

# 技職大學生的英語學習需求：以輔英科大為例

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## 摘要

本研究透過問卷調查，探討技職大專學生對於一般英語課程的需求，以期課程規劃更符合學生的需要及興趣，引發學生的學習動機，進而提高學習成效。研究對象包括 576 名輔英科技大學一到四年級的學生，以及英文教師 25 人。研究結果發現，在課程需求方面，不同科別、年級、英語程度的學生在各選項的看法均無顯著差異，反而師生之間的看法有顯著歧異。根據以上的結果，本研究最後提出相關結論與建議，俾供課程決策者之參考，以期使英語教學更符合以學習者為中心的教學理念。

**關鍵詞：**英語學習需求；課程規劃；技職英語

## The English-Learning Needs of Technical University Students: A Case Study of Fooyin University

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### Abstract

This paper aimed at exploring technological university students' needs for general English courses. Of particular interest to this research was the investigation of whether or not there were any significant differences among students from different grade years, of different majors, and at different proficiency levels of English. A total of 576 students and 25 English teachers from a technological university in southern Taiwan served as the subjects of the study. The materials consisted of a questionnaire addressed to the students and another to the teachers. Results from statistical analyses revealed that while students from different backgrounds demonstrated no prominent disagreements in their needs for English curriculum, there is a significant difference between students' and teachers' views of what an ideal English curriculum should be. Based on the data analysis, this paper presented its findings and pedagogical suggestions for the reference of the curriculum-designers. It is hoped that English teaching *will* focus on the learners and that language instruction *will* become more learner-centered.

**Key words:** English-learning needs; curriculum design; vocational English

## I. Introduction

### A. Statement of the Problem

Taiwan's vocational education system, which consists of vocational high schools, junior colleges and

technology universities, cultivates a great number of basic and high-level professionals every year. In general, graduates from the vocational education system have won lots of compliments in technical skills, working efficiency and professional disposition. The great majority of them, however, have very low English language proficiency and can hardly reach the CEF( Common European Framework )A2 level of proficiency by the time of graduation. The reasons why they are so weak even in English basics are many, including the difficulties of learning a foreign language that is extremely different from their mother tongue, lack of an English environment for them to apply the language in daily life, and limited instructional hours at school with less than 2 hours of English courses per week. To make things worse, a previous survey by this author revealed that an average technological university student in Taiwan spent less than one hour per week on English-learning activities outside the English class. The fact that students devoted little time in English study resulted in severely insufficient training in English. Even though some students have recognized the importance of English and tried to learn it well, they are usually faced with the dilemma of time constraint because there are other major school subjects they need to attend to. More often than not, they tend to choose the subjects of their majors over English, the so-called "general course." And that is why English teachers teaching at vocational schools tend to feel helplessness in striving to upgrade their students' English level. As more and more students each year fail to meet the course standards, English teacher cannot but lower their requirements for the students so as to fulfill the pre-established curriculum objectives. The result is that students' English ability regresses yearly (林曉雲、胡清暉, 2009; 張錦弘, 2009; Lin, 1992).

While this country is actively seeking a greater role to play on the world stage, particularly in the field of commerce and economy, the English language is undoubtedly a very important tool for an individual to make advancements in academic work, job hunting, knowledge pursuit and self actualization. In addition, by promoting the English ability of the public, especially of the professional personnel, the country will have a more competitive edge in the international community. Therefore, to cope with the current trend, the educational authorities should never ignore the issue of how to enhance vocational school students' English proficiency. An educator or a curriculum planner in the vocational school, in particular, should take on the responsibility to help students improve their English ability by designing courses that can intensify their learning motivation and meet with their learning needs. To that end this study was thus conducted.

## **B. Purpose of the Study**

This study is an attempt to evoke researchers' attention to the English education in technological universities. More specifically, the purpose of the study is to seek answers to the following questions:

1. What are technological university students' needs for English instruction?
2. Do such expectations differ among students from different grade years, of different majors, and at different proficiency levels of English?
3. Do English instructors differ from their students in their perceptions of such needs?

