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A Study of Chinese University English Teachers' Subjectivity in a Neoliberal EAP Policy Implementation

From a Foucauldian Perspective

Yulong Li, Yixuan Feng, & Xiaojing Liu

Abstract

Human capital has had a considerable influence on the education policies in China. In this paper, a new policy of the Shanghai Education Bureau is described in which universities were strongly recommended to replace their English in general education programs with an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) one, in order to produce talent for regional and national development. Using a Foucauldian perspective to explore the extent the teachers were subjectified by the Shanghai EAP Policy. The teachers had demonstrated their subjectivity, particularly via critiquing, questioning the discourse and mediating their EAP teaching. Teachers' praxis becomes useful in helping them to develop independent professionalism to sustain their subjectivity in a neoliberal discourse.

Introduction

In recent years, human capital, a key component of the neoliberal movement, has been influencing educational policy-making on both the international and local levels (Allatt & Tett, 2018). Human capital is defined by the Nobel Prize Winner in Economics Gary Becker (1975, p.16) as "any stock of knowledge or

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characteristics the worker has that contributes to his or her productivity.” Human capital theory views education as the fuel behind human success in employment, economic growth and dominance in global competition (Becker, 2006). However, the singular pursuit of human capital in education policy making can lead to an overemphasis on the teaching of employment skills (Allatt & Tett, 2018) to the detriment of other aspects in the realm of education that do not directly translate into economic productivity (Nussbaum, 2010).

In China recently many scholars have taken up a human capital lens, while criticizing general English (GE) courses taken by non-English major undergraduates for being, low-efficient, time-consuming, aimless; they view them as inadequate for equipping students with skills required in the global marketplace (Jiang & Zhang, 2017; Zhao & Yu, 2017). However, it should be noted that the phrases like efficiency, skills, and marketplace are all the languages out of a neoliberal discourse. Cai (2017a, p.115) has even claimed the GE course is responsible for “a whole generation of Chinese scientists and engineers who are unable to extract information in their disciplinary literature in English, [and unable to] effectively communicate their research in international journals and conferences.” Thus, a move to replace GE with an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course in Chinese universities has emerged (Cheng, 2016).

In 2013, the Shanghai Education Bureau following the advice of the English Language Teaching Advisory Board, proposed a human-capital-oriented language policy called, *A Framework of Reference for EFL Teaching at Tertiary Level in Shanghai for Non-English Major Undergraduates* (we will call it the Shanghai EAP policy), which was meant to replace the GE in local institutions with an EAP course to spur students' international competitiveness for regional and national economic development (Cai, 2012). In the past the typical passages used to study English in the GE course, consisted of literature and celebrities' speeches; however, in the new EAP course such content would be replaced by skills related to academic writing, reading, listening and speaking, along with paper presentations (Cai, 2017a). Despite the new policy's neoliberal characteristics, as this change was strongly recommended by the Shanghai Education Bureau, 26 universities, accounting for two-thirds of the total number of local higher institutions, adopted it (Wang, 2018). The teachers who once taught GE had to transit over to teach the EAP course (Cheng, 2016). During this transition many of them were reported to be afflicted with anxiety (Wang & Wang, 2015), although some others reported their successful adaptation (e.g., Li & Wang, 2018a, 2018b). With such the backdrop, this study uses a Foucauldian (1982a) lens to find out the English teachers' subjectivity in implementing the human-capital-oriented EAP policy in their micro contexts (Ball, 2007).

Literature Review

Foucault (1982a) states there is not a monolithic power, but web-like, diverse and multi-faceted powers. In order to decode these powers, Foucault (1990) claims there is a need to delve into their particular discourses and the knowledge they produced. Thus, enlightened by Foucault's (1990) discourse analysis, in the literature review we look at the knowledge that neoliberal discourse and its technologies generated, particularly human capital theory as a discursive technology, and their influence on higher education policy-making in China, which has incubated the micro-discourse of the Shanghai EAP policy. The discussion of the above discourse lays the foundation for us to explore the power that subjectifies the teachers in the Shanghai EAP policy context.

