

Influence of the Authority of English Native Speakers on the Composition of Expatriate Employees at Universities in Shanxi Province, China

Yingzhe Wu* Sarana Photchanachan*
School of Management, Metharath University*

Received: 03/01/2023, Revised: 28/02/2023, Accepted: 15/03/2023

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of authority of native English speakers (ANES) on the Composition of expatriate employees (CEE) in universities in Shanxi Province, China. ANES consists of three dimensions: qualification, national cultural power of their country and their competence. CEE can be reflected in the diversification of expatriate employees' sources and the construction of the overall number and the dynamic mechanism of person-post matching. A questionnaire survey was conducted among 419 English teachers from several universities in Shanxi Province. Structural equation model is applied to verify the influence of ANES on CEE. Multiple linear regressions were used to verify the moderating effect of university Management support (MS) on Cultural power and Competency. It is found that ANES has a significant positive influence on CEE. Management support moderates the two independent varieties: Cultural power and Competency. Finally, the model and support path of strengthening management support and perfecting the Composition of expatriate employees in universities are put forward.

Keywords: Authority of native English speakers, Composition of expatriate employees, Cultural power, Qualification, Competency, Management support.

1. Introduction

Based on Person-posts Dynamic Matching Modes (Luo, 2003; Dai, 2009; Yang, 2017), the authors intended to exam the relationship among Authority of English native speakers, which is reflected in three observed varieties, and the Composition of expatriate employees at universities in Shanxi, China. Expatriate employees, which refer to foreign English teachers in Chinese universities in this paper, play an increasingly important role in the cultivation of international talents. However, there is a great contradiction between the actual supply and demand of expatriate employees at universities in Shanxi, China. According to SPBC (2022) and previous interviews, there are 538,000 undergraduates but fewer than 170 foreign employees in 34 universities in 2021.

If there is a serious shortage of foreign teachers, management of expatriate employees is difficult to achieve (Fu, Li, & Fan, 2014). The current introduction of expatriate employees in universities is limited by the existing routines or prejudice. Hence, it is urgent to expand the hiring path of expatriate employees and expand the selection range of expatriate employees.

Under the trend of world English's (Kachru, 1985), the authority of English teachers from the traditional five English-speaking countries has been questioned and shaken to a large extent (Chen & Zhang, 2017). English has become the English of the world for all who use it (McArthur, 2001). Hence, in this paper, all English speakers from inner and outer circle countries are accordingly classified as native speakers.

Management support was also tested for the moderating effect between two independent and dependent variables. The research objects are as follows:

- 1) To examine the relationship between Native English Speakers' (NESS') qualification (QUA) and composition of expatriate employees (CEE).
- 2) To examine the relationship between NESS' Cultural power (CUP) and CEE.
- 3) To examine the relationship between NESS' Competency (COM) and CEE.
- 4) To examine the moderating effect of management support (MS) between CUP and CEE.
- 5). To examine the moderating effect of MS between COM and CEE.

2. Literature Review

The main theories for this study is Luo (2003)'s Dynamic person-post matching theory for enterprises, followed by Dai (2009) who applied relevant theory to schools. Yang (2017) refined the relevant theory to the introduction of overseas high-tech talents and developed the HOT-posts Matching Mechanism which is geared towards recruiting high-level overseas talent(HOT).

Meanwhile, in the age of world Englishes, Chen and Zhang (2017) proposed that the authority of foreign English teachers in the traditional five English-speaking countries has been challenged and shaken. Fu, Li and Fan (2014) proposed strategies to deal with the shortage of existing foreign English teachers and constructively proposed the idea of expanding the selection range of foreign teachers. These views cannot be separated from the support of World English theories such as Kachru (1985)'s Three Concentric Circles of English and McArthur (1987)'s Circle of World English. As a result, the selection range of expatriate employees extends from inner circle countries to expatriate countries at the same time.

Theories on competency assessment and examination as well as composition of expatriate employees include: Boyatzis (2008)'s continuous research results on Onion Competence Model and Dimitrov & Haque (2016)'s application of Boyatzis' theory in the cross-cultural field.

Based on the literature, the conceptual framework is generally formed (See Figure 1). There are 5 hypotheses in this study, which are as follows. According to (Zhang, 2020), Qualification is a hard index and selection basis for expatriate employees, this variable does not need management support and only needs to be reviewed by functional departments in accordance with regulations.

