts have been retained, which present China, the CCP and Communist revolution positively but not in overt Party ideological language. They constitute a fairly large percentage of the texts, including *An Outing* (Book 2, Lesson 4), *Ministers with Pick and Shovel* (Book 2, Lesson 7), *A Red Army Man's Cap* (Book 2, Lesson 11), *A Sweet Potato Plot* (Book 3, Lesson 3), *A Doctor Sent by Chairman Mao* (Book 3, Lesson 11), *The Great Hall of the People—A Foreign Visitor's Impressions of Beijing* (Book 3, Lesson 13), and *To China at Ninety* (Book 4, Lesson 14). Also retained are reports or biographies of communist leaders like *Ministers with Pick and Shovel* (Book 2, Lesson 7), *Lenin in London* (Book 3, Lesson 9) and *Reminiscences of Marx* (Book 4, Lesson 11).

There are still several texts that are critical of Western society and Western values in spite of the deletion of the more extreme ones like *Bicket* and *Jurgis*. *The Art Scholarship* is about racial discrimination in the United States (Book 3, Lessons 1, 2). The story of *Golden Trumpets* casts doubt on the American version of democracy and freedom, pointing out that in America the rich own all the newspapers, magazines and radio stations and have freedom of speech while the poor own none of these and have no way to voice their opinions (Book 3, Lesson 4). In *Pennies and People*, the M.P.

only speaks for the rich and does not really care about the plight of the ordinary people (Book 4, Lesson 15).

To sum up the findings and discussion in this section, changes in the presentations of China and the West mean ideological adaptations. There is less overt glorification of China, and the tone is softened in criticism of Western society and values. The changes indicate modification rather than repudiation of the ideological orthodoxy. The theme of anti-imperialism, however, has completely disappeared with the deletion of texts like the Lumumba letter and the mass rally speech. Nothing of the kind remains in the revised edition. On the other hand, the broader picture of the world and the positivistic discourse added to the revised edition are associated with the open-up policy and the theme of Modernization of the CCP in the reform era.

### **Further Ideological Shifts in NXGZE**

The textbook *New Xu Guozhang English* (Books 1, 2) (NXGZE) claims to be a product of *quanxin de sixiang, quanxi de chuangzuo, quanxin de neirong, quanxin de sheji* (new ideas, new workmanship, new content and new design). All the 32 lessons are new lessons. Themes of the texts range from science and technology, Asian economic take-off, population, wild life and environment protection, to life and culture of the West. The most important change, however, is the emergence of modernization as a dominant theme. The theme of modernization appears so important that it has affected the attitude towards Western society and Western values, namely the attitude has shifted from critical to approving.

In NXGZE, poverty and social injustice have disappeared as hallmarks of the West. There are two texts that deal with ethnic conflict in the United States. One depicts Asian Americans as victims of the Los Angeles riot in May 1992 (Book 2, Lesson 26). The other discusses the identity crisis felt by some Asian Americans (Book 2, Lesson 27). These two passages are about “Western problems”, but they are far outnumbered by the texts that present the West in positive images. In the latter group of texts, the West is associated with symbols that stand for Western achievements and values in culture, economy and political institutions.

In these texts, it is as cultural symbols that Western cities such as London, Paris and Venice are introduced (Book 1, Lessons 7, 14, 15). London is associated with sub-symbols of the annual Cambridge and Oxford boat race, bridges across the Thames, the House of Commons and the House of Lords, the historical pea-soup fog and the Clean Air Act. Paris is introduced as seen in the eye of an appreciative visitor: ancient trees along the Seine, patient fishermen, the Cathedral of Notre Dame, the Louvre and, of course the Eiffel Tower. The text ends with “It [Paris] is the pride of France—and of civilized mankind.” Both the selection and presentation of these cultural symbols indicate a positive attitude. For political symbols first there is Washington D. C. with the White House, the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial (Book 1, Lesson 13). Then there is the American Constitution, [which] “has been the patch-work of history, added to by the wisdom of statecraft from generation to generation.” “It has lasted over 200 years, revised but never overthrown, as has happened in many countries.” (Book 1, Lesson 12).

The change of attitude can be viewed as both the consequence of and impetus for a redefinition of Marxism in terms of source of social values and ideals, and its relation to “cultural achievements and civilization” of the non-Marxist world. With this redefinition, concepts of democracy, liberty, and equality were not rejected straightway, for they represent a “major liberation of the human mind” in the struggle of the rising bourgeois and the working class against feudal despotism.<sup>34</sup>

While this change of attitude is significant, it should not be viewed as indication of a prevailing acceptance of Westernization. Rather the change has to be interpreted in terms of the emergence of modernization as a dominant theme in the post-Mao-era. The change in attitude towards the West had taken place under the framework of modernization, which represents a higher order. Despite convergence and overlaps between Westernization and modernization, NXGZE has contrived to make a distinction between the two. The approval of Western values, for instance, is balanced on the one hand by the presentation of Western problems like ethnic conflict and identity crises, and on the other hand by texts that highly praise the social and economic development of Singapore, which actually represents “Asian values”. In the introductory remarks to the text, stability, science and technology, and political leaders with vision and insight are defined as the three key factors to the successful nation building of Singapore. The Singaporean leader Lee Kwan Yew is said to be a statesman with moral integrity to whom Singapore owes its prolonged prosperity. “A shrewd and resolute man, Lee led a frugal life. He combined an Asian outlook with

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<sup>34</sup> Yan Sun, *The Chinese Reassessment of Socialism, 1976-1992*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995, p. 210.

modern methods, and brought his country an efficient administration assuring growth and stability. Many Asians look on Singapore as a model of clean streets and clean politics.” (Book 2, Lesson 18).

### ***New Concept English: Beyond Local Politics?***

The four textbooks, despite differences among themselves, are all local and Chinese in terms of their relationship with macro politics. The two dominant themes in Chinese political ideology, the discourse of Modernization and the Four Cardinal Principles, are expressed forcefully through ideological symbols contained in these English-language textbooks.

A study of English-language textbooks would look incomplete without taking into account the fact that in addition to English-language textbooks authored in a “Chinese context”, such as those discussed above, some originally overseas-produced English-language textbooks have also been very popular and influential, in particular *New Concept English* (NCE).<sup>35</sup> My search for the title key words *Xin Gainian Yingyu*, the Chinese pinyin for NCE at the catalogue of the National Library of China resulted in 95 records, and a look at these records found that over the past 20 years or so, at least 24 publishing houses in China have been engaged in publishing bilingual editions of and/or study aids to NCE. In comparison, a combined search for title key words *Xu Guozhang Yingyu* (XGZE) and the key words *Xu Guozhang* as author of

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<sup>35</sup> L. G. Alexander, *New Concept English* (English-Chinese bilingual edition, trans. by Chen Deyun), Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1982, new edition (Chinese trans. by He Qixing), Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, and HK: Longman, 1997.

XGZE got 23 records involving eight publishers.<sup>36</sup> This suggests that NCE has been even more influential than the popular XGZE. Since NCE and the like are originally not produced in a Chinese context, how are they different ideologically from those discussed above? Are they really beyond local Chinese politics as some may assume? If not, then in what way may they be connected to Chinese politics? How do they function ideologically in China?

To address these questions, this study makes use of two groups of English-language lessons selected by Heidi A. Ross, who puts them in the appendixes of her study presumably to let the readers see for themselves the difference between English-language lessons published in China and those published abroad.<sup>37</sup> The first group has four passages from Chinese-published English textbooks for secondary schools in China and the second consists of three passages from NCE. Since Ross has been concerned with how the Chinese authorities are unprepared for the influx of Western ideas into China via ELT, her selection is particularly relevant for this study. The incorporation of these lessons in the appendixes of *China Learns English* also indicates that these lessons are characteristic examples.

Although the focus here is on the three passages from NCE, it is useful to take a brief look at the four China-published passages as background, which are *An English Class*, *An Old Scientist Speaks*, *A Black Girl Speaks Her Mind* and *Driver Lao Li*. The students of the “English class” appear to be under discipline and the lesson is not very

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<sup>36</sup> <http://www.nlc.gov.cn> (accessed Dec. 2001).

<sup>37</sup> Heidi A. Ross, *China Learns English: Language Learning and Social Change in the People's Republic of China*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993, “Appendix D: English-Language Lessons Published in China” and “Appendix E: English-Language Lessons

interesting, in which the teacher takes initiatives throughout the conversation and speaks authoritatively whereas students report, answer questions, and do what they are told. In *An Old Scientist Speaks*, the scientist speaks like a Chinese politician, ending his speech with “Above everything else, study Marxism. It’s an important guide to the study of science.” *A Black Girl Speaks Her Mind* is mainly about racial discrimination in the United States while *Driver Lao Li* is eulogy to someone with “devotion to duty” and with “revolutionary optimism in the face of fatal illness.” Here the texts serve overtly as instruments of socialization, introducing new generations to the existing social order with its relations of power and domination. To end the discussion of the four passages, we wish to point to an important development which occurred after Ross’s study—all the four passages, except *An English Class*, which only underwent some revisions, were entirely deleted in later editions of English textbooks for secondary schools.<sup>38</sup> Like the deletions discussed earlier in this chapter, the deletions are also a sign of ideological change towards de-radicalization.

The three NCE passages are *A Wet Night*, *By Air* and *Illusions of Pastoral Peace*. *A Wet Night* tells the story of boys camping. It takes place in the middle of a field. Activities of the boys include “a wonderful meal”, stories and songs by the campfire, and a sleeping in “warm and comfortable” sleeping bags. The boys are presented as happy, carefree, and far from the madding crowd of city life. Even the heavy rain in the middle of the night turns out to be a pleasant surprise rather than a nuisance, for it produces a stream that “wound its way across the field and then flowed right under their tent!” In *By Air*, the [Western] boy “used to travel by air a great deal.” With

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Published Abroad: New Concept English”.

<sup>38</sup> Bob Adamson and Paul Morris, “The English Curriculum in the People’s Republic of China” in *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 41, no. 1, Feb 1997, pp. 3-27.

parents living in South America, the boy “used to fly there from Europe in the holidays” and “never had an unpleasant experience” during flight. Only in one occasion did the boy feel “frightened,” which was when the police had learned that a bomb had been planted on the plane and ordered the plane to turn around in mid-air and fly back to the airport. However, it turned out to be false alarm, because “the plane was searched thoroughly” but “nothing was found” and the plane was able to take off again. The theme again is the happy air-traveler and holidaymaker, whose adventure only adds to the pleasure of the trip. The third passage, *Illusions of Pastoral Peace*, compares country life with city life. Country life is idyllic with “the friendly people, the clean atmosphere, the closeness to nature and the gentle pace of living, the first cock crow, the twittering of birds at dawn, the sight of the rising sun glinting on the trees and pastures.” City life on the other hand is associated with “the latest exhibitions, films, or plays.” “Shopping is always a pleasure.” “There is so much variety that you never have to make do with second best.” The drawbacks of both lives are also discussed, of course, but they are discussed under the framework that life is beautiful and enjoyable.

As a whole the NCE passages create a picture of life in the West. How truthful this picture is in representing the life of the average Western man and woman is not the interest of this study. Ideologically the implications of the NCE passages are twofold. First their presentation of the West may affect the image of the West held by Chinese in general and Chinese learners of English in particular, the majority of whom have but limited knowledge of life in the West. Secondly, the NCE picture is in stark contrast to the Chinese official version of life in the West, one that is beset with inequality, violence and economic and spiritual crises.

The United States—in the eyes of Chinese Marxist commentators—is a society beset by marked social stratification, extreme economic inequalities, and all the attendant social maladies associated with ‘parasitic capitalism’ developed to the extreme. Social ills—of which the United States no doubt has many—are usually attributed (explicitly or implicitly) to the tyranny of the bourgeoisie. The United States is portrayed as a land of social inequality, often times juxtaposed against the socialist paradise to be found in China.<sup>39</sup>

Under the ELT framework, the influence of NCE on the belief and value systems of the average Chinese is subtle but persistent. The challenge it poses to the official ideology is also subtle and by no means confrontational, but nevertheless significant. The NCE approach to English-language learning, as neatly summed up in the titles of each of its four volumes—*First Things First*, *Practice Makes Perfect*, *Developing Skills*, and *Fluency in English*-- is functional, pragmatic and skills-oriented. However, as a Western discourse about the West, NCE is not de-ideologized or politically neutral. On the contrary, with its influence on the belief and value systems of the ELT learners and its challenge to the official ideology, it is deeply involved in Chinese politics.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter we started by drawing on the argument of textbooks as ideological discourse with ideological functions. We modified the argument by suggesting that the

ideological functions of textbooks should be viewed in terms of the two main functions of ideology itself, that of status qua and that of change. Furthermore, we defined the Chinese ideological context in terms of the co-existence of two dominant themes, the Four Cardinal Principles and the Modernization discourse. The former stands for ideological orthodoxy and stability whereas the latter stands for change. The ideological functions of English-language textbooks are defined under this framework and the above findings from the textbooks will be interpreted accordingly.

The ideological function of the textbooks is seen mainly in terms of the removal of “old” symbols/ideas and the insertion of “new” symbols/ideas. Regarding the former, the findings show that the symbols/ideas removed from textbooks are mostly associated with the Four Cardinal Principles. This, in the first place, suggests a more active role of textbooks in ideological change. This is very significant because either at the time of the removals or even today, Chinese macro politics does not entail the removal of such symbols of anti-imperialism and glorification of China from textbooks. These symbols could and can stay in view of the present Chinese context, namely the overall political situation in China. In other words, the removals are not the results of intervening or pressure from macro politics, or “politicization” as discussed previously in the section of Formal Ideology and “Lived Ideology.” Instead the removals can be interpreted as initiatives on the part of ELT to give up support to the ideological theme of the Four Cardinal Principles and the political elite behind the theme. The removals mean a reduction of the influence and importance of the Principles in ELT as one sector of social life. The implication is that if more and more symbols associated with the Principles are removed, the end result will be the

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<sup>39</sup> David Shambaugh, *Beautiful Imperialism*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991, p. 139.

complete disappearance of the Principles from practically all sectors of social life.

On the other hand, the inserted new symbols/ideas are in some cases associated with the discourse of Modernization. The insertion means increased influence of the theme of the Modernization discourse in the CCP ideology. The balance of power in China's ideological battles is affected in favor of the Modernization discourse. In other cases, however, the inserted symbols/ideas are not even associated with the Modernization discourse. They represent differences and challenges not only to a particular theme of Chinese Communist ideology, but also to the ideology as a whole. They contribute to the pervasive Western influence we discussed in the previous chapter.

If it is done outside the ELT context, both the removal of existent symbols and the insertion of new symbols could have immediate implications and consequences in political China.<sup>40</sup> Within the ELT context, in particular with the presence of the three mechanisms of positivism, instrumental approach and marketization, the details of which will be discussed later in the thesis, changes occur without sudden confrontation and their political impact may even be unfelt. But this does not reduce the significance of ELT as impetus for change. It is true that changes in ELT textbooks do not directly lead to dramatic changes in macro politics, since the latter would involve agents, mechanisms and many other factors in addition to the ELT discourse. On the other hand, however, formal ideology does respond to "lived ideology" and major political and ideological changes at macro level are bound to take place as the

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<sup>40</sup> For the importance of political and ideological symbols in Chinese social life, see Simon De Beaufort, *Yellow Earth, Green Jade: Constants in Chinese Political Mores*, Cambridge, Mass.: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1978.

cumulative results of changes at the micro level. Viewed in longer term, ELT textbooks are an important impetus for change.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Into the Realm of Pure Ideology: the Shift of the Chinese Marxist Discourse of English Literature in the Post-Mao Era**

#### **Introduction**

The introduction of English literature into China through teaching, study and translation is important as a discourse about the West. How English literature as well as Western society, culture and values embodied in English literature is perceived and presented can be a major factor in shaping students' image and understanding of the West. This is because on the one hand, textbooks and lectures in literature usually provide a prototype of interpretations to be followed by students. As Alan C. Purves' findings suggest, "The school has an effect on students' understanding and interpretation of literary works via the inculcation of a preferred set of responses".<sup>1</sup> Consequently students' freedom of interpretation is restrained and the genesis of novel interpretations is limited when they are conscious of a preferred set of responses. On the other hand, due to the close link between literature and society, this prototyping in literature can be readily extended to the interpretation of Western society and culture in general.

In the Maoist era, a Chinese Marxist discourse had been dominant in perceiving and presenting English literature as well as Western society. This discourse on the one hand

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<sup>1</sup> Alan C. Purves, *Literature Education in Ten Countries*, Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1973, p. 34.

overlaps with “ideology” in that they both can be “essentially a set of ideas with a discursive framework which guides and/or justifies policies and actions, derived from certain values and doctrinal assumptions about the nature and dynamics of history.”<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, for analytical purpose here, the discourse can be distinguished from ideology as being a particular way of establishing orders of truth in the specific field of English literature. This chapter aims to find out what has happened to this Marxist discourse in the post-Mao era and why it has happened by posing three questions. The first question concerns the “identity” of the discourse. Is it still “Marxist” in nature despite the challenges it has met in the reform era, or it has changed so much that the very notion of its being Marxist is in doubt? If the change is not one of kind, but one of degree, then there comes the second question concerning the position or status of the discourse as a dominant one in perceiving and presenting English literature. To what extent is that dominant position challenged or changed? The third question is about how ELT has been a cause of the change, that is, if there is any significant change, either in the identity of the discourse as being “Marxist” or in its position as being “dominant”, what is the role of ELT in bringing about that change?

Drawing on Franz Schurmann’s model of pure ideology and practical ideology (See Chapter Three), the chapter first examines some key elements underlying the Marxist discourse, namely those main concepts and outstanding features that give the discourse a distinct Marxist “identity.” For this purpose, this chapter uses the textbook *A Short*

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<sup>2</sup> Zhang Wei-wei, *Ideology and Economic Reform under Deng Xiaoping 1978\_1993*, London: Kegan Paul International, 1996, p. 5.

*History of English Literature* (hereafter *History*)<sup>3</sup> as ideological embodiment and carrier of the discourse. Moreover, since *History* was first published in the late 1970s and had undergone a major revision in the 1990s, a comparative method is used to find out whether there are any significant changes in the ideological elements of the discourse over the period of China's economic reform. Then the chapter examines the discourse in terms of its relevance in policy-making and action sequences so as to ascertain whether it still functions as a practical ideology as it did in the Maoist era. Here the introduction of the British writer D. H. Lawrence into post-Mao China is used as a case. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the nature of the shift of the Marxist discourse in light of findings from the two cases and on the role of ELT in bringing about the shift.

### **Ideology, Policy, and Policy Outcome**

As shown in Chapter Three, Schurmann's model involves the view that Chinese Communist ideology is made up of pure ideology and practical ideology. The former is a set of ideas designed to give the individual (or organization) a unified and conscious worldview, and the latter is a set of ideas designed to give the individual rational instruments for action. In this sense pure ideology serves as the guiding principle while practical ideology is aimed at generating policies and actions. Also according to Schurmann, when there are ideological changes, certain elements of the ideology move from the realm of pure ideology into the realm of practical ideology or vice versa. Under this model, ideological change may take place not only in terms of the abandonment of

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<sup>3</sup> Liu Bingshan, *A Short History of English Literature*, Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education

“old” ideas or the absorption of “new” ones, but also in terms of the increased or decreased relevance and importance of certain ideas in policy-making and action sequences and results.

