

Willingness to Communicate (WTC), Phonetics Learning Strategies (PLS), and Self-Perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC) among Chinese English majors

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Received: 25 April 2024
Available Online: 15 July 2024

Revised: 25 June 2024
DOI: 10.5861/ijrsl.2024.032

Accepted: 10 July 2024

ISSN: 2243-7754
Online ISSN: 2243-7762

OPEN ACCESS



Abstract

English language proficiency has become increasingly important for individuals seeking to engage in international communication and pursue global opportunities. As a result, understanding the factors that influence language learning and communicative competence has become a significant area of research. A questionnaire survey was conducted to gather quantitative data from a sample of 428 students from English majors. Additionally, interviews were conducted with a subset of participants to obtain qualitative insights into their experiences and perceptions. By employing this approach, a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between WTC, PLS, and SPCC can be achieved. The results of this study revealed that English learners preferred to show their unwillingness to communicate in English outside the classroom; inside the classroom; they preferred to sing an English song than other activities; English learners tend to use social strategies more than affective, cognitive, memory, and meta-cognitive strategies; Respondents may not perceive themselves as highly competent in aspects of using English with teachers and classmates, activities and in daily life situations. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the existing literature on language learning and communicative competence among Chinese English majors. By identifying the factors that influence WTC, PLS, and SPCC, this research could inform the development of effective language teaching strategies and curriculum design. Addressing language anxiety, enhancing motivation, and providing ample language exposure opportunities can foster a positive learning environment that promotes WTC, PLS, and SPCC among Chinese English majors. In general, this dissertation aimed to shed light on the complex interplay between willingness to communicate, phonetics learning strategies, and self-perceived communicative competence among Chinese English majors. By investigating these variables and their relationships, this research sought to contribute to the field of language education and provide practical implications for language educators and policymakers.

Keywords: Willingness to Communicate, Phonetics Learning Strategies, Self-perceived Communicative Competence, Chinese English majors

Willingness to Communicate (WTC), Phonetics Learning Strategies (PLS), and Self-Perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC) among Chinese English majors

1. Introduction

In today's globalized world, English language proficiency has become increasingly important for individuals seeking to engage in international communication and pursue global opportunities. As a result, understanding the factors that influence language learning and communicative competence has become a significant area of research. The concept of willingness to communicate (WTC) has become a prominent topic in the field of second language learning. Many researchers argue that authentic communication is the ultimate objective for language learners. However, having strong linguistic skills does not guarantee high WTC, as some learners with limited language proficiency may communicate more than those with advanced skills. Despite the emphasis on communication in language teaching, many learners still struggle to engage in conversation. Therefore, ESL university students who lack WTC may face challenges in achieving their goal of mastering English.

Based on this foundation, a number of researchers in the field of second language acquisition, such as De Saint Léger and Storch (2009), have examined the factors influencing the willingness to communicate (WTC) of ESL university students as perceived by the students themselves. Nguyen et al. (2022) studied the factors affecting how university professors teach oral communication in English as a Foreign Language classes. However, there is limited research on the factors influencing the WTC of ESL university students in relation to their phonetics learning strategies. Furthermore, there is a lack of research on the factors impacting the WTC of ESL university students considering both their phonetics learning strategies and their self-perceived communicative competence, which is the focus of this study. One of the initial empirical studies on the factors impacting the willingness to communicate (WTC) of ESL students was conducted by MacIntyre et al. (2011).

MacIntyre highlighted that perceived communication competence and communication anxiety are key predictors of WTC among ESL students. Dewaele and Dewaele (2018) explored WTC and found that factors such as familiarity with conversation partners, topic of discussion, group size, and social context can significantly influence individuals' WTC in their native language. They also noted that using a second language involves various intergroup issues with social and political implications that do not typically arise in first language communication. They developed a comprehensive model of variables affecting the WTC of ESL students, which has been adopted by numerous researchers. For instance, Li and Jackson (2008); Zhang (2014); Wu et al. (2023) assertion that familiarity with conversation partners, group size, discussion topics (including interest in the topics), and self-confidence play a role in influencing the WTC of ESL students. While previous research has been examined, there is a need to explore their interrelationships and their impact on Chinese English majors. Chinese English majors face unique challenges in their language learning journey due to cultural and linguistic differences. Understanding the factors that influence their willingness to communicate, their use of phonetics learning strategies, and their self-perceived communicative competence can provide valuable insights for language educators and policymakers. (Haile & Mendisu, 2023).

