ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF AMERICAN ESL TEACHER EDUCATION TRAINING ON PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OF SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN CHINA

a Jiao Jiao, b Khairul Azhar Jamaludin, c Chen Yi

ABSTRACT

Aim: This Study examines the influence of the American ESL Teacher Education Training Program on the qualifications of Chinese language educators. Due to the growing demand for English language teaching, there is an urgent need in China for trained and skilled second language teachers. Specialized training in pedagogical abilities, language proficiency, cultural awareness, and professional growth is available through the American ESL Teacher Education Training Program.

Methodology: The impact of the American ESL Teacher Education Training Program on the qualifications of second language instructors in China was investigated using a systematic review methodology.

Results: It is well known for its comprehensive strategy for teacher development.

Conclusions: This publication examines how this training program has raised the bar for second-language teachers in China.

Originality/Value: This study was conducted during teachers’ education training. There is an urgent need for trained and skilled second language teachers in China due to the growing demand for English language education. Specialized training in educational skills, language skills, cultural awareness, and professional development is available through the American ESL Teacher Education Training Program.

Keywords: american ESL teacher education training, second language teachers, professional growth, pedagogical practices.

Received: 21/06/2023
Accepted: 15/09/2023
DOI: https://doi.org/10.55908/sdgs.v11i7.836

a Master of Education (Curriculum & Pedagogy), Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, E-mail: p118388@siswa.ukm.edu.my, Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3744-4751
b PhD in Curriculum Development, Faculty of Education, Universiti Malaya, Malaysia, E-mail: khairuljamaludin@ukm.edu.my, Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9709-6261
c Master of Education (Curriculum & Pedagogy), Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, E-mail: p114573@siswa.ukm.edu.my, Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2844-5787
AVALIAÇÃO DO IMPACTO DA FORMAÇÃO DE PROFESSORES AMERICANOS EM ESL SOBRE PRÁTICAS PEDAGÓGICAS E CRESCIMENTO PROFISSIONAL DE PROFESSORES DE SEGUNDA LÍNGUA NA CHINA

RESUMO

Objetivo: Este Estudo examina a influência do Programa Americano de Formação de Professores em Educação sobre as qualificações dos educadores de língua chinesa. Devido à crescente demanda por ensino de língua inglesa, há uma necessidade urgente na China para professores de segunda língua treinados e qualificados. A capacitação especializada em habilidades pedagógicas, proficiência linguística, consciência cultural e crescimento profissional está disponível através do Programa Americano de Formação de Professores em AEP.

Metodologia: O impacto do Programa Americano de Formação de Professores de AEP nas qualificações de instrutores de segunda língua na China foi investigado usando uma metodologia de revisão sistemática.

Resultados: É bem conhecido por sua estratégia abrangente para o desenvolvimento de professores.

Conclusões: Esta publicação examina como este programa de treinamento elevou o padrão para professores de segunda língua na China.

Originalidade/Valor: Este estudo foi realizado durante a formação dos professores. Há uma necessidade urgente de professores de segunda língua treinados e qualificados na China devido à crescente demanda por educação em língua inglesa. O treinamento especializado em habilidades educacionais, habilidades linguísticas, conscientização cultural e desenvolvimento profissional está disponível através do Programa Americano de Treinamento de Formação de Professores em ESL.

Palavras-chave: formação de professores de ESL americano, professores de segunda língua, crescimento profissional, práticas pedagógicas.

1 INTRODUCTION

For English as a Second Language (ESL) education to expand globally, second-language educators' professional development is essential (Galloway & Ruegg, 2020). Raising the bar for ESL teachers' professionalism is important since English ability is seen as being essential for social and economic success in China. Many Chinese educators and government officials have focused their efforts on international training programs to address this need in the hopes of enhancing domestic teacher preparation programs by utilizing the knowledge and experiences of foreign educators.

