

# A Survey on the Oral English of English Majors and the Countermeasure

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**Abstract:** Students' language practice ability is the key to cultivate practical talents, so the importance of oral English Education for English majors in colleges is self-evident. Oral English teaching in college education is the focus and difficulty. For English majors, in the future work, study and life, oral communication opportunities are often much more than written expressions. This paper aims at investigating the current situation, problems and causes of the oral English proficiency of the English majors from freshmen to graduates of North China University of Technology, then analyze the causes of these findings, and put forward countermeasures. The results of the comprehensive survey show that English majors can communicate in simple English, but their obstacle is that they cannot have in-depth discussion and communication on certain topics. Therefore, the task of this topic is to find a scientific method for students to learn spoken English, improve learning efficiency. The goal of language learning is communication. The improvement of oral English ability is a step-by-step process, which needs the joint efforts of teachers and students. We should really tap the learners' intrinsic interest in English learning and fall in love with English learning.

**Keywords:** Current situation of oral English; English majors; questionnaires; Teaching strategies

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## 1. Introduction

Only by setting up lofty ideals can college students stimulate their English learning motivation, cultivate their English learning ability, and create the conditions for their English learning. The correct achievement motivation and ambition can make English learners work hard and make great efforts to achieve the desired results. The higher the achievement motivation and the clearer the ambition, the better the academic performance. When we clear the learning goals and set high aspirations, it will enhance the desire to learn, so that the motivation to learn, and in the unremitting efforts to learn at the same time to get new motivation and passion. The purpose of this study is to find out the current barriers of oral English for English majors from freshmen to seniors. After analyzing the questionnaire data, we can simply understand the obstacles of the English majors in learning spoken English and the deficiencies of the school's teaching model, and in view of these obstacles and the insufficiency can propose the effective countermeasures. And I hope that the countermeasures I put forward to solve the oral communication ability of English majors have substantial help. I also hope that the school can form a distinctive atmosphere of English, so that students can develop themselves.

## 2. Results and Discussions

### 2.1 Analysis of survey results

This thesis aims at investigating the current situation, problems and causes of the oral English proficiency of the English majors from freshman to graduate of North China University of Technology.

Due to the limited forms available because of the coronavirus, the survey was conducted in the form of a questionnaire to collect data. Based on the questionnaire survey conducted by scholars at home and abroad and the actual situation of English majors in our university, the author has designed twelve questions, this paper investigates the current situation of Oral English learning and the obstacles in oral English learning of English majors in our university. The questionnaire is divided into two

parts: 1-7 ask students to self-evaluate their oral English level, and 8-12 investigate the factors that students think affect their oral English expressions in oral English learning.

The number of valid questionnaires 100, were: 21 Freshmen, 27 Sophomores, 27 juniors, 25 seniors.

### **2.1.1 Self-evaluate**

Most of the students thought their current level of oral English could carry out simple dialogues (77%), the minority thought they could hold a whole speech freely (16%), and the other thought they could speak several sentences (5%), very few students thought they could only speak a few words (2%).

### **2.1.2 Influence factors**

The factors that affected students' oral ability were limited vocabulary (77%), lack of oral learning environment (76%), ignorance of some cultural background and puns (58%), incorrect expression (54%), poor linking (43%), and poor pronunciation (30%), affected by dialect (11%).

## **2.2 Strategies for addressing these issues**

Based on the above findings, most students realize that the study of oral English requires a scientific method, but they do not spend a reasonable time on the improvement of oral English ability, the efficiency of their autonomous English learning is not high. Moreover, Oral English teaching must be combined with the actual situation of our school, and teachers' teaching methods should be adjusted according to students' learning progress. Therefore, the task of this topic is embodied, for students to find a scientific way to learn spoken English, improve their ability efficiency.

### **2.2.1 Cultivation and stimulation of learning motivation**

Piaget said: "All effective work is based on some interest as a prerequisite. " Learning is not a process of passively accepting knowledge, but a process of learning the interaction between the existing mental structure, knowledge structure and new knowledge. Motivation is an important factor affecting learning. For students, the desire to learn, the willingness to learn and the motivation to learn are important prerequisites for learning success. Most English majors pass all kinds of English examinations, but they cannot use it, which cannot satisfy the needs of their daily life or career.

i. To stimulate students' curiosity. Albert Einstein said: "Interest is the Best Teacher". People's thirst for knowledge and interest in learning are formed through the close connection between the subject content and practice, the practical significance of theory and the use of theory to discover, analyze and solve practical problems. Enhancing the thirst for oral English can arouse the interest of English learning. Teachers should cultivate students' sense of independent learning and exploration and set up several different learning scenarios for students to build independent learning classes around improving students' curiosity in oral English learning. In this process, students can better explore their own learning demands and learning deficiencies and carry out oral English learning practice in a planned way.

ii. Use online learning platforms. In recent years, due to the impact of COVID-19, college students' courses are often changed from offline courses to online courses. Online oral learning can solve the problem of insufficient classroom time, which is convenient for students to use the time after class to practice oral English, so that the learning time is extended. Students can speak freely on the platform and take the initiative to communicate with others. Teachers can use the online learning platform to conduct relevant oral tests for students. The platform will provide special training for each student at different levels according to the test results and big data. It can take care of the learning situation of each student in a more comprehensive way and improve the learning efficiency.

iii. Encourage creativity. Modern language learning methods are closely related to personal ideas, social environment, and other conditions, which are characterized by innovation. The starting point and end-result of learning should be constant change and innovation, in constant change and innovation beyond predecessors, thus promoting social progress and the development of human civilization. The rapid development of society needs many innovative talents, so we should put the students' own innovative ability to a certain height, carry on the effective innovative study, to meet students' needs for language, to adapt to the development of society.

