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An Introduction to Major University English Tests and English Language Teaching In China

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An Introduction to Major University English Tests
and English Language Teaching In China

Caiping Sun

A selected project submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Dr. Lynn Henrichsen, Chair
Dr. Dan Dewey
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August 2010

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ABSTRACT

An Introduction to Major University English Tests and English Language Teaching In China

Caiping Sun

Department of Linguistics and English Language

Master of Arts

The purposes of this project were to introduce (1) the four main college level English tests used in the People's Republic of China to expatriate English language educators, researchers, curriculum developers, and program designers; and (2) the college English language teaching situation in China to expatriates and give them information on where and how to apply for teaching positions there. The project produced two products to fulfill these goals. First, a paper titled *an introduction to major university English tests in China: Their nature, development and importance* is now ready to submit for publication. It is a paper that introduces all four of the main college level English tests in China to the outside world. It explains these high-stakes English tests to scholars outside of China. Second, a website, <http://www.tesolinchina.blog.com>, was created to fulfill the second goal of the project. It is the first website that provides those who are interested in teaching English in China with a complete list of major universities in each geographical region of China as well as other necessary information, and links to these universities.

Keywords: English test, high-stakes, website, expatriate, the People's Republic of China

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List of acronyms

CET	College English Test
CET-4	College English Test: Band Four
ELT	English Language Teaching
CET-SET	CET Spoken English Test
GSEEE	Graduate School Entrance English Exam
MC	Multiple Choices
NEEA	National Education Examination Authority
NMET	National Matriculation English Test
TEM	Test for English Majors
TEM-4	Test for English Majors: Band Four
TEM-8	Test for English Majors: Band Eight
UEEHE	University Entrance Examination to Higher Education
WTO	World Trade Organization

Chapter 1

Introduction

There has been a growing number of English learners and speakers in the People's Republic of China since the start of China's Open Door Policy to the outside world in 1979, which was followed by international trade by Sino-foreign enterprises, and Chinese students studying abroad. More people started learning English when China became a member of the World Trade Organization in 2001 and, when China prepared for the 2008 Beijing Olympics between 2000 and the of summer, 2008. Today the Chinese are preparing for the Shanghai Expo 2010, China, which attracts more people to learn English. English, from a subject that was neglected and abolished completely in China during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), has not only developed into one of the most important subjects at all levels of school, from kindergarten to graduate school; it also has developed into the most important subject to be tested for every Chinese student who tries to get into an institution of a higher education. The English-learning population in China has now risen to about 300 million (Hong, 2009), which includes both learners at schools and learners out of schools.

Testing plays an important role in most of the Chinese people's lives. English, as the major subject tested at all levels, is a key to success in China (Cheng, 2008) and determines the outcome of many people's lives. The College English Test Band Four (CET-4) is the most influential certificate English test among many other certificate English tests in China. The University Entrance Examination to Higher Education (UEEHE) is the most important entrance examination among many other entrance

examinations. The greatest impact these two tests have on English teaching and learning in China takes place at the university level where students focus on passing the CET-4, and at the high school level, where they focus on getting high scores on the UEEHE. In their pilot study of washback of the CET-4 on teaching and learning, Sun and Peng (2009) found that all college level teachers who answered the questionnaires said they aimed to help students pass the CET-4 and 100% of college students said they aimed at passing the CET-4. In the same study, 80% of the teachers said the CET-4 decided what and how they taught in classes, while 95% of the students said the CET-4 decided what and how they learned English. A similar result was obtained by Huang (2005) when he found that schools and students stopped listening classes and practicing listening when it was declared in the UEEHE Specifications of the related province that listening was not to be tested that year.

One indirect impact of these tests is that most Chinese students are not capable of communicating in English after studying English for over 10 years probably because of the neglect of communicative skills in English testing. The authors recommend in the manuscript that is part of this project that speaking should be tested in the CET-4 in order to enhance the teaching and learning of spoken English and to improve the Chinese learner's communication skills.

The large size of the English learner and user population in China stands in stark contrast with the outside world's neglect of this situation. Therefore, by explaining those tests and English Language Teaching (ELT) studies in China, this project will build a bridge for international English educators who may see potential opportunities for conducting research, developing curricula, or starting English training programs in China.

On the other hand, a website, <http://www.tesolinchina.blog.com> has been created through this project to build a communicative bridge for Chinese universities and English native speakers who want to teach English in China. The lack of fluency of Chinese students in spoken English has brought a lot criticism to ELT in China and has drawn great attention to their educational institutions. Many schools in China hire native English speakers to teach spoken English and listening in order to improve their students' communication capacity. However, the lack of direct communication between Chinese schools and native English speakers who want to teach in China makes it hard for schools to hire teachers, and hard for individuals to find an ideal school in which to teach. This situation leads to a necessitous demand for both Chinese schools looking for native English teachers and English native speaking candidates who want to teach in China. Thus a website seems the most convenient and direct solution to resolve this demand. Therefore, this website, undoubtedly, will create a channel between the schools in China and the foreign individuals, through which, they can communicate directly.

This project is important for the following reasons. First, as mentioned above, it will give international English scholars knowledge of what has been happening in China in English language teaching and learning. Hopefully, this will help scholars both in and out of China to look for opportunities to cooperate in research on teaching, learning, and testing. The Chinese scholars and teachers can learn from their international colleagues how to conduct scientific studies in which they can base their conclusions on real data. Consequently, they will not only write academic articles, but will also practice new methods of teaching (Cheng, 2008). On the other hand, international scholars will be able to get help from their Chinese colleagues in collecting data.

Second, China has been growing into an economically and politically powerful and influential country. More and more communication takes place between China and the outside world through the English language; and more and more people want to know about this ancient country full of mystery. Traveling in China is an important way for people to get to know China but it is not the only or best way. Tourists can only see and learn a very shallow portion of China, its history, its beauty, its people and their cultures and customs. In contrast, having an opportunity to work and live in China for a year or longer helps people get to know China better. Meanwhile, these teachers can help Chinese people learn the English language and understand other countries better. Many people outside of China desire to have the experience of working and living in China, but most of them may not know how they can do so. The website created through this project is an indispensable tool for native English speakers who want to find a teaching position at a Chinese university. There are some websites from which people can get information but these are run by specific agencies. The users are compelled to find a job through these agencies. With this website, the users will be able to contact any university directly without going through an agency. It is the first of such website that provides the complete information needed to do so.

Chapter 2

Manuscript on major university English tests in China

This chapter is to fulfill the first purpose of this project by introducing four major college English tests in China to the EFL educators outside China.

An Introduction to Major University English Tests in China: Their Nature, Development, and Importance

Introduction

Among the world's languages, Chinese has the greatest number of native speakers. Outside of China (and other Chinese-language countries and communities), however, Chinese is not commonly spoken. For that reason, English is widely studied in China as a language for international communication. As China has grown into an economically powerful and politically influential country, more and more communication takes place between the Chinese and the outside world through the English language. Consequently, English is now studied in China on a grand scale. The English-learning population in China is estimated to be around 300 million (Hong, 2009). That means there are more learners of English in China than native speakers of English in the United States (Sun, L., 2009)

For these reasons, English language teaching and testing constitute an important part of the Chinese education system. There has been a growing number of English learners and speakers in the People's Republic of China since the start of China's 1979 Open Door Policy to the outside world. This policy has led to much international trade by Sino-foreign enterprises and many Chinese students studying abroad. Even more people started learning English when China became a member of the World Trade Organization

in 2001, and then when the Chinese prepared for the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the 2010 International Exposition in Shanghai. From a subject that was ignored and even abolished completely in China during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), English has developed into not only one of the most important subjects at all levels of school, from kindergarten to graduate school, but a subject on which every Chinese student who tries to get into an institution of a higher education will be tested.

Many reports have been written by Chinese scholars and outsiders regarding English language teaching in China (Scovel, 1979; Cowan, Light, Mathews, & Tucker, 1979; Maley, 1983; Liu, 1988; Campbell and Yong, 1993; McKay, 1994; Weng, 1996; Wang, 1999; Henrichsen, 2007). In contrast, only a few articles about English language testing in China have been published for international readers and scholars. Chinese language educators and researchers themselves did not start serious studies in foreign language teaching and learning until about twenty years ago. The history of research on English testing is even shorter due to the relatively short history of English tests in China. In addition, it is hard to find articles published by Chinese in international academic journals before 1980 because of the isolation of the Chinese from the rest of the world after the establishment of the People's Republic of China. This was especially true during the Cultural Revolution when China did not have any relations or contact with Western countries.

The situation began to change, however, when China's doors to the outside world opened, and when more and more Chinese started studying or doing exchange research at western universities. Chinese language educators and researchers began doing research

on language teaching and learning, and later, on language testing. However, publications of research by Chinese in international journals are still limited.

Although an increasing number of publications deal with language testing in China, most are just review articles or state-of-the-art articles, “due to the research tradition in China with its focus on knowledge dissemination” (Cheng, 2008, p 21). There is still a serious discrepancy between the huge number of English teachers and learners in China and the little knowledge about this situation that has been disseminated to international educators and the outside world. To help remedy that unfortunate situation, this article provides an introduction to and overview of the Chinese system for testing students’ English language skills.

More than a dozen different national high-stakes English examinations are offered in China every year. One thing is common to all of them—no matter which one students take, the remainders of their lives are determined by the results, especially the college-level English tests. For example, if high school graduates fail the National Matriculation English Test (NMET), they lose the opportunity to get into universities. If college students fail the College English Test—Band Four (CET-4), they will not receive their degrees, which makes it challenging for them to find jobs after graduation and impossible to pursue graduate studies.

The high-stakes nature of these tests makes most educational activities in China very exam-oriented. English teachers and English students in China may have different focuses on teaching and learning but the same examination-oriented goal. That is, the teachers focus on helping their students to pass these tests, and the students focus on passing them.

These English examinations can be classified into two major types: entrance examinations and school completion/leaving English certificate examinations. The entrance examinations are given to screen candidates desiring to enter high school, university, or graduate school. The major English entrance exams include the National Matriculation English Test (NMET), the Graduate School Entrance English Exam (GSEEE), the English Test for Admission to Institutions of Higher Education for Adults, the Entrance English Examination for Self-Taught Higher Education, the Entrance English Test for TV-University, and the Entrance English Test for Correspondence University.

In contrast, the purpose of the certificate tests is to evaluate the level of English proficiency students have achieved through coursework already taken. The major certificate tests include the College English Test (CET 4 & CET 6), the Test for English Majors (TEM 4 & TEM 8), the National Professional and Technical Titles English Test, the Cambridge Young Learners' English Test, the Public English Testing System, Business English Examinations, the *Wàiyǔ shuǐpíng Kǎoshì* (WSK —an English proficiency examination to select professionals to study abroad), and the National Accreditation Examination for Translators and Interpreters.

Due to length restrictions, it is not possible to discuss all of these many high-stakes English tests in depth in this article. Therefore, it will focus on only the four most important and influential college-level English tests in the People's Republic of China, which are taken by tens of millions of Chinese students annually. Two of these tests are entrance examinations: the NMET (National Matriculation English Test) and the GSEEE (Graduate School Entrance Examination). Two are certificate examinations: the CET

(College English Test) and the TEM (Test for English Majors). Each test's nature, historical development, projected future development, and significance to international educators will be discussed. Before that discussion and as a foundation for it, this article will first provide a brief history of English language learning, teaching, and testing in China.

Historical overview of English language learning and testing in China

English was first introduced to China in the Sui Dynasty (581-617 AD) and Tang Dynasty (618 – 907 AD), when the new Silk Road connected China to the outside world and led to “cultural, commercial and technological exchanges between traders, merchants, pilgrims, missionaries, soldiers, nomads and urban dwellers” in China and many European countries (*Sīchóu zhīlù*, 2009). For example, when British Christian missionaries came to China in the Tang Dynasty, some Chinese Christians either learned English from the missionaries in China or were sent to European countries to learn English or other European languages (*Yīngyǔ zài*, 2009). During the 1600s, the establishment of the John Company by the British in India helped introduce the English language to China again through business and missionaries. The Westernization Movement (1861-1894) of the Qing Dynasty brought English to more Chinese through diplomacy, the munitions industry, civil industry, and education (*Yángwù yùndòng* 2009). In 1862, the first school of foreign languages in Chinese history, *Jīng-shī-tóng-wén-guǎn* (1862-1900; Beijing Normal Language School), was established. It was a school established by the government of the Qing dynasty to train translators, diplomats, and other foreign language specialists for the government. It taught only English in the

beginning, but later added French, German, Russian, and Japanese (*Jīng-shī-tóng-wén-guān*, 2009).

Although English has been taught at schools in China since those early days, it did not become a subject for all students until the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, when English was introduced to all schools. The existing English language tests, however, can be traced back only to 1977 when the University Entrance Examination to Higher Education (UEEHE) was resumed after the ten-year Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) in which higher education was forbidden and English was ignored. During that time, Chinese students did not learn any foreign languages at school, books published in foreign languages or about western countries were burned, and those who tried to teach or learn foreign languages were criticized as subservient to foreigners. Before 1966, the UEEHE included a required Russian language examination, but English was optional and not as popular. When the UEEHE was resumed in 1977, an optional English exam was again administered. Nevertheless, the English score was only taken into consideration (not required) for admission into colleges and universities. In schools, English was listed in the curriculum as one of the required subjects, but because there were no qualified English teachers in most parts of China, most urban Chinese students did not start learning English until the sixth grade, while most suburban and rural Chinese students could not start learning English until the last year of high school. Those students who lived in more remote parts of China never had the opportunity to learn any English.

After the resumption of the UEEHE in 1977, the next great leap forward in English testing in China was made in 1985 when English became one of the mandatory subjects on the examination. At about that same time, another high-stakes, nationwide

English test, the College English Test (CET), began. The College English Test Band-4 and Band-6 (CET-4, CET-6) were introduced to Chinese students respectively in 1987 and 1989, first among college students and then to all levels of public education. As the importance of the CET grew and became recognized, English began to be taught to children as early as the third grade starting in the mid-1990s (Cheng, 2008) and then from the first grade in the early 2000s. Today, parents send their children to bilingual kindergartens or pay private tutors for their children to learn English starting at age 5 and continuing through age 18 when their children graduate from high school.

This “English fever,” which started in the late 1980s, has never shown signs of “temperature” reduction. First, China’s joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) in November 2001 pushed English learning to a peak. Later, English fever reached another peak when China started preparing for the Beijing 2008 Olympics and called on the citizens in Beijing and other cities organizing some games to learn English. More recently, the 2010 Shanghai World Expo made the English fever flame more fiercely.

Twenty years ago, the Chinese people were keen to learn English mostly in order to learn advanced science and technology from overseas. They do so today for a great variety of academic, personal, and professional reasons (Sun, L. 2009). Along with the rapid development of China’s economy, an increasing number of Chinese students have gone abroad to attend universities and graduate schools. With their new prosperity, more and more Chinese citizens travel the world as tourists. In addition, an increasing number of successful Chinese entrepreneurs extend their investments to the outside world, mainly in English speaking countries like Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States.

For all these reasons, China today has a larger English-learning population than any other country in the world.

