

English-Learning Motivation and Needs Analysis: A Case Study of Technological University Students in Taiwan

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ABSTRACT

This paper aimed at exploring technological university students' motivation in learning English and their 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 a medium high motivational orientation and medium low motivational intensity in the students. The results also showed a close relationship of motivational intensity to learning channels, to motivational orientation, and to English proficiency. Major findings led to the conclusion that students with stronger motivational intensity tended to have higher index scores in motivational orientation, developed more autonomous learning, and attained better English proficiency. While students from different backgrounds demonstrated no prominent disagreements in their needs for English curriculum, the results indicated 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 focus on the learners and that language instruction become more learner-centered.

Key words: college English; learning motivation; needs analysis

1. Introduction

1.1 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 majority of them, however, are lacking in language proficiency and are much less

proficient learners than graduates from the general educational system. The reasons why students from the vocational education

system are poorer language performers are many. In addition to the individual factor, the main reason is that English education in vocational schools has not received its due attention from the relevant authority. For example, college students are required to take approximately 8 credit hours of English courses within their four years of study in order to fulfill the language requirement of the school. In other words, they have less than 2 hours of English courses per week, a period much less than enough to learn the language well. To make things worse, a previous survey by this author revealed that a junior college student spent less than one hour on the average studying English on

his/her own after class. The fact that students devoted fewer than three hours per week in English learning resulted in severely insufficient training in English. Even though some students have recognized the importance of English and strove 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 are forced 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 trying to upgrade their students' English level. As more and more students each year fail to meet the teaching criteria, the teacher cannot but lower his requirements for the students so as to fulfill the pre-established curriculum objectives. The result is that students' English ability regresses yearly (Lin, 1992).

While this country is gradually transforming herself into a modernized, international trade center, 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 professionals, the country will have a more competitive edge on the world stage. 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 his/her students improve their English ability by designing such courses that can intensify their learning motivation, make positive their learning attitudes and meet with their learning needs. And that is what this study is for.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

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

1. How motivated are technological university students in learning English? And does this motivation differ among students from different grade years, of different majors, and at different proficiency levels of English?
2. What are technological university students' needs for English instruction? And do such expectations differ among students from different grade years, of different majors, and at different proficiency levels of English? Responses from English instructors in this section are compared with those from the students to gain a whole picture.
3. Is there a significant relationship between students' motivation and their needs for English curriculum? Do students with higher motivation in learning English have different needs from those with lower motivation?

2. Review of Literature

In recent years, the surveying of students' learning motivation and needs has been considered as 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 attitudes and needs. (Allwright, 1983; Berwick, 1994; Nunan, 1988; Taylor, 1987).

Based on the principle of learner-centered instruction, this paper explores respectively the theory of foreign language learning motivation and of needs analysis as

the theoretical basis of this study.

2.1 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: (s)he joins in the process of decision making, accepts students' ideas, supports what students do in class, motivates them and acts 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 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Creating a Learner-Centered Classroom

STUDY	SUBJECTS	OUTCOMES
Nunan (1986)	Adult ESL learners in Australia	Learners have definite views on what they want to do and how they want to learn. There are often dramatic mismatches between the views of the teacher and the learner.
Nunan (1987)	EFL learners in SE Asia	Motivation and activating language beyond the classroom are the key to successful acquisition.
Dan & Gabrielsen (1988)	11-year-old EFL learners in Denmark	Learners can take responsibility for planning, organizing, managing and evaluating their own learning.
Widdows & Voller (1991)	University students in Japan	Students want to be involved in the selection of language content and learning process (Major mismatches today).
Lim (1992)	Junior College students in Singapore	:Opportunities for learners to self-monitor and self-check leads to greater sensitivity to the learning process, and learners develop skills in articulating what they want to learn and how they want to learn.

Heath (2002)	High school students in the U.S.	Learning enhanced when students actively involved in selecting content, learning tasks and evaluation.
Reilly (2004)	EFL learners in Mexico	Motivation enhanced when learning goals are clear, there is a focus on learning process, and learning is personalized.

