

The Basic Rules of Marxist Philosophy Say “No” to the Long-standing English Teaching:

Taking China’s Large-Scale English Teaching for Example

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Abstract: This paper, by using the basic rules of Marxist philosophy, has discussed the universal natural rules violated by China’s large-scale English teaching and researching, with the purpose of calling experts' and scholars' attention to the question below: is it true that, for a long time, there have been some large faults in China’s large-scale English teaching at all levels of our education, and that the teaching orbit and the researching orbit have been mistaken and misleading? On the basis of more than 30 years’ probing, researching and experimenting, the author has put forward a suggestion that we should adopt a new teaching and researching method of imitating thinking orbit, by taking advantage of the natural rules existing inside and outside the brain. The author expects that, in China’s English teaching and researching circle, there appears a discussion of “Practice-is-the-sole-criterion-of-truth”.

Key words: The Basic Rules of Philosophy; Negation; Thinking Imitating; Practical Values

INTRODUCTION

Ever since China’s English teaching started, the English teaching and learning in the primary and middle schools and universities has focused on the written language (letters, words consisting of letters, sentences and texts). However, as early as before China restored the entrance examinations for universities in 1977, I had done some English teaching experiments on students in several primary and middle schools by adopting self-compiled new phonetic symbols textbooks (with no words consisting of letters, and no texts of words at all),and had achieved particularly satisfying results. In the first year that China restored the entrance examinations for universities, I entered the department of foreign languages, Shandong University, majored in English and English literature and also showed strong interests in learning phonetic linguistics and philosophy. When I graduated and was assigned to do translation work, the president who was a professor of English, said in front of graduates: “some of the 1977 grade graduates should do research into rules, and try to find out the way in which we Chinese can learn English quickly and efficiently.” As soon as I heard his words, I kept pestering the heads of the department to let me quit the assigned job and get a chance of teaching English in a university, so that I could have the opportunity of doing researching into the reform of the English teaching. I did the teaching work splendidly, and meanwhile devoted myself wholeheartedly to probe the reform of the

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English teaching. From physics, chemistry, mathematics, origin of organisms and life, and the principles of Chinese Traditional Medicine, I tried to prove the principles of a new English learning method by means of imitating thinking orbit. I did experiments repeatedly on students in the primary and middle schools and universities. By reviewing these results as well as the lessons of philosophy textbooks, I found the existing methods of English teaching and researching disobeyed the rules of Marxist philosophy. Duty-bound not to turn back, I have been probing, researching and experimenting and so on for more than 30 years. Now I have become surer and surer that the method and orbit of the long-existing English teaching and learning have been fundamentally mistaken and a speech sound learning method that adopts the rules existing inside the brain and that imitates the thinking orbit can double the effects of teaching and learning.

It is written in *History of China's Teaching of Foreign Languages* that "the teaching of foreign languages in China began as early as 2,000 years ago...The earliest-established schools in history of China's modern education, were mostly the schools of foreign languages." (Fuke, 1986:7-15) Following this statement the book mentions Jingshi Tongwen Guan (a school) founded in 1862 and Hubei Ziqiang Xuetang (another school) founded in 1893 as the examples of the new-established foreign languages schools. The 1st school later became Beijing University, and the 2nd became Wuhan University. From the time when the 1st school was founded, until now (especially in these more than 100 years) China's foreign languages teaching has sometimes surged and has sometimes subsided. In the past more-than 20 years, China's foreign languages teaching has reached an unprecedented scale. In the present world, no other country has more teachers of English and English learners than our country. There are hundreds of millions of students learning English in the officially-owned primary schools, middle schools and universities. There are more than 3,000 English training institutions outside the schools and the universities. However, many learners have wasted a lot of time, energy and money, but remain at a relative low level, in spite of the fact that the English teaching has cultivated some talented people. People often criticize the English teaching for having trained a lot of deaf and mute or semi-deaf and mute persons, and the unqualified people who read slowly, or react slowly or write articles full of mistakes. Just as Li Lanqing, the ex-vice-premier who was once in charge of China's education, pointed out: "The effect of China's foreign languages teaching is not satisfying. It cannot meet the needs of the development of the national economy and the society, above all, it cannot meet the needs of China to open the door to the world, to reform and to enlarge the exchanges with foreign countries" (Hu, 1996:1). It should, of course, be acknowledged that in recent years there have been some achievements made at all level of education, and that a large number of teachers' hard-work should be respected. But it is true that, after they finish the schooling in English, most learners cannot meet many needs either at home or abroad.

Does the fact that for so long, China's English teaching at a large scale has not been ideal, and has consumed a lot of resources, mean that there exist some faults in our methods? Marxist philosophy tells us: everything that happens has a reason. Marxist philosophy is the most scientific world outlook and methodology in the present human society. It comes from practice, has been proved by practice, and goes back to guide practice. When the technological problems of the teaching of foreign languages have gone unsolved for a long time, then it is time to examine the faults of foreign language teaching and research, and find out a more efficient method of learning and teaching English, with the help of Marxist philosophy. It is of academic value and practical value.

