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General English or ESP/EAP? Rethinking College Students' Needs for GE and ESP/EAP

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The purpose of the study was to explore English as foreign language (EFL) college students' needs for General English (GE) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in terms of their attitudes towards the English courses in the EFL contexts. This study addressed the following key questions: (1) What are the EFL college students' needs for GE and ESP/EAP? (2) What are their attitudes towards GE and ESP/EAP by gender, major, and English proficiency? and (3) Which between GE and ESP/EAP do they prefer depending on their experience of taking English-medium instruction (EMI) classes? A survey questionnaire was administered to 248 EFL college students in South Korea, and the results showed that the students needed speaking the most for GE, and having an advantage with regard to jobs for ESP/EAP. To triangulate the findings and to attain a more in-depth understanding of the learners' needs, 15 college students were also interviewed. They preferred GE to ESP/EAP whether they had or had not experienced taking EMI classes. Accordingly, the results of this study invite discussions on the implementation of English courses in universities and offer pedagogical implications for language instructors, curriculum designers, and university administrators.

[General English/College students' needs/ESP/EAP/EMI]

I. INTRODUCTION

Globalization has facilitated English learning and English language teaching (ELT) in the English as a second language (ESL)/English as a foreign language (EFL) context. Many universities are trying to restructure their English program, reflecting the current trend of focusing more on the students' practical communication needs. On the other hand, the universities in South Korea are also considering university evaluation, thereby

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increasing their English-medium Instruction (EMI) classes. At the same time, the demand for English for specific purposes (ESP)/English for academic purposes (EAP), such as for business or medical English, is growing. Accordingly, this current trend continues the ELT approach that is more practical and helpful for strengthening the students' job-related skills (Kwon, 2012). How effective EMI actually is has not been proven, however, and is still being debated on by scholars. Moreover, no directive on the teaching of ESP has been enacted, except for very specific fields like business or the medical area, even though many scholars in South Korea argue that ESP/EAP is more needed than General English (GE) for more practical objectives such as obtaining jobs (Suh, 1990; Kim, 2005; Seong, Chang, & Kim, 2007). The current trend in South Korea, however, is that an increasing number of college students are taking EMI classes for two purposes: to improve their English proficiency and to obtain content knowledge using English as a medium. The students' perceptions of how much they need GE and ESP/EAP, however, have not been determined.

Accordingly, this study aims to investigate the South Korean college students' perceptions of their need for GE and ESP/EAP in terms of their attitudes towards the English courses in the EFL contexts. There is much debate on the current GE curriculum in South Korea, with many recommending that GE be changed to ESP/EAP (Kim, 1996; Seong, Chang, & Kim, 2007; Chang, 2009), but the reality is that the ESP/EAP research is still in the early stage even while many students are already taking EMI classes. In this South Korean tertiary education context, this paper explores the college students' needs and attitudes with regard to GE and ESP/EAP, guided by the following research questions:

1) What are the EFL college students' needs for GE and ESP/EAP?
2) What are their attitudes towards GE and ESP/EAP by gender, major, and English proficiency?
3) Which between GE and ESP/EAP do they prefer depending on whether they have or have not experienced taking EMI classes?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. GE and ESP

GE has been taught for more than 100 years now at the tertiary level in South Korea for the sake of general education, but it has been attacked from the perspective of survival skills because it is blamed for not being able to provide the college students with English skills as a tool for attaining success in their future careers. Many scholars suggest that ESP be taught instead as it teaches English in a way that can help the students in their future

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careers. What is ESP? Hutchinson and Waters (1987) view it as an approach to language learning not as a product based on the learners' needs but focusing more on learner-centered instruction.

Basturkmen (2010) argues that "both ELT and ESP share a similar aim: to develop the students' communicative competence" (p. 7). Accordingly, GE and ESP should start with the students' needs, but ESP addresses the students' more specific needs. Cook (2002) also explains the difference between general ELT and ESP based on their external and internal goals. That is, ESP is related more with external goals like getting a job or pursing academic achievements while general ELT focuses on developing the students' thinking or linguistic skills. Basturkmen (2010) argues for the effectiveness of ESP over GE by citing several studies (Kasper, 1997; Master, 2005; Song, 2006). She maintains that ESP draws the students' interest and motivation because it relates more to their work and study and has more limited and specific aims than GE. Therefore, Basturkmen (2010) maintains that ESP is more efficient than GE because if the students are highly motivated, learning is likely to occur, and if the learning objective is highly specific, it is more likely to be achieved.

Seong, Chang, and Kim (2007) showed in their study results that college students need an ESP-oriented curriculum. Based on a student needs analysis, Kwon (2012) also proposed the development of GE courses in universities, and her study revealed that college students have a strong need to improve their practical English skills. Therefore, in the globalized society, the voice of changing GE tends to become increasingly stronger from the practical perspective, focusing more on communication and on the means of content and information delivery not only for English majors but also for non-English majors. Therefore, many scholars argue that GE should reflect the students' needs related to their majors and future jobs for effective ELT, and that GE should be changed to ESP/EAP (Kim, 1996; Seong, Chang, & Kim, 2007; Chang, 2009).

