

A Dynamic Study on the Formation of Oral English Ability of English Majors in Application-Oriented Universities

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Abstract: Based on the China Standards of English(CSE), this paper conducts a follow-up investigation on the formation process of oral proficiency of English majors in applied undergraduate colleges from the micro level and explores the specific factors affecting the formation of oral proficiency in order to explore the more effective oral teaching mode of English majors of applied undergraduate colleges.

Keywords: China Standards of English(CSE); Applied Undergraduate Colleges English Majors; Oral Ability; Dynamic Study

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1. Introduction

Oral English ability is not only one of the criteria to measure the comprehensive quality of English majors, but also one of the necessary conditions for English majors to adapt to the new form of workplace requirements.

For a long time, scholars have extended their research on oral ability from the perspective of language level and non-language level. The current research that the formation of oral English ability may be restricted by the following factors : the negative transfer of mother tongue, culture on oral English ability, the regional differences of oral English ability and the common problems of regional pronunciation, such as the negative influence of dialects. Oral English teaching focuses more on vocabulary and pronunciation, and grammar. Under the exam-oriented education: oral class hours and types are less; it is easy to ignore the current situation of context; negative psychological factors. The oral English scores of most English majors in application-oriented universities are lower than other universities. They are weak in learning ability. Therefore, how to effectively improve their oral ability is key issue in teaching.

2. Research Design

2.1 Research questions

In order to explore the specific factors that limit the formation of oral English , this study mainly answers the following questions :

For English majors in application-oriented universities : 2.1.1What are the factors that limit the formation of oral proficiency at different learning stages ? 2.1.2What are the factors that limit the formation of oral English ability for students of different levels ?

2.2 Research subjects

This study is conducted among 76 first-year (second semester) English majors from an application-oriented university in Inner Mongolia. The author randomly selected two classes as the subjects. The 70 students ' English college entrance examination scores were the highest at 115 points and the lowest at 90 points. Their English level can better reflect the average situation of the whole English majors. They were followed up for one academic year (32 weeks).

2.3 Research methods and process

This study adopts the dynamic description model to study the first-year English majors in an application-oriented undergraduate college in Inner Mongolia.

The development of students' oral English ability was tracked for one academic year (32 weeks) to describe its formation process, and the attribution analysis of the materials obtained from the empirical research was carried out to summarize the rules of the formation of English majors' oral English ability in applied undergraduate colleges. The specific steps are as follows : after fully considering the overall situation of the students, the author compiled a questionnaire based on the level 2 to level 6 criteria in the oral subscale (self-evaluation) of the China Standards of English, and conducted a self-evaluation before, during and after the systematic oral training. At the same time, according to the oral subscale of China Standards of English, the corresponding teacher evaluation criteria are formulated as the evaluation criteria for the two oral final exams.

2.4 Data collection and analysis

The English majors' oral proficiency questionnaire and the teacher evaluation criteria compiled in this study are designed based on the Likert scale. Each question gives five options : complete agreement, comparative agreement, general agreement, comparative disagreement, and complete disagreement, which represent five levels of degree, are assigned 5 points, 4 points, 3 points, 2 points, and 1 point in turn. The students and teachers choose the corresponding options through their own real feelings. The final score is the sum of the total assignments of each option. The score is positively correlated with the performance of students' oral ability.

3. Research Results and Discussion

3.1 Learning stages

According to the recovered questionnaire and teacher evaluation form, the effective data are statistically analyzed to obtain the following figure ;

Figure 3.1 Restricted factors at different learning stages

	Students assessment			Teachers assessment		
	Initial stage	Middle Stage	Post Stage	Initial stage	Middle Stage	Post Stage
Pronunciation	80.02	82.62	89.89	82.91	84.21	90.01
Grammar	87.30	80.59	87.44	85.58	80.47	87.39
Context	83.73	82.46	82.56	86.62	87.28	88.15
Psychological	82.20	88.53	88.72	84.13	84.46	89.11

3.1.1 Pronunciation factors

As shown in Figure 3.1, students are most troubled by phonetic factors in the early stage of oral system learning, and then decrease. After the end of learning, the trouble of phonetic factors is minimized. At the beginning of learning, the oral level and learning ability of students in applied undergraduate colleges are limited, and the requirements of English majors for students' phonetic appearance are improved, which leads to students' troubled by phonetic factors. With the deepening of learning, the students' phonetic appearance is gradually improved, and the negative impact on the formation of oral ability is also reduced.