2.2 Foreign Language Learning Motivation

A learner-centered approach to teaching pays particular attention to the issue of student motives because of the influential effect that motivation has on learning. According to much previous research, motivation has a direct influence on learning in such respects as (1) learning achievement (Cheng, 1996; Gardner, 1992; Hsu, 1986), (2) the frequency of learning strategy use (Ames & Archer, 1988; Bacon & Finnermann, 1990), (3) the intention of speaking the target language to other people (Ely, 1980), (4) the intake of input (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991), and (5) persistence in target language study after school is finished (Ramage, 1990). In addition, there are also studies that reveal a negative relationship between motivation and anxiety. That is, as one's motivation grows higher, one will have lower anxiety, more positive learning attitudes, higher expectation for oneself and extend more efforts to learning.

In spite of the great importance attached to motivation, however, it is a very complicated task to decide the sources of motivation, for many factors can lead to fluctuations in motivation. Factors that may have a promoting or hindering effect on motivation include: (1) personal factors: one's intelligence, aptitude, perseverance, self-evaluation, needs, self-expectation, etc., (2) familiar factors: parents' encouragement, educational levels and foreign language abilities, (3) school factors: learning experiences, the teacher, teaching methods and materials, and (4) societal factors: societal values, cultural backgrounds,

learning environment, etc. (Brown, 1987)

The study of motivation in second-language acquisition was made a distinguished research topic by Gardner and Lambert (1972), who found two types of motivation relevant to second language proficiency: integrative and instrumental. The former is regarded as a positive tendency toward the target language group and culture, and the desire to interact with and even become a part of the community. The latter refers to the motivation to learn the target language for pragmatic goals: getting a good job or a higher salary, furthering a career, reading original texts, and so on.

As to which of the two motives is superior for language learning, results from different empirical studies vary with one another. Some investigations show the superiority of integrative motives over instrumental ones in language attainment (Csizer, K. & Dörnyei, Z., 2005). The others yield just opposite results (Cheng, 1996). More and more studies, however, indicate that language attainment is related to both motives (Hsu, 1986; Laine, 1984). Still, there are other studies which found a third type of motive centering on the need to fulfill a language requirement (Ely, 1986). As a matter of fact, studies that utilize a more open-ended approach to identifying students' motives than has been used previously generally produce a variety of motives that do not correspond to the integrative-instrumental dichotomy — receiving intellectual stimulation, seeking personal challenge, showing off to friends, aiding world peace, travelling abroad, etc. (Crookes & Schmidt, 1989; Dörnyei, 1990;

Ramage, 1985).

Because of the limitation of Gardner's old motivational framework, many researchers (Crookes & Schmidt, 1989; Dornyei, 1990; Oxford & Sherin, 1994) have called for an expansion of it to allow a comprehensive list of motives to emerge. In fact, Gardner has, in the recent research, modified his own theory of motivation by claiming that motivation is composed of four elements: a goal, a desire to attain the goal, positive attitudes toward learning the language, and effortful behavior to that effect (Gardner, 1985).

Crookes and Schmidt (1989) asserted that language learning motivation can be either intrinsic (attitudinal) or extrinsic (behavioral). The so-called intrinsic motivation includes: 1) interest in the target language, 2) the perception that personal needs can be met by learning, 3) expectancy of success or failure, and 4) rewards felt by the learner. External motivation includes 1) attention paid to and efforts involved in L2 learning, 2) long-term strives for L2 learning, and 3) repeated practices. According to many renowned linguists, both the integrative and instrumental motives are external because they are generated by stimuli outside the classroom and that they have a greater influence on adults. To learners who are still in school, the internal motive caused by learning environment, teacher disposition, teaching methods and academic achievement plays a more important role.

In fact, however motivation is classified, almost every learner has a mixed combination of different types of motives. After all, there are so many factors which may affect one's learning. Although motivation is very personal, teachers should still strive to care for their students, design courses and activities that meet with the students' needs so as to evoke the highest possible level of motivation in the students.

For the sake of researching convenience, the current study, based on Gardner's (1985) earlier theoretical framework, interprets

motivation as the combination of motivational orientation and motivational intensity. The former refers to the reasons that the learner hold for learning, and the latter means the efforts that the learner actually extends to learning.

2.3 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/her motivation advances naturally. Researchers in Taiwan have started to do research on related topics in recent years.