EAP is the most common branch of ESP, but it focuses more specifically on academic purposes. Hereafter, this study puts ESP and EAP together as ESP/EAP. The picture is not always rosy for ESP/EAP, however, because there has been little research on how GE can be changed by making it focus on ESP/EAP, there has been no study that successfully justified the need to change GE to ESP/EAP, and there are not many ESP/EAP classes in South Korea, such as Business or Medical English.

Celani (2008) argues that "needs" has been an important term in ESP after its evolution. She proposes the reconceptualization of needs, however, even if there have been many discussions on it, such as in situation analysis (Richterich & Chancerel, 1980), target situation analysis (Munby, 1978), strategy analysis (Allwright, 1982), learning needs analysis (Hutchison & Waters, 1987), and means analysis (Holliday & Cooke, 1982). Instead, Celani (2008) argues that the concept of "needs" has been changed in such a way

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that it is now more related to the social context from the critical perspective, and says, "it is the social role that determines the need" (p. 420). Furthermore, Celani (2008) argues that the myth of ESP is that it regards "reading is the skill that lends itself more easily to further development in other skills as well" (p. 421) and adds, "teaching ESP is not equal to teaching reading only, although it is still interpreted like that by many in Brazil" (p. 421), from the critical stance. Celani (2008) concludes that the "needs" of language learning and teaching point to the social role imposed by our society for the "imagined future" (p. 421), and that the myth is that reading is the primary skill that has to be developed in general, especially in English teaching.

2. CBI and EMI

Brown (2007) explains content-based instruction (CBI) as "the learning of some specific subject matter content with the learning of a second language" (p. 287). Kim (2009) advocates the two advantages based on the theoretical rationales citing scholars' works: first, language education can take place more meaningfully and successfully; and second, students have an urgent need for content learning with a specific motivation because the themes are relevant to the learners. However, CBI can be a burden for both teachers and students, because teachers should use the target content in language classrooms and students need to understand the language and the content at the same time (Demirdirek, Özgirin, and Salataci, 2010).

On the other hand, the most common CBI type can be embodied by EMI. Park (2006) differentiates the concepts of CBI and EMI in that CBI focuses more on the subject content than on the form but the teaching objective is usually the language learning itself, while EMI pursues subject content learning rather than language learning. Therefore, language practitioners usually employ CBI while content instructors employ EMI.

Cho (2012) claims that the EMI implementation in South Korea is currently growing, pointing out that Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST) adopted a 100% English policy in all lectures, even those on Korean history, in 2006, and that Pohang University of Science and Technology (POSTECH) did the same in 88% of its undergraduate courses and 95% of its graduate courses in 2010. The implementation of EMI is spreading to other colleges from the Seoul metropolitan area. Cho (2012) argues that the wider implementation of EMI in the Expanding Circles (EC) (Kachru, 1985) like South Korea is due to the academic or economic purposes based on the belief that using English in universities will both provide the students with higher English proficiency and increase their chances of having a better future career. Cho (2012) claims, however, that the real reason for the expansion of EMI in the universities in South Korea is to raise the university's rank because EMI is one of the evaluation criteria for assessing universities in

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South Korea and is the easiest and most effective way of obtaining a high university rank compared to the other criteria, like research achievements. Furthermore, Cho (2012) cites the students' difficulty in understanding the advanced contents and abstract concepts in English as a disadvantage of EMI. Therefore, it cannot be said that learning contents should be taught in English for the sake of its advantages for universities. Kang and Park (2004) argue that professors are also burdened by lecturing in English and perceive their students as not capable of understanding EMI. Kang and Park (2004) evaluate EMI as not effective in developing the students' reading, speaking, and writing abilities, although the purpose of EMI is to improve the students' English proficiency. They claim that one of the reasons for the failure of EMI is the lack of feedback because they conclude that even though the students are more exposed to English through the mass media, taking EMI classes requires that the students use English and develop English proficiency only through the feedback that they receive based on their actual English usage. Park (2006) reports, however, that based on the results of her quantitative and qualitative study, EMI produced more satisfactory outcomes than Korean-medium instruction with freshman or sophomore engineering students with low grades.

III. METHODOLOGY

1. Participants

The participants of this study were 248 college students aged 19-29 who were attending the four-year universities A and K in Gyeonggi-do, South Korea in 2013. A and K universities have GE programs, divided into English 1 and English 2. At A university, English 1 is for English conversation classes with native English teachers, and English 2 is for reading classes with Korean English teachers. However, at K university, English 1 is for reading and English 2 is for writing. The difference between these two universities is that at K university, Korean teachers take basic and intermediate classes, but native English teachers take advanced and upper advanced classes. The English proficiency and EMI policies at both universities are similar, in that their Business Administration and Engineering departments tend to focus more on EMI. The respondents are from both reading classes with Korean English teachers.

A total of 295 accomplished questionnaires were collected, but 47 of them had missing parts or were marked multiple times and were thus discarded. Fifteen students volunteered to participate in the semi-structured interviews. They were taking compulsory GE classes across departments (excluding the English majors). Table 1 shows the demographic data of the study participants.