A questionnaire survey was conducted to gather quantitative data from a sample of Chinese English majors. Additionally, interviews were conducted with a subset of participants to obtain qualitative insights into their experiences and perceptions. By employing this approach, a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between WTC, PLS, and SPCC has been achieved. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the existing literature on language learning and communicative competence among Chinese English majors. By identifying the factors that influence WTC, PLS, and SPCC, this research can inform the development of effective language teaching strategies and curriculum design. Addressing language anxiety, enhancing motivation, and providing ample language exposure opportunities can foster a positive learning environment that promotes WTC, PLS, and SPCC among Chinese English majors.

In general, this dissertation aimed to shed light on the complex interplay between willingness to communicate, phonetics learning strategies, and self-perceived communicative competence among Chinese English majors. By investigating these variables and their relationships, this research sought to contribute to the field of language education and provide practical implications for language educators and policymakers.

Objectives of the Study - This study aimed to determine relationships among Willingness to Communicate (WTC), Phonetics Learning Strategies (PLS), and Self-perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC) among Chinese English majors to propose an enhanced language program for English phonetics teaching in Chinese colleges and universities. Specifically, this study determined learners' level of willingness to communicate (WTC) as to contexts inside and outside the classroom; identified phonetics learning practices of the respondents as to memory strategies, cognitive strategies, meta-cognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies; determined the level of self-perceived communicative competence (SPCC) among Chinese English majors as to speaking among teachers and classmates, activities, and daily life; tested the relationships among the variables WTC, PLS, and SPCC; and proposed an English learning program to enhance English phonetics teaching and learning.

2. Methods

Research Design - In this study, the descriptive design was used to assess the learning strategies, motivation, and engagement of Chinese students in multimodal English learning. This study's design is appropriate to assess the current state of affairs from the perspective of how the occurrence of such a circumstance might add to the body of knowledge already in existence. The link between these variables was examined in this study. Similar studies looked for connections between elements like learners' level of willingness to communicate, phonetics learning strategies, and self-perceived communicative competence. Quantitative analysis was also employed to gather data and evaluate respondents' responses.

Participants of the Study - The 428 college student participants were from a public university in Xinxiang City. Raosoft software was used to determine the minimum required sample size. Based on the calculation with a 5 percent margin of error, a 95-confidence level, and a 50 percent response distribution, at least 260 students were needed out of a total of 800 students involved. A total population of 428 respondents were randomly selected.

Instruments of the Study - Questionnaire was the primary tool used in data collection for this research survey. The instrument consisted of four parts: profile of the respondents (gender, year level, home location and starting age of learning English); learners' willingness to communicate, phonetics learning strategies, and self-perceived communicative competence.

Part 1 is the respondents' profile information based on four variables: sex, year level, home location and starting age of learning English. In terms of gender, the profile indicates male and female respondents. The year level variable categorized respondents based on their academic year, including freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Next, home location divides respondents into urban and suburban area. Lastly, the starting age of learning English variable classifies respondents and are divided into three categories: 0-5 years old, 6-11 years old, and 12 years old and above. Part 2 is the questionnaire on respondents' Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English adapted from Weaver, using the Rasch model to develop a measure of second language learners' willingness to communicate within a language classroom (2005). Part 3 is the questionnaire on respondents' English Phonetics Learning Strategies (PLS), adapted from Peterson's research in the paper: Pronunciation Learning Strategies: A First Look. (Peterson, 2000). Part 4 is the questionnaire on Respondents' Self-Perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC) of English Language, adapted from Self-perceived communication competence scale (SPCC) in Measurement Instrument Database for the Social Science by McCroskey and McCroskey, (2013). This new measure consists of 25 items and uses a four-point Likert-type scale.

The reliability results provide a breakdown of different indicators related to language learning strategies and their corresponding Cronbach Alpha values, which indicate the internal consistency reliability of the measures.

Inside the classroom and outside the classroom indicators have high Cronbach Alpha values of 0.908 and 0.954 respectively, indicating excellent reliability. Memory, cognitive, meta-cognitive, social, activities, and daily life strategies have Cronbach Alpha values ranging from 0.750 to 0.866, indicating good to acceptable reliability. Affective strategies have a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.750, which is considered acceptable but could be improved. Teachers and classmates indicator has a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.707, which is the lowest and considered acceptable but could be improved. Overall, the reliability results demonstrated that the items within each construct of Willingness to Communicate (WTC), English Phonetics Learning Strategies (PLS), and students' Self-Perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC). This suggests that the items consistently measure the intended constructs, providing reliable data for further analysis and interpretation.

