



**A SURVEY OF ENGLISH SKILLS AND MARKETING
ACTIVITIES AMONG CHINESE MARKETERS**

BY

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Abstract

This study investigated the demand for English among marketing personnel in China, marketing activities that use English, and intercultural communication issues. Using a mixed-methods research approach, the research employed a questionnaire and in-depth interviews as instruments. The samples were 40 Chinese marketing personnel. The samples were requested to complete the questionnaire through online platforms while data through in-depth interviews were gathered through voice recording and textual transcription. The research employed descriptive statistics, reliability, and significance testing to analyze quantitative data using SPSS (version 26). Qualitative analysis was performed through thematic analysis.

The results indicated a high demand for English skills, especially in speaking and listening skills, among Chinese marketing professionals. English was found to be widely used in marketing activities such as attending global exhibitions and business negotiations. Cross-cultural communication awareness is crucial as understanding and respecting others' cultures and customs can enhance collaborative efforts. The research suggested that, in order to better assist Chinese marketing professionals in their work, ESP curriculum should be designed to enhance both business English proficiency and intercultural communication skills.

(Total 111 pages)

Keywords: Needs analysis, English for Specific Purposes, Marketing, Intercultural Communication

Student's Signature Thesis Advisor's Signature

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background and Significance of the Study

Due to rapid economic growth and the explosive rise of the information age, more and more countries are establishing new connections. Business cooperation and trade have become a new trend in economic exchanges, with English serving as the primary bridge for communication with Western countries and being used and studied by more and more people. The international marketing and trade industry has been rapidly developing since 1980, leading to a sharp increase in the amount of industry professionals (Gillespie & Swan, 2021). For China, the globalized economy is undoubtedly an element of development. Deputy Director Long Guoqiang of the Development Research Center of the State Council of China once stated that since China acceded to the World Trade Organization in December 2001, after 20 years of development, its merchandise trade has risen from sixth place in the world to first place, service trade from eleventh place to second place, and the utilization of foreign capital has secured the top position among developing countries. The efforts of Chinese enterprises and people have not only intensified the development of international trade but also enabled China's contribution to world economic growth to reach about 30% for many years in consecutive years (Long, 2021). According to a report from the General Administration of Customs of China, there were 567,000 international trading companies in China by the year 2021 (General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China, 2022). A report from the Ministry of Commerce of China indicates that by the end of 2023, the number of foreign-funded enterprises in China had reached 1,150,000 (RegistrationChina, 2021). Moreover, the British Council reports that the number of English learners in China has surged to 400 million (British Council, n.d.). With the growth in the market trade economy, an increasing number of individuals are engaging in foreign trade or working for foreign-

funded companies, which signifies that English has become a crucial means of communication in their professional lives.

However, after working as a marketing manager for 5 years and discussions with other global marketers, the researcher noticed that low English skills could bring inconvenience and inefficiency to work. In global marketing meetings with distributors and suppliers around the world, obtaining and exchanging information are essential. In this case, marketers should understand the foreign colleagues' and customers' speeches, and exchange business information with others. When marketers have to deal with negotiations with foreign customers, the key points still remain to be input and output information in English. For example, a poor reading comprehensive proficiency might waste a lot of time at work, when reading seasonal marketing strategies papers sent from the headquarters. Working in the global market, it is difficult and less efficient to communicate without English, which means having a satisfactory level of English proficiency could be vital to global marketers.

The proficiency of English skills has an impact on the work of marketers. Many scholars have conducted research on the relationship between English skills and the marketing field (Rogerson-Revell, 2007; Subramaniam & Harun, 2012; Wu, 2012; Zhang, 2013; Polsombat, 2015; Thomas, Piquette, & McMaster, 2016; Xie, 2016; Putrilani, Mukhaiyar, & Refnaldi, 2018; Takino, 2019). However, a more in-depth investigation is still needed to examine how English proficiency influences Chinese marketing professionals and the level of demand for English in the marketing field. Furthermore, with societal and technological changes, researchers still need to continue exploring the demand for and importance of English among marketing professionals in China.

The academic community in English studies considers the purpose of English language usage as a specific area of research. Since the 1960s, this research has been defined as English for Specific Purposes, used by different professions (Halliday, McIntosh, & Strevens, 1964). Robinson (1991) further clarifies that English for Specific Purposes has various tendencies, with the purpose of English usage extending

beyond literary studies to include academic and professional contexts. Similarly, the study of Chinese marketing professionals can be seen as a study of English for Specific Purposes. Researching English for marketing purposes requires an understanding of the meaning and research principles of English for Specific Purposes.

In conducting research on English for Specific Purposes, an essential first step is to perform a needs analysis (Li, 2014). The analysis of needs requires gathering a lot of data, such as learners' demographic information, the necessity of using English, and other information related to English usage (Nunan, 1988). Furthermore, with the changes in external factors, fluctuations in English proficiency, and shifts in learning objectives, the learning information of learners is constantly evolving, making needs analysis a process of continuous improvement (Graves, 2000).

The understanding of needs analysis can be divided into two categories, target needs and learning needs. It is widely acknowledged that target needs are related to the environmental requirements of English language users. For example, the target needs of marketing professionals may include job requirements, industry norms, and any other factors that could influence the market profit. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) identified necessities, lack, and wants as the three fundamental components of target needs. In order to study the specific English language use of marketing professionals, it is necessary to identify the abilities they must possess, those they lack, and those they desire. This requires a series of information gathering related to their work and English language use.

Learning needs refer to the analysis of factors related to the learner's concept of learning, such as learning habits and environment. This means that research on learning needs for English for marketing purposes should gather information about the stakeholders, in this case, that means the Chinese marketers, such as their personal background, educational background, learning preferences and habits, and so on.

In addition, during the growth period of economic globalization, cross-cultural communication is also common in the work of Chinese marketing

professionals. Communication refers to the exchange of thoughts, ideas, and emotions among individuals, while cross-cultural context refers to an environment composed of individuals from diverse racial, religious, ethnic, and cultural educational backgrounds (Samovar, Porter, McDaniel, & Roy, 2015). Different cultures and customs have different understandings and cultural barriers. For example, the emotions represented by different colors vary in different cultural contexts. In China, white is considered a symbol of solemnity, while in some European countries, white is regarded as a symbol of purity. In this different understanding, if people from these two regions were to collaborate on a product, misunderstandings could arise from the choice of colors. However, this is just a small example. As the workplace culture becomes increasingly complex, the job of marketing professionals will also undergo corresponding changes.

There is a wealth of research in academia regarding business professionals and diverse linguistic and cultural environments (Washington, Okoro, & Thomas, 2012; Miranda & de Salazar Casanova, 2015; Gut, Wilczewski, & Gorbaniuk, 2017; Yao & Du-Babcock, 2023; Rustamovna, 2024). However, when it comes to the attitudes of Chinese marketers towards intercultural communication, what they consider essential to understand, and their level of cultural appreciation, further in-depth research is still required.

In this study, the researcher focused on investigating the importance of English in the global marketing industry, and identifying the specific marketing activities involved. This includes examining the issues arising from cross-cultural communication encountered by marketing professionals in their work. The analysis of specific English language needs has been extensively researched. However, with the advancement of technology and increasing cross-cultural communication, the work environment and requirements of marketing professionals are also changing correspondingly. Therefore, the researcher believes it is necessary to conduct research on the English language needs and cross-cultural communication of Chinese marketing professionals at the present stage. This study can provide the latest data for English for Specific Purposes. Perhaps this data and conclusions can provide recommendations and assistance for English training for Chinese marketing

professionals, enabling educators to have a more intuitive understanding of the English language needs of marketing professionals in their work.

1.2 Objectives of the Research

There are three aims in this research, as follows:

- 1.2.1 To analyze the necessities, lacks, and wants of Chinese marketers for English
- 1.2.2 To investigate which marketing activities require English
- 1.2.3 To study a needs analysis of intercultural communication from Chinese marketing employees in international workplaces

1.3 Questions of the Research

To find out the aims, research designed three research questions in this thesis.

- 1.3.1 To what extent are English skills necessary for Chinese marketing employees?
- 1.3.2 What are the marketing activities that Chinese marketers using English at work?
- 1.3.3 What are the Chinese marketers' attitudes towards intercultural communication in overseas cooperation?

1.4 Scope of the Research

The study was conducted from January to February 2024. This research was established under a mixed-method methodology. This study consisted of two research instruments: a questionnaire survey and a semi-interview. A total of 40 Chinese marketing professionals from diverse industries participated in the survey. The criteria for selecting participants were as follows: 1) Chinese adults over 18 years old, 2)

engaged in international marketing activities, and 3) utilizing English in their work. The researcher identified and invited suitable marketers by observing their work and language skills at international trade shows on multiple occasions. Due to the vast number of individuals who met the criteria, it was not feasible to survey and interview every individual. Therefore, the researcher obtained 40 eligible Chinese marketers who volunteered to participate in the study through convenient sampling. All 40 participants completed the questionnaire, and among them, 10 underwent subsequent in-depth interviews.

1.5 Definition of Terms

The terms used in this study are defined below.

English for marketing purposes (EMP) refers to using English in a marketing environment, including the study and teaching of marketing English.

English for specific purposes (ESP) broadly refers to the use of English for different purposes and purposes (Halliday et al., 1964). ESP is defined in this paper as the use of the English language to meet the specific needs of the speaker and can be broadly extended to English teaching and learning methods for different purposes.

English skills refer to the four English abilities of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Intercultural communication broadly refers to the exchange of ideas and emotions among individuals from different racial, religious, ethnic, and cultural educational backgrounds (Samovar et al., 2015). In this context, it specifically pertains to Chinese marketing professionals communicating ideas and emotions in a complex multicultural environment.

Lacks broadly refer to the gap between learners' current English proficiency and their target proficiency level (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). In this context, it

specifically refers to the disparity between marketers' existing English abilities and the proficiency level required by the industry.

Learning needs broadly refer to the needs related to the inner factors of learners' personalities, desires, strategies, social backgrounds, and so on (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). In this article, this term refers to the marketers' subjective needs, such as their personal background, educational background, learning preferences and habits, and so on.

Marketers in this study refers to Chinese employees who work in marketing-related roles. They create value by completing different tasks and bringing profits to businesses and employers. Specifically, this paper focuses on Chinese marketing professionals in the era of a globalized economy.

Marketing activities refer to all activities that a company conducts to increase profits, including product advertising, pricing strategies, seasonal marketing campaigns, international trade shows, and so on.

Necessity broadly refers to the English requirement that should be done in the target situations (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). In this context, it refers to the industry requirements for English proficiency that Chinese marketing professionals need to achieve in the global economic working environment.

Needs Analysis (NA) broadly refers to the analysis procedure of specific English, by gathering information of the learners' needs, analyzing the information, and determining how and what to be learned (Long, 2005). In this article, NA refers to collecting information related to English from marketers in an international marketing environment, and analyzing this information to obtain solutions to help marketers solve English problems.

Target needs broadly refer to the specific English language requirements of English learners under specific situations (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). In this article,

target needs refer to the English communication requirements of Chinese marketers, specifically about the tasks necessary in global marketing scenarios.

Wants broadly refers to the level of English that learners want to have (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). In this article, we specifically refer to the English proficiency that marketers are trying to achieve.

1.6 Summary and Limitations of the Study

This study provides the latest ESP research data and fills the existing research gap. Through a detailed analysis of English language needs and intercultural communication, it aims to understand the demands of Chinese marketing professionals in the current global economic environment. Although this study conducted a detailed investigation of English for marketing purposes, its conclusions are limited to China due to the nationality restriction. Moreover, the research only surveyed practitioners and did not include surveys of teachers and students in relevant academic fields, might have led to a biased orientation of the results. To better ensure that research findings contribute to contemporary marketing English course design, researchers need to broaden the scope of studies and conduct more in-depth research from various perspectives, including educators, learners, users, and others.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 English for Specific Purposes

The concept of English for specific purposes has been around for decades. It originated after the Second World War and is the product of social change and large-scale economic development (Walsh & Mann, 2019). Although scholars have expanded their understandings of English for specific purposes over time, they agree that it is a combination between English and the purpose of use. In 1964, ESP was proposed by scholars, who for the first time linked it to English teaching (Halliday et al., 1964). From then on, ESP is not only the English used by different professions but also stands for practical English teaching and learning in different majors. In 1987, Hutchinson and Waters expanded ESP, stating that ESP is an English language education process based on learners' needs and that both the methods and content associated with the process should be closely linked to learners' needs (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Anthony (2018) points out that ESP is a teaching approach that focuses on learners' learning needs through the use of appropriate study materials, language skills, and so on. From a broad perspective, English for specific purposes is not only limited to the use of English but also includes the learning and teaching methods of English for special purposes such as academic and occupational. To better use English in related fields and master professional English skills more efficiently, learners should follow the learning rules of ESP.

2.1.1 Types of English for Specific Purposes

The range of special uses of English is very wide, and all English for special purposes is subordinate to it. It is widely recognized that English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Professional Purposes (EOP) are the two major components of ESP. Anthony (2018) made a framework of the extension of ESP

branches, in which it can be seen that ESP subdivides into more small branches. According to the framework, English for emergency room nursing purposes belongs to English for Professional Purposes (EPP), which is a subordinate classification of EOP. In addition, English for lecture comprehension purposes belongs to English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP), which is a subordinate classification of EAP. As the use of English is studied more and more widely, there will be more sub-branches of ESP.

2.1.2 The Four Pillars of English for Specific Purposes

There are four main components of the ESP curriculum: needs analysis, learning objectives, materials and methods, and evaluation (Anthony, 2018). Needs analysis is the first step to doing ESP curriculum design, and focusing on the learners' needs. By conducting a needs analysis, we could know: who needs the specific English, the situation in which English is used, when English is used, and why the learners use English. Learning objectives are what the course designers decide to be contained in the course. Materials and methods are related to teaching methods, and evaluation is to evaluate the English course.

The needs analysis is mainly about doing research on the necessities, lacks and wants of learners (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). The results obtained from needs analysis can provide information to determine learning objectives, as well as help designers find teaching materials and methods that are suitable for learners. In this paper, the researcher focuses on the needs analysis.

2.2 English for Marketing Purposes

English for marketing purposes (EMP) can be defined as the English used and learned by marketing employees for their occupational purposes. English is divided into various branches for different purposes. Due to the globalization of the economy, the work of marketing professionals is becoming more and more global-oriented and they have the chance to communicate with the world. In addition, the marketing field has its own professional laws and the vocabulary, genre, styles, emphasis on language skills could be different from other professions. In this case, English, which is

specifically used and learned by marketers, can be called EMP because of its special usage.

A marketer is a person who works on marketing activities, such as activities that can create products or services of value to employers and customers, and generate profits that are diverse, not only limited to selling (Kotabe & Helsen, 2022). For example, a Japanese company needs to produce a large number of rubber products, but Japan is not the country of origin of rubber, so the Japanese company has to buy rubber production from other countries. Under this premise, Japanese companies should cooperate with suppliers from other countries, and all cooperation activities belong to marketing activities. Just like Coca-Cola sells its products in different countries, they need to carry out a series of marketing activities. For example, to make a marketing plan, marketing staff need to conduct market research on other countries, they need to obtain market information of competitive products, and local customer needs, and summarize all the collected information in the marketing plan. The final market development strategy would be developed through meetings and discussions with colleagues. In the product promotion phase, the company's marketing personnel need to cooperate with the local distributors, and then report the quarterly cooperation summary to the Coca-Cola Company. Marketing activities to produce benefits is a complex process, which needs creation, communication, and exchange to achieve. In the era of globalization, English has long been the medium of communication for marketing workers, and it is also used and learned for marketing related work.