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TABLE 1

Demographic Data of the Study Participants (N=248)

Demographic Data	Subcategories	*N*	%
Gender	Male	162	65.3
	Female	86	34.7
Major	Engineering	72	29.0
	Social Science	61	24.6
	Business Administration	44	17.7
	Art and Design	33	13.3
	Humanities	10	4.0
	Physical Education	16	6.5
	Science	9	3.6
	Music	4	1.6
English learning duration	1 ~ 9 years	92	37.1
	10~ 19 years	155	62.5
	20~ 29 years	1	0.4
Self-rated English proficiency	High	5	2.0
	Middle	131	52.8
	Low	112	45.2
TOEIC scores	200 ~ 299	1	0.4
	300 ~ 399	1	0.4
	400 ~ 499	5	2.0
	500 ~ 599	6	2.4
	600 ~ 699	19	7.7
	700 ~ 799	23	9.3
	800 ~ 899	17	7.7
	900~ 990	4	1.6
	NA	170	68.5

As shown in Table 1, there were twice as many male participants as female participants. Their average age was 22, with the youngest participant 19 years old and the oldest 29. 62.5% of the participants had learned English for more than 10 years because English is a compulsory subject from the 3rd grade in the elementary schools in South Korea. With regard to the participants' self-rated English proficiency, 2.0% (n=5) gave themselves a high rating, 52.8% (n=131) gave themselves a middle-level rating, and 45.2% (n=112) gave themselves a low rating. Although the participants' TOEIC scores ranged from very low to high, 68.5% (n=170) of them did not have TOEIC scores as an indication of their English proficiency level.

2. Data Collection Procedures

1) Survey Questionnaires

To determine the EFL students' needs for the ESP/EAP and GE courses, a questionnaire

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was modified based on that developed by Liu, Chang, Yang, and Sun (2011). The questionnaire was written in English and Korean, so that students who could not understand English could use the Korean version.

The questionnaire had five parts: demographic data about the participant, attitudes towards GE and ESP/EAP, and necessities, wants, and lacks with regard to the GE and ESP/EAP courses (see Appendix A). The reliability of this study was Cronbach alpha α=.901. The rationale of the classification of the students' needs into necessities, wants, and lacks was based on the explanation of Hutchinson and Waters (1987), as follows: necessities (needs determined by the demands), lacks (the gap between the target proficiency and the existing proficiency), and wants (what the learners want or feel they need) in the target situation. The questionnaire consisted of 30 question items, including open-ended questions and multiple-choice question items scored based on a 5-point Likert scale (1: strongly disagree; 2: disagree; 3: neutral; 4: agree; and 5: strongly agree).

2) Interviews

Fifteen participants who accomplished the questionnaire were selected on a voluntary basis during the 2013 spring semester. There were 10 interview questions (see Appendix B). The demographic data of the 15 interviewees are as follows:

TABLE 2

Demographic Data of the 15 Interviewees

Participants	Gender	Age (Years in School)	Major	English Learning Duration	EMI Experience
Sooyoung	F	21 (Sophomore)	Mechanical Engineering	13 years	Yes
Yongseok	M	27 (Senior)	Computer Engineering	13 years	Yes
Jungwoo	M	24 (Sophomore)	Computer Engineering	10 years	Yes
Minyoung	F	20 (Freshman)	Electronics & Radio Engineering	10 years	No
Jinhee	F	20 (Freshman)	Industrial & Management System Engineering	10 years	No
Jieun	F	23 (Junior)	Physical Education	18 years	Yes
Sangwon	M	26 (Junior)	Physical Education	15 years	Yes
Minsu	M	25 (Junior)	Civil Engineering	15 years	Yes
Taehwan	M	20 (Freshman)	Science	11 years	No
Giseok	M	21 (Sophomore)	Business Administration	11 years	Yes
Yeonsu	F	21 (Sophomore)	Social Science (Economics)	13 years	No
Chanyoung	M	21 (Sophomore)	Science	14 years	Yes
Minjeong	F	20 (Freshman)	Art and Design	10 years	Yes
Inkyu	M	23 (Freshman)	Music	13 years	Yes
Yesul	F	23 (Freshman)	Physical Education	5 years	Yes

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Only five out of the 15 interviewees had certified English proficiency scores; two had TOEIC scores higher than 800, two had higher than 700, and one had a TOEIC score of 550. Of the 15 interviewees, three gave themselves a low English proficiency rating and four each gave themselves a low-intermediate, intermediate, and upper-intermediate rating.

3. Data Analysis

For data analysis, T-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA) using SPSS were conducted to determine if there is any difference between the college students' attitudes towards GE and ESP/EAP. For data triangulation, the interviews were also conducted, which were recorded with the consent of the 15 interviewees. The recorded interviews were transcribed in Korean and then translated into English. Focus group interviews with three or four students were also conducted, and the data obtained were analyzed based on open coding.