An early study by Dr. 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, Shieh and Wu (1988) investigated students' needs for teaching objectives, methods and materials with questionnaires.

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 course, while nearly forty percent of the students hoped to have professional English course 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 et. al. (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 (莊麗容等, 1995) investigating the fourth-year college students' needs for technical 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) making presentations in technical English. 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 two decades from subject- or teacher-centered approach to student-centered instruction. As predecessors have asserted, the traditional grammar-based or reading-based language teaching has failed to meet students' needs; only the two-way communicative instruction which underscores students' learning processes and objectives can really match students' requirements, and effectively improve the results of foreign language teaching.

3. Methodology

3.1 Subjects

The subjects of the study included 25 English teachers and 576 students from a technological university in southern Taiwan. The students were registering respectively in the nursing and medical-technology departments (for a detail of sample distribution, see Table 2). 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 2. Student Sample Distribution

	1st yr	2nd yr	3rd yr	4th yr	Total
Md. Dept	43	47	48	46	184
Nr. Dept	98	96	97	101	392
Total	141	143	145	147	576

3.2 Instruments

3.2.1. Questionnaire (See Appendix 1)

A questionnaire concerned with various aspects of student motivations, attitudes and

needs was developed for use in the study to assess students' learning motivation, attitudes and needs for English curriculum. Some items in the questionnaire were adapted from scales used in previous research (方, 1987) and some were designed by the author for the present use. The questionnaire was tried out by 10 students and examined by three experienced teachers before it was edited into the present format, which contained six sections.

- A. Background Information: including age, sex, majors, grade levels, learning difficulties, time spent in learning English, etc..
- B. Learning Channels: a 5-point Likert scale, which contained five items, with five possible responses (from "always" to "never") to assess students' inclinations to study independently.
- C. Motivational Orientation: a 5-point Likert scale, which contained 12 items, with five responses (from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree") to investigate students' reasons for learning English. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of this scale is .70 ($p < 0.01$), indicating that the scale measures a person's motivational orientation with medium accuracy at different times.
- D. Motivational Intensity: a 5-point Likert scale, which contains 8 items, with five responses (from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree") to assess students' efforts in learning English. The scoring of the scale was from 8 to 40. The concurrent validity of the scale was verified through its high correlation with English proficiency ($F = 25.99$, $p < .001$) The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of this scale is .78, indicating that the scale measures a person's motivational intensity with high accuracy at different

times.

- E. 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'.

3.2.2. 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.

3.3 Data Analysis

SPSS for Windows was used to perform the following analyses: First, descriptive statistics, including frequencies, mean and standard deviation, for the scales was estimated. Next, t-test and one-way ANOVA were run to determine if there was any significant difference in students' learning channels, motivation, and attitudes among students from different departments, grade levels, and with varied English proficiency levels. Third, 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.

4. Results and Discussion

Language Learning Channels

The average length of English study with the present subjects were 9.77 years; the

4.1 Description of the Subjects and

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 not much 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 3). Finally, to the delight of the teachers, there were still 34% of the subjects who enjoyed themselves in English learning.

Table 3. 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 private tutor	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 (%)	Voca.	Pron.	Gram.	World know.	Learning strategy	Perseverance	others
	28.5	24.3	19.4	4.9	10.4	10.4	2.1

As can be seen in table 4, 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 4 Means and Standard Deviations of Major English-learning Channels

Channels	Frequency of Use (%)					Mean	S.D.	Rank
	5 ^a	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

^a 5=always, 4=often, 3=sometimes, 2=rarely, 1=never

Table 5 indicated whether differences in majors, grade years, motivational intensity and English proficiency had made a significant difference on the use of English-learning channels. As shown in the table, the extent to which nursing students relied on classroom instruction was significantly higher than medical students (t=2.31, p<0.01). Senior students, as compared with juniors, had significantly higher percentages of utilizing two types of out-of-class resources, i.e., English teaching broadcasts (t=4.41, p<0.001) and English media (t=5.64, p<0.001). Differences in

motivational intensity seemed to be the key factor in deciding the significant levels on learning channels; students with higher motivation had higher frequencies of use on all learning channels except on classroom instruction, which implied students with higher motivation developed more self-initiating learning. The same phenomenon happened to students with different English proficiency levels; high achievers reported using self-study and English teaching broadcasts significantly more frequently than low achievers.

