



# A Survey on Needs Analysis of Morality Cultivation in English for Academic Purpose to Non-English-Majored Postgraduate Freshmen

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## Abstract

The morality cultivation in course instruction is a kind of new teaching idea. Three hundred and two non-English-majored postgraduate freshmen from Yangtze University filled out the questionnaire online on needs analysis of the morality cultivation in English for Academic Purpose (EAP) to non-English-majored postgraduate freshmen. Data collected from 302 questionnaires on needs analysis of the morality cultivation in EAP to non-English-majored postgraduate freshmen were analyzed in this paper. The results in this study showed that: 1) among three hundred and two non-English-majored postgraduate freshmen, 82.11% of them had needs for integrating ideological and political elements into EAP to postgraduate freshmen students; 2) in the learning process of EAP, the subjects had higher needs in listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation, accounting for 89.76%, 79.16%, 87.86%, 90.46% and 91.16%, respectively; 3) postgraduates not only hoped to get teachers' guidance in language ability, but also expected to get teachers' positive guidance in the following aspects: ideals and beliefs (248 students), values (265 students), moral integrity (242 students), personality psychology (253 students), aesthetic taste (236 students) and academic integrity (229 students).

## Subject Areas

Higher Education, Language Education

## Keywords

Needs Analysis, The Morality Cultivation, English for Academic Purposes, Non-English-Majored Postgraduate Freshmen

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, more people and organizations focus on morality cultivation applied in the courses such as English for Academic Purposes, and maths in colleges and universities. President Xi emphasized “all other courses should keep a good section of the channel and plant a good field of responsibility, so that all kinds of courses can go with ideological and political theory courses in the same direction to form a synergistic effect” at the National Conference on the Morality Cultivation in Colleges and Universities from 7 to 8 December 2016 [1]. In June 2020, the construction of curricula related to the morality cultivation in colleges or universities to be comprehensively promoted was required by the “Guidelines for the Construction of Curricula related to the Morality Cultivation in Colleges and Universities” issued by the Ministry of Education [2]. The morality cultivation applied in the courses such as English for Academic Purposes, and maths in colleges and universities is very important for students in colleges or universities to grow and for colleges or universities to achieve the goal of uniting value moulding, knowledge imparting and ability training. More and more researchers spent their time, energy and interest in the study of the morality cultivation applied in the courses. This paper wants to analyze non-English-majored postgraduate freshmen’s needs for morality cultivation in the course: English for Academic Purpose. The paper includes six parts: introduction, literature review, methods, results, discussion, limitations and suggestions for further research, and conclusion.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Definition and Approaches Needs Analysis

Needs analysis (hereinafter NA) refers to “the activities involved in gathering information that will serve as the basis for developing a curriculum that will meet the learning needs of a particular group of students” ([3], p. 35).

Many scholars such as Hutchinson and Waters [4], Brindley [5], Robinson [6], West [7], Brown [3] and Richards [8] agree that needs analysis (NA) plays an important role in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or general English course design.

Hutchinson and Waters [4] differentiate two types of needs: target needs and learning needs. Target needs can be further divided into three classes: 1) necessities mean what students have to perform in the target situation; 2) lacks refer to the gap between what students already know and what is needed in the target situation; 3) wants refer to what students feel they need. Learning needs include information about learners, reasons for learning the language, the ESP course time and location [4]. For Hutchinson and Waters ([4], p. 6), ESP is “an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner’s reason for learning”.

Various approaches such as target situation analysis (hereinafter TSA), learning situation analysis (hereinafter LSA), present situation analysis (hereinafter

PSA), means analysis and language audit are identified to study NA [9]. TSA, LSA and PSA, which are fundamental constituents for analyzing students' language learning needs [9].

Target Situation Analysis (TSA): TSA refers to form of needs analysis, which centers on identifying the learners' language requirements in the occupational or academic setting [7].

Learning Situation Analysis (LSA): LSA refers to subjective, felt and process-oriented needs [10]. Dudley-Evans and St. John [10] stated that LSA meant effective ways to learn the skills and language.

Present Situation Analysis (PSA): Dudley-Evans & St. John ([10], p. 124) stated that PSA estimated strengths and weaknesses in language, skills and learning experiences.