The interviews ranged from 7 minutes 30 seconds to 22 minutes 2 seconds. The interview questions consisted of 10 questions about the interviewees' demographic data to their attitudes towards GE and ESP/EAP. The researcher tried to create a comfortable atmosphere for the interviews, and the interviews were conducted in the classrooms, after class hours. The real names of all the students were replaced with pseudonyms so as not to reveal their identities.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Needs for GE and ESP/EAP

The following were found to be the college students' perceptions of their weakest English skill and the most important English skill for their future jobs:

TABLE 3

Perceived Weakest English Skill and Most Important English Skill for Future Jobs

Category	Weakest English Skill		Most Important English Skill	
	N	%	*N*	%
Listening	26	10.5	15	6.0
Speaking	101	40.7	163	65.7
Reading	15	6.0	16	6.5
Writing	50	20.2	7	2.8
Translating	9	3.6	7	2.8
All of the above	47	19.0	40	16.1

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As can be seen in Table 3, 101 participants (40.7%) perceived speaking as their weakest English skill, and 163 participants (65.7%) perceived speaking as the most important English skill for their future jobs. Therefore, speaking was both the participants' weakest English skill and the English skill that they perceived to be the most important for their future jobs. Among the interviewees, 10 cited speaking, three grammar, one writing, and one vocabulary as their weakest English skill. For the most important English skill related to their future jobs, 10 answered speaking, two all the English skills, one listening, one speaking and reading, and one listening and speaking. The interviewees' responses appeared to be related to the Korean EFL context's focus on reading and listening. Jieun (PE, junior) mentioned the following:

> I think speaking is the most important English skill related to my future job in the area of sports marketing, and persuading people is very important in that field.

Sangwon (PE, junior) also cited speaking as the most important English skill for his future job, as follows:

> I want to be an interpreter or sports commentator at a broadcasting station, and as I expect to meet many foreign sports players, I have to be able to communicate with foreigners well.

Giseok (Business Administration, sophomore) also mentioned the following:

> I want to work in the finance field, like my father. He told me that a finance practitioner who is fluent in foreign languages will have more chances of being promoted more quickly than one who is not.

Chanyoung (Math, sophomore) also mentioned that he wanted to work in the finance field and also thought that speaking is the most important skill in such field.

Of all the participants, 106 (42.7%) said that they had taken or were taking EMI classes while 142 (57.3%) indicated that they had never taken EMI classes. There was a statistically significant difference between those who had taken or were taking EMI classes and majors, as follows:

TABLE 4

Crosstab of Study Participants with EMI Experience and Majors

Major	Taking EMI			Chi-Square (*Sig.*)
	Yes	No	Total	
Engineering	35 (33.0%)	37 (26.1)	72 (29.0%)	63.762 (.000)**
Science	5 (4.7%)	3 (2.1%)	8 (3.2%)	
Music	1 (.9%)	3 (2.1%)	4 (1.6%)	

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Physical Education	5 (4.7%)	11 (7.7%)	16 (6.5%)
Humanities	4 (3.8%)	6 (4.2%)	10 (4.0%)
Art & Design	19 (17.9%)	14 (9.9%)	33 (13.3%)
Social Science	3 (2.8%)	58 (40.8%)	61 (24.6%)
Business Administration	34 (32.1%)	10 (7%)	44 (17.7%)
Total	106 (100%)	142 (100%)	248 (100%)

$^{**}p < .001$

As can be seen in Table 4, the Pearson Chi-Square test [(63.762, 7), $p < .001$] revealed that 35 participants (33%) from the Engineering department and 34 participants (32.1%) from the Business Administration department tended to take more EMI classes compared to those from the other departments. On the other hand, 58 participants (40.8%) from the Social Science department tended to take relatively less EMI classes than those from the other departments.

2. Attitudes towards GE and ESP/EAP

The questionnaire responses showed the EFL university students' attitudes towards GE (see Table 5). The students revealed positive attitudes towards GE overall and showed the most positive attitude towards GE in relation to the importance of English; that is, 81.5% of the respondents (n=202, m=4.24) agreed that English is one of the most important languages in the world today, a very big percentage compared to the percentage of responses to the other questions. This means that the students generally agree that the English language is important and seem to know that they should learn it well.

TABLE 5

Attitudes towards General English

Category	*M*	*SD*
Necessity of English (Q10, Q11)	3.32	1.07
Importance of English (Q12)	4.24	.85
Helpfulness of English (Q13)	3.93	.99
Good impression (Q14)	3.83	1.09

(1: Strongly disagree; 2: Disagree; 3: Neutral; 4: Agree; 5: Strongly agree)

Table 6 shows the differences in attitudes towards GE by gender.

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TABLE 6

***t*-Test Results of Attitudes towards GE by Gender**

Category	Gender	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*t*-Test	
					t	*Sig.* (2-tailed)
Importance of English (Q12)	M	162	4.33	.81	2.177	.030*
	F	86	4.08	.91		
Good impression (Q14)	M	162	3.69	1.10	-3.019	.003*
	F	86	4.12	1.01		

*$p < .05$

The independent *t*-test results showed that there were two statistically significant differences in the students' attitudes towards GE by gender: one with regard to the students' perceptions of the importance of English (Q12), and the other with regard to how knowing English well is needed to make a good impression (Q14). That is, more male than female college students considered English important [$t(246)=1.417, p < .05$]. On the other hand, more female than male college students perceived knowing English well as necessary to make a good impression [$t(246)=2.069, p < .05$].

There is also a statistically significant difference between the attitudes towards GE and the self-rated English proficiency (high, middle, and low). With regard to the necessity of English (Q10, Q11), the middle-level group perceived English as necessary more than the low-level group did ($p=.047$) [$F(2, 245)=3.244, p < .05$], as confirmed by the post-hoc Tukey test results.