Exam-orientation and English tests in China

Chinese education today is often characterized as being examination-oriented. Chinese children, willingly or not, may start taking examinations as early as age 4 or 5 to get into a selective kindergarten, and they will never stop taking examinations if they want to get into higher education or aspire to important social positions. “Over the years of primary education (K-Grade 6), secondary education (Junior High Grade 7-9, Senior High School 10-12) and university education (4-year undergraduate), students take numerous examinations at the school, municipal, provincial and national levels” (Cheng, 2008, p.16). In China, everyone must receive a nine-year compulsory education, but all students have to pass examinations to move from one level to another. Many take very competitive examinations to get into better schools.

Testing in China also has a very long history. *Kējǔ*, the first standardized test to select the highest government officials based on merit, started in the Sui Dynasty (605 AD) and continued until the end of the Qing Dynasty (1905) (*Kējǔ zhìdù*, 2009). English language testing, however, did not start until the establishment of *Jīng-shī-tóng-wén-guǎn* (Beijing Normal Language School) in 1862. Nevertheless, these early tests were often small in scale and aimed at selecting officials for the government (Cheng, 2008). The present national English testing has a relatively short history. The only current national English test that existed before 1966, was the pre-standard English test for college entrance examinations. The rest of the current national English tests did not come into existence until 1977 when China resumed its entrance examinations for colleges.

Major English tests in China

This paper only introduces the following four most important and influential college level English tests in China: the National Matriculation English Test (NMET), the Graduate School Entrance English Exam (GSEEE) and the College English Test-Band 4 (CET-4), and the Test for English Majors (TEM-4 & TEM-8).

The National Matriculation English Test (NMET)

The University Entrance Examination to Higher Education (UEEHE)

The NMET is one of the four or five subjects tested in the University Entrance Examination to Higher Education (UEEHE). The UEEHE known as *Gāokǎo* (*Quánguó Pǔtōng Gāoděng Xuéxiào Zhāoshēng Tǒngyī Kǎoshì*) in Chinese, is the major gateway through which Chinese students must pass to achieve higher education, though not the only one. It is a multi-part academic examination held annually in June throughout China. All secondary students in their last year of high school who want to get into colleges and universities must pass the UEEHE, which is a prerequisite for entrance into all colleges and universities.¹

The UEEHE, or *Gāokǎo*, is seen as the gatekeeper for formal higher education and nicknamed the “Footslog Bridge.” It is undoubtedly the most visible and important examination in China. “During the examination season each year, secondary schools,

¹ Although an increasing number of candidates can be accepted by different levels of colleges and universities, about half the candidates still cannot get into higher education institutions through the UEEHE because of limited enrollment capacities at Chinese universities. For those who cannot get into higher education institutions through the UEEHE, various other exams exist, such as the Admission Tests to Institutions of Higher Education for Adults and the Self-Taught Higher Education Examination System.

universities, and even government officials at different levels will focus their attention on the examinations that make up the UEEHE” (Liu, 2010, p. 35). It is also the most competitive entrance examination in China. Each year, millions of high school graduates and others with equivalent educational credentials try to enter into universities by means of this “Footslog Bridge.” The number of the test takers varies but each year has had more candidates than the year before (See figure 1).

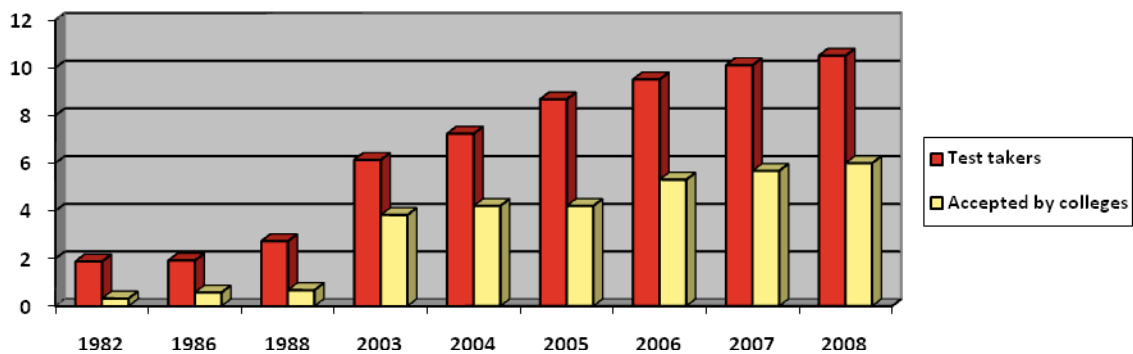


Figure 1. Numbers of *Gāokǎo* test takers and number of test takers admitted to colleges in China (in millions) (Zhōngguó líníán, 2008)

The *Gāokǎo* was discontinued between 1966 and 1976 due to the Cultural Revolution. During those ten years, the Down to the Countryside Movement in China brought secondary school graduates, the so-called “intellectual youths,” to the country to work as peasants in villages throughout China. All except a limited number of higher education institutes in China were closed then. Instead of selecting students according to their academic achievements in the entrance examination, these non-closed institutes selected students who had been working as farmers, workers, or soldiers for over three years and called them “worker, peasant and soldier college students” (*Gāokǎo*, 2009).

The *Gāokǎo*, officially resumed in 1977, but instead of being a national test, it was first designed and administered by the individual provinces. However, its resumption was still a history-making event in modern China (National Higher Education Entrance Examination, 2009). From 1978 on, it has been a national examination, uniformly designed by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. Since then, all students across the country have taken the same examination each year.

Before 2004, a single paper test for each subject of the *Gāokǎo* was used nationwide on the same examination day. The test was and is still organized by examination and admissions offices of the department of education of each province, autonomous region, and directly-controlled municipality on behalf of the Ministry of Education. However, in 2004, for examination security reasons the National Education Examination Authority (NEEA) was required to develop four sets of papers for each subject. They were used in different provinces. At the same time, nine provinces were allowed to develop their own matriculation tests. In 2005 and 2006, some more provinces were allowed to do so (Liu, 2010), and today, many major universities are allowed to develop their own matriculation tests.

No matter whether the candidates take a national, provincial, or university matriculation test, the *Gāokǎo* is administered between June 7th and 9th (which used to be between July 7th and 9th before 2003, but was changed to June due to the hot weather in July).

The *Gāokǎo* is a multi-part examination, with some parts being mandatory and others optional. Chinese, mathematics, and English are the three mandatory subjects tested in the *Gāokǎo*. Physics, chemistry, geology, geography, political education and

history are the other subjects that applicants take depending on whether they want to study sciences or humanities in college (Gǎigé kāifàng, 2009). However, for the 2010 *Gāokǎo*, four out of six universities with the right to develop their own matriculation tests in Shanghai announced that only mathematics and English would be mandatory subjects. When questioned why Chinese was no longer included in these versions of the *Gāokǎo*, one of the presidents of these four universities explained that the purpose of this reduction was to lighten the burden on the test takers (Ji, & Xu, 2010). It is noteworthy that despite the dropping of some important academic subjects (such as Chinese language), English (in the form of the NMET, explained in the following section) apparently has a secure position on the *Gāokǎo*.

The National Matriculation English Test (NMET)

The NMET or *Gāokǎo Yīngyǔ (Quánguó Pǔtōng Gāoděng Xuéxiào Zhāoshēng Tōngyī Kǎoshì--- Yīngyǔ)* is the English-language component of the University Entrance Examination to Higher Education. The NMET is a norm-referenced standardized test whose major function is to select high school graduates for institutions of higher education (Cheng, 2008). The specific purpose of the NMET is to “make inferences about candidates” and their English language ability, which are “used in university admission decisions together with the scores from other university entrance tests” of a few subjects (Cheng, 2008, p. 19). The NMET’s historical development can be divided into two main phases (Lu, 2008).

Pre-standardized Phase (1950-1988)

During the first stage (1950-1966) of this phase, the NMET mainly tested reading, English-to-Chinese translation, and Chinese-to-English translation. The ratio of subjective questions to objective-response questions was 80:20 (1950 *nián*, 2008).

The NMET was closed for ten years between 1966 and 1976 due to the Cultural Revolution, and was not resumed until 1977. The format of the test changed greatly during the second stage (1977-1988) of its pre-standardized phase. The new NMET was composed of sixteen completely different types of questions. The ratio between the subjective questions and objective-response questions was reversed, from 80:20 to 20:80. Initially the NMET score was not counted into the total score of the *Gāokǎo*, but that changed in 1978 when it started being counted.

The Standardized Phase (1989-Present)

In its second, standardized phase, the NMET underwent three different stages of development.

1. MET Matriculation English Test) Phase (1989-1994)

The MET (Matriculation English Test) was started in Guangdong Province in 1985 and expanded to the whole country in 1989. The total possible score was 100 points. It had five different sections: phonetics (5%); multiple choice (15%); cloze test (25%); reading comprehension (40%) and writing (15%).

2. *NMET Phase (1995-2003)*

The *National* Matriculation English Test (NMET) was piloted in some provinces as early as 1991 and offered nationwide in 1995. This test had 150 points in total, coming from five different sections: reading comprehension (50 points), situational conversation and word spelling (i.e., dictation) (20 points); multiple choice (25 points); cloze test (25 points); and writing (30 points). The ratio between subjective and objective-response question was 55:95 (out of 150 total points). Listening was added to the test around the year 2000, but it was not counted into the total score until 2003.

3. *Second MET Phase (2004-Present)*

Starting in 2004, the Chinese Ministry of Education allowed nine provinces to make their own English tests for the *Gāokǎo*. By 2007, another nine provinces were given the same privilege. This decentralization reversed the earlier trend toward central control over the exam. Nowadays more provinces use their own test than use the national MET. The biggest difference between the national and provincial versions of the NMET is whether or not listening is counted in students' overall test score.

To summarize, the University Entrance Examination to Higher Education (UEEHE) is by far the most important entrance exam in China today. It is taken by millions of high school graduates each year and wields a strong influence on their future careers. No less important than the overall UEEHE is its English component, the National Matriculation English Test (NMET). It makes English language teaching and learning an essential part of education in China today. The particular language skills it has tested over the course of its historical development have determined to large degree

the emphasis given to these skills in English classes throughout Chinese students' secondary school years. That secondary education, in turn, becomes the foundation on which college English classes must build.

The Graduate School Entrance English Exam (GSEEE)

Like the UEEHE, the Graduate School Entrance Examination (GSEE) is an entrance examination administered at the national level annually. The difference is that is taken by undergraduate students hoping to enter graduate schools throughout China (Cheng, 2008). The GSEE has four components, one of which is the GSEEE (Graduate School Entrance *English* Exam). The GSEEE tests English, which is one of two compulsory subjects (the other is political science) required by the National Education Examination Authority (NEEA) of the Chinese Ministry of Education. The other two subjects tested on the GSEE are course-related and developed by the universities or research institutes the applicants want to enter. The GSEEE is administered in late January or early February each year by the NEEA.

The number of students taking the GSEEE is steadily increasing (See figure 2), and the challenge of getting into graduate school is becoming much greater than before. This increase is due to the increasing competition in the employment market and the fact that graduate-level study is viewed as a way to postpone job hunting in a challenging market or as a way to improve one's chances of finding a job later (Shen, 2009).

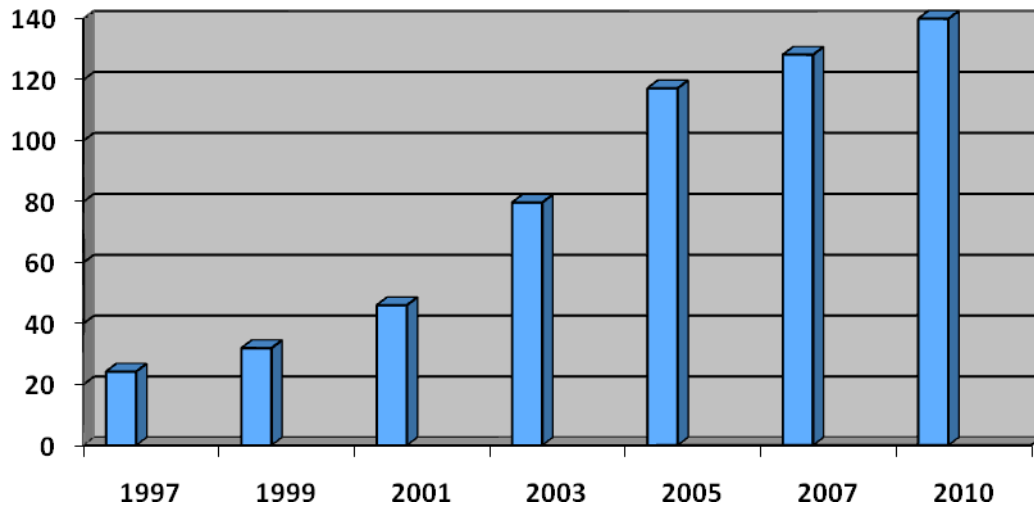


Figure 2. Numbers of GSEEE test takers (in ten thousands) (Shen, 2009; Su, 2009)

The current GSEEE test format was designed in 2004 and first used in 2005 (Liu 2010). It contains three main sections: Use of English (10%), reading comprehension (60%), and writing (30%).

Section one, Use of English, focuses on control of formal elements of the language in context, including a wide range of vocabulary, expressions, structures, and reorganization of features of discourse relating to coherence and cohesion. Test takers are required to do a cloze test with twenty multiple-choice items.

The second section is made up of three parts focusing on testing the examinees' ability to read written English. In part one, candidates are required to read four passages and complete twenty multiple-choice questions based on their understanding of these passages. In part two, candidates read an incomplete passage with five gaps and fill the gaps with five of the seven choices given. In part three, test takers are required to read one passage and translate five underlined sections from English into Chinese.

The third section is made up of two parts. First, the test takers are asked to write a letter, a report, a memorandum, or an abstract of about 100 words based on information given. Second, candidates write an essay between 160 and 200 words long based on guidelines given either in English or Chinese.

Taking the various sections and subsections of the GSEEE requires a total of 180 minutes (cloze test: 15-20 minutes; reading: 70-75minutes; translation: 20 minutes; fill-the-gap: 20 minutes; and writing 50 minutes).

Although the GSEEE is taken by far fewer students each year (1,400,000 in 2010) than the number who take the NMET (over ten million), the GSEEE is still an important “gatekeeper” test. It plays a significant role in determining which students get to go on to graduate studies in China.² The GSEEE’s history of development is much shorter than the NMET’s. In addition, the fact that the number of examinees is smaller makes it possible for test items and tasks to be more natural and authentic even though they are also more time-consuming to score.

The College English Test—Band Four (CET-4)

The College English Test—Band Four (CET-4) is the most important certificate (or school-leaving) English test in the Chinese university system. It has more test takers each year than any other certificate English test in China—over ten million a year (see figure 3).