1. CURRENT METHODS OF THE LARGE-SCALE ENGLISH TEACHING OF CHINA HAVE DISOBEYED THE UNIVERSAL LAWS OF UNITY OF OPPOSITES, AND HARMONY OF CONFLICT PRESENT IN THE BRAIN'S THINKING PROCESSES

The most important part of Marxist philosophy is dialectical materialism. The combination of dialectics and materialism is a big leap in philosophy. The two permeate each other, and run through the whole

system of Marxist philosophy. Marxist materialist conception of history was called by Lenin “the greatest achievement in scientific thought” (Lenin, 1972:433). “Dialectics” was classified by Engles “as the science showing the basic rules of the movement of the outside world and of human thinking” (Engels, 1972:239). Engles also pointed out: “All philosophy, especially the major basic questions of modern philosophy, concern questions about the relationship between thinking and existing” (Engels, 1972:219).

Unity of opposites, and harmony of conflicts, is universal natural laws existing in the micro world, the objective world, human society and the whole universe. They are the basic rules of Marxist philosophy, and are also “the keys to helping understanding its own movement of any existing thing” (Lenin, 1972:408). In Marxist philosophy, everything in the world has two sides: e.g. the positive number and the negative number existing in mathematics, the action and the reaction existing in physics, the positive charge and the negative charge existing in chemistry, the yin and the yang existing in Chinese traditional medicine, the male and the female in animal world, the man and the woman in human society....The two sides are opposing and repelling each other and also integrating. This “integration” is harmony. Are there any rules of unity of opposites, harmony of conflicts in the human brain or in human thinking? We cannot prove the existence of these rules directly by using the experiment. However, since we admit that the law of unity of opposites is the universal rule of everything, and we admit also that the human brain is a product of materials, then we can be sure that the law of unity of opposites, or the law of harmony of conflicts exists in the brain and in human thinking. Sometimes conclusions are not necessarily drawn from experiments, e.g. Einstein drew the conclusion of the theory of relativity, not by experiments, but by pen and paper. Mao Tsetung, the Chinese leader who was known for predicting like a prophet, put it at the end of his essay “On Contradiction: “The law of unity of opposites...is the fundamental law of thinking” (Mao, 1964:310).

Let us think and see whether or not the law of unity of opposites, or the law of harmony of conflicts exist in written English. As far as its appearance—written spelling forms—is concerned, there is no law of harmony, because the spelling forms have 21 consonants, but have only 5 vowels. One vowel “A” has as many as 16 kinds of spelling forms, so how could the spelling forms be in harmony? But, for hundreds and thousands of years, people have been teaching or learning English with the help of English textbooks consisting of letters. Take the course arrangements of Jingshi Tongwen Guan (a foreign languages school) for example: the task of the first year of the 8 studying years, was to “learn to be able to read the words, write the words, and explain some simple sentences’ grammar...” (Fuke, 1986:16); If we have a look at piles upon piles of English textbooks used in primary & middle schools and universities, we can find all of them are full of letter-form words, sentences and texts. As long as the students begin by studying (or as long as the teachers begin by teaching)with textbooks of this kind ,they will surely be at odds with the law of harmony of the brain’s thinking, and sooner or later it be will painful for them to teach or learn English.

The two sides which anything can be divided into according to Marxist philosophy, can be shown as “+1” and “-1”. The positive, the yang, and the male are “+1”s; the negative, the ying, and the female are“-1”s. The combination of “+1”and “-1” is the state of harmony, which is shown as “0”.The absolute value of “-1” is its opposite number “1”. “+1” which is not combined with “-1” is still 1. Therefore as far as the state in which something is combined and stationary is concerned, there exist many many 010111001...forms in the world. According to Marxist philosophers, everything in the world is moving. Moving is absolute, while being stationary is relative. Movement can be shown as “1”, being stationary can be shown as “0”. Therefore, as far as the process of moving and being stationary, there exist countless and regular 0101010101...forms. E.g. if a light is on, the state can be shown as “1”, if a light is off, the state can be shown as “0”; if a machine is working, the state can be shown as “1”, if it is not working, the state can be shown as “0”.

We know that we human beings have made billions of computers by taking advantages of 010101...and 01100100...rules. The human brains are just like the computers, and are more complicated than them. We can conclude according to the law of unity of opposites of Marxist philosophy, that there are the rules shown by 0 and 1 in the brain and its thinking. The brain that consists of hundreds of billions of nerve cells possesses the characteristic: sometimes it presents the state of being positive, sometimes it presents the state of be negative, when it is in harmony, there are combined positives and negatives, or

uncombined positives and negatives. So there are countless 0101101001...forms. Marxist philosophical theory of the origin of consciousness tells us: consciousness comes from advanced animals' feeling and psychology that evolves from primitive organisms' reflection forms of stimulated response, which evolves from reflections anything possesses. There are the states of being excited and the states of being checked (restrained) in the brain. Being excited can be shown as "1", and being checked can be shown as "0". So as far as the processes of being moving and being stationary are concerned, there exist nothing but 10101010... forms when the brain passes information through nerve pulse signals and when it does not pass any information. In the human written language—words, there does not exist the rule of harmony like 0101 forms, e.g. taking the written systems of English and French into consideration, we cannot find the existence of the 0101 rule of harmony, because many consonants of English and French have not matched vowels. There are quite a few consonant letters that have no sound. The sound of some consonant letters is not their own sound. The vowel letters have many different sounds. But if we analyze them with the help of Marx's dialectic materialism, that is, if we remove the shell of the languages (i.e., go into the core, don't consider the spelling forms, but consider the sounds or the phonetic elements), we can find that there are surely the 0101...and 0110...rules in the material sounds of English, French and so on. Let's choose one English passage and one French passage at random. Firstly, input the two passages in the form of word-document: 1) Columbus took the egg and struck its small end gently upon the table so as to break the shell a little. After that there was no trouble in making it stand upright. "Gentlemen," said he, "what can be easier than this? And yet you said it was impossible! 2) Quand la fusée a aborde la Lune, les astronautes avaient conscience d'aller vers l' inconnu, dans un monde etrange,sans bruit, silencieux. Eux non plus, ils ne parlaient pas.

