Effects of a Remedial Course of Introductory Economics on the College Students with Lower Language Proficiency

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Outline of Presentation:

- What is the aim of this study?

- Who are the target students in this pilot study?

- What is this remedial course of introductory Economics?

- Regression analysis and results

- Feedbacks from students

- Conclusions and Recommendation

- Q & A Session

What we observe:

- Introductory Economics is a compulsory subject offered to business students by most of the tertiary education institutions in Hong Kong.

- Students who are weak in English language proficiency often find it hard to obtain a satisfactory academic result in this subject.

What is the aim of this study?

- How to provide additional learning support to the students with lower English language proficiency when they study a compulsory Economics subject?

Who are the target students in the study?

- Year 1 students of 2 Associate Degree Business Programs

- 2017-18 cohorts

- Only students with Level 2 in HKDSE English are selected in this study

What is this remedial course of introductory Economics?

Remedial Course is tailor-made for providing additional learning support for students to prepare for assignment 1	
Number of students invited	286 students from 2 programs (Level 2 in HKDSE English)
Number of classes	5 (roughly 55-58 per class)
Duration of remedial course	Week 2 – 5 (mid-Sep to Oct, 2017)
Number of sessions	4 weekly sessions
Duration of each session	2 hours per session (day time)
Materials developed	- Materials covered in Topic 1 to 4 - Examples: how to find the relevant information in a given scenario; how to write a simple Economic analysis for a given scenario; common errors in sentence structure, spelling and choice of words in students' works.

Regression analysis:

- Regression analysis:
  used to evaluate the effectiveness of the remedial course on students' performance in studying a compulsory introductory Economics subject for an Associate Degree Business Scheme of a local community college.

- Factor: No. of remedial session attended

- The effect of the attendance rate of remedial course to the following assessment items are evaluated:
  - **Assignment 1**
  - Test
  - All coursework components
  - Examination

Results of regression analysis (by assessments):

	Assessment items	Factor	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	Significant
Program A	Assignment 1 (due in week	Constant	57.168	3.230	17.701	.000***
		No. of	3.425	1.270	2.697	.010**
Program						
Overall						

Number of sessions attended ⬆

⇨ Marks of assessment ⬆

     *   The effect is significant at level 0.1
    **   The effect is significant at level 0.05
  *** The effect is significant at level 0.001

Feedback from students:

- A questionnaire survey was carried out at the last session of the remedial course to collect the feedbacks from students regarding the usefulness of the remedial course.
- Positive feedbacks were received.

Medium of instruction in your secondary school: Chinese 83%; English 17%	
Question (on a 10-point scale with 10 equals to strongly agree)	Mean
1. The remedial course is well organized. 輔導課程的安排妥當。	7.7
2. Explanations given by the tutor helped me understand the subject matters. 導師的講解有助我對課程的理解。	**7.9**
3. I am satisfied with the overall arrangement of the remedial courses. 我對整個課程的安排滿意。	7.7
4. Now I am confident that I can attempt the exercises independently. 我現在有信心自己能獨立作答題目。	**6.0**
5. The remedial courses were helpful to me. 輔導課程對我的學習有幫助。	**7.6**

Conclusion :

- Based on the results of regression analysis, the attendance rate of remedial course is <u>positively related</u> to the student performance in this introductory Economics course. In other words, if students attend more sessions in the remedial course, their academic performance in this subject will get better.

- According to the student feedback questionnaire, remedial course is <u>useful</u> for students with lower English proficiency.

- Both the data analysis and student feedback provide <u>consistent</u> findings that additional learning support is useful for the academic improvement of weaker students.

Recommendation for further study:

- Based on the results of regression analysis, the <u>positive effect</u> of remedial course in the <u>final examination became insignificant</u>. It may be caused by

  - the limited number of topics covered in the remedial course (topic 1 – 4) and

  - the short duration of the course (only 4 sessions).

- <u>Recommendation</u>:

  Both the <u>sessions</u> of remedial course and <u>topics covered</u> can be increased if the remedial course is re-run in the future.

- Repeating the analysis if the remedial course is re-run in the future. The results of analysis will give insights to the college lecturers to explore different ways to help students to improve their learning in the college and the lifelong learning ultimately.

Thank You