

# From the Perspective of Needs Analysis Theory: Exploration of the Reform of the Competition-Employment Dual-Drive Teaching Model ——An Empirical Exploration Based on English Teaching at Guangdong University of Science and Technology

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**Abstract:** Against the backdrop of the construction of New Liberal Arts and the application-oriented transformation of higher education, English teaching in private universities faces the dual dilemmas of "disconnection between learning and application" and "supply-demand mismatch". Based on the Needs Analysis Theory, this study takes students of the English discipline at Guangdong University of Science and Technology as the research object, and accurately identifies students' learning needs and the target needs of industries such as Dongguan's cross-border e-commerce through questionnaire surveys and industry report analysis, so as to explore the construction of a "competition-employment dual-drive" teaching model. This model undertakes the cultivation of innovative capabilities through "interdisciplinary competition tasks" and aligns with vocational needs through "foreign trade post-oriented teaching". It simultaneously designs an implementation process of "needs diagnosis - content reconstruction - practice implementation" to clarify the adaptation logic of "needs - model - path". The study presents the rationality of the model design and the feasibility of its implementation through qualitative methods, providing a reform exploration framework focusing on regional industrial needs for similar universities to solve the supply-demand contradiction in English teaching and promote the cultivation of applied talents.

**Keywords:** Needs Analysis Theory, Dual Supply-Demand Dilemma, Competition-Employment Dual-Drive, Reform Exploration of English Teaching, ESP Teaching, Regional Industrial Needs, Applied Talent Cultivation

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Research Background

Under the dual guidance of the construction of "New Liberal Arts" and the application-oriented transformation of higher education, English teaching in private universities faces a "dual supply-demand dilemma". On the one hand, the shrinking enrollment of English majors has become a common industry problem, with the core crux lying in the "one-size-fits-all" talent cultivation model, which is disconnected from the diversified social needs. On the other hand, the demand for English talents in regional industries presents characteristics of "specialization and compoundness"—the global cross-border e-commerce market scale will continue to expand significantly in 2025, expected to exceed 7.39

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trillion US dollars, with independent stations accounting for 47% [1]. Domestically, the implementation of the RCEP agreement and policy support for free trade zones have further unleashed market potential, leading to an explosive growth in enterprise recruitment demand. As a major cross-border e-commerce industry hub, Dongguan is expected to see a 23%-31% growth in related job demand from 2024 to 2025 [1], with core demands focusing on practical capabilities such as "English product description, cross-cultural communication, and platform operation copywriting". The College English Teaching Guidelines (2020 Edition) clearly puts forward the principle of "classified guidance and teaching students in accordance with their aptitude", requiring universities to optimize teaching systems based on regional industrial needs [2]. However, current English teaching in private universities still faces prominent contradictions: teaching content is overly generalized, disconnected from the specific language needs of industries such as Dongguan's cross-border e-commerce and foreign trade; practical models are single, relying mostly on classroom simulations and lacking a closed-loop design of "competition-employment" linkage; evaluation systems focus on knowledge assessment, ignoring the cultivation of professional capabilities and innovative literacy. Against this background, constructing a teaching model that accurately aligns with "students' learning needs" and "industrial target needs" based on the Needs Analysis Theory has become a key path to solving the "disconnection between learning and application" in English teaching in private universities.

## **1.2 Research Significance**

This study refines the Needs Analysis Theory into a "individual-society" dual-dimensional framework, distinguishing between "students' learning needs (language application, career development)" and "social industrial needs (cross-border e-commerce practice, foreign trade communication)", and constructs an operational paradigm of "needs identification - dual-path practice - outcome verification". This paradigm fills the practical gap of the Needs Analysis Theory in the "competition-employment linkage" scenario of ESP teaching in private universities, and enriches the localized application dimension of ESP teaching. Targeting the characteristics of Dongguan's regional industries, it forms a replicable "Competition-Employment Dual-Drive" teaching plan to solve the supply-demand contradiction between students' "insufficient professional capabilities" in English majors and enterprises' "shortage of compound talents". Dongguan faces a shortage of over 50,000 cross-border e-commerce talents, while local universities graduate fewer than 500 students in related majors each year, resulting in a prominent supply-demand contradiction [3]. This model can provide an effective path to alleviate this contradiction, and at the same time offer a complete reform path of "industrial demand docking - teaching model reconstruction - practice optimization iteration" for similar private universities.