English learning is to master English language skills. English skills can be divided into four main parts: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and each skill has its subskills. Listening subskills include listening for the main topic, guessing unknown information, listening for specific details, and inferring the speakers' attitude and purpose (Azeez & Al Bajalani, 2018). Speaking subskills mainly consist of using accurate words and pronunciation, speaking in whole sentences, fluently speaking, and speaking on one's initiative (Khaizal, Nasir, Rahimi, & A-Rahman, 2021). The subskills of reading mainly include word decoding, text comprehension, vocabulary, and reading speed (Landi, 2009). The sub-skills of writing mainly include grammar,

orthographic control, cohesion and coherence, vocabulary, and genre format (Wang & Fan, 2020). In the working environment of global marketing, these language skills will be put into practice in different work activities. For example, in the conference discussion mentioned above, listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills will be used in varying degrees. In this case, the intensity necessary for each skill is unknown, so it needs to be investigated.

2.3 Needs Analysis

Needs analysis is a systematic process, which not only focuses on the analysis but also the collection of needs. In addition, needs are considered to be prioritized; they should be sorted according to priority and followed in data collection and analysis of conclusions (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Graves (2000) stated needs analysis should be carried out continuously since the needs will change with time. It can be understood here that with the development of society, the working environment and job requirements will change, and learners' needs for language will change, resulting in changes in the content of learning. Therefore, requirements analysis needs to be carried out continuously in order to obtain the most suitable analysis results at present. When conducting a needs analysis, it is necessary to understand which needs should be collected and analysed. Needs are related to learning tasks and learners.

2.3.1 The Components of Needs Analysis

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) state that target needs and learning needs are two essential parts of collecting needs. There are three components to the target needs: necessities, lacks and wants. The necessities refer to the knowledge and ability of English that the students need to possess in the language-using situation, and these language abilities should meet the job requirements. The lacks relate to the gap between the students' current language ability and the required ability. The wants are related to the learners' subjective ideas, which are mainly about learning habits.

When investigating the target needs, it is needed to understand why learners use the language, how the language is used, the relevant knowledge, with whom to speak English, where to speak it, and when to use it. Learning needs are more related

to learners' learning methods, personal background, and learning reasons. This part is to understand who the learner is, why, and how they learn.

2.4 Intercultural Communication

It is well known that the term “intercultural communication” was first introduced by Edward T. Hall (Hall, 1959). When Intercultural communication appeared for the first time, it stood for the communication of people from two different civilizations (Chen & Starosta, 1998). With the development of economic globalization, intercultural communication not only refers to the communication between two cultures but also refers to the communication and exchange between multiple cultures.

To understand intercultural communication, we can break down this term. First of all, human communication refers to the transmission and sharing of information between people in a specific situation. Intercultural, on the other hand, refers to the collision between a complex diversity of customs, beliefs, values, and behavioural norms (Samovar et al., 2015). In this research, it specifically stands for the Chinese marketing professionals sharing ideas and emotions in a complex multicultural working situation.

2.4.1 Verbal and Non-verbal Intercultural Communication

According to the information conveyed, intercultural communication can be divided into two types: verbal intercultural communication and non-verbal intercultural communication (Samovar et al., 2015). Literally, verbal communication refers to exchanging information using language. Non-verbal intercultural communication refers to all communication that cannot be expressed through language, including behaviours, spatial arrangements, and the setting of time. Samovar, Porter, McDaniel, and Roy (2015) emphasize that non-verbal messages can be both autotelic and unconscious, and cannot be separated from linguistic information. In the context of this study, the medium of verbal intercultural communication for Chinese marketing professionals is English. All other information,

such as behaviour, attire, expressions, and so on, are non-verbal signals they transmit in their international work environment.

2.4.2 Intercultural Business Challenges

In cross-cultural communication of a commercial nature, people face five challenges: (1) how to maintain good business etiquette, (2) leadership and management in a cross-cultural environment, (3) marketing decisions in cross-cultural communication, (4) how to manage possible conflicts in management, and (5) how to negotiate in an intercultural context (Samovar et al., 2015). The solution to these challenges is to have a sense of cross-cultural communication.

In the book *Communication Between Cultures* (Samovar et al., 2015), the authors suggest that developing cross-cultural awareness when communicating can lead to greater efficiency. First and foremost, it is important to believe that every individual is unique. While individuals may share similar cultural backgrounds, differences in personality, gender, upbringing, education, and cognition require us to communicate with each individual on a personalized basis rather than making generalizations. In multicultural communication situations, it is important to objectively view the other party's culture, understand that cultural differences exist, and not just immerse oneself in one's own culture. Secondly, in order to achieve cross-cultural communication or cooperation, necessary compromises can facilitate the process of cooperation. Finally, it is also important to recognize that communication is not always the ultimate solution, and sometimes ceasing communication might be better.

Communication is about exchanging information and reaching a consensus. But in different cultural contexts, seeking common ground while reserving differences can bring benefits to communication. This means that people need to understand each other and integrate cultures. Cultural differences exist among workers from different countries, and it is essential to make reasonable use of cross-cultural differences in order to achieve marketing purposes.

2.5 Relevant Research Articles

In 2010, Malaysian scholars conducted a similar ESP analysis, surveying the English proficiency of 65 engineering graduates working in 10 multinational corporations. Kassim and Ali (2010) investigated the needs and importance of English skills for engineering graduates in multinational work environments through a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire on needs analysis. This study reveals that engineers in the workplace rank oral and writing skills as equally important (with mean scores of 4.3), followed by listening (mean score of 4.2) and reading (mean score of 4.1). In professional events involving English usage, the 65 respondents reported frequent occurrences of activities such as teleconferences, presentations, discussions, and writing reports and proposals, accounting for 61-80% of their work. The respondents also believed that fluent English proficiency is beneficial for career advancement. Kassim and Ali (2010) believed that the high frequency of English usage and its correlation with promotions among engineers indicate the paramount importance of English in their workplace. Kassim and Ali (2010) argued that English communication is not only a professional requirement but also a facilitator for career advancement. Their conclusion emphasizes the significance of spoken English over written skills and suggests that ESP teaching programs should be improved by integrating content relevant to the work domain.

Yan Wu's (2012) study on the needs analysis of university business English courses also inspired my research. Wu's samples of 340 participants included 100 international business owners, 220 graduates with one-year work experience in business English, and 120 undergraduate students studying business English. The findings of this research indicated that oral and listening skills are crucial for business English majors, as 70% of employer participants believed that employees lacked business English oral and listening abilities, and 36.3% of graduate practitioners and 60.8% of undergraduates felt that improvements were needed in business English speaking and listening skills. In marketing activities related to English, employer respondents considered business English conversation (65%) to be the most practical, with business English negotiation (50%) and product demonstration (50%) tied for

second place. However, graduate respondents with one-year work experience regarded business English negotiation (72.5%) and business English conversation (72.5%) as equally the most important, followed by English correspondence (40.9%) and product presentation (36.3%). Wu (2012) asserted that the oral and listening skills of professionals in Business English need enhancement, and advocated for practical exercises in Business English abilities in learning and improvement.

Polsombat (2015) from Thammasat University conducted a study on the English proficiency of sales personnel in a foreign-owned company in Thailand. The researcher administered a questionnaire, including a 4-point Likert scale, to 30 employees in the sales department of a Japanese trading company. The results on the necessities for English skills indicated that the sales staff considered oral skills to be the most in-demand at work (with a mean score of 3.67), followed by listening skills (with a mean score of 3.63), and reading and writing skills tied for third (with a mean score of 3.5). Polsombat's research findings indicated that all four English skills are required in the international trading workplace, with speaking and listening being the most crucial. The study also concluded that English training should be tailored for the sales department employees, incorporating practical events such as meetings, telephone communications, and presentations into the learning process to enhance their skills.

Takino's (2016) doctoral research at the University of Southampton on the English proficiency of Japanese business professionals also noted that participants faced numerous challenges when using English in their work. Takino's conclusion highlighted that English is indispensable in the work of Japanese business professionals, with the difficulty lying in their transition from learners to proficient users. Furthermore, through thematic analysis, Takino discovered that the challenge lies in applying learned English skills flexibly to work tasks and avoiding errors. These marketing job tasks include attending meetings, drafting business documents, engaging in business collaborations, participating in international conferences, and more.

Additionally, articles on intercultural communication and language by various scholars also inspired my research. Lifintsev, Fleseriu, and Wellbrock (2019) argued that in the context of globalized business environments and the digital information age, the ability to communicate and navigate cross-cultural interactions is essential, with young people embracing multicultural social and work settings. After surveying 324 university students from Germany, Ukraine, and Romania, the researchers found that 88% of the participants strongly agreed that possessing cross-cultural communication skills is a fundamental ability in modern society, 70% held positive and inclusive attitudes towards cross-cultural work environments, and over a quarter believed that companies with multicultural work environments had higher revenues. Researchers also found that participants with strong English skills reported significantly smoother intercultural communication compared to those with weaker English abilities. Beyond language issues, approximately 40% of the participants identified differences in cultural values and behavioural standards as barriers to communication.

Echavarria (2014) conducted a study on the relationship between second language proficiency and intercultural communication in the context of professional work, involving 71 individuals from global professional fields. The findings of Echavarria's research indicated that respondents acknowledged the advantage of strong intercultural capabilities in enhancing job competitiveness, with 89% of the respondents believing that good language skills and intercultural abilities improve work efficiency. All participants (100%) expressed that understanding the customs, norms, and values of different cultures and countries, as well as language, is crucial in intercultural communication settings. Echavarria (2014) further noted that individuals with higher proficiency in a second language and extensive international work experience tend to believe that intercultural communication awareness and skills play a more decisive role than language in business collaborations.

In summary, numerous prior studies have explored the significance of English in the global workplace and issues related to intercultural communication from various angles and extents. However, few scholars have conducted a detailed

needs analysis of the English skills required by Chinese multinational marketing professionals while also investigating intercultural communication issues. Nevertheless, with the advancement and transformation of communication methods due to the evolution of time and technology, new research should be conducted to address the English needs and intercultural communication challenges faced by Chinese marketing professionals. These prior studies have offered experience and insights, which this researcher will utilize to explore the English needs and intercultural communication of Chinese marketers against the backdrop of global economic development.



Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Population

A total of 40 participants took part in this study. All participants were Chinese citizens using English and engaged in international marketing. They were selected from various international trade fairs around the world, including the China Import and Export Fair (Canton Fair), Shanghai World Expo International Exhibition, Beijing Sino-Dental Show, Bangkok Ad & Sign Expo, DigiTech ASEAN, Glasstech Asia, Thailand International Motor Expo, the International Dental Show (IDS) in Cologne Germany, Istanbul Dental Exhibition (IDEX) in Turkey, and Vietnam Medical Exhibition. These exhibitions target enterprises from around the globe, allowing the researcher to more effectively identify marketing participants who meet the research criteria: 1) working in an international environment, 2) using English for communication, and 3) being adult Chinese individuals.

Before identifying the target participants, the researcher first observed the attendees' ID badges to determine if they held marketing-related positions. The researcher then assessed their work situations to ascertain if they used English in their jobs. After clarifying the above conditions, the researcher engaged in conversation to tell them about the study's content, inquired about their willingness to participate, and established connections with those willing Chinese marketers, such as exchanging business cards or adding them on WeChat. Due to the busy schedules of marketers, to efficiently gather responses from 40 participants, the researcher added and included them in a WeChat group chat for online questionnaire collection. The first part of this study was a questionnaire survey, which was voluntarily participated in by 40 marketers within the WeChat group. The second part of the study involved interviews,

with 10 interviewees who came from the questionnaire participants and participated voluntarily.

All participants were over 18 years-old adults. The participants' right to privacy always were respected and the participants were within their rights to draw out of the research without any explanation. The researcher was aware of the research moral and basic ethical principles, and protected the rights of participants to remain anonymous.

3.2 Research Instruments

The research aimed to investigate the needs analysis of English in the marketing professional under the globalized economic environment. This research was conducted under a mix-method methodology, including a questionnaire and a semi-interview. The majority of questions were quantitative, containing close-ended questions and Likert scales. The qualitative research questions were open-ended questions in the semi-interview.

The first part was a questionnaire which partly adapted from the following surveys: Long (2005), Luankanokrat (2011), Polsombat (2015), and Kaewsuphan (2018). Because the research participants and research purpose were different, the researcher made some changes to the question sentences and choices, so as to be more suitable for this research.

The questionnaire was quantitative research, and contained five parts:

No. 1: General background information

There were 5 close-ended questions in the first part of the questionnaire, which focused on the participants' general background information.

No. 2: English background information

This second part consists of 8 questions investigated the English competence of participants, as well as the relation of English to their working situations. The first 7 questions were close-ended questions, and the eighth question was a four point Likert scale with ranges from “excellent” to “poor”. The 4 points Likert scale was easy for respondents to understand, and minimize ambiguity. Also, by analysing the results of the Likert scale, the researcher could clearly judge how much respondents prefer different answers.

No. 3: Necessities of English skills and marketing activities

The third part was a 4-point Likert-scale of questions, investigating the needs of English communication skills of marketers in the target situation. The close-ended questions consisted of the needed English skills and English working tasks that the marketers should accomplish in the workplace. The scoring ranks of answers indicated the extent from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”.

No. 4: Lacks and wants of English communications

This part of the questions consisted of 7 close-ended questions. The fourth question was a multiple-choice question, in which the respondents could choose more than one answer.

No. 5: Needs of intercultural communications

This part consisted of two of the 4-points Likert scales, which corresponded to different problems. The first one investigated what knowledge is useful in business cross-cultural communication. The second question investigated marketers' perceptions of cultural integration.

A semi-interview was the second part of the survey. There are 6 open-ended questions in the interview, in order to get more in-depth answers. To avoid peer interference during the interview, the researcher opted for individual interviews.

Question 1: Lots of companies require marketing employees to be capable of using English. Do you think English skills are important in the global marketing field? And please tell me the reason.

Question 2: What kind of marketing activities or tasks do you need to use English for when you are working?

Question 3: Which marketing activities are the most difficult to perform in English? Please give the reason.

Question 4: If you were to attend an English marketing course, what knowledge do you think would be beneficial for your work to learn in class?

Question 5: If you can take an English course, what kind of materials do you want to study with? Authentic business materials (such as a video of business English negotiation, a reading article from economic newspapers, and so on) or general traditional English textbooks. Please give a reason.

Question 6: Have you encountered any issues due to cultural differences in a multicultural work environment? Could you share your thoughts or experiences on intercultural communication?

3.3 Data Collection

The data collection period for this study was from January 2024 to February 2024. Due to the presence of two research instruments in this study, and interviewees being selected from the questionnaire participants, data collection was divided into

two steps: the first step being a questionnaire survey, and the second step being semi-interviews. The questionnaire survey took an average of about 5 minutes per person, while each interview lasted approximately 15 minutes. The steps for data collection for each type were detailed below.