One of the hallmarks of practical ideology is its tendency and potentiality to generate policies and actions via the agency of a party or individuals. Ideally once a policy is made, it should be implemented, and its implementation should produce the intended results. There is some discrepancy between ideology and policy and between policy and policy outcome, but a certain degree of compatibility between them is essential for an ideology to be a “practical” one as defined by the model.

The Marxist discourse was a practical ideology in the Maoist era, during which a kind of compatibility was largely sustained between ideology, policy and policy outcome. The discourse then not only meant a manner of thinking, an attitude, and a system of values and beliefs regarding foreign literature, but also meant policies regarding the introduction of foreign literature into China. Furthermore, in most cases the policies derived from the ideology were implemented with intended result. Guided by the ideology, the official literary policy limited the introduction and study of foreign literature to writers who were perceived to be politically correct or acceptable. The objective of the introduction, which was defined at the First National Conference on Translation Work (November 1951, Beijing), was to “serve the [Chinese] revolution and literary creation.”<sup>4</sup> Before the split of the Chinese Communist Party with the Soviet Communist Party in the 1960s, the

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Press, 1981, revised edition, Zhenzhou: Henan People’s Publishing House, 1993, 2000.

policy meant priority to literary works of the former Soviet Union and its Eastern Bloc allies, as shown in the translation statistics earlier-mentioned in discussing Soviet influence. In contrast, since not many Western works could serve the Chinese revolution and literary creation as defined by the Chinese authorities, only a limited number of Western works were introduced. From 1949 to 1966, over the first seventeen years of the PRC, only 245 works of English literature and 215 of American literature were translated.<sup>5</sup> The consequence of the policy could be seen more clearly if put in light of history. The last decade of the Qing Dynasty had witnessed a surge in the translation of foreign literature. It reached highs in 1906 and 1907, with 110 and 126 titles translated respectively.<sup>6</sup> Even if we take into account the fact that these 236 titles in the latter case covered literary works in other foreign languages than English, such as Russian and Japanese, the number of works translated from English in the Maoist era appears very small. The English works that did come into China during the 1949-1966 period included classics as well as what the Chinese called “revolutionary and progressive” literature such as literature of the Chartist Movement and works of Robert Tressell and Ralph Fox.<sup>7</sup> In short, there was little discrepancy between the ideology represented by *History*, the policy spelt out at the Translation Conference and the actual results regarding the introduction of foreign literature.

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<sup>4</sup> Sun Zhili, *1949-1966: Zhongguo yingmei wenxue fanyi gaikuang* (1949-1966: A survey of Chinese translation of English and American literature), Nanjing: Yilin Press, 1999, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. pp. 221-239.

<sup>6</sup> Wong Wang-chi, "An Act of Violence: Translation of Western Fiction in the Late Qing and Early Republican Period" in Michel Hockx (Ed.), *The Literary Field of Twentieth-Century China*, Richmond: Curzon Press, 1999, pp. 21-40

<sup>7</sup> Sun Zhili, *1949-1966: Zhongguo Ying Mei Wenxue Fanyi Gaikuang* (1949-1966: A survey of Chinese translation of English and American literature), Nanjing: Yilin Press, 1999, pp. 221-239.

## ***History* and the Persistent Presence of the Marxist Ideology**

Professor Liu Bingshan's *History* is an influential textbook in the field of the study of English literature in China. The book first came out in 1981 and was adopted nationwide as a textbook for students majoring in English. In 1992 the book underwent a major revision but its influence and popularity remain unchanged. Despite the competition from other textbooks of English literary history, the revised edition had 13 printings between 1993 and 2001. The book has the approval and backing from the authorities, as made clear by the fact that both the original and the revised editions had been sanctioned and recommended by the Chinese Ministry of Education to universities nationwide as a textbook. In this sense *History* represents not only a major mode of discourse and dialogue among certain intellectuals,<sup>8</sup> but also the official attitude towards Western literature as well.

There is little doubt as to the Marxist assumptions and orientation of *History*. In the Preface to the book, the author claims "Efforts have been made to apply the basic views of Marxism-- mainly those of historical materialism-- in tracing the historical development of English literature. [Therefore] each literary period is introduced first by a brief comment on the social, political and ideological conditions."<sup>9</sup> In the revised edition, the author restates the above position, adding that the Marxist orientation as one of the

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<sup>8</sup> David Shambaugh and Zhang Wei-wei, among others, argue that Communist ideology serves as a mode of discourse and dialogue among certain intellectuals, which shows that ideology is still important in post-Mao China. See Shambaugh, David, *Beautiful Imperialism*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991, p. 36, and Zhang Wei-wei, *Ideology and Economic Reform under Deng Xiaoping 1978\_1993*, London: Kegan Paul International, 1996, pp. 1-4.

<sup>9</sup> Liu Bingshan, *A Short History of English Literature*, p. ix. Unless marked otherwise, page reference refers to the revised edition.

distinguishing features of the book is what he wants to retain and enhance. There is ample evidence that supports the author's above claims. The most obvious evidence is the frequent direct quotes from Marx, Engels, and Lenin on Western literature, history and society. There are, for example, Engels' references to "the oldest Celtic laws" and to the historical significance of Beowulf in reflecting the features of the tribal society of ancient times as well as his comments on the Renaissance. Also frequently occurring in *History* are the class view, emphasis on the value of working class literature, and emphasis on the theme of social evils in capitalist society, which are some of the hallmarks of the Chinese Marxist discourse of Western literature. Above all, however, *History* involves the Marxist interpretation of and attitude towards English literature as crystallized in the concepts of realism and critical realism.

Realism here is first defined in Engels' terms as what "implies, besides truth in detail, the truthful reproduction of typical characters under typical circumstances."<sup>10</sup> However, as an element of the discourse, the concept of realism has far more social and literary implications than Engels' words may suggest. Based on historical materialism, the discourse views (English) literature as a social product and emphasizes the epistemological function of literature as a mirror of society. Whether a literary work reveals the fundamental tension or "class contradiction" of its time and how it does that have become benchmarks for judging the worth and value of writers and literary works. In the summary to the chapter on Shakespeare, for instance, Shakespeare is defined as

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<sup>10</sup> *History*, p. 106.

“one of the founders of realism in world literature.”<sup>11</sup> The nineteenth century realists, or critical realists as they are called in *History*, are highly praised because their pages “have revealed to the world more political and social truths than have been uttered by all the professional politicians, publicists and moralists put together.”<sup>12</sup> Even in poetry, the social aspects of literature are also emphasized at the expense of the more personal and individual. Poetry is thought to have degenerated as in the case of Alfred Tennyson and other Victorian poets.

Poetry was no longer a major art intended to change the world, as that of Byron and Shelley. It now seldom touched on the serious social problems, but mainly concerned itself with the poet’s purely personal or spiritual questionings—such “luxury problems” as shades of religious belief, the conflict between faith and science, or a study of the Italian Renaissance from a purely aesthetic view.<sup>13</sup>

There are further indications of taking realism as a benchmark for literary criticism. One finds in *History* that major literary trends at the turn of the twentieth century, such as naturalism, neo-romanticism and aestheticism, are defined more or less in contradistinction to realism. For naturalism, “[only] some of the best naturalistic novels may approach or even become forceful realistic literature because naturalism, in reality, was a development of realism.”<sup>14</sup> The introduction of neo-romanticism reads

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> K. Marx, “The English Middle Class” (1854), Lee Baxandall & Stefan Morawski (eds.), *Marx & Engels on Literature and Art*, St. Louis: Telos Press, 1973, p. 105.

<sup>13</sup> *History*, p. 406.

<sup>14</sup> *History*, p. 440.

“Dissatisfied with the drab and ugly social reality and yet trying to avoid the positive solution of the acute social contradictions, some writers adopted this new trend which laid emphasis upon the invention of exciting adventures and fascinating stories to entertain the reading public.”<sup>15</sup> And Oscar Wilde, with his claim that art does not reflect life but life imitates art, is criticized as having “mistaken ideas.” In a similar way, his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and his play *Salome* are dismissed as “typical unwholesome products of the decadent literary trend [of aestheticism].”<sup>16</sup>

Modernist fiction, a major literary trend in the twentieth century, had been left out in the first edition of *History*. When included in the revised edition, it is also defined in contradistinction to critical realism. “Modernist fiction represented a trend drifting away from the tradition of nineteenth century realism. Modernist fiction puts emphasis on the description of the characters’ psychological activities, and so has sometimes been called modern psychological fiction.”<sup>17</sup> In the treatment of modernism, *History* appears less prescriptive than it did in the above cases, but the chapter on modernism does conclude with doubts and reservation, “Poets and novelists made bold experiments with form and content in a way which departed radically from the nineteenth century traditions. What their experiments actually amount to is a question not yet fully settled.”<sup>18</sup> This indicates *History* takes a wait-and-see attitude towards modernism, which elsewhere is warmly embraced.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *History*, p. 442.

<sup>16</sup> *History*, p. 448.

<sup>17</sup> *History*, p. 487.

<sup>18</sup> *History*, p. 499.

<sup>19</sup> Li Weiping, among others, believes that “They [the modernists] were not only a group of rare art geniuses in Western history, but had made an unprecedented revolution in literature. To be fair, such a

On the other hand, the adoption of critical realism as the benchmark can have positive effects on the appraisal of the working-class novel. In *History*, the genre of working class novel seems to be defined in its strictest sense—a novel by (someone of) the working class, of the working class and for the working class. The case of Robert Tressell and his novel *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* may illustrate this point. Robert Noonan, who wrote the book under the penname of Robert Tressell, was a house painter. The theme of the novel, as its title suggests, is how the workers, the true creators of wealth in society, are badly exploited by the capitalists. The purpose of the novel is stated in the Preface, “I designed the conditions resulting from poverty and unemployment: to expose the futility of the measures taken to deal with them and to indicate what I believe to be the only real remedy, namely—socialism.” The novel is “written with realism and passion.”<sup>20</sup> Moreover, *History* has paid to Robert Tressell unusual attention as shown in the space devoted to him—there are five pages about him and his one novel while there are four pages on D. H. Lawrence and three on James Joyce. Obviously the working class novelist has been given the most prominence.

Prominence is also given to Marxist literary criticism in Britain. In fact, Marxist literary criticism is the only critical approach that has been dealt with exclusively in an independent chapter. Marxist critics like Ralph Fox and Christopher Caudwell are introduced in detail while influential critics by other standards are just mentioned or even

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powerful group of writers with such excellent works were not paralleled in history, except perhaps in the Renaissance and the Romantic Movement.” Li Weiping, *A Survey of English and American Modernist Literature*, Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1997, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

not mentioned at all. For instance, there are three pages dealing exclusively with Ralph Fox while there is only a half page on T. S. Eliot the critic.

In brief, findings from *History* have shown that the Marxist interpretation of and attitude toward English literature have been largely retained in the revised edition of 1993. There is obviously what we call ideological stability in the Chinese Marxist discourse of English literature.

As for ideological change, a comparison of the two editions of *History* seems to suggest the following. First the book has grown from about three hundred pages to five hundred pages, an indication that more writers and works are included. The most important change is the incorporation of those writers who belong to literary schools other than realism-- naturalism, aestheticism and modernism, etc. The first edition had omitted them either on grounds that they were "less important writers" and therefore were beyond the concern of a short history, or that since their works were unavailable at the time, their works were out of the reach of Chinese students anyway.<sup>21</sup> The incorporation of these writers in the revised edition indicates both changed attitude and changed circumstances— now those writers are thought to be important enough to be included and their works have become available in China.

Historically Soviet influence had been a major factor in shaping the Chinese Marxist discourse. Soviet influence made its way both in terms of imported theories and translated works. According to Fokkema, "Soviet literary ideology was received

eclectically and expediently by the Chinese as influence.”<sup>22</sup> Russian literary works, including both the classics and those produced during the Soviet period, were introduced in large number via translation. Between 1949 and 1956, 2,746 Russian literary works were translated.<sup>23</sup> In view of this historical background, it would be interesting to see if there has been any significant change in terms of Soviet influence. However, we find the changes are relatively unimportant. For instance, the name of Stalin has completely disappeared from the revised edition. Some of his comments, such as those on the peasant leaders in Russian history, also disappeared. However, in other cases the ideas formerly attributed to him are retained. For example, the overt reference to Stalin and his work *Marxism and the Problems in Linguistics* are deleted from the section on the influence of the Norman Conquest on the English language, but otherwise the section remains unaltered. Another example is that the name of M. Gorky the Russian Marxist writer and critic is deleted but the quote of his praise of Chaucer as “the founder of English realism” is retained. In terms of significance, the retaining of ideas seems to outweigh the deletion of sources. Furthermore, it is worth pointing out that what happens in *History* regarding Soviet influence is not exceptional, but is a characteristic example of the persistent Soviet influence in post-Mao China. A similar example is the three-volumed Soviet *History of English Literature*, which was translated into Chinese between 1983 and 1986 and has been one of the most referred works in the field since.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *History* (first edition), p.1.

<sup>22</sup> D. W. Fokkema, *Literary Doctrine in China and Soviet Influence 1956-1960*, London: Mouton & Co, 1965, p. XII.

<sup>23</sup> R. F. Price, *Education in Communist China*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975, pp. 102-103.

<sup>24</sup> Shulian Kexueyuan Gaoerji Shijie Wenxue Yanjiushuo (Gorky Research Institute of World Literature, Soviet Science Academy), *Yingguo Wenxue Shi: 1789-1832* (History of English literature: 1789-1832), (trans. Miu Lingzhu, first pub. 1984), *Yingguo Wenxue Shi: 1832-1870* (History of English literature: 1832-1870), (trans. Cai Wenxian, first pub. 1986), *Yingguo Wenxue Shi: 1870-1955* (History of English

*History* has a whole chapter on Shakespeare, and this chapter had undergone more extensive revision than any other chapters. Through deletion, addition and shift of emphasis, the revision alters the perception and presentation of Shakespeare considerably. The deletions include the comments and views that Shakespeare was concerned with “racial problems arising with capitalism” (*Merchant of Venice*), that he had “deep understanding of the class contradictions of his age” (*Pericles*), that he made reflection on “the omnipotent power of money in the age of growing capitalism” (*Timon of Athens*), and that his method of characterization was in line with what Engels defined as “typical character in typical situations.” While the deletions are associated in one way or another with the social and political aspects of Shakespeare’s works, the additions have more to do with the literary aspects. Additions include comments on Shakespeare’s method of adaptation in dramatic creation, his long experience with the stage and hence his intimate knowledge of dramatic art, as well as his skills in many poetic forms. The additions and deletions indicate a shift of emphasis from Shakespeare the social critic onto Shakespeare the artist.

The more tolerance to schools other than realism, the reduction of overt Soviet influence and the more attention to the literary and artistic aspects of literature in the revised edition indicate a certain degree of de-radicalisation in the Chinese Marxist discourse of English literature. However, as said earlier, these changes appear relatively insignificant when compared with what has been retained in the discourse. They do not alter or affect the

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literature: 1870-1955), (trans. Qin Shui & Shang Huao-e, first pub. 1983), Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe (The people’s literature press).

Marxist nature of the discourse as a system of values and beliefs regarding English literature.

Therefore if there is any change concerning the Marxist discourse as a practical ideology, the change must be defined in terms of the compatibility between ideology, policy and policy outcome. The case of D. H. Lawrence is used next to find out to what extent the compatibility is retained or changed, which in turn is the key to the question whether or not the Marxist discourse has remained as a practical ideology.

### **The Case of D. H. Lawrence**

The past two decades have witnessed the introduction of a host of Western writers and their ideas into China as well as China's vigorous response to the influx. The influx has come at a fast pace as China tries to catch up with the West rapidly. While in the 1980s the idea of "modernism" as a normal intellectual development had to be defended, by the mid-1990s there were people looking beyond "post-modernism." In terms of magnitude and impact, the contemporary influx of Western ideas has parallels with the one between the turn of the twentieth century and the May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement, when Chinese intellectuals and students were looking to the West for the spirit of democracy and science. In the period of 1980-1986, the number of book titles translated averaged about 657 per year. Since 1988, except for a few years, the number increased to over 1,000 book titles for

each year.<sup>25</sup>

There are two particular reasons why the introduction of the English writer D. H. Lawrence in post-Mao China is chosen as a case here. The first is the background of the introduction. Historically Lawrence had been introduced to China as early as the 1930s, when literary magazines like *Xin Yue* (New moon), *Xiandai Wenxue* (Modern literature), *Xiaoshuo Yuebao* (Fiction monthly) and *Shijie Wenxue* (World literature) published translated stories of Lawrence and chapters on him. His most controversial novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was translated into Chinese and was published in 1934. However, from 1950 to 1979, for some thirty years there was not a single published study on Lawrence. Nor was there any translation of Lawrence's works.<sup>26</sup> In the first edition of *History*, D. H. Lawrence was not even mentioned. Lawrence was practically banned in the first thirty years of the PRC, and his obscurity during this period was a direct consequence of the Marxist discourse.

The second reason has to do with the situation today. On the one hand, D. H. Lawrence has emerged from obscurity to popularity, and his image has changed from a pornography writer to one "that had made great contribution to modern English fiction."<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, the dispute over Lawrence is far from being over. Despite his enormous popularity

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<sup>25</sup> Li Jingrei, "Fanyi zhiliang jidai tige" (An urgent call for quality translation), *Guangming Daily*, 13 December 2001.

<sup>26</sup> See Hao Shulin & Guo Yingjian, "Laolunsi yanjiu zai zhongguo" ("Lawrence studies in China"), *Henan shifandaxue xuebao* (Journal of Henan Normal University), no.3 (1993), pp. 65-69.

<sup>27</sup> Wang Zuoliang, *Yingguo Wenxue Shi* (A history of English literature), Beijing: Commercial Press, 1996, p. 567.

among the general reading public and the wide attention he has drawn from academics and literary critics, the Chinese translation of the novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is still banned by the authorities and is unlikely to come out of the ban in the short term. Both because of the historical background and the situation today, we believe D. H. Lawrence is not only a relevant case of Western influence and Chinese response to that influence, but also will yield more interesting findings than other English writers regarding the shift of the Marxist discourse in the post-Mao era.

With regard to data, the case of D. H. Lawrence involves two sources. The first is 50 or so Chinese scholarly studies of D. H. Lawrence published either as papers or as book chapters in the 1980s and 1990s, and the second is the statistics concerning translation and publication of Lawrence's works during the same period. While 50 studies are by no means exhaustive, they do represent the major critical views on and approaches to Lawrence. Similarly, the statistics are far from complete, but they are sufficient for providing an authentic picture of the scale and characteristics of the introduction of Lawrence. Besides, these studies and statistics already suggest that Lawrence is one of the most-read and most-studied Western writers in China.

Findings from these two sources are presented below in terms of three propositions. Such a way of representing and analyzing findings is similar to the method used by Lucian Pye in his study of Chinese factionalism.<sup>28</sup> Essentially the three propositions are about

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<sup>28</sup> Lucian Pye, *The Dynamics of Factions and Consensus in Chinese Politics: a Model and Some Propositions*, Santa Monica, CA.: Rand, 1980.

change of the Marxist discourse, namely its shift into the realm of pure ideology, and the causes and dynamics of that change.

**Proposition 1. The Marxist discourse still functions as an important critical approach, but its previous position as the dominant approach is over.**

At the outset, that is, in the early 1980s, critics and academics had wittingly or unwittingly used the Marxist discourse to justify their attempts and efforts to introduce the controversial writer D. H. Lawrence. Approaching Lawrence, the critics tend to define the social/historical context in terms of the Marxist tenets of imperialism as the last stage of capitalism (Lenin) and economic base versus superstructure (Marx).