## II. Review of Literature

Surveying students' learning needs has always been a crucial part of a successful foreign language program. Scholars assert that a well-designed language course, which targets at increasing students' learning efficiency and at triggering students' interest and motivation in learning the foreign language, should first take into account their needs (Allwright, 1983; Berwick, 1994; Chu & Huang 2007; Lee & Joe, 2006). Based on the notion of learner-centeredness, this study reviewed literature related to learner-centered approach to teaching and needs analysis as its theoretical basis.

### A. Learner-Centered Approach to Language Teaching

Similar to the traditional teacher-centered curriculum, the development of student-centered curriculum involves three steps: 1) planning, which includes needs analysis, objective setting and content choice; 2) implementation, which contains teaching approaches and teaching materials; and 3) evaluation, which means achievement tests and feedback evaluation. Yet, unlike the former regarding the teacher as the only authority in the classroom, the latter involves both the teacher and the students as the decision-makers during the whole process of curriculum development (Little & Andrew, 1983). What underlines the learner-centered approach is the development of learner autonomy.

According to Holec (1983), the so-called 'learner autonomy' refers to the active participation of the learner in the process of curriculum planning, i.e., deciding long-term and short-term objectives, learning contents, teaching approaches and assessment methods. Holec's conception of 'learner autonomy' incidentally corresponds with Breen's (1987) idea of 'process syllabus.' Breen stresses that learning process is more important than the result of learning and that any curricular activities and tasks should be come by through the negotiation of both the teacher and the students. Dam (1988) successfully applied Holec's and Breen's ideas in the real-life situation by having a group of high school students decide their own learning objectives, activity contents and ways of evaluation while the teacher plays the following role: joining in the process of decision making, accepts students' ideas, supporting what students do in class, motivating them and acting as their counselor. There are quite a few related researches abroad in the recent decades, and they all point to one common fact that student-centered instruction yields better results in language learning (Lim, 1992; Heath, 2002; Nunan, 1987; Reilly, 2004)

### B. Analysis of the Learner Needs

The first step of learner-centered instruction is needs analysis (Richards, 1984). Needs analysis allows the teacher to know why and how his students are learning the foreign language. When the courses learnt relate meaningfully to the learner's expectations, his or her motivation advances naturally. Researchers in Taiwan have started to do research on related topics in recent years.

An early study by 方鳳山 (1987) on the needs analysis of medical school students yielded an intriguing result. As far as learning objectives are concerned, the priority orders listed by his subjects were: 1) the ability to learn independently, 2) the ability to communicate orally in the target language, 3) the acquiring of basic English proficiency, 4) the acquiring of professional knowledge, and 5) the preparing of English proficiency for work market. When it comes to the types of learning needs, students had the strongest need for basic language proficiency, the next strongest need for communicative competence in the foreign language, and the third for

self-actualization. In general, students' needs corresponded to their expectations with a slight discrepancy on the priority of basic language proficiency and communicative competence. The possible explanation might be that expectations and actual needs do not always meet with each other. The paper concludes with a suggestion that the four language skills should be integrated and that learning objectives be manifested.

Again with university freshmen as the subjects, Hsieh and Wu (1988) surveyed students' needs for teaching objectives, methods and materials. They found that although most students accepted the existing objective which focused on reading and writing, they still longed for more practices in listening and speaking. In addition, more than half of the students chose to spend a whole school year in taking general English courses, while nearly forty percent of the students hoped to have [professional English courses](#)<sup>1</sup> for the second semester. They then suggested that an English proficiency test be administered at the beginning of the school year, that students be placed in different types of courses, i.e., remedial, general, or professional classes, based on their scores on the proficiency test, and that the general course be further broken down into conversation and reading/writing courses for students to choose at their will.

Yang, Chang & Kao (1994), using junior college students as subjects, evaluated the use of technical English materials in an agricultural and industrial school setting. Their study showed that over half of the students had the experience of reading technical English text, and that their reasons for studying it were mainly instrumental, such as obtaining credit hours, pursuing further education and seeking employment. Their study also found that the major difficulties for college students to comprehend the original text were: too much vocabulary and technical terms, and too complicated sentences to analyze for meaning.

