

Practical Issues with Western TESOL Teachers in China's Public Education System: From the Critical Lens of In-Service Teachers

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Abstract: China has been a popular work site for Western TESOL teachers in recent years. As more and more public educational institutions in China have had foreign teachers joining their English teaching departments, doubts emerge from practice concerning whether it is adaptive for China's English teaching and learning environment. In this paper, I investigated four cases of Western TESOL teachers working in a public middle school and a public university in Beijing. Over a three-year period, interviews were conducted with the Western teachers and their native Chinese on-site coordinators by the end of every academic year. From both perspectives, I summarized the challenging facts for Western TESOL teachers working in EFL classrooms in China. Lastly, I made suggestions accordingly to facilitate Western TESOL teachers to adapt and apply their specialty in teaching smoothly.

Keywords: Practical Issues; Western TESOL Teachers; Critical Lens

1. Introduction

With the explosive economic growth and societal development in China since the 21st century, English as a foreign language (EFL) education for Chinese students has turned its emphasis from language skills (e.g., grammar) to language application (e.g., dialogue in contexts) by the latest 2022 edition of English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education ^[1]. This shift aims to make English a unity of a language tool and human culture for Chinese students, which could cultivate their awareness and ability for cross-culture communication to prepare them for adapting and constructing future globalized societies, instead of just a subject for testing and gaining admission to high school and college.

To achieve the goal of EFL curriculums matching the 2022 edition of English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education, more and more public educational institutions in China have started to hire Western TESOL teachers to join their English teaching teams – ranging from elementary education to higher education. Western TESOL teachers are believed by native Chinese English educators to offer valuable expertise in authentic English, innovative teaching methods, a wealth of learning resources, and exposure to diverse foreign cultures ^[2]. However, after a while in actual practice, their introduction into the public education system does not seem as pleasant as expected. Western TESOL teachers feel their professional competencies might not fit in China's EFL situation, and their native Chinese on-site coordinators also think Western TESOL teachers' teaching effectiveness is limited. This reality brings doubts and awkwardness to Western TESOL teachers working in China.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore what makes Western TESOL teachers unfit to teach EFL to Chinese students; and what leads native Chinese English educators to reduce their favorability toward Western TESOL teachers, specifically in China's public educational institutions. Both the Western TESOL teachers and the native Chinese on-site coordinators are interviewed independently to collect research data. This approach enabled participants to specify their concerns in detailed cases from their practices.

The paper is structured as follows: (a) Background on EFL teaching in China's public educational institutions and Western TESOL teaching/teachers in China; (b) Layout and descriptions of data sources and analysis; (c) Discussions of each aspect where Western TESOL teachers or their on-site native Chinese coordinators find maladaptive occur; (d) Suggestions for Western TESOL teachers and native Chinese educators.

2. Background

2.1. EFL Teaching in China

The traditional English as a foreign language teaching approaches in China, often criticized for their heavy focus on grammar instruction, have been defended by some scholars who argue that these methods are well-suited to the specific educational context in China^[3]. Factors such as the broader curriculum, traditional pedagogical approaches, large class sizes, rigid schedules, limited resources, and the relatively low status of teachers who focus on communicative rather than analytic skills all contribute to the persistence of these methods. As China has increasingly integrated into the global economy, the demand for English language teaching and learning has surged. This shift underscores the recognition of English as a critical skill for communication, employability, and professional success in the context of globalization and the knowledge economy. English has become a compulsory subject in schools across the country, reflecting its importance in modern Chinese society^[4].

However, it is essential to acknowledge that the progress and development of English language teaching in China have been uneven. Several challenges hinder widespread reform, including time constraints, competing educational priorities, skepticism toward new pedagogical ideas, insufficient investment in educational resources, the dominance of textbooks, varying levels of student language proficiency, and limited opportunities for professional development^[5]. These obstacles make it difficult to implement comprehensive reforms in English language teaching across the country.

Given these complexities, the role of Western TESOL teachers in China's EFL teaching landscape remains crucial. Their involvement is seen as an important factor in advancing and enriching English language education in China, providing students with diverse linguistic and cultural perspectives that are vital in a globalized world.

2.2. Western TESOL in China

From the perspective of Western TESOL practitioners, several stereotypes about Asian students can complicate the teaching process. These include perceptions that Asian students are overly obedient to authority, lack critical thinking skills, and do not engage actively in classroom interaction^[6]. These assumptions can lead to misunderstandings and misalignments between Western teaching approaches and Chinese students' learning styles/patterns.