Neoliberal Discourse in Higher Education

Neoliberalism is also called "Thatcherism," due to its adoption in the UK when former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was in power in the 1970s (Cahill & Konings, 2017), but now the term is widely used worldwide. Neoliberalism was conceptualized based on the neoclassic ideology of free market competition. On the one hand, it promotes meritocratic principles to stimulate the "stagnant" welfare state by privatizing public sectors such as transportation and education; it also allows citizens to take on the identities of customers to choose those that served them best, and sifts out those with lesser quality as punishment (Kivisto, 2018). On the other hand, Neoliberal governments also tighten their overseeing of the public sector by adopting quality assurance indicators as a means to improve their performance (Raaper, 2016; Cahill & Konings, 2017). In such a discourse, universities are incorporated (Fairclough, 1990). Against the founding principles of the university as a public good, neoliberalized universities become entrepreneurial institutions (Giroux, 2002). Inside universities, subjects and majors that accrue profits are labelled "marketable" (Quinn & Bates, 2017); however, the "unmarketable" subjects, often in the humanities, are marginalized and sometimes eliminated (Giroux, 2002; Hordern, 2018). Thus, the role of the university is reduced to facilitating employment, which in turn helps to attract more students (Quinn & Bates, 2017). Neoliberalized universities have also adopted an accountability-management and quality-auditing system, enlarging the authority of administrators (Giroux, 2002), controlling the autonomy, voice, and power of teachers (Raaper, 2016; Dugas, Stich, Harris, & Summers, 2018). Inside neoliberal universities, knowledge of marketization becomes naturalized (Simburger & Donoso, 2018), and many people regard marketability as the true value of universities (Quinn & Bates, 2017).

As an incentive to advance neoliberalism (Allatt & Tett, 2018), the concept of human capital was based on a hypothesis that those who invested more in education have better payment (Lauder, Brown, Dillabough, & Halsey, 2006). Becker

(2006) thus claimed that the success of an individual is dependent upon their investment in education as human capital. On a national level, Becker (2006) even found human capital surpassed all other types of non-human capital as the most significant fuel in growing the economy of the U.S., as he observed that the value of human capital was unharmed by stock market downturns in US history. Similarly, Shultz (1962) pointed to Japan and Germany as two developed economies that benefited from their respective educational reform in improving citizens' education. On an international level, investing in human capital leads to the rise of the national economy and its competitiveness in global markets (Reich, 2006). Under this theory, education inevitably is viewed as responsible for generating students' human capital (Hong, 2014).

Many national educational policies are promulgated to effectively exploit human capital (O'Brien, 2018) to keep up with, for example, OECD international policies, and to maintain and advance the nation's global competitiveness (Allatt & Tett, 2018). However, human capital theory overlooks the value of human beings by reducing them to economic entities (Gillies, 2011). Human capital theory also overlooks the social, economic and other structures that prevent people from receiving a well-rounded education when it blames people themselves for their lack of education (Allais, 2012; Miller & Rose, 2008). Furthermore, human capital theory is criticized for its overemphasis on instrumentality, only teaching skills necessary for employment and economic growth, which reduce education to a market-oriented service, betraying the emancipatory and human-flourishing value that education should have (Allatt & Tett, 2018; O'Brien, 2018). Human capital also leads towards a tendency in tertiary education to weigh market value above all else (Nussbaum, 2010).

Human Capital Educational Policies in a Neoliberalizing Education Discourse in China

Since the late 1970s, China has been undergoing neoliberal reform using the market economy to replace the highly centralized planned economy; however, neoliberalism has not only gradually changed the practice of socialism in economic matters, but also policy making in public sectors (Mok & Lo, 2007). In 2001, China obtained membership in the World Trade Organisation (WTO), which has further internationalized the country with WTO guidelines operating not only in business, but in the way the WTO portrays higher education (as a service) (Mok & Lo, 2007). Thus, positioning higher education as a service to the economy embraces human capital ideals; accordingly, China began increasing university enrollment and improving teaching and research for global competition (Ngok & Guo, 2007). In 2010, the Ministry of Education in China published the *National Medium and Long-term Educational Reform and Development Program 2010-2020* (abbreviated as "the Program"). The Program placed the nurturing of human beings as its centerpiece, but Gu (2013, p.4), one of the policy makers of the

Program, revealed that the motivation behind its making was actually to increase human capital. In his words, the Program was to “forge first-class talents via a first class education for a first class country...[As]the transition of an economic development mode changes in international situations, the intensity of international competitions all need innovation in technology and systems” (our translation). Drawing from the program, the Shanghai local government developed its own educational reform policy in 2010, *Outline of Shanghai’s Medium-and Long-Term Educational Reform and Development Plan 2010 - 2012* (which is called the Shanghai Outline). The Shanghai Outline is also human-capital oriented, as it describes the importance of producing international talent for participating in worldwide communication for the purpose of building Shanghai into a centre for global, finance, trade, and shipping (Cai, 2012).