Another related study by 莊麗容 and 周碩貴(1995) investigating the fourth-year college students' needs for [professional](#) English courses revealed students' needs in the following order: 1) the analysis of sentence structures, 2) more training in listening comprehension, 3) the introduction to technical background knowledge, 4) an efficient way of memorizing technical terms, 5) practices in technical writing, and 6) [giving professional](#) presentations. The study also suggested a basic training in general reading skills for the first two years of college, and optional courses in professional English for students to register during the final two years of college.

The research above indicates a shift in the developmental trend of domestic English teaching within the last few decades from subject- or teacher-centered approach to student-centered instruction. As previous studies have implied, the traditional grammar-based or reading-based language teaching has failed to meet students' needs; only communicative instruction language which underscores students' learning processes and objectives can really match students' requirements, and effectively improve the results of foreign language teaching.

### **III. Methodology**

#### **A. Subjects**

The subjects of the study included 25 English teachers and 576 students from a technological university in

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<sup>1</sup> Professional English courses are the teaching of English for vocational or professional purposes, such as EMP (English for medical purposes), EBP (English for business purposes) and EST (English for science and technology) that are used by working professionals. In contrast, general English courses are aimed to cultivate basic English abilities in the four language skills: reading, listening, speaking, and writing.

southern Taiwan. The students were registering respectively in the nursing and medical-technology departments (for a detail of sample distribution, see Table 1). The surveys to the students were administered by the author toward the end of the semester, during self-study or class-meeting periods when they were given thirty minutes to answer the questionnaires. Among 600 questionnaires that were issued, 576 were obtained valid. Thirty-three questionnaires were issued to the teachers and 25 were returned.

Table 1. Student Sample Distribution

Year \ Dept	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Medical	43	47	48	46	184
Nursing	98	96	97	101	392
Total	141	143	145	147	576

## B. Instruments

### **(A) Questionnaire (See Appendix 1)**

A questionnaire concerned with various aspects of student needs was developed by the researchers to assess students' needs for English curriculum. The questionnaire was tried out by 10 students and examined by three experienced teachers before it was edited into the present format, which contained three sections.

1. Background Information: including age, majors, grade levels, learning difficulties, time spent in learning English, etc.
2. Learning Channels: a 5-point Likert scale, which contains five items, each with five responses ranging from 'never' (scale = 1) to 'always' (scale = 5) to assess the respondents' inclinations to study independently. The 5-point Likert scale was adopted because it is the most popular method used in surveys, allowing the researchers to quantify opinion-based items.
3. Needs for English Curriculum: containing 6 items, under which were listed several options for students to prioritize; the rank order of the options indicated students' expectations for curriculum arrangement, teaching objectives, teacher disposition, basic linguistic abilities, applied language abilities and teaching content. In addition, a teachers' questionnaire addressing the same issue was developed to compare the teachers' views and the students'.

### **(B) English Language Proficiency**

The subjects' English proficiency was measured by their semester English grades and their scores on the English placement test administered prior to their enrollment in the first-year general English course.

## C. Data Analysis

SPSS for Windows was used to perform the following analyses: First, descriptive statistics, including frequencies, mean and standard deviation, for the scale was estimated. Next, Mann-Whitney U-test and Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA were performed to detect any significant differences in students' needs between teachers and students and among students with different backgrounds. Finally, Friedman two-way ANOVA was conducted to explore if there was any significant difference in the priority order of the needs options.

## IV. Results and Discussion

### A. Description of the Subjects and their Language Learning Channels

The average length of English study with the present subjects were 9.77 years; the average hour spent per week in studying English out of class was 0.73. No significant differences were found between different grade years (seniors 0.71; juniors 0.74) or different English proficiency levels (advanced 0.82; intermediate 0.71; beginning 0.56) except between different majors. The significant difference between nursing majors and medical technology majors ( $t=2.43$ ,  $p<.01$ ) indicated that medical students worked slightly harder than nursing students (medical 0.89; nursing 0.65). Nevertheless, college students, as a whole, were far from being hard-working at all, considering that they spent an average of one hour less per week in studying English on their own. Perhaps, the high percentage (72.9%) of students who confessed to have low to medium interest in English could explain the dissatisfying situation.