Table 5 Test Results of Significant Differences on Major English-learning Channels

Variables Channels	Majors ^a	Grade Levels ^b	Motivation ^c	English Proficiencies ^d	
	t-value	t-value	t-value	F-value	Schéffe
1	-2.31*	1.82	-1.26	0.05	
2	0.30	-1.70	9.39***	7.83***	G1>G2,G3
3	-1.27	-0.07	5.01***	1.52	
4	-0.56	4.41***	9.67***	8.19***	G1>G2,G3
5	0.34	5.64***	6.10***	0.32	

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

^a Majors--Medical (N=184) & Nursing (N=392); t-value is derived from the former minus the latter.

^b Grade Levels--Seniors (3rd & 4th grades, N=292) and Juniors(1st&2nd grades, N=284); t-value is derived from the former minus the latter.

^c Motivational Intensity --High (score > 22, N=263) & Low (score<=22, N=313); t-value is derived from the former minus the latter.

^d English proficiency levels--G1 (score >79, N=253), G2 (score between 70~79, N=208) & G3 (score <70, N=115).

4.2 Motivational Orientation and

Motivational Intensity

Table 6 revealed the sample's inclination in learning English. With the statistical figure of each item higher than 3.0 (the scoring range was 1 to 5), the present study produced evidence that motivation was multi-dimensional; many reasons, such as passing exams, furthering jobs, traveling abroad and following trend, may constitute the reasons for learning English. Yet, the result of ranking order was much to the surprise of the author. The first two items (fulfilling language requirement and passing

exams), which had been expected to earn the strongest endorsement from the students, dropped unexpectedly behind other ten items, while seemingly petty reasons like traveling and following the trend, turned out to be endorsed the most by the subjects. Although students generally rejected the idea of studying English for exams, passing tests, in reality, they could be the most powerful force stimulating the majority of students to study English.

Table 6 Frequency, Mean & Standard Deviation for Motivational Orientation

Motivational Orientation	Frequency (%)					M	SD	Rank
	5 ^a	4	3	2	1			
1 Required course	7.6	23.3	41.8	21.4	5.9	3.05	0.99	12
2 Exams	8.3	25.9	49.7	13.0	3.1	3.23	0.89	11
3 Job-related reasons	11.6	53.1	27.1	6.9	1.2	3.67	0.82	4
4 Make foreign friends	9.2	33.9	35.1	17.5	4.3	3.26	0.99	10
5 Education & social status	13.9	54.3	29.0	2.3	0.5	3.79	0.72	3
6 Express oneself	6.8	38.7	43.2	9.9	1.4	3.40	0.81	8
7 Pursue knowledge	10.2	33.3	45.8	8.7	1.9	3.41	0.86	7
8 Cultural reasons	10.4	35.2	44.3	7.6	2.4	3.44	0.87	6
9 Study or travel abroad	26.9	44.8	24.5	3.0	0.9	3.94	0.84	1
10 Interested in English	9.9	31.4	46.2	9.2	3.0	3.36	0.89	9
11 Follow fashion	22.7	42.9	36.3	5.4	1.2	3.81	0.89	2
12 Understand spoken English	16.7	40.5	36.3	5.4	1.2	3.66	0.86	5

^a 5=strongly agree 4=agree 3=not sure 2=disagree 1=strongly disagree

According to table 7, there is no significant difference between medical and nursing students in all the orientation items except number 7, studying English to obtain the latest information, to which medical students gave higher support than nursing students ($t=2.28, p<0.05$). Grade year had a much closer relationship with motivational orientation than majors of study. Seniors yielded means significantly higher than juniors on eight items (item 4-9 & 11-12). That is, as students grew older, their overall motivation for learning English increased. Such a delightful phenomenon could probably be attributed to the pressure in furthering education or seeking employment that was approaching senior students. Similar to grade year, proficiency level reported a result of reaching a significant