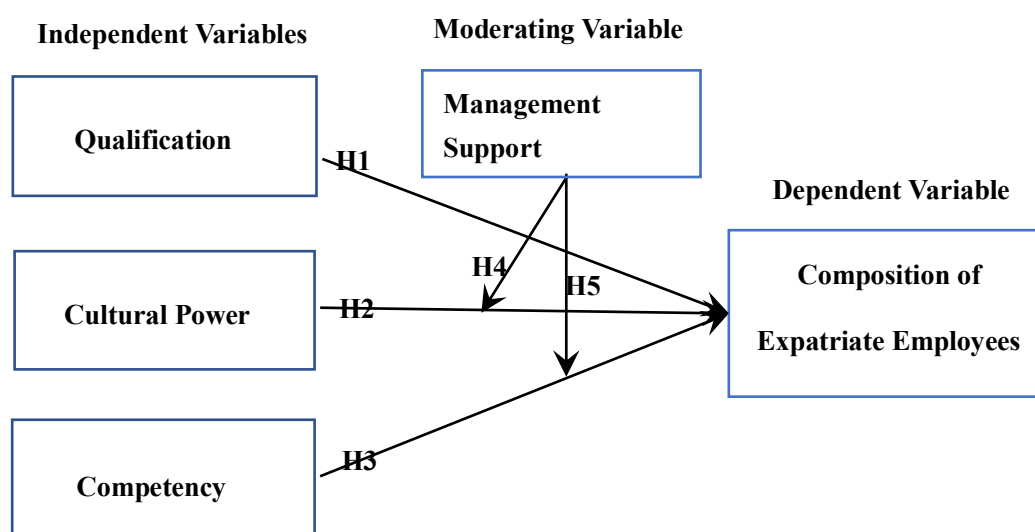


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



Source. Chen (2018), Chen & Zhang (2017), Phillipson (1992), Rampton (1992), McArthur (1987), Kachru's (1985)

3. Methodology

The following is consisted of the research process, to identify variables and questionnaire, to conduct data analysis procedure, pilot study which includes the IOC test, the reliability test and the validity test, to generate the formal questionnaire and the confirm factor analysis(CFA) and results discussion.

After repeated argumentation and assumptions in the early stage, researchers established each dimension of each variable, designed their own questions according to each dimension, and then set them as questionnaires. And questionnaire is the main tool or form of data collection in quantitative research phase.

The items in the questionnaire were measured using the 5-point Likert scale which is mainly referred Wang (2020)'s scale and combines the literature of Luo (2003) and Yang (2017) to expand the items of competency and dynamic matching management. In term of IOC tests, the expert consultation questionnaire average score was 0.96, greater than 0.5, indicating the content validity of the measurement items could be guaranteed. Secondly, SPSS25.0 was utilized for reliability analysis, and EFA in pilot test and the formal questionnaire was created. Thirdly, CFA was conducted. Fourthly, structural model was performed to evaluate the model fit based on the research conceptual framework, as well as conducted path coefficients estimation. Finally structural equation modeling (SEM) with bootstrapping estimation to test research hypotheses. The target population is the Chinese English teachers at universities in Shanxi Province, China. 419 valid questionnaires of "Management of Expatriate employees at universities" were collected. The questionnaire is composed of qualification scale, cultural power scale, qualification scale, management support and composition of expatriate employee scale. The measurement of variables is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 indicates the measurements of variables used in the study as established in the existing literature.

Table 1 Variables in the Study

Latent variable	Observed variable	Scholars
Independent variables	Qualification (QUA)	Chen & Zhang (2017), Chen (2018), Zhang (2018)
	Culture power(CUP)	Kachru(1985), Phillipson (1992), Rampton (1992), McArthur (2001)
	Competency(COM)	Boyatzis(1982),
Dependent variable	Composition of expatriate employees (CEE)	Luo (2003) , Zhang (2006), Xi, (2012) , Yang (2017)



Moderating variable	Management Support(MS)	Fu, Li & Fan (2014), Dimitrov & Haque (2016)
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To check the internal consistency of the measurements, Cronbach's alphas and composite reliability were calculated. The EFA results of independent variables, mediators and dependent variables are shown in Table 2

Table 2 Results of EFA

Variables		Cronbach's Alpha	KMO
Independent variables	QUA	.833	
	CUP	.932	
	COM	.923	.883
Dependent variable	MS	.894	
Moderating variable	CEE	.903	

As can be seen from the data in Table 2 and Table 3 that the reliabilities and validities were satisfactory as the Cronbach's alpha and KMO values all exceeded 0.70, while composite reliability also exceeded 0.70 (Hair et al., 2017).