The American ESL Teacher Education Training Program is one such course that has attracted interest. Aiming to provide Chinese ESL teachers with the information, abilities, and pedagogical techniques required to offer effective English instruction, this program was created and is managed by prominent American colleges (Rose et al., 2021).
The impact of these training programs on the professional standards of second language instructors in China must be assessed notwithstanding the clear potential advantages of such cross-cultural interactions. The purpose of this study is to look into how the American ESL Teacher Education Training Program has affected the requirements for second language teachers in China. In this study, the impacts of the training program on pedagogical expertise, language proficiency, cultural competency, professional growth, and student learning outcomes were investigated. It analyzed whether the program addressed the challenges second language teachers in China currently face and assessed the program's contribution to these advancements. This study used a systematic literature review technique to examine the program's impact and provided important information to improve policy and practice in ESL teacher education.

2 DEFINITION OF TERMS

2.1 AMERICAN ESL TEACHER EDUCATION TRAINING PROGRAM

This refers to the specialized training programs designed and implemented in the United States to educate and train English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers. These programs focus on enhancing pedagogical skills, language proficiency, cultural understanding, and professional development (Kim, 2023).

2.2 PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Professional standards are the set of guidelines and criteria that define the expectations and requirements for the teaching profession (Tursunovich, 2022). They outline the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that second language teachers should possess to ensure effective and high-quality instruction.

2.3 SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHERS

Second language teachers are educators who specialize in teaching a language to learners whose first language is different (Lemarchand-Chauvin, 2018). In the context of this journal, second language teachers primarily refer to English teachers in China who have received training from American ESL Teacher Education Training Programs.
2.4 PEDAGOGICAL SKILLS

Pedagogical skills refer to the competencies and techniques used by teachers to facilitate effective learning (Stronge, 2018). These skills include lesson planning, classroom management, instructional strategies, assessment methods, and the ability to adapt teaching approaches to meet the needs of diverse learners.

2.5 LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Language proficiency refers to the level of proficiency and fluency in a particular language (Stronge, 2018). In the context of this journal, it relates to the English language proficiency of second language teachers in China and the impact of the American ESL Teacher Education Training Program on enhancing their language skills.

2.6 CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

Cultural understanding refers to the knowledge, awareness, and sensitivity toward different cultural practices, norms, and values. It encompasses an understanding of cultural diversity, intercultural communication, and the ability to incorporate cultural elements into language teaching to foster a positive and inclusive learning environment (Tran et al., 2018).

3 METHODOLOGY

The impact of the American ESL Teacher Education Training Program on the qualifications of second language instructors in China was investigated using a systematic review methodology. Systematic reviews are commonly regarded as a comprehensive and thorough procedure for integrating the body of research literature and producing pertinent findings from a variety of studies, according to Xiao, Yu, and Watson (2019).

3.1 SEARCH TECHNIQUES

To find pertinent studies, a thorough search method was created. Using the proper keywords and Boolean operators, databases like the China Integrated Knowledge Resources System, Research4Life, and Google Scholar were searched. The keyword combinations used in the searches included "American ESL Teacher Education Training Program," "professional standards," "second language teachers," and "China." In order to
include only the most recent and pertinent studies, the search was restricted to those that were published in English between 2018 and 2023.

3.2 CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

To ensure rigor and relevance, studies were chosen based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Studies explicitly examining the effect of the American ESL Teacher Education Training Program on the professional standards of second language teachers in China were included in the inclusion criteria. Studies that concentrated on various training programs or environments outside of China met the exclusion criteria.

3.3 SELECTION AND SCREENING

The relevance of the discovered studies' titles and abstracts to the study topics was initially evaluated. The whole texts of studies that might be pertinent were acquired, and they were then evaluated for eligibility based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The study team came to an agreement on any differences or ambiguities in the selection procedure after discussion.

3.4 EXTRACTION OF DATA

A consistent data extraction form was used to systematically obtain data from the chosen research. Research design, participant demographics, intervention details, outcome measures, and conclusions about the influence of the American ESL Teacher Education Training Program on professional standards were among the key pieces of information that were collected from the study.