The first step was to conduct a survey questionnaire, which was shared with participants through Questionnaire Star software and WeChat software. In the early stage of the experiment research, the researcher took the survey questionnaire to international exhibitions to collect voluntary marketing personnel information for the questionnaire research and established online connections with them. During the period of the experiment, participants were scattered in different cities and countries. The researcher sent the survey questionnaire online to the participants, who then opened the online link to answer the questions and submitted the questionnaire to the website. After each participant submitted the answers, they underwent a validation process by the researcher to ensure the completeness of the responses. Then they could receive an online gift from the researcher. In order to further ensure the integrity and authenticity of the information collected, the researcher retained the participants' electronic questionnaires and necessary information.

The second step in data collection involved semi-structured interviews. Ten participants were selected from the questionnaire respondents for a more in-depth study. Due to the interviews coinciding with the Chinese New Year holiday, when the interviewees were located in different cities and regions, to reduce research costs and avoid peer influence, three interviews were conducted via voice call (interviewee 5, interviewee 6, interviewee 8), and four interviews were carried out through an online chat software (interviewee 1, interviewee 2, interviewee 3, interviewee 4). Three interviewees (interviewee 7, interviewee 9, interviewee 10) underwent face-to-face interviews, during which the researcher maintained a friendly demeanour to prevent any anxiety or discomfort in the interviewees. In order to ensure complete and valid data, the researcher maintained a rigorous attitude during voice calls and face-to-face interviews and recorded the conversations of the original interviews for data analysis.

The transcripts of the four interviews conducted through the online chat apps were also copied and organized into files for analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis

A computer statistical software called SPSS version 26 was used to analyse the questionnaire data. By running the software, the descriptive statistics are analysed and shown in tables, together with the mean value, standard deviation, frequencies, and percentages. Moreover, a comparison of data from different working positions ranks would be included.

In order to find the content topics of the interview responses, the data was sorted according to the thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Firstly, the researcher familiarized the interview transcripts and then selected the meaningful fragments as initial codes. Secondly, the researcher rethought the initial codes and put them in tables. Then grouped and catalogued the codes, and the possible themes were written down. After carefully considering and reviewing the interview records, the researcher narrowed down and determined the final themes. Finally, the researcher wrote the results of the interview analysis in paragraphs.

Chapter 4

Research Results

This chapter is mainly about the research results. The following parts present the data analysis results of the survey questionnaires and semi-interviews. In addition, the results of the analysis are presented in the order of questions and experimental procedures of questionnaires and interviews.

4.1 Personal Background Information of the Marketers

The questionnaire required participants to provide general background information, which has been summarized in the following table.

Table 4.1 Descriptive statistics of general background information

General background	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	26	65.0
	Male	14	35.0
Age	Below 30 years old	5	12.5
	From 31 to 40	28	70.0
	From 41 to 50	5	12.5
	Older than 50	2	5.0
Highest academic qualification	Vocational college	9	22.5
	Bachelor's Degree	26	65.0
	Master's Degree	5	12.5
Current working position	Entry-level (just starting)	11	27.5
	Mid-level (managerial position)	19	47.5
	Senior-level	10	25.0

Table 4.1 Descriptive statistics of general background information (continued)

General background	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Period of working	Below 5 years	10	25.0
	From 6 to 10	14	35.0
	From 11 to 15	10	25.0
	Beyond 15 years	6	15.0

According to the statistics described in Table 4.1, the sample size of this survey is 30 people, including 26 women and 14 men. The number of people aged between 31 and 40 is the largest, with 28 people, accounting for 70.0%, and the number of people aged over 50 is the least, with only 2 people. The number of people with bachelor's degrees is the largest, 26 people, accounting for 65.0%, only 5 people with master's degrees and 9 people with college degrees. There are 19 mid-level positions, 11 junior positions, and 10 senior management positions. The number of people who have worked in the international business field for 6 to 10 years is the largest, with 14 people, the number of people who have worked for less than 5 years and 11 to 15 years is 10, and the number of people who have worked for more than 15 years is the smallest, with only 6 people.

4.2 English Background Information

Table 4.2 Description statistics of English background information

Question	Choices	Frequency	Percentage (%)
How long have you been using English at work?	Below 5 years	8	20.0
	From 6 to 10	15	37.5
	From 11 to 15	13	32.5
	Over 15 years	4	10.0

Table 4.2 Description statistics of English background information (continued)

Question	Choices	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Have you ever taken any English classes during the working years?	Yes	9	22.5
	No	31	77.5
Did you take any standardized English test before?	Yes	4	10.0
	No	36	90.0
Did you travel to any English-speaking country before?	Yes	21	52.5
	No	19	47.5
	Rarely	4	10.0
How often do you use English?	Two days a week	6	15.0
	Often (4 to 5 days a week)	13	32.5
	Everyday	17	42.5
	Non-native	8	20.0
Whom do you usually speak English to?	Mother tongue	4	10.0
	Both	28	70.0
What English skill is the most challenging to your work?	Listening	15	37.5
	Speaking	15	37.5
	Reading	1	2.5
	Writing	9	22.5

As can be seen from Table 4.2, 8 people have been using English for less than five years, accounting for 20.0%, and 32 people have been using English for more than five years, accounting for 80.0%. In terms of whether they have participated in English improvement courses, 9 have participated and 31 have not. On the question of whether they had taken standardized English tests, 4 had taken them and 36 had not; On the question of whether they had been to an English-speaking country, 21 had been

and 19 had not. The number of people who occasionally or rarely use English is 10, accounting for 25.0%, and the number of people who often or daily use English is 30, accounting for 75.0%. Among the English users, 8 were non-native English speakers, 4 were native English speakers, and 28 were both. In terms of the most challenging English ability, 15 people think that listening ability and speaking ability are the most challenging, 9 people think that writing ability is the most challenging, and only 1 people think that reading ability is the most challenging.

When analysing the data on the Likert scales in this research, the researcher defined the numerical range of the mean score as follows:

Mean range	Interpretation of items
3.41-4.00	Very high
2.81-3.40	High
2.01-2.80	Moderate
1.01-2.00	Low
0.00-1.00	Very low

Table 4.3 Descriptive statistics of current English proficiency

Skill	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.
Reading	40	1	4	2.50	0.641
Speaking	40	1	4	2.45	0.714
Writing	40	1	4	2.42	0.594
Listening	40	1	4	2.35	0.700

The descriptive statistics were carried out on the current English proficiency of the samples as shown in Table 4.3. It could be seen from the results, that the mean value of listening ability is 2.35, the mean value of speaking ability is 2.45, the mean value of reading ability is 2.50, and the average value of writing ability is 2.42, and the average level of all four ability levels is above 2 points, indicating that the English level is above the middle level.

4.3 Necessities of English Skills and Marketing Activities

Table 4.4 The necessities of English skills and marketing activities

Skills	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.
Speaking skills	40	3	4	3.63	0.412
Listening skills	40	2.75	4	3.51	0.414
Reading skills	40	2.5	4	3.35	0.493
Writing skills	40	2	4	3.28	0.555
English total skills	40	3	4	3.41	0.361

A descriptive statistical analysis was conducted on the needs of English skills and marketing activities, which can be found in Table 4.4. The results indicate that the overall importance of English proficiency has a mean value of 3.41, with speaking skills at a mean of 3.63, listening skills at a mean of 3.51, reading skills at a mean of 3.35, and writing skills at a mean of 3.28. In conclusion, the overall importance of English, as well as the importance of reading and writing, is at a moderately high level, while the importance of speaking and listening skills is at the highest level.

Table 4.5 Descriptive statistics on the needs of speaking skills

Speaking skills in marketing activities	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.
Respond to or explain about the company's products and services	40	3	4	3.68	0.474
Inquiring about problematic issues or requesting customers' feedback/decisions regarding marketing matters	40	3	4	3.67	0.474
Interacting with foreigners orally when communicating about general market issues	40	3	4	3.62	0.490
Speaking English in meetings/seminar concerning marketing issues	40	3	4	3.53	0.506

Table 4.5 presents descriptive statistics on the importance of the need for English-speaking skills in marketing campaigns. As can be seen from the results of Table 4.5, the mean importance of all four aspects is above 3.4 points, indicating that the importance of oral skills in these four areas is at a super high level. Participants identified speaking skills as being the most in-demand in marketing campaigns. Among them, the average value of replying and explaining products and services was the highest (3.68), and communication to solve work problems and customer needs ranked second (3.67). Verbal communication on market issues (3.62) and the use of English in work meetings (3.53) ranked slightly lower.

Table 4.6 Descriptive statistics on the needs of listening skills

Listening skills in marketing activities	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.
Listen to the requests or compliments of foreigners related to marketing matters	40	3	4	3.70	0.464
Listen to marketing meetings/seminar in English	40	3	4	3.57	0.501
Listen and understand what is being said on the telephone	40	3	4	3.53	0.506
Listen to the different English accents at work	40	2	4	3.22	0.620

A descriptive statistical analysis of the demand for English listening skills in market activities is provided in Table 4.6 results. The mean values of importance in all four aspects are above 2.8 points, indicating that marketing professionals have a high demand for listening skills, as it is essential for them to be aware of what others are trying to communicate in their professional duties. Among these, the average value of understanding the market-related content of foreign customers was the highest (3.70), and the average value of understanding business meetings and understanding business phone calls was about 3.55, indicating that these three items are in very high demand in the work of the participants. Although the average value of understanding accents from different regions is the lowest, it still achieves a score of 3.22, indicating that the demand for this listening skill is also high.

Table 4.7 Descriptive statistics on the needs of reading skills

Reading skills in marketing activities	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.
Read the technical issues/protocols/terms and conditions or content details in English	40	2	4	3.43	0.594
Read marketing English-language advertisements/articles, such as the promotion of new product launches	40	2	4	3.35	0.580
Read the records of a marketing-related conference or seminar	40	2	4	3.33	0.616
Read commercial letters/notes and memos with marketing terms	40	2	4	3.30	0.564

Descriptive statistics indicate the importance of English reading skills, as shown in Table 4.7. The mean scores for all four aspects are above 3 points, indicating that the importance of reading skills in these four aspects is at a moderately high level. In business activities, participants consider reading technical issues, agreements, and terms in English (3.43) as the most important. Reading English advertisements related to market products (3.35), reading English meeting records in the market (3.33), and reading business correspondence letters (3.30) follow in descending order.

Table 4.8 Descriptive statistics on the needs of writing skills

Writing skills in marketing activities	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.
Prepare a sales summary/market analysis focusing on the cause-and-effect relationship for specific sales figures	40	2	4	3.35	0.580
Craft a report utilizing marketing-related English vocabulary	40	2	4	3.30	0.608
Write problem-solving strategies or planned countermeasures to prevent potential problems related to marketing	40	2	4	3.30	0.564

Table 4.8 Descriptive statistics on the needs of writing skills (continued)

Writing skills in marketing activities	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.
Draft and write forecasts and plans of sales and marketing in English	40	2	4	3.18	0.675

Table 4.8 is a descriptive statistic on the importance of English writing skills, and the results show that the mean values of the four aspects are above 2.8 points and below 3.4 points, indicating that the importance of writing skills in all four areas is at a high level. The average value for writing sales reports and analyses in English was the highest (3.35). Other market-related tasks related to writing in English are also above a score of 3.0.

4.4 Lacks and Wants of English

In the questionnaire, participants were asked to answer the multiple-choice questions about lacks and wants in English, and the data collected were summarized below.

Table 4.9 Descriptive analysis of lacks and wants of English

Question	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Required English level	Starter	1	2.5
	Basic user	13	32.5
	Independent user	16	40
	Proficient user	10	25
Do you need to improve English to get promoted?	Strongly agree	4	10
	Agree	24	60
	Disagree	12	30

Table 4.9 Descriptive analysis of lacks and wants of English (continued)

Question	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Which aspect of listening skills would you like to enhance in your opinion?	Listen for gist	13	32.5
	Listen for details	13	32.5
	Recognize attitude and purpose	8	20
	Infer the information	6	15
Which aspect of speaking skills would you like to enhance in your opinion?	Accurate words & pronunciation	5	12.5
	Fluency	13	32.5
	Speaking in sentences	3	7.5
	Spontaneously speaking	19	47.5
Which aspect of reading skills would you like to enhance in your opinion?	Decoding	11	27.5
	Vocabulary	14	35
	Comprehension	12	30
	Reading speed	3	7.5
Which part in writing skill would you want to improve?	Grammar	5	12.5
	Cohesion and coherence	25	62.5
	Vocabulary	6	15
	Genre format	4	10
Are you willing to attend English skills training courses for the job?	Very much	7	17.5
	I want to	28	70
	Disagree	5	12.5

Table 4.9 provides a descriptive statistical analysis of the use and improvement of English skills. According to the results of Table 4.9, it can be seen that the number of individuals who need to use English proficiently for work independently is the highest, with 16 people, followed by proficient language users at 10 people, and only 1 person who needs to just start learning English. Therefore, it can be inferred that international workplaces high demands on English proficiency. Regarding the question of whether it is necessary to improve English proficiency to help with job advancement, a total of 28 people chose "strongly agree" and "agree"

accounting for 70.0% of the total. In terms of improving listening skills, there are 13 individuals who wish to enhance both listening for main ideas and listening for details; for enhancing speaking skills, the majority, totalling 19 individuals, opt for being able to communicate spontaneously in English, while 13 individuals choose to speak fluently; for improving writing skills, the largest number of individuals, 25 in total, choose writing coherence and cohesion. As for willingness to participate in English skills training courses for work, a combined total of 35 individuals choose very much willing to and willing, accounting for 87.5%, while 5 individuals opt for unwilling.

4.5 Needs of Intercultural Communications

This section presented the results of the participants' views on intercultural communication issues related to work. The closer the mean score in the table is to 4, the higher the participants' approval of that item.

4.5.1 Descriptive Analysis of the Needs of Intercultural Communications

Table 4.10 The necessities for intercultural communication

Intercultural communication	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.
Company structure of clients	40	2	4	3.40	0.591
Foreign corporate culture	40	2	4	3.33	0.572
Cultural customs and norms	40	2	4	3.33	0.526
Foreign geography in economics	40	3	4	3.30	0.464
Foreign politics	40	2	4	3.18	0.501
Balance both part of cultural norms	40	3	4	3.55	0.504
Priority foreign own norms	40	2	4	3.12	0.607
Priority on own norms	40	2	4	2.85	0.736

Descriptive statistics were conducted to assess the demands for intercultural communication as presented in Table 4.10. The high demand for knowledge of foreign corporate culture among participants is evident, with the mean scores in all five aspects exceeding 3 points. Among them, the knowledge demand for the organizational structure of foreign companies has the highest mean score of 3.40. The mean scores for the demand of foreign corporate culture and cultural norms and customs are both 3.33. The mean score for the demand for local economic situation knowledge is 3.30, and the mean score for the demand for local political situation knowledge is 3.18.

In the context of cultural attitudes towards communicating with foreign companies, participants most strongly agreed that businesses should adhere to the cultural norms of foreign enterprises while also showcasing their own culture, with a mean score of 3.55. The other two viewpoints received moderately high agreement levels, with 3.12 for following foreign cultural standards during collaboration and 2.85 for adhering as much as possible to their own cultural norms.

4.5.2 Comparison of the Needs of Intercultural Communications for Different Levels of Positions

The researcher categorized participants at the same position level into one group and compared the viewpoints of different groups on intercultural communication issues.