Moreover, the application of TESOL techniques that are effective in Western cultural contexts does not always apply well to the Chinese educational setting. The learning and teaching styles of Chinese students and teachers differ significantly from those of other ethnic groups. For instance, Chinese students tend to be more attentive to their teachers and other authority figures, and Chinese teachers often prefer a more directive approach in the classroom compared to their Western counterparts^[7]. This cultural divergence presents significant challenges when Western TESOL pedagogies are imported into Chinese classrooms.

The theoretical exploration of these challenges highlights the need for a context-sensitive approach that acknowledges China's unique educational landscape and cultural context. Scholars have emphasized the importance of adapting Western TESOL practices to better suit the Chinese environment, advocating for a more localized and culturally aware pedagogy^[8]. In response to these challenges, some scholars suggest that TESOL pre-service training should be adjusted to include content specifically tailored to the Chinese teaching context^{[9][10]}. This approach would help new TESOL teachers better prepare for the realities of teaching in China. However, such training must be grounded in a deep understanding of the practical issues that Western TESOL teachers face in China.

Thus, this study aims to address the gap by focusing on the practical issues that arose from the involvement of Western TESOL teachers in China's public education system. Through in-depth interviews with both Western teachers and their native Chinese on-site coordinators, this research seeks to explore the underlying causes of these practical issues. The findings will not only enhance the adaptability of Western TESOL teachers in China but also contribute to the development of more effective pre-service training programs for future TESOL educators.

3. Data Sources and Analysis

Data for this study were obtained from two public educational institutions in Beijing, the Blue River

Middle School (pseudonym) and the Teachers' College at Gray Stone University (pseudonym). Both only hired one Western TESOL teacher and appointed two native Chinese English teachers in their English teaching department to be on-site coordinators in each academic year. In the 3-year-long conduction of this research, both institutions happened to change their Western TESOL teachers midway for once, so there is a total of four Western TESOL teachers involved in the study eventually. At Blue River Middle School, Walter (pseudonym) took Hellen's (pseudonym) place at the start of the second year of this research, teaching the English (EFL) class in Grades 7 and 8 (students aged 13-15). At Teachers' College, Gray Stone University, Trent (pseudonym) took Martin's (pseudonym) place at the start of the third year of this research, teaching freshman and sophomore English majors' Oral English courses. Detailed information about the four Western TESOL teachers is listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Information on the Western TESOL Teachers.

Western TESOL Teacher	Highest Degree Holds	Years of TESOL Experience	Country of Origin	Teaching Setting	Native Chinese On-Site Coordinators
Hellen	Master	<1	UK	Grade 7-8, Blue River Middle School	Lily, Sofia
Walter	Bachelor	9	Canada		
Martin	Master	15	US	Freshman-sophomore English majors, Teachers' College, Gray Stone University	Jenny, Gill
Trent	PhD	12	Sweden		

Notably, the English major degree program at Teachers' College is a "tuition-free teacher education program," in which students are funded by the Beijing Municipal Education Commission. After graduation, if a student successfully gets hired to teach in a public educational institution, then his tuition fees are waived. So, the English major's course designs are teaching-oriented. The course Oral English is taught solely by Western TESOL teachers, and lessons are once a week for each class, six classes in total, and 90 minutes for each class. At Blue River Middle School, the Western TESOL teacher's role is to supplement native Chinese English teachers – one lesson for each class every week, sixteen classes in total, and 40 minutes for each class; each class has six English lessons every week, so the rest of their English lessons are taught by native Chinese English teachers. Detailed information on the teaching workload of Western TESOL teachers is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Teaching Workload Summary of the Western TESOL Teachers.