Against this background, the Shanghai EAP policy was designed with the same human capital orientation to promote local development: “[The EAP policy] is thus designed so as to fill a considerable need for university students equipped with international communication skills and competitiveness within their areas of specialty so as to meet the needs of the national and regional socioeconomic development and the internationalization of higher education” (Cai, 2017a, p.131). Like all other human capital education policies, it prioritizes the teaching of skills as its goals (see Table 1).

Table 1

The Goals of Shanghai EAP Policy, Adapted from Cai (2017a, p.135)

<i>EAP Sub-skills</i>	<i>Discipline-Specific Genre Knowledge</i>	<i>Cross-Disciplinary Scientific Literacy</i>	<i>Qualifications of Twenty-First Century Intellectuals</i>
1. Listening to lecturers, note-taking;	1. Familiarity with characteristics of various sub-genres (research report, experiment report, literature review, book review, conference paper abstract, journal article, etc.);	1. Ability to conduct autonomous and life-long learning and re-search;	1. Critical thinking ability;
2. Reading general academic papers and discipline-specific literature;	2. Knowledge and observance of established research paradigms and discourse traditions in the specific discipline	2. Question raising and problem solving on basis of information analysis and integration;	2. Communication and coordination ability;
3. Writing literature review, academic papers, abstracts;		3. Observance of norms and ethics in academia;	3. Group cooperation ability;
4. Presenting academic papers, participating in academic discussion		4. Application of scientific reasoning and methodology in public affairs	4. Innovation and creative thinking ability;
			5. Cross-cultural communication ability

So it is a neoliberal educational policy. As mentioned previously, the Shanghai EAP policy aimed to use EAP to replace the GE course for non-English major university students (Cai, 2012). The policy criticized GE for simply teaching generic English skills while not meeting the students' future employment or educational needs or the requirements of national talent strategies (Cai, 2012). Additionally, its policymaker criticized the economic value of the GE course, negating the values it held (Cai, 2017b). To promote the new policy, the English Language Teaching Advisory Board in Shanghai printed and disseminated quarterly newsletters among the participant universities reporting the EAP reform achievements. They also formed a China EAP Association (CEAPA), giving memberships to many university English teachers both inside and outside of Shanghai and invited them to join EAP conferences, seminars, and workshops. Key members promoting the Shanghai EAP policy have been publishing widely in some mainstream media (e.g., Cai, 2016, Oct 4; 2018, Nov, 6) to critique the so-called problems and the uselessness of the GE course in universities, while promoting the teaching of EAP. All these behaviors generated a Foucauldian discourse, promoting EAP as providing more important knowledge than GE.

Theoretical Framework:

Foucault's Subjectivity, Technologies of Power and Technologies of Self

As a strongly recommended policy regulated by the Shanghai Education Bureau, the Shanghai EAP policy was adopted by 26 local universities (two-thirds of higher education institutes in Shanghai) (Wang, 2018). Instead of recruiting new EAP teachers, however, these universities demanded in a top-down manner that GE teachers transition into teaching EAP (Li & Wang, 2018a), without allowing the teachers any choice about the matter. Despite a few studies expressing concern over the unsuitability or anxiety of these teachers' transition to EAP (e.g., Cheng, 2016; Wang & Wang, 2015), most studies reported a generally positive attitude towards the teachers' EAP teaching transition (e.g., Li & Wang, 2018a; Li & Wang, 2018b; Tao & Gao, 2017). In the present study, rather than recording how the teachers successfully became EAP teachers, we will explore to what extent the teachers were subjectified by and resisted the human-capital-oriented policy in the neoliberal discourse. As a post-structural philosopher, Foucault (1982a) considered that his research mainly deals with human subjectivity, or more specifically, how individuals are subjectified by technologies of power (Usher and Edwards, 1994) and by the technologies of self (Foucault, 1981). Heyes (2010) explains Foucauldian subjectivity is not equivalent to person as a *homo sapiens*, but a term concerning with the kind of person one wants to become. Foucault believes (1981) that only two kinds of technologies can work on individual's subjectivities, i.e., the technologies of power and self.