Then we use the "find and substitute" method: substitute the consonants (the phonetic symbols, not the symbols in the form of letters) for "1"s automatically; substitute the vowels (still the phonetic symbols) for "l" automatically; substitute "l-l" for "0" automatically; and substitute the rest "l" for "0" or "1", because the absolute value of "-l" and "+1" is "1"), then the above two passages change into the following forms: 1)00101 01 001 011 1101 011 10:1 011 0110 001 0011 0 01 0:101 0 010011.0:1001 0 01 0 1011 01001 01 1011 0101. "011101," 01 0; "01 01 0:0:0 01 017 011 01 0:01 01 01 010011!" 2)0 0:00 0:0:0:011 0; 0:l,0 0:: 1100:1 0:0 010:10:0 01000,0001010:0,010,0010,0010,010 0:110.

From the above, we can see that the phonetic elements are always in a state of harmony, while the written forms of the languages are often in a state of conflict. Because there exist moving-and-stopping 010101...rule and stationary 011001011...rules in the brain and its thinking, and because the human activities of learning and teaching are nothing but something involving thinking —listening, reflecting, understanding, judging, memorizing and so on, human beings should teach and learn languages by way of phonetic forms. This method must take advantage of scientific natural rules. If we call the brain the small universe, and call the "nature" outside the brain the big universe, then we can say natural rules exist in both universes. As soon as we put natural rules to use, doing such things as teaching and learning will surely become a piece of cake. Unfortunately, for so long, our English teaching and learning has been done around the textbooks using English spellings. This does not accord with the "science" called by Marx, "which reflects the general rules of movements of the outside world and human thinking" (Engels, 1972:239), and has disobeyed the general law of unity of opposites of Marxist philosophy, that is, the law of conflict and harmony in human thinking.

2. THE PRESENT RESEARCH METHODS OF ENGLISH TEACHING AND LEARNING HAVE NEGLECTED THE BASIC QUESTIONS OF MARXIST PHILOSOPHY, AND HAVE ALSO NEGLECTED THE BASIC PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM, SO TO SPEAK, THE RESEARCHERS HAVE PUT THE CART BEFORE THE HORSE

It is not because many teachers of English and researchers haven't done research that the effects of China's English teaching and researching have long been poor, and that no essential and evident achievements have been made. In fact, they have done a lot of research, and made many efforts. We can know this by looking at the many journals and monographs in libraries. But just as each person claims to be in the right in any arguments between a husband's father and mother, each author claims to be in the right in his or her own essays or works. All of these essays and monographs cannot solve the essential problems. A lot of essays and monographs are nothing but repetition of others, just as the same old stuff with a different label. Although piles upon piles of published textbooks have some new guises, beautiful-looking covers, added exercises (making the books thicker), added pictures and added reference books, the students still cannot reach an ideal and satisfying level after they finish studying them. For instance, although many college English textbooks in recent years are labeled as "outstanding textbooks at the state-level", there is no novelty at all in essence. The teachers and students have not obtained slightly more efficient results after they use them than they used the old state-level Textbooks for Students of Liberal Arts and Students of Natural Science. On the contrary these textbooks have wasted more energy, time and money. Many textbooks and research achievements introduced from abroad are also full of subjectivity, metaphysics, and empiricism. Furthermore, the scholars in English-speaking countries cannot avoid being influenced by the English written language, so they "cannot know the true appearance of Lushan Mountain, as they are deep in the mountain".

Researching methods adopted by teachers and researchers are very various and numerous. The foreign languages school I work in pays much attention to the research of teaching and learning. It has offered to each teacher a booklet of *"Researching Methods of Foreign Language Teaching"* written by Professor Liu Runqing, the highest authority in China's Researching Center of Foreign Languages". After reading this booklet, all of us feel the methods he has introduced are really very useful to the teachers and the researchers of foreign languages, e.g. the method of contrast, the method of summary, the method of hypothesis, the qualitative approach, the correlative approach, the ex post facto research approach and so on. Of course the teachers and the researchers of foreign languages have to be familiar with all these methods or approaches. However I would like to say they should adopt the two main methods of Marxist philosophy as well: the method of Marxist dialectical materialism, and Marxist Quan-Mian-Fen-Xi-Wen-Ti method, that is, we should analyze problems in all round way, and in a correlative way, and in a developing way. If the small method is right, sometimes a small problem may be solved. If the big method is wrong, even if all small methods are right, no big problems may be solved at all. If authors didn't adopt the right big method, the essays, monographs, and textbooks they wrote would be full of subjectivity, idealism and metaphysics. The English teaching researching achievements made in China and abroad are missing the adoption of these two big Marxist methods.