## **2.2. Previous Studies Related to the Morality Cultivation in Postgraduates' EAP**

Many researchers spent time and energy to study the morality cultivation applied in curricula in colleges or universities in China. Shang etc. [11] explored teaching reform of professional English for mechanical postgraduates from the aspect of the morality cultivation. Wu and Li [12] studied integrating academic English, medical English and humanistic ideological and political English, and design of multi-modal ideological and political teaching activities. He [13] studied approaches of morality cultivation teaching in English courses for postgraduates in conservatories. Researchers [14] [15] [16] also studied the morality cultivation from aspects of textbooks, the teaching methods and the teaching reform, respectively. Their studies were related to theoretical exploration on the morality cultivation applied in English course. Researchers Liu and Hu explored 655 EFL learners' needs for "curriculum-based political and virtuous awareness" elements in College English in the context of liberal education in 6 colleges or universities in China [17]. The researcher Lou studied the morality cultivation in College English instruction for non-English-majored undergraduate freshmen [18]. There are few empirical studies on needs analysis of the morality cultivation applied in EAP to non-English-majored postgraduate freshmen. The present paper is related to the needs analysis on the morality cultivation applied in EAP to non-English-majored postgraduate freshmen. This paper will study the morality cultivation applied in EAP to non-English-majored postgraduate freshmen from empirical perspective to explore the postgraduate freshmen's needs on the morality cultivation applied in EAP.

This paper tries to answer the following questions:

- 1) What is the need of the subjects for integrating the morality cultivation elements into EAP teaching for postgraduate students?
- 2) What are the difficulties of the subjects in learning the morality cultivation elements applied into EAP for postgraduate students?
- 3) What kind of guidance do the subjects expect to obtain from the morality cultivation applied in EAP to postgraduate freshmen?

### 3. Methods

#### 3.1. Subjects

The link to the questionnaire was sent to 3 English teachers to teach EAP to the postgraduate freshmen in Yangtze University (the author's colleagues), then they sent the link to the questionnaire to their first-year non-English-majored postgraduates. All 302 subjects were voluntary to answer the questions in the questionnaire online (<https://www.wjx.cn/>). According to the data from the questionnaire, subjects in this study were 302 (128 males and 174 females) first-year non-English-majored postgraduate students taught by EAP from Yangtze University in Hubei province majored as aquaculture, zoology, microbiology, horticulture, genetics, law, physical education to fill in the Questionnaire on the morality cultivation applied in postgraduate English. Their average age was 24 years old.

#### 3.2. Tool

The tool used in this study to explore the postgraduate fresh men's views and needs on the morality cultivation applied in EAP is questionnaire with the Likert scale: 1) strongly disagree; 2) disagree; 3) not sure; 4) agree; 5) strongly agree. The contents (the rate of the morality cultivation in the EAP textbooks, effects of the morality cultivation on students' EAP learning, the Chinese culture, the Chinese social system, the career planning, and correct ideals, beliefs, values) are designed in the questionnaire to obtain subjects' views and needs. The questionnaire includes two parts with 22 questions. The first part of the questionnaire is on the personal information of the participants (age, gender and major, 3 questions), and the second part of the questionnaire is about the fresh men's views on the morality cultivation in EAP and their learning needs (19 questions). The questionnaire was revised by 5 different English teachers (the author's colleagues) several times before being used, and then 10 students were invited to try it out. The questionnaire was valid. And the questionnaire ( $\alpha = 0.803$ ) was good. On June 12-28, 2021, 302 postgraduate freshmen from Yangtze University filled out the questionnaire online (<https://www.wjx.cn/>).

#### 3.3. Data Collection and Processing

All the questionnaires filled out by 302 postgraduate freshmen from Yangtze University online were valid. All the 302 questionnaire data were analyzed and processed by Questionnaire star (<https://www.wjx.cn/>) to obtain the results.

### 4. Results

#### 4.1. Results of General Needs of Integrating the Morality Cultivation Elements into EAP to Postgraduate Freshmen

From **Table 1**, we can know that for the question "The morality cultivation elements should be integrated into EAP to postgraduate freshmen?" Among 302 subjects, 248 subjects (82.11%) agreed and strongly agreed that "The morality

**Table 1.** Results of general needs of integrating the morality cultivation elements into EAP to postgraduate freshmen.

| Question Choices  | The morality cultivation elements should be integrated into EAP |             |
|-------------------|---|-------------|
|                   | Number  | Percent (%) |
| Strongly disagree | 9   | 2.98        |
| Disagree          | 15  | 4.97        |
| Not sure          | 30  | 9.93        |
| Agree             | 146   | 48.34       |
| Strongly agree    | 102   | 33.77       |

cultivation elements should be integrated into EAP to postgraduate freshmen, while only 24 subjects (7.95%) chose “strongly disagree and disagree”.