Public Educational Institutions	Teaching Grade(s)	Class Amount in Each Grade	Total Teaching Lessons per Week	Duration for Each Lesson	The Role of Western TESOL Teachers
Blue River Middle School	Grade 7, Grade 8	8	16	40 minutes	Complement native Chinese English teachers to teach English (EFL) classes
Teachers' College, Gray Stone University	Freshman, sophomore	3	6	90 minutes	Solely prepare and deliver the Oral English course

On-site coordinators in the two institutions play an important role in organizing Western TESOL teachers to integrate into the existing teaching system, but there are some differences between the university level and the middle school level. At Teachers' College, Gray Stone University, the Western TESOL teacher, Martin/Trent, has more flexibility in their curriculum design and classroom teaching. Their on-site coordinators, Jenny (pseudonym) and Gill (pseudonym), only provide general expectations for the Oral English course, and they seldom show up in Martin/Trent's classroom; even if they show up, they will only sit in the back, observing without intervening. On the contrary, at Blue River Middle School, the Western TESOL teacher Hellen/Walter has to work closely with their on-site coordinators Lily (pseudonym) and Sofia (pseudonym), on their teaching plans, teaching designs, teaching content, etc. Lily or Sofia, at least one of them, have to be present in Hellen/Walter's classes, for in any case, the Western teacher might need help. The four on-site coordinators are all experienced native Chinese English (EFL) teachers. Detailed information about them is summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Information on the Native Chinese On-Site Coordinators.

Native Chinese On-Site Coordinator	Institution Affiliated	Highest Degree Holds	Years of Teaching English (EFL)
Lily	Blue River Middle School	Master	16
Sofia		Bachelor	21
Jenny	Teachers' College, Gray Stone University	Master	25
Gill		Master	22

The following section summarizes the results of interviews with the Western TESOL teachers and their on-site coordinators. The interviews were conducted at the end of each academic year during the three-year-long research period. The purpose of the interviews was to learn the participants' experiences, thoughts, and reflections on practical issues that may have hindered them from agreeing that "Western TESOL teachers are adaptive to China's English education system." Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring themes and patterns in the qualitative data, which involves systematically organizing and interpreting the teachers' responses. It enables the extraction of valuable insights from the rich dataset.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Limited Choice of Teaching Content at the Middle School Level

At Blue River Middle School, it is the native Chinese coordinators' duty to assist Western TESOL teachers in preparing for each lesson. They have set strict boundaries for Western TESOL teachers on what to teach by providing fixed teaching content and teaching objectives, sometimes even teaching activities. This has led Helen and Walter to feel that their teaching effectiveness at Blue River Middle School is constrained. They believe that they are not fully able to leverage their strengths and that there is a notable disparity between the Chinese and Western English education models. They are worried adhering to the Chinese model is impacting their effectiveness and are questioning the rationale behind hiring Western TESOL teachers to teach English in China. Consequently, the confidence of Western TESOL teachers in their ability to teach English to students has declined.

While the Western TESOL teachers at Blue River Middle School are dissatisfied with the teaching content requirements, the native Chinese coordinators believe it is the best way to organize Western TESOL teachers to fit into the public middle school's English teaching situation in China. Lily highlighted the differences between Western teachers and native Chinese English teachers in their approach to teaching English. While acknowledging that Western teachers might excel in teaching English to speakers of other languages, she pointed out that they lack an understanding of the specific challenges Chinese students face^[11], such as exam preparation, learning habits, and classroom dynamics. She argued that native Chinese English teachers are more effective in guiding students toward academic success and suggested that Western teachers in public schools should follow the directions given by their native Chinese counterparts.

4.2. Highly Flexible Teaching Content at the University Level

In contrast to middle school, at Teachers' College, Gray Stone University, Martin and Trent have more freedom in deciding on their teaching content. During the first two years of this study, when Martin was teaching, he organized the overall concept of the Oral English course for freshmen and sophomores as shown in the following Table 4.

Table 4: Martin's Overall Concept Design of the Course "Oral English".

Freshman Section	year	General Objectives: Accumulate language knowledge of new words, phrases, and sentence expressions.
		Teaching Activities: Word games, making dialogues, oral compose stories, role-play, etc.
Sophomore Section	year	General Objectives: 1) Unpack language assessment standards, and design teaching lessons by backward planning according to the standards. 2) Use the correct APA citation format for academic writing.
		Teaching Activities: Group discussions, presentations, simulated teaching, etc.

Since the Oral English course is offered to English majors who are English-teaching oriented, Martin designed the sophomore year course closely connected to English teaching careers in elementary and secondary educational institutions. The course requirements for those English majors to complete their bachelor's degree have already included independent compulsory courses such as "Pedagogy," "English Curriculum and Theory," "English Teacher's Professional Skills Training," "English Academic Writing," etc. But Martin still believed his Oral English course involving teacher education was necessary. He highlighted that his teacher education stands out because it is taught entirely in English. He is intended to help students grasp the English-language requirements for teaching and effectively design lessons based on assessment standards. He also noted the importance of understanding teaching objectives and preparing future educators to write academic papers, which is why he introduced and emphasized the use of the APA format through his course practice and assignments.