It is widely accepted in the field of English teaching research that English teaching research doesn't have to stick to the standpoints of Marxist dialectical materialism as the research of natural science does. In fact, this is quite mistaken and misleading. Among all the basic philosophical questions, the most important question is whether or not the researchers recognize that matter is primary. The next important question is whether or not the researchers recognize that thinking can understand existence. Marxist philosophy always claims that matter is primary, and recognizes that everything in the world comes or develops from nature. The human brain is the product of matter that has developed into an advanced level. Of course human consciousness and thinking are the products of labor and society, but they are first of all the products of matter. Of course man's languages and culture are the products of labor, but they are first of all the products of matter. Since the appearance of written languages, some people, when

they are careless, would get the written languages and spoken languages confused. The former are full of man's will, belong to accepted opinions influenced by social customs. The latter possess the characteristics of matter. As long as we stick to Marxist materialist conception, and adopt the basic rules of dialectical materialism and Marxist Quan-Mian-Fen-Xi-Wen-Ti method, we can find the shortcomings of our English teaching research:

(1) We have not done research into the internal cause of developing things. The Chinese people's leader Mao Tsetung, also the great philosopher, said: "the fundamental cause of the development of a thing is not external but internal; it is in the contradictoriness within the thing" ... "external causes are the condition of change and internal causes are the basis of change. External causes become operative through internal causes" (Mao, 1964:277). For most people who learn English as a foreign language, what are the biggest difficulties? Even most students who have not studied linguistics can tell they are listening and speaking, that is, it is difficult to understand English being spoken by foreigners by ears, and to speak English fluently and naturally. Both listening and speaking has something to do with sound that may be expressed by phonetic symbols. So to speak, the biggest difficulty in learning English is the sound, not the recognizing of the words and sentences consisting of letters, which can be learned after having laid the foundation in sound. However, for a long time, our English teaching and learning have been focusing on the textbooks full of spelling words. I have once pointed out in my book entitled "*A Scientific and Miraculous Method to Learn English Quickly and Efficiently*" that it is really quite laughable to follow the orbit of the written language in our English teaching and learning (Zheng, 2000: 1). In fact, we can find the answers to what the biggest difficulties are in teaching and learning English from Marx's words. He said that when a person is learning English, he must not always be translating everything into his own language. He must be able to use it forgetting all about his own (Zheng, 2004: 26). This statement tells us that the learners should develop a habit of thinking in the language they are learning. Thinking is done by human brains. Many students often say "I always forget the words." This is because the words have not left memory traces in the thinking orbit. Therefore, the researching focus of the English teaching should be on the language receivers—the learners, particularly research should be done into the brains that possess the function of thinking. If we say it is very difficult to do research into the brains, and no research achievements can be made within a short time, then we can decide that the best policy is to do research into the rules of speech sounds that have a blood-and-fresh relationship with thinking. However, despite the piles upon piles of English researching monographs and textbooks, very little research has been done into the rules of the speech sounds and the utilization of these rules. The research done into the kernel of the language—the speech sounds covered by the appearance of the language has really been very little. Lenin said: "Idealism in philosophy has developed (expanded, and enlarged) a characteristic, a side or part of cognition in such a one-sided and exaggerated way that the characteristic or the side or the part has become the deified absolute which has isolated itself from matter and nature" (Lenin, 1972:715).

Fortunately we have finished reading Professor Liu Runqing's essay published in the Journal "*Foreign Languages Teaching and Research*" since we finished reading his booklet of "*Researching Methods of Foreign Languages Teaching*". He pointed out in the essay that after many years of research, we begin to realize we have neglected the research of the internal cause of foreign Languages learning—the human brains of the learners (Liu, 1999:8). Luckily, for more than 30 years, our probing and researching has been done just around the assurance of the natural rules and their exploitation. And we have compiled the textbooks at all levels, and made some tools and soft wares by making use of natural rules. But of course, there is a long way to go in the popularization of our research.

(2) Although there is much research in the English teaching, all of the present research has not made it a reality that the "quality-and-quantity-are-changing-each-other rule" of Marxist philosophy plays its role in the field of English teaching. Just as some people heat up some water in the open air, but cannot get it to boil, if they make the fire at different angles, but with no best angle, and supply the wood on and off. Even if we have done a lot of research into minor problems, there are no ways to bring about an improvement of quality. It is quite natural that China's large-scale English teaching cannot make the quality break-through.

(3) The English teaching has not adopted the basic universal rules that can harmonize functioning within the brain with the human activities outside the brain. As long as people have a basic sense of