² For Chinese students who wish to travel abroad to attend English-speaking universities, the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language, administered worldwide by Educational Testing Service) plays a similar, important role

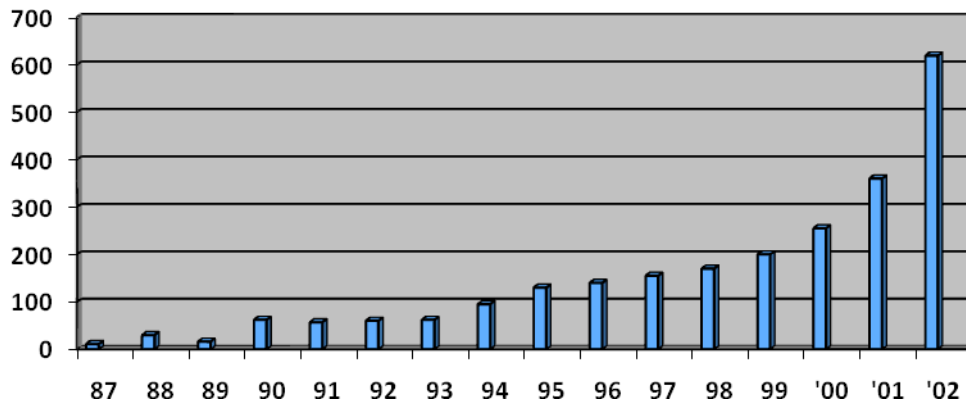


Figure 3. Numbers of CET-4 test takers between 1987 and 2002 (in ten thousands)

The CET-4's purpose is to examine Chinese college students' English proficiency and ensure that they reach the required English levels specified in the National College English Teaching Syllabi. First offered in 1987, the test was extended to college students all over China in 1988 but was still optional. Students could take the Band 4 examination created by each school. But slowly, some colleges started requiring all sophomores to take the CET-4 after they finished the required English courses and made it a rule that only those who passed the test with 60 and above (out of 100 total points) could get a graduation certificate or a bachelor's degree. Starting in the mid-1990s, more and more companies, as well as the government, made the CET-4 certificate an important requirement for hiring graduates. Therefore, more and more colleges and universities started requiring a CET-4 certificate for all the graduates to get their bachelor's degree.

Nature of the College English Test

The College English Test is a national, large-scale, standardized test administered by education departments of every province, autonomous region, and directly-controlled

municipality. It is administered biannually, in June and December/January. It is created under the direction of the National College English Testing Committee (NCETC) on behalf of the higher Education Department (HED) of the Chinese Ministry of Education (CET, 2009). The test takers are undergraduate, non-English majors who take the test when they complete their corresponding required English courses. The CET is actually a test battery with three sequential stages: the CET-4 (Band 4), the CET-6 (Band 6), and the CET Spoken English Test (CET-SET).

The term *band* is unfamiliar to most educators outside of China and deserves some explanation here. All Chinese college students are required to study English courses for two academic years, the first four semesters of their college education. Each semester is counted as one band. Students take final exams for Bands 1, 2, and 3 each semester at their own universities but take the CET-4 as a national English achievement test. After that, teaching and learning English for general purposes is stopped and switched to learning English for special purposes (ESP) related to the students' academic background. Only those who have completed Band 5 and 6 English courses and have passed the CET-4 with a score at or above 425 and above may take the CET-6, which is optional and taken by far fewer students. For those reasons, it will not be discussed in any detail here.

CET-4 scores are reported within a range of 290 to 710. The test itself is made up of four parts: listening, reading, integration test and writing. These components, along with their contents, item formats, times, and score weights, are explained in Table 1.

Table 1. Content, Item, Formats and Weights of the Each Sections of the Current CET-4

Components	Contents	Formats	Time	Score	
Listening Comprehension	Dialogues	Short	MC	15%	
		Long	MC		
	Passages	Comprehension	MC	20%	35
		Compound dictation	Compound Dictation		35%
Reading Comprehension	Reading in Depth	Discourse	MC		
		Discourse Voc.	Banked cloze	25%	25
	Skimming & Scanning	Yes/No Ques.			35%
			Fill-in-blanks, complete sentences	10%	15
Integrated Test	Cloze or Error Correction	Multiple choice or Error Correction		10%	15
		Short Answers or Translation			15%
		Chi. to Eng. Trans.	5%	5	
Writing	Writing	Short Essay		30	15%
Total				125	710

Each of these components of the CET-4 will now be explained in turn.

Listening

The listening section of the CET-4 assesses the students' ability to understand main ideas, important facts and specific details, implied meaning and the ability to determine the communicative function of discourse, the speaker's point of view and

attitudes in oral conversations and passages. Passages are spoken in both standard American English and standard British English (*Dàxué Yīngyǔ sījī kǎoshì dàgāng*, 2009).

This section of the CET-4 counts for 35% of the total score. Fifteen of these percentage points come from the comprehension of conversations, including 8 short conversations and two long conversations. Each short conversation consists of one speaker turn followed by a multiple-choice question, while each long conversation has five to eight speaker turns followed by three or four multiple-choice questions. The other twenty percentage points come from three longer listening passages, followed by three or four multiple-choice questions each (with a total of ten questions), and one compound dictation passage with ten blanks. In seven of these blanks, students must write the single, exact word spoken in the passage, and in three blanks the missing information is a phrase and can be filled in either word-for-word or in the students' own words. The speed of speech in the listening conversations and the passages is approximately 130 words per minute, and the whole section lasts for 35 minutes.

Reading

The reading comprehension section of the CET-4 assesses students' ability to acquire written information through reading. This section generates 35% of the total CET-4 score and is composed of two sections: reading in depth and speed reading.

The speed reading section includes both skimming and scanning (10%). Students have 15 minutes to skim or scan one passage of around 900 words. The item formats used in this part are multiple-choice (7) and sentence completion or true or false (3).

The reading in depth section (25%) is 25 minutes long and includes three short passages with 300-350 words apiece. Each passage is followed by items in different

formats: multiple choices, banked cloze and short answer. In the banked-cloze format, there are ten blanks and students can select one word for each blank in the passage from a list of 15 words given in the word bank. In the short-answer format, students must complete a sentence or answer questions with no more than ten words based on their own understanding of the passage.

Cloze

Cloze is used to assess students' general language comprehension and proficiency at the word, sentence, and paragraph levels. It contributes 10% to the total score and takes 15 minutes. A cloze passage about 220 to 250 words long, with content that is familiar to students and 20 words blanked out is given. For each numbered blank, students are to choose the correct word from a set of multiple-choice options. An alternative format for cloze used some years is error correction, which asks students to identify and correct ten errors embedded in a passage of the same length.

Writing and Translation

The writing and translation section assesses students' ability to write a short, expressive composition in English and to translate a printed Chinese-language passage into written English. It constitutes 20% (writing 15% and translation 5%) of the total score and takes 35 minutes.

For the writing portion, students are asked to write a composition of no less than 120 words in 30 minutes based on information given to them, for instance, the title or the topic with an outline, situation, picture, or graph, etc.

For the translation task, students are asked to complete five English sentences by translating the part of each sentence given in Chinese into English in five minutes. In some years, an alternative format for the translation subsection involves writing short answers to questions based on one of the reading passages from part two.

The College English Test-Spoken English Test (CET-SET)

The College English Test—Spoken English Test (CET-SET) assesses the test-takers' competence in English oral communication. This test is given only to students who have passed the CET-4 or the CET-6 at a predetermined score level. For instance, according to the December 2009 CET-SET registration notification, only those who passed the CET-4 with a score of 550 or above or the CET-6 with a score of 520 or above in 2008 and 2009 (out of a total score of 710)³ could register for the CET-SET (Oral Exam Registration Notification, 2009).

The CET-SET is composed of three parts. Part one, in which three or four examinees and two authorized CET-SET examiners interact in a small-group, question and answer conversation, lasts for approximately 5 minutes. Part two consists of 90-second personal statements spoken by each examinee and then a 4.5-minute panel discussion. This part lasts about 10 minutes. In part three, the examiners ask more questions to further test the examinees' oral English proficiency for an additional five minutes.

The evaluation of test-takers' performance on the CET-SET is based on the following six criteria: (1) accuracy in pronunciation, intonation and use of grammar and

³ Or those who passed the CET 4 with a score of 80 or above or the CET-6 with a score of 75 or above (out of a total of 100 possible) in the years before the new score reporting system.

vocabulary; (2) complexity and scope of vocabulary and grammatical structures employed; (3) contribution made to group discussion individually; (4) consistency in extended and coherent discourse; (5) flexibility in handling different scenarios and topics; and (6) applicability of language used in the specific context (*Dāxué Yīngyǔ sì liù jí kāoshì kōushī dàgāng*, 2009).

Summary: The Importance of the College English Test

To a large degree, the College English Test governs the other English tests, as well as the teaching and learning of English in China.

Washback is a term used to describe the effects of testing on teaching. Usually, the first and the most direct affected aspects of testing on teaching and learning are what and how to teach and learn because “what is assessed becomes what is valued, which becomes what is taught” (McEwen, 1995, p 42) or what to examine, what to teach (Yang, 1992). The CET-4 has brought positive washback to teaching and learning English in China. Gu (2005) found in her empirical study of the CET washback that most of the CET stakeholders thought highly of the test, especially its design, administration, marking, and the new measures adopted in recent years. They believe that the positive washback of the test is greater than the negative washback, and the negative washback is due mainly to the misuse of the test by the users rather than the test itself. In his study, Huang (2005) concluded that no knowledge is more important than what is being tested. He interviewed teachers and students who were preparing for the *Gāokǎo* and both the teachers and students admitted that they stopped regular teaching, learning, and listening practice after the *Gāokǎo* Administration released the news that listening would not be tested in 2005. In 2008, Sun and Peng (2009) conducted a pilot study about the washback

of the CET-4 on teaching and learning in China. Many teachers and students admitted that because of the test they treated teaching and learning more seriously and prepared for lessons more thoroughly.

Wang (2005) believes that the CET has brought fundamental changes to English teaching and learning quality in China and has developed into a complete system. The CET-4 has matured as a “criterion-related norm-referenced test” and has become a highly reliable test with high validity. It would be difficult to find any scientific, large-scale and high-stakes English test other than the CET-4 that could reflect the actual English proficiency of college students and could be as operational as the CET-4 (Mao, 2009). Overall, most Chinese teachers agree that the design and the proportions of the various parts of content are appropriate and fair for students of different academic backgrounds (Mao, 2009).

The Test for English Majors (TEM-4 and TEM-8)

The Test for English Majors (TEM) is a criterion-referenced certificate English test designed especially for Chinese university students pursuing an English major. It is administered nationwide by National Advisory Commission on foreign Language Teaching in Higher Education. It aims to measure the English proficiency of university undergraduate English majors in accordance with the National College English Teaching Syllabus for English Majors (*Yīngyǔ zhūānyè*, 2009). The TEM has two versions—the TEM-Band 4 and TEM-Band 8. Both the TEM-4 and TEM-8 were first administered in 1991. The TEM-4 is administered in May at the end of English majors’ second (sophomore) year, and the TEM-8 is administered in March near the end of English major’s fourth (senior) year.

The purposes of the Test for English Majors are (1) to assess the language performance of English majors and, (2) to examine how well the college English teaching syllabus is working in order to promote forms in English teaching and learning (Cheng, 2008). The TEM certificate issued by the NACFLT is valid for the examinee's lifetime. TEM-4 and TEM-8 scores are reported at three levels: 60-69=pass; 70-79=good, 80 and above=excellent. Starting in 2003, those who fail the TEM the first time can have one more opportunity to take the test. Nevertheless, those who take the TEM for the second time and pass the test can get a certificate labeled "pass" only, no matter how high their score is.

Test for English Majors——Band 4

The TEM is a criterion-referenced test (*Yīngyǔ zhuānyè*, 2009). Students' performance is evaluated against the criteria stipulated by the teaching syllabus (Zou, 2003). The complete TEM-4 has 40% subjective questions and takes 130 minutes.

The TEM-4 is composed of six parts (see Table 2): writing (composition & note-writing), listening dictation (listening four times to a 150-word passage spoken at a speed of 120 WPM and writing it down), listening comprehension (two or three-sentence statements followed by 7-9 multiple-choice questions, three-sentence dialogues followed by 7-9 multiple-choice questions, and several short VOA or BBC news broadcasts followed by 7-9 multiple-choice questions), a cloze test (a passage about 250 words with 15 blanks and four choices for each blank), grammar and vocabulary (25 multiple-choice questions, with about half testing grammar and half testing vocabulary), and reading comprehension (reading in depth and skimming and scanning).

Table 2. Content, Item Formats and Weights of the Different Sections of the TEM-4

Components	Contents	Format	Time	Score
Dictation	Passage	Dictation	15	15
Listening Comprehension	Dialogues	MC	15	15
	Passages	MC		
	News Broadcast	MC		
Cloze	Passage	MC	10	10
Grammar & Vocabulary	Sentences	MC	15	15
Reading Comprehension	Passages	MC	25	20
Writing	Essay	Writing	35	15
	Note-Writing	Writing	10	10
Total			130	100

Test for English Majors—Band 8

The TEM-8 is made up of six parts as well (see Table 3) : listening comprehension (four sections: talk, conversation or interview, news broadcast, and note-taking and gap-filling—a lecture about 700 words, 140-170 WPM, taking notes while listening and then filling the blanks with the omitted information), reading comprehension (reading for depth and skimming and scanning), general knowledge (culture and society of English speaking countries, English literature, and English linguistics), proofreading and error correction (a passage of about 200 words with 10 lines labeled with errors, correcting the errors with adding, deleting, or changing one

word or phrase), translation (two passages of about 300 words each, one in Chinese and the other in English. Each passage has about 150 underlined words to be translated from Chinese to English and English to Chinese), and writing (an argument or an expository essay about 400 words). The TEM-8 takes 185 minutes.

Table 3. Content, Item Formats and Weights of the Different Sections of the TEM-8

Components	Contents	Format	Time	Score
Listening	Mini-lecture	Fill-in-blank	10	25
Comprehension	Conversation & Interview News Broadcast	MC	25	10
Reading Comprehension	Passages	MC	30	20
General Knowledge	Passages	MC	10	10
Proofreading & Error Correction	Passage	Error Correction	15	10
Translation	Passages	Chinese to English English to Chinese	60	20
Writing	Essay	Writing	45	20
Total			185	100

In its two forms, the Test for English Majors examines Chinese students' abilities in English at a fairly advanced level and in relatively authentic and valid ways. It can do this because the number of examinees each year (only English majors) is comparatively

small. Nevertheless, the number of TEM-takers is still so large as to make the testing of English majors' speaking skills impractical. Despite earlier hopes in this regard, the speaking test planned for the TEM had to be suspended because conditions are not yet conducive to holding a large-scale speaking test throughout China (*Yīngyǔ zhuānyè*, 2009).

Conclusion

This article has reviewed the four most important English examinations in modern China. Two are entrance examinations (NMET and GSEEE), and two are certificate or school-leaving examinations (CET and TEM). Table 4 summarizes and compares the four tests discussed in this article in terms of each test's audience, possible score, purpose, length, cost, scheduling, number of test takers, scoring venue, and contents.