Table 4.11 The one-way ANOVA score of intercultural communication needs among different positions

Item	Work position	Mean	F	<i>p</i>	Mean Difference (LSD)
Politics	Entry-level	3.36	1.082	0.349	
	Mid-level	3.11			
	Senior-level	3.10			

Table 4.11 The one-way ANOVA score of intercultural communication needs among different positions (continued)

Item	Work position	Mean	F	<i>p</i>	Mean Difference (LSD)
Geography in economics	Entry-level	3.36	0.156	0.856	
	Mid-level	3.26			
	Senior-level	3.30			
Company structures	Entry-level	3.45	0.071	0.932	
	Mid-level	3.37			
	Senior-level	3.40			
Corporate cultures	Entry-level	3.36	0.867	0.429	
	Mid-level	3.21			
	Senior-level	3.50			
Customs and norms	Entry-level	3.36	5.132	0.011*	Mid-level
	Mid-level	3.11			< Senior-
	Senior-level	3.70			level

* $p < 0.05$

One-way ANOVA was performed for the level of intercultural communication needs for different positions, as shown in Table 4.11. The level of demand for local politics, local economic conditions, organizational structure of foreign companies, corporate culture, and cultural norms and customs in entry-level, mid-level, and senior positions all have a score of 3 or above, indicating that the demand for all three positions in these areas is at the upper middle level. The results of the difference test show that there is no significant difference in the level of demand for local politics, local economy, and organizational structure of foreign companies for different positions. However, there are significant differences in the demand for cultural norms and customs, which is reflected in the fact that the demand for cultural norms and customs in mid-level positions (3.11) is lower than that in senior positions (3.7).

4.6 Results of Interviews

To gain a deeper understanding of the English proficiency requirements, specific English marketing tasks, and attitudes toward intercultural communication among Chinese marketers, the researcher conducted interviews with 10 participants. This section will analyse the interview data through thematic analysis. After analysing and coding the interview transcripts and addressing the research questions, the researcher identified the following six themes: English as an indispensable ability, challenges in English application, digital marketing activities in English, face-to-face marketing activities in English, proactive response to cultural diversity, and negative impact of cultural diversity. Below, the findings from the interview will be thoroughly expounded.

4.6.1 English as an Indispensable Ability

In the context of the importance of English proficiency in the global marketing industry, all ten respondents provided affirmative answers. Among them, nine respondents (90%) explicitly stated that English is a crucial and necessary skill for conducting work. Their comments included:

“It is important. Because working in this international business field, without proficiency in English, it is impossible to communicate effectively for work and business expansion.” (Interviewee 1, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“Yes, of course it's very important. With mature English ability, you can learn all kinds of ideas of global issues firstly, then act and go beyond it.” (Interviewee 2, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“Well, I think it's very important. Because I think first of all, in an international company, because you are facing international customers, English is a mandatory skill. Then I feel that using English can have a better communication with customers, understand the international market, and broaden my horizons.” (Interviewee 3, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“It is important that English is a must-have skill in our industry. Working with foreigners without being able to listen or speak English will make it impossible to carry out the work.” (Interviewee 5, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“Of course, it is important. International business deals with foreigners, so we need to use English to communicate with the clients.” (Interviewee 8, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“Very important. International business requires communicating business in English, and English is a must-have ability. When I recruit employees, I also require them to be fluent in English.” (Interviewee 9, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

One respondent (10%) stated that English is a required ability for by the job, but not the decisive factor for success in the marketing field, since the artificial intelligence can assist with translation. The excerpt of response was as follows:

“AI gets involved in our work so we can use AI to do their translation or interpreter things. So and now I think and the marketing employees, um, English skills is required but not the key things for the marketing.” (Interviewee 4, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

4.6.2 Challenges in English Application

When asking the challenges of applying English in practical work, 10 respondents mentioned activities such as negotiation, conversation, and presentation at meetings. These activities primarily progress through speaking and listening, so the researcher linked these types of English work difficulties to speaking skills and listening skills. In this case, all 10 respondents (100%) believed that there were difficulties in the practical use of listening and speaking skills in global work environments. Their answers contained:

“I think it's more difficult to contact with customers, especially when using the technical terms in conversation.” (Interviewee 1, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“About the marketing activities. Um, I think for these questions the answer is negotiation face-to-face.” (Interviewee 4, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“I think it is price discussion. Because in that situation, you need to listen and think and talk to make the deal.” (Interviewee 6, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“For me, face-to-face communication is more challenging. Because when people reply to me on online platforms, I can use translation software. But face-to-face communication requires me to listen and speak by myself.” (Interviewee 8, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

Additionally, apart from difficulties related to speaking and listening, two respondents also mentioned work-related challenges with writing: composing in formal styles and selecting appropriate words for promotional materials.

“At work, I think it's little difficult to give presentations and presentations in English. Well, also the meetings, because there are a lot of technical words to be used, and the text has to be formal.” (Interviewee 3, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“Communication with customers is important. It's also important to choose the right words to include in catalogue and videos when promoting the product.” (Interviewee 10, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

4.6.3 Digital Marketing Activities in English

In the context of marketing activities conducted in English, respondents' comments mentioned several work tasks accomplished through digital devices. Five respondents (50%) indicated that they handle digital inquiries and replies in English, including email correspondence, phone messages, mobile voice and video calls, and online website inquiries. The answers are as follows,

“Communicating with clients by emails and phone messages, voice call and sometimes video call.” (Interviewee 1, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“Contact customers through emails and phone apps... and responding to inquiries from customers on online sales platforms.” (Interviewee 5, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“Um, and also online contact with foreign clients.” (Interviewee 6, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“...and respond to customer inquiries.” (Interviewee 8, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“Talk with clients on apps.” (Interviewee 10, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

Three respondents (30%) said they needed to maintain and develop the e-commerce platform websites in English, including editing web information, and creating and updating promotional videos and product brochures. The comments as bellowed,

“Editing company’s websites, and update new products and promotion online.” (Interviewee 1, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“...and promote on international online platforms.” (Interviewee 8, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“...and product promotion on website, such as catalogue and videos.” (Interviewee 10, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

Additionally, two respondents (20%) mentioned conducting market research activities in English, which commented as:

“Learning the industry knowledge.” (Interviewee 2, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“Yeah, normally we use the search engine and to get data from the website or Internet and or from other companies’ report...get the answer and data is right or not was on the background of data, uh and, what kind of area we can use the data. So, um, in my opinion, collecting the data or analysing the data is the key things for international marketing.” (Interviewee 4, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

4.6.4 Face-to-face Marketing Activities in English

As marketing professionals engaged in economic globalization, respondents have various opportunities to interact face-to-face with international clients. Notably, seven respondents (70%) directly indicated that they need to use English in their work when traveling globally for exhibitions and conferences. The excerpts as bellowed:

“And, the conferences and international exhibitions and meetings between companies will be in English.” (Interviewee 3, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“...promoting products at international trade shows.” (Interviewee 5, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“For me, going to the international exhibitions and abroad business trip.” (Interviewee 6, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“In my opinion, participating the international exhibitions.” (Interviewee 7, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“I think like...uh, go to the international exhibitions.” (Interviewee 8, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“Go to the international exhibitions... When I travel and meet clients, I speak English. Like last December, after I finished business visiting with Japanese client, I flight to Thailand for the international exhibition.” (Interviewee 9, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“...attend international trade shows.” (Interviewee 10, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

Five participants (50%) mentioned that they would use English during meetings, such as internal company discussions with colleagues or business negotiation visits with foreign clients.

“Also, attending meetings.” (Interviewee 1, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“...then communicating and sharing the ideas with workmates.” (Interviewee 2, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“I work in a foreign company, and I have foreign boss and colleagues, so I have to speak English every day...and meetings between companies will be in English.” (Interviewee 3, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“...and receiving business visits from foreign customers.” (Interviewee 7, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“When I travel and meet clients, I speak English. Like last December, after I finished business visiting with Japanese client, I flight to Thailand for the international exhibition. After that, I flight to Russia for business trip. Now, I am planning to meet someone in America. This job requires me travel a lot.” (Interviewee 9, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

4.6.5 Proactive Response to Cultural Diversity

Another point is the reaction and attitude of participants towards the cultural differences in intercultural communication. The majority of respondents (60%) displayed a tolerant and positive attitude when mentioning cultural differences encountered in intercultural communication. Among the respondents, 4 people (40%) expressed a positive attitude towards the different lifestyles, cultural styles, and customs they experienced, viewing them as cultural integration, respect, admiration, and interest. The comments included:

“Hmm, in our foreign company, we can feel a lot of cultural integration. Most of it is a positive collision, such as more holidays and a great festive atmosphere.” (Interviewee 3, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“Eating habits. Some people in certain countries do not eat pork. Sometimes we need to treat a client to dinner, so we can't order something they won't eat. It is not respectful to break the clients' living habits. So, normally we follow their habit to show our respects.” (Interviewee 6, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“Yes. For example, we Chinese like to invite clients to dinner after work, usually Asian foreign clients are happy to join us, but some west foreigners don't like to hang out after work. They prefer get rest after get off work, I think it is good, I want go back home too. Hahaha, but, our business is more

successful with the clients joining our dinners.” (Interviewee 7, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“When I have food with clients, and I find that people from Europe and America are used to ordering one whole dish for themselves, unlike Chinese prefer to order a table of dishes to share. It’s quite interesting. Um, and also it's good to do business with clients in Europe and America... Maybe I am a simple person, so I prefer to deal with foreign clients.” (Interviewee 9, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

The other 2 respondents (20%) believed that when facing cultural differences, it was important to actively learn relevant knowledge in advance, which could promote the success of business cooperation.

“Uh, in my opinion, if you want to do the market in one country, at least you need to learn the culture or background of the country. And as I said before, uh, if we don't know their religions, the words we speak might offend them. So if we want to win the order or to win customers, we have to do some homework before.” (Interviewee 4, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“For example, it is considered impolite to thumbs up in front of clients from some Middle East countries. So it’s good to know the story before, and don’t do the wrong thing in front of your clients, it will be helpful for the business.” (Interviewee 5, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

4.6.6 Negative Impact of Cultural Diversity

Forty percent of the interviewees answered that different cultural styles and lifestyles had negative impacts on their cross-cultural communication experiences. For example, a conversation style that is not direct enough can affect communication effectiveness, and a large difference in lifestyle and habits can lead to uncomfortable experiences for them. Their comments included:

“My main communication clients are Japanese people, who tend to speak in a vague and indirect manner, which can be quite puzzling. Sometimes, it takes a while to get to the point.” (Interviewee 1, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“Yes, for communication styles, in some cultures, direct communication is valued, while in others, indirect communication is preferred. This can lead to misunderstandings if one party perceives the other as being too blunt or too vague.” (Interviewee 2, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“I’m older. I’m not used to being greeted by foreigners too intimately. Although I have been working for a long time, I am uncomfortable when customers come to meet me at the exhibition, and they are very enthusiastic and want to hug me and kiss my face.” (Interviewee 8, Personal Communication, February, 2024)

“Once I went on a business trip to the north and received customers with other factory owners, and the boss in the north invited the customers and me to go to the bathing centre. We were all scared when we found out that there was a waiter to help us with the bath.” (Interviewee 10, Personal Communication, February, 2024)



Chapter 5

Discussion

The discussion in this study includes speaking and listening skills, English marketing activities, and intercultural communication for marketers.

5.1 Speaking and Listening

The first objective aimed to determine English skills required for global marketers. The results reveal that speaking and listening were significant. Working with foreigners without the ability to listen or speak English is impossible to carry out the work. This is due cross-language work environment relating to international work tasks. Takino (2016) said English is indispensable in cross-international business industry, and many tasks are performed in English by marketers. Wu (2012) supported this view from another angle, indicating that Chinese bosses in global industries place significant emphasis on employees' oral and listening skills in multinational business contexts when recruiting marketers. This may suggest that speaking and listening abilities are not only fundamental requirements for completing cross-border business tasks but could also serve as highlights in the professional development of marketers.

A number of previous researchers have also obtained similar results in the Occupational English Needs Analysis. Kaewkunha (2021) analyzed the English needs of service workers in Thailand and found that listening and speaking skills were most in demand for practical applications of work, as they needed to communicate in English to meet the needs of foreign tourists in order to complete their job duties. The results of Firharmawan and Andika's (2019) study on the English language needs of hotel workers in Indonesia were similar to this research. Their research found that the purpose of using English at workplace was mainly to communicate with foreign hotel guests, so the speaking and listening skills of employees are very demanding.

Polsombat (2015) also pointed out that speaking and listening skills were the most important competencies at work, according to the analysis of the English needs of sales department employees in a Thailand Japan company. The similarity of these researches findings to this research may be due to the fact that they are all in a complex multilingual environment, and because the participants have similar work content in English, such as mainly using verbal conversations and timely understanding of dialogue information to complete work tasks.

Some researches findings differ somewhat from those of this research. For instance, Kassim and Ali's (2010) study on the needs of engineers in multinational companies, while the results also emphasized the importance of speaking skills first, but the difference was that writing was equally considered to be very necessary. This may be due to the fact as Kassim and Ali mentioned that the English related work tasks of engineers are mainly related to oral communications and writing reports. Junplord's (2016) study of the English needs of traditional Thailand medicine doctors in Bangkok was also not quite consistent with this research, and his findings showed that speaking and reading were recognized as the most in-demand basic job skills by doctors. The reasons why the results of Junplord's study are different from this research may also be related to the different work of the participants. As Junplord (2016) mentioned, in addition to communicating primarily in English or speaking out their ideas, doctors also need to read the materials and contents written in English. The fact that the results of these two studies are half consistent with the results of this research might be that the work tasks of the participants are partially similar, such as they all have the need for oral expression and dialogues, while the focus of the main work content in other areas is different, so the results are not the same.

Additionally, there are other research results that are entirely different from this research. Srisuwan and Kardkarnklai (2014) conducted a study on the English needs of industrial pharmacists in two large multinational pharmaceutical companies in Thailand, finding that reading and writing were the most crucial skills in their daily work, as pharmacists primarily used English to read materials and write reports. Similarly, Chaiyapoo's analysis of English needs among administrative staff at

universities in 2017 indicated that reading and writing were the most important skills. Chaipayoo (2017) found that the primary tasks of the participants in that study revolved around document-related work, despite also addressing issues concerning foreign faculty and students, which was typically managed through reading documents and responding to emails. Consequently, reading and writing emerged as the most crucial skills in that study. Although these participants also worked in a multilingual or multinational work environment, the results diverged significantly from this research, which could possibly due to the distinct nature and contents of participants' work. Therefore, the diversity in the details and contents of the participants' work may contribute to the relevance or differences between the results of previous ESP researches in multilingual environments and the current research.

This research believes speaking skills are the most critical. Chinese marketing professionals expects to speak English fluently. This may be due to the challenges marketers that marketers are faced with public speaking and impromptu conversations. Louhiala-Salminen and Kankaanranta (2012) and Echavarria (2014) found that the proficiency in spoken English significantly impacts the professional competence in their professionals. The ability to speak effectively in English is an advantage in a multinational work environment (Kassim & Ali, 2010). Rogerson-Revell (2007) mentioned that effective oral communication is crucial for negotiation, presentation, and networking in an international context.