On the other hand, however, there were nearly 80% of the subjects who recognized the importance of English. Despite so, the time and efforts that the students extended to learning was not in positive proportion to the high percentage of people who considered learning English important (over 70% of the subjects usually did English study only before the tests as shown in item 3, and over 93% of them considered themselves not to have spent enough time studying English as revealed in item 4). Such a discrepancy found its explanation in item 5, which rendered laziness (47.2%), time constraint (19.4) and shortage of interest (14.6) as the three major reasons why students did not work harder. The data from item 7 indicated that vocabulary (28.5) and pronunciation (24.3%) were the two main difficulties for students in learning English (see Table 2). Finally, to the delight of the teachers, there were still 34% of the subjects who enjoyed English learning.

Table 2. English learning experiences of the Sample (N=576)

Items	Options						
1. Interest in English (%)	very high	high	medium	low	very low		
	6.3	20.8	58.3	9.0	5.6		
2. Importance of learning English well (%)	very high	high	medium	low	very low		
	66.4	12.7	19.2	1.7	0.0		
3. When do I study English (%)	before tests /On ordinary days/ before or after class/ On weekends/ others						
	71.5	12.7	2.8	8.3	4.8		
4. Time spent studying English out of class (%)	an awfully lot	a lot	just enough	a little	little		
	0.7	1.8	4.6	40.3	53.1		
5. Key reason for not studying harder (%)	laziness	no interest	not my major	time shortage	no tutors	others	
	47.2	14.6	1.4	19.4	11.1	6.3	
6. Learning English is (%)	fun	a bore	a pain in the neck	with no special feelings			
	34.0	21.5	8.4	36.1			
7. Major difficulty in learning English (%)	Voc. <sup>a</sup>	Pro.	Gra.	W. K.	L. S.	Pers.	Others
	28.5	24.3	19.4	4.9	10.4	10.4	2.1

<sup>a</sup> Voc.=vocabulary; Pro.=pronunciation; Gra.=grammar; W.K.=world knowledge; L.S.=learning strategies; Pers.=perseverance

As can be seen in table 3, college students usually relied on classroom instruction as the major source of English learning (M=3.93). English media such as music and film was the next source utilized most frequently (M=3.43). When comparing English media with English teaching programs on the air, which only received a mean of 1.91, one could easily see that college students tended to learn English in a pleasure-oriented manner, yet downplaying the more efficient English broadcasting programs. Self-study was also placed as one of the learning channels for the students, but it was a pity to find that the great majority of students were such passive learners that 49.7% of them rarely or never studied English on their own, and 40% studied by themselves once in a while. Going to private language centers was the last means that the students would resort to (M=1.74), which was perhaps due to money and time constraint.

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations of Major English-learning Channels

Channels	Frequency of Use ( % )					Mean	S.D.	Rank
	5 <sup>a</sup>	4	3	2	1			
1 classroom teaching	27.6	43.6	24.7	3.1	2.0	3.93	0.87	1
2 self-study	1.7	8.5	40.1	42.4	7.3	2.55	0.83	3
3 bushibans, tutors	0.5	2.6	12.0	39.2	45.7	1.74	0.81	5
4 teaching programs on the air	0.3	4.5	16.1	45.3	33.7	1.91	0.84	4
5 English media	11.3	37.8	37.3	10.9	2.6	3.43	0.93	2

<sup>a</sup> 5=always, 4=often, 3=sometimes, 2=rarely, 1=never

## B. Needs for English Curriculum

This section contains 6 items, under which are listed several options for the subjects to prioritize. The statistical results were indicated by rank indices (李方, 1983); a higher index represents more importance that the subjects attached to the option. In order to find out whether there existed significant differences between or among different variables on the same option, this study adopted Mann-Whitney U test with majors, and grade years and Kruskal-Wallis H test with English proficiency variable.