Data Gathering Procedure - First, the researcher obtained the necessary permission to conduct the data-gathering process. This involved seeking approval from the university, overseeing the research or any ethics committees, and ensuring compliance with institutional guidelines and regulations. Once getting the permission, the questionnaire was distributed through the applet of the "Questionnaire Star" on the WeChat platform. The last step was to review the completed questionnaires for invalid or incomplete responses. Any missing or inconsistent data that may impact the quality or analysis of the dataset were identified. It was the researcher's responsibility to clean the collected data by removing duplicate entries, checking for errors, and resolving any inconsistencies, and ensuring data accuracy and integrity by reviewing responses for any potential discrepancies or anomalies.

Data Analysis - The questionnaire was used to gather data, which were tabulated first. The weighted mean was then utilized to analyze the students' Willingness to Communicate (WTC), English Phonetics Learning Strategies (PLS), and students' Self-Perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC). Descriptive statistics, including weighted mean, percentage, and ranking, were valuable tools in data analysis to summarize and interpret complex data sets effectively. Weighted mean is a statistical measure that takes into account different weights assigned to different data points. It is calculated by multiplying each data point by its assigned weight, then summing these products and dividing by the sum of the weights. Percentage is a common statistical measure that shows the proportion of a particular value in relation to the whole dataset. It is calculated by taking the value of interest divided by the total number of data points, then multiplying by 100. Ranking is used to arrange data points in order from highest to lowest or vice versa. It provides a clear indication of the relative position of each data point compared to the others in the dataset. The relationship between students' Willingness to Communicate (WTC), English Phonetics Learning Strategies (PLS), and students' Self-Perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC) was evaluated using Spearman Correlation Analysis. The outcomes of the data analysis and interpretation were done after all statistical treatments. At the completion of the analysis, recommendations for additional research were made.

Ethical Considerations - Ethics Review is a crucial step in the research process that involves submitting a formal application to an ethics committee or board for approval before conducting the study. The Ethics Review process evaluated the potential risks and benefits of this research project, ensuring that the rights and welfare of participants were protected. Researchers provided detailed information about the study design, methods, data collection procedures, and plans to obtain informed consent from participants. By obtaining Ethics Review approval, researchers demonstrated their commitment to ethical research practices and ensured that the study was conducted in a responsible and ethical manner. This approval also helped to build trust and credibility in the research findings and ensured that the research met high ethical standards. In the process of the research, participants were told that their participation was voluntary, and they had the right to withdraw at any time without consequences. The researcher assured participants that their responses would remain confidential and that their identities would be protected. Coding or other techniques were used to maintain anonymity and ensure that individual participants could not be identified in the reporting or dissemination of results. The researcher clearly stated the purpose of the research, the intended use of the data, and how the results would be reported or disseminated. She was also transparent about any potential conflicts of interest or biases that could influence the research outcomes. The findings were presented honestly and accurately,

avoiding any manipulation or misrepresentation of data. Moreover, collected data were stored securely to prevent unauthorized access.

3. Results and discussion

Table 1

Summary Table on Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Inside the classroom	2.11	Disagree	2
2. Outside the classroom	2.21	Disagree	1
Composite Mean	2.16	Disagree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

The composite mean of both inside and outside the classroom categories was calculated to be 2.16, falling under the “Disagree” category. This indicates that, overall, the respondents’ willingness to communicate in English, when considering both inside and outside the classroom settings, was moderate and leaned towards a lower level of willingness. The willingness to communicate in English outside the classroom had a slightly higher weighted mean of 2.21, also falling under the “Disagree” category. This suggests that the respondents were more willing to engage in English communication activities in real-life scenarios outside the formal classroom environment. This category ranked 1st among the two categories. The respondents’ willingness to communicate in English inside the classroom had a weighted mean of 2.11, falling under the “Disagree” category. This indicates that, on average, the respondents were not strongly willing to engage in English communication activities within the classroom setting. Despite not showing a high level of willingness, this category ranked 2nd among the two categories. The rankings provided in the table show that while the respondents were more willing to communicate in English outside the classroom compared to inside the classroom, their overall willingness in both settings was still categorized as “Disagree.” This suggests that there may be varying factors influencing the respondents’ comfort levels and motivation to engage in English communication activities in different contexts.