When the world came into the twentieth century, capitalist industry was developing rapidly. The capitalist society was entering from a stage of free capitalism into a stage of imperialism. There were daily-intensified contradictions between labor and capitalism, between the imperialist countries, between the suzerain states and the people of the colonial countries, which finally led to the First World War. Western civilization [meanwhile] entered a stage noted for the split self and the degenerated society, the absolute loneliness of man and the overall alienation of social relations. The civilization of machinery and advanced science and technology revealed their de-humanizing and alienating nature. People had a growing fear of the science and technology they had been using. Such a fear of technology resulted in widespread

pessimism among society. There were rapid changes in the human psychology, morality and social value. Man's wholesomeness is damaged beyond reparation and the beautiful and great aspects in the human nature now were suppressed in the capitalist society. (My translation)<sup>29</sup>

Critics justified the introduction of Lawrence into China by arguing that his works, being products of a particular society, were also reflections of that society, and may have epistemological value. Zhao Shaowei, one of the pioneers in Lawrence study in China, highlighted the critical elements in Lawrence's works. Leaving alone the more controversial *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Zhao grouped three other novels, *Sons and Lovers*, *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* as "trilogy of social criticism." He not only emphasized the social critical elements in Lawrence's works, but also referred to the working class family background of the writer.<sup>30</sup> Under the Marxist approach, Lawrence appeared more like a "critical realist."

Problems soon occurred once D. H. Lawrence was introduced in this way. First, there are problems concerning the presentation and interpretation of D. H. Lawrence. Put in light of the Marxist discourse, some aspects of D. H. Lawrence are highlighted while other aspects, though equally important in defining the writer as what he is, are downplayed or overlooked. Second and more significantly, as to be shown below, the Marxist approach, far from being an omnipotent tool as assumed by the authorities and the more orthodox

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<sup>29</sup> Bi Bingbin, "Shidai yu Hong" ("Time and *The Rainbow*") *Waiguo Wenxue Yanjiu* (Studies of foreign literature) no. 4 (1985), pp. 70-71.

practitioners, appears inadequate by itself in interpreting D. H. Lawrence.

Professor Hou Weirui's *A Survey of Modern British Fiction*,<sup>31</sup> with a chapter of fifty pages or about 10 percent of the book devoted to D. H. Lawrence, is one of the most referred works in this field. Lawrence's works are summarized as a combination of social criticism and psychological exploration, as the heading of the chapter suggests. Such a summary suits the general definition of the two primary themes of modernist literature as "crisis and alienation in capitalist society."<sup>32</sup> The times during which the writer lived and wrote were described as "an imperialist period full of chaos and crises and devoid of true beliefs."<sup>33</sup> The works of D. H. Lawrence, like other modernist writings are valued for "an exposure to a certain degree of some of the evils of twentieth century Western society", and thus "having certain epistemological and reference value." Meanwhile, however, readers are told that "Psychology of the human sex is practically the core of Lawrence's creative work and the central theme of all his major novels."<sup>34</sup> This last statement is given ample evidence of support in the following sections on Lawrence's four major novels and other works. As a result, there is a big gap between Hou's general statements on capitalist society and modernist literature in Marxist terms and his specific treatment of the writer D. H. Lawrence and his works.

The gap sometimes leads to self-contradiction. The Freudian theory, for instance, is

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<sup>30</sup> Zhao Shaowei, "Laolunsi de shehui pipan sanbuqu" (D. H. Lawrence: trilogy of social criticism) *Shijie Wenxue* (World literature) no. 2 (1981), pp.11-24.

<sup>31</sup> Hou Weirui, *Xiandai Yingguo Xiaoshuoshi* (A Survey of modern British fiction), Shanghai: Foreign Languages Education Press (first edition 1985), 1996.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* p. 17.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* p. 190.

introduced in detail, and is deemed as indispensable for the understanding of modern British fiction till the 1920s. Psychological exploration is said to be “the key factor that make Lawrence’s novels masterpieces of modern British fiction”. However, the appraisal is followed by a quotation from Marx, which seems to suggest that the theory is wrong, because it “makes no difference between humans and animals, and overlooks the social aspects of man.” There is obvious tension between the author’s appreciation of the significance of the Freudian theory for the creation of highly successful novels and his suspicion of the follies of the theory. This shows how difficult it is to make reconciliation between the Freudian theory and the Marxist view.

This revealed inadequacy of the Marxist discourse may largely account for the emergence of pluralism in approach to English literature. The dissatisfaction and even impatience with the Marxist approach among many critics and academics led to an intensive search for “new” approaches to literature in general and to Western literature in particular. Some felt it necessary to break off with the old Marxist approach.<sup>35</sup> Others joined the “methodology fever” in the mid-1980s.<sup>36</sup> A characteristic example of the “methodology fever”, the book *Waiguo Xiandai Wenyipiping Fangfalun* (Methodologies of contemporary foreign literary criticism) introduced some thirty-seven theories and

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p. 195.

<sup>35</sup> For instance, Liu Zaifu, an expert in Lu Xun study, formulated his *wenxue zhutulun* (literary subjectivity), a theory of the autonomy of literature on the base of a universal humanism. The implication of the theory is that, if literature has a life of its own, namely the internal rules that govern its genesis, development, and reproduction, political meddling backed up with rigid doctrines would be only detrimental to literature and therefore is wrong. The heart of the matter is that Liu has brought “a challenge to the current framework of Chinese literary theory.” Liu Zaifu, “The subjectivity of Literature Revisited” in Liu Kang & Xiaobing Tang (ed) *Politics, Ideology, And Literary Discourse in Modern China*, Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1993.

methodologies.<sup>37</sup> As new intellectual resources were opened up, there was the emergence of pluralism in the study of Western literature.

Pluralism is found unexceptionally in critical approaches to Lawrence. In terms of assumptions, orientations and research focuses, with some overlaps, our collection of the papers and book chapters on Lawrence can be classified into historical (history, tradition, influence, and affinity, etc.), psychoanalytical, archetypal, philosophical, and religious approaches. In addition, there are papers approaching Lawrence in terms of language aspects as well as papers focusing on sex, sexuality and gender.<sup>38</sup> As the titles of some of the articles we collected well indicate the varieties of D. H. Lawrence study in China, we will list them in groups according to the approaches. The purpose for doing so is to present the Chinese picture as against the Western one. Some articles fall into the historical approach: "Tradition, Lawrence, Modernism" (Guo Yingjian, 1991), "Realism in The White Peacock" (Xu Chongliang, 1990), "Heritage and Creation: a Comparative Study of Lawrence and Dickens" (Li Shaojun, 1997). For the psychoanalytical approach, there are "The 'self' in [Lawrence's] Poetry and the Working of the Mind" (Wu Di, 1990); "An Exploration of the Mind: on the Short Stories of D. H. Lawrence" (Guo Yingjian, 1990), "Freud, Lawrence, and the Creation of the Psychological Novel" (Zhang Haijiu, 1994). Next comes the group of philosophical approach: "A Returning to the Universe" (Zheng Dawei), "On D. H. Lawrence's 'Two Principles'" (Qi Yikai, 1994), and

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<sup>36</sup> For a discussion of the "methodology fever", see Tang Xiaobing, "The Function of New Theory: What Does It Mean to Talk about Post-modernism in China?" in Liu Kang & Xiaobing Tang (ed) *Politics, Ideology, And Literary Discourse in Modern China*, Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1993, pp. 215-233.

<sup>37</sup> Fu Xiuyan (eds), *Waiguo Xiandai Wenyipiping Fangfalun* (Methodologies of contemporary foreign literary criticism), Nanchang: Jiangxi Publishing House, 1985.

“Revelation from the Wast Land”(Qi Yikai, 1997). Some articles focus on the artistry of the language in Lawrence’s works: “Language in *Sons and Lovers*” (Chen Guangming, 1990), “Symbolism in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*” (Wang Liya, 1991), “Modernist Trend in the Language of D. H. Lawrence’s Novels” (Jiang Chengyong, 1990). There are also many titles that suggest a feminist approach: “On the Modern Woman in Lawrence’s Novels” (Li Naikung, 1990), “Lawrence’s Views on Marriage” (Jiang Mingming, 1991), to name but a few. At this stage, perhaps a word of warning is necessary. The above listing is to suggest the diversity of methodology and pluralism in perspective in Lawrence study in China. The similarity between the Chinese approach and its Western counterpart does not mean that the former is a poor shadow of the latter.

The study of Lawrence has brought about new possibilities of studying Chinese literature. Cheng Changhen, for example, made a comparative study of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* and the well-known Chinese sex story *Jing Ping Mei* of the sixteenth century. He finds that although sex and sexuality are major themes of both novels, the two novels are different in terms of creative motivation, attitudes towards sex and sexuality, and narrative points of view.<sup>39</sup> Another comparative study is by Liu Xuming, in which Liu compares *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* with a modern Chinese experimental novel, focusing on the detrimental effect of industrialization on man.<sup>40</sup> In short, after long years of the

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<sup>38</sup> The cataloguing draws on a model by Paul Poplawski. Poplawski, Paul, *D. H. Lawrence: A Reference Companion*, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1996, pp. 529-589.

<sup>39</sup> Cheng Changhen, “Chatailai furen de qingren yu jinpingmei cihua zhi bijiao” (“A comparative study of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* and *Jin Ping Mei*”) in *Bijiaowenxue* (Comparative literature) no.1 (1991), pp. 86-91.

<sup>40</sup> Liu Xuming, “Chatailai furen de qingren yu baijing de nuti shuxiang de bijiao fengxi” (“A comparative analysis of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* and *The Golden Stature of a Lady*”) in *Xuzhou shifanxueyuan xuebao* (Journal of Xuzhou Normal College) no. 2 (1991), pp. 94-96.

dominance of the Marxist approach, critics are making more choices in approaching foreign literature.

The emergence of pluralism means that the influence of the Marxist discourse has been on the wane. We found from our data that while studies published in the early and mid-1980s such as those by Zhao Shaowei, Hou Weirui and Bi Bingbing still indicate heavy influence of the Marxist discourse, the majority of those published in the 1990s do not. Into the 1990s, more and more studies focused on Lawrence the modernist instead of Lawrence the realist; the explorer of the human psyche instead of the social critic. The implication is that once the research focus is on Lawrence the modernist and “the great practitioner of the Freudian psychology”,<sup>41</sup> the inadequacy of the Marxist discourse becomes more evident. To interpret Lawrence as such, critics have to look beyond the Marxist views of realism for intellectual sources.

The introduction of Lawrence was initiated by the Marxist discourse. Once the process was under way, Lawrence presented a challenge to the Marxist discourse as a dominant approach by revealing the inadequacy of the latter. The need was felt for alternative approaches. The end result was that the Marxist discourse remained important, but was no longer dominant regarding the reception and presentation of Western writers and literary works.

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<sup>41</sup> Li Weiping, *A Survey of English and American Modernist Literature*, Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1998, p. 141.

**Proposition 2. The Marxist presentation of D. H. Lawrence as a social critic faces challenges from a popular image of D. H. Lawrence in China.**

We said earlier that Lawrence is popular in China. How popular is D. H. Lawrence? Where does his popularity come from? And more importantly, what is the implication of his popularity for the Marxist discourse?

Regarding Lawrence's popularity, statistics show that he is one of the most popular Western writers in China if not the most popular. With the exception of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*,<sup>42</sup> all his novels and perhaps most of his short stories have been translated and published in unexpurgated editions. Our online search of the author key words "laolunsi", Chinese pinyin for Lawrence, at the National Library China yielded 216 records. (The number includes several "errors"-- books by other authors with the same name "laolunsi" and a few dozens of repetitions-- later printings of the same translations.)<sup>43</sup> Normally a foreign novel is said to be "popular" when it has several or even just a few Chinese translations, like *Pride and Prejudice* and *The Sherlock Holmes Mysteries*, but each of Lawrence's novels by far outnumbers the normal several. The most telling example is the novel *Sons and Lovers*, of which there are now at least seventeen different Chinese translations and three different Chinese-English bilingual editions. Next come *Rainbow*

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<sup>42</sup> The case of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* will be discussed exclusively later in the chapter.

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.nlc.gov.cn> (accessed in April 2002)

and *Women in Love*. The statistics are not complete,<sup>44</sup> but they already show the enormous popularity of Lawrence in China.

The second question why Lawrence is so popular is a bit more complicated. However, we found that the themes of love and sex found in the novels and the way these themes are treated are undoubtedly key elements contributing to Lawrence's popularity. Moreover, the Chinese translations seem to have "recreated" the stories by treating these themes more explicitly and even ostentatiously. The implication is that if the pioneers of Lawrence study had highlighted Lawrence's social critical elements at the expense of the equally important themes of love and sex, as Zhao Shaowei<sup>45</sup> and Hou Weirui did, the book market does exactly the opposite. The title of the novel *Aaron's Rod*, when translated into Chinese, becomes *Chuzou de Nanren* (The man who ran away). The story *You Touched Me* is translated into *Ni fumo le wo*. The difference here between the English word "touch" and the Chinese word *fumo* is that the latter denotes a physical action that is more specifically and explicitly associated with love and sex. Translated back, *fumo* may become "caress" or "fondle" rather than the original "touch", which is more general. The Chinese word highlights the theme of awareness of love and sex in the story. Similar cases of translation are found in titles of collections of his short stories, such as *Jidu* (Jealousy), *Waiyu* (Another lover), *Kuangqing* (Wild passion), *Xing yu ke ai* (Sex and the beloved), *Yuju de zuiren* (The guilty mate), *Xing Ai zhi Mei* (The beauty of sexual love), *Xing Shi Yizhong Huoyan* (Sex is a flame), *Wu Ru Qitu de Nuren* (Women

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<sup>44</sup> Data for this section were collected from Shenzhen Xinhua Bookshop, one of the largest in China, Nanchang Xinhua Bookshop, the largest in the province of Jiangxi, and the National Library of China.

who go astray), *Kewang Nanren de Nuren* (Women who are thirsty for men), etc. Here we do not go into the details of how many of these titles are faithful translations of the original titles of Lawrence's works, and to what extent these are but the translators' adaptations or "recreations", since after all we are not concerned with technicalities of translation and editorship. The point is that both the translators and publishers had been well aware of the fact that the popularity of Lawrence among the general reading public comes from the love and sexual content in his works. They knew that in the eye of the reading public Lawrence is above all the priest of love and would present him unmistakably as such.

The popular image of Lawrence is seldom formulated, but as a "lived ideology", it nevertheless also involves beliefs and values. (See the section of "Formal Ideology and Lived Ideology" in Chapter Three) The very existence of such a popular image poses a challenge to the Marxist discourse by revealing a gap between the Lawrence presented by the Marxist discourse and the Lawrence perceived by the reading public. While the book market is quick in response to the literary tastes and demands of the reading public by catering for and thus further stimulating the latter, the Marxist discourse seems unable to make a response. It can neither change itself by joining the trend, nor change the reading public by leading the latter in its own way. Consequently there is the reduced importance and relevance of the Marxist discourse in social life.

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<sup>45</sup> Later in 1997 Zhao Shaowei edited an anthology of Lawrence's works under the title "Laolunsi Xing Ai Xiaoshuo" (Sexual and love stories by Lawrence), which was published by Shanghai Wenyi Chubanshe (Shanghai literary press) in 1997.

**Proposition 3. In a relatively rare case the Marxist discourse was able to generate policy and actions. But the policy and actions were rendered ineffective by the joint resistance from the reading public, which has a different image of Lawrence, the market, and academics taking different approaches.**

In 1986, Hunan People's Publishing House published a 1934 translation of the novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. One of the reasons why the publisher used an old version instead of commissioning a new one might be that the publisher had been well aware of the political risk involved in the undertaking in view of the ever-changing political climate. It wanted to cash in on the relatively relaxed publishing policy and make a big killing before it was too late. The book did go to the book market and sold a large number of copies before the State Press and Publishing Administration put it under ban and gave the order to destroy the remaining copies.<sup>46</sup> It has remained under ban since. Here we wish to make clear that the ban on the novel is a policy rather than an incident, if policy is defined as "a set of ideas or a plan of what to do in particular situations that has been agreed officially by [...] a government or a political party."<sup>47</sup>

On the one hand, the ban on the novel is an indication that the Marxist discourse, far from being dead, is capable of policies and actions. This also confirms our earlier statement that ideas in the realm of pure ideology do not always stay where they are, but are able to

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<sup>46</sup> Anonymous, "Publishing in China in the Post-Mao Era: the Case of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*", *Asian Survey*, Berkeley, June 1992, vol. 32, issue 6, pp. 568-583. (Accessed through e-journal database of the library of the University of Tasmania. The record put the author as "anonymous".)

<sup>47</sup> *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*, Cambridge University Press, 1995.

come back, contributing to the cyclic model in modern Chinese politics. On the other hand, as is our main concern here, the case of *Lady Chatterley's Love* shows how ineffective a policy can become when seriously challenged.

The challenge was indeed serious and it came in many ways. Soon after the novel came under ban, a book **about** the novel was published in a series of Lawrence's works. The book, under the title *Shenpan chatelai furen de qingren* (The trial of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*), gives in detail the eventful history of the novel in Western countries as well as main content of the novel. Though reading about a novel is never the same as the reading of the novel *per se*, the book at least partly satisfies both the curious reader and the serious researcher. Meanwhile Longman and China's Foreign Languages Education and Research Press published the English version of the novel as one of "fine English readers" for learners of English. The latter publisher also independently published an annotated edition of the novel.<sup>48</sup> Another publisher went even further by adding Chinese translation to make it a bilingual edition.<sup>49</sup> Here it seems the study of English, an ever-growing business in China, has justified access to the book. Or the authorities have chosen to believe that the foreign language barrier would limit the access to only a small number of Chinese and thus no great harm would be done. Furthermore, Chinese translations of the novel appear in anthologies.<sup>50</sup> The most overt defiance to the ban came, however, when the novel was published, though expurgated, in Chinese as *Kangni*.

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<sup>48</sup> D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, (annotated by Hou Yilin), Beijing: Foreign Languages Education and Research Press, 1992.

<sup>49</sup> D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, (bilingual edition, Chinese translation by Liu Ming), Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 2000.

<sup>50</sup> Zhong Lei and Li Tong (eds.), *Waiguo Jing Hui Mingzhu Jinghua* (Highlights of censored famous foreign works), Huhehaote: Neimenggu Renmin Chubanshe (Inner Mongolian Press), 1998.

*Qiateli de qinggan licheng*. (The sentimental journey of Constance Chatterley) The translator strongly defends the novel, "It is anything but pornography."<sup>51</sup>

The ban becomes ineffectual not only because there are always loopholes in the official policies, and the ban on *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is no exception, but also more significantly because of the fact that the market erodes the government's power to control. The emergence of a market economy has to a great extent changed the role of the publishers, and to some extent it has even affected the tightly controlled sections like the Chinese media and publishing.<sup>52</sup> Concerned with economic gains or losses, publishers would cater for the readers' taste rather than follow the government's recipe.<sup>53</sup>

Still another challenge comes from critics taking different approaches to the Marxist discourse. Li Weiping, for instance, claims "There seems to be consensus that the novel [*Lady Chatterley's Lover*] is a serious literary work that explores human nature and human relationship in modern industrial society from the point of view of sex and love."<sup>54</sup> Like others, Li makes no direct comments on the ban of the novel in China, but refers in unfavorable terms to the historical ban of the novel in Western countries and how it had to be lifted in later times.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Zhu Bo (Trans.), *Kangni. Qiateli de qinggan licheng*. (The sentimental journey of Constance Chatterley) Huhehaote: Yuanfang Press, 1998, "Introduction to the Chinese Translation" p. 2.

