

On the Implementation, Evaluation and Development of Business English Curriculum in Tertiary Education of China--A Case Study of AB University

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Abstract

Within the situation that English language is more and more popular in international business communication thanks to the globalization of world economy, there is an increasing demand for the people equipped both with good English language competence and with adequate business-related knowledge to satisfy the market. Therefore, the business English major course has been designed and implemented for the purpose above for years in China. How well is it going on and what effectiveness does it obtain? To what extent does it achieve the desired learning outcomes? These questions are the main issues to be studied and answered through this work. With the reviewed literature on curriculum theory as guidance, AB University is taken as a case in the empirical study. The method adopted is the analysis of the curriculum with a comparison between ABU and UOP for adaptations and summative evaluation through a combination of assaying the input- output levels, the results of entrance examination and the results of TEM 4 and 8, and a triangulation of interviews to teachers, questionnaires to seniors and graduates and classroom observation to make the research trustworthy and convincing.

Through the student performance in TEM 4 and 8, data analysis and findings of all the surveys, it might be tentatively concluded that the curriculum in ABU has worked acceptably and basically met the needs of the students and society. The students have achieved their desired learning outcomes to a little above medium extent, or a better extent in general language competence than in business-related knowledge, or they have acquired better English language competence than mastery of business knowledge. Of the five skills, reading ability is comparatively the strongest, then listening, while writing, speaking and especially translating are the lowest. The suggestions and adaptations are provided to improve their lower skills and mastery of business knowledge. The certain weaknesses and limitations for lack of time and space are pointed out.

Anyhow, it is hoped that the findings, suggestions and adaptations will be of some use and generalized to the English teachers and English majors, especially business English majors of all the other universities in China. It is also expected that this work can provide insights into the later studies of a similar nature on a bigger scale.

Keywords: English major curriculum; Tertiary education; Implementation; Evaluation; Development

1.Introduction

Part One will cover the following: rationale of the background of business English major curriculum within the context of a known academic or professional debate and at personal reasons, research aims and outline of the article.

1.1 Background of the research

With the economic globalization of the world, English language is more and more popular and important in international business communication. Within this environment, there is a growing demand for the people who are not only equipped with a high level of competence in English language skills, but also with adequate specialized business-related knowledge to satisfy the market. Therefore, the course in Business English major has been designed and implemented for years in China to prepare the people for their own and social needs. Generally, the Chinese Ministry of Education stipulates the guiding principles or the framework of the curriculum for every major of Tertiary Education. The curriculum of business English major has been formed according to the guiding principles for English major.

However, it is different from the traditional English major or English major (linguistics and literature pathway) curriculum in that the former is the curriculum of a subdivision of ESP and the latter belongs to that of EGP. According to Richards (2001), ESP focuses on what the learner will be able to do with the language at the end of a course of study, whereas EGP on an overall mastery of the language as the goal that can be tested on a global language test. The performance of students of business English major centres on what the students will be able to do with a good mastery of the language at their graduation. The goal of business English major is to foster the students with both a good command of English and business-related knowledge and skills. So business English major curriculum is more complex than traditional English major (linguistics and literature pathway) curriculum.

It has been nearly ten years since business English major curriculum came into being in China. Educators or teachers may think the curriculum works well and has achieved its stated outcomes as the hypothesis goes. Is it true? What is the fact? How well is it going on and how successful is it in reality? What effectiveness does it obtain? In other words, how effective is it in students' English language competence and business-related knowledge? To what extent does it achieve the desired learning outcomes? These questions are the main issues to be studied and answered through evaluation in this article. "No curriculum model would be complete without an evaluation component" (Nunan,1988, p.116). Nunan's comment articulates the necessity and importance of evaluation, only through which, can we perfect curriculum.

So far Chinese literature review has not presented a systematic study on the effectiveness of business English major curriculum by the methods of summative evaluation, saying nothing of comparison with that in a Western University. Therefore, a big gap exists in this kind of study. What the author is going to do is to fill in this gap.

Finding the answer to the questions above is challenging, but necessary to development the current curriculum. Or, only through the research of this kind, can we improve the curriculum.

1.2 Personal reasons for the research

The authors have been thinking of the course development. Here, one important aspect is that it should be made sure the graduates can meet the social needs and are popular with the enterprises and companies in the markets. Curriculum is greatly concerned with the quality of graduates. It needs improvement with social, economic and educational development. The authors will take responsibility for its development and therefore make a study on the effectiveness of the course curriculum by means of summative evaluation and comparison with that in University of Portsmouth (UOP) in United Kingdom so as to further curriculum development.

With the guidance of the findings through this research, the authors can not only perfect the course curriculum to the better extent, but also serve the purpose of benefiting similar universities as a reference to better meet the students' learning and social needs.

1.3 Aims of the article

To explore how the course curriculum was designed, what its features are and how it is implemented in terms of materials and teaching approaches.

To evaluate the current curriculum

To identify to what extent the curriculum obtains effectiveness in students' English language competence and business-related knowledge, or to what extent the curriculum achieves the desired learning outcomes.

To develop feasible guidelines not only for the future improvement of the author's curriculum but also for the future improvement of the curricula of other universities in China

1.4 Outline of the article

Seven parts constitute the article. Part Two presents the literature review concerning curriculum theory. Research questions and methods are addressed in Part Three. Then comes Part Four --- the background and documentation of business English major curriculum framework of Tertiary Education of China and the design and implementation of the curriculum and the comparison of the curricula of ABU and UOP. Part Five articulates the input and output level--the student performance in Grade Four Test for English Majors (TEM 4) and Grade Eight Test for English Majors (TEM 8). Data analysis, discussion and findings are explicated in Part Six. The last Part arrives at conclusion, suggestions and limitations.

2.Literature Review

For this article, the literature pertinent to curriculum theory has been reviewed, along with literature relating to ESP theory. Business English Major Curriculum has formed one specific branch of the wider field of educational curriculum. As it is explained above, the ultimate goal of the article is to analyze the implementation of the existing curriculum and then to evaluate and develop it.

2.1 What is curriculum?

In order to realize the destination of education and to develop the students' quality, school should provide the planned teaching course, and then they will design a curriculum. The word "curriculum" "has its origins in the running/chariot tracks of Greece. It was, literally, a course. In Latin curriculum was a racing chariot; *currere* was to run"(Smith, 1996, 2000, p.1).

Over the decades, different definitions of curriculum have appeared because different educators and scholars consider problems from different priorities such as social demands and personal development and different pressures from practical, school-focused approaches to curriculum and curriculum development. That is why it is not easy for them to reach wide public and professional agreement. Marsh (1997) gives the definitions of curriculum as follows:

Curriculum is that which is taught in school.

Curriculum is a set of subjects.

Curriculum is content.

Curriculum is a set of materials.

Curriculum is a set of performance objectives.

Curriculum is that which is taught both inside and outside of school and directed by school.

Curriculum is that which an individual learner experience as a result of schooling.

Curriculum is everything that is planned by school personnel. (p.3)

According to him, the definition of curriculum as "that which is taught in school" is not very specific or concrete. He talked about it in a general way and might mean by this all the subjects taught, all the activities carried out and teaching and instruction hours given in school.

Curriculum defined as "a set of subjects" focuses on a series of courses or subjects.

Curriculum as “content” “is an interesting emphasis and brings into question another term, namely the ‘syllabus’. A ‘syllabus’ is usually a summary statement about the content to be taught in a course or unit, often linked to an external examination. This emphasis on what content to be taught is a critical element of a ‘syllabus’ but a ‘curriculum’ includes more than this” (Marsh, 1997, p.4). Usually how to teach content can affect what is taught and how students are prepared and motivated to study can effect what they will learn.

Curriculum as “that which is taught both inside and outside of school and directed by school” is meant to include all kinds of activities taking place in classroom, playground and community and those directed by school personnel. This definition indicates that school learning is not just limited to the classroom, but beyond it, or referred to wide scope into the society.

Defining curriculum as “that which an individual learner experience as a result of schooling” is of wider concern. Each individual learner should be encouraged not only to attain skills and knowledge form the school, but also to learn something from his/her own experience, which will help him/her to grow into a fully-qualified member of the society.

Some definitions of curriculum are shown above. If they are of value to scholar and practitioners, they must accommodate different values and perspectives and should not be overly prescriptive. Walker (1990) contends that “if a definition is to have some potential use, it should be in terms of :

matters that teachers and students attend together;
matters that students, teachers and others recognize as important to study and learn;
the manner in which these matters are organized” (p.24).

In the field of language course, a curriculum contains a broad description of general goals by indicating an overall educational-cultural philosophy which applies across subjects together with a theoretical orientation to language and language learning with respect to the subject matter at hand. A curriculum is often reflective of national trends as well.

2.2 Curriculum evolution

The study of curriculum evolution tells us that there appear four models of curriculum, 1) ballistic model or means-ends model, 2) integrated model, 3) interactive model and 4) process model as were called by Nunan (1988). A detailed look will be taken at each.

2.2.1 Means-ends model

This model also means objectives model or product model, at the mention of which, we must think of Tyler, one of the most influential curriculum developer last century. It is he who put forward the model in his best known book, *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*, which was published in 1949. It is by no means surprising that the model is known as Tyler’ model. For many educators and scholars, his book is the most important one for curriculum design. It provided a popular framework for systematic curriculum, with four question as “a four-stage sequence” White (1988, p.26). These are as follows:

What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
What educational experiences can be provided that is likely to attain these purposes?
How can these educational experiences be effectively organised?
How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? (Tyler, 1949, p. 56).

Nunan(1988) further explained the four questions like this: “The first question requires the specification of aims, goals and objectives. The second question relates to the content of instruction and requires the curriculum designer to articulate the subject matter which will be used as a vehicle for attaining the pre-specified aims, goals and objectives. The third question, relating to the organisation of the educational experiences, requires the curriculum designer to articulate the principles for staging and sequencing input for the curriculum. The final question, on attainment of pre-specified purposes or objectives, relates to the area of evaluation”(p. 11).

2.2.2 Integrated model

This model was developed from Tyler's model by Wheeler(1967). Based similarly on Tyler's four-stage sequence, specifying aims, goals and objectives, selecting and organizing the teaching content, and evaluating whether the aims and objectives have been achieved, this (Wheeler's) model "allows for recycling, so that evaluation feeds back into aims, goals and objectives. In this way the evaluation stage provides a basis for modifying the aims, goals and objectives the next time a course or module is taught" (Nunan, 1988, p. 12).