material view, they can make the conclusions of the orderly 010101...rule showing the processes of moving and being stationary in the brain, and of the 011001011 ...rule showing the distribution of 0 and 1 at random in a state of being stationary in the brain. Engles once predicted: "Sooner or later, we can make the conclusion by way of experiments that thinking is based on the movement of molecules and chemicals" (Engels, 1972:591). We don't have to know whether this prediction will become a reality or not. Let's suppose we human beings are the product evolving from nature ——matter is made up of separable particles (e.g, now scientists have been doing so much research into particles that there are such terms as quark, lepton, muon, hadron, neutrino, photon and so on); electrons, protons and neutrons were combined into atoms; atoms and atoms were combined into poly-molecules; molecules and molecules were combined into polymers, some of which became microbes; microbes evolved into primitive plants; primitive plants evolved animals without vertebras from which evolved vertebrates; from vertebrates evolved mammals. It was from mammals that man evolved. Hundreds of billions of nerve cells in the brains are the materials that follow the universal rules of their movements and of their being stationary. When the materials are in harmony, they must be in a state of 011 1001011...that are the random distribution of "0" and "1".In the process of human thinking, there must exist the orderly 010101...rule in the brain. However, for a long time there is no such a deduction in many essays, monographs and textbooks about the teaching of foreign languages. Nobody has thought of the fact that the natural rules existing on the thinking orbit are similar to the natural rules that the English speech sounds possess on the orbit of their origin, evolution, and development, and of the fact that these rules can be put to use to invent a method of English learning and English teaching by imitating the human's thinking orbit.

(4) People seldom find the achievements made in the English teaching research by finding and making use of the brain's rules and particular thinking rules. I have probed into 6 rules in my essay "*Research of Imitating the Thinking Orbit and Revolutionizing China's English*" (Zheng, 2007:78). Two of these are cited below:

a. The nerve system of the brain has the feature of "following you". According to the Marxist philosophy's theory of the origin of consciousness, the characteristic of reflection that all matter possesses evolves into the stimulated response of primitive organism, then further evolves or develops into the feeling and psychology of advanced animals, and then further evolves into consciousness of man. In the process of evolution of organism, it has the ability of preferring the better to the poorer. Consciousness itself that comes into being following the evolution of matter, organism and animals, has its own view. Whatever information you give to the nervous system, it receives such information and reacts to such information. This shows that you (that is consciousness) is initiative and that the nervous system reacts passively. This means whatever people do, they should play the role of subjective initiative. So when learners learn English, they should take initiative to excite the brain, play its active role, and overcome difficulty and make progress, while learning English in a passive way has relatively poorer results. In this sense, the *Method of Learning English in a Crazy Way* (Fengguang yingyu)² that is prevalent all over China is reasonable to some extent. But China's authority, Professor YZZ has scolded this method bitterly. It is reported that quite a few other authorities at the national & provincial levels have also scolded the method. We have had the view all the time that the inventor of the method has not found the general rules and other special rules of the brain yet, so he cannot solve the fundamental problems in the English teaching. However this method has after all taken the advantage of the rule of the initiative function of the brain, so it is kind of useful and helpful to improve oral English and English listening. It should be respected. But unfortunately, there are often quite a few cases in which authorities look down upon ciphers or young path-breakers.

b. The brain has the rule of "thinking-in-spoken-languages". Some people point out: just as we cannot tell exactly whether eggs or hens appeared first in this world, we cannot tell whether thinking or language came into being first in this world.³In all actuality, the two cannot be regarded in the same category. The question of the hens or the eggs has no bearing on language research. Answering the 1st question is of no value to it. The question of language or thinking can be easily answered from

² <http://yy.china-b.com/yyy/fkyy>, "*Learning English in a Crazy Way*", "Threeezui" means most clearly, most quickly and most loudly

³ http://www.lzdd.cn/bbs_ac/printpage.asp?BoardID=5&ID=16458

materialist's point of view: it must have been thinking that came into being first. But ever since language and thinking have been combined, they have been unable to tear themselves away from each other, the language is thinking, and thinking is language, just as the spirit is combined closely with the body. A person who is writing an article (or saying), often uses the language he or she can speak. That is, thinking mainly has to do with oral language, not as much with the appearance of written language. However, China's large-scale English teaching and research don't pay enough attention to oral English, but we require our students to write good compositions. How could this be possible? It's very natural and unavoidable that our students cannot write compositions quickly, and that what they do write is full of mistakes here and there. According to the requirements of China's Band 4 and Band 6 College English Tests, the examinees should write a 100-120 word composition within 30 minutes. This requirement is actually very low, but quite a few examinees' compositions can't meet the requirements, and are full of mistakes or hard-to-understand sentences. We have done some experiments on the students: we have given proper weight to improve our students' oral English. When they take Band 4 tests, they can write out very satisfying compositions within only 7-10 minutes. People know other examples well: Abraham Lincoln, Maxim Gorky and many war-experienced leading persons of our state who had not much schooling, but had rich experience, and high thinking and oral language abilities. They had high ability on writing compositions. These examples help prove why our English teaching cannot cultivate the students' high practical abilities, if it is always paying much attention to the studying and researching of written English, but has neglected the improvement of oral English and thinking abilities.

(5) Many researchers of English teaching suffer from "myopia". They have not adopted the all-round, correlative and developing method. The origin and development of the English language, and the origin and development of life or consciousness, are both natural and objective. On the two orbits there exist similar characteristics. But the origin and development of written English are not natural and objective. One generation of people after another added subjectivity to written English. From written English people cannot find the natural rules at all. Those who devote themselves to the researching of a short line (or part) of the language development have become experts, but they fail to associate the origin of the language with the whole development of the language, and fail to do research into causes and effects. So naturally they suffer from "myopia".