Table 4. Comparison of Major English Tests in China

	NMET	GSEEE	CET-4	TEM-4	TEM-8
Test takers	High school graduates	College graduates	Sophomore non-English majors	Sophomore English majors	Senior English majors
Scores	150	100	710	100	100
Purpose	College Entrance	Graduate School Entrance	Certificate	Certificate	Certificate
Time (Minutes)	120	180	125	130	185
Cost (Yuan)	Varies from province to province	Varies from province to province	Varies from province to province	¥80 & above	¥80 & above
Time scheduled	Annual (June 7)	Annual (January or February)	Biannual (January & June)	Annual (May)	Annual (March)
Number of test takers (in millions, 2009)	10.2 (2009 <i>nián gāokǎo</i> , 2009)	1.246 (2009 <i>nián kǎoyán</i> , 2009)	17.48 (Anhui, 2009)		
Scoring	By province or area	By individual school	By geographical region	By geographical region	By geographical region
Contents	Listening, grammar & structure, reading comprehension, writing	Use of English (grammar & structure) reading comprehension, writing	Listening, reading comprehension, integrated test, writing	Listening, grammar & structure, reading comprehension, writing	Listening, reading comprehension, proofreading (grammar & structure), writing

All four of the major, college-level English tests reviewed in this article—especially the CET-4—have developed into super-large-scale standardized tests with

their own processes, systems and standards. This article has provided only an introduction to these tests. It leaves the following tasks to experts on English language testing in China: (1) providing more detailed information for each test introduced in this paper should be provided to people interested in English language teaching in China and (2) conducting more research on measurement criteria, measurement instruments, and measurement procedures of large-scale standardized tests in order to make the results of each test more accurate, objective, comprehensive and reflective of the true proficiency of students in actually using the language (Jin, 2005).

A common shortcoming of all four tests is that none of them (except the CET-SET, which is given to a very small number of CET takers) tests students' speaking ability. Given the importance of washback from testing to teaching in China, this lack has serious repercussions. Despite the practical difficulties associated with testing students' speaking abilities, this important skill should be tested in the future more than it currently is. China's growing economy and the accompanying improvements in funding, facilities, and personnel should make this advancement in English testing possible.

Another potential area for improvement is test scoring. The scoring systems of these four major college level English tests are not consistent and are also open to scorer-bias due to factors such as fatigue. While all objective-response questions are graded by computers, the subjective-response questions are graded by human teachers. For example, the NMET is graded by selected high school and college English teachers of each province who are gathered together in an enclosed place day after day for a period of about two weeks; the GSEEE is graded by English teachers of each individual

educational institution; and the TEM and the CET-4 are graded by selected College English teachers of each geographical region working in an enclosed place for two weeks.

To summarize and conclude, the National Matriculation English Test (NMET) is the most important English entrance examination in China, and the College English Test—Band Four (CET-4) is the most influential certificate English test among the many other certificate English tests in China. English teaching and learning at Chinese high schools focus on helping students get high scores on the NMET, and English courses and teachers at colleges and universities focus on preparing students to pass the CET. The impact of these tests is significant. Expatriate English language teachers and researchers in China will do well to pay attention to these tests' natures and effects. Taking these factors into account will lead these educators to achieve greater success. This article constitutes a first step in that direction.

Chapter 3

An online introduction to teaching English in China

The manuscript above provides solid evidence that English is one of the most important subjects at all levels of educational institution in China. The contents of these four major college level English tests show that speaking competence in English has been neglected. The fact that Chinese test-takers are good at getting high scores on English tests but incapable of using the language to communicate in the real world has drawn the attention of educators and educational institutions in China. Having native English speakers teaching at schools is becoming more popular in China, but a lack of information makes communication between schools in China and expatriates difficult. The website, <http://www.tesolinchina.blog.com> has been created as part of this project in order to help those who want to find a teaching position in China. However, only information regarding major universities in China is provided in this website because of the size of the project.

Purpose of creating the website

The website, <http://www.tesolinchina.blog.com>, was created to help native English speakers who are interested in teaching English at universities in China but do not know how to find information. Some general ways people go about finding a teaching position in China include, first, going to an agency to register there, while awaiting a university from China seeking a native speaker to teach. In this case, both the applicants and the university have to pay a certain fee to the agency for the connection and pay more if the employment contract is successfully signed between the applicant and the

university. Second, applicants are introduced to a university by acquaintances who have taught English in China. Third, they might have traveled in China before and know people who help set up a connection between the two parties. Fourth, they are sent to teach in China through certain organizations, such as religious sects, governmental or non-governmental culture exchange programs, or academic exchanges between Chinese universities and English speaking countries. However, there are defects in each of the approaches mentioned above. For example, for the first option, applicants have to pay a fee whether they are able to find a job or not. Second, applicants have limited freedom to choose the place and school they want to work for. They are either assigned to a certain university through their organizations or go to a school introduced by their acquaintances, or friends. It would be too late to change after they arrive in China and find out that they might not like the place or the school.

This website was designed to give applicants a place to find links to any major university in China they want to contact and provides them with important information they need in order to find an English teaching position in China.

Structure of the website

The website, <http://www.tesolinchina.blog.com>, is the first website with a complete list of major universities in each Province in China. This site is made up of six different pages. First, “home page” is a page that gives a general introduction of this website. Second, “holidays and accommodations” is a page that gives information about holidays foreign teachers will have during their teaching year and living conditions. Third, “list of universities” is a page that gives a list of four year universities in China. Fourth, “frequently asked questions and answers” is a page that lists questions foreign teachers

concern the most with answers to these questions. Fifth, “what to teach” is a page that gives information what the candidates are expected to teach, and sixth, “why China” is a page that lists reasons why candidates should choose China to teach English.

Advantages of the website

This website has the following advantages:

First, each page provides information related to the topic that applicants need to know. For example, the page of holidays and accommodations provides information about holidays they will enjoy during their one-year teaching contract, information on housing while they live in China, and information about their international travels. On the page about what to teach, applicants will learn what they are expected to teach at the schools where they are hired. Also they will learn what they may expect in the way of help from the students they will teach. The paper titled *an introduction to major university English tests in China: their nature, development, and importance* in one of the pages will help candidates understand why having native English speakers teaching English in China is important and desired. The sample tests given in the same page will help them understand what they will be specifically expected to teach their students. The list of universities is the most helpful and the only page in which candidates can find a complete list of major universities in each province, each metropolitan area, and each autonomous region in China. Through this page, candidates can decide where in China they want to teach and at which university to apply. They have the freedom to choose to apply anywhere and at any university.

Second, it is free. Candidates do not have to pay a fee to obtain this valuable information. All they need is to choose the place they want to teach in China, find the

website of the university at which they want to teach, click the link and they will be taken to the home page of that university. Third, the candidates can contact multiple universities at the same time and compare these universities before they make their final decision. If they are not satisfied with the school they have contacted, they can go back to the list and choose other universities and start again. Fourth, it saves time for the candidates. The candidates do not have to wait for further information from their agencies, or their organizations. They can get specific information and answers they need directly from the universities.

There are many websites people can use to get information about teaching English in China. However, <http://www.tesolinchina.blog.com> is the only place where candidates can get most important information they need from one place in order to find a university where they can teach English in China.

All pages of the website are pasted here for the readers' reference.


TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA - Windows Internet Explorer

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2 COMMENTS 2010 FEBRUARY 4

Posted by yxzhn45

TO TEACH IS TO TOUCH HEARTS FOREVER!

If you want to touch hearts, change lives, and teach English at universities in China, this is the place to start.

Welcome to www.tesolchina.blog.com. This site provides native English speakers who are interested in teaching English in mainland China with information that can help to get started.

China has more English learners than any other area of the world. Native English speakers are needed at all levels, preschools, primary schools, secondary schools, and especially colleges and universities.

This site focuses on teaching English in China at the university level. It provides a list of major universities in each province and metropolis in China. It also gives a brief introduction about each province, its geological location, natural setting, and unique culture and customs.

Welcome to China! You will find your time there will be well-spent and valued!
Take this unique opportunity to broaden your experiences; learn about the

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TEACHING ENGLISH I... Clipping Sun- TESOL M...

EN 5:14 PM

Figure 4. “Home page” for “Teaching English in China”

TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA - Windows Internet Explorer

http://hesolindina.blog.com/

Web Search

Dict. CN: expatriates YouTube - Man, Wenjun 满... TEACHING ENGLISH IN C... X

Welcome to China! You will find your time there will be well-spent and valued!
Take this unique opportunity to broaden your experiences; learn about the wonderful Chinese people and their traditions and culture.



They hope you will come to teach them.



They love their English teacher.

[Edit This](#)

Posted under - Uncategorized

start

TEACHING ENGLISH L... Copying Sun-YESOL M...

5:16 PM

Figure 5. "Home page" continued

Holidays & Accommodations | TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA - Windows Internet Explorer

http://tesolchina.blog/why-china-2/

Home Holidays & Accommodations List of Universities Questions & Answers What to teach Why China

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Holidays & Accommodations

Washing with Tibetan Women



Holidays

The university hiring you usually pays for your round-trip international flight from your home country to the nearest airport where the university is located and the flight back to your home country to the airport nearest to your home. Your Waiban, or Foreign Affairs Office will pick you up from the airport when you arrive and take you to the airport when you leave.

Your contract is usually for one academic year from September to July. You will enjoy a paid winter holiday lasting from 4 weeks to 6 weeks between January and February.

You will also a 7-day holiday for the National Day, the first week of October, a 7-day holiday between Christmas and New Year's Day, and one more 7-day holiday for May Day (the International Labor Day), the first week of May.

Many universities organize free trips for their foreign teachers to visit the local tour sites.

start

Holidays & Accommod...

5:23 PM

Figure 6. "Holidays& Accommodations"

Holidays & Accommodations | TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA - Windows Internet Explorer

http://hesolchina.blog.com/why-china-2/

Dict: CN: expatriates YouTube - Man, Wenjun 满 Holidays & Accommodat...

Accommodations

All foreign teachers are provided with free furnished apartments by universities hiring them. However, food is not included.


Your status in China

You are either hired as a foreign teacher or a foreign expert according to your educational background. Those with bachelor's degrees are hired as foreign teachers and those with master's degrees or higher are usually hired as foreign experts. Foreign teachers and experts are paid differently. Salary also changes according to places you teach.


Traveling

China is a country with different geological features. It also has different cultures because of her 56 unique ethnic groups. You can never have enough time to visit China. However, you can easily find places of special customs and cultures you like to visit. You can get the information you need from your Waiban.


The Great Wall, Beijing




The Terr Cotta Warriors, Xi'an



Guilin, Guizhou



Potala Palace, Tibet



start Holidays & Accommod... Caping Sun-TEESOL M... 5:25 PM

Figure 7. "Holidays& Accommodations" continued

List of Universities | TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA - Windows Internet Explorer

http://tesolchina.blog.com/list-of-universities/

Dict.ON: expatriates YouTube - Mary, Wenjun 譚... List of Universities | TEAC... X



List of Universities

China has hundreds of universities and colleges located in her 23 provinces, 5 autonomous regions, 4 Metropolitan areas, and 2 special administrative regions. The major universities and colleges are listed according to the 7 geological regions. Universities in in HongKong, Macao, and Taiwan are not included.

If you are interested in a particular university and want to make contact, click the website of the university, switch the language into English, look for the International Exchange Center or Foreign Affairs Office, and you can start your communication with the university.

Map of China

Locations of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities.



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List of Universities | T... Copying Sun-TEESOL M...

EV 5:27 PM

Figure 8. "List of Universities"