2.2.3 Interactive model

The interactive model is also called Kerr's model. He (1968) proposed four major elements: objectives, evaluation, knowledge and school experiences, which interacted in the curriculum. Each of the elements has subsidiary elements and a change in one element in the model will result in changes in all other elements. For example, "the discovery of new materials may suggest a modification to objectives, learning arrangements and evaluation. Use of new materials will almost certainly have an effect on methodology and the sorts of learning activities which take place in the classroom" (Nunan, 1988, pp. 19-20)

2.2.4 Process model

This model is developed by Stenhouse, an influential specialist in the curriculum field. In 1975 he wrote and published an important book entitled *An Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development*, which articulated many of his ideas still gaining widespread recognition.

Stenhouse (1975) defines the curriculum as "an attempt to communicate the essential principles and features of an educational proposal in such a form that it is open to critical scrutiny and capable of effective translation into practice" (p.4).

There is not much difference between the four models mentioned above. The first one of means-end model is the earliest one and gives the basic principle for the subsequent development of the latter three models. It pays more attention to the product rather than to the process of learning. Each element within the model is sequential. The second one of integrated model is developed as a recycling one. It emphasizes the feedback and improvement of aims, goals and objectives. The third one of interactive model put emphasis on the interaction among the four elements and its subsidiary elements, and a change in one element in the model will result in changes in all other elements. The fourth one of process model pays more attention to the process and puts emphasis on the implementation of the curriculum and what actually happens in the classroom.

In this section we have looked at the evolution of the curriculum from the means-ends model through to the process model and their main concepts and characteristics. The integrated model is closest to the author's practice in China and will guide the analysis of design, implementation and development of our BA business English course curriculum in the Part Three of the article. Mentioning business English course the author will go over the literature on the key notions and characteristics of ESP next as Business English is known to be a subdivision of ESP and share the same theory.

2.3 English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and Business English (BE)

Since the end of the Second World War, international business has become prosperous and science and technology have progressed tremendously. The expansion of commerce and technology resulted in the emergence of English as a vehicle of communication (Van Naerssen and Kaplan, 1987). Consequently, the whole world demanded a large number of people who did not only mastered English language but also specialized knowledge to satisfy the market. Then many people in the world began to learn English. They needed English to transact business or to extract knowledge from scientific or technological textbooks, journals, or reports. This prompted English education professionals to create a new approach to English teaching. This approach is generally recognized as English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). ESP Is considered a subdivision of English for General Purposes (EGP), but in practice they are disparate in

nature. Widdowson (1983) argues that the purpose for EGP and ESP is the same, but he clearly points out that what distinguishes ESP from EGP is “the way in which purpose is defined, and the manner of its implementation” (p.5). He further distinguishes the two by their differences in relation to education and training. The design of ESP is based as precisely as possible on what learners need. Courses are designed to provide learners with the restricted competence they need to cope with certain clearly specified sets of task requirements. Therefore, a course such as this is termed conceptually applied training. On the other hand, in EGP it is impossible to define the precise special purpose of the course. Instead, its purpose is to provide potentials for later practical use. Therefore, EGP applies a general educational concept. The development of an ESP course curriculum is usually dominated by consideration of some indispensable characteristics:

1. This approach is characterized by a concern with adult students’ roles as users of the English language outside of the classroom (Swales, 1988; Johns and Dudley-Evans, 1991). Widdowson (1983) also expresses the importance of specified purposes in the development of a course for ESP by referring its purposes to the eventual practical use to which the language would be applied in either occupational or academic aims. Richards (2001) articulates that the ESP students are usually studying English in order to carry out a particular role. Mackay and Mountford (1978) also point out that this approach refers to “the teaching of English for a clearly utilitarian purpose” (p.2). The purposes are closely related to certain occupational requirements, vocational training programs, or professional study. Learners don’t study English because of pleasure in the language, but because they need English in order to study or satisfy the demands of their future work. As Hutchinson & Water (1987) put it, they learn English because they know why they need it. Therefore, ESP is goal-directed (Robinson, 1991).

2. This approach to English teaching differs from traditional linguistics in that it pays attention to discovering the ways in which language is actually used in real communication, that is, language use, and that the traditional linguistics to the rules of English grammar, which is language usage (Widdowson, 1978). The underlying assumption is that the language we use differs in a great variety of ways from one context to another. Business English has special characteristics that are different from the English that is used in everyday life and general context. This assumption is applied in the practice of English teaching resulting in the development of English courses which are designed for specific groups of students.

3. Another special feature is that an ESP course is based on a needs analysis to specify the aims, goals and objectives of learners required in the market so that it can meet those needs of the learners through the medium of English (Robinson, 1991). The result of the needs analysis is generally recognized as the purpose of ESP. Mackay and Mountford (1978) defined three kinds of purposes: “(1) occupational requirements, e.g. for international telephone operators, civil airline pilots, etc., (2) vocational training programs, e.g. for hotel and catering staff, technical trades, etc., and (3) academic or professional study, e.g. engineering, medicine, law, etc” (p.2). Van Ek (1987) claims language learning objectives must be geared toward learners’ needs. In a needs analysis, three elements must be made clear: (1) the target group, (2) their needs, and (3) the situations in which they will need the foreign language.

2.4 Curriculum development

Nunan(1988) depicted curriculum development process as follows: “initial planning procedure (including data collection and learner grouping); content selection and gradation; methodology (which includes the selection of learning activities and materials); ongoing monitoring, assessment and evaluation”(p.4). This is echoed by Richards (2001). He strengthens that it refers to the range of planning and implementation processes involved in developing or renewing a curriculum. These processes focus on needs analysis, situational analysis, planning learning outcomes, course organization, selecting and preparing teaching materials, providing effective teaching, and evaluation (p. 41).

According to Richards (2001), curriculum development processes are central elements in language program design. This view has become more widely accepted in language teaching. In many countries, language curriculum development units have been established in ministries of education since the 1980s with a mandate to review and develop national language teaching curriculum based on a curriculum development perspectives. Lim(1988, p.2, cited in Ho 1994) takes Singapore for example and further notes that curriculum development now includes “needs analysis, goal setting, syllabus design, materials design, language program design, teacher preparation, implementation of programs in school, monitoring, feedback and evaluation”.

Four scholars above including some other educationalist hold the same or similar views on curriculum development, which has been a guide to educators and practitioners.

2.5 Curriculum evaluation

Kelly(2004) defines curriculum evaluation as “the process by which we attempt to gauge the value and effectiveness of any particular piece of educational activity- whether a national project or a piece of work undertaken with our own pupils”(p.137).

2.5.1 The purpose of curriculum evaluation

Richards (1984, cited in Nunan,1988) suggests that the purpose of evaluation is to determine whether the objectives of a program have been attained and, where they have not been attained, to suggest procedures for improvement.

Weir and Roberts (1994) address that there are two major purposes for language program evaluation, program accountability and program development. He went on to explain what are program accountability and program development. “Accountability refers to the extent to which those involved in a program are answerable for the quality of their work. Accountability-oriented evaluation usually examines the effects of a program or project at significant end points of an educational cycle and is usually conducted for the benefit of an external audience or decision maker. Development-oriented evaluation, by contrast, is designed to improve the quality of a program as it is being implemented. It may involve staff who are involved in the program as well as others who are not and may have a teacher-development focus” (Weir and Roberts, 1994, p.5). According to the explanation, the evaluation of our BA business English major curriculum in the article research belongs to development-oriented.

2.5.2 Two key concepts in evaluation

Two key concepts are “assessment” and “evaluation”. It is important to clarify the distinction between them. Nunan (1988) articulates that these terms are often used interchangeably, when they mean different things. Within the curriculum framework delineated here, assessment refers to procedures for measuring the extent to which students have achieved the objectives of a course. Evaluation, on the other hand, has a wider sense, entailing assessment, but including other processes as well. These additional processes are designed to assist us in interpreting and acting on the results of our assessment. The data resulting from the evaluation help us to decide whether a course needs to be modified or altered in any way so that objectives may be achieved more effectively.

2.5.3 Formative evaluation and summative evaluation

For a different purpose, formative evaluation or summative evaluation is used. Richards(2001) gives the definition of formative evaluation as “part of the process of program development in order to find out what is working well, and what is not, and what problems will be addressed”(p. 288). It focuses on ongoing development and improvement of the program, or during the learning process.

Richards (2001) defines summative evaluation as a means “which seeks to make decisions about the worth or value of different aspects of the curriculum.....it is concerned with determining the effectiveness of a

program, its efficiency, and to some extent with its acceptability. It takes place after a program has been implemented” (p.292).

According to the definition, the summative evaluation applies to the author’s article research

2.5.4 The steps in curriculum evaluation

Omaggie et al (1979, cited in Nunan,1988) describe a comprehensive evaluation model which contains eight steps. These are as follows:

1. *Identify a set of program goals and objectives to be evaluated.*
2. *Identify program factors relevant to the attainment of these objectives.*
3. *For each factor in Step 2, develop a set of criteria that would indicate that the objectives are being successfully attained.*
4. *Design appropriate instruments to assess each factor according to the criteria outlined.*
5. *Collect the data that is needed.*
6. *Compare data with desired results.*
7. *Match your discrepancy.*
8. *Prepare an evaluation report (p.19).*

In accordance with these eight steps, the author will carry out the curriculum evaluation in the research and specify the measures of success in the article.

The methods in summative evaluation of curriculum have been presented in the following section.

2.6 Summary

The literature review presents the different definitions of curriculum, discrepancy of curriculum and syllabus, curriculum evolution, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and business English, curriculum implementation, curriculum framework and curriculum evaluation, which will guide the analysis of design and implementation, evaluation and development of BA business English major curriculum.

3. Research Questions and Methods

3.1 Research questions

Based on the rationale and aims of the research, questions will be explored as follows:

- 1) How is the course designed and what are the typical materials and classroom approach?
- 2) What is the curriculum for and what is it intended to achieve?
- 3) What are the design features of the current course in terms of curriculum and materials?
- 4) How is the curriculum implemented?
- 5) How are the intended learning outcomes, teaching content and delivery, materials and assessments coordinated?
- 6) What coordination is there with business studies courses taken by the students?
- 7) To what extent does the curriculum bring about effectiveness in students’ English language competence and business-related knowledge? In other words, how well are the students improved in their English language competence and business-related knowledge through the curriculum? More specifically speaking, to what extent does the curriculum achieve the desired learning outcomes?
- 8) What suggestions and adaptations will be obtained for the curriculum development?