China's large-scale English teaching and what we have achieved in the researching have proved that what Professor Liu Runqing in Beijing Foreign Study University and Professor Hu Zhuanglin in Beijing University have worried about has convincing arguments, because they have pointed out that "sooner or later, the backwardness of China's present researching method will become the fetters and hand cuffs of the linguistic research" (Liu & Hu, 1999). The reality is that the backwardness of the method has already become "the fetters and handcuffs of linguistic research".

3. FACTS HAVE REFUTED THE PRESENT ENGLISH TEACHING AND LEARNING, ACCORDING TO THE VIEW OF MARXIST PHILOSOPHY THAT "PRACTICE IS THE SOLE CRITERION OF TRUTH"

Marx said: "whether thinking possesses objective truth or not is not a question in theory, but one in practice. Man should prove in practice that his thinking accords with truth, that is to say, prove his thinking is practical and forceful, or prove his thinking's temporality" (Marx, 1972:16). For a long time, especially ever since China opened the door to the outside world and began to reform, our large-scale English teaching has been going on like a raging fire. Are its widespread and total effects worth the investment of time, energy and money of students, teachers and administrative personnel? People have not tested this by means of the standard in which truth is tested. If people tested our English teaching's actual effects, the conclusion may be made that we should take the negative effects, inefficiency, cost and waste into consideration and take action to reform or to have a fundamental revolution. Otherwise we'd better stop the large-scale English teaching in some colleges and universities (here this doesn't mean ending the old-brand colleges' and universities' English teaching whose purpose is to cultivate English

major graduates, but means reducing the amount of non-English-major English teaching that has been going on at a large scale, and has been known for low efficiency), because many facts have proved that China's large-scale English teaching is just like what has been criticized by Li Lanqing, the ex-state leader in charge of education: many English learners have not been up to standard although they have learned it for many years. What's more, some people have pointed out on the internet that "China's English teaching is a failure" (Hu, 1996:1).

(1) Among English learners, most are non-English-major students. They began to learn it when they entered primary schools, learned it for 6 years in middle schools and learned it for 2 years (quite a few for 4 years). For post-graduate students and doctorate students, English is still an important course. The students, who have learned English for 10 years or more, should have been able to use English as English experts. But in fact, the English words which a lot of graduates and post-graduates can understand by ears, speak quickly and use correctly in the compositions are no more than 2,000, although they have been trying to memorize 4,000—10,000. If they have really mastered 2,000 English words, then their listening, oral English, and writing level should be quite good. But actually they can only understand the broad meanings of thousands upon thousands of words when they see the spellings. After graduation, they gradually forget a large number of the words they have learned by heart. While working, most of graduates cannot use English proficiently. Many learners have obtained such low levels despite spending hundreds, thousands, and even tens of thousands of hours studying English. If they invested all these hours studying another course, they would surely study it well and profoundly.

(2) For thousands of years, people have known a simple fact very well: any child can learn how to express himself in his own words after he is born and stays together with the parents, relatives and friends, listening to them talking for 10 months. When he is 2 years old, he can quarrel with adults. As long as he studies in the primary school for 2 years, he is able to read newspapers and write simple "articles" to express his meanings, even if he is "not an intelligent student".

Chinese is said to be the most difficult language to learn, but within 2 years children who can speak Chinese can learn how to read a Chinese newspaper and write meaningful sentences. This fact suggests a simple hidden truth: It is quite possible for English learners to avoid learning written words consisting of letters, but to spend 5 months, at most 20 months listening to, reading aloud and speaking English along the natural thinking orbit with the help of the memorizing symbols standing for oral English and with the help of the imitating-thinking-orbit-method. After 5 months' or 20 months' oral English learning, the learners may begin studying the letter-system of English for half a year (e.g. one term of the third year of the junior middle schools). If English is learned in such a way, any junior middle school student can finish learning the present English contents that are learned by primary school students, middle school students, college students or even post graduate students (some who have not learned English at junior schools can also finishing learning the English contents that are learned by senior middle school students and college students), and can obtain higher practical application abilities than the abilities obtained through the long-standing traditional method (the abilities that the younger students obtain by the new method will be influenced by age, experience and knowledge, so they are temporarily lower, but will increase as age, experience and knowledge increase.) Students in senior middle schools and colleges and universities shouldn't have to go to English classes. They may attend the specialties classes in which they listen to teachers speaking English, and answer questions in English), so that as their scientific and cultural knowledge increases, they can further improve their English reading abilities and English application abilities.

(3) For decades, we have conducted teaching experiments on students in primary & middle schools, and colleges and universities. Each time the teaching effects are significantly better than the effects of the present traditional teaching. This can prove that both the English learning method that takes advantage of natural rules (which accord with the rules of Marxist dialectical materialism and theory of knowledge), and imitates the thinking orbit, and a series of our new products, can be used to revolutionize China's large-scale English teaching.