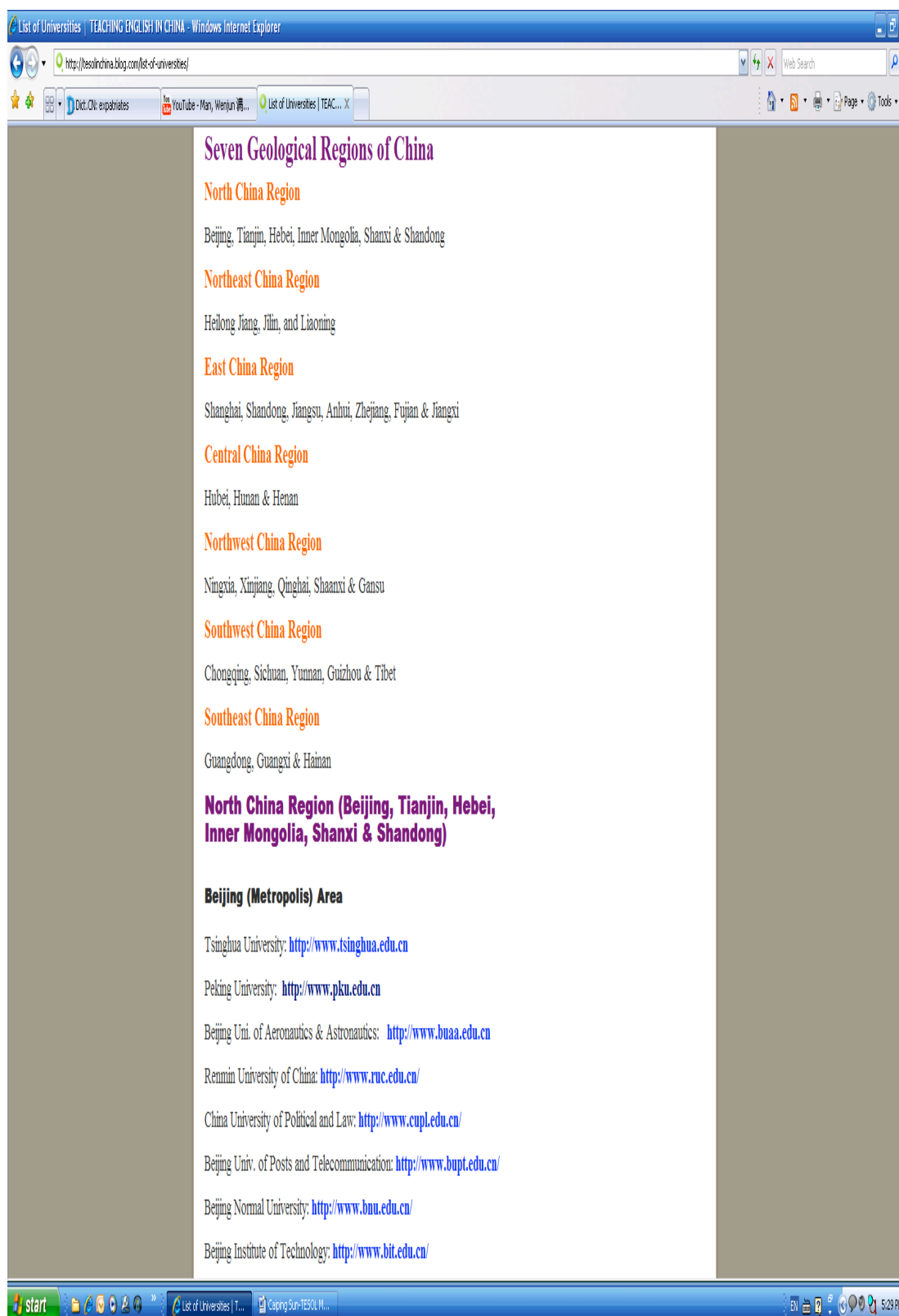


Figure 9. “List of Universities” continued



Figure 10. “List of Universities” page continued

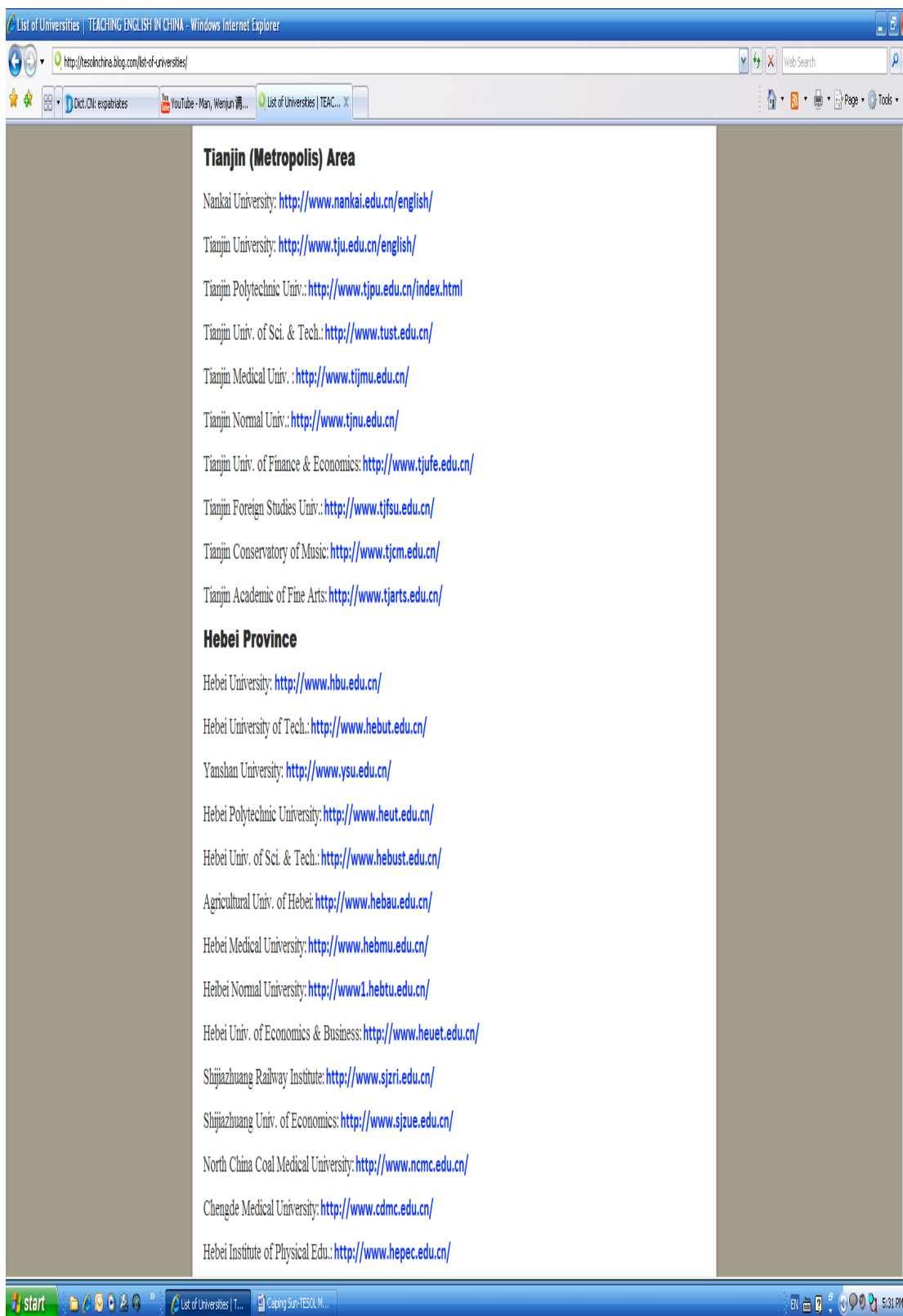


Figure 11. “List of Universities” continued



Figure 12. “List of Universities” continued

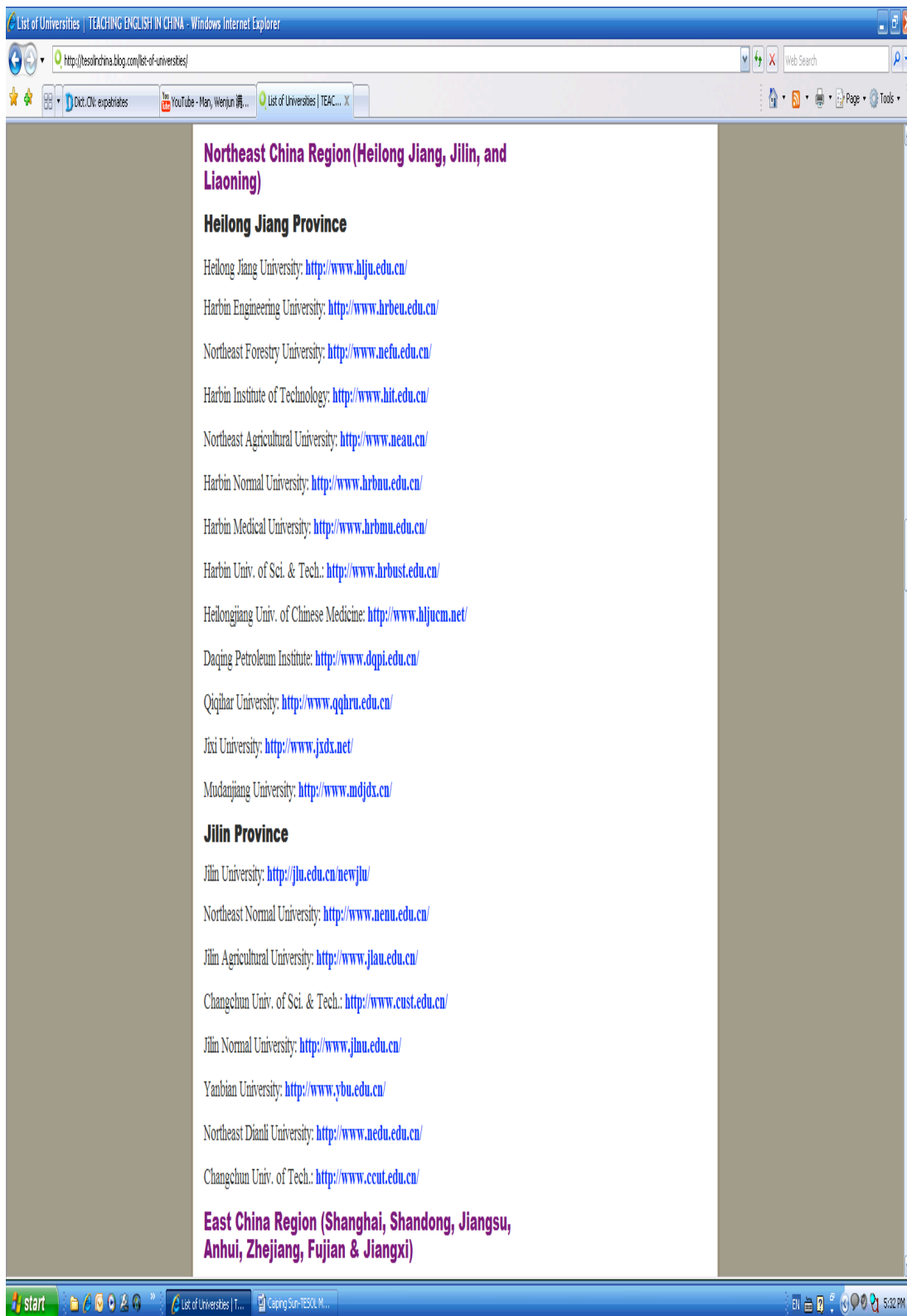


Figure 13. “List of Universities” continued

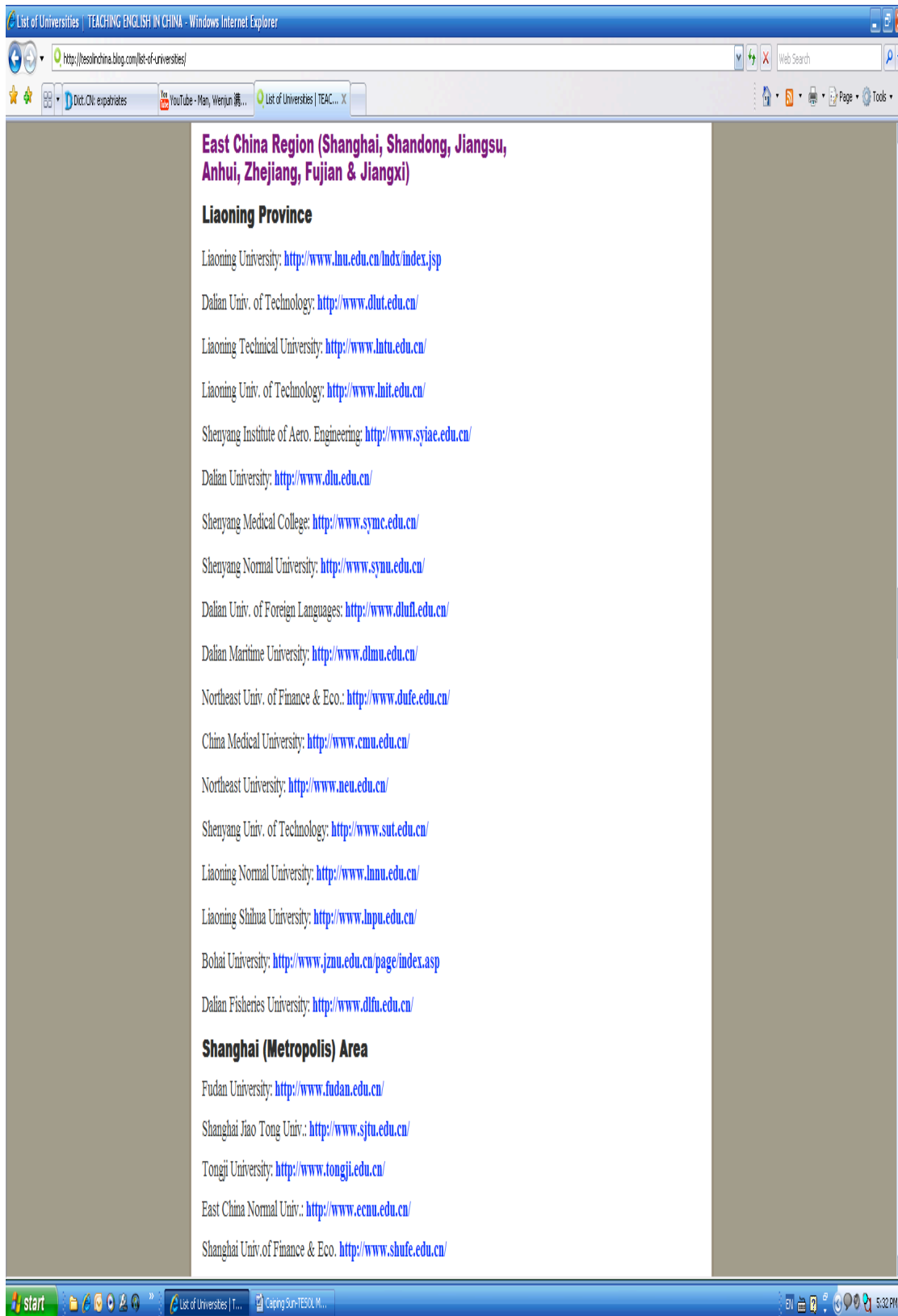


Figure 14. "List of Universities" continued

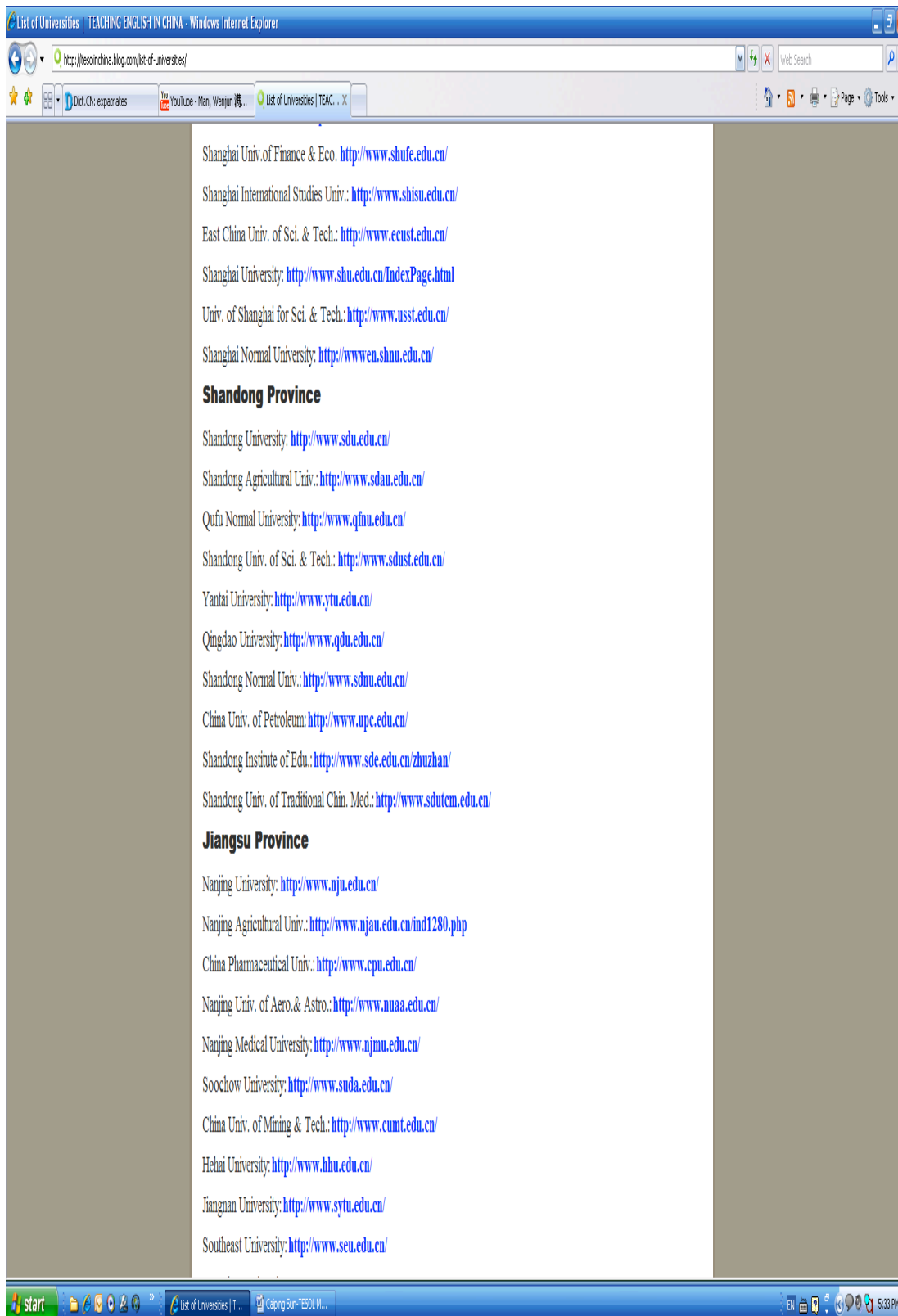


Figure 15. "List of Universities" continued

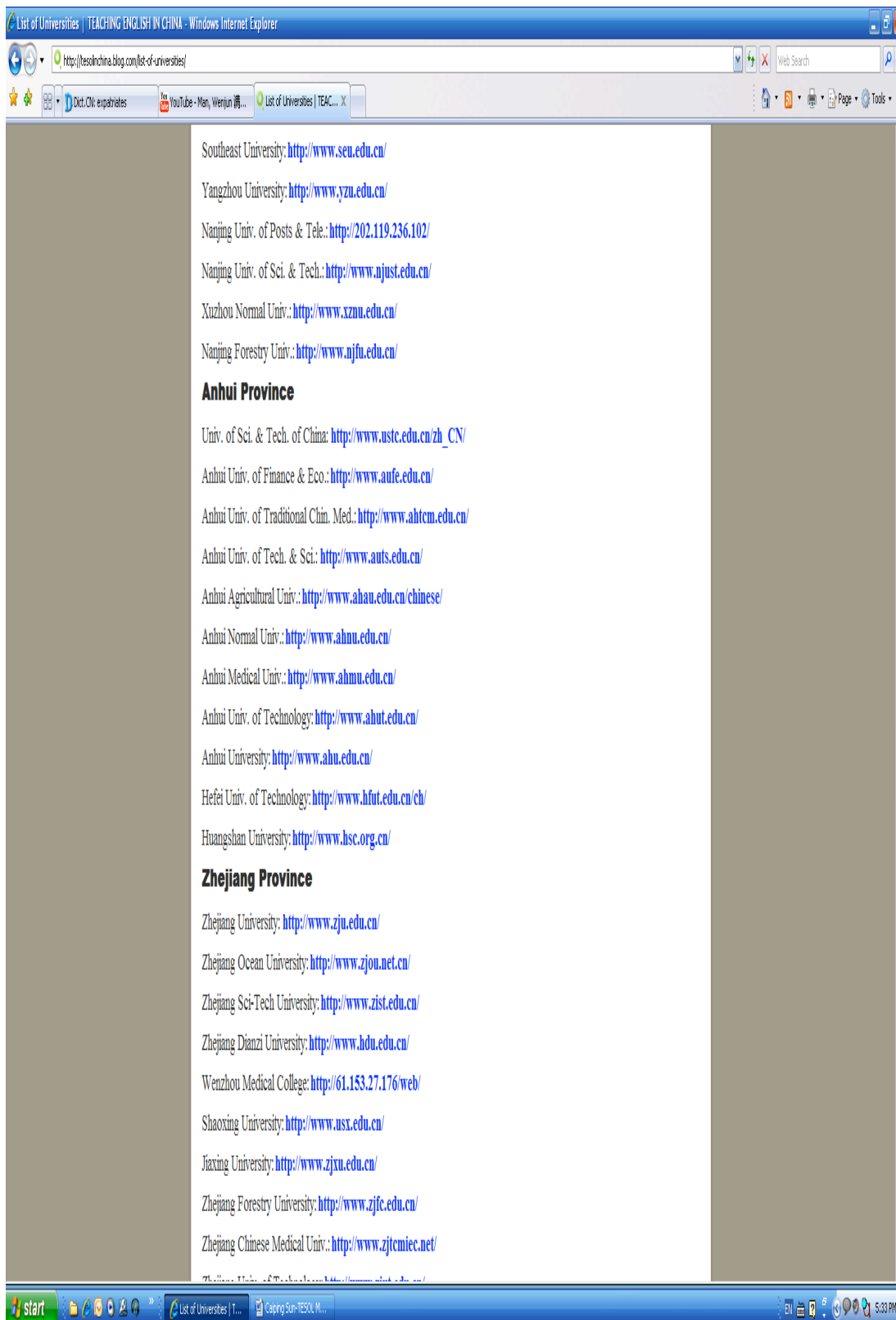


Figure 16. “List of Universities” continued

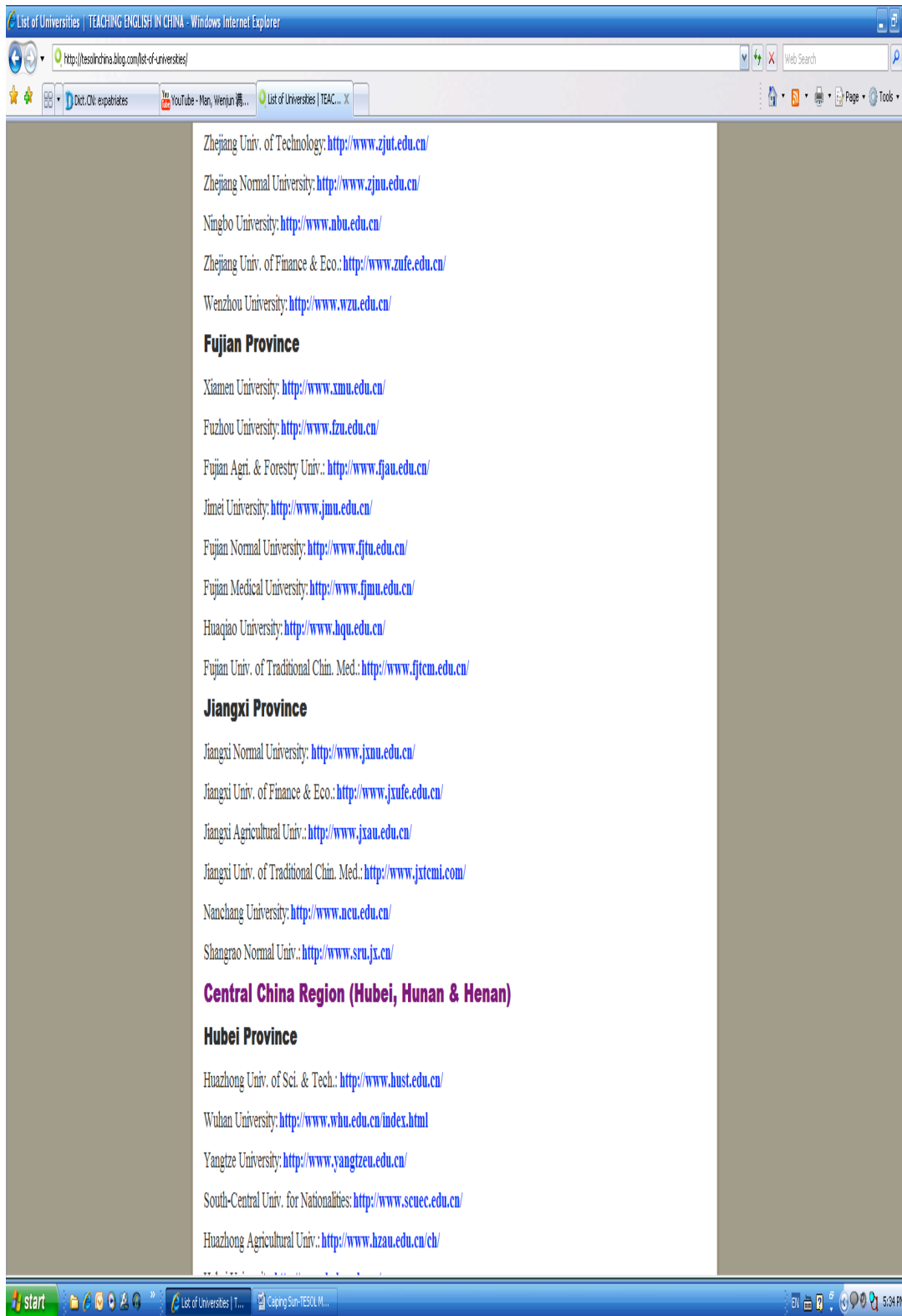


Figure 17. "List of Universities" continued

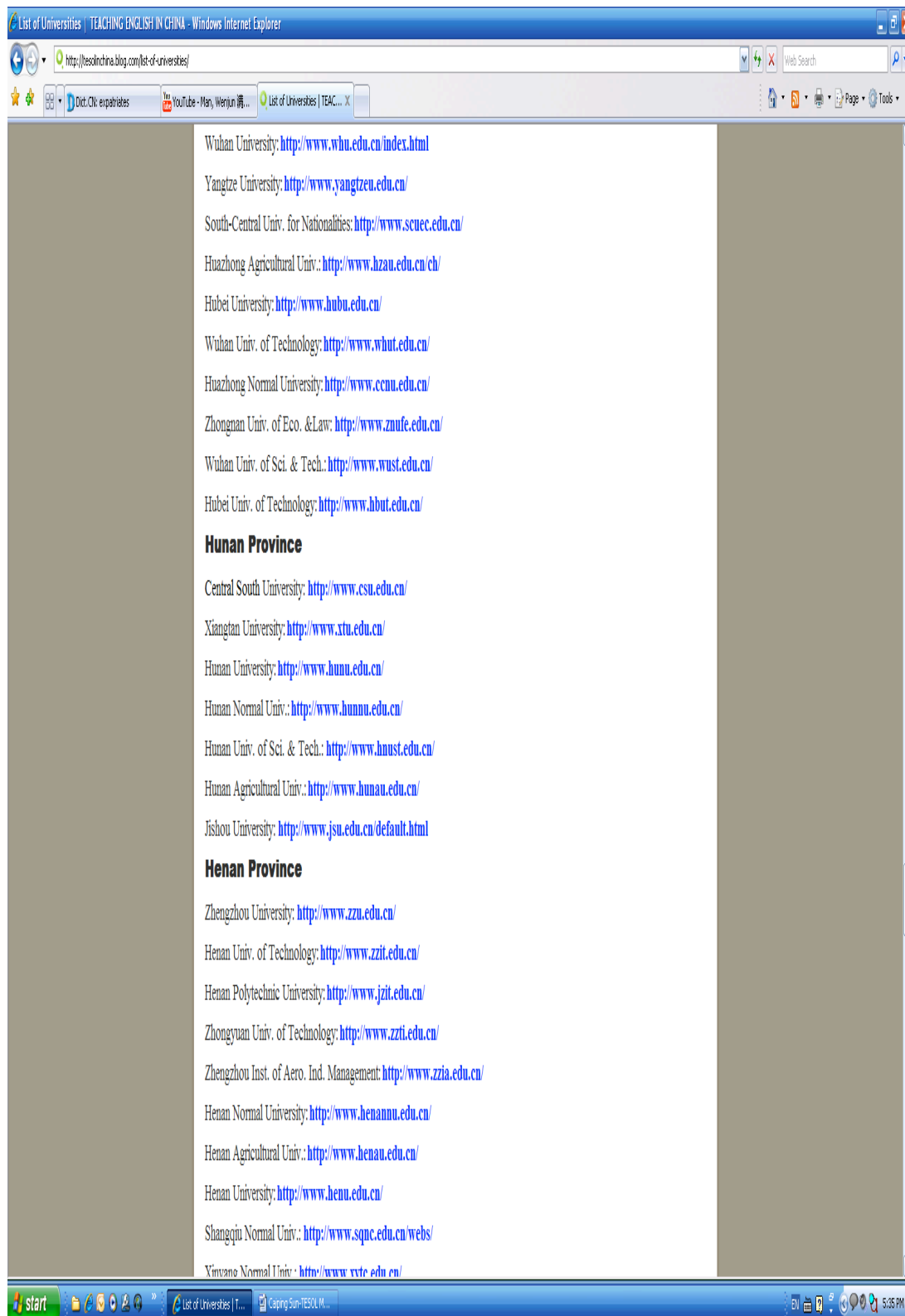


Figure 18. “List of Universities” continued

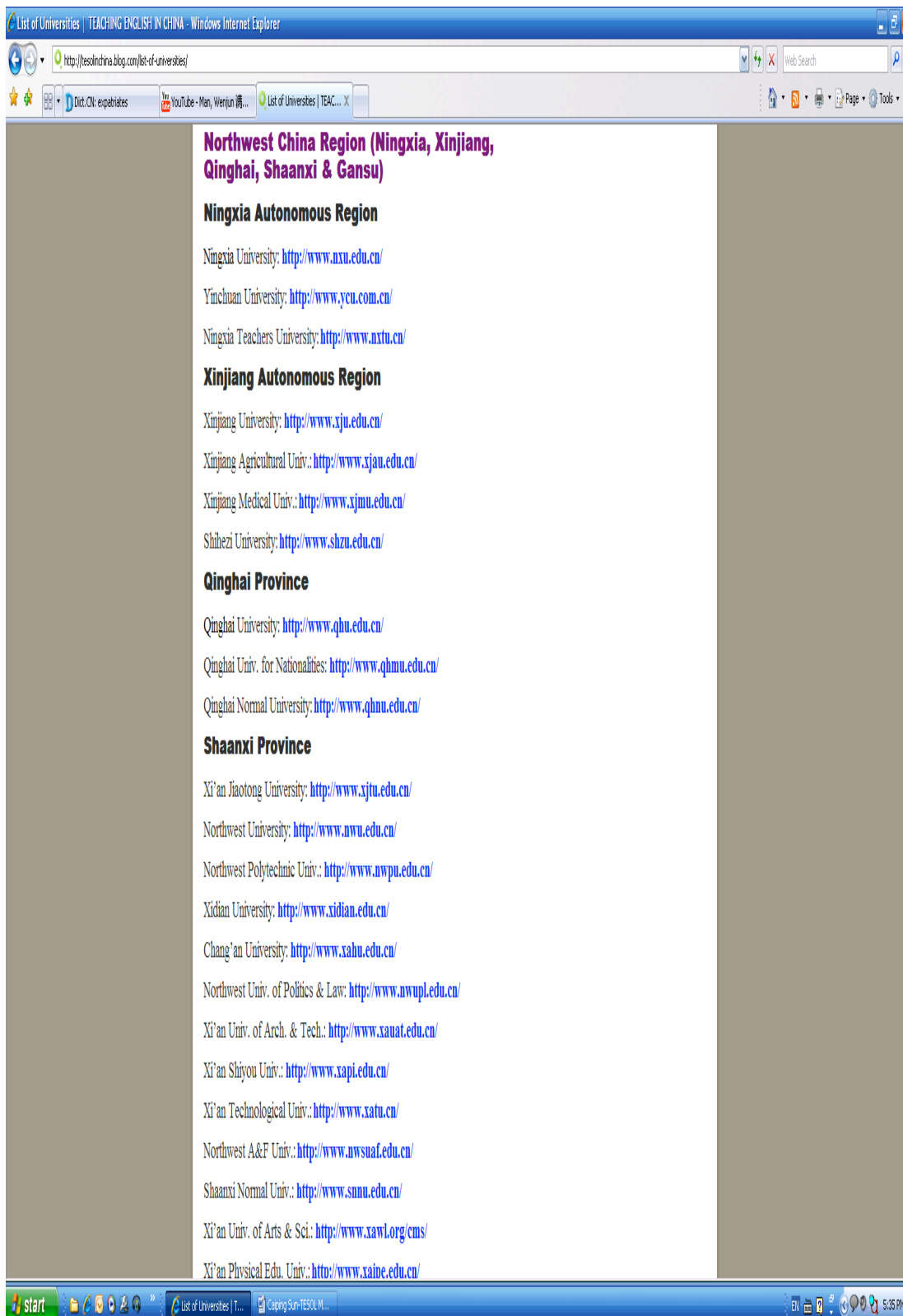


Figure 19. "List of Universities" continued

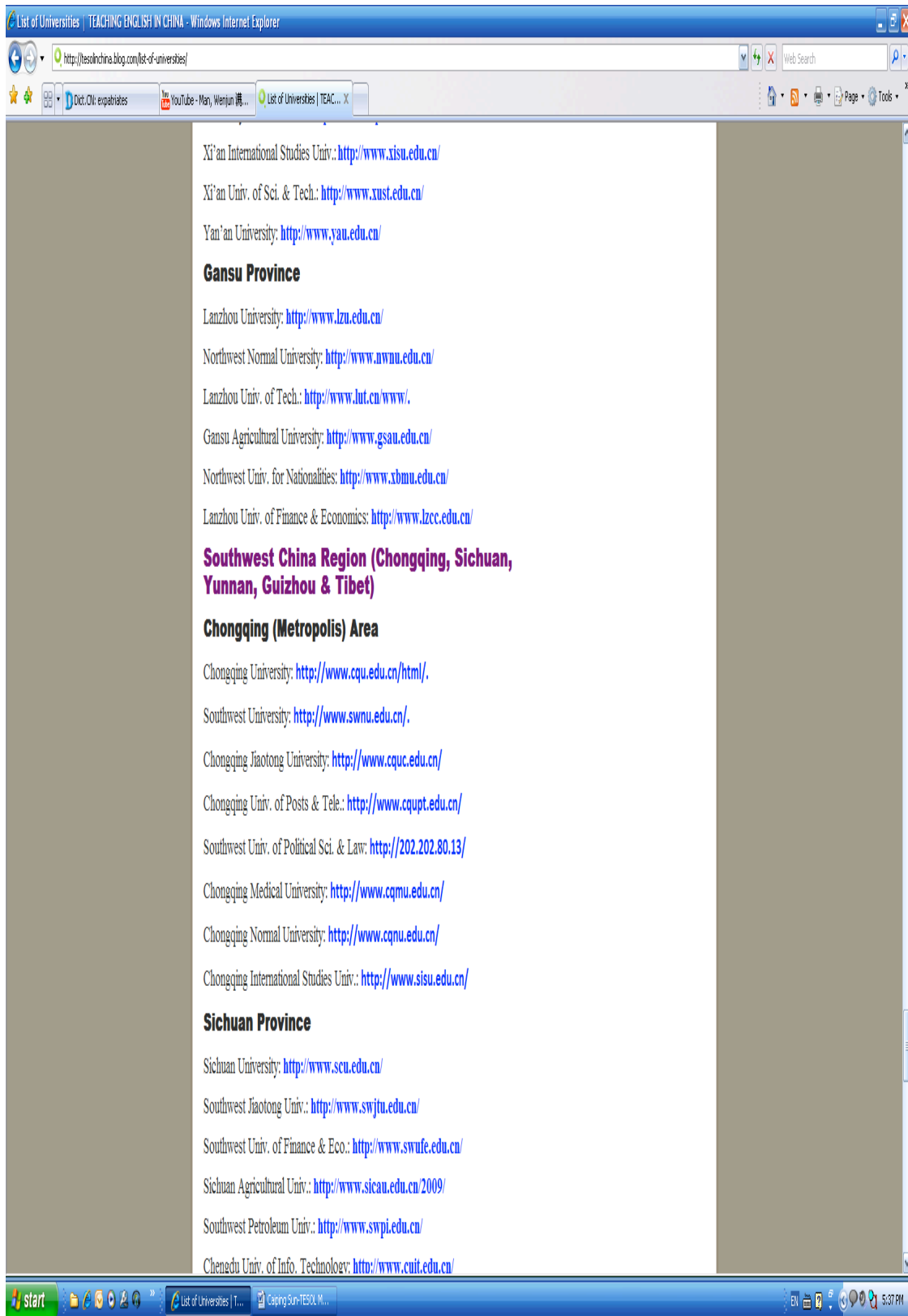


Figure 20. "List of Universities" continued

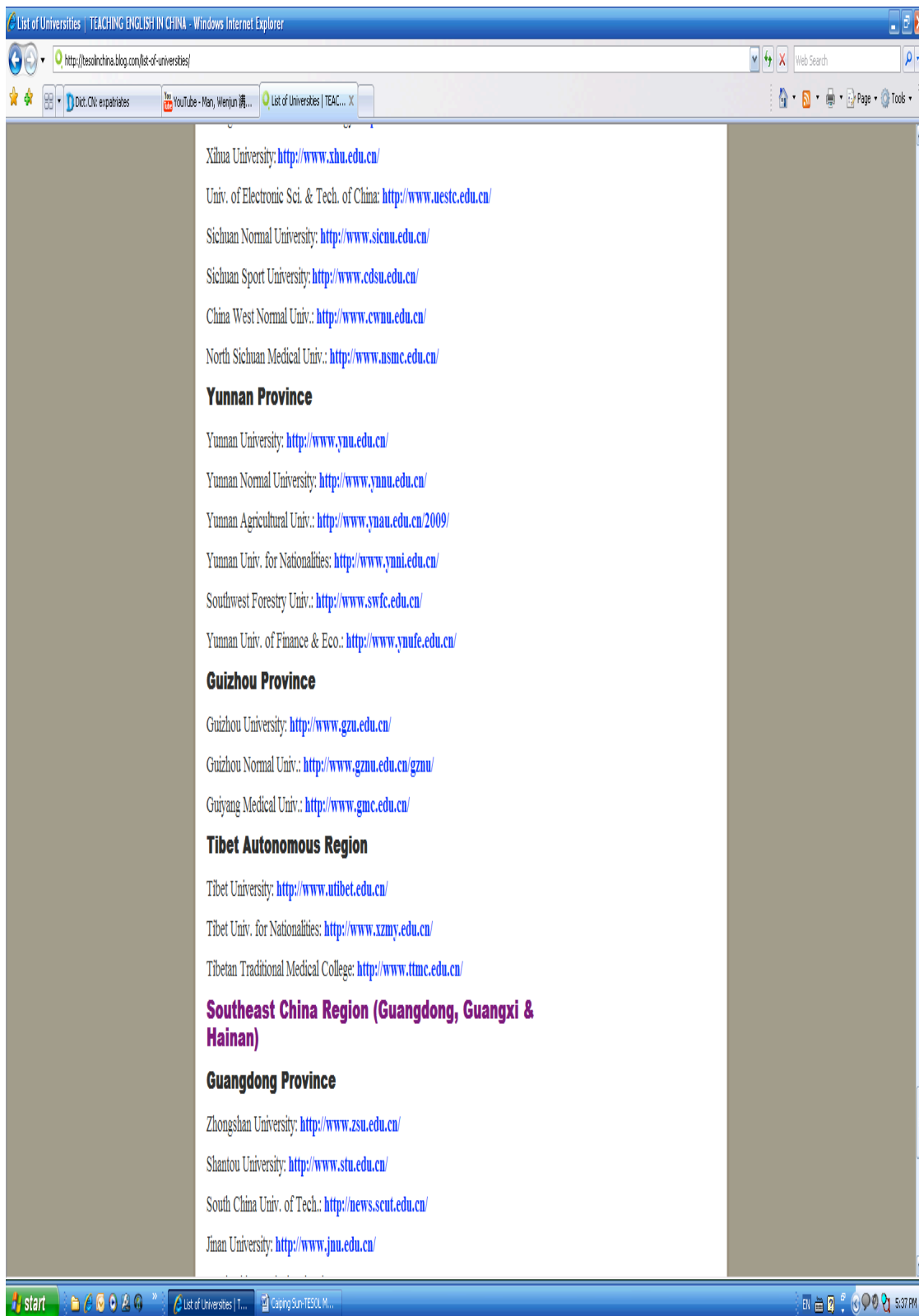


Figure 21. “List of Universities” continued

List of Universities | TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA - Windows Internet Explorer

http://tesolchina.blog.com/list-of-universities/

South China Agricultural Univ.: <http://www.scau.edu.cn/>

Shenzhen University: <http://www.szu.edu.cn/szu2007/>

Guangdong Univ. of Foreign studies: <http://www.gdufs.edu.cn/>

South China Normal University: <http://www.scnu.edu.cn/>

Guangzhou Sport University: <http://www.gipe.edu.cn/>

Guangdong University of Finance: <http://www.gduf.edu.cn/>

Southern Medical University: <http://www.fimmu.com/>

Guangdong Univ. of Technology: <http://www.gdut.edu.cn/>

Guangzhou University: <http://www.gzhu.edu.cn/index.jsp>

Guangzhou Univ. of Chinese Med.: <http://www.gzhtcm.edu.cn/>

Guangxi Autonomous Region

Guangxi University: <http://www.gxu.edu.cn/>

Guangxi Normal University: <http://www.gxnu.edu.cn/>

Guangxi Medical University: <http://www.gxmu.net.cn/>

Guilin Univ. of Electronic Tech.: <http://www.gliet.edu.cn/>

Guilin Univ. of Technology: <http://www.glite.edu.cn/>

Guangxi Univ. of Finance & Eco.: <http://www.gxufe.cn/>

Guangxi Univ. of Technology: <http://www.gxut.edu.cn/>

Hainan Province

Hainan University: <http://www.hainu.edu.cn/>

Hainan Normal University: <http://www.hainnu.edu.cn/>

Hainan Medical College: <http://www.hainmc.edu.cn/>

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Comment:

start | List of Universities | Teaching Sun-TEESOL M... | 5:38 PM

Figure 22. “List of Universities” continued


Questions & Answers | TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA - Windows Internet Explorer

http://tesolchina.blog.com/questions-answers/

Dict.CN: expatriates YouTube - Man, Wenjun 闻君 Questions & Answers | ... X

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Questions & Answers

1.
Q: Who can I contact?
A: Go to the page of the List of Universities, find a university you want to teach; go to its home page by clicking the link provided on that page; switch the language into English; go to the International Exchange Center or Foreign Affairs Office of the school. You can find their contact information there. Call them or send them an email.