As Table 4 reveals, regarding the type of English taught in class, senior students and junior students were consistent in their priority orders: 1) general English used in daily lives, 2) professional English related to their majors of study, 3) academic English pertaining to further education and doing research, and 4) literary English that helps improve cultural understanding and broader-based knowledge. The four sub-items were significantly different from one another in the degree of importance (Frideman Two-Way ANOVA  $\chi^2=982.6$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). With regard to the first and second priorities, teachers thought that for juniors, general English should come before professional English, and the other way around for seniors. As for the third and fourth priorities, teachers chose literary English over academic English for the juniors, and the opposite for the seniors. Significant differences existed between teachers' and students' views on all of the sub-items except one (see Z value).

Concerning the priorities of teaching objectives, both the teachers and students placed 'lay solid foundation in English' as the first choice, perhaps due to the fact that college students were generally weak in even the basics of English. As for the second and third priorities, teachers and students held opposite opinions. Students

considered 'training in communicative competence' more important than 'training in independent study', while teachers would rather spend more time teaching their students how to learn on their own. For the last two priorities, the two parties reported another division. Students preferred 'training in academic pursuit' to 'training in cultural understanding', but teachers thought the opposite. Seniors and juniors presented prominent disagreements on four of the sub-items; seniors had a greater demand for academic and job-related preparation, while juniors had a preference for communicative competence and cultural studies.

When asked about what made a popular teacher, the students listed their preferences in the following order: 1) teach in a humorous and delightful manner, 2) express clearly and make lessons easy to understand, 3) often interact with and encourage students, 4) teach hard and prepare lessons carefully, 5) evaluate fairly and demand reasonably, and 6) manage the syllabus well. The importance indices for the six sub-items were statistically different from one another ( $\chi^2=1170.96$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Teachers had entirely different priority orders from the students, and yet the two groups were statistically different from each other only on two sub-items—'teach humorously and delightfully' and 'teach hard and prepare carefully.' Teachers considered the latter more important than the former, while students thought the opposite.

Students ranked their needs for English basics in the following orders: 1) pronunciation, 2) general vocabulary, 3) technical vocabulary, 4) grammar and 5) spelling. The five sub-items tested by Friedman ANOVA were significantly different from one another in importance indices ( $\chi^2=508.05$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Teachers and students were consistent in their views on grammar, but were totally different on all the rest sub-items. Teachers' priority orders were as follows: 1) general English, 2) pronunciation, 3) spelling, 4) grammar, and 5) technical vocabulary. The reason why teachers listed vocabulary as the top priority was presumably that students suffered such a severe shortage of vocabulary that teachers were often forced to resort to the grammar-translation method while teaching reading comprehension. Yet, from the students' point of views, most students had great difficulties in remembering a word, and they blamed the fault on their ignorance of pronunciation.

Regarding the needs for the four language skills of English, students reported their priorities in the following orders: 1) speaking, 2) listening, 3) reading and 4) writing. The four sub-items were statistically different from one another in importance indices ( $\chi^2=1085.73$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Teachers and students held significantly different views on speaking and reading ( $Z=4.46$  and  $5.28$  respectively). Teachers considered reading ability the most important skill for students, based on the fact that reading skill is utilized most often in a non-English environment, where use of English is more related to school studies, job employment, further education and knowledge attainment. On the other hand, students' strong need for communicative ability might be explained by the fact that being able to communicate with other people orally is one of the basic human needs, and that, unfortunately, has long been ignored in classroom teaching.

In arranging the teaching content, students preferred something more practical, something that could be applied to real life. To this end, teachers held the same idea. On the next priority, however, teachers and students had slightly different opinions. EST(English for specific technology) materials were students' second choice, while materials enriched with linguistic knowledge were teachers' cup of tea. Teachers and students agreed with each other on the 3rd, 5th and 6th priorities, i.e., materials that are interesting as the 3rd, materials that taught



learning strategies as the 5th, and materials that introduced cultural aspects of English-speaking countries as the 6th priority. Teachers and students showed significant differences on the technical content ( $Z=2.76$ ,  $S_s > T_s$ ), and cultural content ( $Z=4.55$ ,  $T_s > S_s$ ).