#### 4.2. Specific Needs of the Morality Cultivation Applied in EAP for Postgraduates

**Table 2** showed that 252 (148 + 104) or 83.44% subjects agreed and strongly agreed that they had difficulties in listening to the materials of the morality cultivation applied in EAP to postgraduates and needed to receive teachers’ teaching guidance to improve their listening ability; 240 (128 + 112) or 79.47% subjects agreed and strongly agreed that they had difficulties in reading the materials of the morality cultivation applied in EAP to postgraduates and needed to receive teachers’ teaching guidance to improve their reading ability; 230 (131 + 99) or (76.16%) subjects agreed and strongly agreed that they had difficulties in writing the materials of the morality cultivation applied in EAP to postgraduates and needed to receive teachers’ teaching guidance to improve their writing ability; oral expression ability and translation ability in the ideological and political teaching of academic English course for postgraduates. 246 (127 + 119) or 81.46% subjects agreed and strongly agreed that they had difficulties in expressing the materials of the morality cultivation applied in EAP to postgraduates and needed to receive teachers’ teaching guidance to improve their speaking ability and 243 (129 + 114) or 80.46% subjects agreed and strongly agreed that they had difficulties in translating the materials of the morality cultivation applied in EAP to postgraduates and needed to receive teachers’ teaching guidance to improve their translation ability.

#### 4.3. The Content for Postgraduate Freshmen to Be Guided by the Instructor of the Morality Cultivation in EAP

From **Table 3**, we may know that postgraduate freshmen in the morality cultivation applied in EAP expected to be guided by the instructor. Two hundred and forty eight subjects expected to be guided by the instructor on ideals and beliefs. Two hundred and sixty five subjects expected to be guided by the instructor on

**Table 2.** Specific needs of the morality cultivation applied in EAP for postgraduates.

| Questions<br>Options | Are there difficulties in listening to MC applied in EAP? |       | Are there difficulties in reading MC applied in EAP? |       | Are there difficulties in writing MC applied in EAP? |       | Are there difficulties in speaking MC applied in EAP? |       | Are there difficulties in translating MC applied in EAP? |       |
|----------------------|---|-------|--|-------|--|-------|---|-------|--|-------|
|                      | N   | P (%) | N  | P (%) | N  | P (%) | N   | P (%) | N  | P (%) |
| Strongly disagree    | 7   | 2.32  | 8  | 2.65  | 6  | 1.99  | 5   | 1.66  | 6  | 1.99  |
| Disagree             | 13  | 4.30  | 14   | 4.64  | 13   | 4.30  | 9   | 2.98  | 9  | 2.98  |
| Not sure             | 30  | 9.93  | 40   | 13.25 | 53   | 17.55 | 42  | 13.91 | 44   | 14.57 |
| Agree                | 148   | 49.01 | 128  | 42.37 | 131  | 43.38 | 127   | 42.05 | 129  | 42.72 |
| Strongly agree       | 104   | 34.44 | 112  | 37.09 | 99   | 32.78 | 119   | 39.40 | 114  | 37.74 |

MC stands for the morality cultivation; N stands for number; P for percentage.

**Table 3.** The content for postgraduate freshmen to be guided by the instructor of the morality cultivation in EAP (more options).

| Options | Ideals Beliefs | Values | Morality | Integrity in Academy |
|---------|----------------|--------|----------|----------------------|
| Number  | 248            | 265    | 242      | 229                  |

values. Two hundred and forty two subjects expected to be guided by the instructor on morality. Two hundred and twenty nine subjects expected to be guided by the instructor on the integrity in academy.

## 5. Discussion

Postgraduate English is a compulsory course with the widest audience for postgraduate students in China. It is not only a new teaching idea but also a new teaching content to integrate the ideological and political elements into postgraduate English teaching. The morality cultivation applied in postgraduate English course will not only meet the needs of postgraduate freshmen to learn postgraduate English knowledge, but also meet their needs to improve their ideological and political literacy.