2.
Q: Who can be hired?
A: Native English speakers. However, the chance is better for those who have bachelor's degree and above with teaching experiences.
3.
Q: Is there a requirement for the applicant's age?
A: Yes. Nobody over 70 will be hired. Some universities do not hire people over 65. Contact the school for the specific requirement on applicant's age.
4.
Q: What do I teach?
A: It depends on individual universities. But most native English speakers are usually assigned to teach oral English and listening. Sometimes, they might be assigned to teach writing as well.
5.
Q: How long is each class?

start Copying Sun- TESOL M... 5:42 PM

Figure 23: “Questions & Answers”

Questions & Answers | TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA - Windows Internet Explorer

http://tesolchina.blog.com/questions-answers/

5.

Q: How long is each class?

A: 50 minutes. But you teach 2 fifty minutes each time.

6.

Q: How many hours do I teach each week?

A: It depends. But, 14 hours per week is common at most universities.

7.

Q: Do I have to be in my office all the time except my class hours?

A: No. You do not have to stay in your office. In fact, most foreign teachers do not have offices.

8.

Q: Do I have other assignment in addition to my 14-hour classes?

A: Not really. But, you are expected to show up sometimes at English Corner held once a week.

9.

Q: What is English Corner?

A: English Corner is an activity held and organized by English Association of each school, providing a place for students to practice with each other.

10.

Q: Do I have means to go to my classes?

A: Yes. You live on campus and your classroom are all within walking distance. Many universities have a separate campus, and the school shuttle takes teacher there.

11.

Q: Should I find someone to cover my class if I am sick?

A: No. Let the department and students know when you will make up the class you miss.

12.

Q: Am I responsible for the final exams?

A: Yes. You are the one to decide how to conduct the final exam for the class you teach. You write questions and decide the format of the test.

13.

Q: What are other things we are expected to do?

A: You are expected to hold Free Talk with your students.

start | Questions & Answers... | Copying Sun-TEESOL M... | 5:44 PM

Figure 24: “Questions & Answers” continued

Questions & Answers | TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA - Windows Internet Explorer

http://tesolchina.blog.com/questions-answers/

14

Q: Can I go to China with a visitor's visa to teach?

A: No. You have to have a work visa. However, if your time is limited, you can get into China with a visitor's visa under the agreement between you and the school hiring you. If so, they will help change your visa while you are in China.

15

Q: Should I pay my international flight?

A: No. The school hiring you will pay your round international trip. But if you plan to travel in a third country on your winter holiday or travel in China, you have to take care of the expenses.

16

Q: Can I freely travel anywhere?