3.5 ANALYZING AND SYNTHESIZING DATA

Thematic analysis was used to examine the extracted data in order to find commonalities, patterns, and trends among the included studies. The study objectives were addressed in the synthesis and presentation of the findings, which also offered insights into how the American ESL Teacher Education Training Program affected professional standards.
3.6 STRENGTHS AND DRAWBACKS

Language limits and publication bias were two examples of the systematic review's limitations, which were acknowledged and explored. The systematic review's advantages, such as its thorough search approach and exacting selection procedure, were also emphasized.

4 THE IMPACT OF AMERICAN ESL TEACHER EDUCATION TRAINING PROGRAMS

The popularity of American ESL teacher education training programs has recently boosted the professional standards of second language teachers in China. Through these programs, Chinese educators have the possibility to advance their knowledge, skills, and teaching methods while also learning new things from American experts in the field of ESL education (Wen, 2018). This section provides a comprehensive overview of American ESL teacher preparation programs with an emphasis on their key components, curricula, and distinctive characteristics.

American ESL teacher education training programs are designed to satisfy the specific demands of Chinese second language teachers and give teachers the abilities they need to deliver effective language instruction (Kim, 2023). These programs are typically offered as short-term workshops, seminars, or longer-term courses by American educational institutions or organizations that specialize in ESL teacher preparation. They want to increase the caliber of English language instruction in China as a whole by introducing teachers to cutting-edge pedagogical approaches, enhancing their language proficiency, growing in understanding of other cultures, and promoting professional development.

One distinctive aspect of American ESL teacher education programs is the emphasis on pedagogical approaches that give student-centered learning first priority. Traditional Chinese teaching methods frequently include teacher-centered instruction and routine memorization. On the other hand, American programs place a big focus on teaching methods that actively include students in the learning process. These techniques aid in the growth of students' collaborative, analytical, and problem-solving skills. Through workshops and hands-on activities, Chinese teachers acquire practical strategies for implementing student-centered pedagogies in their own classrooms (Zhang, 2018).
The integration of technology into ESL instruction is a significant aspect of American programs for preparing ESL teachers. Given the growing importance of digital literacy and the widespread use of educational technology (Abrar, 2018), these programs introduce Chinese teachers to cutting-edge tools and resources for enhancing language acquisition. Teachers are instructed to employ multimedia tools, digital resources, and interactive software in their classrooms so that students can learn languages more successfully. In addition to promoting autonomous learning and providing tailored feedback, teachers can boost student enthusiasm and engagement (Wang & Kokotsaki, 2018).

4.1 EFFECT ON TEACHING TECHNIQUES

American ESL teacher education programs have a significant impact on the teaching methodologies employed by second language teachers in China. Through these initiatives, modern pedagogical techniques that prioritize student-centered learning and promote active engagement in the language-learning process are made accessible to Chinese educators. By applying these strategies in their classrooms, teachers can increase the effectiveness of English language education and create a more engaging and dynamic learning environment (Johnson et al., 2020).

One of the main implications of American ESL teacher education training programs on teaching styles is the shift from traditional instructor-centered instruction to student-centered approaches (Johnson, 2018). In a traditional Chinese classroom, the teacher frequently takes on a didactic role when instructing passive students. On the other hand, American programs place a strong emphasis on the importance of active student participation and encourage teachers to play a facilitative role. Through workshops and practical training, Chinese educators learn how to involve students in cooperative learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving activities. This modification fosters higher-order thinking abilities and empowers students to take control of their education.

Another aspect of instructional strategies that have been influenced by American ESL teacher education training programs is the integration of technology. Technology has considerably assisted the study of modern languages by providing students with interactive tools and authentic language resources. Chinese teachers are introduced to various forms of educational technology via American programs, and they are shown how to successfully incorporate these technologies into their lessons (Kim, 2023). Teachers
are trained on how to combine multimedia materials, web resources, and interactive software to make language instruction more dynamic and interesting. Teachers may employ technology to create interesting, interactive classes that cater to different learning preferences and inspire students.