More than 30 years ago, before I took the entrance examination and entered the department of foreign languages of Shandong University, I taught English to students by adopting the simple method similar to the present innovated method of imitating thinking orbit. All of the students were strongly interested in learning English in this way, and made much progress. After I graduated from Shandong University in

1982, I was assigned to teach English in a university. I conducted many experiments on students with a series of myself-innovated products, and made comparisons and analyses. For example I chose two classes in a first-class university. In one class, the learning method of imitating the thinking orbit was adopted, with the purpose of laying emphasis on speech sounds. In the other class, the traditional method was used. The experiment proved that, in the class in which the new method was adopted, the students' level of oral English and composition writing was higher, 100% of them passed the Band 4 test, most of them passed the Band 6 test ahead of time, while in the class where no new method was used, most of students passed the Band 4 test, but their points were not as high as those of the students in the 1st class. After getting the approval of the governmental educational institution, we chose two classes in a primary school in Wuchang Town, and conducted the experiment in popularizing our research. The pupils kept a strong interest in learning English from the beginning to the end. They made rapid progress in Oral English. At the end of the first term they took both oral and written English tests. The parents and the teachers of the school came to watch the pupils' oral English test. Every examinee spoke English freely, clearly and fluently. The results of their written English test were outstanding. Another long process experiment may be mentioned as an example: M began to learn English at home with the help of the method of imitating thinking orbit, and with the purpose of laying emphasis on speech sounds, ever since he was a 5 year pupil in a primary school. For each subject, the mark M got was at a middle-level or a little higher than the middle level. As the primary schools in Wuchang were known for the after-class overload work, he had a lot of homework to do after school. So, he had only a little time to learn English. Within 2 years, he finished learning various English textbooks used for China's middle school & college students, but rewritten in the new method. One month after he entered the junior middle school, he got the special prize (which was the highest) at a national-level English competition. Soon after he entered the middle school, he passed college tests, got Band 4 and Band 6 certificates, and got the first-class prize in the English competition at the Hubei-provincial-level. As M had obtained a certain level of English, his new textbooks in the middle school were almost untouched. After he entered Wuhan University for the first English test, he got the highest point in his school.

Z, a girl, did not finish her junior middle school, needless to say she had learned English well. When she did full time work in Wuhan for a living, she studied a three-year-correspondence- college course in her free time, but never studied college English. After she graduated, she went to a far-away province and worked for 10 years. Later she went back to her own province and hoped to take the entrance exams for a post graduate student. As she had not laid a strong foundation in English, she asked to be taught English quickly by taking advantage of our new method and products. Z spent only one month finishing learning college English series. She made outstanding progress in listening and oral English. At the beginning she couldn't understand articles she was reading, but at the end of one month, she could understand most meanings. As she studied only correspondence courses for three years, she had to spend much time auditing other courses before taking the entrance exams for the postgraduate students. So, she had no time to spend on auditing English lectures given in the traditional methods. Half a year later, she told me that although she didn't get high points for the entrance English exam, the points she got were higher than the points that the 4 or 5 year full-time students got, so she was accepted as a postgraduate student.

We have chosen 2 big classes of more than 100 freshmen, from a second-class college, and made the English learning experiment by using the method and products of imitating thinking orbit, and with the purpose of giving priority to speech sounds. By turning for help to the soft ware we made, we automatically change the selected English texts into a new set of symbols marked with stresses, rising or falling tones, meaning groups and liaisons. The students first listened and then looked, first followed the thinking or speech sound, and then referred to the meanings, and got to the level of using the language through practice. In two terms, the students didn't study at all the spelling-forms of language (the words or sentences consisting of letters), but they finished the contents of two years' college English. The oral English test showed their application abilities have improved considerably. At the end of two terms, the students in two universities were tested with the national level test (which was not made known to the public).The points the students in the experimental classes got were noticeably higher than the students who were not in the experimental classes.

For so many years, China's large-scale English teaching has been buzzing with activities and sticking to the traditional way, without making the substantial changes, although the general effects are not

satisfying, and it is meeting with more and more criticism. This practice does not accord with another law of Marxist philosophy—the negation-of-negation law. According to this law, the inherent negation force of the English teaching causes the affirmative factors to change into the opposite, that is, to reach the negation of itself through affirmation, and then to reach the new affirmation through negation. The replacement of affirmation after negation is the normal law of the development of anything. On the whole, for the past 100 years, especially for the past about 30 years, no substantial changes have ever occurred in China's large-scale English teaching modes. Neither teaching nor learning can tear itself away from the traditional textbooks full of words and sentences consisting of letters which are not in harmony with the speech sound, so learners cannot be free from words and man-made yokes. The English teaching researching has not ever made use of the general rules of 010101...and 0110100110...in the brain and anywhere in the universal world, and has not ever made use of the other special rules hidden in the brain. It is only the utilization of the natural rules that can bring about a revolution in English teaching. It is very funny and pitiful that at the mention of the English teaching reform, the authorities and institutions in charge of China's large-scale English teaching and researching will do some minor mending work around the "Teaching Outline", but not do research into what is in the way of the improvement of the English teaching. I have been working in the field of English teaching for more than 30 years, and have witnessed such "English teaching reform" as making some changes in the teaching outline. For instance, in the recent years, there have appeared severe criticisms of English teaching, and calls for reform. We estimate that the authorities will make some changes in the outline, especially the examination outline. Just as we have predicted, the forms of Band 4 and Band 6 Tests have changed now. We can make a bet that this kind of reform, which is just like using same medicine prepared differently, won't bring about a break-through in the quality of the English teaching, just like mending a cart, which cannot change the cart into a car. There are problems in China's English teaching, which needs the fundamental negation of itself in a Marxist philosophical sense, Marx said: "In a sense of dialectics, the understanding of affirmation of some existing thing contains the understanding of negation of the existing thing, that is, the understanding of the existing thing being doomed" (Marx, 1972:218). Although we claim that China's English teaching needs a fundamental negation, some methods, experience and some achievements that teachers and students consider to be relatively useful in the long-existing English teaching, should be reserved, for negation in a philosophic sense both means the fundamental negation, and also means Hegelian sublation, that is, "to develop what is useful and healthy, and to discard what is not".