For postgraduate freshmen, they have intense needs of the morality cultivation applied in EAP. EAP may improve their English level in their academic research, and the morality cultivation elements may guide postgraduate freshmen in the correct paths (such as values) to achieve their academic goals. Teaching materials, the main carrier of teaching content, are the basic guarantee for achieving the teaching goals [15] and also the important media for postgraduate students to receive positive guidance in terms of ideals, beliefs, values, and ethics. Postgraduate freshmen express that at present the content of EAP textbooks for postgraduate freshmen is mostly selected from articles on Western culture, political system, social development, western science etc., while papers on China's

excellent culture, political system, social development achievements, Chinese science (such as 5G, technology of high-speed railway, super computer) are few or not. The emergence of the low content ratio of the morality cultivation in the current EAP textbooks for postgraduate freshmen is very unfavorable for postgraduate freshmen to receive the morality cultivation. Therefore, in the compilation of postgraduate EAP textbooks in the future, it should be clearly stated that the compilation purpose and content of the textbooks are moral education and ideological and political service [14].

The instructors to teach the morality cultivation applied in EAP for postgraduate freshmen need improve their teaching skills and teaching methods to meet postgraduate fresh-men's needs in learning the morality cultivation applied in EAP. Postgraduate freshmen need to improve their listening ability, reading ability, speaking ability, writing ability and translation ability in the morality cultivation applied in EAP. During the teaching process of the morality cultivation applied in EAP for postgraduate freshmen, the instructors may integrate the morality cultivation in meeting postgraduate fresh-men's needs in EAP to help postgraduate freshmen improve their ability in EAP and guide them on correct political path to serve the country and the people in the future.

English for academic purposes can be a course that meets the needs and expectations of postgraduate students' growth and development, goes in the same direction with the ideological and political theory courses to form a synergistic effect. During the teaching of the morality cultivation applied in EAP, teachers and students can use English to study and discuss the content on knowledge related to Chinese culture, Chinese system knowledge, values and the academic integrity to promote postgraduate students' deep understanding for Chinese excellent cultural knowledge, Chinese system knowledge, values and the academic integrity, to improve their ability in EAP, to raise their confidence in Chinese culture, the Chinese social system, and to strengthen their sense of identity with Chinese culture, national identity, and professional identity. However, the negative parts from Western ideologies, cultural systems, and lifestyles will affect postgraduate freshmen in learning EAP, because English is one of the western languages related to western culture, and English articles in the current EAP textbooks and other English audio and video will involve a lot of Western ideologies, cultural systems, and lifestyles. Therefore, English teachers to teach EAP for postgraduate freshmen should correctly guide postgraduate students in terms of ideals, beliefs, ideals and beliefs, ethics, values and the academic integrity to help them know how to resist the negative influence of western ideology, cultural system and lifestyles on their growth. In the future, the English teachers to teach EAP to postgraduate freshmen may combine the correct information related to ideals, beliefs, ideals and beliefs, ethics, values and the academic integrity into their EAP teaching to postgraduate students through different activities such as the English speeches, introduction of the morality cultivation in their scientific researches.

## 6. Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

There are limitations and suggestions for Further Research in this article.

Firstly, the subjects in the study consisted of only 302 non-English-majored postgraduate freshmen in one university, which is needed to be broadened in further research.

Secondly, the instrument used in this study to investigate the non-English-majored postgraduate freshmen students' views and needs on the morality cultivation in EAP involves only questionnaire. The study would be much better, if it were combined with other instruments such as interview, introduction of the morality cultivation in the scientific research. More instruments should be used in investigating in the further research.

Finally, subjects in this study were the non-English-majored postgraduate freshmen students from only one university. The study will be better if more subjects from other local universities can be participated in the experiment.

Despite of the restraints of the study, we hope that it can offer some guidelines for further research of the morality cultivation on EAP for non-English-majored postgraduate freshmen.

## 7. Conclusion

In this paper, 302 postgraduate freshmen at Yangtze University were surveyed on their opinions and needs on the morality cultivation applied in EAP courses. According to the results in this paper, we know that postgraduate freshmen at Yangtze University generally accept the new teaching concept of integrating ideological and political elements into EAP courses, and they need the instructors' guidance in the morality cultivation applied in EAP skills in listening ability, reading ability, speaking ability, writing ability and translation ability. During the teaching process of the morality cultivation applied in EAP to postgraduate freshmen, EAP teachers need correctly guide postgraduate freshmen in terms of ideals and beliefs, values and academic integrity to help postgraduate students to grow up well and at the same time achieve the goal of uniting value moulding, knowledge imparting and ability training.

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## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.



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