3.2 Methods for the research

In order for the aims above to be realised and research questions to be answered, the principal method the author will adopt is the analysis of the curriculum by using the principles of curriculum design and evaluation, which belongs to summative evaluation as Marsh (1997) described “Summative evaluation is the final goal of

an educational activity”(p.173). Genesee (2001) also wrote “Formal programme evaluation is general summative, i.e. it occurs at the end of an extended period of instruction”(p.146). Allen (1984) once applied a combination of testing, interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observation to his summative evaluation of the Canadian studies program related to ESL instruction. What he did is very much similar to the author’s research of business English major curriculum. It only differs in that the program content subject is not the same. He evaluated the Canadian studies program related to ESL instruction and the author will do the business subject program related to ESL instruction. Therefore, the same is true of the author’s case and his methodology is a good guide to answer the author’s research questions. He said that “Our experience so far suggests that the most effective approach to summative evaluation would be based on a combination of testing, interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observation”(PP,71-72).The author will follow J.P.B. Allen. For testing, the author will analyze the results of Grade Four Test for English Majors (TEM 4) and Grade Eight Test for English Majors (TEM 8) for our students, which are the national tests held at the fourth and eighth semester for English majors in China. The author will also use a triangulation of interviews with teachers, questionnaires for students and graduates and classroom observation.

Besides, the author will employ another method--- comparison, to compare the curriculum of ABU with that of UOP in light of its design so that we can see their similarities and differences for our adaptation, and the input levels, the results of Chinese college entrance examination and output levels, the results of TEM 4 and TEM 8.

To sum up, the analysis of the curriculum by using the principles of curriculum design and evaluation through a combination of assaying tests and student performance, interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observation, along with comparison, and statistics in data analysis, will be employed to make the research trustworthy and convincing.

4.The Design and Implementation of the Curriculum of ABU and the Comparison of UOP

In order for the design and implementation of business English major curriculum in ABU to be clearly addressed, an exposition will be first made on the background, documentation and framework of English major curriculum of Tertiary Education of China, according to which the curriculum of ABU has been formed. Then the comparison will be made of the curricula of ABU and UOP for our adaptation.

4.1. The background of English major curriculum of tertiary education of China

Against the backdrop of an internalized high-tech information age, the 21st century has witnessed the rapid development of science and technology, the rise of emerging interdisciplinary science, the convergence of humanities and science and technology. The Worldwide cultural communication and cooperation have been strengthened than ever before. People must be full aware of the opportunities and challenges posed to undergraduate English major program in terms of high education. Under such circumstances, we need to intensify the cultivation of foreign language talents including broadening the scope of knowledge and improving their ability and quality. With the increase of foreign trade and economic cooperation with foreign countries, there is urgent need for us to add more knowledge about foreign diplomacy, foreign trade and finance and so forth to language teaching on the basis of literature and linguistics. Foreign language talents in the 21st century must be equipped with good language competence, broad range of knowledge, relevant professional knowledge, strong capability of acquiring and applying knowledge and good individual quality including ethic, cultural and psychological quality. Accordingly, the Educational Ministry of China issued new English major curriculum documentation and framework for higher learning in December 1999.

4.2 English major curriculum documentation and framework

4.2.1 Cultivation objectives

English major program of institution of higher learning aims at fostering compound-and-application type of talent equipped with solid language competence and extensive knowledge who can proficiently apply English language in translation, teaching, management and research work in the field of foreign affairs, international business, foreign trade, cultural exchange, science and technology and military service. (Translated from National English Major Curriculum for Institution of Higher Learning (NEMCIHL), 2000, p.1)

4.2.2 Curriculum design

According to NEMCIHL (2000), English major program lasts four academic years. According to English major teaching principle, the whole teaching process can be divided into two phases: basic phase (first-year and second-year) and higher grade phase (third-year and fourth-year). The major teaching tasks for basic phase are to lay solid foundation for entering high grade period by teaching students basic English knowledge, launching well-rounded and strict drills of language skills, cultivating students to put language competence into practical use and establishing good study habits and methods. The major teaching tasks in high grade period are to require students to keep on strengthening language competence, learn English professional knowledge and relevant knowledge, further range of knowledge, increase their sensitivity to cultural differences and improve their communicative competence in English comprehensively.

English major courses falls into three types: English language skills, English professional knowledge and relevant professional knowledge.

(1) courses connected with English language skills: they are courses with integrated skills and single English skills including English, listening, speaking, reading, writing, interpreting and translating, etc.

(2) courses connected with English professional knowledge: they are courses related to English linguistics, literature and culture and so on including linguistics, lexicology, English grammar, stylistics, British and American literature, society and culture of English speaking countries and western culture, etc.

(3) courses connected with relevant professional knowledge: they are courses relevant to English and other professional knowledge in the field of foreign affairs, international business, foreign trade, cultural exchange, science and technology and military service.

The overall teaching hour of English major courses in 4 years ranges from 2,000 to 2,200 hours excluding public compulsive and elective courses. In principle, English major courses offered in every college or university should be no less than 2,000 teaching hours and no more than 2,200 hours. In setting up teaching procedure, all the colleges and universities can offer relevant elective courses and teaching hours based on their cultivation objectives, school-running features and specific conditions

4.3 The design and implementation of business English major curriculum in ABU.

Generally speaking, the Educational Ministry of China stipulates the guiding principles or the framework of the curriculum for every major of Tertiary Education. The curriculum of business English major in ABU has been formed according to the guiding principles for English major.

4.3.1 The aim of the curriculum

This curriculum aims at fostering high-quality compound-and-application type of talents equipped with solid language foundation, good language competence and basic knowledge of international trade and business, qualified for jobs of foreign affairs, foreign trade, management, translation, teaching and foreign secretarial work in the field of international business, economic circulation and cultural communication. Graduates can be employees in various kinds of domestic and foreign business companies, foreign affairs office at different levels, various types of import and export enterprises and foreign-related enterprises and English teaching training schools.

4.3.2 The curriculum design and features

The curriculum is designed on the basis of the courses and framework issued by NEMCIHL (2000), exchanges with other similar programs in similar universities, complying with future development of English major and the advancement of the times and also the common framework set by the Educational Administration Office of ABU and then a handbook of curriculum has been created. The curriculum is made up of 160 class credit points and 20 credit points in practice program. One class credit point for compulsive courses equals to 18 teaching hours while the one for elective courses to 16 hours. Class credit points must be obtained by learning general knowledge courses both compulsive and elective, English basic courses which are compulsive, professional courses both compulsive and elective and other elective courses for comprehensive quality. Students must get 132 credit points of compulsive courses and 28 credit points of elective course. In terms of course number, there are 12 compulsive and 3 elective general English courses, 5 compulsive and 10 elective business (English) courses. In terms of percentage of credit points, general English course accounts for 87% of total compulsive English basic and professional courses while business English course accounts for 13%. Depending on what elective business courses students select, the proportion of business elective courses to the total elective courses ranges from 36% to 64%. In this way, the feature of business-oriented English major curriculum stands out and accords with the national framework.

4.3.3 The typical materials and classroom teaching approach

All the teaching materials are written by famous professors and educational specialists from the key universities according to the teaching contents and requirements set by NEMCIHL (2000). They are published as textbooks by the most famous and authoritative education publishers in China — such as Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, Higher Education Press and Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press. Besides college textbooks, they also develop a great amount of audio-visual, electronic products and on-line teaching materials serving English teaching. The typical textbooks are Contemporary College English Books 1-6 and Contemporary College English Speaking Books 1-4 published by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. Extensive Reading Course Books 1-4 are published by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press. The textbooks on Fundamentals of Business, Business Writing, Business Interpretation and Translation and other business-related knowledge are published by Higher Education Press.

The approach to classroom teaching is a combination of teacher's lecture and students' discussion or workshop with 1:1 allocation ratio. The heuristic approach is applied to classroom of every course. By introducing key points or major principles through lectures, the teachers help students to grasp the main points in each class and motivate them to apply those terms or key points by answering, discussing questions in groups or pairs and writing assignments either in or after class. For language skills courses, in-class exercises are very important but never limited in mechanic language drills. Flexible teaching methods are used such as getting students involved in teaching materials preparation and class teaching. Oral presentation and writing are always the key exercises in each language skill class. A wide range of reading sources is offered to students. As a result, a solid language foundation or competence is achieved. For Business courses, teachers put focus on combining general business knowledge and practical need of students. By analyzing practical case study, the teachers can provide students relevant knowledge to practice case study. By grasping business terms and operation procedures, students can put them into practical use.

4.3.4 The curriculum implementation

4.3.4.1 Class teaching

1. Following the course in the curriculum, the teaching syllabus for every course has been carefully set. The experienced teachers and course teachers in charge take part in designing the course syllabus.

2. Every course syllabus is revised and checked many times and section chief of English major until it accords well with cultivation objectives and program requirements.

3. Every teacher must strictly arrange his course progression, prepare class materials and complete teaching content based on the syllabus so as to maintain the coherence and succession of the course once it is set.

4. Student representatives are called together in the middle of semester to give their evaluation and suggestions on teaching, which are then fed back to teachers to ensure their teaching effect.

5. Tests and exams are given to students in the end of semester to assess their learning effect. If some fail, they will have to take tests or exams again at the beginning of next semester. These measures help to remind or assure students of working hard in the whole semester.

6. Teaching syllabus can be adjusted according to the development of program, teaching plan and students' feed back, but must be under the permission of the Department.

4.3.4.2 Practice

The practice activities are carried out both in class and outside class. For in-class business English practice, advanced simulative business software is introduced in computers in the laboratory and students can be brought into the simulated business environment, engaging themselves in import and export activities. Like experiencing real business life, they are supposed to know how to do business in English and how to use English in business environment. Reading activities run through the first three academic years. Under the guidance of the teachers, students are required to read more books concerning business English. The book reports for every single piece of reading are submitted periodically and checked by the tutors. Reading forms the base for the further business English practice in the real working field. For outside-class practice, graduation field work is an important part, which is carried out in the last semester of the four school years. There are designated practice bases, such as foreign companies, private enterprises and business agencies, for students to practise. During the whole process, a supervisor appointed for each student offers timely guidance and suggestions. In the end, students are required to submit a full and elaborate working practice report. Another important component of practice is the writing of graduation thesis. Based on what they have learned, students select topics concerning with general English or business English and finish their theses independently. The designated supervisor gives them guidance for topic choosing, material collecting, proposal writing and thesis writing. And students should also make good preparation for the oral defence in the last step.

The arrangement of practicing activities has offered a great opportunity for students to check themselves and to be ready for the further application of business English in their working field.

4.3.5 The coordination of the intended learning outcomes, teaching content and delivery, materials and assessments

In order to achieve the intended learning outcomes, measures are taken as follows:

1. Once the curriculum of English major is established, all teachers should get familiarized with its cultivation objectives, program requirements, composition of courses and course connections as well as their connections to overall curriculum.

2. All teaching content follows course syllabus based on textbooks. But the content is always upgraded and new information added to enrich classroom teaching in accordance with the curriculum requirements.

3. The teachers also need to design specific teaching plan for each unit or Part including lead-in introduction, teaching aims, learning outcomes, classroom activities, teaching method, homework and assessment. Every Part or unit centres round a specific topic with difficulties and key points in each class.