level of difference on seven items. A more detailed post hoc analysis of these items revealed that the better proficient students were less inclined to learn English for school requirements or exams, and that they were more willing to make foreign friends than less proficient students. In addition, the former approved more with statements as follows: English is interesting knowledge; learning English is fun; learning English allows me to express myself to foreigners; and learning English can raise my social status. On the whole, more proficient students possessed more intrinsic motivation, while less proficient students were more subject to external influences. Among all of the variables, 'motivational intensity' was found to have the strongest correlation with orientational index; the result of t-test

yielded a significant level on all items except item 3. A more detailed analysis of t-value revealed that the more motivated students had higher means than less motivated ones on all items except the first two. Such findings implied that studying English for

language requirement or for exams were negative motivation, which might deter or hinder one from learning English well and even contribute to the termination of English study when school was over.

Table 7 Results of Testing for Significant Differences for Motivational Orientation

Orientation	Variables	Majors	Grade Levels	Mo. Intensity	English Proficiency	
		t-value	t-value	t-value	F-value	Schëffe
1	Required course	-1.53	-1.32	-0.81***	12.04***	G2,G3>G1
2	Exams	-1.43	-0.84	-7.00***	6.37**	G3>G1
3	Job-related reasons	0.84	-0.07	0.24	0.93	
4	Make foreign friends	1.12	4.28***	4.65***	4.17*	G1>G2
5	Education & social status	-1.06	2.65**	6.13***	5.52**	G1>G3
6	Express oneself	1.23	2.42*	7.55***	3.81*	G1>G3
7	Pursue knowledge	2.28*	3.26***	8.17***	2.69	
8	Cultural reasons	0.94	3.27***	6.17***	0.17	
9	Study or travel abroad	0.62	2.97***	6.93***	1.17	
10	Interested in English	0.26	1.27	10.49***	17.79***	G1>G2,G3
11	Follow fashion	1.45	2.33*	2.78**	3.74*	G1>G3
12	Understand spoken English	-1.56	3.56***	5.29***	2.45	

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

Table 8 summarizes the results of the subjects' responses to the 'Motivational Intensity' section, which contains eight items with a scoring range from 8 to 40. The present sample received an average mean score of 22.07 in this section, suggesting a merely satisfactory motivational intensity in the subjects. Reviewing items in this section, one could conclude that college students were mostly passive learners, doing only what they were asked to do, such as correcting test errors and doing homework carefully, while being perfunctory with things they feel free to do, such as actively practicing using English and thinking of

English often. The item receiving the lowest mean score was class participation, with only 11% of the students who would raise or answer questions, while the rest remained silent – a phenomenon corresponding to what the author had observed in the classroom. Another phenomenon worthy of mention was that more than half of the students (58.1%) considered themselves less hard-working than others, which echoed the fact that the subjects spent an average hour of 0.73 weekly in studying English on their own after class.

Table 8 Frequency, Mean & Standard Deviation of Motivational Intensity

Motivational Intensity	Frequency (%)					M	SD	Rank
	5	4	3	2	1			
1 actively practice using it	3.6	9.5	36.6	36.6	13.5	2.53	0.97	6
2 ask teachers.	5.9	25.2	45.7	18.9	4.3	3.09	0.92	4
3 work harder than others	6.7	5.4	35.8	43.2	14.9	2.34	0.82	7
4 do homework carefully	7.3	27.3	43.2	20.1	2.1	3.18	0.91	2
5 think of English often	1.6	7.8	44.8	35.6	10.2	2.55	0.84	5

6 ask questions in class	6.7	4.3	21.0	47.4	26.6	2.05	0.84	8
7 correct testing errors carefully	9.7	30.0	36.6	19.8	3.8	3.22	0.99	1
8 try to understand English lyrics	8.0	27.3	39.8	17.9	7.1	3.11	1.02	3
aggregated motivational intensity	Min: 8		Max: 37		22.07(2.76)*		4.60	

* Inside () is the ratio of the mean divided by the number of total items.