<sup>52</sup> Jaime A. FloCruz, "Profit, Not Propaganda", in *Time*, no. 44 (June 1998), p. 27.

<sup>53</sup> Elisabeth Rosenthal, "New Gray Market in China Loosens Grip on Publishing" in *The New York Times*, web edition, 27 June 1999.

So the ban is still there, but it is seriously challenged, implicitly criticized, and appears ineffective. It will be still less effective as the English language education expands and more people in China will be able to read the English original of the novel. The ineffectiveness of the ban could be further revealed by the fact that other Western novels with strong sex themes were published and circulated. They include John Updike's *Couples*, Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* and James Joyce's *Ulysses*, to name but a few. The government's ability to control the dissemination of "Western ideas" seems to have been seriously eroded by the expansion of ELT and its resultant surge in translation, as well as by the market force.

### **Conclusion: Ideological Change and the Role of ELT**

The above findings from and discussion on *History* and the case of D. H. Lawrence provide answers to the first and the second questions posed at the early part of the chapter with regard to the "identity" and "status" of the Marxist discourse. Findings have show that the discourse is still Marxist but it is no longer a practical ideology, nor it is a dominant one. To interpret both the ideological stability and ideological change, we can draw on Schurmann's model and conclude that the Chinese Marxist discourse of English literature has shifted from the realm of practical ideology into the realm of pure ideology. This interpretation on the one hand gives due recognition to ideological change and the extent of change. On the other hand it disputes the view that ideology or Marxist ideology

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<sup>54</sup> Li Weiping, *A Survey of English and American Modernist Literature*, Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1998, p. 167.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

is dead or unimportant in post-Mao China.

As for the third question, the role of ELT in ideological change, we think the ELT role can be seen firstly at the social level and secondly within the “school.” The expansion of ELT means in the first place a surge in translation, which in turn means extensive ideological dissemination via translation. The translation of D. H. Lawrence’s works into Chinese is but one example. When the majority of the people are English-ignorant,<sup>56</sup> translation seems to be the most important channel of ideological dissemination. With the channel of information limited and information itself carefully selected, the Chinese image of the West could be no other than the one the authorities would like them to have. The expansion of ELT and the consequent surge in translation, however, have made a difference. With language barrier gone, more readers have access to Lawrence and may perceive the writer in their own ways. In addition, the surge of translation also means the availability for the critics of intellectual sources different from the Marxist discourse, with the result of the Marxist discourse becoming just one of the approaches to English literature instead of practically the only one as it was in the Maoist era.

Within the “school”, the ELT role is also quite obvious. The ELT approach to English literature makes the Marxist discourse irrelevant regarding which writers and which literary works are to be introduced to students. The national Syllabus for English Majors, for example, has selected 53 novels by British authors, of which only 24, or less than half

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<sup>56</sup> Despite the huge number of learners of English in China, “only about three percent of students attain an acceptable level of proficiency in English.” Obviously it takes time for a more substantial number of

had occurred in *History* (1993 edition).<sup>57</sup> The reason is that the ELT approach tends to be instrumental regarding teaching materials. (See Chapter Six) Accordingly it regards literature as a means of learning English, which again is perceived to be but a means to other larger ends like the training of a quality labor force for China's modernizations. In terms of the relationship between English literature and the English language, ELT regards the former as secondary to the latter.<sup>58</sup> This is made clear by the fact that even professors of literature, like Tao Jie of Beijing University, have been defining the worth and value of literature in terms of its usefulness to language learning.<sup>59</sup> Therefore the Syllabus does not follow the prescriptions in *History*. Instead, it applies a different benchmark in selecting writers and literary works, which are selected with the view to help students to learn English. In addition, the Syllabus readily incorporates works that may not be considered important by the Marxist discourse, such as detective stories (e.g. *Murder on the Oriental Express*, *Adventure of Sherlock Holmes*) and spy stories (e.g. *The Human Factor*, *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*). In the same way the Syllabus takes in the politically sensitive novel *Nineteen Eighty-four*, which as discussed earlier was perceived by the Marxist discourse to be out of Orwell's "petty bourgeois anti-Marxist position". ELT does not reject the Marxist discourse-- *History* has been in use for the past two decades, but it does not always follow the Marxist discourse, either. It is just being instrumental and pragmatic in selecting writers and literary works. However, for the

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learners to reach the "acceptable level" to which Hertling refers. See James Hertling, "China Embraces the English Language", the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, vol. 42, no. 17, 5 January 1996, pp.49-51.

<sup>57</sup> Working Team on Revision of Syllabus of College English, *Daxue yingyu jiaoxue dagang* (College English Syllabus), Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, and Beijing: Higher Education Press, 1999, "Appendix ii", pp. 28-31.

<sup>58</sup> This does not suggest that there are no "genuine" lovers of English literature in ELT, namely people who love literature for its own sake, but the number is very small if put in the ELT context and even that number is still dwindling.

Marxist discourse, the effects and implication of what happens in the Syllabus is no less serious than those that would be posed by overt challenge and defiance.

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<sup>59</sup> Tao Jie (eds.), "Preface" to *Selected Readings in American Literature*, Beijing: Higher Education Press, 2000, pp. 1-17.

## Chapter Six

### The Trojan Horse of English Language Teaching: The Contribution of ELT to the De-radicalization of Political Discourse in China<sup>1</sup>

#### Introduction

This chapter draws on findings from the cases of the Voice of America (VOA) and George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-four* to demonstrate that the apparently skills-based ELT has significant political and ideological implications. Operating through the mechanisms of positivism, technicalization and marketization, ELT not only opens up politically forbidden areas, but also has produced a so-called "lily-pond effect" in terms of the creation of more channels of Western influence. On the basis of the findings, the chapter attempts to formulate a non-confrontation model that may shed light on the more general political and ideological changes in post-Mao China.

To many China observers, the following two occurrences in the year 2000 may look surprising. The first is the publication of a book advising readers on listening to the English news of the Voice of America. (VOA)<sup>2</sup> The second is the selection of George Orwell's

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<sup>1</sup> Most of this chapter is published in Shaoquan Zhang and Mobo Gao, "The Trojan Horse of English Language Teaching: The Contribution of ELT to the De-radicalization of Political Discourse in China" in *China Information*, Vol. XV, No. 2 (2001), pp. 114-130.

<sup>2</sup> Yan Wenqing & Wang Mai-mai, *Meiguozhiyin yingyu guangbo shoutng zhinan* (A Guide to the English broadcast of the VOA), Xi Bei Gongye Chubanshe (Xi'an: North-West Industry University Press), 2000.

novel *Nineteen Eighty-four* in the National Syllabus of College English<sup>3</sup> amid repeated warnings by the Chinese authorities of “the ideological infiltration of Western hostile forces”.<sup>4</sup> Significantly, neither of these publications was an underground or “illegal” undertaking. The book, authored by two academics, presumably teachers of English, was published by a state press; the Syllabus was drawn up by the country’s most authoritative body in the field and sanctioned by the Ministry of Education.

The official sanction for incorporating VOA and *Nineteen-Eighty-Four* into English language teaching content naturally raises a number of questions. There is no evidence that ideology does not matter any more in post-Mao China.<sup>5</sup> On the contrary, the Chinese authorities are extremely wary of the detrimental effect of Western ideological influences, as shown by the earlier campaigns against “spiritual pollution”, against “bourgeois liberalization” and “peaceful evolution” and the more recent battle against “infiltration of bourgeois ideology.” But then why is the Chinese population allowed free access to VOA and George Orwell, the former being one of the most important Western propaganda machines and the latter a severe critic of communist revolution and the totalitarian state? Is it because English language teaching overrides the concern for erosion of the officially held ideology? If so, then why is ELT considered so important? The answers to these

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<sup>3</sup> The English Section of the National Directing Board for Foreign Language Teaching at Tertiary Level, *Syllabus of College English (as a Major)*, Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, and Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> See “Ding Guangen (head of Central Propaganda Department of the CCP) on New Party Ideology Campaign”, *BBC Monitoring*, 1 May 2000, and Liu Yunshan (Minister of Culture), “Shizhong jianchi xianjin wenhua de qianjin fangxiang, fanrong fazhan you Zhongguo teshe shehuizhuyi wenhua” (Always adhere to the progressive culture, and develop socialist culture with Chinese characteristics), *People’s Daily*, 1 June 2000.

<sup>5</sup> For the view that ideology is still of crucial importance in Post-Mao China, see Zhang Wei-wei, *Ideology and Economic Reform under Deng Xiaoping 1978-1993*, London: Kegan Paul International, 1996. Feng Chen, *Economic Transition and Political legitimacy in Post-Mao China*, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995, and “An Unfinished Battle in China: the Left Criticism of the Reform and the Third Thought

questions will throw more light on the ideological change in post-Mao China.

In what follows we will first present the two cases of VOA and George Orwell in more detail to make the point that ELT has worked as the Trojan Horse in introducing Western ideology into China and consequently helped de-radicalize the Chinese official ideology. Then we will use Franz Schurmann's study, which sees Chinese official ideology as being made up of "pure ideology" and "practical ideology", as an explanatory model for the ELT phenomena. Under Schurmann's model, the implications of the CCP ideology are twofold: firstly, the ideology provides legitimacy to tendencies in ELT that would normally be considered as heterodox; secondly, what happens in ELT may become impetus for further ideological change. Then we will demonstrate that certain mechanisms in ELT, namely positivism, technicalization and marketization, have helped de-radicalize the political discourse. Finally we will conclude by proposing a non-confrontation model to explain the more general political and ideological changes in post-Mao China.

### **The Case of the Voice of America**

The Chinese authorities have always been suspicious of the political intention of the VOA. The reason is not hard to understand, given the fact that during the various student protests in the 1980s, VOA did its best to spread the news beyond the local area and was a main source of information for the students.<sup>6</sup> Chinese media and propaganda workers brand it as "ditai" (enemy broadcaster), "fandong diantai" (reactionary broadcaster) and "didui shili"

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Emancipation", *The China Quarterly*, no. 158, June 1999, pp. 447-467.

(hostile force). This attitude has remained unchanged till today. Listening to VOA news in Chinese was regarded as a crime until the 1970s and some people were jailed or persecuted for listening to the VOA and telling others what they heard from the radio.<sup>7</sup> VOA was singled out and condemned for spreading “Western bourgeois ideas” and “rumors” during the political campaigns in the 1980s. In the wake of the 1989 crackdown in Tiananmen Square, police departments put up public notices warning people not to listen to the VOA. Today listening to VOA in the Chinese language is still forbidden and the VOA web site is blocked.<sup>8</sup>

But on the other hand, the VOA has been actively involved in ELT, and this is one of the important reasons why VOA has a strong hold in China. Its teaching programs until late 1970s tended to be language-centered and skills-based, as shown in *English 900*,<sup>9</sup> a popular book which the VOA had used for many years. At first, sentence drills took the forms of “Hello, I’m John Smith” and “Everything was fine except the weather was too cold at this time of the year” and did not seem to have much ideological content. Since the 1980s, however, there has been a change now English comes along with American cultural and ideological content. Programs like “This Is America” and “The Making of a

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<sup>6</sup> Merle Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds of Democracy in China: Political Reform in the Deng Xiaoping Era*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994, p. 201.

<sup>7</sup> Ding X. L., *The Decline of Communism in China: Legitimacy Crisis, 1977-1989*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 115.

<sup>8</sup> The stance of the Chinese government on the VOA issue is made even clearer by a similar case. When Radio Free Asia, the descendent of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, started beaming news and commentary, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman made the following comments, “This action of the United States seriously violates the norms of international relations.” (Tim Larimer, “Is Anybody Out There Listening?” *Time*, March 17, 1997, pp. 94-95) His language was mild if compared with that of his Vietnamese and North Korean counterparts, who condemned the broadcast as “gun-fires of the Cold War on the airwaves” and “sinister ideological and cultural infiltration.” (Larimer, *ibid*).

<sup>9</sup> *English 900*, New York: Macmillan, 1972.

Nation”<sup>10</sup> are rich in ideological content. In these programs, political figures are introduced next to scientists, writers, and artists. The American version of history is taught using American English. Another program, “English of Current Affairs”, uses texts from the US media for language training. Moreover, VOA news in special English, which is read at a slower pace to help the learner/listener understand, is a mixture of English teaching and news broadcasting. Therefore, ELT that makes use of VOA materials is more than training language skills—it involves the introduction of foreign ideas that may not be considered suitable by the Chinese authorities, and the provision of information that may not be available in the state-run media. The question is: Why do the authorities allow this to happen?

In China, where the majority of the learners have no access to native speakers of English and where many people still find cassettes and videos are too expensive, VOA English teaching programs attract many listeners. Its popularity among English learners has steadily increased. As early as in the 1970s, many English major students listened to VOA’s *English 900* in secret. In the reform period, more people have turned to VOA to study English. “Students could now listen to the BBC and the Voice of America programs without fear of being questioned by Party or police officials.”<sup>11</sup> In the mid-1980s even entire organizations and institutions got involved. English departments at universities started to use VOA programs, including its news broadcasts, as listening material in class. Later the practice went beyond campus and into society at large, as VOA materials were

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<sup>10</sup> The program “This Is America” reports on life in the United States. It tells about America’s people, places, government and culture. The program *The Making of a Nation* tells the history of the United States. See Zhu Wenhua & Liu Yingqing (ed.), *VOA News in Special English Listening Drills*, XFLVTP, 1994, p. X, “Introduction”.

selected and published as textbooks. For example, between 1993 and 2000, Xi'an Foreign Language Video and Textbook Press published a series of 15 such books for listening courses.<sup>12</sup> *Learning English through Listening to the VOA* and *VOA English News* are common book titles. Even when VOA was singled out and condemned for spreading “Western bourgeois ideas” and “rumors” during the political campaigns in the 1980s, in particular around the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown, VOA in the ELT context was not affected.<sup>13</sup>

A recent development, as mentioned at the beginning, is the publication of *Meiguozhiyin yingyu guangbo shouting zhinan* (A Guide to the English broadcast of the VOA). Contents of the book include (1) Introducing VOA Special English, (2) Introducing VOA Standard English, (3) Main Features of News in the English Broadcast, (4) A Comparison of Special English and Standard English, (5) Listening Skills, and (6) A Sample of 140 News Items. The authors believe persistent listening to VOA broadcasts will facilitate students' English proficiency. This view is shared by Yin Jun, among others. Yin Jun suggests that an effective utilization of VOA Special English should involve the English-language teacher's “scientific instruction”, institutional support, and of course the painstaking efforts of the students. Teachers may instruct the students to focus on main ideas while listening and help students solve vocabulary problems like the frequently occurring

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<sup>11</sup> Dzau Y. F., *English in China*, HK: API Press Ltd., 1990, p. 36.

<sup>12</sup> Sources are from our own collections.

<sup>13</sup> In contrast, the impact of macro politics on other areas could be serious. As seen in translation, political campaigns do have effects on the opening-up. While since 1978 the publication of translated books on social, economic, and political subjects from major foreign languages increased dramatically, it suffered two setbacks in 1982 and 1985 respectively. The cause for the setbacks was apparently the political campaigns in the previous years. In 1981 there was the campaign against bourgeois liberalization and between 1983 and 1984 there was the campaign of anti-spiritual pollution. Because of the publishing cycle, the impact of the campaigns tells on the following years. See Ding X. L., *The Decline of Communism in China: Legitimacy*

acronyms WHO, EEC, OPEC, ASEAN, etc. Most universities in China possess AM radio stations set up to serve the national College English Test, and each student is required to buy an earphone when entering university. The device can be utilized to deliver pre-recorded VOA Special English broadcasts so that the students can listen in to them as they wish in their spare time. As for the students, with a high-quality radio, they may take advantage of every chance to practice listening: when they are getting up in the morning; when they are having dinner; or just before they go to sleep.<sup>14</sup> Yin Jun puts the above as suggestions in his/her article, but actually the above are routines widely practiced at China's universities.

By now, VOA English has become a kind of standard for English learners. The national English syllabus for students of English major requires that by the end of the first year of study, students should "be able to understand VOA news in special English and its cultural programs".<sup>15</sup> At the end of the second year, they should "be able to understand VOA and BBC news (in standard English), and be able to distinguish varieties of English, such as American English, British English, Australian English, etc."<sup>16</sup>

ELT practice has undoubtedly added to the popularity and hence the impact of the VOA in China. In terms of media influence from overseas, the VOA has been in a leading position. The number of Chinese listeners to the VOA can be as high as 60 million, as compared with 9 million internet users (in the year 2000) and 1.4 million households that receive CNN

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*Crisis, 1977-1989*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 117.

<sup>14</sup>Yin Jun, "Using VOA Special English to Help Develop Listening Skills" in *ELI Teaching, Theory and Practice*, issue 34 (fall 2001), pp. 23-26.

<sup>15</sup> *Syllabus of College English*, 2000, p. 7.

(1997).<sup>17</sup> Aside from whether or not these statistics are precise, it suffices to say that the VOA has attracted a huge audience in China, and ELT is one of the major reasons.

However, the VOA case seems to be a paradox. On the one hand, the Chinese are forbidden to listen to its news and information broadcasts in Chinese because of its ideological orientation. On the other hand, they are allowed and even encouraged to use the VOA to learn English, even though it is clear that, while doing so, they are simultaneously exposed to the ideological contents of the programs. The inevitable consequence is that ELT serves as a Trojan Horse through which Western ideology is smuggled into China. Moreover, this process has far-reaching implications: If access to Western ideology through ELT is justifiable and legitimate, it can be argued that access to such ideas through the native Chinese language should also be legitimate. Once the political taboo is questioned and challenged by ELT, it becomes less forbidding. This is why ELT is, in our view, contributing to the de-radicalization of discourse in China.

### **The Case of George Orwell**

George Orwell has been controversial in China because he is the author of two popular political novels, *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-four*. The former “is a satire in fable form on revolutionary and post revolutionary Russia, and, by extension, on all

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> David M Lampton., *Same Bed, Different Dreams*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, p. 266.

revolutions.”<sup>18</sup> The latter is “a nightmare story of totalitarianism of the future.”<sup>19</sup> To those Chinese who had suffered or had seen others suffer in the Cultural Revolution, the all-pervasive power of Big Brother, the Thought Police, and Newspeak, as well as the tragic fate of the protagonist, are all immediately recognizable. According to the official view, expressed in many textbooks and scholarly studies, these two novels “vilify socialist society and communism”<sup>20</sup> and are “the clearest and most systematic articulation of Orwell’s petty bourgeois anti-Marxist position”.<sup>21</sup> An incident in 1981 is very illustrative.<sup>22</sup> That year the British Council and China’s Nanjing University co-sponsored a training program in modern English literature. The British teachers had sent a shipment of contemporary English literary works to China as materials to be used in the program. When the shipment arrived, it was found that all copies of Orwell’s *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-four* were missing. Apparently the books did not pass Chinese censorship and were confiscated.

A more recent incident indicates criticism of revolution in general and the Chinese Communist revolution in particular, as well as criticism of authoritarian power is still a very sensitive issue. Here we refer to the ban and criticism of Li Zehou and Liu Zaifu’s *Gaobie Gemin* (Farewell to revolution). The book was originally entitled *Huiwang ershi shiji Zhongguo* (A look back at twentieth century China). Later the authors chose to use Farewell to Revolution as its title to highlight the central theme of the book. By

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<sup>18</sup> Margaret Drabble (eds.), *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* (sixth edition), Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 31.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. p. 726.