Additionally, American ESL teacher training programs place a strong emphasis on student-centered activities that promote communicative ability. The communicative language teaching approaches, which are widely utilized in American ESL training, encourage students to actively participate in everyday conversation while improving their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in practical contexts. These training courses show Chinese teachers how to design communicative activities that encourage meaningful language use, like role-playing, group discussions, and problem-solving activities. These activities allow students the chance to use their language skills in engaging, real-world situations, enhancing their communication skills in English (Johnson, 2020).

Classroom management techniques have significantly improved as a result of American ESL teacher preparation programs. Chinese educators identify workable classroom management strategies that provide a friendly and inclusive learning environment (Kim, 2023). They learn how to establish firm boundaries, manage inappropriate conduct, and foster a sense of community in the classroom. Classroom management issues are also covered in these training sessions, giving teachers the tools, they need to handle interruptions and maintain a healthy learning environment. By using effective classroom management techniques, teachers can maximize students’ learning possibilities and create a welcoming environment for language acquisition.

4.2 LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IS AFFECTED

The American ESL teacher preparation programs have a considerable impact on the linguistic abilities of second language teachers in China. Chinese instructors can strengthen their own English language skills and engage with their students and coworkers more successfully through these programs. By honing their own language abilities, teachers can provide excellent English language instruction and aid pupils in picking up the language more quickly.
Language competence seminars are a crucial component of American ESL teacher preparation programs (Johnson, 2018). These courses are designed to increase teachers' language ability in speaking, listening, reading, and writing as well as other linguistic domains. Chinese teachers receive in-depth training in the language, which includes activities to hone idiomatic expressions, expand vocabulary, and strengthen grammar. They learn how to impart complex language structures and linguistic skills to non-native English speakers.

Chinese teachers who take part in these language competency courses become more fluent in English and develop the linguistic abilities necessary for effective language instruction. Their ability to comprehend and interpret spoken English improves, which makes it easier for them to instruct and enlighten their students more precisely. Teachers can act as role models for accurate pronunciation, intonation, and fluency in the target language by honing their speaking skills. As a result, students are exposed to good English usage, which aids in their language proficiency.

Along with language proficiency workshops, American ESL teacher preparation programs usually provide opportunities for cultural immersion and language practice in an English-speaking environment. Chinese teachers might enroll in challenging language programs in countries with large English-speaking populations or participate in language exchange initiatives (Renandya, 2018). Through this engaging experience, teachers can converse with English speakers and advance their language skills. Their ability to communicate authentically in real-world situations increases their accuracy, fluency, and understanding of various cultures.

4.3 CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING IMPACT

American ESL teacher education training programs have a considerable impact on the cultural awareness of second language teachers in China. These programs recognize the importance of cross-cultural understanding in language instruction while simultaneously aiming to improve instructors' cultural competency. These programs support instructors in creating inclusive and culturally aware learning environments that promote intercultural communication and student awareness of different cultures (Gong et al., 2018).

One of the key effects of American ESL teacher education training programs on cultural understanding is exposure to real cultural materials and resources (Johnson,
These programs expose teachers to a wide range of authentic resources, such as books, films, music, and works of art, that showcase the cultural diversity of English-speaking countries. Investigating these items helps teachers gain knowledge of different cultures' traditions, beliefs, and values. They get knowledge on how to integrate cultural material into their lessons to expose students to language use in authentic settings and promote global awareness.

Through American ESL teacher education training programs, Chinese teachers have the opportunity to learn about the cultural norms, customs, and practices of English-speaking countries as well (Johnson, 2018). Increasing instructors' knowledge of cultural subtleties and sensitivities is the aim of seminars and workshops. Teachers create strategies for overcoming cultural differences in order to handle potential issues that can occur in multicultural classrooms. The courses provide educators with the information they require to help pupils appreciate and understand people from diverse cultures.