Gill, one of Martin's coordinators, said that she and Jenny are aware that Martin's curriculum content overlaps with other teacher education courses students are taking and causing confusion for students, but they decided not to interfere with his choice of teaching content since his class still meets the purpose of the Oral English course, which enables students to practice their oral English. They even think it is beneficial for students to learn that knowledge in Martin's class – it can reflect the internationalization of higher education.

In the third year of this study, Martin left Teachers' College, and Trent took his position teaching the course Oral English. Trent has different ideas about the content of this course, so he changed the overall concept of the course, as shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Trent's Overall Concept Design of the Course "Oral English".

General Objectives: Accumulate language knowledge of new words, phrases, and sentence expressions. Have read substantial masterworks in British and American literature.	Notes: Masterworks in British and American literature, e.g., The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The Little Prince, Oliver Twist, David Copperfield, etc. Students will read them after class as homework and be ready to have conversations/discussions about them, instead of reading them in class. The two sections (for freshmen and for sophomores) of the course are designed by this same concept.
Teaching Activities: Group discussions, presentations, oral Q & As, debates, etc.	

In Trent's opinion, his change of the content for the course Oral English made it available for abundant classroom activities for students to speak English, and its difficulty and features are fit for university students. Jenny and Gill, who are Trent's native Chinese on-site coordinators, believe Trent's teaching is effective, particularly in improving students' oral English skills. They recognize the significant change in the course design and stand by Trent's approach, given his qualifications and the positive outcomes they observe.

In the university setting, Western TESOL teachers possess a high degree of flexibility in selecting and organizing their teaching content. As long as their course can meet the curriculum purposes provided by their native Chinese coordinators, they can navigate the teaching design based on their understanding of students' needs, prior knowledge, characteristics, etc. Additionally, Chinese coordinators have concerns about providing direct teaching instruction to Western teachers unless there is a major issue, as they believe that Western teachers are more authoritative and professional than them in TESOL.

4.3. Lack of Expected Teaching Organization Skills

The teaching organization skills of Western TESOL teachers are highly correlated with their years of experience in meeting the expectations of their native Chinese coordinators. Among the four participants in this study, Hellen is experiencing the most difficulty in meeting the expectations of Lily and Sofia. The coordinators feel that Hellen lacks appropriate teaching organization skills in her class. Many middle school students have difficulty understanding English-only instruction, which poses challenges for Hellen. She struggles to explain new words and language points clearly, often requiring Lily and Sofia to intervene and translate for the students. This situation detracts from the intended English immersion environment. For instance, when Hellen tried to teach comparative forms, her explanation confused the students due to their unfamiliarity with the terminologies in grammar. While Hellen has been improving with assistance, she still needs further practice to master these teaching methods.

Besides Hellen's deficiency in organizing her approach to teaching, the native Chinese coordinators also thought her style of teaching could be improved. She lacks the energy and enthusiasm native Chinese

people often associate with Western teachers. Hellen tends to deliver her lessons in a plain tone, standing at the front of the room with little movement or expressiveness. Sofia attributed this to Hellen's inexperience and personality but emphasized that these traits should not hinder her from improving. She believes that with more practice, Hellen can develop a more interactive and engaging teaching style.

Western TESOL teachers' teaching organization skills are important in their adaptability to teaching in China. Their teaching organization skills are largely accumulated through practical teaching experience. Apart from Hellen, the other three Western TESOL teachers all have strong teaching organization skills and over nine years of previous TESOL experience. The native Chinese coordinators are satisfied with the lessons they taught entirely in English, the learning atmosphere they created, and the discourse they employed in the classroom. For novice Western TESOL teachers, teaching organization skills are the competence they might need to adjust and promote with their on-site coordinators once they start to work in China's public educational institutions.