Table 2

Summary Table on English Phonetics Learning Strategies (PLS)

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Memory Strategies	1.99	Disagree	2
Cognitive Strategies	1.96	Disagree	3
Meta-cognitive Strategies	2.00	Disagree	1
Affective Strategies	1.85	Disagree	5
Social Strategies	1.92	Disagree	4
Composite Mean	1.94	Disagree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 2 provides a summary of the English Phonetics Learning Strategies (PLS) across different categories, including Memory Strategies, Cognitive Strategies, Meta-cognitive Strategies, Affective Strategies, and Social Strategies. Overall, the composite mean for all categories in Table 2 was 1.94, falling under the “Disagree” category. This indicates that, on average, respondents may not strongly agree with the effectiveness of the various phonetics learning strategies across memory, cognitive, meta-cognitive, affective, and social dimensions. The rankings and mean scores provide insights into the respondents’ perceptions and preferences regarding different strategies for improving English pronunciation, highlighting areas where further emphasis or support may be needed to enhance phonetic proficiency.

Meta-cognitive Strategies ranked first. The weighted mean for Meta-cognitive Strategies was 2.00, ranking it at the top spot in the “Disagree” category. Despite the high rank, this suggests that learners have shown the most disagreement with the use of meta-cognitive strategies in language learning. Meta-cognitive strategies involve planning, monitoring, and evaluating one’s learning process, and although they are deemed essential, not all learners may align with their full utilization. Memory Strategies ranked second. The weighted mean of Memory Strategies was 1.99, falling under the “Disagree” category. This indicates that learners have expressed some

disagreement with the use of memory strategies in language learning. While memory strategies can play a crucial role in retaining and recalling language knowledge, some learners may have reservations about the effectiveness or applicability of such strategies in their language learning endeavors. Cognitive Strategies ranked third. With a weighted mean of 1.96, cognitive strategies also fall under the “Disagree” category. This suggests that learners may not completely agree with the utilization of cognitive strategies in their language learning process. Cognitive strategies involve mental processes such as reasoning, problem-solving, and attention, and their value may be viewed differently among learners. Social Strategies ranked fourth. The weighted mean for Social Strategies was 1.92, placing them in the “Disagree” category. This suggests that learners have demonstrated some disagreement with the use of social strategies in language learning. Social strategies involve interaction and collaboration with others in the learning process, and learners may vary in their views on the effectiveness and desirability of such strategies. Affective Strategies ranked fifth. Affective Strategies had a weighted mean of 1.85, positioning them at rank 5 within the “Disagree” category. This indicates that learners have expressed disagreement with the use of affective strategies in language learning. Affective strategies encompass emotional and motivational aspects of learning, and some learners may have differing opinions about the role of emotions and motivation in their language learning experience.

Table 3

Summary Table on Self-Perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC) of English Language

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Teachers and Classmates	2.26	Disagree	3
Activities	2.29	Disagree	2
Daily Life	2.49	Disagree	1
Composite Mean	2.35	Disagree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 3 provides a summary of the Self-Perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC) of English Language across different contexts, including interactions with teachers and classmates, participation in activities, and daily life situations. The category of teachers and classmates received a weighted mean of 2.26, falling under the “Disagree” category. Respondents expressed a lack of strong confidence in their communicative competence when interacting with teachers and classmates in English. The rank of 3 indicates that this category had the lowest level of perceived competence among the three contexts analyzed. The category of activities received a weighted mean of 2.29, also falling under the “Disagree” category. Respondents showed a similar level of confidence in their English communication abilities during various activities, such as giving speeches, chatting with acquaintances, and participating in drama performances. The rank of 2 suggests that individuals felt slightly more competent in activities compared to interactions with teachers and classmates. The category of daily life: received the highest weighted mean of 2.49, falling under the “Disagree” category. Respondents demonstrated the highest level of confidence in their ability to use English in daily life situations, such as talking to foreigners, persuading others, traveling, and living in a western country. The rank of 1 indicates that individuals felt most competent in applying their English language skills in real-life scenarios.