4. Typical excellent textbooks are used to advance the course study, particularly those state-planned textbooks published by authoritative publisher. While drawing on the strengths of authoritative textbooks, we

work on a set of textbooks catering to teaching and learning in ABU reflecting the disciplinary features of English major.

5. Depending on the course features, every course needs either strict testing or assessment. For those language skill courses, students are given exams testing their vocabulary, reading, listening, speaking, writing and translating skills by the end of each term. For professional courses, both testing and assessment are mainly based on open questions and essay writing instead of rote memories in order to encourage students' independent thinking and analytical ability. The testing content follows the course syllabus and covers the key points of the course.

6. Learning outcomes should always be taken into consideration not only in each unit or Part teaching but also in each course teaching and testing as well as in all courses. At the end of a semester we usually have a meeting to look through what worked, what didn't work and what should be improved for next time. Teaching effect is always assessed to make sure both learning outcomes and teaching effect are well coordinated

4.4 The comparison of business English major curriculum of ABU with that of UOP

The comparison between the two curricula has been made in light of their design, courses, the teaching method and material to find out their similarities and differences for the author's adaptation.

4.4.1 Curriculum design:

The curriculum of ABU aims at fostering high-quality compound-and-application type of talents equipped with solid language foundation, good language competence and basic knowledge of international trade and business. It takes four years for students to finish.

University of Portsmouth has the business English major curriculum, which is for the students who want to learn how to communicate effectively in English in the field of international business. Students will spend three years here to obtain a BA degree.

As mentioned previously, the curriculum of ABU has been designed by considering framework issued by NEMCIHL (2000), exchanges with other similar programs in similar universities, complying with social and economic development and the common framework set by the Educational Administration Office of ABU. After the approval of the university teaching supervision committee the curriculum is implemented. Whereas, the curriculum of SLAS of University of Portsmouth has been designed from practical needs without the government set structure or framework according to Mr John Naysmith, Head of SLAS and Mr Peter Watkins, Course leader of MA Applied Linguistics and TEFL in SLAS. But within the university, there will be a committee that looks at proposed units to see whether they have an appropriate academic learner. There will be representatives of the department, senior teachers from other faculties, and also one or two external persons from outside the university to judge whether this curriculum is appropriate so as to make sure it meets the needs and achieves good effect.

4.4.2 Course structure

For the purpose of knowing the full details of the curriculum of SLAS, the author interviewed Ms Gilian Gronow, English and Linguistics Coordinator of SLAS, and she gave me a copy of their course structure and unit choice form. We talked a lot and she answered the author questions about their curriculum so that the author has a clear idea of its courses, teaching and material.

By comparison, there are much more course, credit points and lecture hours in the curriculum of ABU than in the curriculum of SLAS. The former curriculum is made up of 160 class credit points and 20 credit points in practice program. In SLAS, students must take 60 credits per semester. Each course is 10 credits, which is quite different with that of ABU. They have general English course including listening and writing, business related and business English course and electives. Each semester students must choose one optional course. The credits

and percentage of general English course, business-related course and other course are shown in the following table:

Table 4.3 The credits and percentage of general English course, business-related course and other course in SLAS

Course category	Credits	Percentage (%)
General English (listening & writing)	100	27,8
Subject(business) course	160	44,4
Study skill & independent project	40	11,1
options	60	16,7

It is clearly seen from the above that they have less general English course and more business English and business-related course, in which business communication runs through six semesters. The students are given a range of options. In the first year there are 20 credits for general English course and 20 credits for business-related course each semester. And in the second academic year there are 20 credits for general English course including writing and 30 credits for business English and business-related course every semester. In Level Three there are 10 credits for general English course and 30 credits for business English and business-related course every semester. So we can see the first year is general or less specialized. Then they get more specialized as they go along.

The curriculum design and course structure of ABU has already been described in the previous part --- 4.3.2, the curriculum design and features. The credit of each course in ABU is much less than that of SLAS for reasons of different curriculum design system between UK and China. With learning general English and its knowledge in the first two years, English majors are offered business related and business English courses from the third academic year. As for designing the curriculum, business English major of ABU is different from SLAS. Besides general English course (called disciplinary basic course in ABU) and subject course (specialized course), they also have common courses, extension courses and practice program. Elective courses are embodied in the specialized courses and extension courses.

From the above we see that both Portsmouth and ABU have general English course and subject course. The combination of subject knowledge and good English language skills developed on the courses of general and business English will give the students a distinctive advantage in the international job market. However, Portsmouth begins the business English course in the first year as the students enter the university while ABU starts business related and business English courses from the late second and third year. In ABU, students of business English major will have two years to strengthen their English language competence. This is because we don't have a national standardized test like an international IELTS or TOEFL for students to take to prove their required English language level for entering English major. We have national college entrance examination, but it is a comprehensive test consisting of several subjects besides English. Students are able to attend colleges and universities if they have got definite overall scores. So it's necessary to have the first two years to help them learn and raise their English language competence. When students want to enter the Universities of UK, they have to take IELTS and get an ideal mark to be qualified for them. In this way students in Portsmouth are more accomplished in English language. They have less general English language courses and more business courses. They can learn and digest business-related knowledge from level one.

4.4.3 Teaching method

As Gill explained, the aims of business English course are to develop the students' linguistics skills to a level at which they are able to engage in an effective communication in English-speaking business environment. Teaching methods vary. For instance, students may do a simulation after giving a case study, individually or in

group. The course is involved in communicative language teaching, cooperative learning approach, task-based approach and greater autonomous learning by the students with much more after-class time.

Teaching method in ABU is the same with SLAS to some extent. Students are asked to make effective communication in class. Besides communicative teaching approach, cooperative learning approach and task-based approach, ABU also adopts content-based approach. Teachers give students the opportunity to communicate by what they've learned in the classroom in a given field. But they have less or weak autonomous learning because of the two reasons. First, some of them are not active in learning or hard-working. Second, they have almost no after-class time for autonomous or independent learning as they are arranged about 30 class hours to attend by day and in the evening, with 6 hours each in-week day.

4.4.4 Teaching material

According to Gill, teachers in SLAS have freedom to choose the material they want, including a couple of practical exercises. For each course they have no set textbook but use the material from different books. Teachers give students the unit handbook with indicative readings for students to read and the handouts, the contents of which are chosen by themselves. However, within the university there are committees looking at proposed units and say whether they feel it is appropriate. In this way students are required to read more books for each course. The more they read, the more they will learn.

The teachers at ABU use the government set textbooks for each course as it is the same in China. The book is written by the famous professors and specialists appointed from the key universities based on the national curriculum or syllabus. The teachers will base their lectures on textbooks and they can also make some additional proper explanations beyond the content of textbooks or add something applied to the topic from other material. There is a disadvantage that the students cannot obtain more without reading more as they mainly focus on one book.

4.4.5 Summary

This Part talks about the background, documentation and framework of English major curriculum of Tertiary Education of China, analyses the design and implementation of the curriculum in ABU and compares the curriculum of ABU with that of UOP in terms of course design and structure, teaching methods and material. Some adaptations based on the above are arrived at and put in the last part.

5.The Input and Output Level -- the Student Performance in TEM4 and TEM8

5.1The input level-- scores in college entrance examination

It is well known that students can enter prestigious or key universities if they get higher scores in college entrance examination in China. Otherwise, they have to go to common universities. Compared with students' scores in college entrance examination in the prestigious universities in 2005, the students' scores in Foreign Languages Department of ABU are relatively low. For example, at Foreign Languages Department of Beijing Normal University(BNU), the students' average scores in college entrance examination in 2005 are 595 points in arts and 594 points in sciences (Admission Office of BNU, 2006), which are higher than that of many other ordinary universities in China. On the contrary, at Foreign Languages Department of ABU, the students' average scores in 2005 are 463 points (Admission Office of ABU, 2006), which is lower than that of students at prestigious universities, or key universities in China. In fact, ABU belongs to the second class universities in China. Students' average English score in college entrance examination is 104 points in Foreign Language Department of ABU in 2005, which is lower than that of the English-majors studying at the key universities in China. The same is true in the years before and after,

5.2 The standard and requirements of TEM 4 in NEMCIHL

Grade Four Test for English Majors (TEM 4) is a national test held for sophomores at the end of every April in the fourth semester. According to the requirements issued in NEMCIHL (2000), sophomores of English majors should be able to master the following skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation while taking TEM 4. In terms of listening, sophomores should be able to understand the daily conversations among native speakers including the speakers' attitudes, feelings and intentions. They should be able to understand the main contents of VOA and BBC broadcast and accomplish the dictation of a two-hundred-word paragraph which is read at the speed of 120 words per minute within 15 minutes. In terms of speaking, they should be able to communicate with native speakers smoothly in daily conversations and express their ideas clearly in correct pronunciation and intonation. In terms of reading, they should be able to read news report that is equal to American Newsweek and literature works equal to *Sons and Lovers* in the degree of difficulty. In addition, they should be able to understand the main points and give critical analysis after reading. Their reading speed should reach 120-180 words per minute with about 70% correct understanding. Besides, they should be able to cover a piece of reading material of about 1,000 words within five minutes and understand its gist, and the reading material should be in medium level difficulty. In terms of writing, they should be able to work out an essay of about 200 words within half an hour in accordance with directions and accomplish the practical writing of about 60 words within ten minutes. The organization of the essay should be rational and the expression should be clear and can be of fewer grammatical mistakes. In terms of translation, they should be able to finish the translation exercises in the textbook independently, and their translation should be expressive and correct.

5.3 The purpose of TEM 4

The purpose of TEM 4 is to examine how English majors get along with the requirements issued by NEMCIHL (2000) after they have accomplished the basic teaching phase. In addition, the examination aims at checking English majors' overall English language competence, which includes listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation. Simultaneously, it also assesses the effectiveness of the curriculum design and teaching and learning. The design of the examination is based on NEMCIHL (2000) (translated from the National Syllabus for TEM 4, 2004, p.1).

5.4 Analysis and comparison of the scores in TEM 4

The analysis and comparison of the scores in TEM 4 have been made between English-majors of Grade 2005 from Foreign Languages Department of ABU and the other universities in China

TEM 4 consists of listening (15 points), cloze (10 points), grammar (15 points), reading (20 points), writing (25 points) and dictation (15 points).

Table 5.1 National average score and score of ABU in TEM 4

School	Lisn	Cloze	Gr	Rd	Wrin	Dic	Total	Stud	Pass	%
National average score	9.37	5.12	8.70	11.40	16.91	8.19	59.97	120877	71398	59.07
11405	10.02	5.34	8.91	12.89	17.54	9.18	64.22	109	84	77.06

(The data is from the National Examination Office of College English Speciality. 11405 stands for code name of Foreign Languages Department of ABU)

From the above table, it can be seen that English majors' scores in TEM 4 in 2007 differ between the English majors from ABU and the other universities in China. 109 English-majors from ABU participated in TEM 4 in 2007 and so did 120877 English-majors from all the other universities in China (issued by National Examination Office of College English Speciality).

