

#EmergingEnglish

Q&A List

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Exploring Digital Trends and Needs of English Teachers in China

Date: 29 June 2022

Time: 16:00 – 17:15 (Beijing time) / 09:00 – 10:15 (UK time)

Speaker: Ben Beaumont

	Question	Answer
1	Are there any differences in understanding of "teaching 21st century skills and abilities" among professionals from China, Korean and/or Japan respectively?	The questionnaire listed '21 st century skills/core competencies (for example, creativity, collaboration and critical thinking)' in the local language, adding the example in parentheses to avoid ambiguity. We recognised that different MoEs would describe 21 st century skills differently, so after consultation with the three in-country research teams and trials of the questionnaire, we settled on the term and example above.
2	Hi Ben, do you think that the lack of Speaking in the CET4 and CET6 exams has made that skill more in demand as a PD for teachers? And how do you think the graph 1 would correlate if it were teacher trainers ranking Chinese teachers' needs? Thank you	<p>In short, I would say that the effect on PD requests of speaking being included, or not, in school exams depends on the teacher. In some cases, I would suggest that where not included, teachers may feel that they're not using their language, and so want more practice with it to maintain their level of proficiency. However, there was evidence of many teachers only having time to prepare for the minimum class requirements. In this latter case, it's likely that the teachers are not so interested in developing their own speaking skills. What is certainly true is that teachers want PD that will help them with the issues they face in the classroom, be they related to teaching speaking skills or other areas of teaching.</p> <p>Regarding the question about teacher trainers ranking teachers' needs, again, I think this will greatly depend on the background of the trainer. If they are a trainer working for the government, they will have institutional opinions about what teachers need, e.g. training in development in the new curriculum (see the webinar on Understanding the Implications of the 2022 Primary & Junior High English Curriculum at www.britishcouncil.cn/en/teach/emerging-English-webinar2022 for examples of this). If, however, the trainer has been trained in a communicative methodology, they may well rank skills associated with communication more highly.</p>
3	You mentioned lesson observation in the sense of a number of teachers observing a more experienced teacher. Was observation by a number of more	We didn't specify what type of lesson observation, only the type of observation. The data emerging from the surveys and interviews didn't specify whether the lesson observations were of more or less experienced teachers. This illustrates the interesting point of less-experienced teachers having something that they can share with more experienced teachers,

	experienced teachers of a less experienced teacher (quite a common practice in Chinese schools) also considered in the research?	length of experience itself not being the sole reason someone might run a lesson observation class.
4	Hi. In the area of 'effective PD', international collaboration was on the list. Did the study identify any examples of this?	Yes. Examples included the British Council, publishing organisations and broadcasters, e.g. the BBC. Full details can be found in the report.
5	Great and fascinating presentation, thanks Ben. Do we know what the English level of the teachers is ? How interested might the teachers be in improving their proficiency vs methodology and pedagogic skills ?	Thank you. We did not ask the teachers to self-report their level of English, but anecdotally, from the interviews (conducted in the national language for each country), levels ranged from B1 to C2. It is possible to make some possible assumptions about language level based on responses, however. For example, in the China data, the language of instruction for PD was not rated highly as a determining factor of participation, suggesting that for most teachers, training conducted in English may not be a problem. With English language teacher PD likely to be around a B2-C1 level, one might guess that many teachers have a receptive level of English of at least B2. However, this is taking several steps away from the actual data and so it is important not to base important decisions on such a suggestion.
6	Can you explain the item in the interview data that simply said PD should “increase”?	The full information is in the report, but it simply means that there should be more PD.
7	How much of the result of CPD is measured in terms of Level 3 or Level 4 evaluation? (Kirkpatrick model)	We didn't use the Kirkpatrick Model to rate CPD. We only asked respondents to identify the general topics/themes of CPD, e.g. peer observations, reading books, classroom action research. Depending how each of these are conducted and feedback gathered, they could be listed at a different level on the Kirkpatrick Model.

8	Do you have any historical data to compare this with, in order to see trends and changes over the past few years?	We have found no research that offers a three-country landscape review of teachers' digital PD needs. However, there has been extensive research into teacher PD in each of these countries. The published landscape report includes 40 citations of previous research. Full references are detailed at the end of the report.
9	Did any surprising differences between China, Japan and ROK arise?	The findings were generally quite similar, although it was notable that satisfaction with PD in Japan was much lower than in China and South Korea (e.g. 39% in Japan compared to 83% and 87% for China and South Korea respectively). Key cross-cutting themes are given in slides 36-38 of the presentation and full details can be found in the report.
10	How transferable do you suspect the data is to Chinese university lecturers who teach through the medium of English?	My understanding is that, on the whole, there is generally less PD for lecturers at universities than there is in state sector primary and secondary education, something which is a generalisable point in countries around the world. Separate research I've been involved in suggests that Chinese university EMI PD is generally lacking and what support there is, tends to be for general language training rather than for pedagogic training. In terms of PD content matter, I imagine that there would be little transfer, as EMI lecturers are only using English to instruct their subject rather than teaching English. However, this may differ depending on individual university's definition of what EMI is (i.e. Do universities see EMI as having dual learning objectives or just subject learning objectives?).
11	Did you spot any differences in requirements based on length of service? Practical ideas seem very prevalent; is that the same for newly qualified teachers vs. very experienced ones?	Yes, there was a general desire for training to focus on practical techniques to overcome issues teachers face in their day-to-day classroom practice. This was common across levels of experience and age.