4. Results

This section mainly analyzes and discusses the quantitative data collected over a period of 6 months. Statistical analysis software SPSS25.0 was adopted to conduct descriptive statistical analysis, T-test analysis and one-way analysis of variance on the data collected from 419 questionnaires. Amos23.0 software is used to test the hypothesis between the variables, and on this basis, the structural equation model is established. The direct effect between the authority of native English speakers and the composition of expatriate employees in universities is investigated. Finally, the effect of moderating variable management support on the relationship between two of the independent variables and dependent variable was verified by using SPSS25.0 software to establish regression models.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics.

In general, from the descriptive statistics, it can be seen that 76% of the respondents teach for non-English majors (see Figure 4.2), The other 24 % of the respondents teach to English majors who are more in demand for foreign education. It can be seen that the respondents of this questionnaire about the expatriate employees' performance and expectation covers English teachers give lessons to all majors. 90 % of the respondents think that the current English classes taught by expatriate employees are insufficient. This is consistent with the literature review and some interview before the research.

4.2 The reliability analysis.

Cronbach's Alpha was used in this study to measure the intrinsic reliability of the questionnaire. The larger the coefficient in Cronbach's Alpha measurement is, the higher the internal consistency of the questionnaire is. As can be seen from Table 4, Cronbach's Alpha of the scale is above 0.7, indicating that the internal consistency of the questionnaire is relatively high, and the questionnaire can be used as a research tool for this study.



Table 3 Reliability Analysis of each variable

Variable	Items	CITC	Cronbach's Alpha after deleting items	Cronbach's Alpha
QUA	QU1	0.786	0.835	0.883
	QU2	0.725	0.859	
	QU3	0.765	0.843	
	QU4	0.709	0.864	
CUP	CP1	0.785	0.924	0.934
	CP2	0.761	0.925	
	CP3	0.750	0.926	
	CP4	0.748	0.926	
	CP5	0.698	0.929	
	CP6	0.755	0.926	
	CP7	0.740	0.927	
	CP8	0.746	0.926	
	CP9	0.779	0.924	
COM	CO1	0.780	0.915	0.927
	CO2	0.746	0.917	
	CO3	0.710	0.920	
	CO4	0.724	0.919	
	CO5	0.716	0.920	
	CO6	0.731	0.919	
	CO7	0.764	0.916	
	CO8	0.826	0.911	
MS	MS1	0.741	0.854	0.884
	MS2	0.739	0.854	
	MS3	0.715	0.860	
	MS4	0.704	0.862	
	MS5	0.701	0.863	
CEE	CEE1	0.669	0.847	0.870
	CEE2	0.656	0.849	
	CEE3	0.640	0.853	
	CEE4	0.660	0.849	
	CEE5	0.632	0.854	
	CEE6	0.755	0.832	

At the same time, by excluding the observation variables, the specific method is to delete each variable once. If the reliability index does not improve after the deletion, it is considered that the measurement items of the variable have good reliability.

4.3 Confirmatory factor analysis.

Amos 23.0 was used to perform a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for the scale used in this



paper. A confirmatory factor model was established according to the results of exploratory factor analysis, and the suitability of the model was judged by judging the fitting index of structural equation. If it meets the standard, it means that the model established in this paper can effectively measure the relevant latent variables.

Table 4 The main evaluation indexes and criteria of the overall fit degree of the model

Statistical test quantity	Adaptive standard or threshold value
Chi-square degree of freedom ratio (NC value)	$1 < NC < 3$, Good fit; $NC > 5$, Reasonable fit
GFI	> 0.8
AGFI	> 0.8
IFI	> 0.9
CFI	> 0.9
TLI	> 0.9
NFI	> 0.9 Good fit; > 0.8 Reasonable fit
RMSEA	< 0.05 Good fit < 0.08 Reasonable fit

Source: Data information from this research

Table 5 Model fitting index

indicators	X ² /df	GFI	AGFI	NFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Value of statistics	1.172	0.929	0.917	0.937	0.990	0.989	0.990	0.020
Reference value	< 3	> 0.8	> 0.8	> 0.9	> 0.9	> 0.9	> 0.9	< 0.08
Reach the standard or not	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: Data information from this research

Generally, the ratio of chi-square to DOF should be greater than 1 and less than 3. The X^2 / df value of this paper is 1.172, which meets the judgment criteria, indicating a good model fitting. GFI (goodness of fit index) is the fit index, AGFI (adjust goodness of fit index) is the fit index.