In listening, the average score in ABU is 10, 02 points while the average score from all the other universities in China is 9, 37 points. In cloze, our average score is 5, 34 points while the national average score

is 5, 12 points. In grammar, our average score is 8, 91 points while the national average score is 8, 70 points. In reading, our average score is 12, 89 points while the national average score is 11, 40 points. In writing, our average score is 17, 54 points while the national average score is 16, 91 points. In dictation, our average score is 9, 18 points while the national average score is 8, 19 points. For the total scores, ABU average is 64, 22 points while the national average is 59, 97 points. Of 109 English majors in ABU, 84 students passed the examination, with the pass rate being 77, 06%. Of 120877 English majors from all the other universities, 71398 students passed the examination, with the pass rate being 59, 07%. Apparently, the pass rate of ABU is higher than the average pass rate of English majors from all the other foreign language departments.

Although English-majors' average score in ABU is lower in the college entrance examination in 2005, their total average score in TEM 4 in two years, 2007, is higher than that of English majors from the other universities in China.

5.5 The standard and requirements of TEM 8 in NEMCIHL

Grade Eight Test for English Majors (TEM 8) is also a national test held for seniors every early March in the eighth semester. According to the requirements issued in NEMCIHL (2000), seniors of English majors should be able to master the following skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation while participating in TEM 8. In listening, they should be able to understand various kinds of English conversations, English broadcast, English TV programs about politics, economy, culture, education, sciences as well as reports similar to the above-mentioned topics. They should be able to understand the news reports in TV and conversations in TV plays. Their listening should reach a speed of 150-180 words per minute, and the correct understanding rate should be over 60%. In speaking, they should be able to communicate with native speakers fluently on the important issues about the current affairs happening both at home and abroad, and express their point of view clearly and systematically. In reading, they should be able to read news reports in English newspapers, historical and literature works published in English-speaking countries, and they should be able to analyze the authors' point of view in these works, grammatical structures and rhetorical approaches. They should be able to cover an essay of about 1,600 words within five minutes and understand the gist. In writing, they should be able to work out different genres of essays with appropriate expression and diction. They should reach a writing speed of 300-400 words within half an hour as well as a graduation thesis of 3,000-5,000 words with clear organization and appropriate expression. In translation, they should be able to translate articles in English newspapers and literature works into Chinese and essays in Chinese newspapers and literature works into English by applying translation theories and techniques. They should reach a translation speed of 250-300 words per hour from Chinese into English and the translation works should be expressive and faithful to the original text.

5.6 The purpose of TEM 8

Similar to the purpose of TEM 4, the purpose of TEM 8 is to examine how English majors get along with the requirements issued by NEMCIHL (2000), namely the requirements for English competence and communicative capability. The examination aims at enhancing the effective implementation of the curriculum and improving the quality of teaching and learning in the aspect of listening, reading, general knowledge, writing and translation. The design of the examination is based on NEMCIHL (2000). (translated from the National Syllabus for TEM 8, 2004, p.1).

5.7 Analysis and comparison of the scores in TEM 8

The analysis and comparison of the scores in TEM 8 have been made between English-majors of Grade 2005 from Foreign Languages Department of ABU and the other universities in China

TEM 8 consists of listening (10 points), reading (20 points), general knowledge (10 points), gap-filling (10 points), proofreading (10 points), translation 1 (from Chinese into English, 10 points), translation 2 (from English into Chinese, 10 points) and writing (20 points).

Table 5.2 National average score and score of ABU in TEM 8

School	Lisn	Rd	Gk	Gap	Proof	Tran1	Tran2	Wrin	Total	Stud	Pass	%
National average score	5.68	10.28	6.93	3.69	5.13	6.61	4.88	13.70	56.85	124023	58698	47.33
11405	6.14	10.33	6.38	4.16	4.90	6.75	4.56	14.85	58.14	101	52	51.49

(The data is from the National Examination Office of College English Speciality. 11405 stands for code name of Foreign Languages Department of ABU)

From Table 4, it can be seen that differences exist in the scores in TEM 8 in 2009 between English majors from ABU and from all the other universities in China. 101 ABU English major seniors took TEM 8 in 2009, and so did 124023 English major seniors from all the other universities in China (issued by National Examination Office of College English Speciality).

In listening, the average score in ABU is 6, 14 points while the average score from all the other universities in China is 5, 68 points. In reading, our average score is 10, 33 points while the national average score is 10, 28 points. In general knowledge, our average score is 6, 38 points while the national average score is 6, 93 points. In gap-filling, our average score is 4, 16 points while the national average score is 3, 69 points. In proofreading, our average score is 4, 90 points while the national average score is 5, 13 points. In translation 1, our average score is 6, 75 points while the national average score is 6, 61 points. In translation 2, our average score is 4, 56 points while the national average score is 4, 88 points. In writing, our average score is 14, 85 points while the national average score is 13, 70 points. For the total scores, ABU average is 58, 14 points while the national average is 56, 85 points. Of 101 English-majors in ABU, 52 students passed the examination, with the pass rate being 51, 49%. Of 124023 English majors from all the other universities, 58698 students passed the examination, with the pass rate being 47, 33%. Apparently, the pass rate of ABU is higher than that of English majors from all the other universities.

5.8 Summary

From the analysis, it can be seen that although English majors' average score in ABU is lower in the college entrance examination in 2005, compared with the college entrance examination scores of English majors of other universities in China in the same year, their total average score in TEM 4 in two years, 2007, and TEM 8 in four years, 2009, is both higher than that of English majors from the other universities. The passing rate of ABU is 17, 99 % in TEM 4 and 4, 16% in TEM 8 higher than the average passing rate of all the other universities. All this proves from one aspect that the design of the curriculum of ABU, especially on general English, is rational and effective. It has brought about effectiveness in students' English language competence to a desired extent, for as mentioned in the test requirements above, the examination checks students' overall English language competence and assesses the effectiveness of the curriculum design and teaching and learning. In other words, the students are well improved in their English language competence through the curriculum considering their input level. The desired teaching effect and learning outcomes have been achieved in general English.

6.Data Analysis, Discussion and Findings

In accordance with the methods in the article, besides the comparison and the analysis of students performance which have been made in the previous two Parts, a triangulation is done of interviews to teachers,

questionnaires to students and graduates and classroom observation, based on Richards' ten questions as what to be evaluated from micro-level and the criteria of evaluation from macro-level mentioned in the part of 2.7.4 and Omaggio et al's eight steps in the part of 2.7.5 in Literature Review. The purpose of the triangulation is to find more objective, reliable and valid answers to the previous research questions 7 and 8 in Part Three from the eyes of teachers, seniors and graduates, as well as observation through summative evaluation, thus making the research trustworthy and convincing. The data analyses are discussed in the order of interviews to teachers, questionnaires to students and graduates and classroom observation.

6.1 Analysis of the interview to teachers

6.1.1 The composition

The interview consists of four parts, the interviewees' basic information, their evaluation on the curriculum effectiveness in teaching and learning, their view about teaching and suggestions to the curriculum.

For the items 6 to 26, numbers from 1-5 are given and each correspondingly equals to poor, below average, average, above average and excellent. For the items 27 to 30, numbers from 1-5 are given and each correspondingly equals to not at all, a little, average, much and very much. For the open questions, the interviewees are free to make their remarks.

6.1.2 The performance

The interview was conducted among 11 teachers, of whom 2 are males, making up 11.2% and 9 females, 81.8%. 1(9.1%) of the interviewees has obtained BA degree and 10 (90.9%) MA degree. 9 (81.8%) of them majored either in English linguistics or translation studies while 2 (11.2%) in business English. The extension of their teaching varies from 28 years to 3 years. 4 (36.4%) have taught 20 years above, another 4 (36.4%) 10 to 15 years and 3 (27.2%) 5 years and below. 6 (54.5%) teach general English while 5 (45.5%) business English. The courses they taught cover a wide range from intensive reading to business English translation, etc.

The interviewees are required to take juniors and seniors as subjects and keep their choices and answers as objective as possible.

6.1.3. Data analysis and discussion

Part one is the basic information of the interviewees shown above. In part two, items 6 and 7 aim to find out the extent to which the curriculum has reached its stated goal. The mean score of item 6 is 3.55, that is, 36.4% of the teachers chose 3, 45.5% chose 4 as above average and 9.1% chose 5. For item 7, 3.45 is the mean score. 45.5% of the teachers chose 3 and 36.4% did 4 and 9.1% did 5. For both items, only 1 (9.1%) marked below average. The results show that the seniors' language competence and teaching and learning outcome are between average and above-average and closely satisfying. However there is still room for further improvement for 9.1% marked below average for these two items.

For item 8, reading ranks the highest, with mean score at 3.73, listening is the second (3.54), and then writing (3.27), the fourth goes to speaking (3.18) and the following is translating (3.0). These results show that students' ability to receive language input both in audio or visual forms is stronger than their ability to deliver, either in oral or in written forms. The highest is reading and the lowest is translating, which shows students' ability to transfer between two languages is the lowest.

Generally speaking, language program develops all four skills, even the fifth skill, translation for a foreign language learner. The level of language competence just shows the level of four skills for a native speaker. It is somewhat different for a foreign language learner, especially for a Chinese English learner. The level of language competence just shows the overall level of four skills or five skills, of which one skill may be comparatively higher or lower. That's why there are individual courses of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation for English major students in China's universities. As explicated above, the reading ability is the comparatively better. This is the common situation in China. The Chinese English learners usually have a better

ability in reading than in listening and speaking because they lack in an English listening and speaking surroundings. For example, a student can completely understand a passage by reading, but cannot completely do that passage by listening, say nothing of speaking it out after listening. Based on these, language competence is evaluated in five skills in item 8.

The results of items 9 to 17 show a four-level distribution. The highest mean score, 3.27, goes to pronunciation, reading and comprehending general articles or reports in English newspaper and magazines and read for viewpoint, the second, 3.09, to grammar, news listening and ability to summarize materials and reports, and the third, 3.0, to vocabulary and communicative competency while the lowest 2.82 goes to business translating. The results display a correspondence with the previous part. Students are better in reading and listening than in writing and translating. Items 18 and 19 aim to find out the students' interest degree in English and the causes of their failure. 18.2% of (2 out of 11) the interviewees observe that 90% of the students are interested in English studies, while 54.5% (6 out of 11) hold 70% are interested while 27.3% (3 out of 11) hold that only 50% are interested. This means in other words that most of the teachers think at least 30% of students are not interested in English, which will affect their attitude and learning outcomes.