^a 5=strongly agree 4=agree 3=not sure 2=disagree 1=strongly disagree

According to table 9, medical and nursing students did not statistically differ from each other on motivational intensity, nor did senior and junior students differ greatly in this respect in although they were statistically differentiated on three items(#1, 2 & 7): senior students performed better in seeking multi-channels to learn English, while junior students did better in asking teachers to clarify confusion and correcting homework and test errors. In order to understand how different proficiency levels

affect the intensity of motivation, the study used ANOVA technique and Schéffe test ($p < 0.01$). The one-way ANOVA revealed significant differences among groups ($F = 25.99, p < 0.001$) in the intensity of motivation. And Schéffe test indicated the similar effect: $G1 > G2, G3$ on all of the items except item 8 ($p < 0.01$). In other words, students with better English proficiency tend to work harder.

Table 9. Results of Testing for Significant Differences for Motivational Intensity

Variables Motivational Intensity	Majors	Grade Levels	English Proficiencies	
	t-value	t-value	F-value	Post Hoc (Schéffe)
1 actively practice using it	-0.16	2.77**	9.08***	G1>G3
2 ask teachers.	0.46	-2.50*	7.05***	G1>G3
3 work harder	0.98	-0.54	21.18***	G1>G2,G3
4 do homework carefully	-0.52	-0.66	19.81***	G1>G2,G3
5 think of English often	-0.21	-0.22	6.98**	G1>G2,G3
6 ask questions in class	-0.38	-0.91	8.95**	G1>G2,G3
7 correct testing errors carefully	1.42	-2.64**	18.03***	G1>G2,G3
8 try to understand English lyrics	0.57	1.43	1.94	
aggregated motivational intensity	0.47	-0.60	25.99***	G1>G2,G3

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$

4.3 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, grade levels and motivation variables and Kruskal-Wallis H test with English

proficiency variable.

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 (Friedman 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 (see Table 12); 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 χ^2 values displayed in Table 10, we could see that only one variable, i.e., students v.s. teachers, was highly correlated with 'needs for curriculum' as a whole, while such variables as majors, grade levels, motivation and English proficiency were not. To be more specific, of all 31 sub-items, different majors revealed only four significant differences, and so did different English levels; different grade levels showed eight significant difference, and different motivation levels had seven significant differences.

Table 10. 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)			χ^2 (Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA)	
	S	(Rank)	T	(Rank)	S-T	Majors	Grades	Mo ^A	English Proficiency ^b
1. Priority order in the types of English taught									
(1). general Eng	0.36 ^c	1	0.38 ^e	1	1.99*	0.25	0.17	2.48*	2.18
	0.36 ^d	1	0.28 ^f	2	4.98**				
(2). academic Eng.	0.22	3	0.18	4	2.29*	0.27	2.77	3.07**	6.19*
	0.21	3	0.25	3	2.60**				
(3). technical Eng.	0.29	2	0.25	2	1.88	0.33	0.79	0.05	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	1.61	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	4.40	0.53
(2) learn independently	0.17	3	0.21	2	2.91**	2	1.30	2.03*	2.35
(3).prepare further edu.	0.14	5	0.10	6	2.26*	0.59	3.27**	2.81**	0.68
(4).prepare job market	0.15	4	0.13	4	1.12	0.74	3.89**	1.30*	1.00
(5).commu. competence	0.21	2	0.17	3	2.46*	1.11	2.16*	1.30	3.16
(6) cultural schema	0.07	6	0.11	5	2.63**	2.18	2.51*	1.52	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**	2.12*	1.82
(2) teach hard	0.16	4	0.20	2	2.72**	0.47	1.28	1.52	3.7
(3).articulate oneself	0.22	2	0.24	1	0.33	0.34	1.57	1.68	0.91
(4) care for students	0.19	3	0.18	4	0.92	0.88	2.71**	0.11	4.65
(5).fair assessment	0.11	5	0.09	6	0.32	0.10	0.46	0.41	9.48**
(6) follow syllabi	0.10	6	0.10	5	0.57	0.88	1.36	0.78	5.20
4. Priority order in basic English abilities									
(1) pronunciation	0.25	1	0.21	2	2.13*	0.92	0.49	1.40	1.16
(2) grammar	0.16	4	0.16	4	0.56	1.98*	1.66	1.90	0.04
(3) spelling	0.14	5	0.18	3	2.58**	1.41	1.14	1.22	3.94
(4) general voca.	0.24	2	0.29	1	3.16**	0.70	0.94	1.06	0.60
(5) technical voca.	0.19	3	0.15	5	2.37*	2.51*	1.96*	0.82	1.78
5. Priority order in language skills									