In order to explain technologies of power, we have to shed light on Foucault's

perspective of power. Foucault (1973b) claimed that power is an internal warlike relationship, which takes the forms of both momentary and constant confrontations between individuals, as the result of which some individuals attain the upper hand, and power becomes their coercive form of exertion over others. Before the 18th century, corporal punishment as a public spectacle was adopted to prosecute those who offended the royalty and to alert those who may have the potential to do so (1973a). While by the 19th century, when the centralised power of royalty gradually shifted to the hand of Bourgeoisie of capitalist industrial production system (Foucault, 1973d), the public corporal punishment was reckoned both brutal and costly (Foucault, 1995); therefore, sequestration institutions of power, like schools, factories, and prisons, were created to discipline individuals' time, movement, bodies, and habits (Foucault, 1973c). According to Foucault (1995), such discipline methods are technologies of power forging the biological human beings into docile and useful bodies, subjectifying them into industrial production. Accompanying the discipline methods, discourse as knowledge-power was created (Foucault, 1973b) to spread a certain ideology inside the sequestration institutions (Foucault, 1973c) and in the society (Foucault, 1973d) to legitimize the power technologies. As Buchan-an (2018, p.140) argued, "to be able to say someone is 'mad' for instance requires that madness exist as a concept and that the rules for its use are established". So discourse is a truth making process, through which "what can be said, and thought, but also about who can speak, when, where and with what authority" is determined (Ball, 1990, p.17).

So the discipline methods and discourse are both the technologies of power aiming to subjectifying individuals. As a result, when individuals are subjectified by the power, their bodies are trained and manipulated into becoming machines, "political puppets, (and) small-scale models of power" (Foucault, 1995, p.136), and they will develop an obedience to power by sacrificing their subject wills (Foucault, 1982b). However, Foucault (1984a) does not believe power can be dismissed as the nature of power is internal wars among people competing for upper hand over others (Foucault, 1973b), so as long as there are people there will be power: "I don't believe there can be a society without relations of power... The problem is not of trying to dissolve them" (Foucault, 1984a, p.18). The only way Foucault (1981) thinks people can escape the ubiquitous power is through technologies of self, which is the other way that can work on human's subjectivity. Foucault (1981) thinks human in nature should be fully responsible for amend, transform or maintain their identities. To be more specific, Foucault (1982b, p18) explicits that

[Technologies of self] permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality.

Under the umbrella of technologies of self, Foucault (1982b) particularly stresses the concept of care of the self, which originated in Ancient Greece, where it was

highly regarded as a main principle of the cities of the time, and of the means to govern citizens' social life (Foucault, 1982b). This care of the self included activities from studying philosophy, reading, writing a diary, preserving one's health, contemplation, and retrospection, to conversing with, and writing letters to friends, with the ultimate aim of such activities being the care of an individual's spirit and soul (Foucault, 1988). Deriving from care of self, some Foucault's followers reckon that it is a Foucauldian re-sistance to power (e.g., Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Yussuff, 2013; Choi, 2017). Rather than thoroughly revolt the discipline power, individuals should care for themselves so as to modify how one is subjectified by the technologies of power in an everyday manner (Yussuff, 2013). In other words, the Foucauldian (2007, p.75) resistance can be understood as "the will not to be governed thusly, like that, by these people, at this price." In practice, Ball and Olmedo (2013) believes Foucauldian resistance can also be seen in people's questioning and criticism on policy or other sequestrations of power. Furthermore, Ball and Olmedo (2013) also thinks sometimes individuals' intentional acting "irresponsibly" under the pressure of power is a Foucauldian resistance and being caring for themselves. Choi (2017) added that individuals' expressions of confusion, depression, stress, and frustration in an policy enactment also represent their resistance to the policy power and such emotional expressions in nature is care for themselves.

Generally speaking, Foucault (1982b) stressed that the care of the self is all possible avoidance of rules. He firmly believed that the care of the self is the only way out of the reign of powers, as by engaging in it, individuals step on "a path by which, escaping all the dependences and enslave-ments, one ultimately rejoins oneself, like a harbor sheltered from the tempests or a citadel protected by its ramparts." (Foucault, 1988, p.65) Perhaps to Foucault (1978), the aim of care of the self is to an aesthetic of existence, and only through it, individuals can govern their own subjectivity in their own way. Anyway, the paradox between technologies of power and technologies of self creates the possibility of negotiation of the Shanghai EAP teachers' Foucauldian resistance in our study. There are different types of teacher resistance to neoliberalism. Choi (2017) categorized them into those that are open and organized, those that are latent and sporadic, and those that are Foucauldian. Open and organized teacher resistance often takes the form of parades (Choi, 2010) and Marxist - Gramscian comrade unions (Quinn & Bates, 2017); the latent and sporadic resistance is similar to what Scott (1989) named everyday resistance, which he described as the subalterns pretending to conform to power, but doing otherwise. Foucauldian resistance is also in a hidden form, but it is more concerned with the retaining of subjectivities, so this study will use the aforementioned technologies of self as conceptualising framework to explore the Shanghai EAP teachers' status quo in the policy reform.