The analysis of the relationship between WTC in English and PLS inside the classroom showed highly significant correlations for all strategies. Memory strategies had a rho-value of .663, cognitive strategies had a rho-value of .724, meta-cognitive strategies had a rho-value of .680, affective strategies had a rho-value of .587, and social strategies had a rho-value of .630. The p-values for all strategies were 0.000, indicating a strong and significant relationship between WTC and PLS inside the classroom. Similarly, the relationship between WTC in English and PLS outside the classroom also demonstrated highly significant correlations for all strategies. Memory strategies had a rho-value of .618, cognitive strategies had a rho-value of .697, meta-cognitive strategies had a rho-value of .661, affective strategies had a rho-value of .538, and social strategies had a rho-value of .630. The p-values for all strategies were 0.000, indicating a strong and significant relationship between WTC and PLS outside the classroom. Overall, the table highlights the strong and significant relationship between individuals’ willingness to communicate in English and their use of English phonetics learning strategies both inside and outside the classroom. The high rho-values and low p-values suggest that there is a clear connection between individuals’

confidence in communicating in English and their utilization of various phonetics learning strategies. Understanding this relationship can help educators and learners tailor language learning approaches to enhance communication skills effectively in different contexts.

Table 4

Relationship between Willingness to Communicate in English and English Phonetics Learning Strategies

Inside the Classroom	rho-value	p-value	Interpretation
Memory Strategies	.663**	0.000	Highly Significant
Cognitive Strategies	.724**	0.000	Highly Significant
Meta-cognitive Strategies	.680**	0.000	Highly Significant
Affective Strategies	.587**	0.000	Highly Significant
Social Strategies	.630**	0.000	Highly Significant
Outside the Classroom			
Memory Strategies	.618**	0.000	Highly Significant
Cognitive Strategies	.697**	0.000	Highly Significant
Meta-cognitive Strategies	.661**	0.000	Highly Significant
Affective Strategies	.538**	0.000	Highly Significant
Social Strategies	.630**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Table 5

Relationship between Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English and Self-Perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC) of English Language

Inside the Classroom	rho-value	p-value	Interpretation
Teachers and Classmates	.536**	0.000	Highly Significant
Activities	.619**	0.000	Highly Significant
Daily Life	.588**	0.000	Highly Significant
Outside the Classroom			
Teachers and Classmates	.578**	0.000	Highly Significant
Activities	.654**	0.000	Highly Significant
Daily Life	.646**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Table 5 shows the association between Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English and Self-Perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC) of English Language. The computed r-values indicates a strong direct correlation and the resulted p-values were less than the alpha level. This means that there was significant relationship exists and implies that the more the more willing to communicate, the better is the self-perceived communicative competence. The analysis of the relationship between WTC in English and SPCC inside the classroom showed highly significant correlations for all categories. When interacting with teachers and classmates, the rho-value was .536. For activities, the rho-value was .619, and for daily life situations, the rho-value was .588. The p-values for all categories were 0.000, indicating a strong and significant relationship between WTC and SPCC inside the classroom. Similarly, the relationship between WTC in English and SPCC outside the classroom also demonstrated highly significant correlations for all categories. When interacting with teachers and classmates outside the classroom, the rho-value was .578. For activities outside the classroom, the rho-value was .654, and for daily life situations outside the classroom, the rho-value was .646. The p-values for all categories were 0.000, indicating a strong and significant relationship between WTC and SPCC outside the classroom.

Overall, the table highlights the strong and significant relationship between individuals' willingness to communicate in English and their self-perceived communicative competence in various contexts, both inside and outside the classroom. The high rho-values and low p-values suggest that there is a clear connection between individuals' confidence in communicating in English and their perception of their communicative competence. Understanding this relationship can help educators and learners focus on enhancing communication skills and building confidence in using English effectively in different situations.