<sup>20</sup> Zhang Hanxi, *Advanced English (Book 2)*, Beijing: Commercial Press, (first edition 1980) 1991, p. 20.

<sup>21</sup> Hou Weirui, *Xiandai yingguo xiaoshuoshi* (A Survey of Modern British Fiction), Shanghai: Foreign Languages Education Press, 1985, 1996, p. 359.

<sup>22</sup> The present author was a participant in the program and had witnessed the incident.

“revolution”, the authors mean “radical actions that involve mass movement and violence aimed at overthrowing existent order and institutions.”<sup>23</sup> In their view, in China the twentieth century was one in which violent revolution and life-and-death politics dominated everything and caused tension in all aspects of social life. Revolution and worship of revolution had been destructive in terms of what they had brought to China and to the Chinese people.<sup>24</sup> As a result, the book is a critique of all the revolutions in twentieth century China, including the Chinese Communist revolution. The authors were criticized for their “deconstruction” of Chinese revolutions at special national conferences held in Jinan, Changsha and Beijing.<sup>25</sup> This case may to some extent indicate the Chinese context in which the George Orwell case occurred.<sup>26</sup>

Orwell’s name first appeared in an English textbook published in 1980, which contained his essay “Marrakech”.<sup>27</sup> The essay deals with the colonial impact on an East African country and carries a strong anti-colonial and anti-imperialist message--perhaps this was the reason that the essay was selected to introduce Orwell to Chinese students. In the mid-1980s *Animal Farm* and a number of his essays were translated and published in Chinese, but before long the Chinese version of *Animal Farm* disappeared from bookshops and public libraries. During the same period, *Nineteen Eighty-four* was translated and

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<sup>23</sup> Li Zehou and Liu Zaifu, *Gaobie gemin: huiwang ershi shiji Zhongguo* (Farewell to revolution: looking back at twentieth century China), HK: Tian Di Tushu (Cosmos Books LTD), 1997, p. 4.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. p. 66.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> Orwell may have been banned even before the Cultural Revolution. Statistics by Sun Zhili, among others, gives no evidence of Orwell being translated or introduced in other forms in that period. See “List of Translated British and American Literary Works: 1949-1966” (Appendix I) in Sun Zhili, *1949-1966: Zhongguo yingmei wenxue fanyi gaikuang* (1949-1966: A survey of Chinese translations of English and American literature). Nanjing: Yilin Press, 1999.

<sup>27</sup> Zhang Hanxi, *Advanced English (Book 2)*, Beijing: Commercial Press, (first edition 1980) 1991.

published in Chinese (1985, 1986, 1988), first for “internal circulation” (limited to cultural officials and critics) and later for the general readership.<sup>28</sup> However, the novel was banned after 1989.

Viewed in this light, the recent selection of *Nineteen Eighty-four* in the national English syllabus is yet another manifestation of the cyclic model in contemporary Chinese politics discussed earlier in the thesis. The introduction, disappearance and reoccurrence of George Orwell indicate conflict and tension between the practical ideology of Modernization and the pure ideology of the Four Cardinal Principles. In the ELT context, the novel is just one of many well-known literary works for English majors, just as *Pride and Prejudice*, *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Lord of the Flies*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, etc. ELT justifies access to books that are otherwise banned for their political/ideological messages. Just as in the VOA case, it seems that the Chinese authorities adopt a double standard towards heterodox acts and ideas. What is banned in Chinese seems to be OK in English. Many far more heterodox ideas can appear in ELT context than can be permitted to Chinese thinkers, an interesting double standard. How ELT could have assumed this role is, of course, the heart of the issue.

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<sup>28</sup> According to Dong Leshan, the translator, the reason then given for translating and publishing the book was that “It describes the darkness of the West”. The author acknowledges comments by Professor Geremie Barne of Australian National University (ANU) at a panel session of the Seventh Biennial Conference of the Chinese Studies Association of Australia (July 2001, ANU, Canberra).

## The Lily-pond Effect

This research has found that the VOA and George Orwell cases are not exceptions, but just two characteristic examples of many similar cases showing that ELT has contributed to the de-radicalization of political discourse in China. The official sanction for incorporating VOA and *Nineteen-Eighty-Four* into ELT content is the cumulative product of many taboo-breaking cases that happened earlier or at the same time. Indeed, what happens in ELT in terms of its influence on politics can be described as “a lily-pond effect.” At first only isolated and sporadic cases or “lily leaves” came out as if to see what the political climate was like. By and by, however, more “leaves” appeared, with the result of a pond covered with lilies.

In addition to the VOA programs, BBC news and CNN news are two other main sources of ELT materials. The earlier mentioned Xi'an Foreign Language Video and Textbooks Press has published in addition to the VOA series two other series of textbooks based respectively on BBC news and CNN news. The aim of the series is stated as to “meet the demand of those ... who still wish to improve their aural comprehension ability.”<sup>30</sup> However, learning English is not the only aim, for the editor also believes that (by using the series) “Learners will be able to keep up with what is happening in the world as well as broaden their horizon and increase their knowledge.”<sup>31</sup> In the Preface to the CNN series, the editors described CNN news program as having the following features. “It covers a

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<sup>29</sup> Anonymous reviewer, “Comments: VOA, George Orwell, and the Politics of De-politicization”, Oct. 2001.

<sup>30</sup> Hou Xinmin (eds.), *BBC News*, Xi'an: Xi'an Foreign Language Video and textbooks Press, vol. 1, p. X, “Introduction”.

huge amount of information. Its vocabulary is rich and fresh. It is up-to-date both in terms of news coverage and the use of language.”<sup>32</sup> So here again one finds the foreign language is the primary goal, but it is not the only goal.

Our research into the content of the listening materials produced the following findings. First, generally speaking the news items selected for listening drills are within the acceptable range of the Chinese authorities. They contain few “negative” reports of China and no criticism of Chinese authorities at all. Second, only in one single case, the authors/editors take up the Chinese government position regarding the VOA.

Although VOA English broadcast is very good for learning English, it is a propaganda machine of the US government. As such it inevitably has its political orientations and sometimes it spreads reactionary views. Therefore we should adopt the basic position and views of our government while listening to VOA. Only in this way can we learn what we want to learn.<sup>33</sup>

However, even in this single case, the importance of taking the government’s position is reduced since the above advice comes in a “technical” rather than “political” context-- as one of the fifteen “skills” deemed necessary for listening to the VOA. All the other skills sound strictly technical, such as how to get a better reception and how to catch key words in news items, etc. Third and finally, the textbooks do contain news items that pose difference

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Liu Li (ed.), *CNN English News: Listening Drills*, Xi’an: Xi’an Foreign Language Video and Textbooks Press, 1997.

and challenge to the official Chinese stance on some important issues. For instance, both the extensive VOA report of the Kosovo crisis,<sup>34</sup> and the report of the Dalai Lama's comments on the little boy chosen by Chinese authorities as the second holiest figure in Tibetan Buddhism<sup>35</sup> are not likely to be found in the Chinese media. However, the textbooks contain few news items like these. In the Kosovo case, news items contain a speech by U. S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright urging Milosevic to accept NATO demands on Kosovo.

We are hitting your forces in the field. We are destroying your tanks, your artillery, your ammunition storage, your petroleum, your electric grid; 80% now of Serbia is without electricity and is going to stay in that way. So that is what we are saying to Milosevic; we are saying to him that the air campaign is intensifying, you are losing, we are winning. It is time for you to accept the condition.<sup>36</sup>

The findings indicate that the authors/editors had chosen a "non-political" approach in selecting the news items. This approach signifies scholarship as a distinct entity, autonomous from and resistant to non-scholarly, political and ideological contingencies. Thus it is different from the more radical intellectual tradition in modern China that was inextricably intertwined with *realpolitik*.<sup>37</sup> But viewed from another angle, the ELT

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<sup>33</sup> Yan Wenqing & Wang Mai-mai, *Meiguozhiyin yingyu guangbo shouting zhinan* (A guide to the English broadcast of the VOA), p. 152.

<sup>34</sup> Huang Zheng (eds.), *VOA News in Standard English Listening Course*, Xi'an: Xi'an Foreign Language Video and textbooks Press, 2000, pp. 104-126.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* p. 156.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* p. 113.

<sup>37</sup> Liu Kang, "Is there an Alternative to (Capitalist) Globalization? The Debate about Modernity in China" in Fredric Jameson and Masao Miyoshi (eds.), *The Cultures of Globalization*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1998, pp. 164-190.

approach is inescapably “political.” It is “political” first in the sense that “Teachers can either support powerful elites and their ideology, challenge those powerful elites and their ideology or adopt an attitude of indifference towards the elites and their ideology, for all these actions and decisions, whether active or passive, are political in nature.”<sup>38</sup> More importantly, it is also political in a narrower sense because the seemingly non-political approach works for the continuous and extensive use of Western media in ELT.

The real significance of ELT as a de-radicalizing factor, however, does not depend on how many dissenting “foreign ideas” are presented in the textbooks themselves or whether the teachers have the intention to challenge the official ideology when they compile these textbooks. It lies in the simple fact that ELT has made possible the politically impossible in other contexts, has done it extensively, and it is able to continue this role.

Regarding George Orwell, there were some interesting developments in parallel with or following the official sanction of *Nineteen Eighty-four* as ELT content. In 2000 and 2001, *Nineteen Eighty-four* and *Animal Farm* were published respectively in bilingual editions in China.<sup>39</sup> In the English parts of the novels, perceived difficult words and phrases are translated into Chinese. This indicates that the readers the editor/publisher has in mind are learners of English in the first place. However, the novels are also intended for “those who love English literature, or do research in the field, as well as the general readership, who are attracted by the ideological elements (*sixiang meili*, literally, ideological attractiveness) in

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<sup>38</sup> Mark R. Ginsburg, “Educators / Politics” in *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (Nov. 1992), pp. 417-429.

Orwell's works.”<sup>40</sup> Printed on the back cover of *Nineteen Eighty-four* is a quote from the controversial Chinese writer Wang Xiaobo (1952-1997). “In 1980, then an undergraduate, I read George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-four*. The experience has become a life-long memory. This book and Huxley's *Brave New World* and Zamyatin's *We* were described as a ‘trilogy of the dystopia’. However, for me, *Nineteen Eighty-four* is not utopia, but history.” Here the Orwellian novels are more than books for English learners—they are meant for a more general readership and their ideological aspects rather than the linguistic aspects are highlighted. Indeed, it is the editors/translators' view in the Preface that “every Chinese, who can read, who has conscience, and who wishes to gain a certain kind of wisdom, should read the book, and read it seriously.”<sup>41</sup> The Preface ends in English, urging, “Buy it! Read it! Appreciate it! Study it! Keep it!” Meanwhile, Shanghai People's Press also published a bilingual edition of *Animal Farm*, using a different Chinese translation.<sup>42</sup> Actually the Chinese translation was the one that had been published in 1988. As said earlier, after 1989, the year of Tiananmen crackdown, the book disappeared from bookshops and public libraries. In “Preface” to the new edition, the translators point to the ten-year-or-so gap between the two editions, but leave it to the reader to think what accounts for the gap.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> The two novels were published respectively in 2000 and 2001 by Zhongguo Zhigong Chubanshe in Beijing (China Zhigong Press). The Chinese translations and notes to the English versions are by Liu Zigang and Xu Huiyan.

<sup>40</sup> Liu Zigang and Xu Huiyan, “Translators' Preface to *Animal Farm*”, pp. 1-3.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> George Orwell, *Animal Farm* (bilingual edition, Chinese translation by Zhang Yi and Gao Xiaoxian), Shanghai: Shanghai People's Press, 2000.

<sup>43</sup> Zhang Yi and Gao Xiaoxian, “For the Care of Ourselves: Preface to the New Edition of *Animal Farm*” in *ibid.*

These cases are interesting and telling. In all these cases ELT emerges ostentatiously as an objective of and a reason for the publication. Yet it is clear that here ELT is serving as a vehicle for the Orwellian ideas. Less clear but still probable is that in later times ELT may serve as a defense or retreat for those involved in the publication if the political climate changes into a hostile one. Here the point is that in China there is not one total authority any more. There are people who may deliberately choose to publish and introduce dissenting western ideologies by using ELT as a channel, one which the Party officials want to control but can't for two reasons. The first reason is that they may be impotent because they are not in the field. The second is that they themselves are constrained by ideological shifting in the reform era, which focuses more on Modernization. If the authorities define ELT in terms of its utility to Modernization, there are also people who approach ELT differently, for some of the actions appear distinctly non-official or even anti-official. Viewed in this light, ELT impact on macro politics is not just like a side effect, incidental or unintended, but is the intended result on the part of some individuals who take up ELT as a weapon in China's ideological battles.

That ELT has made a difference in forcing the authorities to adopt a double standard can also be seen in the case of D. H. Lawrence's novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The Chinese translation of the novel is banned as "pornography" (See Chapter Five) whereas the English version is published and circulated as "a fine English reader." This is interesting, for the Chinese authorities actually have already adopted a double standard when "Many

far more heterodox ideas can appear in translated foreign works than can be permitted to Chinese thinkers.”<sup>44</sup>

Last but not least, ELT has helped spread the *Bible* in post-Mao China.<sup>45</sup> In a non-ELT context, it would be hard to imagine the propagation of Christian ideas outside the church. By law, Chinese citizens have the freedom to believe in religion. But also by law, Chinese citizens have the freedom NOT to believe in religion. In reality, the second freedom, the freedom not to believe in religion seems to have more implications. It affects not only the 67 million Communist Party members (2000)<sup>46</sup> and the 68.41 million Communist Youth League members (2002)<sup>47</sup>, but also the public servants, those in the army and the police force, the students, and many others. Therefore outside the church, approaching the *Bible* for religious ideas is discouraged. On the other hand, the authorities would allow people to read the *Bible* to learn English or to study the *Bible* as part of the study of English literature. As early as 1979, one of the examinations for postgraduate study at Beijing Foreign Languages College (now Beijing Foreign Languages University) required the candidates to define the *Bible*, among other literary works. By the 1990s, a *Bible* story in an English magazine, a *Bible* selection among readings in English literature, and a book or a seminar with the topic of The *Bible* and the English language or English literature<sup>48</sup> looked quite

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<sup>44</sup>This is from comments on “VOA, George Orwell, and the Politics of Depoliticization” by the reviewer, who cites extensively translated Hayek, the early works of Marx, the European Existentialists, etc., as evidence of the double standard.

<sup>45</sup> The implication of this spread may be better understood against the historical background of the missionary efforts in late Qing Dynasty to spread English in order to spread Christianity. See Chapter Two of the thesis.

<sup>46</sup> *People's Daily*, 1 July 2000.

<sup>47</sup> Report on the eve of China's Youth Day by China Central Television (CCTV), 3 May 2002.

<sup>48</sup> Such as, Liao Guangrong, *Shengjing yu Yingyu Yuyan Wenhua* (The *Bible* and the English language), Changsha: Hunan Normal University Press, 2000.

commonplace. As a matter of fact, publications like *Stories from the Bible*<sup>49</sup> and the like, available in Xinhua (New China) Bookstores and public libraries in China, are not essentially different from the popular *Bible* readings handed out at the Christian churches in Australia.

Answers to the questions why the authorities allow these to happen, and how ELT could assume such a role in de-radicalizing the political discourse first lie in the model of pure ideology and practical ideology introduced in Chapter Three of the thesis. Answers can also be found within ELT itself, to which we will come in the next section. The model defines official ideology as made up of different levels in terms of abstraction, and defines ideological change as the shifting of key components from the realm of practical ideology into that of pure ideology or vice versa. Under this model, the reform era is characterized by divergent, shifting and contradictory policies—which lead to equally divergent and conflicting actions—as a result of divergence and tension at higher levels of ideology. Also under this model, the resultant actions add to the conflict and tension at higher levels of ideology and help push some elements of the ideology further into the realm of pure ideology.

The implications for ELT are twofold. First, differences and challenges are tolerated so long as they do not constitute an immediate threat. The practical ideology in this era has been Modernization and economic development and the ideology of radical revolution has shifted to become pure ideology. As a result, “to learn the foreign language with the

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<sup>49</sup> Zhu Wei, (eds. and trans.) *Stories from the Bible* (bilingual edition), Chengdu: Sichuan People's Press, 1994.

foreign ideas” has replaced “to learn the foreign language without learning the foreign ideas” as the norm.<sup>50</sup> Here the goal is the foreign language, not the foreign ideas, but the foreign ideas are included in the learning/teaching process because they make the process more productive. This gives the answer to the question why the authorities allow these to happen. Secondly, differences and challenges do not stop at being tolerated. They may continue to exert themselves more actively until new circumstances are created for a political and ideological response. More “lilies” will come out to change the face of the “pond.”

### **The Mechanisms of the Trojan Horse**

The model of pure ideology and practical ideology defines the political and ideological conditions under which ELT could function as an effective channel of Western influence and contributing factor for the de-radicalization of political discourse in China. But macro conditions alone do not fully explain how ELT actually functions like that. As to be discussed below, some important mechanisms are also involved, which have made the ELT function possible.

Comparing ELT in post-Mao China with its historical parallels, there are both continuation and change. First the importance of the foreign language remains as it was. Ever since Western gunboats forced China’s door open, there has been little doubt as to the usefulness of English. Emperor Kuang-hsu had no such doubt when he started to learn English in

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1891.<sup>51</sup> Neither did Mao Zedong have when he was learning English in the 1960s.<sup>52</sup> The national drive in learning English in the reform era is, in a sense, just a continuation of what started over a century ago. Second, as argued in previous chapters, the foreign language dilemma has remained unsolved. If the English language is a gateway between China and the West, beyond the gateway there are always other things as well as advanced science and technology and better ways of management.

What has changed is the emergence of three mechanisms that have become dominant in shaping ELT in the post-Mao era, namely the positivistic discourse of ELT, the instrumental approach to foreign language teaching, and marketization.<sup>53</sup> Here we do not suggest this change is a fundamental one, for each of these mechanisms may have some historical roots. But the extent to which these mechanisms become dominant models of ELT in post-Mao China is historically unmatched, and also the way they serve as vehicles for the dissemination of Western ideologies is quite different.

At the first sight these mechanisms may seem anything but “political”—if politics is defined in terms of state politics and the official ideology. They are closely associated with a professionalism in ELT, which “refers to seeing methods, techniques, and procedures

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<sup>50</sup> The latter phrase is from Price. See R. F. Price, *Education in Communist China*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975, p. 171.

<sup>51</sup> Chen Jerome, *China and the West: Society and Culture 1815-1937*, Hutchinson of London, 1979, “Chronology”, pp. III-VI.

<sup>52</sup> Zhang Hanzhi, “Mao Zedong” in photocopy.

<sup>53</sup> These concepts are developed from what Pennycook calls “scientization, trivialization and marketization”. See, Alastair Pennycook, *The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language*, London and New York: Longman, 1994, pp.150-180. However, we differ from Pennycook significantly in terms of basic assumptions and orientations.

followed in ELT, including the theories of language learning and teaching adhered to, as sufficient for understanding and analysing language learning.”<sup>54</sup>

“ELT professionalism excludes broader social issues, the prerequisites and consequences of ELT activity, from its professional purview.... The professional discourse around ELT disconnect culture from structure by limiting the focus in language pedagogy to technical matters, that is, language and education in a narrow sense, to the exclusion of social, economic, and political matters.”<sup>55</sup>

Yet interestingly it is these mechanisms that have effectively turned ELT into the Trojan Horse in terms of dissemination of ideas that go against official ideology and in terms of de-radicalisation of discourse in China. In the Chinese context, in which overt challenge to the official ideology is forbidden, what appears apolitical or non-political may have significant political implications, and what might have been a check to the dissemination of ideas in other contexts has proved to be a prompter of the dissemination.