Methodology

Based on the conceptualising framework of Foucauldian subjectivity and particularly technologies of self, we adopted a qualitative study to explore the teachers' general belief, possible resistance, and their subjectivities in the Shanghai EAP reform. Various kinds of interviews were used to collect opinions from the ten teachers participating in the study. Semi-structured, focus group, and social media (WeChat) interviews were used to depending on the participant teachers' convenience. The teachers we interviewed came from three universities in Shanghai, each belonging to different disciplinary specializations. All names were anonymized. Among the three universities, Treasury University (TU) specialized in business and management studies; Spanner University (SU) specialized in industry and technology; and Pills University (PU) specialized in Chinese medicine. These universities are among second tier institutions in China, whose graduates are positioned to work in manufacturing and other social service industries (Luo, Guo, & Shi, 2018). The purpose of selecting the three universities, thus, was to see the enactment of the regional EAP policy at the local level, particularly in non-research-intensive institutions.

Four teachers (pseudonyms: Phil, Elisa, Felicity, and Shaw) were from TU, and they were recommended by their faculty dean to us. Between 2015 and 2018, 25 face-to-face semi-structured and WeChat-based interviews were held. The four teachers' college English teaching experience ranged from 10 to 20 years. They regularly appeared in the training sessions or conferences that the Shanghai EAP policy maker organized. Phil and Elisa were designated as pioneer EAP teachers, who were invited to give demo teaching to other members. Another four teachers (pseudonyms: Sabrina, Victor, Sue and Moby) were from SU, and we approached them through one of the first four teachers, and got to know the rest by snowball sampling. We had semi-structured and social media interviews with them intermittently from 2014 to 2018. Their teaching experience ranged from five to 10 years. Sabrina was a pioneer teacher in SU. She and the other three teachers also sometimes attended the training provided by CEAPA. We met another two teachers (pseudonyms: Leaf and King) from PU in an EAP teacher training course in Shanghai organized by CEAPA. By then Leaf had four years teaching experience and King had three years. As Leaf and King were both novice teachers with less experience, they participated in almost all the training sessions offered by CEAPA. During the sessions in which we met them, we held focus group interviews. For the teachers' details see Table 2.

Almost all the face-to-face interviews focused on teachers' opinions about how the EAP policy was enacted in their respective universities, and how they taught in their classes. Teachers were also asked to evaluate the usefulness of the EAP policy on their students; the teachers also compared their experience of teaching the GE course with teaching EAP. All the face-to-face interviews were

recorded. WeChat was used as a channel for follow up interviews, and teachers' voices and text messages were also saved. All the interviews were conducted in Chinese before we translated them into English. Inductive coding was used for us to read between the lines of the transcripts for clues on the teachers' subjectivity and possible resistance, and the coding schedule was in line with the forms of technologies of self or Foucauldian resistance mentioned in the chapter of methodology. We, the two authors, independently coded the transcripts, and we exchanged and discussed our coding results in the end in order to attain an agreement. We were concerned that some teachers might be cautious in discussing their attitudes towards the policy as many of them were recommended by their colleagues or superiors, particularly when they knew we were focusing on their subjectivity and possible resistance. In order to lower their precaution, we assured them of their anonymity and the confidentiality of data, and most importantly, we tried to befriend them, before, during and after the research.

Results

Teachers' Interest in EAP

In this section, the responses in interviews indicated that all of the teachers

Table 2
Detailed Information of the Participant Teachers

<i>No.</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Institutions</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Years of experience</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Areas of specialty</i>
1	Phil	TU	M	10	PhD	Curriculum & Instruction
2	Elisa	TU	F	19	Masters	Applied Linguistics
3	Felicity	TU	F	15	PhD	Intercultural Communication
4	Shaw	TU	F	20	PhD	Applied Linguistics
5	Sabrina	SU	F	10	Masters	English Literature
6	Victor	SU	M	6	Masters	TESOL
7	Moby	SU	F	5	Masters	Applied Linguistics
8	Sue	SU	F	7	PhD	Applied Linguistics
9	Leaf	PU	F	4	Masters	English Literature
10	King	PU	F	3	Masters	Applied Linguistics

generally felt positively towards teaching EAP and believed in its usefulness for both teachers and students. Individually, Victor expressed his original excitement when hearing his university would develop an EAP reform: “I feel passionate about academia, but I think our Chinese students lack critical thinking, so the new EAP policy is very important.” Moby believed the EAP policy was important to her as she thought transitioning to EAP would be able to help her progress in teaching: “Teaching should be progressing with time; the new methods should cover the old, and we cannot stick to only one method”. (Moby interview). Sue agreed with Moby’s opinion that teaching EAP is keeping students abreast with the times.