Table 6

Relationship between English Phonetics Learning Strategies (PLS) and Self-Perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC) of English Language

Memory Strategies	rho-value	p-value	Interpretation
Teachers and Classmates	.511**	0.000	Highly Significant
Activities	.513**	0.000	Highly Significant
Daily Life	.481**	0.000	Highly Significant
Cognitive Strategies			
Teachers and Classmates	.539**	0.000	Highly Significant
Activities	.594**	0.000	Highly Significant
Daily Life	.573**	0.000	Highly Significant
Meta-cognitive Strategies			
Teachers and Classmates	.514**	0.000	Highly Significant
Activities	.583**	0.000	Highly Significant
Daily Life	.564**	0.000	Highly Significant
Affective Strategies			
Teachers and Classmates	.436**	0.000	Highly Significant
Activities	.451**	0.000	Highly Significant
Daily Life	.403**	0.000	Highly Significant
Social Strategies			
Teachers and Classmates	.489**	0.000	Highly Significant
Activities	.520**	0.000	Highly Significant
Daily Life	.497**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Table 6 shows the association between English Phonetics Learning Strategies (PLS) and Self-Perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC) of English Language. The computed r-values indicates a strong direct correlation and the resulted p-values were less than the alpha level. This means that there was significant relationship exists and implies that the better is the English phonetic learning strategies, the better is the self-perceived communicative competence.

The analysis shows highly significant correlations between memory strategies and SPCC in various contexts. When interacting with teachers and classmates, activities, and daily life situations, the rho-values were .511, .513, and .481, respectively. The p-values for all categories were 0.000, indicating a strong and significant relationship between memory strategies and self-perceived communicative competence. Similarly, cognitive strategies demonstrated highly significant correlations with SPCC across different contexts. The rho-values for interactions with teachers and classmates, activities, and daily life were .539, .594, and .573, respectively. The p-values for all categories were 0.000, indicating a strong and significant relationship between cognitive strategies and self-perceived communicative competence. The analysis revealed highly significant correlations between meta-cognitive strategies and SPCC in various contexts. The rho-values for interactions with teachers and classmates, activities, and daily life were .514, .583, and .564, respectively. The p-values for all categories were 0.000, indicating a strong and significant relationship between meta-cognitive strategies and self-perceived communicative competence. Affective strategies also showed highly significant correlations with SPCC across different contexts. The rho-values for interactions with teachers and classmates, activities, and daily life were .436, .451, and .403, respectively. The p-values for all categories were 0.000, indicating a strong and significant relationship between affective strategies and self-perceived communicative competence. The analysis demonstrated highly significant correlations between social strategies and SPCC in various contexts. The rho-values for interactions with teachers and classmates, activities, and daily life were .489, .520, and .497, respectively. The p-values for all categories were 0.000, indicating a strong and significant relationship between social strategies and self-perceived communicative competence.

Table 7
A Proposed English Language Learning Program for Chinese College Students

Key Result Areas	Program Objectives	Program/ Activities	Success indicators	Persons involved
1. Willingness to Communicate in English Outside the classroom	To have an English conversation with one stranger at an English corner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Conversation Starters: Provide students with a list of conversation starters or discussion topics to help them initiate conversations with strangers. This can include questions about hobbies, interests, travel experiences, or current events. ❖ Role-Playing: Have students participate in role-playing activities where they practice initiating and maintaining conversations with strangers in English. ❖ Speed Networking: Organize a speed networking event where students have a limited amount of time to talk to different strangers at the English corner. ❖ Group Discussions: Encourage students to participate in group discussions or debates at the English corner. This can provide a structured environment for students to practice speaking English and engage in meaningful conversations with others. ❖ Language Exchange Partners: Pair students up with language exchange partners who are native English speakers or fluent English speakers. This can provide students with the opportunity to practice speaking English in a one-on-one setting and receive feedback on their language skills. ❖ Conversation Games: Incorporate conversation games, such as “Two Truths and a Lie” or “Would You Rather,” into the English corner activities. These games can make conversations more engaging and interactive for students. 	<p>90% of students can demonstrate increased confidence in initiating and maintaining conversations with strangers in English.</p> <p>90% of students are willing to actively engage in English conversations with strangers at the English corner.</p>	English learners English teachers Instructors
2. English Phonetics Learning Strategies Meta-cognitive Strategies	To help students make English phonetic learning plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Phonetics Workshops: Organize workshops or seminars focused on English phonetics, where students can learn about the sounds of English, phonetic symbols, and pronunciation rules. ❖ Pronunciation Practice Sessions: Schedule regular pronunciation practice sessions where students can practice specific sounds, words, or phrases in English. Provide feedback and guidance to help students improve their pronunciation skills. ❖ Phonetics Apps and Online Resources: Encourage students to use phonetics apps and online resources to practice English sounds and pronunciation. Apps like Sounds: The Pronunciation App or websites like the British Council’s Learn English Phonetics can be helpful tools for students to improve their phonetic skills. ❖ Peer Feedback Sessions: Organize peer feedback sessions where students can practice speaking English and receive feedback from their classmates on their pronunciation. ❖ Phonetics Challenges: Create phonetics challenges or games where students can compete or collaborate to practice English sounds and pronunciation. This can make phonetic learning more engaging and interactive for students. ❖ Individualized Learning Plans: Encourage students to create individualized phonetic learning plans based on their specific pronunciation goals and areas of improvement. Students can set targets, track their progress, and adjust their learning plan as needed. ❖ Pronunciation Clinics: Offer pronunciation clinics or one-on-one sessions with a language instructor or phonetics expert to provide personalized feedback and guidance on pronunciation. 	<p>90% of students show a deeper understanding of English phonetics, including knowledge of phonetic symbols, sounds, and pronunciation rules.</p> <p>90% of students can apply phonetic knowledge effectively in their spoken English, using correct pronunciation and intonation.</p>	English learners English teachers Instructors
3. Self-Perceived Communicative Competence (SPC) of English Language	To build confidence for students to live in a western country at least one year by themselves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Cultural Exchange Programs: Encourage students to participate in cultural exchange programs that provide opportunities to interact with people from Western countries. ❖ Language Immersion Programs: Encourage students to enroll in language immersion programs where they can improve their English language skills and become more comfortable communicating in English. ❖ Pre-Departure Orientation Workshops: Organize pre-departure orientation workshops to provide students with information on living in a Western country, including tips on cultural adaptation, housing, transportation, and healthcare. ❖ Cross-Cultural Communication Training: Offer cross-cultural communication training to help students develop the skills needed to effectively communicate and interact with people from different cultural backgrounds. 	<p>90% of students can exhibit an increased awareness and appreciation of cultural differences, demonstrating respect for the traditions, values, and beliefs of the Western country.</p>	English learners English teachers Instructors