TABLE 7

Results of the One-Way ANOVA on the Attitudes towards GE and Self-rated English Proficiency

Category	Group	*M*	*SD*	Source	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Necessity of English (Q10, Q11)	High	2.90	.82	Between Groups	7.284	3.642	3.244
	Middle	3.48	1.01				
	Low	3.15	1.12	Within Groups	275.051		
	Total	3.32	1.07				
				Total	282.335	1.123	

*$p < .05$

There was no statistically significant difference, however, in the attitudes towards GE by major.

TABLE 8

Attitudes towards ESP/EAP

Category	*M*	*SD*
Importance of reading international literature (Q15)	3.97	1.00
Necessity for getting a good job (Q16)	4.25	.89
Importance of English for publishing journals (Q17, Q18)	3.51	.95
Importance of English for attending conferences (Q19)	3.83	.95

(1: Strongly disagree; 2: Disagree; 3: Neutral; 4: Agree; 5: Strongly agree)

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The questionnaire results showed the EFL university students' attitudes towards ESP/EAP (see Table 8). The students revealed positive attitudes towards ESP/EAP overall, and the attitudes towards GE and towards ESP/EAP were shown to be similar (m= 3.83, m=3.89).

Furthermore, the students showed the most positive attitude towards ESP/EAP in relation to its necessity for getting a good job (Q16); that is, 82.7% of the respondents (n=205, m=4.25) agreed that English is necessary for one to get a good job. This means that overall, the students perceive ESP/EAP as necessary primarily for getting a good job.

The interview findings also supported this result regarding the primary reason for the need for ESP/EAP. Sooyoung (Mechanical Engineering, sophomore) mentioned the following:

> Yes, I think ESP/EAP is necessary because I want to work at a foreign company. Nowadays, many people want to do that, right?

Therefore, Sooyoung feels that ESP/EAP is necessary but shows some concerns related to her experience of taking EMI classes, as follows:

> I am taking four EMI classes, but I actually don't understand the professors' lectures so I just study all alone. I sometimes don't listen to them at all, but I look at the process of solving mathematics problems in the text.... In addition, I don't think all the classes have to be EMI classes because my major, Mechanical Engineering, will later be divided into Heat & Fluid and Material & Production, and I don't think basic classes like Engineering Mathematics have to be taught in English.

On the other hand, there is one statistically significant difference in the attitudes towards ESP/EAP by gender: more female than male students agreed with the necessity of ESP/EAP for getting a good job.

TABLE 9

***t*-Test Results of the Attitudes towards ESP/EAP by Gender**

Category	Gender	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*t*-Test	
					t	*Sig.* (2-tailed)
Necessity for getting a good job (Q16)	M	162	4.17	.93	-2.130	.034*
	F	86	4.42	.80		

*$p < .05$

As can be seen in Table 10, there was no conspicuously significant difference between the attitudes towards ESP/EAP and the self-rated English proficiency, except in one category: the importance of reading international literature (Q15).

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TABLE 10
Results of the One-Way ANOVA on the Attitudes towards ESP and the Self-rated English Proficiency

Category	Group	*M*	*SD*	Source	*SS*	*MS*	*F* (*Sig.*)
Importance of reading international literature (Q15)	H	4.60	.55	Between Groups	8.900	4.450	4.583 (.022*)
	M	4.11	.98				
	L	3.78	1.00	Within Groups	237.902	.971	
				Total	246.802		

*$p < .05$

That is, there was a statistically significant difference between the middle- and low-level groups ($p = .022$), [$F(2, 245) = 4.583$, $p < .05$]. The post-hoc Tukey test results showed that the students whose English proficiency self-rating fell under the middle-level group regarded English as necessary for reading international literature more than the low-level group did.

TABLE 11
Results of the One-Way ANOVA on the Attitudes towards ESP/EAP and the Major

Category	Group	*M*	*SD*	Source	*SS*	*MS*	*F*
Importance of reading international literature (Q15)	Engineering	3.97	.96	Between Groups	34.791	4.970	5.626
	Science	4.63	.74				
	Music	4.25	.50				
	P.E.	3.13	1.02	Within Groups	212.012	.883	
	Humanities	3.30	1.50				
	Art & Design	3.79	.89				
	Social Science	4.43	.72				
	Bus. Admin.	3.80	1.07				
	Total	3.97	1.00	Total	246.802		
Importance of English for publishing journals (Q17, Q18)	Engineering	3.59	.81	Between Groups	24.179	3.454	4.187
	Science	4.44	.42				
	Music	3.75	.96				
	P.E.	2.69	1.00	Within Groups	197.989	.825	
	Humanities	3.65	1.13				
	Art & Design	3.28	1.10				
	Social Science	3.73	.85				
	Bus. Admin.	3.38	.95				
	Total	3.52	.95	Total	222.168		
Importance of English for attending conferences (Q19)	Engineering	3.89	.81	Between Groups	21.677	3.097	3.669
	Science	4.50	.42				
	Music	4.00	.96				
	P.E.	3.31	1.00	Within Groups	202.545	.844	
	Humanities	3.90	1.13				
	Art & Design	3.39	1.10				
	Social Science	4.15	.85				
	Bus. Admin.	3.68	.95				
	Total	3.83	.95	Total	224.222		

*$p < .05$

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As can be seen in Table 11, there were three statistically significant differences between the attitudes towards ESP/EAP and the major. For the importance of reading international literature (Q15), there were statistically significant differences between Physical Education and Engineering (p = .027), Science (p = .007), and Social Science (p = .000), and between Social Science and Humanities (p = .012), Art & Design (p = .039), and Business Administration (p = .018), [$F(7, 240) = 5.626$, $p < .05$]. The post-hoc Tukey test results showed that the students who majored in Engineering, Science, and Social Science perceived English as important for reading international literature more than those who majored in Physical Education did. Also, the students majoring in Social Science regarded English as important more than those who majored in Humanities Art & Design and Business Administration did, as confirmed by the post-hoc Tukey test results.