Similarly, Sabrina monitored her differences in teaching general English compared with EAP and shared her enrichment in teaching content: “In GE, I paid a lot of attention to correcting students grammar and vocabulary learning, and sometimes I referred to knowledge regarding English culture, which EAP helped me have a big shift in my teaching. I transitioned from teaching only language and culture to teach critical thinking.” (Sabrina interview). Leaf and King commented that besides participating in EAP training such as the one in which we first encountered them, they were compiling an EAP textbook specialized for their students who were majoring in Chinese traditional medicine. We especially noted that during the focus group interview, Leaf and King sometimes discussed the usability of the skills they had learned in training their classes at their university, from which we could see their interest in EAP teaching. When we asked Leaf to compare the differences between GE and EAP, she remarked that GE textbooks were like “chicken soup for the soul,” teaching students about values and emotions, but it was “utterly beyond the students’ expectations and needs;” however, their comments mirrored the Shanghai EAP policymaker, which we suspected might not have truly reflected their real impressions, as they also had some confusion regarding the usefulness of teaching EAP to their medical students.

Elisa once published her research in an international journal, which had developed her academic writing skills, and that triggered her belief in teaching EAP. She believed only the teachers who had international publication experience should be entitled to teach EAP. Felicity and Shaw told us they enjoyed teaching EAP, but the way they taught it was following their colleague Phil’s Project Based Learning (PBL) which was different from the setting in the Shanghai EAP policy. Generally speaking, all the interviewed teachers confirmed their willingness towards teaching EAP.

Teachers’ Critique of the EAP Policy

Although the teachers did not object to teaching EAP, some of them had found their students were too weak to study it: “The biggest challenge in teaching EAP to our students is their poor English foundation. They cannot even understand the textbooks” (Moby interview); “in SU, our students’ English is really weak. I think

EAP should be taught only to those who have attained an ability to have basic communication” (Victor interview). Similarly, Sue also stated that if students’ English was inadequate, teaching EAP to them when they had just enrolled into university, would be as ineffective as “teaching a bull to play piano” (a Chinese idiom meaning something being useless). However, despite the students’ weak English foundation in the SU, the university demanded a thorough implementation of the Shanghai EAP policy. This meant the teachers spent a tremendous amount of time and energy to help their students adapt to EAP, leading to teacher burnout.

Observing the students’ performance in their EAP classes over the years, Victor claimed that “at the later stage of the EAP reform, I gradually sensed we reformed just for the sake of responding to the education bureau because our students’ needs did not change by learning EAP; they don’t need it.” In PU, Leaf and King also expressed a conundrum in teaching EAP. During the focus group interview, they stated: “The trainers said GE does not meet students’ expectations and needs. It is important to build EAP as a springboard (what the EAP policy claimed to do) for the students to reduce their struggles when studying abroad ... but our students are studying Chinese medicine, and a very low percentage of them will go abroad ... we are sometimes confused when teaching EAP; we feel it is not very practical except for guiding them to write dissertations.”

In an interview with Sabrina in 2016, she told us her opinions regarding the policy maker on the students’ needs:

I am afraid this policy is only for some elite students; it is not so consistent with the needs of most students. In our training, he (the policy maker) used a student named Liu Lu as an example. She had mastered maths knowledge very well and could do advanced research in her field; however, due to her lack of academic English, Liu Lu could not publish her research in international journals. He used Liu Lu’s case as a justification for the policy, but I want to ask, how representative is this case? Universities should reflect on the suitability of this policy for their students before embarking on the reform.

Teachers also found the Shanghai EAP policy overemphasized the instrumentality of academic English. Sabrina believed in a balanced coexistence of teaching skills and humanities in EAP. She commented that

the EAP policy is encouraging ‘practical skills’ ... but it shouldn’t negate humanistic values of English education. I feel teaching EAP should concern both skills and humanity.” Similarly, Elisa also lamented the loss of humanity in teaching EAP: “In the past (when teaching GE), in each semester I led students to read English novels, but now it seems hard to insert these materials. The aesthetics of education is being diluted, leaving only rationality. Does this reflect some failure in higher education? I hope humanity can be merged into our EAP course because I am against teaching only skills.