The findings of this research indicate that marketers highly prioritize the ability to respond and explain the needs of products and services in their work. This may suggest that showcasing and introducing products and services are among the most crucial aspects of their job, with verbal promotion to foreign individuals being a common task in marketing. After all, elucidating the features of goods and services is a fundamental skill in sales-related roles, and this constitutes a significant category of practical applications for English oral skills (Pochakorn, 2012). The results of this research indicate that inquiring about problematic issues and responding to foreigners' feedbacks on marketing matters are crucial for marketers. This is because providing in-depth replies to clients' queries and offering corresponding information is essential

(Kaewkunha, 2021). The findings of this research also underscore the importance of oral discussions with foreigners on marketing issues, as well as participation in marketing meetings or seminars, which constitute a significant part of a marketer's job. In a multilingual work environment, oral communication and meetings pertaining to professional content are indispensable, extending beyond internal company communications to interactions with external parties (Kassim & Ali, 2010). Polsombat (2015) also posited that oral conversations with foreigners and presentations at meetings and group discussions are crucial speaking tasks in the business workplace. From this, it may be inferred that speaking tasks in English for marketing are primarily developed around the job responsibilities of marketers. As Neeley (2012) pointed out, spoken English is crucial for global business interactions.

Moreover, the listening skill which are used for conversations, suggesting that the primary importance of using listening abilities is also significant. The results in this research showed that listening skills in the daily work of Chinese business marketers were significant highlighting auditory proficiency in grasping detailed information for interactions, and understanding client needs and job requirements. This may be related to the tasks of marketers, as effective listening is crucial for understanding customer needs, market feedback, and detailed information during interactions, enabling adjustments to marketing strategies and effectively meeting customer preferences to achieve work objectives. Polsombat (2015) supported this point that English listening skills are the most needed by business professionals, as the primary tasks of business workers are used in face-to-face conversations, meeting discussions, telephone conversations, and oral discussions on sales topics. Particularly when completing tasks related to services to clients, staff must listen to their clients' thoughts, opinions, and complaints to facilitate the next steps in the process (Kaewkunha, 2021). Also, the listening practical skills are necessary in managing diverse client interactions and understanding nuanced communication (Louhiala-Salminen & Kankaanranta, 2012).

Apart from listening tasks related to understanding content, the research also found that comprehending various English accents is highly demanded in the work of

marketing professionals. They need to possess the ability to understand diverse English pronunciations, which may be associated with whether the communication partners are English native speakers or not. For instance, participants in this research not only interacted with native speakers but also non-native speakers, and they frequently traveled worldwide for exhibitions and business meetings, making the ability to understand different accents of English crucial for them. As Polsombat (2015) emphasized before, understanding English spoken with a Japanese accent is challenging for business professionals communicating in English, but they must strive to comprehend it as it is a prerequisite for accomplishing their work tasks.

Furthermore, participants in the interviews found that the most challenging tasks in English marketing activities were business negotiations and face-to-face conversations. This indicates that for business professionals, expressing and obtaining vocal information in English at work can be difficult. As shown in the results, participants assessed their current speaking and listening skills as moderate, yet they strongly expressed that the level required for these two skills in their job is very high. This may be illustrating that in the workplace, listening and speaking are fundamental communication functions. Speaking skills enable the expression of needs and ideas, while listening skills are responsible for understanding the meanings of others (Kaewkunha, 2021).

In summary, the findings of these English needs analysis researches consistently underscore the indispensable role of English as a crucial competency in global work environments. Similar findings also emphasize the significance of speaking and listening skills within the marketing industry.

5.2 Marketing Activities

The second question was the important of marketing activities for Chinese marketers. The first one is digital marketing activities. Digital consulting and response, maintenance and development of e-commerce platforms, and market research in an English-speaking environment were the key tasks to be performed in English. The

second one is the use English in face-to-face interactions in meetings and business negotiations.

Compared to other previous ESP needs analysis studies, it seems that particular English tasks are highly aligned with the occupational characteristics of the research participants. For instance, Kassim and Ali (2010) discovered that the primary English tasks for engineers in Malaysian foreign companies were writing and teleconferencing. Chaiyapoo (2017) posited that the main English tasks might be related to reading and writing for university officers. Secondly, comparing the English tasks of sales department employees in Thailand's multilingual environment (Polsombat, 2015), it was found that the main tasks also differ from the results of this research. This may be the distinct point of the findings identified by this research, which is primarily attributed to the uniqueness of Chinese global marketing personnel.

Digital consulting and response demands that marketers promptly reply to customer inquiries, which constitutes the most crucial part of Chinese marketers' responsibilities. English plays a decisive role in this multilingual work environment. The respondents also emphasized that accurately responding to customers in English is vital, as it directly impacts customer satisfaction and the seller-customer trust maintenance. On mobile technology devices, when customers provide feedbacks and seek solutions of products and services issues, they often expect personalized responses and may also express more emotions (Shankar et al., 2022). Effective and targeted responses by marketers can significantly enhance customer willingness to cooperate. In the modern digital workplace, English as a digital communication medium holds a pivotal role (Yusuf, Yunus, & Embi, 2018).

Developing an English e-commerce platform website for promotional and marketing purposes is a challenging and significant task. This primarily involves editing web information of companies and products in English and updating promotional videos for target international clients. It also includes designing English advertisements and product catalogues. The respondents emphasized the need for selecting appropriate vocabulary in English to avoid misunderstandings and increase

the attractiveness of the promotional content. As Ma and Ma (2022) pointed out, properly phrased and concise English promotional materials are essential in cross-cultural communication. Moreover, to manage to resonate the local cultural with clients, effectively and appropriately rephrasing the language in promotional materials helps promote the products or services (Torresi, 2020). The interactivity and vibrancy exhibited by companies on e-commerce platforms can improve the customers' sense of engagement, thereby facilitating the completion of marketing goals (Pathak & Kaushik, 2024).

The respondents mentioned that conducting market research activities in English and analyzing international market trends is the other crucial task. The ability to conduct research papers in English enables marketers to access a broader range of information and resources, facilitating a deeper understanding of global market dynamics. Tien, Phu, and Chi (2019) pointed out that discovering useful information and identifying market demands in the international marketing arena are crucial factors for business success. In addition, the results of overseas market research in English can help marketers understand the local culture and customer preferences of the target market, and make customized marketing plans and strategies. When marketing across borders, the localization of products and services can strengthen the connection between companies and customers, and increase the recognition of the company in the target market (Yu & Hu, 2020). In turn, marketers can flexibly use the real-time market information they receive to respond more effectively to the new customer feedbacks. As Salonen, Mero, Munnukka, Zimmer, and Karjaluo (2024) argued, in the business context, sharing exactly what the customers want of the products and services is a means of marketing success.

Another task is face-to-face marketing activities. Marketers need to connect with foreign customers, promote and explain products, and develop new business relationships. Wu (2012) argued that English is the key to achieving this goal. In such a situation, marketers need to start a conversation with customers in English and introduce information related to the company and products in order to establish the business relationships with others. In addition, deeper face-to-face business events

require meetings and business negotiations in English. Marketers should be able to accurately express their ideas and understand their customers, in order to achieve mutually beneficial agreements. Similar as Polsombat (2015) mentioned, English negotiations and meetings for business workers are an important part of their work.

In addition, using English in business travel is also considered by participants to be a highly frequent work task. In the trade industry, face-to-face communication with customers through business travel is a common and effective marketing method, even in this era of extensive digital marketing communication (Soderlund, 2023). Because in a business context, there is a lot of information that cannot be shared through the internet, and it requires face-to-face explanations and introductions by marketers. When travelling across borders, it's inevitable that marketers have to use English to communicate. This is not limited to presentations and negotiations in the workplace, they also need to handle other tasks during the trip in English, such as buying plane tickets, booking hotels, hailing taxis, ordering meals, and so on. Although travel is the big cost for companies, this English marketing task cannot be replaced. The benefits of international business travel for business cooperation are substantial (Beaverstock, Derudder, Faulconbridge, & Witlox, 2009).

5.3 Intercultural Communication

The third objective aimed to uncover intercultural communication for marketers in international workplaces. While cultural differences have brought some negative impacts, the participants maintained an optimistic and inclusive attitude towards cross-cultural communication. So, showing positive attitudes towards intercultural interactions in the workplace is necessary.

Some previous researchers have also supported this viewpoint to varying degrees. Candel-Mora (2015) argued, in the study of Spanish industrial engineers' attitudes towards intercultural communication in ESP, that the linguistic competence and knowledge are insufficient for success in an international context, and students also need to be aware of multicultural differences and understand various cultural

stereotypes. The results of Candel-Mora's study, while affirming the importance of cross-cultural knowledge but do not view cross-cultural communication positively, possibly due to the participants being students. And the students treated intercultural knowledges merely as an exam objective, unlike the marketers in this research who had experienced cross-cultural interactions firsthand.

Jiang and Pretorius (2011) found in their research on intercultural communication among Chinese and South African engineering managers in international collaborative projects that cultural differences can have a negative impact on international cooperation. The managers should necessitate the mitigation of risks in international projects and work through effective communication. Gut et al. (2017) conducted a survey on the perspectives of Chinese employees in multinational corporations regarding cross-cultural communication, finding that although Chinese employees thought cultural differences could bring a negative impact on communication, they were still willing to engage actively in cross-cultural communications. The similarity among this research and the findings of Jiang and Pretorius (2011) and Gut et al. (2017), may be attributed to all the studies focusing on workers who possess practical intercultural and multinational work experience. Perhaps the factor of participants sharing the same nationality of Chinese also contributed to the consistency of the results between these two studies and this research.

This positive attitude towards intercultural communication among the participants in this research shows that marketers recognize the complexities of the nowadays global marketplace and the importance of cultural understanding in their professional roles. The high percentage of marketers who value this intercultural knowledge also shows that they recognize the role that intercultural competence plays in effective communication. As some respondents claimed, understanding each other's culture before business meetings and negotiations could be a catalyst for collaboration. Gut et al. (2017) suggested that it is possible to avoid problems caused from intercultural communications by training different cultures knowledges in advance when confronted with complex cultural situations. Solid intercultural knowledge gives

global workers an advantage and increases their productivity (Echavarria, 2014). This view is a broader trend that can be observed in the results of this research, where the marketers not only recognize the importance of intercultural communication, but are also actively developing their capabilities in this field.

Purposefully understanding the foreign companies' structure and corporate culture is considered to be a highly effective behavior for promoting intercultural business cooperation. This might be because in cross-border cooperation, differences in the structure and management methods and styles of companies could bring problems and challenges to business cooperation. Jiang and Pretorius (2011) also supported this point by emphasizing that the management structure and methods of western companies are different from those of other cultures and countries, which could be the infer that understanding different firms' structures and management cultures is basic and vital to cross-nation cooperation.

In addition, in terms of cultural norms and customs, proper business etiquette is also a highly effective behavior in cross-cultural business communication. A part of respondents argued that different cultural etiquette and norms need to be respected, both as expressers and receivers of etiquette moves. In cross-border communication, proper understanding and learning of cultural etiquette is the main prerequisite for the success and development of intercultural cooperation, then the staffs can better understand how to do things in the business cooperation (Bovee & Thill, 2010, as cited in Washington et al., 2012). The main difficulty in the development of international business is to handle the cultural differences in international business etiquette, which is also the basis for the success of international business (Carte & Fox, 2008, as cited in Washington et al., 2012).

There is one particular noteworthy finding in terms of cultural norms and customs. The participants in senior positions placed greater emphasis on norms and customs in international business communication compared to those participants in lower positions. This suggests that an intercultural communication perspective may be linked to the occupational status of participants. Similarly, Echavarria (2014) also

pointed out that global business professionals, that proficient in a second language without linguistic barriers, considered intercultural communication skills to be more decisive than language in business collaborations.

Moreover, in the intercultural communications, participants showed a tendency to emphasize their own culture and norms while also pay attention to and respect the cultures and customs of others. This indicates that Chinese marketers in international business not only wish to maintain their own cultural style but also strive to balance the cultural emphases between both parties, in order to express respect to their clients. As mentioned by Mackenzie and Wallace (2011), respecting cultural differences in intercultural communication enables marketers to achieve effective communication. Cultural differences could lead to issues in business communication among people with diverse cultural backgrounds, thus affecting work efficiency, so cultural adaptability is crucial in global workplace communication (Gut et al., 2017). Additionally, another reason of this phenomenon might be related to the traditional Chinese cultural style of moderation. Chinese individuals tend to foster a harmonious coexistence atmosphere, in order to seek a balanced and mutually beneficial relationship with their partners in international collaborations (Jiang and Pretorius, 2011).

On the other hand, the diversity in thinking patterns of cultural communication can also have an impact on intercultural communication. The lack of understanding and adaptation to the thinking and behavior patterns of other cultures is the most common reason for the failure of intercultural business collaborations (O'Rourke, 2010, as cited in Washington et al., 2012). As some interviewees pointed out, the implicit and vague communication styles of eastern countries in business negotiations can affect the comprehension of discourses, which could lead to difficulties in project development and reduced work efficiency. Although they acknowledge that the difference in communicating styles and distinct ways of thinking may lead to some negative impacts, none of them exhibit reluctance to continue participating in intercultural communications. This positive attitude is crucial as it

could facilitate smoother interactions and deeper understanding among individuals from different cultural backgrounds (Lifintsev et al., 2019).

In summary, Chinese marketers are aware of the intercultural communication challenges and recognize the importance of intercultural competence in facilitating successful international business relationships. In addition, in the context of intercultural business communication, actively approaching intercultural communication tasks, purposefully understanding cross-cultural knowledge, and properly following the intercultural business etiquettes could effectively help achieve business cooperation.

5.4 Conclusion

This study conducted quantitative and qualitative analyses of the perspectives of 40 Chinese marketers. It can be concluded that English is essential in the marketing field. Marketers demand high proficiency in spoken and listening English skills. English is required for digital marketing activities and face-to-face marketing activities, especially in international conferences and business negotiations. Intercultural communication is crucial in the global business workplace, and mutual respect for culture and customs in business cooperation.

5.5 Limitations and Recommendations

The sample size in this study was restricted to only 40 participants. The next researcher could gather a larger sample. Although this study has done a study of English needs for Chinese marketers, the researcher can expand the scope of this study in the future. The researcher may conduct a research study to serve a marketing English course for university students. However, due to the limited scope of this papers, researchers will conduct a needs analysis of students and teaching staff.

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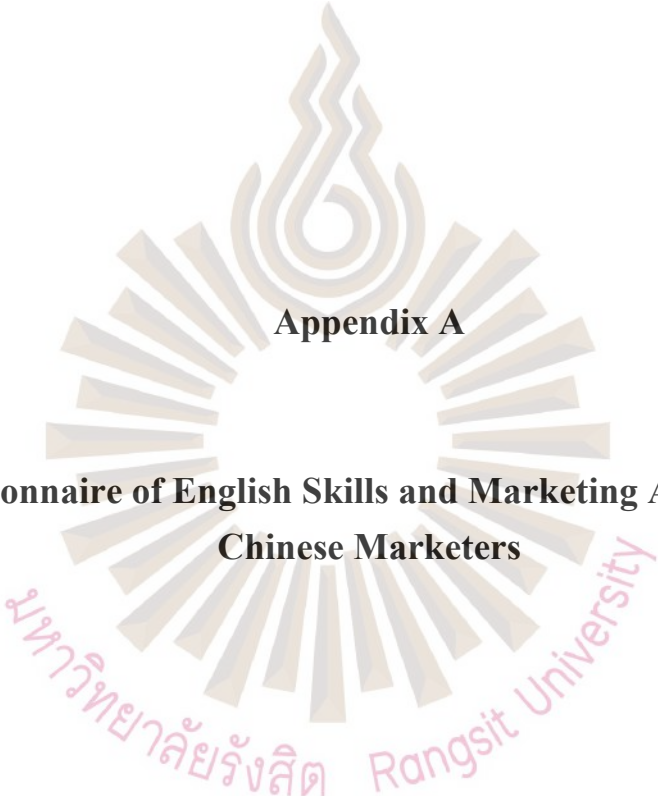
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Appendix A

The Questionnaire of English Skills and Marketing Activities among Chinese Marketers

Questionnaire

This questionnaire is a part of a research methodology instrument in the aim of studying the English skills and marketing activities among Chinese marketers. The researcher is an English major master student in Faculty of Liberal Arts, Rangsit University. The information in your response will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used for academic analysis and discussion.