For the importance of English for publishing journals (Q17, Q18), there were statistically significant differences between Physical Education and Engineering (p = .009), Science (p =.000), and Social Science (p = .002) and between Science and Art & Design (p = .028) [$F(7.240) = 4.187$, $p <.05$]. The post-hoc Tukey test results showed that the students majoring in Engineering, Science, and Social Science regarded English as important for publishing more than the students majoring in Physical Education did. The students majoring in Science considered English important for publishing more than those majoring in Art & Design did, as confirmed by the post-hoc Tukey test results.

For the importance of English for attending conferences (Q19), there were statistically significant differences between Social Science and Physical Education (p =.030) and Art & Design (p = .005) and between Science and Art & Design (p =.05) [$F(7, 240) = 3.669$, $p \leq .05$]. The post-hoc Tukey test results showed that the students majoring in Social Science perceived English as important for attending conferences more than the students majoring in Physical Education and Art & Design did. Also, the students majoring in Science perceived English as important more than the students majoring in Art & Design did, as confirmed by the post-hoc Tukey test results.

3. Needs for GE and ESP/EAP

Table 12 shows the EFL college students' perceptions of the necessities, wants, and lacks with regard to GE.

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TABLE 12

Necessities, Wants, and Lacks for GE

Category	Necessities		Wants		Lacks	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Listening (Q20)	3.65	1.04	3.33	1.26	3.51	1.19
Speaking (Q21)	*4.20*	*.98*	*4.18*	*1.02*	*3.53*	*1.21*
Reading (Q22, Q23)	3.64	.90	3.44	1.04	3.37	1.74
Writing (Q24)	3.57	1.13	3.40	1.27	3.33	1.18

(1: Strongly disagree; 2: Disagree; 3: Neutral; 4: Agree; 5: Strongly agree)

The above Table 12 shows that 79.4% of the respondents (N=197, M=4.20) agreed that GE was necessary, and 76.6% (N=190, M=4.18) wanted to develop their English speaking skills more than their other English skills, but 50% of the respondents (N=124, M=3.53) perceived that of all the English skills, they lacked English speaking skills the most. Taehwan (Oriental Medicinal Materials & Processing Science, freshman) stated that his weakest English skill was that of speaking English, and also considered speaking English the most important English skill, as follows:

> Q: What do you think is your weakest English skill?
> Taehwan: Speaking or engaging in an English conversation
> Q: Have you ever taken a speaking or English conversation class at a private academy?
> Taehwan: No.
> Q: How about your strongest English skill?
> Taehwan: Reading and listening skills, because I practiced them

Jungwoo (Computer Engineering, sophomore) recounted his experience of taking EMI and explained that he had English-only classes and partly-English-content classes, as follows:

> Jungwoo: I took a 100% EMI class because it was a mandatory course, but I wasn't able to understand it at all.
> Q: Not at all?
> Jungwoo: No. Half of the students were foreigners, like Chinese and African Americans.
> Q: So, was it hard?
> Jungwoo: Yes. I flunked.
> Q: I heard that EMI classes employ criterion-referenced assessment.
> Jungwoo: Yes, but the problem was I wasn't able to understand the class at all.

Therefore, Jungwoo explained why he got an F for the 100% EMI class he took as a required course, and his problem was he couldn't understand it at all. Yongseok (Computer Engineering, senior) said that he considered GE more important than ESP/EAP. He said that the students who have fundamental English skills can take EMI classes.

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TABLE 13

ESP/EAP Necessities, Wants, and Lacks for ESP/EAP

Category	Necessities		Wants		Lacks	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Understanding the content (Q25, Q26)	4.01	.91	3.55	1.19	3.20	.95
Communication in English (Q27)	3.74	1.12	3.50	1.21	3.27	1.17
Advantage for the future job (Q28)	*4.27*	.93	*4.11*	1.02	*3.44*	1.09
Studying the content in English (Q29)	3.94	1.07	3.69	1.18	3.21	1.13

(1: Strongly disagree; 2: Disagree; 3: Neutral; 4: Agree; 5: Strongly agree)

As can be seen in Table 13, 79.4% of the respondents (N=197, M=4.27) answered that they felt that they need ESP/EAP the most for their future jobs, and 73% of the respondents (N=181, M=4.11) also wanted to take ESP/EAP so that they would have an advantage with regard to their future jobs. At the same time, however, 45.6% of the respondents (N=113, M=3.44) feel that ESP/EAP is most deficient in terms of helping them in their future jobs.