4.4. Interpersonal Relationship Barriers with Native Chinese Colleagues

The colleagues of Western TESOL teachers are usually native Chinese teachers within the same department – since, typically, there is only one foreign teacher in the department. Western teachers often face challenges in communicating and collaborating with native Chinese colleagues due to primary language and cultural differences. Hellen observed that while her colleagues often enjoy conversations around her, she is unable to join in because she does not understand Chinese. Walter echoed similar sentiments, noting that his interactions are mostly limited to work-related talks with his on-site coordinators. Although he was initially invited to lunch with the other teachers, the invitations ceased after he missed one. Even when included, Walter finds it difficult to participate in conversations with his colleagues, which are mostly spoken in Chinese, leading to feelings of isolation.

At Teachers' College, Martin and Trent encountered the same language and cultural barriers, but they experienced less isolation due to their more intensive class schedules, which allowed them to be off campus more often. They also connected with other foreign teachers outside Teacher's College at the university, particularly from the Business School and Tourism College, forming a supportive social group. This community enabled them to chat casually, share teaching experiences, and discuss insights on Chinese student characteristics, which they found valuable for their teaching.

From the perspectives of native Chinese teachers, they focus on maintaining respect and avoiding any actions that might make Western teachers feel uncomfortable. Sofia mentioned that she and Lily refrain from inviting Western teachers to lunch unless they show interest, to prevent them from feeling pressured or isolated due to language differences. Jenny at Teachers' College similarly noted that she and Gill primarily interact with Western teachers for work-related purposes, avoiding excessive enthusiasm to ensure they don't feel uneasy. Despite this, they remain ready to offer help with any personal or professional matters.

The interpersonal relationships between Western teachers and their native Chinese colleagues are primarily based on formal work interactions. Both sides encounter obstacles in forming close interpersonal relationships due to language barriers and differences in interpersonal culture. Native Chinese colleagues typically have to communicate in English to engage with Western teachers, and their collectivist social habits may differ from those of Western teachers. As a result, conversations between the two groups often remain formal. Western teachers may be less likely to reach out to their native Chinese colleagues firsthand for personal issues or teaching advice.

4.5. Students' Existing Preference of English-Speaking Accents

While there are various English accents around the world, China's English (EFL) education recognizes only American English (AmE) and British English (BrE) as the dominant accents in the classroom ^[1]. According to the English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education, there should be no preferences between these two accents, and students should be able to listen to and understand English spoken or written in both accents. However, students are only required to master one accent for their spoken and written English ^[1]. For Western TESOL teachers' English classes, some students have complained that the accents of the Western teachers are inconsistent with the accents they are used to/prefer to learn with, which is usually the accent their native Chinese English teacher speaks. Especially in Hellen's case, she is from London and has a British accent. She recalled an incident where a student refused to follow her pronunciation correction, convinced that his American accent was correct. Although Hellen tried to clarify the difference, her native Chinese coordinator had to step in to defuse the tension.

Sofia, the coordinator, explained that the student's belief in the American accent as the standard stemmed from his previous after-school classes. She noted that many students were hearing a strong British accent for the first time and might not trust Hellen's pronunciation. Sofia acknowledged that it takes time for students to adjust to the different accents of Western TESOL teachers, which can be quite different from the more neutral accents of native Chinese teachers, posing a challenge for Western teachers in managing this adaptation process.

Gill, Martin's coordinator at Teachers' College, supported Sofia's perspective on the challenges of accent variation. She mentioned that she teaches the compulsory course English Pronunciation in a British accent. However, when Martin, who speaks with an American accent, taught the Oral English course, some students expressed dissatisfaction with the differing accents. Instead of confronting Martin directly, students provided feedback to the native Chinese coordinators, indicating that this inconsistency affected their experience in engaging in the Oral English course. Gill did not intervene/instruct Martin on this issue. She believed that as the course moved on, Martin should be able to handle the situation and that students should be able to adjust themselves and adapt to the two different accents. From her observation afterward, it seems that students eventually accepted the American accent in the Oral English course and the British accent in the English Pronunciation course.

English (EFL) teaching in China places limited emphasis on accent variety, leading students to be unaware of the differences between British and American accents. Students often believe what their teachers have taught them is the only standard pronunciation of English. When Western TESOL teachers, especially native English speakers, are involved in English teaching in China, their strong British or American accents can confuse students. Therefore, it is essential for Western TESOL teachers to guide students in recognizing accent differences and their connection with the concept of "standard pronunciation." This guidance helps students accept and adapt to different English accents spoken internationally, particularly the British and American accents, as required by the English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education ^[1].