4. LIMITATIONS

Although we have been probing and researching in the field of teaching for more than 30 years, and we concluded quite a few years ago that China's large-scale English teaching disobeyed the rules of Marxist philosophy, and needs a fundamental negation, we stick to our belief that long and large-scale experiments should be made to prove our conclusion. Indeed we have done long and various experiments, all of which have been successful, but the scopes of the experiments are not wide, the scales are not large. One of the reasons is, in our country, education is controlled too much by the officials. In some cities those who know education well have no power, while those who have power don't know much of education. In such places even if you take a lot of trouble to apply for the approval of experiments, the officials who have power may find one excuse or the other until your application ends up in nothing definite. The next reason is, although we have a team, man-power is limited. The minority are no match for the rooted traditions of the majority. It seems that the surroundings we are in do not welcome new ideas and creative achievements. According to the arrangement of administrative institution, our time should be spent entirely on year-in-and-year-out- low-efficiency-routine teaching. If someone would like to do some probing or researching, he should make use of his spare time. It is funny that nearly 100% of us and colleagues have never got any funds for doing research from the university, although we are the professors and lecturers in a so-called famous university. For those duty-bound-not-to-turn-back truth seekers, they will go on with probing and researching even if they have no funds supporting them. But it is not a minor problem that some administrative personnel and our society don't really take the large-scale English teaching seriously. What these administrative personnel

need is enough teachers going to classes and giving lecturers, and the students who can pass the Band 4 and Band 6 Tests. We hope sincerely that more colleagues that are not satisfied with the existing status and would like to play the role of their creation genes, with the spirit of seeking better and new English teaching methods, can criticize, enrich, test and perfect our probing and researching.

CONCLUSION AND EXPECTATION

It can be seen from the above first 3 sections that China's long-lasting and large-scale English teaching goes against the basic rules of Marxist philosophy, that in human thinking and in the speech sound of the human languages there exist natural rules free from human willpower. Also that it is of academic value and of great practical value to criticize and to change China's large-scale English teaching and researching methods and orbit by using the basic rules of Marxist philosophy. People often say that we should do our work with scientific views and scientific methods, and we should build a harmonious society. The basic rules of Marxist philosophy are just the scientific methods, and with them people can find the scientific methods of English teaching. As everything in the universe is in harmony, we should put natural rules to use so that the thinking of the learners' brains reaches a state of harmony. Sometimes the power of natural rules is surprising. It can bring about surprisingly huge wealth. For instance, for thousands upon thousands of years, the water in Three Gorges of the Yangtze River has been passing by without bringing about any wealth. People didn't know that flowing water meant nothing but piles upon piles of "silver" until the Three Gorges Dam was built. Rules are the dependence of all scientific methods. We should make full use of the natural rules inside and outside the brains, to learn and teach English by means of the method of imitating the thinking orbit so that a revolution in a real sense in the field of English teaching comes. If so, the present system, modes, textbooks, the methods of compiling them, tools for learning, and the methods of teaching and learning, will have big changes. The quantity-and-quality norms set in the English teaching plans for primary and middle school students, and college students and post graduate students can be fulfilled in the periods of middle schools. The students' practical abilities will improve considerably. The self-study learners in society can also improve the practical abilities and the points in examinations if they use our new software, new textbooks, new methods and new tools. The traditional college (even senior middle school) teaching can come to end. The college (even senior middle school) students can further improve their English by learning knowledge of their majors in English.

English teaching and English itself are changing, propelled by the quick development of science and productive forces. We should not retain what is old and outworn. In an era of knowledge explosion and the competition of science and technology, it does not accord with the demand of the era that young people spend up to or more than 10 years learning English. Time, money and energy spent on teaching and learning of English should be cut down. The world is developing. Science and technology are developing. Economy is developing. The efficiency of teaching and learning English should increase. Creation or revolution is the only way-out. If the Chinese nation known for her long history and her striving spirit regards creation as unimportant, is satisfied with the present status, fritters away time, misses the opportunity, and takes no action to make new progress, then we should really have a guilty conscience (as the descendants of the Chinese nation). We expect that a large number of our colleagues and persons of ideals and integrity offer advice and suggestions, and that the governments at all levels collect opinions and wisdom, adopt the miraculous power of the natural rules, and popularize the learning-English-by-imitating-thinking-orbit method, and the new products among the Chinese people, which will inevitably bring about huge economic and social effects.

A big discussion of "practice-is-the-sole-criterion-of-truth" that appeared more than 30 years ago brought about "a spring" (the word spring in China often means a thriving and vigorous situation) to our country. Just because of this spring, earth-shaking changes in China's society have appeared, and a lot of achievements have been made in many fields. Of course these changes and achievements have something to do with the industry of the Chinese people. They also have something to do with this: we Chinese have chosen the right way. We expect that, in the field of English teaching, there will appear a big discussion of "practice-is-the-sole-criterion-of-truth", too. Let's await a storm of revolution of English teaching, and say "let it break in all its fury."

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