Phil’s main suggestion was to design a course more attuned to improving students’ thinking rather than an extreme negation of GE: “I agree with teaching EAP, but

not the way the policy is presently regulated. I cannot accept a bulldozing of GE, and worshipping EAP as the sole form of English education; any course as long as it can improve students' thinking is a good course." Phil also shared some of Elisa's and Sabrina's opinions on the EAP policy's instrumentality by refuting an opinion of the policy maker who stated that the teaching of academic English promoted more Nobel Prize winners in Japan (see Cai, 2018, Nov, 6). Phil added:

In China, many university teachers and intellectuals with meager salaries are sometimes not able to "pay for food", and how can they be devoted to do high-level research? There are many socio-cultural and historical reasons why Japan has come this far. His (the policymak-er's) opinion has one-sidedly viewed the instrumentality of education. If we only relate Eng-lish teaching to the creation of Nobel Prize winners, we are reducing the value of education and reducing human beings to an instrument. In the long run such education cannot help the human world.

The Teachers' Mediation of the EAP Course

Knowing that not all the students were aiming to pursue further education, nor were they motivated to study research related EAP, Phil and Felicity said they intentionally did not mention the word "academic" to their students very often. Instead, Phil explained to his students that EAP was a more scientific and logical way of thinking, which would help them to deal with daily chores better. More importantly, instead of following the rules of teaching EAP in the policy, Phil led his colleagues to develop a Project-Based Learning (PBL) EAP pedagogy, which had students learning academic English by themselves in projects based on reading and writing. In order to complete the projects, students also needed to develop questionnaires or interviews, and conduct research in real contexts. In so doing, Phil intended to let the students go out of the ivory tower into the real world and learn how to think critically for the community. The PBL EAP pedagogy became a major part of the EAP curriculum in TU, which all other teachers followed. Phil also pointed out the necessity for his students, as future business people, to have social justice discussions for preventing unethical behavior; therefore, Phil added some controversial discussion topics in his classes to raise students' moral awareness as future business leaders, e.g., should MacDonald advertise its high calorie products in children's TV programs.

In the EAP course taught by Elisa, she selected a book called *Heritage of Western Intercultural Tradition: a resource book* (Zhu, 2008) and discussed some of its chapters as supplementary reading in her EAP classes. Elisa wanted her students to learn how to develop arguments and to think about the philosophical elements in the book's passages while reading. Elisa also used newspaper reports published in various countries to teach media analysis and nurture students' critical thinking abilities. Elisa sometimes showed her students videos related to academic research in order to help students learn EAP as a way to do research for the

benefit of human beings. She claimed: “the policy maker is wrong in just focusing on how to teach students thesis writing, but if we uncover the ultimate meaning of EAP, as shown in the video clips, there is a lot about research for human benefit.

As for Sabrina, she often used philosophers' texts for student discussion as a warm-up, and Socratic questioning as her way to answer students' questions and to stimulate critical thinking. Although she had a large number of students whose English was weak, Sabrina preferred to give students one-to-one consultations to help them with their writing problems. Her warmheartedness touched many students, making them determined to study EAP. Sabrina told us that, to her, teachers need to have affection. Although EAP teaching is more skills related, she would also use her sincerity to help each student. Similarly, in order to help students with weak English proficiency to quickly adapt to EAP learning, Moby and Sue used multiple methods, such as reciting, using online platforms, and dictation, to improve their students' English basic knowledge in EAP class. To help students better understand academic thinking, Moby frequently used Chinese as her teaching language and used students' life cases as a lead-in. However, Victor experienced burnout from teaching the EAP course, and developed an indifferent attitude towards EAP teaching:

I could not explain my difficulties to my superior as she was bossy and wouldn't listen to my advice. So I sometimes complained to my colleagues. When I had to attend the EAP teacher training, I could not refuse her order, so I just went there to listen. However, I insisted on teaching English my way, as every teacher has different interpretations of the policy, so she (the superior) cannot say I am not sticking to the guidelines... I am exhausted, I am taking the attitude of 'whatever.'

Conclusion

In the micro discourse of the Shanghai EAP policy, all the teachers seemed to have been subjectified by the neoliberal discourse of the EAP policy. Because in the interviews they have used many languages derived from the discourse generating group of the EAP policy maker. For example, Leaf compared the GE to “chicken soup for the soul,” teaching emotion, falling from enough to students needs; Moby and Sue regarded EAP as an advancement beyond the dated general English course. Generally speaking, all the interviewed teachers supported the idea of teaching EAP. In Foucauldian lens, they were “fabricated”, “animated” and “produced” by the knowledge of the elimination of values taught in the GE course. However, this does not mean all the teachers had been completely subjectified by the neoliberal policy discourses, as many of them gradually became critical of the policy as shown in the Results. To critique is the ground where individuals' subjectivity grows as shown in Foucault's (1978, May) lecture on “What is Critique?” For instance, Phil, Elisa, and Sabrina negated the instrumentality of the EAP policy; as another example, Victor, Moby, Sue, and Sabrina all found the EAP policy' was unsuitable to their context, as the students' English foundation was too weak.