4.6. Racial Preference in the Teacher Employment Consideration

In employing Western TESOL teachers, native Chinese coordinators have a preference in terms of candidates' race/ethnicity to ensure they will not cause controversy among parents. They tend to prioritize White candidates, followed by Black candidates, with Asian candidates. Particularly those Asians with Chinese immigration backgrounds, being the least favored. Although native Chinese educators understand that teaching abilities should be the primary criteria, they feel necessary to consider race when candidates are otherwise comparable.

The existence of racial preference in the employment of Western TESOL teachers in China is rooted in the traditional Chinese view of teachers as role models and mentors. Teachers are expected to embody high moral qualities and behaviors that students can respect and replicate ^[12]; they should maintain high professional standards, ethics, and integrity in their interactions with students, colleagues, parents, and the community. However, the prevailing societal views of Black individuals in China do not align with these expectations for teachers. Chinese people's impression of Black people may likely be as uncivilized and perceived as threats to public safety, and references on social media to events in Western countries involving crimes committed by immigrants support the idea that Black people pose security risks ^[13]. When it comes to Asians, those who have immigrant family backgrounds (e.g., American-born Chinese) may be seen as disloyal to their home country, leading to doubts about their morality and suitability as teachers in China. Additionally, Asians from countries other than China may not be considered as Westerners or native English speakers by Chinese people ^[14]. As a result, they are less likely to be considered for TESOL teaching positions in China.

5. Conclusions

The findings from this study illuminate several practical challenges faced by Western TESOL teachers in China's public education system, particularly when viewed through the critical lens of in-service Western teachers and native Chinese coordinators. These challenges highlight the necessity for greater understanding, adaptation, and collaboration between Western TESOL teachers and their Chinese counterparts to enhance educational outcomes.

One of the key insights from this study is the importance of Western TESOL teachers gaining a deeper understanding of the educational environment in China before accepting teaching positions ^[15]. The

differences between elementary education, secondary education, and higher education in China are significant, and recognizing these distinctions is crucial for aligning teaching practices with the specific needs and expectations of Chinese students and educational institutions. A clearer understanding of the local context can help teachers adjust their teaching philosophies and expectations, thereby reducing frustrations related to constrained teaching content, as observed in this study.

Furthermore, fostering open communication between students and their Western TESOL teachers is essential for bridging the gap between teaching methods and student expectations. Encouraging regular course reflection and assessment allows students to express their concerns and for teachers to adjust their approaches accordingly. This practice is particularly important in addressing issues such as accent variation and differences in teaching styles, which were identified as areas of concern in both middle and higher education settings.

In addition to communication, the study highlights the need for Western TESOL teachers to cultivate teaching organization skills that are specifically tailored to the Chinese educational context^[16]. This involves adopting a critical pedagogy that takes into account the economic, social, and cultural backgrounds of students and native Chinese coordinators^[8]. The localization and adaptation of Western TESOL methodologies to suit the Chinese context can enhance the relevance and effectiveness of teaching, making it more aligned with the needs of non-native English learners.

The study also emphasizes the importance of managing interpersonal relationships and cultural differences within the school environment. Western TESOL teachers often face challenges in communicating and collaborating with their native Chinese colleagues due to language barriers and cultural differences. Building strong, supportive relationships with on-site coordinators and maintaining open lines of communication can help mitigate these challenges, fostering a more harmonious and productive teaching environment.

Another significant finding relates to the issue of accent variation in TESOL instruction. Given that students in China may struggle with different English accents, it is important for TESOL teachers to help students understand these variations and their connections with the concept of standard pronunciation. This understanding can aid students in becoming more adaptable and proficient in their spoken English.

Finally, the research points to the need for promoting racial equity in the employment of Western TESOL teachers in China. Hiring practices should focus on the teaching competencies and holistic quality of candidates rather than their race/ethnicity. By fostering a culture of racial equality and upholding high moral standards, Western TESOL teachers can better fulfill their roles as educators and role models within the Chinese education system.

In brief, the successful integration of Western TESOL teachers into China's public education system requires a multifaceted approach that includes cultural sensitivity, pedagogical adaptability, and a commitment to open communication. By addressing these practical issues, the collaboration between Western TESOL teachers and native Chinese educators can be strengthened, ultimately enhancing the English learning experience for students across China and improving Western pre-service TESOL teacher training.

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