

PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROPRIATENESS OF EFL METHODOLOGIES
TO CHINESE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

With the increase in international communication and the growing demand for foreign language professionals in the last decade, the teaching of foreign languages, especially English, has gained considerable prominence in Chinese education. Despite the long history of English teaching in China, there are still significant deficiencies in this area. If these deficiencies are to be addressed, then methodology is a crucial variable worthy of examination.

Many of the TEFL (Teaching English as Foreign Language) methods developed in the last twenty years are unknown to the Chinese teachers, although they may be introduced to China in the future. Since these methods are products of Western experience, a scrutiny of their relevance to the Chinese teaching situation is necessary. In particular, it is important to focus on the psychological appropriateness of these methods to the Chinese setting.

A number of the most crucial psychological issues, such as learner's motivation, aptitude, personality and learning style, are discussed in CHAPTER 2, together with those social and cultural influences which may affect the learner's psychological attributes.

CHAPTER 3 provides a detailed, yet not exhaustive, description of a range of TEFL methodologies, which may provide potential solutions to the deficiencies that have

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been identified. Here the emphasis is on psychological theories that underlie these methods and on their psychological impact on the learner.

CHAPTER 4 moves to a specific investigation of the psychological attributes of Chinese students. To this end, data have been obtained from a study specifically designed for this paper, and used as a basis for evaluating the motivation, personality, affect and learning style of English majors at ERWAI (Peking Second Foreign Language Institute). This evaluation is further supplemented by the views of foreign visitors to China and by the results of some published studies of Chinese nationals in America.

Based on the discussion in the previous chapters, the fifth and final chapter concludes with an overview of the appropriateness of TEFL methodologies to the Chinese situation.

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