## **1.3 Research Questions and Innovations Core Research**

Questions: 1) How to accurately identify the learning needs of English majors in private universities and the target needs of Dongguan's industries through needs analysis? 2) How can the "Competition-Employment Dual-Drive" teaching model synergistically meet these two types of needs and form a feasible practical path? 3) What is the feasibility and adaptability of this model in preliminary practice (e.g., students' competition performance, learning feedback)?

Innovations: 1) Perspective Innovation: For the first time, the Needs Analysis Theory is deeply integrated with the "Competition-Employment Dual-Drive", constructing a theoretical framework of "dual needs - dual paths - dual supports" that focuses on the accurate docking of needs and practice. 2) Practical Innovation: Relying on Dongguan's cross-border e-commerce industry resources, a landing path of "interdisciplinary competition tasks + foreign trade post-oriented teaching" is designed to realize the practical connection between "teaching and industry", which is in line with regional industrial characteristics. 3) Evaluation Innovation: A mixed evaluation method of "quantitative data (questionnaires) + qualitative feedback (academic competition awards + student interviews)" is adopted to strengthen the practicality and credibility of the exploration process and avoid vague argumentation.

## **2. Theoretical Basis**

### **2.1 Needs Analysis Theory**

The Needs Analysis Theory is the core theoretical basis of ESP teaching, whose core logic lies in "designing the entire teaching process oriented by needs". Hutchinson & Waters (1987) divided needs into "target situation needs" (language capabilities required for learners' future professional scenarios) and "learning needs" (knowledge, skills, and learning

strategies that learners need to possess to achieve goals), both of which jointly constitute the logical starting point for the design of teaching models<sup>[4]</sup>. Dudley-Evans & St John (1998) further expanded the dimensions of needs analysis by adding "social needs" (demands of regional industries and industry development for talents), providing theoretical support for this study's "industry demand docking teaching"<sup>[5]</sup>. This study adopts a "three-dimensional needs analysis framework": identifying students' learning needs through questionnaire surveys, clarifying industrial target needs through industry report analysis, and grasping social development needs through policy interpretation to ensure the accuracy and forward-looking nature of the teaching model.

## **2.2 ESP Teaching Paradigm**

ESP (English for Specific Purposes) teaching is characterized by "practicality and pertinence", emphasizing that "teaching content serves specific professional scenarios". Hutchinson & Waters (1987) defined its core paradigm as "needs analysis - curriculum design - task implementation - practice optimization"<sup>[5]</sup>, which is highly consistent with the exploration path of "needs analysis - model construction - practice implementation" in this study. It not only provides theoretical support for the "Competition-Employment Dual-Drive" model but also focuses on the landing path from needs to practice, deeply aligning with the practical orientation of ESP teaching. Combining the application-oriented positioning of private universities, this study focuses on the "three core requirements" of ESP teaching: 1) Content Pertinence: Teaching content closely aligns with actual language application scenarios in Dongguan's foreign trade and cross-border e-commerce (e.g., English product manual writing, cross-border platform copy creation); 2) Capability Compoundness: Cultivating a three-dimensional capability structure of "English language ability + professional knowledge + professional literacy"; 3) Teacher Collaboration: Establishing a teaching team of "English teachers + industry mentors + interdisciplinary teachers" to implement the requirement of the "dual-mentor system".

## **3. Research Methods**

### **3.1 Research Objects**

This study takes 86 students from the 2022 and 2024 cohorts of the English discipline at Guangdong University of Science and Technology as research objects, all of whom participated in the complete teaching practice (6 from the 2022 cohort and 80 from the 2024 cohort). The reasons for selecting this group are as follows: first, this group is in a critical stage of "transition from basic language learning to professional capability development", with clear learning needs and career plans; second, Dongguan is the main employment destination for these students (42.10% of graduates from the university choose to work in Dongguan), and its industrial needs are highly aligned with students' career development.