In summary, according to the  $Z$  and  $\chi^2$  values displayed in Table 10, we could see that only one variable, i.e. students vs. teachers, was highly correlated with 'needs for curriculum' as a whole, while such variables as majors, grade levels and English proficiency were not. To be more specific, of all 31 sub-items, different majors and English levels revealed only four significant differences while different grade levels showed eight significant differences.

Table 4. The Ranking Indices of "Needs for English Curriculum" for both the Students and the Teachers & the Results of Testing for Significant Differences on Relevant Variables

Needs for Curriculum	Ranking Indices				Z (Mann-Whitney U Test)			$\chi^2$ (Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA)
	S (Rank)	T (Rank)	S-T	Majors	Grades	English Proficiency <sup>a</sup>		
1. Priority order in the types of English taught								
(1) general Eng	0.36 <sup>b</sup>	1	0.38 <sup>d</sup>	1	1.99*	0.25	0.17	2.18
	0.36 <sup>c</sup>	1	0.28 <sup>e</sup>	2	4.98**			
(2) academic Eng	0.22	3	0.18	4	2.29*	0.27	2.77	6.19*
	0.21	3	0.25	3	2.60**			
(3) professional Eng	0.29	2	0.25	2	1.88	0.33	0.79	0.68
	0.30	2	0.36	1	3.90**			
(4) literary Eng	0.13	4	0.19	3	4.06**	0.09	2.56	1.82
	0.14	4	0.12	4	2.06*			
2. Priority order in the teaching objectives of English courses								
(1) lay Eng foundation	0.25	1	0.28	1	2.60**	0.67	0.3	0.53
(2) learn independently	0.17	3	0.21	2	2.91**	2	1.30	2.35
(3) prepare further edu	0.14	5	0.10	6	2.26*	0.59	3.27**	0.68
(4) prepare job market	0.15	4	0.13	4	1.12	0.74	3.89**	1.00
(5) commu competence	0.21	2	0.17	3	2.46*	1.11	2.16*	3.16
(6) cultural schema	0.07	6	0.11	5	2.63**	2.18	2.51*	1.64
3. Priority order in the qualities of a 'good' English teacher								
(1) make learning fun	0.23	1	0.19	3	1.56*	0.26	3.43**	1.82
(2) teach hard	0.16	4	0.20	2	2.72**	0.47	1.28	3.7
(3) articulate oneself	0.22	2	0.24	1	0.33	0.34	1.57	0.91
(4) care for students	0.19	3	0.18	4	0.92	0.88	2.71**	4.65
(5) fair assessment	0.11	5	0.09	6	0.32	0.10	0.46	9.48**
(6) follow syllabi	0.10	6	0.10	5	0.57	0.88	1.36	5.20
4. Priority order in basic English abilities								
(1) pronunciation	0.25	1	0.21	2	2.13*	0.92	0.49	1.16

(2) grammar	0.16	4	0.16	4	0.56	1.98*	1.66	0.04
(3) spelling	0.14	5	0.18	3	2.58**	1.41	1.14	3.94
(4) general voca	0.24	2	0.29	1	3.16**	0.70	0.94	0.60
(5) technical voca	0.19	3	0.15	5	2.37*	2.51*	1.96*	1.78
5. Priority order in language skills								
(1) listening	0.32	2	0.30	2	1.45	1.26	0.45	0.85
(2) speaking	0.33	1	0.27	3	4.46**	2.92**	0.03	0.01
(3) reading	0.23	3	0.33	1	5.28**	0.43	0.69	0.41
(4) writing	0.11	4	0.10	4	1.59	1.60	0.04	0.57
6. Priority order in teaching contents								
(1) linguistic aspect	0.18	3	0.19	2	1.16	0.85	0.1	7.28*
(2) applicable aspect	0.26	1	0.25	1	1.17	0.35	0.52	0.34
(3) interesting aspect	0.18	3	0.18	3	0.16	1.09	0.67	11.40**
(4) professional aspect	0.19	2	0.15	4	2.76**	0.97	0.02	0.08
(5) strategies aspect	0.12	5	0.12	5	1.05	1.60	1.17	0.64
(6) cultural aspect	0.07	6	0.11	6	4.55**	2.36*	2.44*	0.11

