

# Research on the English Examination Policy from the View of Multi-stream Theory

Hui Li, Xiangying Cao

Foreign Languages Department, Nanchang Institute of Technology, Nanchang, China

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**Abstract:** CET-4 and CET-6 is the basis for the development of colleges, sorting out the policy changes of CET-4 and CET-6 under the framework of multi-stream theory, and analyzing the difficulties encountered in the course of the policy changes of CET-4 and CET-6, including the measures and means adopted in the process of the English test policy reform. Based on the theoretical framework of the multi-stream stream to propose for the reform of CET-4 and CET-6, and provided a new theoretical basis for the Chinese English test policy.

## 1. Introduction

There are few studies on the combination of multiple-streams theory and English test policy in China. The research direction is mainly concentrated in the scope of English teaching, which is to study the backwash and validity of English test policy. This paper attempts to study the process of College English Band 4 and 6 examination policy from the perspective of multiple-streams theory in the process of policy change.

## 2. Analysis of the Sources of the Changes in the Policy of College English Test Band Four and Six

### 2.1 Problems with the test function

The test function needs to adhere to the principle of maximizing the public interest of public policy. As a national teaching test, the 4th and 6th grade examinations are authoritative. Some colleges and universities associate degree certificates with the results of the CET-4 and CET-6; some employers rank the result of CET-4 as the main reference for recruitment. These phenomena have caused misuse and abuse of the 4th and 6th grade examinations[1].

### 2.2 Problems of scoring

According to the notice on the registration qualification of College English Test Band 6 in December 2005 and College English Test Band 4 and 6 in November 2005, “the registration qualification of College English Test Band 6 in December 2005 is: above 425 points in College English Test Band 4 in June 2005, and the accomplishment of the courses of College English Test Band 6”. [2]This scoring method only avoids the original criticism and fails to consider the feedback effect on college English, resulting in defects in the formulation.

### 2.3 Charges

There is no matching legal basis for the CET-4 and CET-6 as a teaching supervision test. University courses are charged separately from tuition fees, and there is no relevant legal process to hold a hearing similar to the hearings of universities, teachers, and students attending water, electricity, and train tickets[3]. Therefore, the policy makes process of CET-4 and CET-6, as fee-based teaching supervision tests, is not sufficient.

### **3. Analysis of the Policy Source of the Formulation of CET-4 and CET-6 Examination Policy**

#### **3.1 Promotion of the policy community**

Government officials, representatives of the two sessions, experts and scholars, and stakeholders are considered to be the main participants of the CET-4 and CET-6 policy groups. Although the ways, means and effects of these people participating in the policy process are different, they have a great impact on the success or failure of the reform of the English test policy.

#### **3.2 Scheme planning**

The absence of oral test in CET-4 and CET-6 leads to the lack of oral skills training in English learning, which affects the cultivation of communication skills. Due to the lack of national will, oral exams have not been taken as compulsory examinations of CET-4 and CET-6. Although it has brought benefits to management departments and managers, it has caused losses to the national interests in foreign language education.

#### **3.3 Formulation of the plan**

The CET-4 and CET-6 reform policies were formulated through the discussion and research of experts and teachers of the education administration department. The students were not involved in the main target of this examination policy. Therefore, the formulation of the CET-4 and CET-6 reform policies cannot fully reflect the people's wishes, social conditions and public opinion, which also causes disharmony in policy implementation.

### **4. Analysis of the Political Source of the Implementation of CET-4 and CET-6 Policies**

Political source is an important source of the multi-stream theory of China's policy agenda. In political origin analysis of the College English Test Band 4 and 6 policy agenda setting, it should be combined with China's national conditions and the specific conditions in the "College English Test Band Four and Six" policy setting process. An analysis can be conducted from the policy implementation process, the means of execution, implementation bias and control, which is reflected in:

#### **4.1 The process of implementation**

The Communist Party of China is the ruling party of our country. The implementation of policies is to establish an organization, empower existing institutions to implement policies, allocate different policy resources needed to implement policies, and achieve the established policy objectives and activities, which is specifically reflected in:

First, the policy statement. In the process of policy implementation, the policy object needs to understand the meaning of policy implementation. The policy subject needs to understand the elements of the policy; otherwise the policy cannot be implemented at all. The policy description of the CET-4 and CET-6 examinations should be held at the time of the publication of the new English policy, and a special press conference will be held to explain the reasons, background, measures and significance of the new policy to all relevant parties in the society.