The findings related to the necessities, wants, and lacks with regard to GE and ESP/EAP were that the respondents felt that speaking English is more necessary than the other English skills and wanted to develop their English speaking skill more than their other English skills, but they also felt that their English speaking skills were deficient. For ESP/EAP, however, the respondents felt that it was most needed for their future jobs, wanted to develop it the most for such purpose, and felt that it was most deficient in terms of helping them with their future jobs. Therefore, the respondents perceived ESP/EAP as related to their future jobs and felt that they needed it most for their future jobs. On the other hand, however, they also felt that it is deficient in helping them with their future jobs.

With regard to the preference for GE or ESP/EAP, 157 (63.3%) respondents preferred GE to ESP/EAP and only 45 respondents preferred ESP/EAP. A total of 35 respondents did not give an answer, as shown in the table below.

TABLE 14

Preference for GE or ESP/EAP

Category	*N*	Percent (%)
GE	157	63.3
ESP/EAP	45	18.1
Both	11	4.4
NA	35	14.1
Total	248	100

For the reasons for the preference for GE, 44 respondents mentioned that GE will be more useful for them in the future, and 29 respondents said that ESP/EAP is more difficult

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to understand and that the existing learning terminologies will not be enough for ESP/EAP. A total of 27 respondents wanted to communicate in English more fluently, and 20 respondents mentioned that GE is more basic and should be taken before taking ESP/EAP. Eighteen respondents mentioned that they did not need to study their English major subjects and that they did not mind studying GE. For the other reasons, three respondents said they could study with their main textbooks.

For the interviewees, nine out of the 15 interviewees preferred GE to ESP/EAP, and six preferred ESP/EAP. Yeonsu (Economics, sophomore) mentioned the following:

> I prefer GE because I think that the English communication skill is important. Also, I think studying ESP/EAP is very difficult.

For the reasons for the preference for ESP/EAP as indicated by the answers to the open-ended question, 36 respondents said that ESP/EAP was necessary for learning their major in their academic field, and four respondents said that it was related to their future job. Six respondents said that both GE and ESP/EAP were necessary because ESP/EAP could help them read their specialized books and GE could help them communicate in English when they go abroad.

On the other hand, Table 15 shows how much college students want GE, ESP/EAP, or both depending on whether or not they have taken EMI classes.

TABLE 15

Crosstab of EMI Experience and Preference for GE or ESP/EAP

EMI	Frequency (%)					Chi-Square	*Sig.* (2-sided)
	GE	ESP	Both	NA	Total		
Yes	73 (68.9%)	21 (19.8%)	7 (6.6%)	5 (4.7%)	106 (100%)	14.731	.002*
No	84 (59.2%)	24 (16.9%)	4 (2.8%)	30 (21.1%)	142 (100%)		
Total	157 (63.3%)	45 (18.1%)	11 (4.4%)	35 (14.1%)	248 (100%)		

*$p < .05$

The Pearson Chi-Square test results [(14.731, 3), $p < .05$] revealed a statistically significant relationship between EMI experience and preference for GE or ESP/EAP. 73 (68.9%) among EMI-takers than 84 (59.2%) among non-EMI-takers preferred GE, but 30 (21.1%) among non-EMI-takers preferred neither GE nor ESP/EAP.

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V. CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The results of the questionnaire survey and the semi-structured interviews with college students present several implications for General English (GE) and English for special purposes (ESP)/English for academic purposes (EAP) in the English as a foreign language (EFL) context in South Korea.

First, the respondents considered speaking English both their weakest English skill and the most important English skill for their future jobs. This result suggests that English speaking proficiency is urgently needed. Therefore, English language teaching should be more focused on speaking, but in the EFL context in South Korea, most of the English classes are focused on reading, and to some extent on listening, for the preparation for the university entrance exam. Speaking is rarely taught until high school, and college students are given some opportunities to speak English with their native English teachers in their English conversation classes at the tertiary level. Therefore, the students feel that their English speaking skills are deficient but that they also need them the most for their future jobs.

Second, overall, the college students' attitudes towards GE were positive, but the "importance of English" category was the highest. The gender distribution, however, was different; more male than female students considered English important while more female than male students regarded knowing English well as important for making a good impression. There was also a statistically significant difference depending on the self-rated English proficiency. For the necessity of English, the middle-level group perceived it more positively than the low-level group, but there was no statistically significant difference depending on the major.

Third, the college students' attitudes towards ESP/EAP were positive, but the "necessity of ESP/EAP for getting a good job" category got the highest score. For gender comparison, the female students agreed more with the necessity of ESP/EAP for getting a good job than the male students did. There was also a statistically significant difference depending on the self-rated English proficiency. For the necessity of ESP/EAP for reading international literature, the middle-level group agreed with it more than the low-level group did. There was also a statistically significant difference depending on the major.

Therefore, what is conspicuous is that there was no statistically significant difference between the attitude towards GE and the major, but there was a statistically significant difference between the attitude towards ESP/EAP and the major. Overall, the students majoring in Social Science, Science, and Engineering agreed with the importance of English for reading international literature, publishing journals, and attending conferences more than the students majoring in Art & Design and Physical Education did. Therefore, EMI or ESP/EAP should focus more on Engineering, Social Science, and Science rather than on Art & Design and Physical Education. As for the results regarding the experience

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in taking EMI classes, the students majoring in Social Science responded that they had no experience in taking EMI but showed very positive attitudes towards ESP/EAP. Hence, ESP/EAP or EMI courses should be provided by the universities to the students majoring in Social Science more than to the students with other majors.