3.1.2 Grammar factors

As shown in Figure 3.1, students are relatively stable in grammar factors at all stages of oral system learning. Most students in applied undergraduate colleges are troubled by grammar in their oral production, and they cannot express their thoughts completely and accurately, which in turn affects the formation of oral ability.

3.1.3 Context factors

As shown in Figure 3.1, students are less affected by contextual factors in oral system learning. The context of systematic oral teaching has a positive effect on the formation of students' oral ability, but the familiarity of the context also has a certain impact on the oral output of the students.

3.1.4 Psychological factors

As shown in Figure 3.1, students are most troubled by psychological factors in the early stage of systematic learning, and then decrease. After the end of learning, the trouble of psychological factors is minimized. In the early stage of learning, the students' fear of difficulties, shyness and fear of mistakes in oral English learning projects have the greatest impact on oral English output. With the

advancement of systematic learning, the students' familiarity with oral English learning projects and the confidence established in learning gradually have a positive effect on oral English output.

To sum up, students are most affected by phonetic and psychological factors in the early stage of oral English system learning; in the middle stage of learning, grammar is the most influential factor; in the later stage of learning, context has the greatest influence.

3.2 Students level

Figure 3.2 Restricted factors at different student levels

	Students assessment			Teachers assessment		
	<60	61-85	>85	<60	61-85	>85
Pronunciation	78.96	84.04	89.05	73.08	80.43	85.56
Grammar	82.55	84.58	77.76	78.98	84.91	82.97
Context	79.55	80.27	81.76	77.07	83.43	88.80
Psychological	81.69	81.43	78.52	79.85	79.85	83.90

3.2.1 Pronunciation factors

As shown in Figure 3.2, students with learning difficulties are most troubled by pronunciation; students with strong learning ability are less troubled by pronunciation. Students with strong learning ability have relatively strong imitation ability and faster mastery of phonetic knowledge. Therefore, in the process of forming oral ability, they are less affected by phonetic factors.

3.2.2 Grammar factors

As shown in the above figure 3.2, students with strong learning ability are most troubled by grammar; students with learning difficulties are least affected by grammatical factors. It is worth noting that students with strong learning ability have higher requirements for grammatical accuracy in oral output, so they give up a lot of practice opportunities. To some extent, it affects the formation of oral ability.

3.2.3 Context factors

As shown in the above figure 3.2, the influence of contextual factors on the formation of different students' oral ability is relatively stable, but on the whole, it has a positive effect on the formation of oral ability. Compared with students with strong learning ability, contextual factors have less influence on students with learning difficulties.

3.2.4 Psychological factors

As shown in the above figure 3.2, students who learn well are most troubled by psychological factors; students with learning difficulties receive the least psychological factors. When learning excellent students in oral output, they have higher requirements for the quality of oral output, and the psychology of anxiety and fear of mistakes increases the invisible pressure. To some extent, it has a negative impact on the formation of oral ability.

To sum up, students with strong ability are most affected by grammar and psychological factors; students with learning difficulties are most affected by phonetic factors.

4. Conclusions

The development process of oral English ability is a dynamic development process, which will be different according to different learners, different learning experiences, different periods and different learning objectives. Based on the China Standards of English (CSE), this paper studies the dynamic development process of oral English ability of English majors in application-oriented universities. It is found that: students are most affected by phonetic and psychological factors in the early stage of oral English system learning for different learning stages; in the middle stage of learning, grammar is the most influential factor; in the later stage of learning, context has the greatest influence. For different learners, students with strong ability are most affected by grammar and psychological factors; students with learning difficulties are most affected by phonetic factors.

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