The questionnaire consists of five parts, which are as follows.

PART ONE: General background information

PART TWO: English background information

PART THREE: Necessities of English skills and marketing activities

PART FOUR: Lacks and wants of English Communications

PART FIVE: Needs of intercultural communications

Instructions: During the test, please carefully read the questions and check (☑) the answer you prefer.

PART ONE: General background information

1. Gender

Female

Male

Other

2. Age

Below 30 years old

31-40 years old

41-50 years

Over 50 years old

3. Highest academic qualification

Vocational/High Vocational Certificate

Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

4. Current Working Position

entry-level (just starting)

mid-level (managerial position)

senior-level

5. Period of working in the related field

Below 5 years

From 6 to 10

From 11 to 15

Beyond 15 years

PART TWO: English background information

1. How long have you been using English at work?

Below 5 years

From 6 to 10

From 11 to 15

Over 15 years

2. Have you ever taken any English classes during the working years?

Yes

No

3. Did you take any standardized English test before?

Yes

No

4. Did you travel to any English-speaking country before? (such as US, UK, Canada, Australia, etc.)

Yes

No

5. How often do you use English?

rarely

two days a week

often, 4 to 5 days a week

everyday

6. Whom do you usually speak English to?

Non-native speakers

Mother tongue speakers

Both

7. What English skill is the most challenging to your work?

Listening

Reading

Speaking

Writing

8. Please rate your current English skills based on the following evaluation criteria.

Please put your checkmarks in the table (☑).

1 – Poor

2 – Fair

3 – Good

4 – Excellent

Current English skills	4	3	2	1
8.1 Listening				
8.2 Speaking				
8.3 Reading				
8.4 Writing				

PART THREE: Necessities of English skills and marketing activities

Instruction: Please carefully read the below statements describing necessities for English skills and marketing activities. Put a checkmark (✓) according to the following evaluation criteria scale.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Agree
- 4 – Strongly agree

Necessities for English skills and marketing activities	4	3	2	1
1. Needed English skills during work time				
1.1 Listening				
1.2 Speaking				
1.3 Reading				
1.4 Writing				
2. Listening skills				
2.1 Listen to the requests or compliments of foreigners related to marketing matters				
2.2 Listen to the different English accents at work				
2.3 Listen and understand what is being said on the telephone				
2.4 Listen to marketing meetings/seminar in English				
3. Speaking skills				
3.1 Inquiring about problematic issues or requesting customers' feedback/decisions regarding marketing matters				
3.2 Respond to or explain about the company's products and				

services				
3.3 Interacting with foreigners orally when communicating about general market issues				
3.4 Speaking English in meetings/seminar concerning marketing issues				
4. Reading skills				
4.1 Read commercial letters/notes and memos with marketing terms				
4.2 Read the records of a marketing-related conference or seminar				
4.3 Read marketing English-language advertisements/articles, such as the promotion of new product launches				
4.4 Read the technical issues/protocols/terms and conditions or content details in English				
5. Writing skills				
5.1 Craft a report utilizing marketing-related English vocabulary				
5.2 Draft and write forecasts and plans of sales and marketing in English				
5.3 Prepare a sales summary/market analysis focusing on the cause-and-effect relationship for specific sales figures				
5.4 Write problem-solving strategies or planned countermeasures to prevent potential problems related to marketing				

PART FOUR: Lacks and wants of English Communications

1. What level of English proficiency is required to carry out your current job?

Starters

Basic user

Independent user

Proficient user

2. Do you need to improve your English proficiency level to assist in your career advancement?

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly agree

3. Which aspect of listening skills would you like to enhance in your opinion?

Listen for gist

Infer the information

Listen for details

Recognize attitude and purpose

4. Which aspect of speaking skills would you like to enhance in your opinion?

Accurate words & pronunciation

Speaking in sentences

Fluency

Spontaneously speaking

5. Which aspect of reading skills would you like to enhance in your opinion?

Decoding

Comprehension

Vocabulary

Reading speed

6. Which aspect of writing skills would you like to enhance in your opinion?

Grammar

Cohesion and coherence

Orthographic control

Vocabulary

Genre format

7. Would you be interested in taking an English training course specifically focused on English skills for your current job?

Very much

I want to

Disagree

Never

PART FIVE: Needs of intercultural communications

Instruction: Please carefully read the following statement describing needs for intercultural communication. And put a checkmark (☑) according to the following evaluation criteria scale.

1. How do you evaluate it when global marketers in regular business contact with foreigners have the following knowledge?

1 – Totally unnecessary

2 – Unnecessary

3 – Purposeful

4 – Very purposeful

	4	3	2	1
local politics				
local economic geography				
organizational structure of foreign companies				
corporate culture				
cultural norms and customs				

2. What is your opinion of the following three statements? Do you agree or disagree?

- (1) Firms should follow their own cultural norms as closely as possible in communication with foreign firms/customers.
- (2) Firms should follow foreign firms/customers' cultural norms as closely as possible in communication with foreign firms/customers.
- (3) Firms should follow foreign firms/customers' cultural norms and simultaneously show their own cultural identity in communication with foreign firms/customers.

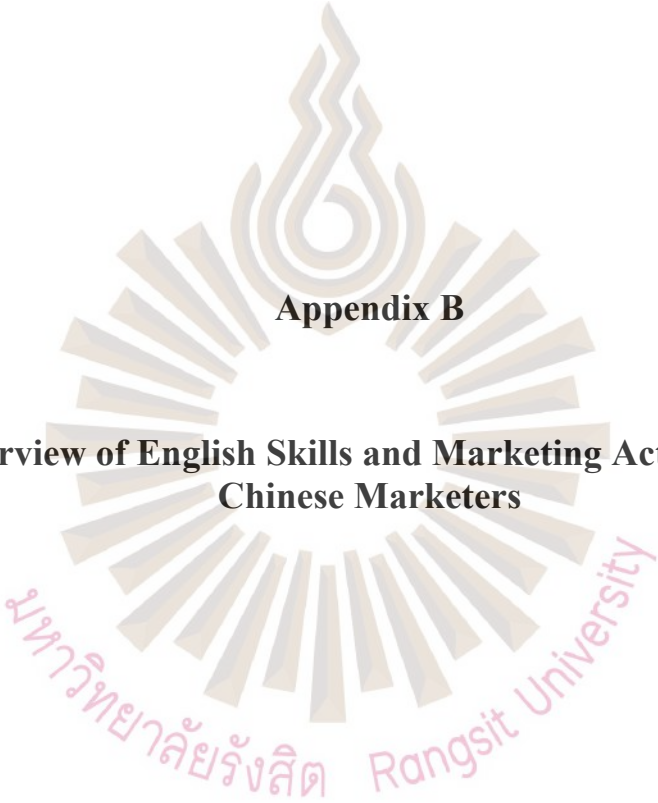
1 – Strongly disagree

2 – Disagree

3 – Agree

4 – Strongly agree

	4	3	2	1
Firms should follow their own cultural norms as closely as possible in communication with foreign firms/customers				
Firms should follow foreign firms/customers' cultural norms as closely as possible in communication with foreign firms/customers				
Firms should follow foreign firms/customers' cultural norms and simultaneously show their own cultural identity in communication with foreign firms/customers.				

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Appendix B

The Interview of English Skills and Marketing Activities among Chinese Marketers

Interview

This interview is a part of a research methodology instrument in the aim of studying the English skills and marketing activities among Chinese marketers. The researcher is an English major master student in Faculty of Liberal Arts, Rangsit University. Your interview results will be kept confidential and used only for academic analysis.

Instruction: Please fill in your answer on the blank line below.

1. Lots of companies require marketing employees to be capable of using English. Do you think English skills are important in the global marketing field? And please tell me the reason.

2. What kind of marketing activities or tasks do you need to use English for when you are working?

3. Which marketing activities are the most difficult to perform in English? Please give the reason.

4. If you were to attend an English marketing course, what knowledge do you think would be beneficial for your work to learn in class?

5. If you can take an English course, what kind of materials do you want to study with? Authentic business materials (such as a video of business English negotiation, a reading article from economic newspapers, and so on) or general traditional English textbooks. Please give a reason.

6. Have you encountered any issues due to cultural differences in a multicultural work environment? Could you share your thoughts or experiences on intercultural communication?



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Appendix C

The Interview Transcripts

Interview Transcripts 1

Interviewer: Researcher

Interviewee 1: Ms. Minwei Peng

(Start of Interview)

Interviewer: Hello, I would like to do an interview with you. Similar topics about the questionnaire, because after completing the questionnaire, I have 6 more in-depth questions that I would like to know. It takes about 10 minutes, and there are six questions.

Interviewee 1: No problem, go ahead.

Interviewer: Thank you. This interview questions will be sent in English. Let's start with the first question. 1. Lots of companies require marketing employees being capable in using English. Do you think English skills are important in global marketing field? And please tell me the reason.

Interviewee 1: It is important. Because working in this international business field, without proficiency in English, it is impossible to communicate effectively for work and business expansion.

Interviewer: Question No.2, what kind of marketing activities or tasks do you need to use English for when you are working?

Interviewee 1: Communicating with clients by emails and phone messages, voice call and sometimes video call. Editing company's websites, and update new products and promotion online. Also, attending meetings.

Interviewer: 3. Which marketing activities are the most difficult to perform in English? Please give the reason.

Interviewee 1: I think it's more difficult to contact with customers, especially when using the technical terms in conversation.

Interviewer: 4. If you were to attend an English marketing course, what knowledge do you think would be beneficial for your work to learn in class?

Interviewee 1: Professional nouns, writing skills.

Interviewer: 5. If you can take an English course, what kind of materials do you want to study with? Authentic business materials (such as video of business English negotiation, a reading article from economic newspapers, and so on) or the general traditional English text books. Please give reason.

Interviewee 1: Add some business-related teaching materials. When I was studying in college before, I mainly focused on general textbooks. If I can study English now, I hope to read more genres related to work.

Interviewer: 6. Have you encountered any issues due to cultural differences in a multicultural work environment? Could you share your thoughts or experiences on intercultural communication?

Interviewee 1: My main communication clients are Japanese people, who tend to speak in a vague and indirect manner, which can be quite puzzling. Sometimes, it takes a while to get to the point and they don't express themselves directly, while a simple sentence or two would suffice.

Interviewer: Thank you! The interview is over.



Interview Transcripts 2

Interviewer: Researcher

Interviewee 2: Mr. Junwei Liang (Damen)

(Start of Interview)

Interviewer: Hi, Damen, are you available? I'd like to do a little interview on the questionnaire, 6 questions.

Interviewee 2: I am here for you. Please start.

Interviewer: Hahaha, thank you for support. The first question: Lots of companies require marketing employees being capable in using English. Do you think English skills are important in global marketing field? And please tell me the reason.

Interviewee 2: Yes, of course it's very important. With mature English ability, you can learn all kinds of ideas of global issues firstly, then act and go beyond it.

Interviewer: Question No.2, what kind of marketing activities or tasks do you need to use English for when you are working?

Interviewee 2: Learning the industry knowledge, then communicating and sharing the ideas with workmates.

Interviewer: Next No.3. Which marketing activities are the most difficult to perform in English? Please give the reason.

Interviewee 2: Analysis and expression. One is to get understand others thoughts, the other one is to express myself thoughts and get agreement from others.

Interviewer: 4. If you were to attend an English marketing course, what knowledge do you think would be beneficial for your work to learn in class?

Interviewee 2: Some real ideas and business samples are definitely needed. Maybe, the course could be taught by an English speaking teacher, and the contents of the courses were "How to cooperate in trade business", something like that.

Interviewer: 5. If you can take an English course, what kind of materials do you want to study with? Authentic business materials (such as video of business English negotiation, a reading article from economic newspapers, and so on) or the general traditional English text books. Please give reason.

Interviewee 2: I will choose the video of business English negotiation, because currently we use it most in our daily work, as well as the exhibitions.

Interviewer: 6. Have you encountered any issues due to cultural differences in a multicultural work environment? Could you share your thoughts or experiences on intercultural communication?

Interviewee 2: Yes, for communication styles, in some cultures, direct communication is valued, while in others, indirect communication is preferred. This can lead to misunderstandings if one party perceives the other as being too blunt or too vague.

Interviewer: Thank you, Damen. Your interview has been completed. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.



Interview Transcripts 3

Interviewer: Researcher

Interviewee 3: Ms. Joy Zhong (Joy)

(Start of Interview)

Interviewer: Hi, Joy. Can I give you an interview? There are 6 questions related to the questionnaire.

Interviewee 3: Haha, yes, you can.

Interviewer: Thank you. I will start now. Question 1, lots of companies require marketing employees being capable in using English. Do you think English skills are important in global marketing field? And please tell me the reason.

Interviewee 3: Well, I think it's very important. Because I think first of all, in an international company, because you are facing international customers, English is a mandatory skill. Then I feel that using English can have a better communication with customers, understand the international market, and broaden my horizons.

Interviewer: Question 2, what kind of marketing activities or tasks do you need to use English for when you are working?

Interviewee 3: I work in a foreign company, and I have foreign boss and colleagues, so I have to speak English every day. And, the conferences and international exhibitions and meetings between companies will be in English.

Interviewer: Question 3, which marketing activities are the most difficult to perform in English? Please give the reason.

Interviewee 3: At work, I think it's little difficult to give presentations and presentations in English. Well, also the meetings, because there are a lot of technical words to be used, and the text has to be formal.

Interviewer: Question 4. If you were to attend an English marketing course, what knowledge do you think would be beneficial for your work to learn in class?

Interviewee 3: I want to learn business English because I want to communicate better with customers. I want to improve my spoken English.

Interviewer: If you can take an English course, what kind of materials do you want to study with? Authentic business materials (such as video of business English negotiation, a reading article from economic newspapers, and so on) or the general traditional English text books. Please give reason.