A: Yes and No. You can travel anywhere with your free will except Tibet. You need a special permit to visit Tibet. Make sure you will get that permit before you plan your trip there.

17

Q: How much is my salary?

A: It depends. Different regions have different standards. Usually, the pay is higher in East China, Southeast China and the special economic zones. Your salary is also decided by your educational background. The higher your degree is, the higher your salary will be.

18

Q: Do I have to pay for my apartment?

A: No. Your apartment is free.

19

Q: Is my apartment furnished?

A: Yes. You are provided with furniture you need.

20

Q: Do I have to pay for my food?

A: Yes.

21

Q: Am I paid on holidays?

A: Yes. You are paid on holidays during your contract time. For example, you are paid regular salary on your winter holiday which lasts between 4 and 6 weeks.

start

Questions & Answers... Copying Sun-TEESOL M...

5:44 PM

Figure 25. "Questions & Answers" continued

Questions & Answers | TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA - Windows Internet Explorer

http://tesolchina.blog.com/questions-answers/

23

Q: I heard bathroom in China is different from western style, is it?

A: Yes. There is no sitting toilet in any public buildings. There is no toilet paper, or soap, either.

24

Q: What if I want to teach for one more year?

A: Tell you Waiban, and most time, you will be bale to sign a contract for another year. Some people may teach at the same university for over 5 years if they and the university are satisfied with each other.

25

Q: Should I bring clothing for all four seasons?

A: It depends where you live. Check the climate of the city you are going. Ask your Waiban for advice. If you cannot take everyone you want, don't worry. You can buy everything in China with a reasonable price.

26

Q: What are things I need most in China?

A: Teaching materials. You may not like the textbook given to you, or you may not have textbook for your oral English class or your writing class. It is always helpful if you have some textbooks like these prepared.

27

Q: Will I survive?

A: Oh, yes. You will love your experience there.

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Questions & Answers... Copying Sur-TE30L M...

5:45 PM

Figure 26. “Questions & Answers” continued

What to teach | TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA - Windows Internet Explorer

http://tesolindchina.blog.com/what-english/

TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA

COME & TEACH ENGLISH Home Holidays & Accommodations List of Universities Questions & Answers What to teach Why China

What to teach

What will you teach?

Typically, a native English speaker hired by a university in China is expected to teach speaking and listening. You may be expected to work with your students' pronunciation. Moreover, you are expected to help your students' with their fluency and accuracy in speaking English.

Second, some might be assigned to teach writing. You may want to bring some reference books with you on writing. Chinese writing style is different from yours. Keep this in mind and you will be fine.