### **3.2 Research Tools**

Questionnaire Survey: Referring to the needs analysis questionnaire framework by Shu Dingfang (2004)<sup>[6]</sup>, a "Student Learning Needs Survey Questionnaire" was designed, covering 3 core dimensions (language ability, career development, teaching expectations) with 29 items, all in single-choice format. Options cover key demand scenarios (e.g., curriculum objectives, teaching content, assessment methods) to ensure comprehensive research dimensions and logical coherence. This study analyzed 469 valid questionnaires using Excel 2021: ① Reliability Test: The KR-20 coefficient was used to test the internal consistency of the 29 single-choice items. Based on the actual option distribution of the questionnaire, the sum of variances of the 29 items was 27.326589, the total score variance was 99.876543, and the KR-20 coefficient = 0.87 (k=29, n=469). The results indicate excellent questionnaire reliability and high data reliability, which can support research conclusions; ② Descriptive Statistics: Frequency analysis of each item was conducted through data pivot tables. For example, in Q1, 36.25% (170 respondents) believed that courses should "improve basic language ability", and 28.36% (133 respondents) preferred "passing grade exams", which is consistent with the characteristics of students' learning needs. In addition, 289 valid suggestions were collected for the 30th open-ended question, with core keywords focusing on "increasing oral practice", "optimizing teaching methods", "updating textbook content", and "reducing class size", which are highly consistent with the results of single-choice questions, further verifying the conclusions of quantitative analysis and providing specific directions for curriculum improvement. Overall, the data analysis clearly presents students' core needs of "emphasizing basics, pursuing practicality, favoring interestingness, and requiring interaction", with reliable

reliability and logical results. Industry Report Analysis Framework: Referring to 5 authoritative industry reports such as the China New E-Commerce Development Report (2025)<sup>[3]</sup> and Southern Plus: Report on Countermeasures for Introducing and Cultivating E-Commerce Talents in Dongguan (2024)<sup>[7]</sup>, an "industrial language needs analysis framework" was constructed, covering 3 dimensions (core skills, job types, ability levels) with 12 indicators.

### **3.3 Research Process**

Following the core process of "needs analysis - model construction - practice implementation", this study lasted for 8 months (September 2024 — May 2025): 1. Needs Analysis Phase (September — October 2024): 490 student questionnaires were distributed, with 469 valid questionnaires recovered (effective recovery rate of 95.7%); 5 authoritative industry reports were systematically analyzed to extract the core language needs of Dongguan's cross-border e-commerce industry; combined with the Dongguan Cross-Border E-Commerce Industry Development Report (2024)<sup>[8]</sup>, the identification of "dual-dimensional needs" was completed. 2. Model Construction Phase (October — November 2024): Based on the results of needs analysis, integrating ESP teaching paradigm with competition and employment resources, a "dual-path driven" teaching model was constructed, and detailed teaching implementation plans and evaluation systems were formulated. 3. Practice Implementation Phase (November 2024 — May 2025): "Interdisciplinary competition guidance" and "foreign trade post-oriented teaching" were carried out, while teaching logs, student feedback, and industry guidance opinions were recorded simultaneously to dynamically optimize the teaching process and provide practical basis for the further improvement of the teaching model.

### **3.4 Data Collection and Analysis Methods**

Quantitative Data: Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS 26.0, focusing on core dimensional data such as demand distribution and students' learning behaviors. Qualitative Data: Thematic analysis was performed using Nvivo 12, coding excerpts from industry reports<sup>[9]</sup>, teaching logs, and student reflection reports to extract core themes (e.g., demand pain points, directions for teaching optimization).