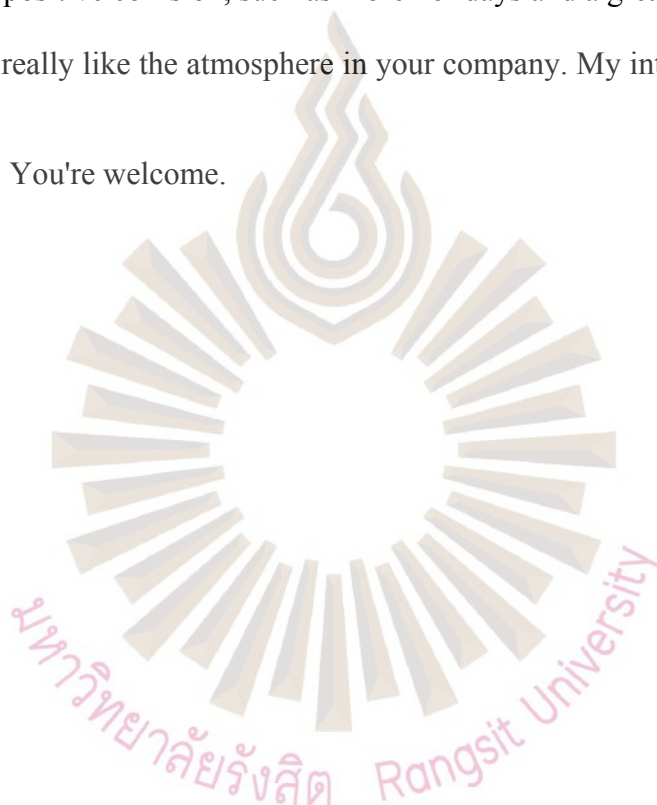
Interviewee 3: I prefer articles about economics. Because I think that studying this kind of article can not only improve my English, but also increase my understanding of the international economic situation. This allows us to appear more high-quality when chatting with our customers.

Interviewer: 6. Have you encountered any issues due to cultural differences in a multicultural work environment? Could you share your thoughts or experiences on intercultural communication?

Interviewee 3: Hmm, in our foreign company, we can feel a lot of cultural integration. Most of it is a positive collision, such as more holidays and a great festive atmosphere.

Interviewer: I really like the atmosphere in your company. My interview is over, thank you.

Interviewee 3: You're welcome.



Interview Transcripts 4

Interviewer: Researcher

Interviewee 4: Mr. Li Liu (Leo)

(Start of Interview)

Interviewer: Hi, Leo. I am going to do a short interview to you. Please answer my questions. Now, the interview is starting. Question 1. Lots of companies require marketing employees being capable in using English. Do you think English skills are important in global marketing field? And please tell me the reason.

Interviewee 4: Um, okay, thanks for your question and lots of company require marketing employees being capable in using English and for in my opinion as the development of the skills especially for the translation, uh software, it will help a lot of people and who cannot manage their English skill very well, also can do the marketing, um things, and a knowledge, the AI gets involved in our work so we can use AI to do their translation or interpreter things. So and now I think and the marketing employees, um, English skills is required but not the key things for the marketing.

Interviewer: Very helpful answer. Thank you. Now please see the second question. No.2, what kind of marketing activities or tasks do you need to use English for when you are working?

Interviewee 4: Yeah, normally we use the search engine and to get data from the website or Internet and or from other companies' report. Ah, if we wanted to uh interview with other people, yeah who collected details and it's better for us to develop some deeper things, uh, just like at the back of the details. So that's a very important if we need to know the further things and. And sometimes we cannot guarantee the data is right or not. And we need to find the author writer yet to get the answer and data is right or not was on the background of data, a work, what kind of area we can use the data. So, um, in my opinion, collecting the data or analysing the data is the key things for international marketing.

Interviewer: Question 3, which marketing activities are the most difficult to perform in English? Please give the reason.

Interviewee 4: About the marketing activities. Um, I think for these questions the answer is negotiation face-to-face. First, I need to collect information and data for the topic. Then analyse it. It is difficult to guarantee the information data are correct. That means, uh, I need to be careful during the talks.

Interviewer: That's very enlightening. You see the next question. 4. If you were to attend an English marketing course, what knowledge do you think would be beneficial for your work to learn in class?

Interviewee 4: Okay, for the first part of this question, I want to learn doing marketing researching in English environment. How to collect the data from market and how to analyse the data, and make the clearance of the of the data. Because I believe there are still many technical gaps between China and the west.

Interviewer: Good answers. Now question 5, if you can take an English course, what kind of materials do you want to study with? Authentic business materials (such as video of business English negotiation, a reading article from economic newspapers, and so on) or the general traditional English text books. Please give reason.

Interviewee 4: Ah, for this questions I preferred the true, the video of the business English negotiation or some practice. Ah, it's quite important and that should be the way for us to learn English at the school. And, ah, also to know their accents is ok too. We are easier to understand their paper materials, using software or some kind in interpreter software. But face-to-face talk needs fast listening and speaking abilities. And I don't want to use the English textbooks, because most of times it behind the what we need, also behind the market.

Interviewer: Thank you for your answer. Let's see the next question. 6. Have you encountered any issues due to cultural differences in a multicultural work environment? Could you share your thoughts or experiences on intercultural communication?

Interviewee 4: Um, please give me a moment to recall. Because I graduated with an English tour guide license, so most of the cultures and offense things were on the books and college training. So I don't have misunderstanding in my work, but I still want to give my opinions on this. Uh, in my opinion, if you want to do the market in one country, at least you need to learn the culture or background of the country. And as I said before, uh, if we don't know their religions, the words we speak might offense them. So if we want to win the order or to win customers, we have to do some homework before.

Interviewer: Thank you. I think your interview is finished. I appreciate your kind support.

Interviewee 4: Anytime. Happy to help.

Interview Transcripts 5

Interviewer: Researcher

Interviewee 5: Ms. Xiaoqian Chen(Lily)

(Start of Interview)

Interviewer: Hello Lily, do you have time for an interview? It's about 10 minutes, and there are six questions.

Interviewee 5: Sure. I have time. Please go ahead.

Interviewer: Okay, thank you for your support. I will make it short. The first question: lots of companies require marketing employees being capable in using English. Do you think English skills are important in global marketing field? And please tell me the reason.

Interviewee 5: It is important that English is a must-have skill in our industry. Working with foreigners without being able to listen or speak English will make it impossible to carry out the work.

Interviewer: Question 2, what kind of marketing activities or tasks do you need to use English for when you are working?

Interviewee 5: Contact customers through emails and phone apps, promoting products at international trade shows, and responding to inquiries from customers on online sales platforms.

Interviewer: Question 3, which marketing activities are the most difficult to perform in English? Please give the reason.

Interviewee 5: I mainly deal with medical products, so it can be challenging to communicate with customers when encountering unfamiliar professional terms related to the products. At such time, it is inconvenient to pull out my phone to translate.

Interviewer: Question 4, if you were to attend an English marketing course, what knowledge do you think would be beneficial for your work to learn in class?

Interviewee 5: Yes, I would like to learn more on the professional terms related to the products. As the number of new products increases, and my understanding and knowledge of the industry get deeper, I believe there will be more new things to learn in the future.

Interviewer: 5. If you can take an English course, what kind of materials do you want to study with? Authentic business materials (such as video of business English

negotiation, a reading article from economic newspapers, and so on) or the general traditional English text books. Please give reason.

Interviewee 5: I think it would be great to add more learning materials that relate to business real work. It will help in our future career.

Interviewer: 6. Have you encountered any issues due to cultural differences in a multicultural work environment? Could you share your thoughts or experiences on intercultural communication?

Interviewee 5: Well, sure. For example, it is considered impolite to thumbs up in front of clients from some Middle East countries. So it's good to know the story before, and don't do the wrong thing in front of your clients, it will be helpful for the business.

Interviewer: Thank you! The interview is over.

Interviewee 5: You are welcome.



Interview Transcripts 6

Interviewer: Researcher

Interviewee 6: Mr. Jerry Pan

(Start of Interview)

Interviewer: Hello Jerry. How are you? I'd like to interview you with 6 questions related to the survey. Are you available?

Interviewee 6: Yes, I am available.

Interviewer: Thank you, Jerry. Question 1, lots of companies require marketing employees being capable in using English. Do you think English skills are important in global marketing field? And please tell me the reason.

Interviewee 6: English is important. Because we need English to communicate with clients at work.

Interviewer: 2. What kind of marketing activities or tasks do you need to use English for when you are working?

Interviewee 6: For me, going to the international exhibitions and abroad business trip. Um, and also online contact with foreign clients.

Interviewer: 3. Which marketing activities are the most difficult to perform in English? Please give the reason.

Interviewee 6: I think it is price discussion. Because in that situation, you need to listen and think and talk to make the deal.

Interviewer: 4. If you were to attend an English marketing course, what knowledge do you think would be beneficial for your work to learn in class?

Interviewee 6: Well, maybe give talk in front of the public. Yeah, I would say speech.

Interviewer: 5. If you can take an English course, what kind of materials do you want to study with? Authentic business materials (such as video of business English negotiation, a reading article from economic newspapers, and so on) or the general traditional English text books. Please give reason.

Interviewee 6: Business negotiation and international laws. It is more helpful for the business.

Interviewer: 6. Have you encountered any issues due to cultural differences in a multicultural work environment? Could you share your thoughts or experiences on intercultural communication?

Interviewee 6: Eating habits. Some people in certain countries do not eat pork. Sometimes we need to treat a client to dinner, so we can't order something they won't eat. It is not respectful to break the clients' living habits. So, normally we follow their habit to show our respects.

Interviewer: Thank you for your time. The interview is finished.

Interviewee 6: You are welcome.



Interview Transcripts 7

Interviewer: Researcher

Interviewee 7: Mr. Hui Zhou

(Start of Interview)

Interviewer: Hello, do you have time for an interview? There are 6 questions in total, and it takes about 15 minutes.

Interviewee 7: Ok. I have time now.

Interviewer: That's great. Here I start the interview. 1. Lots of companies require marketing employees being capable in using English. Do you think English skills are important in global marketing field? And please tell me the reason.

Interviewee 7: I think English is important in global marketing field. Because the employees need to use English to communicate with their clients, and they need to go to the international fairs in other countries.

Interviewer: 2. What kind of marketing activities or tasks do you need to use English for when you are working?

Interviewee 7: In my opinion, participating the international exhibitions and receiving business visits from foreign customers.

Interviewer: 3. Which marketing activities are the most difficult to perform in English? Please give the reason.

Interviewee 7: I think it is business negotiation. sometimes, you need to understand the imply meaning and trick questions, then reply in a good way.

Interviewer: Question 4, if you were to attend an English marketing course, what knowledge do you think would be beneficial for your work to learn in class?

Interviewee 7: Speaking. Because working as a marketer, I need to talk a lot. So those who can talk in good ways are the best sellers.

Interviewer: 5. If you can take an English course, what kind of materials do you want to study with? Authentic business materials (such as video of business English negotiation, a reading article from economic newspapers, and so on) or the general traditional English text books. Please give reason.

Interviewee 7: I prefer authentic business materials. It is closer to my work and it might be helpful for my work.

Interviewer: Question 6, have you encountered any issues due to cultural differences in a multicultural work environment? Could you share your thoughts or experiences on intercultural communication?

Interviewee 7: Yes. For example, we Chinese like to invite clients to dinner after work, usually Asian foreign clients are happy to join us, but some west foreigners don't like to hang out after work. They prefer get rest after get off work, I think it is good, I want go back home too. Hahaha, but, our business is more successful with the clients joining our dinners.

Interviewer: Thank you. The interview is over.

Interviewee 7: You are welcome.



Interview Transcripts 8

Interviewer: Researcher

Interviewee 8: Ms. Rongshu Yao

(Start of Interview)

Interviewer: Good afternoon, Ms Yao. Could I interview you now? Is it available for you?

Interviewee 8: Hi, good afternoon. Yes, I have time now.

Interviewer: Thank you. I will make it short. I will give you six questions, and I am starting with the first question. Question 1, lots of companies require marketing employees being capable in using English. Do you think English skills are important in global marketing field? And please tell me the reason.

Interviewee 8: Of course, it is important. International business deals with foreigners, so we need to use English to communicate with the clients.

Interviewer: 2. What kind of marketing activities or tasks do you need to use English for when you are working?

Interviewee 8: I think like...uh, go to the international exhibitions, and promote on international online platforms and respond to customer inquiries.

Interviewer: 3. Which marketing activities are the most difficult to perform in English? Please give the reason.

Interviewee 8: For me, face-to-face communication is more challenging. Because when people reply to me on online platforms, I can use translation software. But face-to-face communication requires me to listen and speak by myself.

Interviewer: 4. If you were to attend an English marketing course, what knowledge do you think would be beneficial for your work to learn in class?

Interviewee 8: I want to learn to speaking and listen. For me, it's good to be able to understand and talk. The important thing is to understand what the customer means and then answer it in the right spoken language.

Interviewer: 5. If you can take an English course, what kind of materials do you want to study with? Authentic business materials (such as video of business English negotiation, a reading article from economic newspapers, and so on) or the general traditional English text books. Please give reason.

Interviewee 8: Economic and business materials, such as newspapers and magazines, are preferred. Using these kind of textbooks to teach classes is closer to our work.

Interviewer: 6. Have you encountered any issues due to cultural differences in a multicultural work environment? Could you share your thoughts or experiences on intercultural communication?

Interviewee 8: I'm older. I'm not used to being greeted by foreigners too intimately. Although I have been working for a long time, I am uncomfortable when customers come to meet me at the exhibition, and they are very enthusiastic and want to hug me and kiss my face.

Interviewer: Thank you. The questioning is finished.



Interview Transcripts 9

Interviewer: Researcher

Interviewee 9: Mr. Zheng

(Start of Interview)

Interviewer: Hello, Mr. Zheng. I'd like to give you a more in-depth interview in English, which will take about fifteen minutes and six questions.

Interviewee 9: Hello. I am happy to.

Interviewer: Okay, I am happy to hear that. You can reply by three or four sentences. Then I'll get started. The first question, lots of companies require marketing employees being capable in using English. Do you think English skills are important in global marketing field? And please tell me the reason.

Interviewee 9: Very important. International business requires communicating business in English, and English is a must-have ability. When I recruit employees, I also require them to be fluent in English.

Interviewer: 2. What kind of marketing activities or tasks do you need to use English for when you are working?

Interviewee 9: Go to the international exhibitions and business visiting. For example, I have overseas business trip every month. When I travel and meet clients, I speak English. Like last December, after I finished business visiting with Japanese client, I flight to Thailand for the international exhibition. After that, I flight to Russia for business trip. Now, I am planning to meet someone in America. This job requires me travel a lot.

Interviewer: 3. Which marketing activities are the most difficult to perform in English? Please give the reason.

Interviewee 9: I think business negotiations in English is the most challenging. It requires not only the ability to communicate in English but also to negotiate with intelligence in order to complete business deals.

Interviewer: Question 4. If you were to attend an English marketing course, what knowledge do you think would be beneficial for your work to learn in class?

Interviewee 9: I have been doing international trade and travelled the world since 2004. Um... If I have to choose one, it would be English business negotiations.

Interviewer: 5. If you can take an English course, what kind of materials do you want to study with? Authentic business materials (such as video of business English

negotiation, a reading article from economic newspapers, and so on) or the general traditional English text books. Please give reason.

Interviewee 9: Authentic business materials, such as economic articles, and real business negotiation videos.

Interviewer: 6. Have you encountered any issues due to cultural differences in a multicultural work environment? Could you share your thoughts or experiences on intercultural communication?

Interviewee 9: When I have food with clients, and I find that people from Europe and America are used to ordering one whole dish for themselves, unlike Chinese prefer to order a table of dishes to share. It's quite interesting. Um, and also it's good to do business with clients in Europe and America. After the product and price are confirmed, the rest of the process is very simple, just follow the contract. Maybe I am a simple person, so I prefer to deal with foreign clients.