For item 19, the interviewees can make more than one choice. 100% interviewees chose "personal attitudes" as the cause of some students' failure to achieve the desired learning outcome, 72.7% chose "learning strategies", 27.3% did "lack of fundamental competence", 9.1% did "teaching methodology", and 9.1% did "no motivation". The result shows that personal attitude is the most influential factor.

Items 20 to 24 are designed to evaluate students' competence in business context. 5 interviewees have taught business courses and made choices to them. The numbers chosen are averaged out mostly between 2.4 and 3.8. And for the general outcome, the mean score is 3.20 while the mean score of all the items in this part is 3.28. Of all the mean scores, the highest one is 3.80, which are contributed to reading abilities and the business teaching materials. From another aspect, the items, on which nearly 90% of the interviewees chose 3 or 4 or 5, are also about these two items. These results show that generally the teachers regard the reading ability as the strongest of all. The language skill of lower evaluation is mainly focused on business writing, whose mean score is surprising low at 2.4. The results show that the teachers are not very optimistic about the students' business competence, especially when writing is concerned. This is one of the problems to be improved in future practice.

For item 25, the interviewees give a mean score of 3.54. Over 80% of them give average or above average, which shows the teachers are mostly satisfied with the textbooks.

In part three, items 26 to 28 are concerned with the views about teaching. For all the items, the scores chosen are averaged out between 3.36 and 3.72. The mean score of item 26 is 3.63, which reflects that the teaching is basically satisfactory and the desired teaching outcome has been achieved to a most degree. Of all the mean scores, the highest one is 3.72, which is contributed to the teaching facilities. This is a result of recent development of educational technology, with computer-aided instruction and multi-media used in teaching. So the teachers are pleased with them. The lowest mean score is 3.36, about the teaching methods, which shows that the teachers feel there is a disparity or gap between their used methods and students' demand or desire. The methods should be greatly updated and varied.

In part four, item 29 is designed to study to what extent the students' five language skills should be strengthened. Usually if a certain skill is lower, it should be more strengthened. Otherwise, it should be less strengthened. For all the items, the numbers chosen are averaged out mostly between 3.63 and 4.09. The highest mean of 4.09 goes to writing while listening is given an average mark of 3.63. Speaking, reading and translating are all given 3.90. This shows all the skills should be much strengthened, while writing, the biggest concern among the teachers, should be the most.

Item 30 is designed to find out to what extent the students' business knowledge should be strengthened according to teachers. The mean score is 3.36, lower than the above five items. And only 9.1% of the interviewees hold that business knowledge should be strengthened very much, which implicates that the teachers think fundamental language skills are more important than their business knowledge when it comes to accounting for the low mean 2.4 in item 22 for their English business report writing ability. They hope to strengthen the students' business knowledge, meanwhile, strengthen their language competence much more.

For item 31, 18.2% of the interviewees think that 80% of the courses should be general English, 45.5% do 70%, 9.1% do 60%, another 9.1% do 50%, while 18.2% do 40%. Altogether, we can see that 72.7% of the interviewees think general English courses should take over 60% of the courses. While only 27.3% think most of the courses should be business-oriented. This result indicates that general English courses are still a key part in the curriculum in the eyes of most teachers.

6.1.4 Findings

1. The seniors' English language competence is better than the capability of mastery of business knowledge and skills. However there is still room for further improvement for both.

2. The curriculum has basically reached its goals in teaching and learning outcome.

3. The students' reading ability is comparatively the strongest of all the five abilities while writing, speaking and especially translating are the lowest.

4. Most of the interviewees hold that above 70% of the students are interested in English study. And for those who have failed to reach the goals, all of the interviewees regard personal attitudes including interest and motivation as the first cause. And 75% of the interviewees also take learning strategies as a main cause.

5. The teachers are satisfied to a higher degree with the teaching materials and facilities and less satisfied with the methods, which should be greatly improved and varied.

6. Enough attention should be paid to the training of students' writing and translating ability.

7. Generally the teachers consider general English courses more important and should enjoy a higher percentage in the curriculum than business courses. They should mount to over 60% of the courses.

6.2 Analysis of the results of the questionnaire to seniors

6.2.1 The composition

The questionnaire is composed of five parts; basic information about the seniors, their self-evaluation of curriculum effectiveness in their study, their views about teaching, their suggestions about curriculum and about their future.

6.2.2 The performance

The questionnaire was carried out in the conversazione for the seniors (also called 'respondents' in the article that follows), who voluntarily gave their ideas of learning at ABU and were asked to fill the questionnaires seriously and truthfully. Then they were mainly analyzed by SPSS, with only several questions induced and summarized. Therefore, the scientific statistical method can ensure the objectivity of the analysis. Of the 76 copies of the questionnaire collected, 69 copies are effective.

6.2.3 Data analysis and discussion

In part one, 82.6% of (57 out of 69) the respondents are females and 17.4% (12 out of 60) males, which is a typical feature of language learning in all the English majors in China's universities. TEM 4 is taken as an aspect of the students' performance in English study. 79.7% of (55 out of 69) respondents have passed TEM 4, while 20.3% (14 out of 69) failed. Item 3, for which the respondents could make more than one choice, inquires into students' motives for learning business English. For the reasons why they choose business English major, 40.6% of respondents chose "for my interest in English", 15.9% chose "for getting a good job in the future", 15.9% chose "my parents or relatives advised me to study English", 33.3% chose "I didn't choose it but was

dispensed to this major”, while 8.7% chose “for other reason”. This reflects that 1/3 of the respondents didn’t choose business English as their first wish, which influenced their attitudes and learning performance. Item 4 inquires into students’ attitude towards English learning. For the item, 10.2% of (7 out of 69) respondents are greatly interested, 56.5% (39 out of 69) interested, 23.2% (16 out of) a little interested, 8.7% (6 out of 69) not interested, and 1.4% (1 out of 69) disgusted.

Through analysis we can find that there is also a relationship between their achievements and their interests in English. The attitude of the respondents who have passed TEM 4 is averaged out at 3.32, while the attitude of those who failed in TEM 4 is averaged out at only 2.70. It is found that the students who have passed TEM 4 have stronger interest in English learning than those who failed. In other words, those who have stronger interest in English learning have better performance.

Items 5 to item 20 in part two and item 21 in part three each has 5 rating scales , of which 1 stands for ‘poor’, 2 for ‘below average’, 3 for ‘average’, 4 for ‘above average’ and 5 for ‘excellent’.

In part two, for items 5 to 20, the author only meant that the respondents could evaluate their levels in those details according to the standard of TEM 8 mentioned above. Each item on the respondents’ evaluation of curriculum effect in their study is related to English competence or business knowledge. For all the items, the numbers they chose are averaged out mostly between 3 and 3.5, which represents between average and above average. And the average of all items in this part is 3.19, which means generally they think the goal of the curriculum they have achieved is acceptable to certain extent.

Of all the mean scores, the highest one is 3.42 for item 16 about reading ability. Altogether 46.4% of the respondents chose 4 or 5, which means 46.4% of the respondents think they are above average or excellent on reading for author’s viewpoint. The items 7 and 15 of the second highest mean, 3.39, are also about reading abilities. So it safe to say that the reading ability is a better one the seniors have attained.

The language skills on which the students have lower evaluation are mainly focused on speaking and translating abilities. From item 7, it can be seen that the mean scores on speaking and translating are separately 3.09 and 3.13. 23.1% of the respondents think their speaking abilities are below average or even poor. 21.7% think their translating abilities are below average.

For all the items, the respondents seem to have a more positive evaluation on English language competence, while lacking confidence in business knowledge. Items 8, 14, 17, 19 and 20 are related to business field. Their means are separately 3.01, 3.17, 2.99, 3.07 and 3.16. Except items 14 and 20, which are about reading abilities in business field, the other three items get nearly the lowest mean scores. The evaluation on the goal of language skills achieved is averaged out at 3.25, which is much higher than the evaluation on the goal of business knowledge achieved, which is only averaged out at 3.01. This reflects that business knowledge needs to be strengthened much more.

Items 22 to item 25 in part three and item 27 in part four each has 5 rating scales, of which 1 stands for ‘not at all’, 2 for ‘a little’, 3 for ‘average’, 4 for ‘much’ and 5 for ‘very much’.

In part three, the numbers they chose for each item are still averaged out between 3 and 3.5, which represents between average and above average. And the average of all items in this part is 3.23, which is a little higher than the average in the respondents’ evaluation of curriculum effect in their study. This means their evaluation about the teaching is a little higher than that about their study.

Item 21 is their general impression of English teaching, which is averaged out at 3.39, and 59.4% of the respondents think English teaching is average. 34.7% or more than one third think English teaching is above average or excellent. Items 22 and 23 are 3.17 and 3.20 in mean scores, about the teaching material in English language and business knowledge. The distinctive difference cannot be found between them. The material for both is just acceptable. Item 24 is about the teaching methods, the mean of which is the lowest, 3.0, in this part.

This reflects that the respondents are not satisfied with the teaching methods, which need to be greatly improved in future. Item 25 is about the teaching facilities. From the mean and the frequency we can easily judge that the respondents are comparatively satisfied, since the teaching facilities in ABU have been greatly improved in recent years.

Part four shows how much the respondents hope to strengthen the training of English language competence in five skills and business knowledge. If they feel that a certain skill is lower, it should be more strengthened. This is just echoed by the item speaking in item 26, which has the highest mean score of 4.13. It proves that the respondents have a lower level of speaking and hope to strengthen that skill much more. The degree that they think English language competence should be strengthened in the curriculum is averaged out at 3.67, the mean score of 3.71, 4.13, 3.25, 3.43 and 3.81, while the degree they think business knowledge courses should be increased is 3.91, which is much higher than the former. And as high as 68.1% (33.3% for choosing number 4 and 34.8% for 5) of the respondents think business knowledge courses need to be strengthened much or very much. Together with the open Question 28, we can say that the students have a higher expectation on strengthening business knowledge courses. All of these are consistent with the data in part two. In a word, in comparison with English language competence, business knowledge needs to be much more strengthened. And of all the language skills, speaking and translation abilities need to be much more strengthened.

Based on the analysis above, it is safe to say that the seniors hope to strengthen the knowledge or skills which can be applicable directly to future work, which reflects their practical views.