\*p<0.05    \*\*p<0.01    \*\*\*p<0.001

<sup>a</sup> English proficiency levels are divided into 3: high, intermediate and low; the division system is the same as in table 5.

<sup>b</sup> The figure shown here refers to the ranking index for junior students, i.e. 1st and 2nd graders.

<sup>c</sup> The figure shown here refers to the ranking index for senior students, i.e. 3rd and 4th graders.

<sup>d</sup> The figure shown here refers to the ranking index for what teachers think would meet the needs of junior students.

<sup>e</sup> The figure shown here refers to the ranking index for what teachers think would meet the needs of senior students.

## V. Conclusion

### A. Pedagogical Implications

The purpose of this study was to provide educators and school authorities with useful information concerning college students' needs for English curriculum. Preliminary and substantial results have been reached after a statistical analysis of the data. It is now to summarize the results and render relevant suggestions in the following:

1. Although college students generally show interest in English and acknowledge its importance, they spend less than enough time and efforts studying it out of class and usually rely on classroom instruction as the only channel of learning; rarely do they have an autonomous type of learning out of class. In spite of a medium high percentage of students who reported learning English through media, it is very likely that they used media more for pleasure than for learning. Therefore, teachers need to caution their students not to over-rely on

classroom teaching and encourage them to make more use of the valuable learning resources outside the classroom, such as newspapers, magazines, radio English programs, pen pals, English conversation clubs, and flash cards. Teachers can also ask their students to brainstorm as many ways of learning English as possible, and to share their experiences with one another. The author once tried the same thing with her students, and obtained wonderful results: one class decided to subscribe to "Studio Classroom", and to be tested by the teacher on a regular basis; another class concluded that they would record the lesson or conversation onto the tapes and have the teacher play some of the tapes in class for public evaluation. In short, it is most important to raise learners' awareness and let students see that the toughest task in learning English neither lies in vocabulary or grammar nor in pronunciation or conversation, but in whether the learner himself is armed with strong motivation, perseverance and appropriate learning strategies.

2. With regard to "expectations of what English curriculum has to offer", the data revealed a most significant difference between the students' expectations and the teachers' views, compared with slight differences among students at different grade years, with different majors, different levels of English proficiency and motivational intensity. Such severe disagreement between the viewpoints of the students and the teachers reflected an urgent need for both parties to work out a consensus as early as possible. Although the teachers might be wiser, the students' opinions should still be respected, so that stronger motivation on the students' side could be aroused and learning outcomes be improved. In planning course syllabus and activities, the teacher should respond to the needs of his students by incorporating their good ideas. For instance, from item 2, 3 and 5 in table 10, one can see that the students have a strong need for oral competence, and that should not be ignored. Teaching English conversation to a large class may not be easy, but the teacher can create many opportunities for his students to practice speaking English by means of cooperative learning and group work. Furthermore, the students' responses to items 1, 4 and 6 revealed a high demand for professional courses, and so the teacher may include some technical materials in the regular courses or, if possible, plan optional ESP (English for Specific Purpose) courses for senior students to register. In brief, in order to match the teaching philosophy of 'learner-centered' instruction, the development and planning of English curriculum must correspond to the needs of the students.

## **B. Suggestions for Future Study**

This study has led to a preliminary result regarding college students' needs for English curriculum. Future studies may investigate such needs in more details, such as the ideal number of vocabulary [words](#) for each proficiency level; the desired [English competence level for different language skills](#), and the connection of [general courses with ESP courses](#).

