

## Abstract

As the title of the thesis suggests, the purpose of this research project was to investigate perceptions of English language education for English majors at the tertiary level on China's mainland. The study investigated perceptions held by teachers and students at universities in Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen regarding their preferences for various ELT methods and the effectiveness of methods used. Teachers and students were also asked to evaluate the relative importance of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Other areas investigated included teacher and student perceptions of their interaction within classrooms and factors selected by teachers, students, and administrators as contributing to effective language learning and teaching in their settings.

The researcher identified, as a result of this study, a number of issues and challenges relating to English language education on China's mainland. For example, the researcher found a gap between teachers' theoretical awareness of the advantages of various teaching approaches and their actual teaching practices. Other issues included a perceived lack of teacher and student interaction in classrooms and students' inactivity in and lack of exposure to group work. The researcher identified factors that, in her view, have constrained English language teaching development at the tertiary level in mainland, China. Teacher competence, cultural considerations, and economic factors were viewed as the most significant constraints. Finally, the researcher offered suggestions meant to improve and better develop teacher training efforts.

It is hoped that this study will be helpful to others due to the information provided on the present status of ELT in university English Studies classrooms on the mainland of China. It is expected that insights from this research can assist in a more successful transition to communicative, more student-centered and skill-integrated language teaching approaches suitable within university-level language education settings on China's mainland.