In part five, item 29 is about their views on the future of business English graduates. 7.2% of the respondents think their future is very promising, 37.7% think it promising and 33.3% think it a little promising. Only 16.0% think it is not promising. And the other 5.8% have no idea at present. Faced with economical recession nowadays, such a result is quite positive. This can indicate that the business English seniors have a certain confidence towards what they have learned. Item 30 is about their tendency towards job choosing after graduation. Since this question is a multiple choice, about 43.78% of the respondents chose jobs related to business English, and 21.74% chose jobs related to international business. So the two choices amount to 65.5%, who are inclined to choose a job about business in English environment. However, 31.9% chose other jobs except business or English, which is much beyond our expectation. In another way, this can show that business English major seniors have a wide choice in the job market

Items 28 and 31 are two open questions. 38 respondents made some suggestions about the curriculum. The author also randomly interviewed eight respondents after the conversazione. All their ideas are summarized here. Some hope to improve listening, speaking and translating abilities, and the cross-cultural communicative abilities, but they think there are too many courses on language and fewer courses on business. So business courses should be increased, such as business English writing, international business and trade practice, business English translation, and electronic business, etc. And theories should be combined together with practice. There are too many elective courses, which is a heavy burden. For the teaching, they all think the teachers are very responsible, but the teaching methods need to be varied. The learning interests and initiatives of the students need to be improved. And some think that the international business English certificate should be connected with graduation degree.

6.2.4 Findings

1. The interest of the respondents in English learning is closely related to their performance. And the reason for their choice is another influential factor.
2. The respondents with better performance tend to have higher evaluation on the curriculum.
3. Generally, the aim of the curriculum has been achieved acceptably or to the extent of a little above average.

4. The respondents' evaluation about the teaching is a little higher than their evaluation about their study, which means the teachers are deemed highly responsible in teaching. However, the teaching methods are not very satisfying and need to be greatly improved.

5. In comparison with English language competence, business knowledge needs to be much more strengthened. Of all the language skills, speaking and translation abilities need to be much strengthened. In other words, the respondents expect to improve and strengthen practical knowledge and skills, such as business knowledge and English speaking and translating competence.

6. As business English seniors, most of them have confidence in their future and more than a half are inclined to choose a work about business in English environment.

6.3 Analysis of the results of the questionnaire to graduates

6.3.1 The composition

The questionnaire is made up of five parts, which respectively enquiry about respondents' basic information, present working information, the effectiveness of curriculum has in their study and present work, and their suggestions on the curriculum improvements. The rating scales in each part are numbers or letters. Each number respectively stands for a point in each item (see Appendix 5).

6.3.2 Data analysis and discussion

The questionnaire was carried out in the conversazione for the graduates, who gave their responses in a pleasant atmosphere and with anonymity. 28 questionnaires were collected. The results are shown in the table of Appendix 5.

Part one is about the graduates' basic information. The result of item 1 shows that 75% of the respondents are females, which is a typical feature of English majors in China as mentioned above. The result of item 2 indicates that the respondents have working experience from 1 to 6 years. The result of item 3 shows they have learnt English 10 to 20 years. From these two items, some information can be known about their level of English before they studied at ABU and the value they gave on their working experiences. The result of item 4 says that 89% of the graduates have passed TEM 4. As stated in the last Part, TEM 4 is the national test that mainly focuses on testing and assessing students' performance of English majors in general English. The high passing rate upon graduation shows that most respondents' English language competence can meet the requirements of the national English majors curriculum.

In part two of present work, item 5 shows only 43% of (12 out of 28) respondents engage in the job related to the (business) English. 57% (16 out of 28) do the job with no relationship with English language. The reason for this situation of low employment is described in item 6, which shows that 56% (9 out of 16) chose D--no chance, while 25% (4 out of 16) chose E --'others' with the reasons like 'The companies mainly do business with the native or local enterprises' or working for the government.' The result of item 7 shows that 46% of the graduates work in the foreign-run and private-owned enterprises, 18% in the government and 11% respectively in the state-run enterprises, joint venture and the schools. Item 8 shows most of the graduates work as clerks, managers and secretaries, 14% as officials and 11% as translators. This distribution of the results in this part shows that the curriculum design of business English majors meet the needs of the society and the workplace and the female students may have done better jobs in the careers of clerk, secretaries, manager, officials and translators.

Items 10 to 21 are the third part which has 5 rating scales, of which 1 stands for 'poor', 2 for 'below average', 3 for 'average', 4 for 'above average' and 5 for 'excellent'. Each scale represents the extent to which the respondents have achieved (see appendix 5). The means scores of this part are at the average level. The mean score of item 10 is 3.7, item 17 is 3.61, item 18 is 3.54. These three mean scores are comparatively higher than those of other items, which shows that students' language competence upon graduation and general impression

of the English teaching are highly valued. They are basically satisfied with their competence, general English teaching and materials and less satisfied with their business English teaching materials and business knowledge. The mean scores of their business related skills, cultures and customs and competence are lower than 3.5, which shows that students' business English competences in these respects are not fully developed. Their mean score on achieving the desired learning outcome is 3.29. They are not quite satisfied with the teaching method and teaching facilities provided by ABU, as the mean scores are 3.43 and 3.36. Teaching facilities were not satisfactory when they studied at ABU.

Part four consists of 5 items from 22 to 26. Six rating scales (see Appendix 5) are given to evaluate the graduates' five skills in their job-hunting and practical job performance and assess whether the courses provided in the curriculum can best fulfill the workplace needs and equip the graduates with the business knowledge and skills for their practical jobs. From Appendix 5 it can be seen that all the mean scores in this part are mostly 2 or above 2, which means that respondents' opinions are in the degree of 'agree', except that the mean scores of TOEFL and IELTS in item 26 are respectively 3.67 and 3.61, which means 'neutral'. In item 22, the sequence of skills being well developed for their practical jobs is reading and writing (2.46), listening (2.71), translating (2.75) and speaking (2.93). In item 25, the sequence of hiring due to their levels in five skills is speaking (2.36), translating (2.46), reading (2.61), writing (2.68) and listening (2.75). It is interesting to see that speaking and translating in item 22 are the least skills to be developed for the respondents, but they were especially hired for the sake of these two skills. This comparison shows that speaking and translating are more important skills for the respondents whose work is related to English. The mean scores of items 23 and 24 show that the respondents agree that the core and optional courses provided in the curriculum can best fulfill their workplace needs and equip them with the business knowledge and skills for their practical jobs. Item 26 shows that TEM 4 and 8 are the most welcomed certificates of English competence for being hired.

Part five focuses on graduates' ideas and suggestions on promoting the existing curriculum. The data of item 27 shows that the skills of listening and speaking should be much more strengthened in the future curriculum. The mean scores of listening and speaking are 4.07 and 3.96. The mean score of item 28 is 3.96, for the suggestion of increasing business knowledge courses. From the data of item 29, it can be seen that highest proportion of the respondents thought 60% should be general English and 40% business English. In item 30, the respondents' ideal English teachers should be both qualified with good language competence and business knowledge and skills. For the teaching materials in item 31, all the choices listed are preferred by most of the graduates. In item 32, 86% and 75% of the graduates strongly suggested the practice of business communication skills and English language. Item 33 is the open question for graduate's suggestions about the curriculum. Their suggestions mainly focus on such aspects as: 1. Lay a solid foundation of general English knowledge and skills; 2. Design more business English courses and teach them systematically; 3. Teaching materials should be authentic and reflect the reality; 4. Business English teaching should meet the social needs and business English teachers should be hired with the knowledge and working experiences of foreign-run or joint-run enterprises. 5. Students should make full use of the teaching facilities (language laboratory for business English majors).

6.3.3 Findings

1. The existing curriculum can basically meet the needs of the students and society. The reason for this is that among all the graduates attending the conversazione, 46% engage in the jobs that is related to English or business English

2. General English knowledge and skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating, especially listening, speaking and translating abilities are of crucial importance in college business English learning, the practice of job-hunting and working performance.

3. Business English related knowledge and skills should be strengthened and teaching methods should be

improved

4. TEM 4 and TEM 8 are highly valued in hiring undergraduates by the employers.

6.4 Analysis of classroom observation

6.4.1 The composition of observation list

The observation list is divided into two parts, observable aspects of the lesson and open questions. Part one consists of 20 items, including: the students' response in the class from items 1 to 8, teaching material from items 9 to 11, instructor effectiveness from items 12 to 18 and overall evaluation from items 19 to 20. For each item, the number of evaluation ranges from 1 to 5. 1 stands for 'unsatisfactory', 2 for 'below average', 3 for 'average', 4 for 'above average' and 5 for 'outstanding'. Part two involves 7 open questions.

6.4.2 The performance

The observer went to the class to observe what and how the students learnt, how well the course was delivered by teachers and received by students, how well the material worked, how appropriate the teaching methods were, how effective the course was and how well the students are equipped with English language competence and business-related knowledge. The subjects chosen are junior students. The observer totally observed 5 courses for ten times, including 3 business English courses: Introduction to Business Management; Business English Writing; Business Interpretation; 2 general English courses: Advanced English and Theory and Practice of English Translation. After each observation the observer communicated with the instructor and the students to give a more objective assessment. Besides, the observer intentionally chose two or three different classes for observation of the same course so as to have a reliable and objective judgment.

6.4.3 Data analysis and discussion

In the part of students' response in the class, item 1 has been given the number 3 and 4 occupying 50% respectively, and its mean score is 3.5, which reveals that most of the students can have active attitudes and involve themselves in class discussions. The item 2 is the same as item 1, with the mean score in 3.5. It shows above average number or most of the students can express their personal opinions by responding to the teacher and course content. Item 3 has also a mean score 3.5. That is to say, 70% of the students can understand the courses, and agree or disagree the contents critically. Items 4 and 5 have got the same mean score 3.7, which shows that the students can catch the instructor and understand the key content words or phrases and business knowledge in these courses. Item 6 has got the highest mean score, 3.8, in this part. It reveals that the students can well retrieve simple factual information from short texts and catch the main points or ideas from the texts. The mean score of items 7 and 8 is the same, 3.7. This result indicates that that the students have a desire to take the courses, which increase the students' interest in learning more about the content area.

In the part of teaching material, items 9 to 11 are designed to find out whether the teaching material is appropriate in these courses. For item 9, number 4 amounts to 60%, number 3 to 30%, number 2 to 10%; and the mean score is 3.5, which reflects that the teaching material is averagely interesting to the students. For the item 10, number 4 occupies 60%, number 3 is 30%, number 2 and 5 are 10% respectively; the mean score is 3.6. That is to say, the teaching material can satisfy students' needs to an extent of a little above average. For the item 11, number 3 makes up 50%, while number 4 is 40%, number 5 is 10%; the mean score is also 3.6. Therefore, our teaching material works properly for students' language competence and business knowledge. From the above it can be seen that that our current teaching material can basically arouse the students' interest and meet their needs. So they work well to a large degree.