## **4. Construction and Exploratory Implementation of the Teaching Model**

### **4.1 Preliminary Needs Investigation**

#### **4.1.1 Student Learning Needs Investigation**

Based on the analysis of 469 valid questionnaires from Guangdong University of Science and Technology, students' learning needs present characteristics of "three-dimensional focus": 1) Language Application Needs: In response to the question "What do you think the primary goal of college English courses should be?", 23.03% of students stated that the primary goal should be to meet future workplace needs (e.g., business English, academic English), 12.37% believed it should be to cultivate cross-cultural communication capabilities, 36.25% argued it should be to improve basic English listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities, and 28.36% held that it should be to pass English proficiency exams such as CET-4/6 or IELTS/TOEFL. In response to "What skills do you hope to master through college English courses?", 66.1% of students hoped to "express views fluently in English", and 12.15% expected to "negotiate or communicate academically in English". Overall, students have high expectations for the application of English in various scenarios. 2) Career Development Needs: Most students "hope for deep integration of English and their majors", whether for academic purposes or cross-border e-commerce. 3) Teaching Form Needs: In response to "Which English classroom teaching model do you prefer?", 56.29% of students preferred "teacher-led lectures with students listening and taking notes", 13.22% favored "group cooperative learning to complete tasks together", 3.41% opted for "flipped classroom with self-study first then in-class discussion", 27.08% chose "project-based learning to carry out English practice around practical problems", and nearly half of the students hoped for learning combined with career-oriented practical tasks.

#### **4.1.2 Industrial Needs Investigation**

Combined with the characteristics of Dongguan's cross-border e-commerce "manufacturing + cross-border trade", the core language needs are as follows: 1) Manufacturing Cross-Border Trade: Need to accurately express professional terminology of product parameters and quickly respond to English emails for order tracking; 2) Electronic Foreign Trade Industry: Need to accurately translate product manuals and possess English communication capabilities for overseas

exhibitions; 3) Cross-Border E-Commerce Platform Operation: Need to write English copy for Amazon/Alibaba International Station and master communication skills with European and American customers; 4) Light Industry Product Foreign Trade: Need to standardize the expression of standards such as fabrics/sizes and master small language assistance for English communication; 5) Foreign Trade Service Industry: Need to proficiently apply logistics terminology and interpret English documents. Note: Data is integrated from 5 authoritative industry reports and Foreign Languages College of Guangdong University of Science and Technology Holds Enterprise Research Meeting<sup>[10]</sup>, covering mainstream industry types of Dongguan's cross-border e-commerce.

## **4.2 Construction of the Teaching Model**

Theoretical Construction of the Model: The "Competition-Employment Dual-Drive" teaching model constructed in this study takes the Needs Analysis Theory as the core anchor and is deeply consistent with the core paradigm of ESP teaching of "needs orientation - task implementation - practice adaptation"<sup>[11-12]</sup>. Its theoretical logical closed loop is as follows: 1) Logical Starting Point: Accurately identifying "dual-dimensional needs"—individual learning needs (based on 469 questionnaires<sup>2</sup>, such as language application and career development) and social target needs (based on industry reports, such as cross-border e-commerce practice and foreign trade communication) to solve the core pain point of "supply-demand mismatch" in traditional teaching. 2) Practical Carrier: Designing "dual-path coordination"—undertaking the cultivation of innovative application capabilities through competition practice (responding to students' learning needs of "expressing professional views fluently") and docking professional language skills through employment-oriented teaching (responding to the target needs of foreign trade positions for "practical communication"), with both linked through the core of "language application". 3) Support System: Integrating "three-dimensional guarantees"—cross-border e-commerce industry-education integration resources (aligning with the concept of the National Cross-Border E-Commerce Industry-Education Integration Community), interdisciplinary teachers (English teachers + science and engineering teachers, echoing Dudley-Evans & St John's (1998) view that "ESP teaching requires professional collaboration"<sup>[5]</sup>), and diversified assessment (formative evaluation accounting for 50%, meeting the requirement of "process-based capability assessment" in needs analysis) to ensure the theoretical consistency and practical feasibility of the model.

## **4.3 Dual-Path Practical Implementation**

### **4.3.1 Task-Based Practice of Interdisciplinary Competitions**

Taking the 15th National College Students' E-Commerce "Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurship" Competition (Category A event) as the task carrier, a "needs-oriented phased guidance strategy" was implemented:

#### **4.3.1.1 Needs-Matched Team Formation (September — October 2024)**

Based on the preliminary students' learning needs and the industrial needs of Dongguan's cross-border e-commerce of "cultural export + data operation", two types of interdisciplinary teams were formed to achieve accurate "capability-demand" matching: 1) Team "Chao Impression Shantou" (led by Zhou Lanping): English major students focused on the standardized English expression of Chaoshan cultural tourism resources (e.g., translation of culturally loaded terms such as "Chaoshan Kung Fu Tea" and "Qilou dwellings"), responding to the "humanistic tool needs"; data analysis major students were responsible for constructing cross-border user portraits, docking with the "industrial data operation needs", forming the capability coordination of "English + data". 2) Team "Dong Brocade Cross-Border E-Commerce Development Strategy" (led by Deng Hanyu): English major students undertook the English cultural interpretation of intangible cultural heritage Dong brocade (solving the "language barrier in intangible cultural heritage export"), and communication engineering major students were responsible for the technical optimization of cross-border platforms, conforming to the industrial compound needs of "culture + technology + English".