Daily Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Independent Living Skills Workshops: Provide workshops on independent living skills, such as budgeting, cooking, time management, and problem-solving, to help students prepare for living on their own in a foreign country. ❖ Peer Support Groups: Create peer support groups or mentorship programs where students can connect with others who have lived or studied in Western countries. ❖ Virtual Reality Simulations: Use virtual reality simulations to give students a realistic experience of living in a Western country, including navigating public transportation, shopping for groceries, and interacting with locals. ❖ 	90% of students show improvement in their English language skills, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing, enabling them to communicate effectively in various situations.
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4. Conclusions and recommendations

English learners preferred to show their unwillingness to communicate in English outside the classroom. Inside the classroom, they preferred to sing an English song than other activities. English learners tend to use no strategies on English Phonetics Learning. Generally, they preferred to use social strategies more than affective, cognitive, memory, and meta-cognitive strategies. On average, respondents may not perceive themselves as highly competent in aspects of using English with teachers and classmates, activities and in daily life situations. There was a highly significant positive relationship between the Willingness to Communicate in English and English Phonetics Learning Strategies, a highly significant positive relationship between English Phonetics Learning Strategies and Self-Perceived Communicative Competence, and a highly significant positive relationship between Willingness to Communicate in English and Self-Perceived Communicative Competence. An English language program was proposed, aiming to simultaneously improve the Willingness to Communicate in English, English Phonetics Learning Strategies, and Self-Perceived Communicative Competence in integrated language tasks.

The administration of the universities in China that offers College English may provide support for the adoption of the proposed program for College English course. Other majors may also follow the proposed program for a trial period and eventually apply it to English courses. University English teachers, in implementing this program, may focus more on the aspect of the willingness to communicate in English and English phonetics learning strategies to promote and improve the effectiveness of oral English teaching. College students may consciously cooperate with the teacher by guaranteeing access to oral English learning, making full use of sources to assist learning, fully engaging in the class with strong motivation, and actively interacting with instructors and peers. University supervisors and English teachers may discuss and evaluate the proposed language program for implementation. By incorporating these targeted approaches into educational practices, institutions may create a more inclusive and effective learning environment that fosters better engagement, motivation, and overall academic success for all students. Future researchers may consider adding to the study the teachers' perspective as well as other variables, to make further exploration for oral English learning. In addition, the sample of participants may also be further refined for other courses, and the sample size could be expanded as well. Researchers with plenty of resources may also conduct a global survey on similar topics, adding interviews and classroom observations to further research undertakings.

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