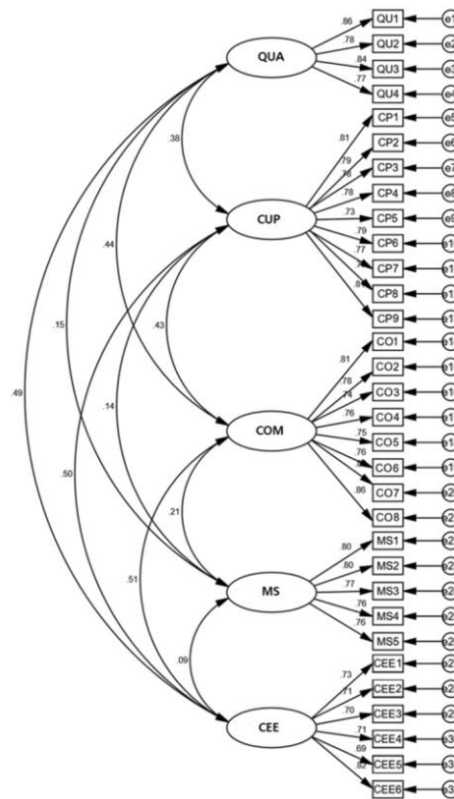


Figure 2 Confirmatory factor model

Source: Data information from this research

The GFI and AGFI values of this paper are 0.929 and 0.917, indicating high fitness. In this paper, the NFI of 0.937 is greater than 0.9, which conforms to the general standard. RMSEA is 0.020. In summary, all the indicators of confirmatory factor analysis in this paper have reached the standard, and the model has a good overall fit.

4.4 Test of convergent validity.

Convergent Validity means that the classification obtained when two different measurement tools are used to measure the same concept is highly correlated. In this study, the reliability (CR) and mean variance extraction value (AVE) were constructed to test the convergent validity. The construction reliability is usually > 0.7 , AVE > 0.5 to meet the standard.

Table 6 Results of convergence validity analysis



Variable	Items	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	CR	AVE
QUA	QU1	0.858					
	QU2	0.779	0.051	18.352	***	0.885	0.658
	QU3	0.837	0.049	20.242	***		
	QU4	0.766	0.050	17.899	***		
CUP	CP1	0.814					
	CP2	0.791	0.052	18.604	***	0.934	0.610
	CP3	0.778	0.051	18.156	***		
	CP4	0.780	0.051	18.234	***		
	CP5	0.726	0.050	16.534	***		
	CP6	0.786	0.051	18.432	***		
	CP7	0.770	0.050	17.917	***		
	CP8	0.771	0.050	17.952	***		
	CP9	0.810	0.051	19.229	***		
COM	CO1	0.814					
	CO2	0.783	0.052	18.293	***	0.927	0.614
	CO3	0.742	0.051	16.985	***		
	CO4	0.761	0.051	17.591	***		
	CO5	0.745	0.054	17.092	***		
	CO6	0.757	0.052	17.448	***		
	CO7	0.796	0.052	18.714	***		
	CO8	0.864	0.050	21.067	***		
MS	MS1	0.799					
	MS2	0.799	0.058	17.265	***	0.884	0.604
	MS3	0.768	0.058	16.467	***		
	MS4	0.762	0.058	16.323	***		
	MS5	0.758	0.059	16.204	***		
CEE	CEE1	0.725					
	CEE2	0.709	0.075	13.714	***	0.871	0.530
	CEE3	0.703	0.079	13.586	***		
	CEE4	0.709	0.073	13.713	***		
	CEE5	0.693	0.072	13.402	***		
	CEE6	0.822	0.074	15.812	***		

Source: Data information from this research

CFA's results of the overall scale are shown in Table 6. The standardized factor load under the five variables of Qualification, Cultural power, Competency, Management support and Composition of expatriate employees is all above 0.5, indicating that each observed variable can explain its latent variable to a large extent. The combined reliability CR is greater than 0.8, significantly higher than the standard 0.7, so the observed variables under each dimension can well explain the dimension. Convergent validity of each dimension reflected by mean variance extraction (AVE value) value is



usually used to reflect the convergent validity of the scale, which can directly show how much of the variation explained by the underlying variable is from the measurement error. As can be seen from Table 6, AVE values are all above the standard value 0.5, indicating that the scale in this paper has good convergence validity.