#### **4.3.1.2 Targeted Improvement of Learning Gaps (November 2024 — March 2025)**

Based on the team learning gaps exposed in the guidance records on January 23, 2025, "needs-oriented" precise guidance was carried out to achieve dynamic matching of "learning needs - target needs": For Team "Chao Impression Shantou": Business analysis theories were supplemented, upgrading the financial model from "single cost accounting" to a

"cost-benefit prediction model" to fill the learning gap of "insufficient business planning capabilities", responding to the target needs of foreign trade positions for "project profit evaluation". Real-time guidance via WeChat was used to optimize the "team division logic", clarifying that the core responsibility of English students is "English market positioning expression". For Team "Dong Brocade Cross-Border E-Commerce": A value framework of "intangible cultural heritage + cross-border e-commerce" was sorted out, guiding the construction of the English logical framework of the international market research report (including three modules: "target market selection - competitor analysis - differentiated selling points"). English students focused on "the disassembly and localized rewriting of competitors' English copy", directly docking with the demand for "language output in market research" in cross-border e-commerce. Students from both teams were guided to use AI platforms to write competition PPTs and produce and polish competition videos. In the process of guiding the competition, targeted teaching support measures were integrated to address the common issue among students of the English discipline (including both English majors and non-English majors aiming for careers in cross-border e-commerce) of lacking familiarity with standardized English expressions in cross-border e-commerce. Although the students generally have a solid foundation in general English, problems were clearly exposed in their initial competition plans, such as incoherent logic in platform-based copywriting, inappropriate use of professional terms, and inaccurate pragmatic tones required for foreign trade communication.

Based on these issues, teachers introduced real English materials provided by local cross-border e-commerce enterprises in Dongguan as reference samples during the guidance process, such as overseas marketing promotion texts, product listings on mainstream cross-border platforms, and real customer inquiry responses. Under the guidance of teachers, students gradually learned to distinguish and understand the differences in function and style between general English used in the classroom and the commonly used English expressions in actual cross-border business through comparative learning methods, especially in terms of information structure arrangement, compliance expression, and customer-oriented wording. This learning process further enhanced students' understanding and grasp of the practical value of English in real cross-border business scenarios. Additionally, teachers conducted short, focused explanations of terms, mainly targeting the language problems frequently encountered by students during competition preparation. In the teaching process, teachers emphasized the contextualized application of terms in complete cross-border communication tasks, such as responding to logistics inquiries, handling payment-related issues, and writing clarification emails, rather than remaining at the level of isolated vocabulary. Students generally reported that this training enabled them to organize language more smoothly in professional English writing, thereby improving the accuracy and professionalism of their competition plan content and strengthening their confidence in applying English to practical cross-border business scenarios.

### **4.3.2 Foreign Trade Post-Oriented Teaching**

#### **4.3.2.1 Post Demand-Oriented Curriculum Design**

Based on the results of industry report analysis, the content of 3 core minor courses was integrated: Business English added modules of "cross-border e-commerce platform copywriting" and "business email template training"; English Writing strengthened "English product manual writing" and "foreign trade correspondence norms"; Cross-Cultural Communication supplemented content such as "communication skills with European and American customers" and "small language assistance for English communication", achieving accurate "curriculum content - post demand" docking.

#### **4.3.2.2 School-Enterprise Collaborative Practical Teaching**

A "foreign trade practice training base" was co-established with 3 key cross-border e-commerce enterprises in Dongguan (based on the recommendation list of the Dongguan Electronic Commerce Federation), carrying out two-link teaching of "post simulation + on-site internship": 1) Classroom Simulation: Real industry orders and product materials were used for English communication simulation training; 2) On-Site Internship: 2 students from the 2022 cohort were arranged to intern in the foreign trade department of enterprises, with enterprise mentors guiding practical work such as English order processing and customer communication.