Fourth, as for the necessities, wants, and lacks with regard to GE, GE was perceived to be most needed for learning how to speak in English. It was suggested that college students need and want very much to learn how to speak in English but at the same time feel that their English speaking skills are deficient. On the other hand, college students feel that they need ESP/EAP more than GE as the former will give them an advantage for their future jobs. Thus, ESP/EAP should be provided more by universities in such a way as to give the students an advantage for their future jobs.

Finally, the college students preferred GE to ESP/EAP. The reason for this was that they considered GE more useful than ESP/EAP. A statistically significant relationship was revealed, however, between EMI experience and GE or ESP/EAP. Seventy three (68.9%) of the EMI takers than 84 (59.2%) among non-EMI-takers preferred GE but 30 (21.1%) of the non-EMI-takers preferred neither GE nor ESP/EAP. This suggests that EMI classes negatively affected the students who took them, which was supported by the interview results. Moreover, even if the respondent had not taken EMI classes, he or she had some uncertain feelings about it. Further research should be conducted to discover the reasons for this. In addition, the study limitations should be noted. This study was not conducted with a nationwide sample; consequently, its results might not be generalized.

In conclusion, the college students in the EFL context in South Korea believe that they need GE rather than ESP/EAP, whether or not they have taken EMI classes. Actually, ESP/EAP is not provided widely in the universities, but 100% or partial EMI is implemented, without any explanation given to the students for such. Therefore, the educational policy for EMI should be reviewed and formulated very carefully, considering the students' majors or needs. To do this, many administrative problems such as the provision of capable EMI or ESP/EAP teachers and curriculum development should be dealt with at the same time.

Furthermore, ESP/EAP should be introduced to college students before implementing EMI, and more importantly, the university administrators should acknowledge the importance of GE as a tool for enhancing the students' speaking skills rather than just pushing the implementation of EMI for administrative reasons like obtaining a high university rank. ESP/EAP should be approached as the bridge for implementing EMI. To do this, research should be conducted more carefully, not just arguing that ESP/EAP is better than GE, and the researchers should listen to the college students' voices with regard to their own needs.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

* Please answer either by ticking √ the appropriate box, circling the number or writing in the spaces provided.

Part I. Demographic Data

1. Gender: Male _____ Female _____
2. Age: _____
3. Please write your certified English score, if you have. (ex. TOEIC 500)

   _____
4. Major: _____
5. How long have you learned English? _____ years

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6. Please check your level of English proficiency: High ____ Middle __ Low ____
7. When learning English, which skills are your weakest?
Listening __ Speaking _ Reading ___Writing __ Translating ___ All of the above ___
8. In your opinion, what skills are important to your future job?
Listening __ Speaking ___Reading ___ Writing __ Translating _ All of the above ___
9. Have you ever taken English-medium instruction course? If yes, what do you think of it?

_____

If you haven't, do you wish to take it?

_____

Part II: Attitudes towards General English

10. In today's world, one cannot get by without knowing English.	1 2 3 4 5
11. In Korea, everyone must learn English.	1 2 3 4 5
12. English is one of the most important languages in today's world.	1 2 3 4 5
13. English is very helpful in my studies and work that I can find anything on the internet in English.	1 2 3 4 5
14. I would like to know English well enough to be able to give the impression of a well-educated Korean with good English skills.	1 2 3 4 5

(1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Neutral 4: Agree 5: Strongly Agree)

Part III: Attitudes towards ESP

In my professional field,

15. English is important for me to be able to read the international, scientific literature.	1 2 3 4 5
16. English is necessary for one to get a good job.	1 2 3 4 5
17. the most important journals are published in English.	1 2 3 4 5
18. everyone who counts publishes in English.	1 2 3 4 5
19. the language of the most important conferences is English.	1 2 3 4 5

(1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Neutral 4: Agree 5: Strongly Agree)

Part IV: Necessities, wants, and lacks for General English

	Necessities	Wants	Lacks
20. Listen to English speeches	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
21. Speak English with foreigners socially.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
22. Read English websites.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
23. Read English newspapers and magazines.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
24. Write English letters, E-mails and essays.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

(1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Neutral 4: Agree 5: Strongly Agree)

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Part V: Necessities, wants, and lacks for ESP

	Necessities	Wants	Lacks
25. Understand the content of subject in English.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
26. Listen to ESP teacher and taking notes during the lecture.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
27. Take part in communicative activities in English about the subject.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
28. Take advantage of the future job.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
29. Study the content in English.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

(1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Neutral 4: Agree 5: Strongly Agree)

* Please feel free to write your opinions.

30. What do you prefer General English or ESP? And why?

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions

1. Do you have any certified English scores?
2. How long have you learned English?
3. What do you think your English level?
4. What do you think of your weakest English skill when you learn English?
5. What do you think of the most important English skill for your future job?
6. Have you ever taken English medium content class?
7. Do you think General English is important or necessary at the tertiary level?
8. Do you think ESP/EAP is important or necessary at the tertiary level?
9. Which do you prefer General English or ESP/EAP?
10. What can you suggest for English education at university in South Korea?

Examples in: English

Applicable Languages: English

Applicable Levels: College/Tertiary

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