### **2.2.2 Create a learning environment and a relaxed classroom**

In China, English, as a foreign language, is not a communicative language used by students in their daily life, and students generally lack the language environment to practice oral English, this directly results in the students' poor oral fluency. Therefore, English majors should consider the influence of environment when they improve, consolidate, and maintain their oral English learning.

i. To cultivate students' initiative, to create a good atmosphere for learning and speaking English, to seize any opportunities available to them, to improve their oral communication in daily life, and to transfer their advantages effectively, to enrich teachers' professional oral practice and combine it with the traditional classroom mode, to build a hard foundation for students' oral communication. Students' past learning experiences, expectations of the curriculum, views on language teaching and learning styles (teacher-led, student-centered or group activities) are all issues that teachers need to consider in terms of student factors. Teachers should provide students with the opportunity of self-study, the materials of self-study and the habit of self-study in oral communication.

ii. Mutual learning between classmates. In this case, the requirement for "peers" is limited to the type of peers in the same class, because most of the classmates are in the same age, and students can get a living, emotional and real interaction from the mutual help partners. Mutual help partners should be attracted to each other and have similar interests. Only partners who can develop close friendship and have great enthusiasm for English can guarantee relatively long-term mutual learning. If the knowledge and information between partners are asymmetrical, there will be frequent mistakes in oral dialogue practice, and it is impossible to achieve effective and long-term mutual oral learning. Moreover, with the help of mutual partners, students will take the initiative to study actively, which can give full play to their subjective initiative in learning, stimulate their internal learning motivation, and to a certain extent guarantee the relatively lasting peer learning. Exchange English between classes and extracurricular time to fully create an environment for oral English learning. Students in this kind of real conversation environment, far more impressive than memorizing sentences from books, this way to train English thinking and expression ability can also get twice the result with half the effort.

### **2.2.3 To enrich students' cultural knowledge and second-class activities.**

It is generally believed that the first classroom refers to the teaching activities carried out by teachers and students in a fixed place according to the teaching syllabus and using certain textbooks within a certain period, that is, classroom teaching. The teaching activities carried out outside the first classroom are called the second classroom. Various forms of second classroom activities can effectively enrich students' extracurricular life, help students to expand their knowledge, cultivate good interests and hobbies, promote interpersonal communication, assist physical and mental health, improve comprehensive quality.

i. Pay attention to cultural edification. Teachers should pay attention to the cultivation of students' cultural atmosphere and bring culture and its background into the oral class. Teachers should try their best to expose students to different cultures, re-face racism, enhance national self-esteem, and learn to appreciate different cultures and religious beliefs. Teachers can introduce audio-visual materials, such as original English programs such as BBC and VOA, and arrange to watch and comment on English videos, let students in the process of integrating into English culture unconsciously fall in love with English, love to speak English.

ii. Oral English class should introduce and impart knowledge of Cultural Customs and social background related to textbooks in a planned and systematic way and cultivate students' ability to observe and understand language in the social context. Teachers should also make full use of multimedia to create a language environment for students to ask questions, initiate discussions, and guide students in reading literary works, newspapers, and periodicals to pay attention to and accumulate social and cultural knowledge. Students can be encouraged to read more Western history, geography, culture and customs, such as books, increase the amount of language input. While reading a lot, students have a better understanding of the culture of English-speaking countries and can consciously compare the cultural differences between China and the West, which is also helpful to improve the appropriateness of language.

iii. Actively organize students to participate in social practice, create space for students to show their oral ability. Actively carrying out learning practice activities is helpful to better strengthen the accumulation of students' learning experience. By creating a good learning environment and constructing a diversified problem-oriented learning environment, teachers can provide educational guarantee for students to carry out oral English learning practice independently. For example, to participate in various English salons, English clubs, English corners, English lectures, English speech contests, English knowledge contests, English song contests, English movies appreciation, if conditions permit, directly participate in foreign-related activities, responsible for English translation, reception, business negotiations and so on. In this way, students can form the desire to master more knowledge, explore more in-depth issues, inspire students to work harder to improve their spoken English.

## **3. Conclusion**

The improvement of oral English ability is a step-by-step process, which needs the joint efforts of teachers and students.

Teachers at college English major should realize the responsibility given by the times and society, who need to change their educational ideas, make full use of modern teaching methods, optimize the teaching process, and give full play to students' initiative, through various ways to help students overcome the obstacles in oral expression, cultivate and improve the students' ability to communicate in English accurately and fluently, thus promoting the overall level of college English teaching. or Students, to accumulate more language knowledge and master certain communication skills, and to carry out a lot of practice.

Therefore, this paper starts from the current situation of oral English learning of Grade 16-19 English majors in North China University of Technology, analyzes the existing problems, and puts forward appropriate improvement countermeasures, hoping to attract enough attention from the school, teachers, and students, and take active measures to adjust teaching and effectively improve some of the existing problems in the current stage of oral English teaching. To improve students' oral English communication ability and provide reference for further improving the oral English teaching model for English majors.

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