4.5 Structural equation model.

According to the theoretical model, Amos23 was used to establish the structural equation model with post qualification, cultural soft power and competency as independent variables and the composition of expatriate employee resources as dependent variables (Figure 3).

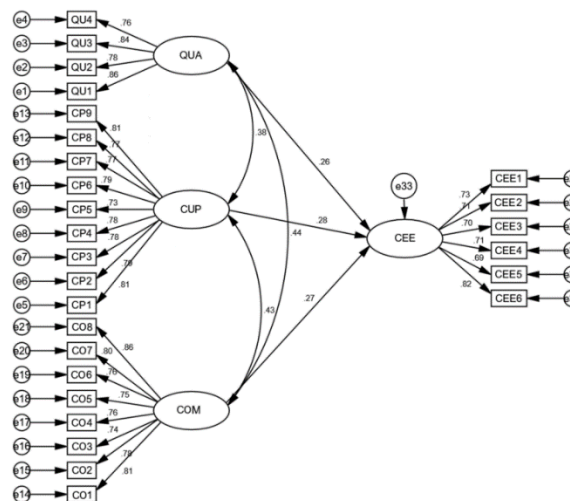


Figure 3 Standardized path estimation for SEM

The standardized path coefficient (SPC) of QUA to CEE is 0.207 ($CR = 4.780$, $p = 0.000 < 0.01$), indicating that QUA has a significant positive effect on CEE, that is, the higher QUA, the higher CEE, so the hypothesis is tenable.

Table 7 Path coefficients between variables

Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
CEE <--- QUA	0.261	0.045	4.780	***
CEE <--- CUP	0.284	0.036	5.290	***
CEE <--- COM	0.272	0.038	4.923	***

Source: Data information from this research

Notes: EE: QUA: CUP: COM:

SPC from CUP to CEE is 0.284 ($CR = 5.290$, $p = 0.000 < 0.01$), indicating that CUP has a significant positive effect on CEE, that is, the higher CUP, the higher CEE, so the hypothesis is tenable.

SPC from COM to CEE is 0.272 ($CR = 4.923$, $p = 0.000 < 0.01$), indicating that COM has a significant positive effect on CEE, that is, the higher COM, the higher CEE, so the hypothesis is tenable.

4.6 Moderating Effect Test.

The test of moderating effect mainly is conducted through multiple hierarchical regressions. Three multivariate regression models were established according to the test of the moderating effect of



relevant literatures.

Model 1 introduces basic information: age, gender, teaching age, teaching object and work experience. Model 2 introduces independent variables and regulating variables. Model 3 introduces interaction terms.

Table 8 The moderating effect of MS on CUP and CEE

Variable		CEE		
		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Variable of control	Age	0.020	0.023	0.017
	Gender	0.179***	0.134**	0.133**
	Teaching Age	-0.088	-0.073	-0.070
	Teaching objects	0.048	0.024	0.018
	International Experience	0.070	0.055	0.053
Independent variable	CUP		0.435***	0.450***
Moderating variable	MS		0.023	0.027
Term of interaction	CUP×MS			0.136**
R ²		0.050	0.239	0.257
Adjusted R ²		0.039	0.226	0.243
F		4.375**	18.435***	17.735***

Source: Data information from this research

Notes: N=419 , * represents < 0.05, ** represents <0.01,*** represents < 0.001.

The moderating effects of moderating variable management support on CUP and EE were mainly verified by establishing regression models. In order to improve the explanatory ability of the model, demographic variables were introduced as control variables. As is shown in Table 8, the R² of model 2 is 0.239, and that of model 3 is 0.257, which significantly increases, indicating that the explanatory power of the model is enhanced. Therefore, it is proved that the moderating variable management support has a significant moderating effect on the influence of CUP and CEE, and the hypothesis is valid.