Another aspect of cultural knowledge that has been impacted by American ESL teacher education training programs is the incorporation of authentic cultural customs and holidays in the curriculum (Gong et al., 2018). Teachers learn about the traditions, celebrations, and holidays observed in English-speaking countries. They become aware of the significance of these cultural practices and think about how to include them into their lessons. Teachers provide students with the opportunity to engage in hands-on learning and broaden their understanding of many cultures by including actual cultural events and festivals.

Additionally, ESL teachers are encouraged to approach language instruction from a global perspective through American ESL teacher education training programs (Kim, 2023). Teachers are given information on global issues, cross-cultural communication skills, and global citizenship lessons. They learn how to facilitate discussions on crucial international topics like social justice, environmental sustainability, and cultural diversity. Through these discussions, teachers encourage critical thinking and challenge their students to reflect on their own cultural prejudices and biases. By promoting international understanding and global awareness, teachers assist their pupils in developing cultural competency.

Beyond interactions with children, teachers should also be sensitive to cultural differences in relationships with other teachers and the community. The training provided by these programs enables American ESL teachers from various cultural backgrounds to
collaborate and network (Gong et al., 2018). Teachers talk to pupils and share stories with them, which fosters mutual respect and understanding. Through these interactions, teachers can discuss effective teaching methods, exchange ideas, and learn about one another’s cultural perspectives. Through this partnership, teachers feel a sense of support and community, which helps their professional development.

Chinese instructors’ increased cultural awareness has two outcomes. The ability to handle the diverse cultural experiences and backgrounds of their students is first and foremost improved by teachers with higher cultural understanding (Gong et al., 2018). All children can experience a sense of worth and appreciation in inclusive, culturally aware classrooms that they help create. Teachers consider cultural differences while developing instructional materials and activities to ensure they are relevant and meaningful to students from a variety of cultural backgrounds. By embracing and honoring students’ cultural identities, teachers create an engaging and inclusive learning environment that enhances academic performance.

4.4 EFFECT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHERS

American ESL teacher education programs have a substantial impact on the effectiveness of ESL teachers in China. These programs give teachers the knowledge, skills, and techniques necessary to provide exceptional English language instruction and support student learning. By increasing teacher efficacy, these programs improve the standard of English language instruction as a whole, which improves student outcomes.

One of the main consequences of American ESL teacher education training programs on teacher effectiveness is the development of pedagogical knowledge and skills (Johnson, 2020). Workshops, seminars, and practical training sessions help teachers grasp effective teaching strategies, instructional approaches, and evaluation methodologies. They learn how to design and conduct well-organized lessons that are catered to their student’s needs and learning preferences. Teachers must build a repertoire of instructional strategies, including cooperative learning, project-based learning, and differentiated instruction, in order to create engaging and student-centered learning experiences.

Additionally, American ESL teacher education training programs place a strong emphasis on ongoing professional growth and reflective practice (Kim, 2023). Teachers are expected to engage in lifelong learning and self-reflection in order to increase the
effectiveness of their instruction. They possess the capacity to assess their instructional approaches objectively, identify potential improvement areas, and implement adjustments in response to student input and their requirements. Through the promotion of a culture of professional growth and reflection, these programs help instructors continually improve their instructional strategies and stay abreast of the most recent developments in language learning.

Another goal of American ESL teacher education training programs is the improvement of instructors' classroom management skills (Johnson, 2020). Effective classroom management is crucial to creating a welcoming and encouraging learning environment. Teachers learn methods for explaining expectations to students, promoting participation, and managing behavior. They learn how to create a welcoming and respectful learning environment and create solutions for common issues with classroom management. Adopting efficient classroom management techniques helps teachers create a setting that maximizes student learning opportunities and promotes a positive classroom culture.