Items 12 to 18 are to find out the instructor effectiveness for the courses. For item 12, number 3 and 5 amount to 30% respectively, number 4 to 40%; and the mean score is 4.0, which shows that the teachers are very enthusiastic for their teaching. They are friendly to the students. They know the students well and plan the class activities in detail. The mean score of item 13 is 3.6, which reflects the instructors can arouse the students'

interest in the content to a great extent and try to enlighten the students. The mean score of item 14 is also higher, 4.0. This shows that the teachers prepare the lesson well and explain the knowledge clearly. For the item 15, number 1, 2 and 3 occupy 10% respectively, while number 4 is 50% and number 5 is 20%; the mean score is 3.6. On the whole our teachers can give good examples of the concept in these courses. For the item 16, number 1 is 10%, while number 4 occupies 50%, number 5 is 40%; the mean score is 4.1. This rate also ranks higher, which indicates that the teachers are helpful when the students are confused. According to the author's observation, the teachers always manage to relate the course and the difficult points to the other things the students have known. For the item 17, number 2 makes up 10%, number 3 up 20%, number 4 up 40%, while number 5 up 30%; the mean score is 3.9. This exposit that the instructors are knowledgeable in their teaching subjects. The proportion of the numbers in item 18 is the same as that in item 17 and the mean score is also 3.9, which shows that the instructor's teaching method is proper in class from a teacher's eyes. This point is somewhat contradicted with the results of the methods assessment of questionnaire to the seniors, who gave only 3.0 as mean score. It might be explained that the students have a higher demand for teaching methods although teachers almost tried their best.

In the part of overall evaluation, for item 19, number 2 amounts to 10%, number 4 to 60%, number 5 to 30%; the mean score is 4.1, the highest one in the observation list. It indicates that the teachers' general teaching effect is much satisfactory in the class delivery. For the item 20, number 2 occupies 10%, number 4 is 70%, number 5 is 20%; and the mean score is 4.0, the second highest one. This shows that the course is well delivered by teachers and received by students.

For the open questions the ideas are summarised as follows:

All the classes have explicit purposes, which are tightly connected with the course outline. The materials relate to the course structure well, but some of them are a bit harder to the students. For the courses, there are not so sufficient preparations by the students. Some of them haven't got prepared for the next class unless the teacher emphatically asked them to. Most of the instructors introduced and summarize the class clearly. They managed to enlighten the students and attract their interest by questions-and-answers, debates and videos with the help of slides. They strived to improve the teaching methods, but they are not varied. The students could take notes over listening. The exercises are helpful for the students to practise their translation, interpretation and etc.

6.4.4 Findings

The students are active in classes. They can understand the key content and give their personal opinions. The teaching material can satisfy students and work well to a large degree for their language competence and business knowledge. The teachers are enthusiastic for their teaching and helpful when the students meet with difficulties. They pay attention to improving the teaching method, but the result shows that the class seems to be teacher-centered as before. The courses have definite purposes, which are tightly related to their syllabuses. The curriculum can generally meet the students' demand

6.5 Summary

This Part presents the compositions, performance, data analysis, discussion and findings of interviews to teachers, questionnaires to students and graduates and classroom observation. The conclusion, suggestions and limitations based on the data analyses above and the ideas from the open questions will be revealed in the following Part.

7. Conclusion and Suggestions

7.1 Conclusion

On the premise of the research rationale and aims, the questions on the curriculum design, implementation, evaluation and development are put forward and explored on the basis of the views and ideas on the curriculum theory presented in Literature Review and through the analysis, comparison, student performance and a triangulation of interviews to teachers, questionnaires to students and graduates and classroom observation. Questions 1 to 6 in the part of 3.1 in Part Three have been investigated for part findings of improvement. Question 7 “To what extent does the curriculum bring about effectiveness in students’ English language competence and business-related knowledge? or to what extent does the curriculum achieve the desired learning outcomes?” is the core issue, which has been probed through the analysis of student performance in TEM 4 & 8 and a summative evaluation, whose criteria are based on the views of Richards (2001) in the part of 2.4 in Literature: that the performance of students of business English major centres on what the students will be able to do with a good mastery of the language at their graduation and the goal of business English major is to foster students with both a good command of English and a certain mastery of business-related knowledge to carry out a specific task or a set of tasks to satisfy the market. The answer may be in this way: it couldn’t be concluded that educators or teachers may think the curriculum works well and has achieved its stated outcomes as the hypothesis goes. It might be tentatively concluded from the student performance in TEM 4 & 8, data analysis and findings of all the surveys that BA business English major curriculum has worked acceptably in ABU and basically met the needs of the students and society. The reason for this is that among all the graduates attending the conversazione, 46% engage in the jobs that is related to English or business English. The students have achieved their desired learning outcomes to a little above medium extent, or a better extent in general language competence than in business-related knowledge, or they have acquired better English language competence than mastery of business knowledge. In other words students’ English language competence is a little more satisfactory than the mastery of business knowledge. Of the five skills, reading ability is comparatively the strongest, then listening, while writing, speaking and especially translating are the lowest. The teaching materials and facilities are satisfactory to a great extent compared with the methods, which can not completely satisfy the students. Of course, there exist certain weaknesses, on which suggestions and adaptations will be provided to improve in the following section.

7.2 Suggestions and adaptations

1. ABU should enrol those who have a higher score in English and apply for English major as their first wish though they may have lower total scores in all the subjects of College Entrance Examination. Thus, they will have much interest and strong motivation in English learning and then ensure their performance.

2. Changes should be made in the curriculum. Courses, especially elective courses, and teaching hours should be reduced to a possible minimum required by the Educational Ministry of China so that the students can have more after-class time to digest the content, apply to main courses and read more books. There are too many courses for students to learn except general English and business related and business English course in ABU. For example, there are common courses and required optional courses which amount to 45 credits, 28, 1% of total 160 in-course credits. The students are asked to take and pass these courses and then they can graduate. Of course, this is the regulation stipulated by the Educational Ministry. Besides, there are too many lecture hours for each course each week. Usually, four or six hours are arranged for a compulsory course per week and two hours for an optional course. As a result, students have to attend about 30 hours per week, with 6 hours from morning till night from Monday to Friday. They hardly have after-class time to read referenced books. This echoes with the strong suggestions from the questionnaire to seniors.

3. Both students’ need and social practical need should be taken into more consideration in the curriculum development so as to make courses or units more effective like the course of SLAS.

4. More business English and business-related courses should be systematically opened and put into our curriculum, especially the course, business communication, should run through several semesters as it is very important and useful in doing foreign and international business. In addition, some business English and business-related courses start from the second semester of the first academic year or the second year so that students can be strengthened in adequate business knowledge and English language skills in business communication or environment. The theories of business knowledge should be well combined with practice.

5. Enough attention should be paid to the training of students' writing, speaking and translating abilities.

6. The teachers should think out different ways to arouse students' interests and stimulate their motivation and apply diverse methods to make students more involved in classroom activities.

7. The teachers should be encouraged to add, compile or write some new and authentic material to the textbooks to better satisfy students' needs.

Some suggestions and adaptations are made here, but they may not be so perfect and complete because of certain limitations for kinds of reasons, which will be articulated in the next part.

7.3 Limitations

Although great efforts are made to arrive at a more reliable, objective and valid answer to the research questions, some limitations are still unavoidable for lack of time and space as well as the busy administration work. Further research is needed to address these issues.

1. There can be different implications of effectiveness in the curriculum. This research only refers to students achieving a good level of English and adequate business knowledge to enter employment. It isn't involved in the employment rate of graduates, which is whether above or below the norm for the same level of institution, the median graduate salary, which is whether at the average or above for the same type of institution and the satisfaction rate of graduates, which is whether significantly above or below the middle score. The employer reactions were designed to collect, but failed to probably because most of them are too busy to respond. OF all the 40 copies of questionnaire sent through e-mails, only two copies were received. They are invalid due to the number.

2. For the methods, the author accepts Allen's view in Part Three. In addition, the author ideally needs external measures of success such as performance in external language tests, but it is harder to require all the students to take IELTS or TOEFL because of their high expense of money for it.

3. For the input-output level analysis, national college entrance examination and TEM 4 & 8 have their standard and requirements of English and may function as a part of stakeholders in assessing student performance, but they don't connect to an international benchmark like IELTS or TOEFL.

4. The analysis and comparison of the curriculum may not be full enough and some other issues or points like reliability, objectivity and validity etc are not properly articulated for this research is already a big project and extremely runs out of the word space limited in MA.

5. After the performance it is found that the questionnaire may be of too many questions and items, with some details unnecessary or overlapped, which may influence the respondents' attention to main issues or cause a little confusion. Besides, the timing, atmosphere and state or mood the respondents entered into may not be perfectly created for their responses. All these may lead to their inaccurate or improper assessments to a certain degree.

6. The questionnaire to students is carried out only in one-year group, seniors, not in another group, juniors. It lacks in a comparison and the results may not be objective, reliable and valid enough.

7. As the graduates work in different parts of China and those who work in Beijing may change their jobs or telephone numbers, invitations might have not reached them by the time the colloquium started. So the number of collected questionnaires to graduates is comparatively small in terms of the graduates number of

English majors at ABU. The data collected might not be decisive. But one point should be made clear that most of the graduates who attended the colloquium work very hard and are doing best in their work. Their responses to the questionnaires are worthy of being highly valued.

8. Some interviewees only taught the seniors and juniors some courses one or two semesters in their first or second academic year, and don't teach them in the third or fourth year. They don't know their whole situation and performance well. So their judgment and choice may not be accurate and objective in some sense.

9. Tertiary Education of China has now moved from former elite education to popular education. Society has changed a lot. Generally, students don't work so hard as teachers who were students before. Some interviewees haven't changed their traditional notion to judge students' attitude towards learning and application to work. They may still use their past scale of measurement to assess the students, which may affect their evaluation.

10. The author meant that they could make a choice or an evaluation of language competence according to the standard and requirement set in TEM 4 and 8, but some of them just did upon their "feel", which also may affect their choices.

11. The proportion between general English teachers and business English teacher is not balanced. Thus it might twist the results in certain points.

12. The classroom observation for BA international business English course in UOP was planned to do, but failed to for some reasons, which may lead to a lean comparison of the implementation of business English curricula of ABU and UOP. Thus incomplete adaptations may be made.

13. For an overall evaluation on the curriculum effectiveness, all the surveys and the results may not be ideally weighted and kept in proper balance. An perfect picture of assessment may not be caused to some extent on some points.

7.4 Summary

The conclusion is tentative, not decisive, the findings, suggestions and adaptations might be improper and imperfect in some sense because of the limitations above. Anyhow, it is hoped that they will be of some use to and generalized to the English educators and teachers and English majors, especially business English majors of all the other universities in China. It is also expected that this work can provide insights into the later studies of a similar nature on a larger scale.

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