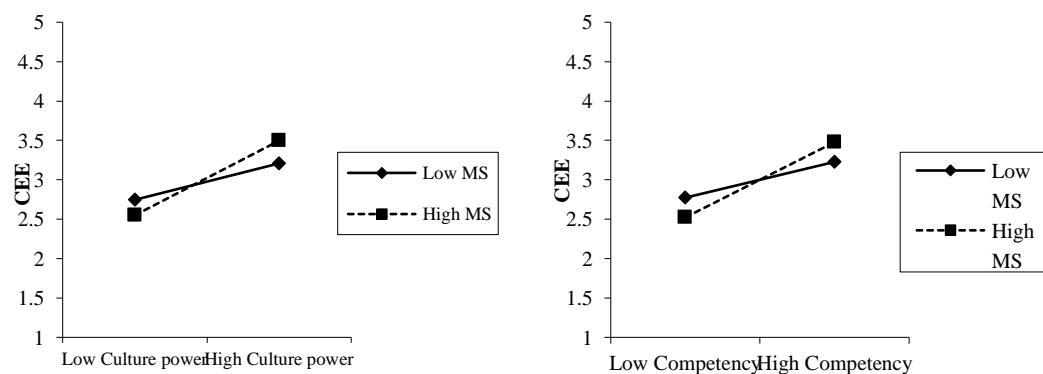


Figure 4 Moderating effect diagram

Source Data information from this research



Similarly, the regulating effect of the regulating variable MS on COM and CEE is mainly verified by establishing a regression model which indicates that interaction terms have a significant effect on CEE (See Figure 4).

5. Discussions

Based on the previous theoretical support, the hypothesis is consecutively found to be valid through the mixed quantitative and qualitative research.

5.1 QUA has a significant effect on CEE in universities. The qualification dimension of ANES (Authority of native English speakers) has significant influence on expatriate employees (0.26***). H1 hypothesis is supported. That is to say, the path of qualifications to select native English Speakers is a basic and fair way to improve EE composition universities.

5.2 CUP has a significant effect on CEE in universities. As a dimension of ANES, Cultural power has significant influence on expatriate employees in universities (0.28***). H2 hypothesis is supported. That is to say, both the outer and inner circle countries have been recognized as native English speakers by universities. This will increase the diversity of options for EE resource expansion and reserve in universities.

5.3 COM has a significant effect on CEE in universities. Competency dimension of ANES has significant influence on expatriate employees in universities (0.27***). H3 hypothesis is supported. That is to say, the path to select excellent native English speakers based on competency will benefit a large number of outer circle NES to stand out, thus help universities to attract qualified expatriate employees.

5.4 MS has a significant effect on the relationship between CUP and CEE. Management support has a significantly positive moderating effect on the relationship between CUP and CEE ($R^2=0.239^{***}$). H4 hypothesis is supported. It shows that effective management support can promote the influence of CUP on CEE, expand the selection range of NES with different CUP backgrounds, and thus expand and optimize EE reserves more obviously.

5.5 MS has a significant effect on the relationship between COM and CEE.

The management support of universities has a significant positive moderating effect on the relationship between COM and CEE ($R^2=0.250^{***}$). H3 hypothesis is supported. Effective management support can facilitate the impact of COM dimensions on CEE. With the attention and support of college management, the CEE team and composition of colleges and universities can be optimized in real time and dynamically through the competency evaluation of NES's competency.

6. Conclusion and Recommendation

This study provides empirical evidence to prove that the dynamic authority of native English speakers has significant effect on the composition of expatriate employees at universities in Shanxi, China. this study is not only meaningful for the improvement of composition expatriate employees resources in universities in Shanxi Province, but also has reference significance for colleges and universities in neighboring provinces that have relevant demand or gap for expatriate employees. At the same time, for junior colleges in Shanxi or other non-speaking regions, there are also some implications for diplomatic configuration.



At the same time, with the increasingly extensive global cooperation and the deepening of internationalization of universities, in addition to introducing native English speakers as full-time language teachers in universities, the necessity, advantages and prospects of introducing NES can also be introduced in some other positions, such as management, research and non-language teaching positions.

The suggestion for the universities is to speed up the expansion, improvement and optimization of the composition of expatriate employees. Universities in Shanxi are expected to appropriately increase the number and proportion of native speakers from outer countries, gradually promote the composition of expatriate employees more diversified in order to adapt to the increasingly close globalization strategy.

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