(1) listening	0.32	2	0.30	2	1.45	1.26	0.45	0.35	0.85
(2) speaking	0.33	1	0.27	3	4.46**	2.92**	0.03	0.86	0.01
(3) reading	0.23	3	0.33	1	5.28**	0.43	0.69	1.14	0.41
(4) writing	0.11	4	0.10	4	1.59	1.60	0.04	0.94	0.57
6. Priority order in teaching contents									
(1) linguistic aspect	0.18	3	0.19	2	1.16	0.85	0.1	1.71	7.28*
(2) applicable aspect	0.26	1	0.25	1	1.17	0.35	0.52	1.22	0.34
(3) interesting aspect	0.18	3	0.18	3	0.16	1.09	0.67	2.55*	11.40**
(4) professional aspect	0.19	2	0.15	4	2.76**	0.97	0.02	0.18	0.08
(5) strategies aspect	0.12	5	0.12	5	1.05	1.60	1.17	1.45	0.64
(6) cultural aspect	0.07	6	0.11	6	4.55**	2.36*	2.44*	0.13	0.11

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.0001

^a Motivation here is the combination of motivational orientation and intensity. It's divided into two groups: high (score >64, N=262) and low (score <=64, N=314).

^b English proficiency levels are divided into 3: high, intermediate and low; the division system is the same as in table 5.

^c The figure shown here refers to the ranking index for junior students, i.e., 1st and 2nd graders..

^d The figure shown here refers to the ranking index for senior students, i.e., 3rd and 4th graders..

^e The figure shown here refers to the ranking index for what teachers think would meet the needs of jr. students.

^f The figure shown here refers to the ranking index for what teachers think would meet the needs of sr. students.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The purpose of this study was to provide educators and school authorities with useful information concerning college students' English learning motivation and 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) Although college students, as a whole, did not have high motivational intensity (M=2.76 out of 5.0), they did have a considerable desire to learn English based on the fact that the mean score of each item in Motivational Orientation exceeded 3.0. The only problem was that they failed to put their thoughts into action, which was again supported by a positively significant correlation between intensity and English proficiency, yet a non-significant correlation

between orientation and language proficiency. In other words, it is not enough to have a reason for learning English in order to learn the language well; actual studying and practicing of it is much more essential. Therefore, one of the teacher's jobs is to let students see clearly the relation between motivational intensity and language achievement by creating a virtual language environment with versatile activities in which students must eagerly participate in order to get the task done. For example, the teacher may choose an interesting but controversial newspaper article for students to read and discuss in small groups before they are asked to turn in a group written report. Or, the teacher may help boost students' motivational intensity by having them record their favorite English songs onto audio tapes before they share and explain the songs with the whole class. Although such activities may not immediately improve their English scores on school tests, they are, in the long run, beneficial in developing student autonomy in learning the language. Finally, the result presented "studying or traveling abroad" as a reason endorsed the most by the students, indicating that a winter or summer English camp in the target country arranged by the school may be a wonderful way to connect the learning of English to the actual outside world, and to help students broaden their views and obtain a deeper look at the target culture while practicing the language.

(3) 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.

6. Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Future Research

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 for each proficiency level; the desired competence level of English listening and speaking, and the connection of regular courses with EST courses.

The subjects of this study were confined to nursing students 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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台灣技職學生的英語學習動機及對英語課程之需求

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摘要

本研究透過問卷調查，探討不同科系、年級、英語程度之科技大專生在學習英語方面的動機，態度以及對一般英語課程的需求，以期使教師或課程規劃者更加瞭解其學生，作出適當的因勢利導，引發學生更強烈的學習動機，進而提高學習成效。研究對象包括 576 名一到四年級在校學生，以及英文教師 25 人。研究結果發現，動機強度分別與動機導向、學習管道及英語程度有顯著相關：動機強度越強者，其內在動機亦高，越能產生自發性的學習，因而英語成就也較佳。此外，動機導向與年級也有密切關係：高年級比低年級學生具有更多樣化的學習原因。在課程需求方面，資料顯示不同科別、年級、動機及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。

關鍵字：大專英文；學習動機；課程需求