Interviewer: Alright, thank you. The interview is over.

Interviewee 9: You're welcome. Feel free to chat with me next time.



Interview Transcripts 10

Interviewer: Researcher

Interviewee 10: Mr. Niko Young

(Start of Interview)

Interviewer: Hello, Niko. I'd like to give you a short interview, okay? It's six questions, and it takes about 15 minutes.

Interviewee 10: Ok. Welcome. Please start.

Interviewer: Thank you. You can reply in English and I'll take notes. Then I'll get started. 1. Lots of companies require marketing employees being capable in using English. Do you think English skills are important in global marketing field? And please tell me the reason.

Interviewee 10: Of course, it is important. We use English to communication with foreigners.

Interviewer: 2. What kind of marketing activities or tasks do you need to use English for when you are working?

Interviewee 10: Communicate with clients on apps, attend international trade shows, and product promotion on website, such as catalogue and videos.

Interviewer: 3. Which marketing activities are the most difficult to perform in English? Please give the reason.

Interviewee 10: Communication with customers is important. It's also important to choose the right words to include in catalogue and videos when promoting the product.

Interviewer: Question No.4, if you were to attend an English marketing course, what knowledge do you think would be beneficial for your work to learn in class?

Interviewee 10: I would say speaking. Giving speeches in front of people is useful for my products introduction.

Interviewer: 5. If you can take an English course, what kind of materials do you want to study with? Authentic business materials (such as video of business English negotiation, a reading article from economic newspapers, and so on) or the general traditional English text books. Please give reason.

Interviewee 10: I think we should add business English articles to the course, and we can also add more English materials for product promotion.

Interviewer: Ok, the last question. No.6, have you encountered any issues due to cultural differences in a multicultural work environment? Could you share your thoughts or experiences on intercultural communication?

Interviewee 10: Yes. Once I went on a business trip to the north and received customers with other factory owners, and the boss in the north invited the customers and me to go to the bathing centre. We were all scared when we found out that there was a waiter to help us with the bath. The customer was not used to such an activity and made some jokes.

Interviewer: Haha, that's funny. Thank you for your time and sharing. The interview is over.

Interviewee 10: You are welcome.



The logo of Rangsit University is a large, faint watermark in the background. It features a stylized flame or sunburst design at the top, with a circular arrangement of rays below it. The text "มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต" (Mahavithayalai Rangsit) is written in Thai script along the bottom arc, and "Rangsit University" is written in English along the bottom arc.

Appendix D

The Initial Coding Tables of Interview Data

Initial coding of interview transcripts 1

	Interview Extract	Initial Codes
Q 1	It is important. Because working in this international business field, without proficiency in English, it is impossible to communicate effectively for work and business expansion.	English is important Work needs to be conducted in English.
Q 2	Communicating with clients by emails and phone messages, voice call and sometimes video call. Editing company's websites, and update new products and promotion online. Also, attending meetings.	Emails Phone messages Voice/video call Editing online websites Conduct products Online promotion Attending meetings
Q 3	I think it's more difficult to contact with customers, especially when using the technical terms in conversation.	using technical terms in communication with clients
Q 4	Professional nouns, writing skills.	Technical terms Writing skills
Q 5	Add some business-related teaching materials. When I was studying in college before, I mainly focused on general textbooks. If I can study English now, I hope to read more genres related to work.	Business-related materials. More business-related genres
Q 6	My main communication clients are Japanese people, who tend to speak in a vague and indirect manner, which can be quite puzzling. Sometimes, it takes a while to get to the point and they don't express themselves directly, while a simple sentence or two would suffice.	Japanese clients prefer a vague and indirect communicating manner It's needs more time to communicate with clients from implicit culture

Initial coding of interview transcripts 2

	Interview Extract	Initial Codes
Q 1	Yes, of course it's very important. With mature English ability, you can learn all kinds of ideas of global issues firstly, then act and go beyond it.	English is important Can be help in get new information.
Q 2	Learning the industry knowledge, then communicating and sharing the ideas with workmates.	Market research Meetings
Q 3	Analysis and expression. One is to get understand others thoughts, the other one is to express myself thoughts and get agreement from others.	Listening the ideas of others Speaking and sharing own thoughts
Q 4	Some real ideas and business samples are definitely needed. Maybe, the course could be taught by an English speaking teacher, and the contents of the courses were "How to cooperate in trade business", something like that.	Learn Business from a English speaking teacher
Q 5	I will choose the video of business English negotiation, because currently we use it most in our daily work, as well as the exhibitions.	Business-related materials.
Q 6	Yes, for communication styles, in some cultures, direct communication is valued, while in others, indirect communication is preferred. This can lead to misunderstandings if one party perceives the other as being too blunt or too vague.	Misunderstanding in communication styles vague culture communication

Initial coding of interview transcripts 3

	Interview extract	Codes
Q 1	Well, I think it's very important. Because I think first of all, in an international company, because you are facing international customers, English is a mandatory skill. Then I feel that using English can have a better communication with customers, understand the international market, and broaden my horizons.	English is important Effective communicate in English Be aware of the international market Broaden horizons
Q 2	I work in a foreign company, and I have foreign boss and colleagues, so I have to speak English every day. And, the conferences and international exhibitions and meetings between companies will be in English.	Communicate with foreign colleagues Attending the international exhibitions/conferences Meetings with other companies
Q 3	At work, I think it's little difficult to give presentations and presentations in English. Well, also the meetings, because there are a lot of technical words to be used, and the text has to be formal.	Give English speeches Attend meetings Technical terms Using correct genre
Q 4	I want to learn business English because I want to communicate better with customers. I want to improve my spoken English.	learn business English want to improve English speaking skills
Q 5	I prefer articles about economics. Because I think that studying this kind of article can not only improve my English, but also increase my understanding of the international economic situation. This allows us to appear more high-quality when chatting with our customers.	Economics articles
Q 6	Hmm, in our foreign company, we can feel a lot of cultural integration. Most of it is a positive collision, such as more holidays and a great festive atmosphere.	Positive cultural integration More holidays happier

Initial coding of interview transcripts 4

	Interview extract	Codes
Q 1	Um, okay, thanks for your question and lots of company require marketing employees being capable in using English and for in my opinion as the development of the skills especially for the translation, uh software, it will help a lot of people and who cannot manage their English skill very well, also can do the marketing, um things, and a knowledge, the AI gets involved in our work so we can use AI to do their translation or interpreter things. So and now I think and the marketing employees, um, English skills is required but not the key things for the marketing.	English is required in this job Nowadays translation software can help
Q 2	Yeah, normally we use the search engine and to get data from the website or Internet and or from other companies' report. Ah, if we wanted to uh interview with other people, yeah who collected details and it's better for us to develop some deeper things, uh, just like at the back of the details. So that's a very important if we need to know the further things and. And sometimes we cannot guarantee the data is right or not. And we need to find the author or writer yet to get the answer and data is right or not was on the background of data, a work, what kind of area we can use the data. So, um, in my opinion, collecting the data or analysing the data is the key things for international marketing.	Using English in collecting and analysing marketing information
Q 3	About the marketing activities. Um, I think for these questions the answer is negotiation face-to-face. First, I need to collect information and data for the topic. Then analyse it. It is difficult to guarantee the information data are correct. That means, uh, I need to be careful during the talks.	Face-to-face negotiations Listen for the useful information
Q 4	Okay, for the first part of this question,	marketing researching in

	I want to learn doing marketing researching in English environment. How to collect the data from market and how to analyse the data, and make the clearance of the of the data. Because I believe there are still many technical gaps between China and the west.	English environment There are still many technical gaps between China and the west
Q 5	Ah, for this questions I preferred the true, the video of the business English negotiation or some practice. Ah, it's quite important and that should be the way for us to learn English at the school. And, ah, also to know their accents is ok too. We are easier to understand their paper materials, using software or some kind in interpreter software. But face-to-face talk needs fast listening and speaking abilities. And I don't want to use the English textbooks, because most of times it behind the what we need, also behind the market.	Authentic business materials Business English negotiation or practice
Q 6	Um, please give me a moment to recall. Because I graduated with an English tour guide license, so most of the cultures and offense things were on the books and college training. So I don't have misunderstanding in my work, but I still want to give my opinions on this. Uh, in my opinion, if you want to do the market in one country, at least you need to learn the culture or background of the country. And as I said before, uh, if we don't know their religions, the words we speak might offense them. So if we want to win the order or to win customers, we have to do some homework before.	Positive attitude Learn other cultures before To avoid misunderstanding

Initial coding of interview transcripts 5

	Interview extract	Codes
Q 1	It is important that English is a must-have skill in our industry. Working with foreigners without being able to listen or speak English will make it impossible to carry out the work.	English is important Using English to conduct work
Q 2	Contact customers through emails and phone apps, promoting products at international trade shows, and responding to inquiries from customers on online sales platforms.	Emails Phone messages International exhibition Reply inquiry on e-commerce platform
Q 3	I mainly deal with medical products, so it can be challenging to communicate with customers when encountering unfamiliar professional terms related to the products. At such time, it is inconvenient to pull out my phone to translate.	Communication with unfamiliar professional vocabulary
Q 4	Yes, I would like to learn more on the professional terms related to the products. As the number of new products increases, and my understanding and knowledge of the industry get deeper, I believe there will be more new things to learn in the future.	Learn more professional vocabulary
Q 5	I think it would be great to add more learning materials that relate to business real work. It will help in our future career.	Authentic business materials
Q 6	Well, sure. For example, it is considered impolite to thumbs up in front of clients from some Middle East countries. So it's good to know the story before, and don't do the wrong thing in front of your clients, it will be helpful for the business.	Positive attitude Avoid impolite gestures could be helpful to the business

Initial coding of interview transcripts 6

	Interview extract	Codes
Q 1	English is important. Because we need English to communicate with clients at work.	English is important. Using English to conduct work.
Q 2	For me, going to the international exhibitions and abroad business trip. Um, and also online contact with foreign clients.	international exhibitions, abroad business trip, online business negotiation
Q 3	I think it is price discussion. Because in that situation, you need to listen and think and talk to make the deal.	Business negotiation Listening and speaking
Q 4	Well, maybe give talk in front of the public. Yeah, I would say speech.	Public speech
Q 5	Business negotiation and international laws. It is more helpful for the business.	Authentic business materials Business negotiation International laws
Q 6	Eating habits. Some people in certain countries do not eat pork. Sometimes we need to treat a client to dinner, so we can't order something they won't eat. It is not respectful to break the clients' living habits. So, normally we follow their habit to show our respects.	Positive attitude. Following clients' cultures to show respects

Initial coding of interview transcripts 7

	Interview extract	Codes
Q 1	I think English is important in global marketing field. Because the employees need to use English to communicate with their clients, and they need to go to the international fairs in other countries.	English is important. Using English at work (such as negotiation, international fairs and abroad business trips)
Q 2	In my opinion, participating the international exhibitions and receiving business visits from foreign customers.	international exhibition, receiving business visits
Q 3	I think it is business negotiation. Sometimes, you need to understand the imply meaning and trick questions, then reply in a good way.	business negotiation
Q 4	Speaking. Because working as a marketer, I need to talk a lot. So those who can talk in good ways are the best sellers.	Speaking skills
Q 5	I prefer authentic business materials. It is closer to my work and it might be helpful for my work.	Authentic business materials Can be helpful to work
Q 6	Yes. For example, we Chinese like to invite clients to dinner after work, usually Asian foreign clients are happy to join us, but some west foreigners don't like to hang out after work. They prefer get rest after get off work, I think it is good, I want go back home too. Hahaha, but, our business is more successful with the clients joining our dinners.	Positive attitude A culture where work and life are distinctly separated

Initial coding of interview transcripts 8

	Interview extract	Codes
Q 1	Of course, it is important. International business deals with foreigners, so we need to use English to communicate with the clients.	English is important. Using English to communicate with clients.
Q 2	I think like...uh, go to the international exhibitions, and promote on international online platforms and respond to customer inquiries.	Attending the international exhibitions Operating e-commerce platform Online inquiries
Q 3	For me, face-to-face communication is more challenging. Because when people reply to me on online platforms, I can use translation software. But face-to-face communication requires me to listen and speak by myself.	face-to-face communication
Q 4	I want to learn to speaking and listen. For me, it's good to be able to understand and talk. The important thing is to understand what the customer means and then answer it in the right spoken language.	Listening skills Speaking skills
Q 5	Economic and business materials, such as newspapers and magazines, are preferred. Using these kind of textbooks to teach classes is closer to our work.	Authentic economic and business materials Business materials are related to work
Q 6	I'm older. I'm not used to being greeted by foreigners too intimately. Although I have been working for a long time, I am uncomfortable when customers come to meet me at the exhibition, and they are very enthusiastic and want to hug me and kiss my face.	Negative attitude Greeting habits are different. People in implicit traditional culture do not favour overly intimate social interactions.

Initial coding of interview transcripts 9

	Interview extract	Codes
Q 1	Very important. International business requires communicating business in English, and English is a must-have ability. When I recruit employees, I also require them to be fluent in English.	English is important. International business jobs require English.
Q 2	Go to the international exhibitions and business visiting. For example, I have overseas business trip every month. When I travel and meet clients, I speak English. Like last December, after I finished business visiting with Japanese client, I flight to Thailand for the international exhibition. After that, I flight to Russia for business trip. Now, I am planning to meet someone in America. This job requires me travel a lot.	international exhibitions, abroad business visiting
Q 3	I think business negotiations in English is the most challenging. It requires not only the ability to communicate in English but also to negotiate with intelligence in order to complete business deals.	Business negotiations Not only need to communicate in English, but also needs good mind.
Q 4	I have been doing international trade and travelled the world since 2004. Um... If I have to choose one, it would be English business negotiations.	Business negotiations
Q 5	Authentic business materials, such as economic articles, and real business negotiation videos.	Authentic business materials economic articles real business negotiation videos.
Q 6	When I have food with clients, and I find that people from Europe and America are used to ordering one whole dish for themselves, unlike Chinese prefer to order a table of dishes to share. It's quite interesting. Um, and also it's good to do business with clients in Europe and America. After the product and price are confirmed, the rest of the process is very simple, just follow the contract. Maybe I am a simple person, so I prefer to deal with foreign clients.	Positive attitude Interesting to know different living habits Like simple and direct style

Initial coding of interview transcripts 10

	Interview extract	Codes
Q 1	Of course, it is important. We use English to communication with foreigners.	English is important Using English to communicate clients
Q 2	Talk with clients on apps, attend international trade shows, and product promotion on website, such as catalogue and videos.	Apps talk Attending the international exhibitions Product promotion Making product catalogue Make product introduction videos Operating website
Q 3	Communication with customers is important. It's also important to choose the right words to include in catalogue and videos when promoting the product.	Business negotiation Choose the right words for product promotion
Q 4	I would say speaking. Giving speeches in front of people is useful for my products introduction.	Speaking skills Giving speeches
Q 5	I think we should add business English articles to the course, and we can also add more English materials for product promotion.	Authentic business materials Business English articles Materials about the product promotion.
Q 6	Yes. Once I went on a business trip to the north and received customers with other factory owners, and the boss in the north invited the customers and me to go to the bathing centre. We were all scared when we found out that there was a waiter to help us with the bath. The customer was not used to such an activity and made some jokes.	Negative attitude Discomfort caused by different lifestyle

Biography

Name	Yuejia Liu
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