Similarly, Leaf and King, teachers of Chinese medical students, were confused about the usefulness of EAP for their students who might become Chinese medicine pharmacists.

Teachers' confusion, stress, and frustration as a result of a policy enactment are all the symbols of Foucauldian care of self as an embodiment of having subjectivity (Choi, 2017). During the enactment of the Shanghai EAP Policy, some teachers expressed their stress and exhaustion, such as, Victor's burnout. Victor later transformed his original passion into an opinion of indifferent attitude of "whatever" towards his teaching EAP; facing the students' constant lower EAP motivation, coupled with the pressure he felt to reform, Victor's attitude-change towards EAP can thus be termed as care of the self. His behavior is similar to what Ball and Olmedo (2013, p. 85) claimed: "By acting 'irresponsibly' these teachers take 'responsibility' for the care of their selves and in doing so make clear that social reality is not as inevitable as it may seem." Facing stress similar to Victor, Sabrina resorted to a mediated EAP course: to give one-to-one consultations to her students. Although the students were weak in learning English, Sabrina's emotional contribution touched many of her students and they eventually progressed. Sabrina's teaching is a realization of her educational ethos, from which she was self-actualizing.

Phil's mediated PBL EAP course was developed from his belief that the purpose of education is about students' thinking. Elisa's merging of philosophy into EAP was also a reflection of her belief that English teaching should go hand in hand with social goodness. Similarly, Moby and Sue also used their preferred methods to facilitate their students' study of EAP. Foucault (1984b, p. 350) said: "self is not given to us, I think there is only one consequence: we have to create ourselves a work of art." From this Foucauldian (1984b) lens, the teachers' mediation of the EAP course were taking care of themselves and even creating their own aesthetic of existence, which constituted their subjectivities. Therefore, instead of being totally subjectified by the neoliberal discourse, the teachers' subjectivities played an important role in their EAP teaching. Whether they were critiquing the EAP course and policy, feeling frustrated, or mediating their lessons, the teachers demonstrated their subjectivities as a Foucauldian form of resistance in the face of the neoliberal discourse.

As seen from the result, the teachers' independent professionalism acts a very important role in maintaining their subjectivity, as they have made important decisions in when to follow, to disrupt the policy implementation, and to mediate their courses. Independent professionalism, as a concept in contrast to sponsored professionalism, means teachers become "receptive to alternative perspectives on routinized practice, and they will seek to update and modify their knowledge and work in ways that are consistent with their developing views" (Leung, 2009, p.71) and "adapt and extend an inappropriate scheme of work or curriculum framework by devising additional teaching materials and classroom activities" (Leung, 2013,

p.25). While sponsored professionalism is “institutionally endorsed and publicly heralded definitions of teachers’ disciplinary knowledge and practical experience as expressed by regulatory bodies” (Coffey & Leung, 2015, p. 234). Leung (2009) also stresses that both professionalism may co-exist, and the independent may not be always contradicted to the sponsored.

However, the obtaining and mastering of independent professionalism is not something that can be achieved from books or short-term training. Kemmis and Smith (2008) used Aristotle’s three kinds of reasoning to elaborate on teacher knowledge: “episteme” (theoretical knowledge like metaphysics that can be learned from books), “techne” (the skill knowledge for production), and “phronesis” (to make moral and prudent decision for doing the right thing). For the previous two kinds, they are certainly important, but teaching is a complex context with uncertainties, dilemmas, and challenges, which particularly requires phronesis knowledge. In support of this argument, Kemmis and Smith (2008, p.19) said that:

To meet these challenges and dilemmas requires not only knowledge of educational traditions and theories, but also a capacity to see immediate circumstances...It requires a capacity to understand and interpret what is going on in richer terms than the ones that might immediately present themselves... It also demands that educators act wisely and prudently and with common sense.

However, the mastering of phronesis can only be developed from the wisdom of experience, or what Kemmis and Smith (2008) called praxis. Such a claim can thus be used to explain why those teachers with more than 10 years of experience like Phil, Elisa, Sabrina can mediate their lessons to meet their special circumstances, while those with lesser experience gave out fewer examples of their teaching.

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