### **The Positivistic Discourse of ELT**

The reform era has been noted for its worship of science. The worship of science is not new—the May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement in 1919 had called for the introduction of *Sai Xiansheng* (Mr

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<sup>54</sup> Robert Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (first edition 1992) 1996, p. 48.

<sup>55</sup> Robert Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (first edition 1992) 1996, p. 48.

Science), along with *De Xiansheng* (Mr Democracy), into China. However, in terms of scale and intensity, the worship of science in the reform era is unmatched by any of its historical parallels. “Science” now seems to have magic power. It is taken as true, neutral and interest-free. The very fact that all sciences are human constructions is overlooked. For example, to attract followers, various *qigong* schools in China have claimed to be a science, such as “life science” and “*qigong* science”. On the other hand, the Chinese government has listed “anti-science”, along with “anti-humanity” and “anti-society”, as one of the most serious “crimes” of the Falun Gong. The importance of science is also made evident in the Chinese authorities’ frequent claim and declaration that Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought are science. Science, as it were, is legitimating and even awe-inspiring. In her interviews of over one hundred Chinese intellectuals between late 1980s and early 1990s, J. A. English-Lueck observes, among other things, they all expressed “an almost mystical belief in the power of science”.<sup>56</sup>

As Stanley Aronowitz argues, science has established itself as not merely the dominant but the only legitimate form of human knowledge. By tying its truth claims to methodology, science has claimed independence from the influence of social and historical conditions. Science is therefore seen as an authority beyond critique, whose norms and values are neutral, self-evident, and absolute. However, science should be best seen as a socially constructed discourse that legitimates its power by presenting itself as truth.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Lawrence R. Sullivan, (Review of) “Chinese Intellectuals on the World Frontier: Blazing the Black Path”, Ann Arbor, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 57, no. 4, 1998, pp. 1118-20.

<sup>57</sup> Stanley Aronowitz, *Science as Power: Discourse and Ideology in Modern Society*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988, pp. 3-35.

Because ELT is closely linked to the science of linguistics, in particular to its branch of applied linguistics, a scientisation of ELT has taken place. The scientific discourse of applied linguistics allows only for a view of English and English language teaching as socially, culturally and politically neutral. This discourse in the first place has created some false idea about the English language.

With the rise of linguistics and applied linguistics, a new positivistic and structuralist version of English as an international language emerged, in which language was construed as a neutral medium for communication, a language divorced from social, cultural or political concerns, and a language in which speakers all over the world had equal rights.<sup>58</sup>

The scientific discourse also has led to the dominance of “scientific methods” in ELT, which are proposed as a kind of modern technology of teaching. Because of this association of methods with modern technology and hence science, some teachers of English unconsciously assume that the methods are value-free and universally applicable. As a result, the Chinese traditional grammar/translation approach to ELT has been largely replaced by the more modern-looking communicative and functional approaches. The students are learning skills from the instructor with the help of a set of “scientifically” proven methods.

Moreover, the science of linguistics itself, at least some of its most influential schools, is

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<sup>58</sup> Alastair Pennycook, *The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language*, London and New York: Longman, 1994, p. 158.

noted for its detachment from the social, ideological and historical aspects of language. Language is often regarded as a system of signs, and the study of language is more concerned with *langue* (Saussure)<sup>59</sup>, deep structure and transformational rules (Chomsky) than with its sociopolitical aspects.<sup>60</sup> Here language becomes an objectively describable and isolated structural entity. When applied to ELT, as in applied linguistics, these linguistic theories further diminish the social and cultural significance of the English texts.

The structuralist linguistics as represented by Saussure has drawn criticism from the Marxist approach to language, among other approaches. The Marxist view thinks that by creating a distinction between *langue* and *parole*, between what is general, systematic and stable in language and what is momentary, interactive and unpredictable, the essential social nature of language was lost. Such a distinction was not ideologically innocent, because it refocused the study of language—later to become linguistics—on an abstract system whose actual connection with society had been cut. It created an artificial discontinuity between language system and language history.<sup>61</sup> But despite this Marxist criticism, structuralist linguistics seems to have taken root and become influential, and the social aspects of language are overlooked. Gui Shichun's review of studies in linguistics and ELT by Chinese academics shows among the hundreds of papers reviewed there are just a few that deal with social aspects of the English language and ELT.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> F. Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (trans. Wade Baskin), New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966.

<sup>60</sup> N. Chomsky, *Syntactic Structure*, The Hague: Mouton, 1957 and *Aspects of Syntax*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1965.

<sup>61</sup> Marnie Holborow, *The Politics of English: a Marxist View of Language*, London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 1999, pp. 2-4.

<sup>62</sup> Gui Shichun *et al* (eds.), *Yuyanxue Yanjiu Fanfa Lun* (Research methodology in linguistics), Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 1997.

## **The Instrumental Approach to Foreign Language Teaching**

Strictly speaking, the instrumental approach to foreign language teaching, like the worship of science, had developed much earlier than the present period of reform. The previously discussed Ti-Yong Formula in the late Qing Dynasty and Chinglish as foreign language policy and practice in the Maoist era are both based on the assumption that language could be simply a useful instrument and its function as such could be separated from its cultural and ideological import. In the history of the PRC, the authorities first turned to Russian rather than English, believing that beyond the Russian language there was advanced culture as well as advanced science and technology.

This downward turn for English, however, was suddenly changed when the Ministry of Education issued a circular on July 10, 1956. This was because in that year China had launched a drive to “scale the heights of science” and Western science and technology was recognized as something China should learn from. Other languages than Russian were needed “for the translation of imported books from Western countries.”<sup>63</sup>

There is no doubt that policy shifts in foreign language had to do with changes in international politics. But the instrumental approach to language had made the shifts in

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<sup>63</sup> Hu Wenzhong, “A Matter of Balance: Reflection on China’s Language Policy in Education” in *Asian Englishes*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2001, pp. 66-79.

language policy easier.

The instrumental approach in the reform era can be seen in the objectives of ELT as defined in guidelines and syllabuses sanctioned by the Ministry of Education. Though the guidelines and syllabuses undergo a revision every few years, this approach itself has remained unchanged as a dominant feature. The goal for English teaching/study at the secondary schools is defined as to lay a solid foundation for the tertiary education through basic training of the “four skills” in listening, speaking, reading and writing. There are specific requirements for each of the four skills in terms of phonetics, grammar and vocabulary. The general guideline for College English (as English for non-English majors at the tertiary level is called) has set a goal that is linguistically more demanding-- to develop the learner’s skills to the level at which s/he can obtain knowledge and information in science and technology through the target language. The goal for English majors is not dissimilar. An English department responsible for the training of English teachers devised three objectives: (1) to become fluent in the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing; (2) to recognize important elements in the literature and culture of English-speaking countries; and (3) to apply principles of English language teaching.<sup>64</sup>

In addition to linguistic proficiency, the guidelines also require the students to get knowledge about the culture of the English-speaking peoples. Here the word “culture” is put in a very general sense, covering everything that has to do with the word “English”. Cultural knowledge is not defined as a goal equally important as that of linguistic

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<sup>64</sup> Donald J. Ford, *The Twain Shall Meet: Current Study of English in China*, McFarland & Company, Inc.

proficiency, but as a by-product of the language teaching/learning activity, knowledge needed for better communication.<sup>65</sup> English literature, which perhaps provides the largest window to English “culture”, is treated as a lesser means of learning the English language rather than as a goal *per se*. Consequently literary and social messages may be overlooked and under-explored in the literary class. The English language in turn is only a tool for China’s modernisation. In a way it is treated like “Western technology”, whose value and function is defined under the framework of the time-honoured Ti-Yong Formula. (See Chapter Two) Indeed, there is much justification in the complaint that English in the ELT case had been reduced to “the level of a technical language not only almost totally stripped of expressive and aesthetic characteristics but also denuded of any critical or self-conscious dimension”.<sup>66</sup>

To make ELT a pure technical matter means “the dilution of ideas” or “playing down of message.” Because ELT is carried out under the framework of English as a tool of

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Publishers, 1988, p. 31.

<sup>65</sup> Put under an international perspective, the Chinese approach to foreign language education seems to some extent different from those in France and Germany, but is similar to that of the United States. The goals of foreign language education in France are threefold: linguistic, cultural and educational. The first two goals are also found in China. The third, however, is almost absent in the Chinese guidelines, namely foreign language education “should broaden students’ intellectual horizon, develop their appreciation for effort, method and rigor, and refine their intellectual, aesthetic and moral judgement and sensibility.” (Claire Kramsch, quotes, 1991) The goals in Germany (FRG) are stated as furthering the development of the learner’s personality through the acquisition of information and the ability to reflect critically on that information. (Claire Kramsch, 1991) In both cases, the policies seem more individually oriented. However, the Chinese foreign language policy is similar to that in the United States of America, for the latter also put more emphasis on the functional service of the foreign language to national/political goals. Guidelines in America claim such goals as: meet the challenge of international economic and technological advances (Utah); reinforce this nation’s security (Pennsylvania, Indiana); cultivate international understanding, responsibility and effective participation in a global age (Wisconsin); provide students with cultural and linguistic sensitivities necessary for world citizenship (Connecticut). See Kramsch, C. “Culture in Language Learning” in Kees de Bot *et al* (Eds.), *Foreign Language Research in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1991.

<sup>66</sup> Robert Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (first edition 1992) 1996, p. 15.

communication, its primary objectives are skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing rather than the cultural aspects of English. In the ELT context, a good English text is one that provides an “interesting” context for the language learning activities. It makes no difference whether the text is about an earthquake that kills hundreds of people or is about a traffic jam that involves hundreds of cars. Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address is not more significant than a student’s diary. For they are all means to an end, the mastery of the foreign language, which itself is but a means (a communicative tool) to other ends. Shakespeare and Dickens have little value because they do not provide any models for contemporary English communication. The greeting “How do you do?” is far more useful and valuable than Hamlet’s monologue “To be or not to be, that is the question.” English literature, once thought to be the embodiment of the best of the English language, is dethroned by business English, English for tourism, English for science, and a host of other varieties. Yet strangely it was as a result of this positivistic and instrumental attitude towards the English language and language teaching that people in China were allowed to listen to the VOA, BBC, and CNN, and to read Orwell, *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, and the *Bible*. After all, it is only the vehicle that counts and not the message. The classroom is not to be affected by politics and ideology. In other words, things that happen within the classroom are not open to political and ideological interpretations.

## **Marketization**

In addition to the positivist discourse of and the instrumental approach to ELT, there is the force of the market, which has also helped make possible the use of Western materials like

the VOA and George Orwell and the unintended dissemination of Western ideologies. The marketization of English has made ELT appear ideologically harmless while promoting the expansion of ELT in China. To use an analogue,

ELT is a service industry, supplying people with a service – English language teaching – and a commodity – the English language. This tendency to celebrate the market-driven expansion of English as an innocent, technical operation, reducing students to “consumers”, teachers to “suppliers of a product”, and schools to “corporations”, appears to be an increasingly common way in which teachers and applied linguists have been able to take up the global spread of English.”<sup>67</sup>

The relationship between English and the market is so close that Yorio (1986) finds it is possible to explain it in explicit business terms.

[English as] second language programs can be viewed within this marketing framework. It is clear that we are suppliers of a product (or service), which consumers need and avail themselves of. Students are consumers who pay for our product directly (from their own pocket) or indirectly (through subsidies given to them or us). We are like “corporations” which on the basis of certain management decisions produce a service which we hope will be purchased by many and which will please all buyers. We advertise the product (some of us more, others less), we

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<sup>67</sup> A. Pennycook (quotes), *The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language*, London and New York: Longman, 1994, p. 165.

hire personnel to deliver the project (teachers), and we build and administer the locations where the product changes hands (schools and classrooms).<sup>68</sup>

When ELT becomes a service industry with economic incentives, the market, instead of politics, assumes the role of prime mover. Official rhetoric about the purpose of education emphasizes its service to politics and the four modernizations as defined by the Communist Party. But individuals are developing a different view. A survey of 1824 learners of English at the well-known Beijing-seated Xindongfang (new oriental) English School shows that the top two objectives of learning English are “to advance oneself” (*tisheng ziwo*) and “to go overseas” (*chuguo*).<sup>69</sup> While there has always been an awareness of the economic benefits of education, it is only in the past two decades that individuals have begun to think of subjects of study as sorters that help determine their occupational prospects. The idea is taking root that education can be an investment in personal economic advancement, and a well-chosen subject of study can be a good investment. It will pay in dollars and cents. Society is not only a collective body to which each individual should devote his or her self, but also a market place where individuals can maximize their advantages once they have obtained the right education. That “right education” actually means the study of a subject that has to do with the development of the country’s economy. In other words, it pays to learn English.

In their critique of human capital theory, R. Robinson and B. Fuller hold that human capital theory errs by taking for granted that schools necessarily create skills and that these skills

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

are automatically transformed into increased economic output. As a balance to that seemingly simplistic view, they set three conditions for the successful operation of the human capital process. First, education must create the kind of skills required by the economy. Second, the economy must be able to absorb the skills created by schooling. And third, there must be a close coupling between the educational and economic systems so that the people with the appropriate skills are allocated to jobs that can utilize those skills.<sup>70</sup> ELT precisely meets the three conditions specified by Robinson and Fuller. With equal qualifications in other aspects, a graduate with a certificate of English Band 6 will have a better chance of getting a job than the graduate without the certificate. In particular, the former is more likely to find a better-paying job in a foreign company or joint venture, and in the socially and economically more developed capital and coastal areas where the foreign and joint ventures tend to be seated.<sup>71</sup>

Economic incentives are high for state sector institutions of higher learning. Selling English by offering English courses and training programs is so profitable that many of these institutions are elbowing into the market. For many private schools, their development, and even their very survival, depends on whether the courses they offer are closely linked to the job market. China has hundreds of non-governmental institutions of higher learning. But by 1999 only twenty-five of them had been granted the right to issue diplomas and degrees.<sup>72</sup> How can the majority of those private institutions survive in a

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<sup>69</sup> [www.cul.sina.com.cn](http://www.cul.sina.com.cn) (accessed on 16 April 2002)

<sup>70</sup> Bruce Fuller & Richard Robinson (ed.), *The Political Construction of Education: the State, School Expansion, and Economic Change*, New York: Praeger, 1992, p. 105.

<sup>71</sup> Normally foreign ventures would ask candidates to fill in the job-application form in English. *Graduates in Jiangxi Normal University*, no. 11 (2002), p. 45.

<sup>72</sup> *China Daily*, 13 September 1999.

country where diplomas, degrees and certificates are regarded as the only credentials for educational attainment? That is where ELT comes in. As a matter of fact, of the twelve largest non-governmental universities in China, each having an enrolment of more than 10,000 students, at least three are specialised in foreign languages or in subjects closely related to foreign languages: Xi'an Translation College, Xi'an Foreign Affairs College, and Hunan College of Foreign Economy. In the single year 2002, out of the ten non-governmental higher education institutions that had the largest enrolment of the year, four are foreign language institutions: Xi'an Translation College, Beijing American English College, Beijing Furen University of Foreign Languages, and Xi'an College of European and Asian Studies.<sup>73</sup>

John W. Meyer, in examining the motives for educational expansion, pointed out that, under certain conditions, that is, when the value of education as a collective good and the value of education in the stratification system are recognized and institutionalized, "people (parents, students, etc.) push for more participation in education, organizations compete to expand education, and so do national societies and states." In our case here, these conditions are met when the four modernizations are formulated into part of the official ideology and when the utility and the importance of the foreign language is recognized nationwide.

ELT is a booming industry both for institutions and individuals. Dongfang Foreign Languages School in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Qianjing Foreign Languages

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<sup>73</sup> [www.edu.sina.com.cn](http://www.edu.sina.com.cn) (accessed 3 Sept. 2002)

School in Shanghai are success stories. The very words “foreign languages school” are so attractive to prospective students that institutions vie to include them in their names. In the southern city of Nanchang, there are at least six different foreign language schools.<sup>74</sup> Xin Dongfang Foreign Language School in Beijing runs a multi-million business by offering courses for TOEFL and IELTS candidates. Likewise, TOEFL test points in China make good money, as China has become a major source of overseas students for countries like the United States, the UK, Canada, and Australia.<sup>75</sup> Among individual entrepreneurs, Li Yang is an interesting example of making a profit out of English. Li Yang devised a method called “crazy English” or the “shouting method”, which has made him a very wealthy man. Although more orthodox teachers may have doubts about his practices, his shouting-based method is so popular that “he can fill a stadium with 30,000 people eager to learn loudly. Rich families pay him between \$12,000 and \$24,000 a year to yell at their kids in English.”<sup>76</sup> Between the years 1988 and 1998, Li Yang made thousands of public teaching speeches to an audience totaling 13 million.<sup>77</sup>

The mechanisms of positivism, instrumental approach and marketization have made ELT appear to be politically innocuous and created the illusion that foreign ideas in ELT materials are politically neutral or trivial, thus keeping ELT free from interference of macro politics. That is one of the reasons why the authorities have allowed the general public increased access to the VOA and Orwell, etc. But once the illusion that foreign ideas in ELT materials are politically neutral or trivial is created and accepted, ELT could in fact be

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<sup>74</sup> They are Nanchang Foreign Language School, Xinhua Computer and Foreign Language School, New Century Foreign Language School, School of Science and Technology and Foreign Language, and School of Foreign Language, Zhong Ming Foreign Language Schools, and International Trade.

<sup>75</sup> Xiao Shi, “TOEFL: America’s Reaper of Chinese Talent” *Beijing Review*, October 2, 2000, pp. 23-25.

a potential Trojan Horse, by disseminating ideas that go against official Communist ideology. Therefore ELT has significant political implications. Although individuals may approach ELT mainly for career's sake, and the expansion of ELT takes place within the boundaries of the practical ideology of the CCP, which favors science and technology and aims at creating a well-educated and skilled labor force and a market economy, the dominance of the above-mentioned three mechanisms in ELT means not only that the official ideology is gradually being "squeezed out," but also that the ideological filter against "Western capitalist ideas", which was a characteristic of ELT in Maoist China, is disappearing. The repeated official call for a "screen" to close out the "decadent and moribund things of the Western capitalist countries"<sup>78</sup> is simply ignored, and through the working of the three mechanisms discussed above ELT becomes a channel for the dissemination of dissenting foreign ideas. An immediate impact of the Trojan Horse of the ELT on official ideology is that it has helped push the Four Cardinal Principles further into the realm of pure ideology, and render these Principles more irrelevant in social life.

### **Conclusion: the Conflict-Without-Confrontation Model**

The study has demonstrated that the skills-oriented approach to ELT has significant political and ideological implications. ELT has contributed to the general de-radicalization of the official ideology in China. Politically forbidden areas are opened up by apparently

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<sup>76</sup> Anthony Spaeth, "Method or Madness?" *Time*, Jan.18, 1999, p. 38.

<sup>77</sup> [www.cul.sina.com.cn](http://www.cul.sina.com.cn), (accessed on 16 April 2002).