You will find that many students would ask you to help them with grammar, and other skills needed to prepare them for the College English Test: Band 4 and Band 6 (CET-4 & CET-6), or Test for English Majors: Band 4 and Band 8 (TEM-4 & TEM-8).

If you want to know more about these tests, please read the article titled: An introduction to university English Tests in China: their nature, development, and importance.

An Introduction to University English Tests in China: Their Nature, Development, and Importance

Abstract

The modern history of English language teaching and learning in China can be traced back to the establishment of the People's Republic of China

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start | What to teach | TEA... | Copying Sun-TESSOL H... | 5:48 PM

Figure 27. “What to Teach”

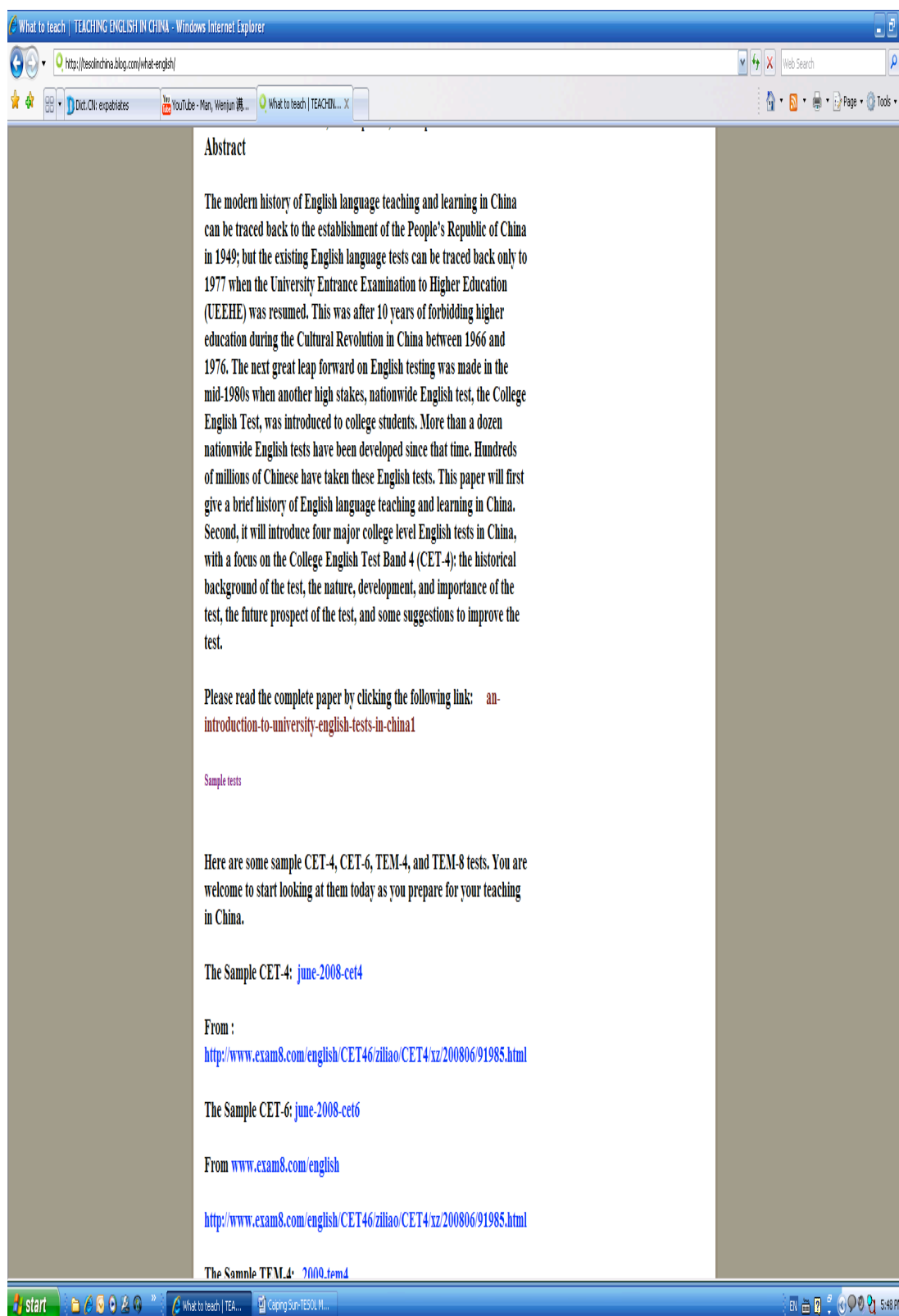


Figure 28. “What to Teach” continued

Why China | TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA - Windows Internet Explorer


http://hesolchina.blog.com/why-china/

Web Search

Dict.CN: expatriates YouTube - Man, Wenjun 魏... Why China | TEACHING E... X

TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA

COME & TEACH ENGLISH [Home](#) [Holidays & Accommodations](#) [List of Universities](#) [Questions & Answers](#) [What to teach](#) [Why China](#)



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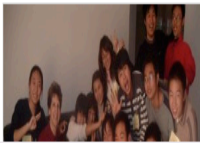
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Why China



More than a dozen National English tests of different levels make English the most important subject at all levels of educational institutes. More and more interaction with the outside world through English makes listening and speaking of English important skills for Chinese English learners. However, the poor supply of qualified teachers in these special areas means there is tremendous demand for native English speakers to teach listening and speaking English classes to Chinese English learners.

Enjoying a guest lecture!



You will find out how much you are appreciated and welcomed as soon as you show up in your classes or in

start

Why China | TEACH... Copying Sun-TEESOL M...

EN 5:49 PM


Figure 29. “Why China”

Why China | TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA - Windows Internet Explorer


http://tesolchina.blog.com/why-china/

China has 56 nationalities and each has its unique culture and customs. You will have an opportunity to learn about some of them. You will also have an opportunity to enjoy unique Chinese local food and have some special cultural experiences while you try to help your students to learn and experience some of your culture.

Chopsticks user!




Fork/knife users!



Education can change her life!

But the most important thing is that you are going to touch hearts and help change lives forever! You will be doing things that you will never regret. You will find that living and learning in China is an amazing experience.



start | Why China | TEACH... | Copying Sun-TEESOL M... | 5:51 PM

Figure 30: “Why China?” continued

Feedback on the website

When the website was created, I sent its URL to 48 people to view it and give me feedback on how they felt about the site. They were all native English speakers belonging to two different groups. People of the first group were those who had never been to China and people of the second group were those who have taught English at universities in China. People of the second group were sent to teach English at universities in about ten cities by the Kennedy Center of International Studies of Brigham Young University. I received two types of feedback in general: first, those who had never been to China think this is a very good place for them to find information to start if they want to teach English in China. They mainly gave some suggestions on the grammar of the text on each page. Second, those who had taught English in China gave comments on a list of pages and contents of the text on each page. The following verbatim comments are some typical feedback from these two groups of people.

Feedback from those who had never been to China

“This is a great resource and I like that you included instructions at the top, before the list of universities. As soon as I read it I understood just how to start the process of trying to get a teaching job. I noticed that the fonts, size, bold, etc. of the text weren't congruent but that might have just been a computer problem.....” (List of Universities).

“I really like all the pictures on each page, it makes the page look very professional and interesting. Also, I think the amount of information is good for an introduction to teaching in China. If I were interested in teaching in China, I would want quick, interesting blurbs of information just like you have, and then a link or contact person to find out more specific information to help me actually start the process of

becoming a teacher in China. I think the amount of information you have is great for getting a person excited to be a teacher in China and it's clear and not overwhelming. Two little typos are: missing "r" in "Your Status in China," and missing "s" on "unique ethnic groups." I'm sure you'd catch this since this is just the prototype website" (Holidays & Accommodations).

"First paragraph-leave out it and just have make a tremendous demand. Instead of teaching I would put to teach listening....." And "Second paragraph use welcomed instead of welcome" (Why China).

"I was confused with the title here. It has information about what you would typically be doing as an English teacher, but I thought it was which style of English was important. Maybe you could change the title" (What to teach).

"From my perspective, every page in this website is wonderful, informative, and appealing."

Feedback from those who had taught in China

"Very thorough. You have a most comprehensive list. This shows many hours of research" (List of Universities).

"This is a great list! I have had friends ask where they can teach and have never been able to find a good Internet site with this information" (List of University).

"This is an excellent page to introduce your topic" (Home Page)!

"Great information!" "I like this page. This would be helpful to potential teachers and something that I did not have when in China" (What to teach).

"This is a very attractive page. I would like to have greater detail about teaching in China. The department head, at the university I was teaching at, could never explain

what he expected me to do..... I would also like to see a step by step overview of the first few weeks before and after arriving in China. What things should we bring with us? What things can we buy in China? Many of my American friends told me to purchase some items in the US that found very easily in China” (Why China).

“This page is also very brief but to the point” (Holidays & Accommodations).

“The pictures speak for themselves. What a wonderful place to be and what a wonderful thing to do.”

“‘What English’ is not exactly the right title for this page. It should be called ‘what will I be teaching’ (What to teach).

“Having been a teacher in China, I thought the pages look good. I am thinking of making a few comments: 1, how do I apply? 2. What is the process for selection? In other words, who will pick me? 3. Health qualifications. Health insurance. What happens if I get sick?”

The changes and improvement I made to the website based on the above comments are described in chapter four.

Chapter 4

The project development process

The process of developing the project

AI originally proposed to write a TESOL MA thesis titled *Washback of the College English Test in teaching and learning English in China*. However, it ended up becoming a project on the introduction to the four major college English tests and the creation of a website of teaching English in China. I worked on the project in the following steps.

First, the first draft of the paper titled *the College English Test-Band Four (CET-4) and its development in China* was finished in December 2009. Dr. Henrichsen suggested that I change the title to the current one because of the vast amount of information about English tests in China and large amount of introduction of these tests along with the CET-4. The second draft of the paper was finished in January 2010.

Second, after the second draft of the paper was finished, I started working on creating a website. This has been the biggest challenge I have had during the entire time I have been working on my project. I knew nothing about creating a website nor did I know where to get help. However, I decided to create it by myself. I tried to learn online how to create a website but failed after several attempts. One day, I noticed a friend had a blog of his own on <http://www.blog.com> so I started trying to create my blog there. First I had to choose a name for my blog. Second, I had to design the pages I wanted to set up. Third, I had to prepare text content for each page. Fourth, I had to choose pictures to

match the texts. I experienced many difficulties and this took me many hours (about 200 hours in total).

The biggest problem I had was when I tried to paste the texts into the related pages of the blog. I prepared the texts as Word documents. I designed the font, size, color of each title, subtitle, and context, but when I pasted them into the corresponding page, the fonts changed, the size of words changed, and the color changed. That was not the only problem. The other problems included the space between the lines becoming uneven even though I made them even. Sometimes, a sentence or a whole paragraph moved from its original place to other places. For example, it might have ended up between two other paragraphs, in the middle of another paragraph, or at the bottom of the page. The most intricate and painful experience was that part of the fonts would change each time I updated the changes.

The page that lists universities is the longest page of the entire website. First, I went online, searching for lists and names of universities in each province (23 in total), each autonomous region (5 in total, equivalent to province), each metropolitan area (4 in total) and each special administrative region (2 in total) in China. The lists and names I found included not only names of colleges and universities, but also names of vocational schools and colleges of associate level. Second, I went over all the names of the schools I found and chose only 4-year colleges and universities. Third, I went to the home page of each university, getting the English names and website addresses and links of these universities. And fourth, I made a list of universities according to the seven geographical regions of China. The problem came when I was making changes after launching the list in the related page of the website I made. Each time the font of universities of one or

several provinces changed. I fixed the problem but the font of other provinces changed when I saved the change. Another annoying problem was regarding the pictures and explanations of the pictures. The outcome might show the picture in one place and the explanation for that picture with another picture. If there were more than one picture on one page, these pictures moved around and so did the texts. I also met a serious problem which I spent hours trying to fix, but failed repeatedly. The picture of the theme option I made was successfully loaded once but was gone later. I have not been able to upload it ever since. However, I learned to create a website independently through this experience, though I spent far too many hours in the process.

Changes made to the website based on feedback

Many changes were made to the website mainly based on feedback sent by people I invited to view it. The major changes I made include the following: 1, I combined the “home” page and “about us” page and called it “home page”. 2, I changed a page name from “what English” to “what to teach” because one reviewer said he did not know what the title meant until he checked the content of that page. 3, I added the “questions & answers” page as the response to questions asked by some viewers. I then made a list of frequently asked questions and collected answers from those who taught English in China or based on my knowledge of hiring foreign teachers. 4, I combined the page “what to teach” and “the paper” to reduce the pages and combined pages of related topics or content together so the users of the website will not have to open so many pages. It will also prevent them from skipping pages they might think are not related to what they want to learn about. 5, Most pictures are either from my own picture album or from people who taught English in China and gave me permission to use their pictures on this website.

Final changes to the project

A final change was made to the title of the project after my meeting with Dr. Henrichsen who questioned the previous title, *an introduction to major university English tests in China*, because it ignored the second purpose of the project. *An introduction to major university English tests and English language teaching in China* became the final title for this project.

Because the final manuscript to be submitted for publication will be co-authored, at this point Dr. Henrichsen made a number of revisions to the manuscript.

Possible publication venues for the manuscript

The manuscript created for this project is now ready to submit for publication in one of the following professional journals, which all address the target audience described above.

Asian EFL Journal is an international, refereed, quarterly online journal that presents “information, theories, research, methods and materials related to language acquisition and language learning” (Nunn, 2009). The Asian EFL Journal has no limit to number of pages, to which the manuscript will be submitted.

Asian Profile is an international journal that is “designed to promote multi-disciplinary research in, and the teaching of, Asian Studies” (Asian Profile, 2010).

Asian Journal of English Language Teaching is a journal for articles that “link theory, research, and pedagogy and relate specifically to teaching English to Asians at the university level” (Gong, G. & Gu. P.Y., 2009).

TESL Reporter is “a peer-reviewed semi-annual publication of the Department of English Language Teaching and Learning at Brigham Young University Hawaii,

and...dedicated to the dissemination of ideas and issues of interest to teachers of English to speakers of other language worldwide” (TESL Reporter, 2010).

Chapter 5

Conclusions

This project shows the importance of introducing the major university English tests in China to the outside world. It is a window through which scholars outside China can get a glimpse of what is happening in China in English language teaching and learning, and English language testing. It is a bridge through which these scholars can connect to China and find potential studies that can be conducted in China. This project also shows the value of the website created as one of the two products. It is a useful tool that will provide native English speakers who want to find a teaching position at universities in China easy access to start their adventure in China.

The greatest contribution of this project lies in (1) its ability to draw the attention of English language scholars outside China, which will lead to studies of English language testing in China, and studies of English language teaching and learning in China by these scholars; (2) its ability to lead expatriates to employment in China. The numerous national English tests in China and the primary research capacity can provide rich topics from which these people can conduct studies. Meanwhile, the vast demand for native English speakers to teach English in China can help those who find difficult to be employed or want to gain experience teaching English in China and enjoy Chinese culture through employment in China. The win-win situation can bring benefits to both sides.

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