The subjects of this study were confined to nursing and medical students only. Thus, the generalization of the result to other populations with different majors or educational backgrounds may be limited. In order to validate the present findings, researchers are encouraged to replicate the study.

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## Appendix 1

本問卷調查旨在了解同學對大專英語課程的看法與需求，以作為改善本校英語教學之用，誠盼您據實填寫，並感謝您撥冗填此問卷。

### A. 個人資料

1. \_\_\_\_\_系科\_\_\_\_\_年級
2. 學習英語的總年數：\_\_\_\_\_年
3. 每週課後研讀英語的時數約：\_\_\_\_\_小時

(學習英文的現況及看法)

1. 我對英語的興趣 (1. 很高 2. 高 3. 普通 4. 低 5. 很低)
2. 我認為學好英語 (1. 非常重要 2. 重要 3. 不清楚重要性 4. 不重要 5. 非常不重要)
3. 我認為學英文 (1. 是一種樂趣 2. 令人討厭或害怕 3. 應付考試令人痛苦 4. 無特殊感覺)
4. 我通常在何時讀英文 (1. 考試前 2. 平常日子 3. 課前或課後 4. 週末假日 5. 想到才讀)
5. 我課後花在英文的時間 (1. 很多 2. 多 3. 尚可 4. 少 5. 很少)
6. 我沒有更努力讀英文的原因 (1. 惰性 2. 沒興趣 3. 非主科 4. 時間不夠 5. 乏人指導 6. 其它)
7. 學習英文最大困難是 (1. 字彙背不起來 2. 發音不好, 不會念 3. 文法差, 無法分析句構 4. 背景知識不足, 無法組織連貫 5. 缺乏有效的學習策略 6. 缺乏恆心毅力 7. 其它)

### B. 我學習英語的主要方式是

(請圈選適合自己情況的答案)

	總 是	常 常	偶 爾	很 少	從 不
1. 依賴課堂教學	5	4	3	2	1
2. 自我課後進修	5	4	3	2	1
3. 利用校外的語文補習班或家教	5	4	3	2	1
4. 收聽或收看空中英語教學節目	5	4	3	2	1
5. 聽英文歌、看英文電影或電視影集	5	4	3	2	1

### C. 對大專英語課程之需求

(此部份作答方式為：依重要性將全部答案，依序排列，並將最重要的先列出，如 3214..)

1. 我認為大專英語課程內容安排的優先順序應為 \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1) 一般性英語(日常生活所需)
  - 2) 學術性英語(升學深造所需)
  - 3) 專業性英語(工作職業所需)
  - 4) 文學性英語(精神層次所需)
2. 我認為大專英語課程教學目標的優先順序應為 \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1) 幫助學生奠定英文基礎
  - 2) 訓練學生獨立學習英語的能力
  - 3) 配合學生將來的升學需求
  - 4) 配合學生將來的就業需求
  - 5) 培養學生外語溝通的能力
  - 6) 使學生熟悉西方人的文化習俗思想
3. 我認為一位受學生喜愛的英語教師所需具備的特質為 \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1) 言談風趣，寓教於樂
  - 2) 教學認真，課前準備充份
  - 3) 表達力強，授課說明易理解
  - 4) 與學生互動佳，常關心鼓勵學生
  - 5) 考核評分公平，對學生之要求合理
  - 6) 能適切掌握教學進度
4. 在語言基礎能力方面，我認為大專英語課程應著重於 \_\_\_\_\_ 的教學
  - 1) 發音
  - 2) 文法
  - 3) 拼字
  - 4) 一般語彙
  - 5) 專業字彙
5. 在語言應用能力方面，我認為大專英語課程應強調 \_\_\_\_\_ 的技能
  - 1) 聽力
  - 2) 會話
  - 3) 閱讀
  - 4) 寫作
6. 我認為大專英語課程所採用的上課教材應加強 \_\_\_\_\_ 方面的內容
  - 1) 語文知識
  - 2) 實用性
  - 3) 趣味性
  - 4) 專業性
  - 5) 學習策略
  - 6) 西方文化