<sup>78</sup> Harry Harding, among others, notices the apparent paradox in the analogy of "open door" and "screen." "Chinese leaders speak of having created an 'open door' between China and the rest of the world, but also emphasize the need to place a screen across this passageway, allowing China to admit the technology it wants and the capital it needs while excluding the ideas, products, and influences it fears." Harry Harding, *China's Second Revolution: Reform After Mao*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1989, p. 134.

non-political actions. Operating through the mechanisms of positivism, the instrumental approach to language-teaching and marketization, ELT provides an avenue through which dissenting foreign ideas can enter China and helps shift the Four Cardinal Principles further into the realm of pure ideology, making them increasingly irrelevant for daily life in reform China.

In view of the findings in this chapter, political and ideological changes in post-Mao China may be interpreted in terms of a conflict-without-confrontation model. Drawing on the study by Schurmann and others of official ideology, this model assumes that Chinese official ideology is stratified and contains conflicting elements such as Modernization and the Four Cardinal Principles. The conflict between different elements of the ideology is never resolved, but tension can be eased and crisis avoided when these elements move to different realms within the ideology. Thus heterodox acts may be tolerated so long as they can be justified by some elements of the ideology and do not pose a serious threat to other elements of the ideology. ELT is in line with the Party/state's modernization drive and therefore encouraged and promoted by the state. When ELT poses ideological differences and challenges, even significant ones, these differences and challenges are largely tolerated. The three mechanisms through which ELT operates make it possible to avoid a major political/ideological confrontation by rendering political intervention from the Party/state unnecessary or ineffective, since they make ELT look non-political, thus hiding the political potential of the "foreign ideas" from view. The things that happen within the non-confrontation model are gradual and inconspicuous, but they are no less effective in bringing about ideological change, particularly in the longer term.

## Chapter Seven

### **Conclusion: the Impact of ELT on Ideology**

#### **A Summary of the Findings**

The findings of this research seem to confirm the hypothesis made at the beginning of the thesis that ELT has been one of the major contributing factors to ideological changes in post-Mao China. They have demonstrated that there is a cause-effect relationship between the expansion of ELT and changes in both the official ideology and the people's belief system, with the former as the cause and the latter as the results.

The ELT impact on ideology is first found in the changes in the English-language textbooks, where on the one hand more orthodox ideological symbols, in particular those associated with the Four Cardinal Principles are removed or discarded in spite of the fact that the Principles have remained a key component of the CCP ideology in the reform era. On the other hand ideological symbols either associated with the theme of Modernization or with Western ideologies have found their way into the English language textbooks. The changes are not the mere results of the need of up-dating the textbooks, because they have involved the conscious or unconscious efforts on the part of ELT academics to make ideological shifts. In other words the

changes are not only technical and pedagogical, but also more importantly “political.” They have political significance in terms of the ideological battles within China over the paces, process and the ultimate goals of China’s reform, and they have effects on the balance of political power. Moreover, the changes have contributed to the pervasive influence of Western ideologies. By rejecting some ideological symbols while embracing others, ELT textbooks have functioned as impetus of ideological change.

In the field of English literature, the previously dominant Marxist discourse is challenged by the influx of Western modernist literature and literary theories, which have influence on Chinese literary critics and the reading public as well, with the result that the Marxist discourse has shifted from the realm of practical ideology into the realm of pure ideology. In terms of policy-making and policy outcome the Marxist discourse has become practically impotent. Even as a critical approach, the influence and status of the Marxist discourse are very much reduced. Not only it is no longer the only legitimate approach to English literature as it used to be in the Maoist era, but also it is not necessarily the most important one. The popular image of Western modernism among readers and in literary approaches among academics and critics has changed the face of English literature and its study in China.

The research has also find ELT impact on ideology beyond the domains of English-language textbooks and English literature. This is not surprising in view of

the fact that ELT in China is a national campaign involving tens of millions of people.

As shown in the cases of the Voice of America and George Orwell, ELT on the one hand functions in breaking Chinese political/ideological taboos, forcing the authorities to adopt a double standard towards heterodox ideas and thus de-radicalizing political discourse in China. On the other hand it leads to a “lily-pond effect”, namely a growing influx of dissenting Western ideologies.

It is not only through English that foreign ideas penetrate China. Translation provides another channel for the penetration. As the reviewer of one of our articles has observed,

One of the odd things is the extent to which foreign works are actually translated into Chinese, including Hayek, the early works of Marx (before the Manifesto), the European Existentialists, etc. Many far more heterodox ideas can appear in translated foreign works than can be permitted to Chinese thinkers, an interesting double standard.<sup>1</sup>

In literature in particular, for more than a decade since 1988, over 1,000 literary book titles are translated each year.<sup>2</sup> And the surge in translation in the post-Mao era, like its historical parallel following the initiation of formal foreign language education in

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<sup>1</sup> Anonymous reviewer, “Comments: VOA, George Orwell, and the Politics of De-politicization”, October 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Li Jingrei, “Fanyi zhiliang jidai tigao” (An urgent call for quality translation), (Beijing) *Guangming Daily*, 13 December 2001.

the late Qing Dynasty, is a direct consequence of the expansion of ELT. In short, contrary to the belief that ELT is apolitical or non-political, this study finds ELT in post-Mao China has political consequences and implications, and its impact on ideology is significant.

The impact of ELT on ideology takes place under the framework of the co-existence of the Modernization discourse and the Marxist discourse of Four Cardinal Principles as key components of the CCP ideology in the post-Mao era. Without the Modernization discourse on top of the Party's agenda, much of what is found by this study could not have taken place. This does not mean that the impact is the intended result by the authorities in promoting ELT. On the contrary, the ELT impact on ideology is largely unintended, and the penetration of dissenting Western ideologies is a social consequence contrary to what the authorities would expect. After all Chinese authorities are largely unprepared to accept the cultural and ideological disruptions that accompanied the foreign language training they deem necessary for modernization. However, it is because of the unique importance of the Modernization discourse that ELT could have played such a role in ideological change. The practical ideology of Modernization has given ELT full legitimacy. On the other hand, the Four Principles, which represent ideological orthodoxy and constraints, make the historical foreign language dilemma (See Chapter Two) an issue not only relevant but also important in the post-Mao era.

In fact, the influx of foreign knowledge triggered by China's open door policies had raised political, economic, and social quandaries as potentially disruptive as those faced by nineteenth-century self-strengtheners. Safeguarding socialist civilization against "capitalist, feudalist and other decadent ideas" made headline news [during political campaigns].<sup>3</sup>

The ELT impact on ideology, either in terms of the replacement of ideological symbols, the influx of Western ideologies, or de-radicalization of political discourse, means the Four Principles got pushed into the realm of pure ideology and became less relevant in social life.

The ELT impact on ideology has become possible for two main reasons. The first is the above-discussed ideological conditions in post-Mao China, with Modernization discourse as a practical ideology and the Four Cardinal Principles as a pure ideology. The second is the presence of the three mechanisms of positivistic discourse, instrumental approach to foreign language teaching, and marketization as dominant features of ELT. (See Chapter Six) The role of the three mechanisms in disseminating foreign ideas seems curiously paradoxical. On the one hand the meaning and significance of foreign ideas is obscured and downplayed due to these mechanisms. On the other hand, however, by appearing to be politically neutral and innocuous, ELT has in fact become the Trojan Horse. The three mechanisms have created the

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<sup>3</sup> Heidi Ross, *China Learns English: Language Learning and Social Change in the People's Republic of China*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993, p. 39.

illusion that foreign ideas in ELT materials are politically neutral or trivial, and this in a way has led to the authorities being led by the nose.<sup>4</sup>

The research findings have also provided an answer to the more general questions of why and how ideology changes in the reform era. While finding some properties within the CCP ideology important for ideological change, such as its capacity in accommodating contradictory elements, its constituent levels of abstraction, and its adaptability to new situations, this study has also found “lived ideology” (See Chapter Three), of which ELT is but one sector, important as dynamics for ideological change. “Lived ideology” creates new conditions of ideological change and calls for responses from formal ideology. The ELT case is different from cases that involve power struggles, elite politics, ideological battles, or head on confrontations. Ideological changes brought by ELT are gradual, evolutionary, but consistent, inconspicuous, but significant. The changed ideological circumstances call for a response from the formal official ideology. The process is bottom up instead of top down. It is mass politics rather than elite politics. It is a peaceful evolution without radical and dramatic confrontation. When ideological changes take place in that way, people tend to overlook them, or even if they do notice the changes, they may not be able to appreciate the scope and intensity of these changes. They tend to overlook the changes and forget until the immediate past ideas could be a serious issue.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The present author would like to express his deep thanks to Dr. Woei Lien Chong, chief editor of *China Information*, who helped clarify the author’s thoughts on this point in a letter dated 28 September 2001.

<sup>5</sup> Yan Sun, author of *The Chinese Reassessment of Socialism, 1976-1992*, recalls how in her student days she came to the awareness that ideas could become a serious issue. “In 1984, during a special

Regarding the changes, the frequent use of the word “crises” as cited at the beginning of this thesis, may have dulled the sensibility of the official ideological supervisors, so to speak, rather than have stimulated it. Nevertheless, the ELT impact and the resultant ideological changes are profound, in particular if viewed in longer terms.<sup>6</sup>

### **Momentums for ELT in the Future**

It is stated at the beginning of the thesis that in terms of scale and intensity ELT is a national campaign backed by state policy and with the participation of tens of millions of Chinese. As for future development of ELT and hence future ELT impact on ideology in China, at this stage we can expect with good reason that ELT will continue to expand, because the driving forces for ELT are still there, ideological, political, social and economic. We leave the issue of future ELT impact on ideology for the next section.

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political report session, a report by Deng Liqun [head of Central Propaganda Dept. of CCP] was read to us. The report criticized a couple of little-known graduate students who had presented papers challenging Marx's theory of cognition at a recent academic conference in Guilin. The gist of their challenge was that whereas Marx would say that the moon existed before and without one's seeing of it, they argued that the moon did not exist for them if they could not see it or if they chose to close their eyes. Deng warned us that graduate students, with their typical active minds, should guard against such dangerous discussions. Deng's report seemed to me to be focusing on a ridiculous piece of trivia, but it also set me thinking: Why was an obscure argument taken so seriously?" Yan Sun, *The Chinese Reassessment of Socialism, 1976-1992*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995, p. ix.

<sup>6</sup> At the time of writing this thesis, policies in China continue to be noticeable for their pragmatic and contingent nature. The remaining power of the pure ideology seems even more symbolic and without binding power. The idea of a waning pure ideology may look contradicted by President Jiang Zemin's recent efforts to join Marx, Lenin and Mao Zedong to become China's king of philosophy with the formulation of "the thought of three representations". But as some analysts say, by putting the thought into the Party Constitution Jiang is aiming at historical status equal to those of Marx, Lenin, Mao and Deng, rather than a revival of pure ideology.

Ideologically English or ELT is now more obviously identified with the Modernization discourse, that is, modernity and globalization, in particular when it is presented in the official media, newspapers, televisions, radio broadcasts, etc. Indeed, nowadays it is hard to find in China a television or radio station that does NOT run an English program of some kind. Still unsatisfied with what ELT has achieved so far, Professor Wang Shouren, vice president of China Association of ELT Research, calls for “foresight and more initiatives” in creating a more-English social environment by setting up a national all-English ELT TV channel, and with more availability of newspapers and readings in English, as well as more nationwide ELT activities such as English-speaking competitions. Wang sets the goal that “[In addition to the foreign language courses,] every University should have at least one course with English as the sole working language, using original English textbooks.”<sup>7</sup> Wang defines the goal as necessary for the modernization of education and to meet the international norm. Then in the long run, as Wang expects, what he calls an “English consciousness” (*yingyu yishi*) will be created in the whole society.<sup>8</sup>

The national campaign of ELT has not gone without challenge. Some cast doubt on the need for the country to devote so much time and energy to the study of English, and think ELT in its present state is a tremendous waste of China’s precious educational resources. “There is no need to force the 1.3 billion Chinese to become

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<sup>7</sup> Wang Shouren, “Guangyu yingyu jiaoyu de sikao” (Reflection on ELT in China), *Guangming Daily*, 18 October 2001.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

foreign languages experts. What is needed is at most 20% of the populace, who are really good at both English and Chinese.”<sup>9</sup> There are also people who are worried that the status of the Chinese language would be threatened by the increasingly important status the English language assumes in Chinese society, citing Singapore as a warning example.<sup>10</sup> In particular, currently going on is a heated debate at Xinlang ([www.sina.com.cn](http://www.sina.com.cn)), one of the most popular and influential Chinese-language web sites, over the so-called “English linguistic imperialism” and whether this English linguistic imperialism is “slaughtering the Chinese language” (*Yingyu Diguozhuyi zhengzai tuzai Hanyu?*). Some of the opinions expressed at the forum of Xinlang seem to have drawn on Robert Phillipson, whom we had referred to earlier in the literature review of the thesis,

English linguistic imperialism means that the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities of English and other languages.<sup>11</sup> Linguist imperialism has a subtle way of warping the minds, attitudes, and aspirations of even the most noble in a society and of preventing him from appreciating and realizing the full

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<sup>9</sup> [www.cul.sina/focus/yuyan](http://www.cul.sina/focus/yuyan) (accessed 29 September 2002)

<sup>10</sup> A survey by Singapore’s *Haixia Shibao* (Strait Times) shows that in Singapore, where Chinese make up 77% of the population, the status of the Chinese language has gone down while that of the English language has gone up. 43% of first year primary school pupils use English “very often”, a marked increase from the 9.3% of 20 years ago. The survey also shows that 53.8% students use Chinese at home, less than the 69.1% of 1989. The president of an English campaign is confident that English will before long replace Chinese as the first language among Singaporean Chinese. Sources: Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (first edition 1992) 1996, p. 47.

potentialities of the indigenous languages.<sup>12</sup>

The worry and concern among some about the emergence of an inequality between the Chinese language and the English language in Chinese society sound similar to what R. Williams (1973) calls “English linguistic hegemony”,

[which] refers to the explicit and implicit values, beliefs, purposes, and activities which characterized the ELT profession and which contribute to the maintenance of English as a dominant language. It is not simply a crude “deliberate manipulation” but a more complex and diverse set of personal and institutional norms and experienced “meanings and values”.<sup>13</sup>

The expressed concerns, doubts, and challenges are indications of a newly emergent awareness of the cultural, political, and ideological imports of the English language, and their effects in China. This awareness the present author found was missing until fairly recently. (See Chapter One) However, there are many more that would come to Wang’s support, and argue for even greater ELT expansion. “If the Chinese economy wants to develop itself, which entails growing exchanges with the international community, it is absolutely necessary to learn foreign languages before we can learn

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p. 56.

<sup>13</sup> Philipson (quotes), Ibid. p. 73.

good things from other countries.”<sup>14</sup> Cui Xiliang, head of the HSK (*Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi*, test of Chinese as a foreign language) center in Beijing dismisses the worry about a lowering status of Chinese, “Whereas we Chinese are learning English, foreigners are learning Chinese. According to statistics of our HSK Center, for several years in succession the number of HSK candidates has increased by 45% annually. In the year 2002, there were up to 100,000 candidates sitting for HSK.”<sup>15</sup> Evidently the newly opened ideological debate about “English linguistic imperialism” will go on, but so will the ELT expansion, because the political and economic driving forces for ELT are simply so strong.

Politically PRC history shows that foreign language policies made by Chinese governmental and semi-governmental organizations had been direct causes for the rise and/or fall of a foreign language in China.<sup>16</sup> In the present phase of development, with Modernization discourse as the practical ideology, government initiatives and supports have been and will continue to be some of the most important driving forces for ELT. The government’s involvement in ELT is seen not in direct intervening of teaching materials and teaching methodology, but in the foreign language testing activities through governmental and semi-governmental bodies such as the Foreign

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<sup>14</sup> Yu Gengshui (Professor of Beijing Broadcast College, former deputy director of Language Research Institute of China), “Yuyan yaokao jingji chengyao” (A language needs economy for backing up), *Zhongguo Jiaoyubao* (China educational news paper), 21 December 2001.

<sup>15</sup> Cui Xiliang, “Zongwen diwei buke qudai” (The importance of Chinese is not to be diminished), [www.cul.sina/focus/yuyan](http://www.cul.sina/focus/yuyan) (accessed 29 September 2002)

<sup>16</sup> Hu Wenzhong, “A Matter of Balance: Reflection on China’s Language Policy in Education” in *Asian Englishes*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2001, pp. 66-79. Zhang Shaoquan E. and Mobo C. Gao, “De-politicization in the Teaching of English in China” in *Pacific-Asian Education*, vol. 12, no. 1 (2000), pp. 60-74.

Language Section of the Ministry of Education and the National Directing Board for Foreign Language Teaching at Tertiary Level (*Quanguo Daxue Yingyu Zhidao Weiyuanhui*). ELT takes and does have the joint efforts of government bureaucrats and the educational experts. Without the involvement of the bureaucrats, as in the Chinese case, academic standards set by the educators would have only limited effects. On the other hand, without the participation of the academics, it would not have been possible to make a realistic and academically sound foreign language policy. "There are two principal ways that political bodies involve themselves with the education system's testing activities," says Murray Thomas, "The first is to require nationwide or province-wide standardized achievement tests intended to maintain uniformly high standards of performance on the part of students throughout the geographical unit."<sup>17</sup> Indeed, testing has proved essential to the implementation of the foreign language educational polity. There are at present at least six nationally unified and standardized English tests in China, ranging from the lower intermediate to the more advanced ones. These are English Test in College Entrance Examination for high school graduates, College English Test (CET, Band 4 and Band 6) for undergraduate non-English majors, Tests for English Majors (Band 4 and Band 8), Graduate Studies Enrolment English Test, Test of Foreign Languages for Professionals and Academics, and Foreign Language Level Test for selecting candidates for government-sponsored overseas research and studies (*Waiyu shuiping kaoshi* or WSK). Of these tests perhaps the most influential is CET. Over recent years, the annual number of CET Band 4 and

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<sup>17</sup> R. M. Thomas, "The Symbolic Linking of Politics and Education" in R. M. Thomas (Eds.), *Politics and Education: Cases from Eleven Nations*, Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1983, p. 34.

Band 6 candidates is 6 million. It was mainly a written test until late 1990s, when the Ministry of Education's Department of Higher Education approved the inclusion of an "Oral English Test" in CET, graded A, B, and C. The authorities believe that the test will solve the problem of university students' weakness in spoken English and difficulty in communicating with foreigners.<sup>18</sup>

As examinations have always been a hallmark of Chinese education, there are simply so many kinds of English tests at different levels. The above six tests are singled out for the following reasons. First, these tests are all national in terms of scale. Secondly, in terms of importance, they are crucial factors in deciding whether the candidate can get advancement in study or career. By closely linking these tests to the candidate's chance of further education and career development, the organizations have made the importance of the foreign language unequivocal to all. As a result, no one thinks that s/he can afford to ignore the implications of the foreign language and its test. Rather, s/he will take pains to study it and make the best of it. English has become a qualifier for almost all educated Chinese, from high school graduates to would-be professors. Any advancement in the intellectual hierarchy entails a progress in the mastery of English. If "In all organizations and policies there is a disjuncture between leadership attention, organizational behavior and the actual result of action"<sup>19</sup>, one needs to notice that in this particular case of how ELT is promoted in China, the

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<sup>18</sup> *Guangming Daily*, 2 December 1999.

