



02 Needfinding and Empathy Work

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Interviewees

- Current ESL School learner
- International student in beginner English course
- International student with past ESL experience, more experienced in English now.

Interview Findings and Insights

For all our interviewees, we found that they

- Valued speaking English much more highly than reading or writing
- Used English speaking media (Netflix, movies, TV shows) as a primary source of listening to English
- Associated using English (outside of the classroom) most with going grocery shopping.

Insights:

- Despite expressing English conversation as a major motivation, watching English speaking media is the main way that people practice their English
- Conversational English is valued most highly, followed by reading ability. Writing seems to be a third priority for both students and ESL classes.

Compelling Quotes

“Feel stupid since I cannot understand”

“Sometimes talk like a totally different person”

Say

Sometimes need to review notes multiple times to understand topic

Accent may cause people to not be able to understand some words

Helpful ways of studying English: watching episodes, reading stories, just talking more

English is more widespread as a language than Mandarin

Mostly staying at home - Netflix or maybe reading books

Would supplement English speaking with body motions -- sometimes with writing (google)

Purpose is to improve communication with people

Tutoring organization helped with reading & writing

Main way to study English was through watching American TV shows (Chinese subtitle)

Conversation partner for talking English

Started exploring after being invited by friend

Acted as character from the show

Motivation for conversational English started when elder sister started company in US

When refueling, this is main English interaction in supermarkets

Watching Netflix - with English Subtitles

Main purpose of learning English is to have conversations

Mentioned writing only in the context of exams

Joking about how friend responded to "acting"

Repeated words when responding

Struggled with more uncommon words: Guatemala / Brazilian

Sometimes need to think up the right word

Asked for repeating questions / clarification

Sometimes went on tangents when talking about experiences

Often had to pause to come up with the "right" word

Do

Speaking & Reading > writing

Very open to asking questions --> need to clarify confusions

English can help secure a more prosperous future

Think

Constant conversation is a very effective way to train English

Conversational English = More practical
Reading / Writing = more exam based

English serves as a gateway to new experiences

Being fluent in English is useful for own job (acting)

Learning English is all connected together

Speaking > Reading and writing

More exposure to English is very useful

Excited to share experiences about using English (outside of classroom)

A little nervous about mentioning "not outgoing"

Happy that they have positive experience with asking questions

Feels proud that she can go to supermarkets by herself (Costco, Safeway)

Feelings of being "stupid" - because she feels she cannot understand

Excited that learning english --> more travels around the world

Happy that friend invited him to explore restaurants, movies, etc.

Proud to be learning English -- English as a way to help build confidence

Saddened that reading English took a lot of time

Feel