Along with pedagogical expertise and classroom management skills, the development of instructors' subject knowledge is an emphasis of American ESL teacher education training programs (Dafouz, 2018). The vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation of the English language are heavily taught to teachers. They gain a deeper understanding of the English language's syntactic structures and linguistic quirks. Teachers' in-depth subject knowledge makes it possible to successfully address students' language learning needs and assist their language development. Kim (2023) claims that in order to promote both student learning and instructor performance, American ESL teacher education training programs place a significant focus on the importance of assessment and feedback. On how to design formative and summative exams that are in keeping with learning objectives, teachers receive training. They gain knowledge on how to assess student performance data, identify students' strong points and flaws, and provide constructive comments to assist them improve. By evaluating students' learning and providing timely feedback, teachers can successfully modify their curriculum to match each student's requirements and promote their language development.

Better teacher effectiveness has led to better student outcomes and accomplishments. When teachers possess the knowledge, skills, and methods learned from American ESL teacher education training programs (Dafouz, 2018), they are better
prepared to facilitate student learning. Well-designed and engaging lessons stimulate participation, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills in the students. Teachers are skilled at giving pertinent feedback, resolving students’ language learning difficulties, and tailoring education to each student's needs. This helps students by enhancing their motivation, language proficiency, and academic performance.

5 CONCLUSION

Significant insight into the success and results of this initiative has been gained through the extensive analysis of how the American ESL Teacher Education Training Program altered the credentials of second language instructors in China. A number of significant areas where the program had a positive effect were identified and summarized in the review, including improved pedagogical knowledge and skills, improved language proficiency, cultural competence and intercultural awareness, professional development and self-assurance, and favorable student learning outcomes.

The curriculum enhanced instructors' pedagogical knowledge and abilities, which is the first important finding. Lesson planning, classroom management, and communicative methods to instruction were all topics that the program's participants learned more about. This finding implies that the program was effective in developing the pedagogical skills of Chinese ESL teachers and providing them with the resources required to provide high-quality English instruction.

The second finding explains how the curriculum enhanced the linguistic skills of the teachers. High levels of English language proficiency are necessary for ESL training to be effective, a challenge that the program successfully resolved. Teachers who participated in the study claimed to have improved speaking and listening abilities, which resulted in a boost in their confidence on their ability to communicate effectively in English. In addition to enhancing their teaching techniques, instructors who are fluent in multiple languages are able to interact with students more effectively and foster a multilingual environment in the classroom.

The development of cultural competency and intercultural awareness was the main result of the American ESL Teacher Education Training Program. Because the curriculum placed a major emphasis on intercultural dialogue and understanding, teachers' heightened cultural competency resulted in a greater awareness of cultural variety. This finding suggests that the curriculum was effective in guiding instructors
through various cultural contexts, cultivating inclusivity, and fostering a welcoming learning environment for students from various cultural backgrounds.

Professional growth and increased confidence were important program outcomes. Participants in the program reported feeling encouraged, supported, and empowered as they sought their professional development. They showed a stronger willingness to try out novel instructional methods, engage in reflective practices, and take on leadership roles within their educational institutions. This finding highlights the program's capacity to encourage a culture of continual professional development among Chinese ESL teachers, which would eventually lead to more effective teaching methods and more work satisfaction.

The review also discovered that the program helped students learn more effectively. Teachers that participated were better able to assist students in acquiring languages, foster communicative proficiency, and promote higher levels of student commitment and participation. This finding suggests that the program's impact extends beyond instructors' professional growth and positively influences Chinese students' educational experiences as well as the overall quality of English language instruction.

The results of this comprehensive investigation support the American ESL Teacher Education Training Program's beneficial effects on the credentials of Chinese second language teachers as a whole. It has been demonstrated that the curriculum is successful in supporting professional development, improving pedagogical knowledge and abilities, improving language proficiency, developing cultural competency, and attaining favorable student learning outcomes. These results are in line with the broader objective of enhancing English language instruction in China and equipping students with the abilities to thrive in a more globally interconnected environment.

Even though the results illustrate the program's main advantages, it's crucial to be aware of its drawbacks and potential growth areas. According to studies, it can be difficult to complete programs and remember the knowledge and skills you learn them. These difficulties highlight the necessity of ongoing support, follow-up initiatives, and professional development opportunities in order to guarantee that the program's beneficial outcomes are sustained over the long run.
REFERENCES