<sup>19</sup> D. M. Lampton, *Policy Implementation in Post-Mao China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982, p. 87.

disjunction is remarkably small. "If power is the capacity to motivate people to do what they otherwise would not do, the [Chinese] Communists have produced a powerful system indeed."<sup>20</sup> This remark rings particularly true in the case of PRC English education. For many, the study of English proves to be tough, frustrating, unproductive and unrewarding. Some complain that undergraduates have to spend half of their spare time on English so as to pass the CET Band 4, which is essential for getting certificates and degrees, only to find English useless after graduation. And yet these people are doing exactly "what they otherwise would not do." In short, the Chinese government has been one of the staunchest backers of ELT, and we believe its role as such will remain unchanged in future years.

The ELT campaign is still gaining momentum. The latest pushes are, among others, China's joining of the World Trade Organization and the scenario that Beijing is to host the 2008 Olympic Games. Economy is still one of the strongest incentives for ELT. Statistics show that there are more than 3,000 English-training schools and institutions all over China, sharing an English market that yields 10 billion RMB or 1.25 billion US dollars annually.<sup>21</sup> No doubt these English training schools and institutions are some of the primary promoters of ELT. English not only brings money to the trainers, but also to the ex-trainees. The income index by China's human resources net shows that English has become one of, or according to some even the most important factor in determining the income level of the middle and upper classes

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

in Chinese society. According to a survey that involved several thousand respondents in Beijing, Shanghai and a few other big cities, on average those who have “fluent English” get an annual income of 53,378 RMB whereas those with “intermediate” English receive 38,898 RMB, and people whose English is just “ordinary” receive 31,211 RMB, more than 20,000 less than the highest. 81% of the respondents had a higher education background.<sup>22</sup>

At the time of writing this thesis, ELT continues to make headlines in local and national papers. In Wuhan, a city in central China that boasts of over thirty foreign language schools and departments and three thousand professional or semi-professional translators, a Speak-English campaign was launched in 2001. The organizers set the goal to involve at least a hundred thousand citizens “so as to add to the city an opening-up atmosphere.”<sup>23</sup> Here English is believed to be able to lend a city or an area a “modern” and international atmosphere, which may help to attract foreign investment. In Beijing, immediately after the announcement that the city was to host the 2008 Olympic Games, taxi drivers were required to take up English-training courses. Eleven government departments of Beijing, including the Educational Commission, the Commission for Promotion of Spiritual Civilization, and the Economic and Trade Commission, jointly announced that an official Certificate of Oral English would be awarded to those who have passed the oral

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<sup>21</sup> [www.xinhuanet.com.cn](http://www.xinhuanet.com.cn) (accessed 13 November 2001)

<sup>22</sup> “Diaocha xianshi waiyu nengli chengwei geren souru de zhui zhongyao tiaojian” (Competence in foreign language has become the most decisive factor for income” *Beijing Wanbao* (Beijing evening paper) 22 September 2002.

<sup>23</sup> *Changjiang Daily*, 8 November 2001.

English tests conducted by these governmental institutions. One of the immediate results is the set up of 132 test and training points across the city of Beijing. A reporter found among the trainees there were “housewives, retired people and teenagers”.<sup>24</sup> Also in Beijing, in addition to regular students at schools and universities, currently the number of English learners is estimated to be over half a million. On 14 April 2002, nearly one million academics and professionals sat for the annual national foreign language test, which is deemed essential for granting academic and professional titles and promotions. The test had been conducted at provincial level for more than a decade, but in 2001 it became national.<sup>25</sup> In Guangzhou, it is stipulated that all government staff members born after 1 January 1960 should pass a test in the English language. The English Test for Public Servant, as is called, has four levels. The first level requires a vocabulary of 1000 words while the fourth and the highest level requires 4000 words of the candidate.<sup>26</sup> Among more recent new trainees in English-training classes, there are bureaucrats and Communist Party leaders. Since 2000, there has been English proficiency test specifically designed for Party and government officials at the provincial level. The more successful candidates are more likely to get a chance to study/research abroad as well as a chance for more important jobs and positions.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Sources are from *Jinhua Shibao* (Jinhua times), 29 July 2002, and *Zhongguo Qingnian Bao* (China youth daily), 16 September 2002.

<sup>25</sup> Quanguo zhuanke jishu renxuan zhicheng waiyu dengji kaoshi guxing (National foreign language tests were held for academic and professional promotions) <http://www.sina.com.cn> (accessed 16 April 2002)

<sup>26</sup> *Nanfang Doushi Bao* (the southern metropolis paper), 17 September 2002.

## Further ELT Impact on Ideology

As shown in previous parts of the thesis, there is a cause-effect relationship between the expansion of ELT and changes in ideology. In view of what has already happened and the present pace and scale of the ELT expansion, there should be little doubt that ELT will have even greater impact on ideology in the future. But how will that impact manifest itself? What will that impact lead to? What may be the culminated results of the ELT impact? There are no definite answers to these questions yet, but we believe this study so far should be able to serve as a base for speculation on ELT impact on ideology in the future.

There have been a number of speculations on the influence of the expansion of ELT in China. They appear rather general, none dealing specifically with ELT impact on ideology as here, but they nevertheless throw light on the issue here. Donald Ford believes that with the spread of English in China, the differences between China and the West will be narrowed, and “the twain shall meet”, alluding to Rudyard Kipling’s lines in *The Ballad of East and West*, “Oh, East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet, /Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God’s great Judgment Seat.”<sup>28</sup> Ford’s view may find support from those who believe English is not only a language, but is also a culture. Therefore the import of the English language means the import of

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<sup>27</sup> Sources: the present author’s interview with Mr. Liu Shuyue, deputy director of Foreign Language Training and Test Centre of Jiangxi Province.

a culture, and the expansion of ELT will be followed by a kind of cultural assimilation, acculturation and preservation.<sup>29</sup> Alfred Bloom, drawing on the concept that language and thought are inseparable and language to a great extent determines the way one looks at the world as well as research findings of his own, argues for the influence of English not only on the Chinese language but also on the Chinese way of thinking<sup>30</sup> While language borrowing is more ready to take place and more noticeable, the influence of a foreign language on a people's way of thinking seems more subtle and less detectable. Still, since language and mind are so closely related, an influence of the former on the latter or vice versa is not unthinkable. Ge Jianxiong, who believes Chinese scholars had been handicapped by a linguistic barrier,<sup>31</sup> would find communication between Chinese scholars and their Western counterparts easier. Ge's functional approach is typical of what many Chinese expect from the spread of English—better communication.

Along the line of this thesis, what I propose is still more significant ELT impact on ideology in the future. This scenario is first based on the assumption that ELT will

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<sup>28</sup> Donald J. Ford, *The Twain Shall Meet: Current Study of English in China*, McFarland & Company, Inc. Publishers, 1988, p. 1.

<sup>29</sup> Eddie Ronowicz and Colin Yallop (eds.), *English: One Language, Different Cultures*, London: Cassell, 1999.

<sup>30</sup> Alfred H. Bloom, *The Linguistic Shaping of Thought: a Study in the Impact of Language on Thinking in China and the West*, Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, 1981.

<sup>31</sup> "Linguistic barrier is a serious problem. Of the old generation of the Chinese historians, some were quite good at English, but few are still alive and these few are well over seventy. In the age group between 50 and 65, who are the main force in the field of history, very few people can read English." Ge Jiangxiong, "Exchanges between China and the U.S. on Ancient Chinese History" in Liu Haiping (eds.), *Cultural Relationships: China and the USA*, Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1999, pp.132-137.

“modernize” the Chinese intelligentsia, and second based on a historical parallel, the *baihua* movement in modern Chinese history. The idea of the “modernization” of the Chinese intelligentsia is set here against a stereotyped one. Rudolf G. Wagner (1990) has made a comparison between the Chinese intelligentsia and their counterparts in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and found in the Chinese case a lack of what he calls “a sophisticated and politically experienced stratum of challengers of the old order.” The Chinese intelligentsia, according to Wagner, is limited in a number of ways. One of such limitations is “their ignorance of and substantial disinterest in the rest of the world, as expressed in the common ignorance of foreign languages and the shocking lack of inquisitiveness beyond the pale surface of the fashion of the day.”<sup>32</sup> Given the vast social, cultural, and historical difference between China and the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, Wagner’s comparative approach may look Euro centric. Two points in Wagner’s argument are interesting, however. The first is his link of the Chinese intelligentsia’s “ignorance of foreign languages” with their “ignorance of and substantial disinterest in the rest of the world.” If the former is the cause of the latter, will changes with the former lead to corresponding changes with the later? The second is his view of the ignorance of foreign languages as one of the major factors that have prevented the Chinese intellectuals from developing a “sophisticated and politically experienced stratum of challengers” among themselves. What are the implications of a Chinese intelligentsia armed with foreign languages? Such an intelligentsia is already emerging. Personal experience tells the present author that it

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<sup>32</sup> Rudolf G. Wagner, “The PRC Intelligentsia: a View from Literature” in Joyce K. Kallgren (eds.), *Building a Nation-State: China After Forty Years*, Regents of the University of California, 1990, pp.

poses no great difficulty for the Chinese participants if an international conference on American, Australian, or U.K. Studies chooses English as the working language. There are also people who believe that comparing China with America, the average educated Chinese knows more about America than his/her American counterpart does about China.<sup>33</sup> Given the pace of development, one can expect to see in not very long terms a Chinese intelligentsia armed with knowledge of foreign languages.<sup>34</sup> Will that knowledge lead to a “substantial interest” among Chinese intellectuals in the rest of world? Will that knowledge prompt them to take up more social responsibilities and play a more active role in times of social transition? And out of that vast number of today’s undergraduate, who claim, some complainingly, to have spent half of their time studying English, will some become in Wagner’s terms “challengers to the old order”? These are difficult questions to answer at this stage, yet they are interesting and relevant questions to ask in viewing the long-term political and ideological implications of ELT in the future.

Regarding the exposure to a variety of intellectual perspective and its effect on those who move from one civilization context to a different one, Beteille thinks that there are two factors to be taken into account in speculating the effect. One is the scale of

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153-184.

<sup>33</sup> Julia Bloch, “The Love-Hate Relationship between China and America”, a conference paper at the international conference of “Re-reading America: Changes and Challenges” co-sponsored by Guangdong University of Foreign Studies and American Consulate General (Guangzhou) in Guangzhou May 2002.

<sup>34</sup> According to Chen Zhili, Minister of Education, in 2001 universities nationwide enrolled 4.79 million new students. And from 1989 to 2001, 12.3 million students graduated from universities. In addition, during the same period 3.4 million got graduate diploma through the Test for Self-Study System. [www.xinhuanet.com.cn](http://www.xinhuanet.com.cn) (accessed 24 September 2002)

the exposure to the intellectual culture of the West; the other is the richness and vigor of the indigenous intellectual tradition in the country concerned.<sup>35</sup> For the first factor, in the Chinese case, the English text provides a virtual Western world and learners' exposure to that world is intense and in large scale. For some, ELT could be a life-long experience.<sup>36</sup> As for the other factor, the richness and vigor of the indigenous intellectual tradition, China undoubtedly has no lack of such a tradition. But this tradition seems to be no problem for the absorption of Western ideas. For example, in order to find Chinese social attitude toward "Western Ideas", Paul Nesbitt-Larking and Alfred L. Chan (1997) draw on a 1987 empirical study of Chinese attitudes on key political issues. They find that "most respondents are tolerant toward the "influx of Western ideas", with a slight tendency for younger respondents to be more tolerant.<sup>37</sup> When the scale of the exposure is large and the indigenous culture is receptive as in the Chinese case, the effect of the exposure should be great.

We can also assess the scenario of further and more significant ELT impact on ideology in the future by comparing it with the effects of the spread of *baihua* (a more colloquial form of written Chinese) in modern Chinese history, which indicate the

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<sup>35</sup> Andre Beteille, *Ideology and Intellectuals*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980, p.3.

<sup>36</sup> For instance, recently Jiaomen Kindergarten in Beijing employed four qualified teachers from Britain and Canada to teach kids English. While it is news to employ foreign teachers for young children, because of the high cost, it is common for kindergartens to offer what is called "children's English". Sources: "Youeryuan gaoxin qing waijiao, xueling qian ertong yingyu jiaoyu re jingcheng" (Kindergarten hires foreign teachers at high salary: ELT for pre-school kids is booming in Beijing) [www.Xinhuanet.com.cn](http://www.Xinhuanet.com.cn) (accessed 13 November 2001)

<sup>37</sup> The percentage of "Not Tolerant" among the six age groups in the survey is as follows: 12.0% for age 25 and younger, 6.7% for age group 26-35, 13.2% for age group 36-45, 14.1% for age group 46-55, 18.6% for age group 56-65, 26.7% for age group 66 and above. See Paul Nesbitt-Larking and Alfred L. Chan "Chinese Youth and Civil Society" in Timothy Brook & Michael Frolic (ed.), *Civil Society in China*, Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1997, pp. 149-171.

enormous ideological potential of language development. *Baihua* was part of the May Fourth Movement. In his discussion of the effects of the May Fourth Movement, Jack Gray links the spread of *baihua* with the spread of new and reformist ideas in modern Chinese history.

For some years a few individual intellectuals had argued that the classical form of written Chinese *wenyan*, hitherto used for all serious writing, should be replaced by the more colloquial written form *baihua*, whose use in the past had been mainly confined to the popular literature of novels and plays. Of the literate population of China only a small minority could read the classical form with ease. If the new ideas the radicals sought to propagate in China were expressed in colloquial form they would reach a wider, and a non-elite, audience. Until 1919 resistance to this change had been all but universal. Now, suddenly the literary revolution was accomplished almost overnight, at least as far as the new generation were concerned. This was a change almost as significant for the democratization of culture as the replacement of Latin in Europe by the vernacular languages after the Renaissance.<sup>38</sup>

So far changes brought by ELT are not comparable to the historical changes brought by the vernacular languages in China and in Europe. A process of a little over twenty

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<sup>38</sup> J. Gray, *Rebellions and Revolutions: China from the 1800s to the 1980s*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 199.

years, the present phase of the spread of English in China has not brought about an “overnight” cultural change as the May Fourth Movement did in history. Even linguistically the achievement of ELT is not as significant as the huge number of Chinese learners of English would suggest. James Hertling (1996) thinks that out of that vast number only 3% of the learners may achieve “an acceptable proficiency in English”.<sup>39</sup> For the majority of English learners the acquisition of proficiency in the foreign language does not come until the last one or two years at the university, when they have passed the College English Band 6.<sup>40</sup> On the other hand, however, one should bear in mind that while the social and ideological consequences of *baihua* are the culminated products of history, what happened in ELT over the past twenty years or more are not the end results of a historical process, but just some early signs of what would happen during a long process. *Baibua* suggests the great potential ELT has in terms of its impact on ideology.

As for the relationship between ELT and Chinese macro politics, ELT will go on to impact on macro politics as a lived ideology. This is because political change takes place when formal ideology responds to changed circumstances brought about by lived ideology. (See Chapter Three) In other words ideological changes will inevitably manifest in political realms. Two cases may serve to demonstrate the political implications of ideological change. One is the issue of “socialist spiritual civilization”,

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<sup>39</sup> James Hertling, “China Embraces the English Language” in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, vol. 42, no. 17, Jan. 1996, pp.49-51.

<sup>40</sup> Some believe that Chinese students who pass a Band 6 in CET are likely to get 5.5 in IELTS after a few months’ training. Li Lin-nei *et al* (eds.), *Studies in Comparative Education: The People’s*

and the other is the earlier mentioned Three Representations. In 1986 the CCP adopted the “Resolution on Build Socialist Spiritual Civilization” at the Six Plenum, which was notable for its recognition of the diversity of Chinese society and the “immaturity” of the socialist system. It dropped the demand of the Twelfth Party Congress (1982) that “spiritual civilization should be built “with Communist ideology at the core,” calling instead for building spiritual civilization “with Marxism-Leninism as guidance.” That less restrictive formulation allowed for greater stress on the development of a “common ideal” that could encompass “party members and non-party people, Marxists and non-Marxists, atheists and believers, citizens at home and those living abroad.”<sup>41</sup> Later on there was redefinition of Marxism in terms of source of social values and ideals, its relation to other aspects of cultural and intellectual life, and its relation to “cultural achievements and civilization” of the non-Marxist world.

The recently formulated Three Representations also indicate that ideological changes may be followed by political and institutional ones. Three Representations, a major ideological shift by itself, has opened the door of the CCP to “capitalists” or “private entrepreneurs” as are called in China. Less than one year after the formulation of the Three Representatives, Jia Qinglin, Party secretary of CCP Beijing Committee, announced at the city’s Party congress that in Beijing more than ninety entrepreneurs

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*Republic of China*, Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1991.

<sup>41</sup> “Communiqué of the Sixth Plenary Session of the Twelfth Central Committee of the CCP” (28 September 1986), Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1986.

had formally applied to become Party members.<sup>42</sup>

Lived ideology may lead to political change because it is an important source of “political legitimacy”, which is taken in the general sense of a widespread consensus on the right of a social agency to operate on terms and towards ends determined by itself.<sup>43</sup> As Beteille states,

In the modern world politics has greatly extended its scope: the struggle for power among princes can no longer be confined to the court, insulated from the day-to-day concerns and demands of ordinary people. In other words, politics has to strive continuously to relate itself to the fluid and amorphous values of a changing society; it is, as it were, constantly on trial in the arena of public life. The sheer struggle for power cannot be its own justification today; at the very least it has to be camouflaged by the promise of a better social order for the people. Nor is this promise merely a camouflage, for in the age of democracy politics can hardly hope to succeed unless it takes the concerns and the demands of the people seriously.<sup>44</sup>

ELT is not the only lived ideology that paves the way for political change, of course,

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<sup>42</sup> *Zhonghua gongshang shibao* (China business times), 23 May 2002.

<sup>43</sup> Robert F. Miller (eds.), *The Development of Civil Society in Communist Systems*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1992, p. 152.

<sup>44</sup> Andre Beteille, *Ideology and Intellectuals*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980, p.9.

but it is nevertheless a very important one. With the legitimacy derived from the practical ideology of the Modernization discourse, and with the presence of the three mechanisms in ELT, which give the latter a politically innocuous appearance, ideological confrontations between ELT and macro politics are avoidable and the ELT impact on ideology will be able to go on.

## APPENDIX

**Table 1: Number of Foreign Language Sections/Departments in China**

Year	English	Russian	Japanese	French	German	Spanish	Arabic
1954	8	14	1	3	3	1	1
1965	74	32	13	10	8	7	5
1994	138	43	58	27	20	9	6
1999	304	63	92	29	26	11	6

**Table 2: Number of Foreign Language Major Students at Universities and Colleges in 1999**

Major	No. of students	Percentage (%)
English	156,723	84.52
Russian	4,010	2.61
Japanese	18,194	9.81
German	2,449	1.32
French	2,571	1.39

Spanish	961	0.52
Arabic	526	0.28
Total	185,434	100

Note: Tables 1 and 2 are by Hu Wenzhong, who has drawn on statistics supplied by the Information Center of the Ministry of Education of China. See Hu Wenzhong, "A Matter of Balance: Reflection on China's Language Policy in Education" in *Asian Englishes*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2001, pp. 66-79.

**Table 3. Number of Foreign Languages Students at Secondary Schools in 2001**

Foreign language	No. of Students	Percentage (%)
English	66,530,000	99.3
Russian	350,000	0.52
Japanese	120,000	0.18
Total	67,000,000	100

Note: Table 3 is by Zhang Shaoquan drawing on sources from Hu Wenzhong, "A Matter of Balance: Reflection on China's Language Policy in Education" in *Asian Englishes*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2001, pp. 66-79.

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