

**Title of Project:**

Washback effects of the reformed CET-4 on college English teaching and learning in China: Students' perspectives

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**Abstract:**

The influence exerted by language tests on language teaching and learning has been called washback in the field of language testing (Bailey, 1996; Person, 1988). Although an increasing number of empirical washback studies on washback by Alderson and Wall (1993), the majority of these studies focus primarily on teachers' perspectives and how English teaching has been influenced by what and how teachers teach in language classrooms (e.g. Manjarrés, 2005; Wall & Alderson, 1993; Watanabe, 1996). In contrast, the perspectives of the most immediate stakeholders, the test takers' are largely under-researched. Equally under-researched is the washback of language tests at the college level, since most reported washback research is on tests given before then (e.g. Cheng, 2005; Manjarrés, 2005; Shohamy, 2001; Qi, 2004; Wall & Alderson, 1993; Watanabe, 2004). The present study, hence, from students' perspectives, looks into how the reformed National College English Test Band 4 (CET-4) – the national test that has the largest number of test takers in the world (Jin & Yang, 2006), affects English teaching and learning at the college level in China. A large scale survey and follow-up about individual students' perceptions towards the CET-4, their test preparation, test-taking experiences, and college English learning experiences from three different universities in China will be examined and compared. Suggestions as to how to maximize intended positive washback of the reformed CET-4, and further promote English language teaching in China will be proposed as well.