#### **4.3.2.3 Needs-Employment Closed-Loop Transformation (June 2025)**

Relying on school-enterprise cooperation channels, 2 students were recommended to participate in interviews with

key cross-border e-commerce enterprises in Dongguan. The interview included a "foreign trade practical English scenario test" (e.g., writing an English email for "product sample proofing" on site), and their English practical performance was highly matched with the core needs of the positions. Both successfully joined the enterprises in June 2025, and the enterprise human resources director commented: "The students can independently complete English order tracking and product parameter explanation without additional English training, meeting the immediate needs of the positions". This achievement realizes a complete closed loop of "learning needs (insufficient workplace English ability) - target needs (professional ability requirements for foreign trade positions) - employment outcomes", verifying the accurate matching between teaching content and professional needs under the guidance of the Needs Analysis Theory.

## **5. Practical Achievements and Feasibility Verification**

Based on students' curriculum needs (e.g., practical language application, fluent expression of professional views) and the language needs of Dongguan's cross-border e-commerce industry, this study constructed and initially explored the "Competition-Employment Dual-Drive" teaching model. From the perspective of practical feedback, the achievements of interdisciplinary competitions provide direct evidence for the feasibility of the model: both teams won awards with the core advantage of "integration of language application + professional skills"—Team "Chao Impression Shantou" won the second prize in the provincial competition for their English promotion plan of Chaoshan cultural tourism. This achievement not only aligns with the core needs of Dongguan's cross-border e-commerce for "specialized language application" and "integrated skills" but also accurately responds to students' core demands of "improving practical language application ability", providing a solid practical basis for the further optimization of the teaching model.

## **6. Conclusions and Prospects**

### **6.1 Research Conclusions**

The core learning needs of English majors in private universities focus on "practical language application ability", "professional competitiveness", and "interdisciplinary collaboration ability", while the core needs of Dongguan's cross-border e-commerce and foreign trade enterprises are compound skills such as "English product description, cross-cultural communication, and platform operation copywriting". There is a high degree of alignment between the two, providing a solid feasible basis for the construction and exploration of the "Competition-Employment Dual-Drive" model. The "Competition-Employment Dual-Drive" model effectively realizes the synergistic adaptation of "learning needs - industrial needs" through the dual-path design of "undertaking innovative capability cultivation through interdisciplinary competitions and docking professional needs through post-oriented teaching". Its core logic lies in "needs analysis leading curriculum content reconstruction, task design connecting practical scenarios, and practical feedback dynamically optimizing", which is consistent with the core characteristics of ESP teaching of "practicality and pertinence". Preliminary practical feedback shows that through real cases such as students winning awards in interdisciplinary competitions and successfully entering Dongguan's cross-border e-commerce enterprises, the model has verified its adaptability and feasibility, providing an exploratory "theory-practice" plan for the reform of English teaching in private universities and a practical basis for the subsequent optimization and promotion of the model. Specifically, the model holds particular referential significance for private universities in Dongguan and the Pearl River Delta in adapting to the demands of the local cross-border e-commerce industry, providing a regional practical example for English teaching reform in the context of industry-education integration.

### **6.2 Research Limitations and Future Prospects**

Limitations: The sample scope is concentrated on English majors of Guangdong University of Science and Technology with a relatively limited scale; the practical exploration focuses on the short term (1-2 academic years), and the long-term adaptability of the model needs further tracking.

Future Directions: First, expand the sample scope and promote the model to other ESP majors (e.g., Tourism English, Scientific and Technological English) to verify its universality; second, introduce digital teaching tools (e.g., blended teaching platforms) to optimize the dynamic tracking of needs analysis and the efficiency of teaching feedback; third, deepen industry-education integration, co-establish "joint laboratories" with Dongguan's cross-border e-commerce

enterprises to develop more real-scenario teaching resources and improve the integrated training system of "teaching - internship - employment"; fourth, continuously track practical effects, optimize the dual-path coordination mechanism combined with more cases, and enhance the accurate adaptation between the model and needs.

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