Second, the policy plan. The policy plan is to implement the policy plan under the basic principles of the policy, compile the implementation process, and clarify the division of labor. The implementation of the policy requires a detailed and operational policy plan, which is not designed for a specific condition, but to ensure smooth and effective implementation of the policy.

Third, policy implementation. Policy implementation is a mobilization process that mobilizes some forces to carry out policy actions and promote the achievement of policy goals. The Department of Education is the main body of the English test reform policy. Teachers are the main body of the policy transformation into teaching practice. Only by mobilizing teachers to participate in the curriculum improvement work can the curriculum reform policy be carried out smoothly.

## 4.2 Means of implementation

The means of policy implementation refers to the various measures and methods selected by the policy executives to implement the policy, including complicated interest entanglements. [4] Because methods of policy implementation are diverse and flexible, the implementation of policies requires certain measures. These measures can be summarized into law, administration, economy, social culture and so on, which are as follows:

First, legal means. We must pass the law to guarantee and maintain the order of CET-4 and CET-6, and pass the law to clarify the rights and obligations of the subjects of CET-4 and CET-6, and clarify the procedures and rules in the process of setting up the examiner, organizer, exam and test results. Those who violate the examination order are held liable.

Second, administrative means. The evaluation of an administrative agency is an evaluation of its administrative performance at a certain stage, especially the evaluation of short-term administrative performance. The CET-4 is planned according to the above regulations. The goal is to weigh whether the candidates have realized the observation and implementation of the Syllabus to improve the level of English teaching in the university.

Third, economic means. Foreign language policy economic means mainly provide scholarships for foreign language learners, increase wages or subsidies for foreign language users, provide more opportunities for foreign language users to work, and stimulate economic growth.

Fourth, social and cultural means. Social and cultural factors are part of the foreign language policy, and social and cultural conflicts will affect policy implementation. Although economic interests and political interests will affect people's attitudes toward social and cultural factors, people are the product of social culture, the ultimate object of policy and the ultimate performer.

## 4.3 Deviation and control of implementation

The realization of the policy implementation objectives will be affected by various aspects of the policy. The policy environment and policy objectives are the two main reasons leading to the deviation of policy implementation. The deviation in policy implementation indicates that not all policy objectives can be achieved[5].

First, the impact of policy environment leads to policy implementation bias. The factors of economic resource, human resource, information resource and social culture all belong to policy environment factors. Policy environmental factors are the main cause of policy implementation bias. As one of the English teaching policies, CET-4 and CET-6 need sufficient economic, human, information and cultural support to be implemented.

Second, policy goal setting leads to policy implementation bias. The deviation of policy implementation is affected by policy objectives. Errors in policy implementation are caused by the fact that when setting policy goals, the difficulty of policy implementation is not mastered and the goal is set higher than the policy implementation.

## 5. The opening of the policy window for the implementation of the College English Test Band Four and Six

It is concluded that in the process of drafting the “English 4th and 6th Exam Policy” agenda, the opening of the policy window is the result of the joint formation of the source of the problem, the source of the policy and the source of politics. The specific manifestations are as follows:

First, in recent years, more and more students have taken the English 4th and 6th grade examinations, and the problems in the 4th and 6th grade examination policies have become more and more obvious in functions, scoring problems, examination fees, etc. It is increasingly prominent that the debate on the abolition of the English 4th and 6th exam policies is becoming more and more fierce. The “College English Test Band 4 and 6” have evolved into a difficult problem, which has become a necessity for reform and has promoted the decision-makers of the government to pay attention to “College English Test Band 4 and 6”.

Second, be aware of the existence of problems, form relevant solutions and incorporate issues

into the policy agenda. Experts and scholars of English education, English teachers working in the field, college students taking the test, news media, etc. put forward their own views and opinions. In addition, the Ministry of Education and the State Council listen to the feasible reform suggestions of the society through forums and news conferences.

Third, promote the resolution of the problem with the support of the party and the government. Driven by multi-source factors, on June 1, 2018, the first English strength assessment standard for Chinese English learners published by the Ministry of Education and the National Language and Literature Working Committee began to implement the China English Proficiency Rating Scale.

## **6. Conclusion**

Combining multiple-streams theory with its suggestions for the reform of China's College English Test Band 4 and 6, our country can promote the test of College English Test Band 4 and 6 in line with China's social development. Rethinking the problems in the reform of English 4th and 6th exams and making up for China's shortcomings of the English 4th and 6th examination policies can be as a reference for reforming other examination policies in China, and promote the research on educational policies.

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