

# **The Analysis of the Current Situation of English Listening Teaching and Transition of Listening Teaching Strategies for Business English Majors in Newly Upgraded Universities**

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**Keywords:** English listening; upgraded universities; situation analysis; strategy transition

**Abstract:** The teaching methods and strategies of English listening in higher vocational schools can't be used in the newly upgraded universities. This paper takes one of the newly upgraded universities as an example. With the method of questionnaires, the author uses the SPSS software to analyze the questionnaire data. From that, we know the recent English listening level of the students majored in business English and brings up relevant teaching strategies hoping in order to help the teaching of listening in the upgraded universities.

## **1. Introduction**

In recent years, many higher vocational colleges in our country have been upgraded to ordinary undergraduate universities. In this particular period of transition, the Business English major of newly-built undergraduate universities is one of the fastest-developing majors. Among the four major skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing in English language learning, listening is a very important basic skill. According to the statistics of W.Rivers and M.S.Temperly, the proportion of "listening" in communication activities is as high as 45%. Students of Business English Majors in the newly upgraded universities are required to take TEM-4 and TEM-8. The listening test scores are also high in TEM-4 and TEM-8. Besides, with the examination of international news, the difficulty increases quite a lot. Obviously, the teaching methods and strategies that were originally adapted to higher vocational college students are hard to adapt to the teaching of undergraduate students. Therefore, research has found that new teaching strategies are imperative. Based on the teaching background of a newly upgraded university in Shandong Province, this paper analyzes the current situation of listening teaching for Business English major and the transformation of listening teaching strategies, aiming at providing reference for the reform of Business English majors in newly upgraded universities.

## **2. Survey of Questionnaire**

### **2.1 Purpose**

The author designed the questionnaire mainly to investigate the following aspects. Firstly, the English learning attitude of freshmen of Business English majors. Secondly, whether English listening is a weak point for the students. Thirdly, the listening methods used in the listening process and English listening teaching methods that students expect teachers to use during class.

### **2.2 Subjects**

The author selected the undergraduates of business English majors from a newly upgraded university in Shandong as the survey subjects. All of them are freshmen and their ages vary from 18 to 20.

### **2.3 Instrument**

The main instrument of the survey were questionnaires and SPSS software. This questionnaire mainly consists of three parts. The first part is the basic information. This includes the time of the

questionnaire, the age, gender and major of the subjects and the giving out and collection of the questionnaire. The second part is the request and hope for the subjects to answer this questionnaire. The third part is a multiple-choice question for investigating English listening learning. SPSS software is used to analyze the data of the recycled questionnaire.

## 2.4 Procedure

Before the questionnaire was issued, the author asked three college English teachers who had many years of teaching experiences and strong research ability to review the questionnaire and revised several questions based on their opinions and suggestions to make sure the reliability of this questionnaire. Then I asked my colleagues to give out the questionnaire in the last half hour of the audio-visual class, and then collect the questionnaire and return it to the author after class.

## 3. Analysis of the Questionnaire

### 3.1 Analysis of the Current Situation of Listening for Business English Majors

The data of the questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS software. There are 21 questions in the questionnaire and investigated the students' listening level and listening strategies. In this paper, four typical Tables, T4, T8, T13 and T21, are selected for analysis and introduction. After analysis and collation with SPSS software, the Tables and conclusions are as follows.

Table T4 Are You Interested with English?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	A Very	96	14.0	14.0	14.0
	B Interested	330	48.0	48.1	62.1
	C Not so much	203	29.5	29.6	91.7
	D Not at all	36	5.2	5.2	96.9
	E Hate	21	3.1	3.1	100.0
	Total	686	99.7	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.3		
Total		688	100.0		

As can be seen from the figure above, the majority of students are interested in English learning which account for 48%. Secondly, it is not so much interested, with a ratio of 29.5%. And then it is very interested accounting for 14% of the total. Only 8.3% are not interested in English at all and hate English.

Table T8 Difficult points in English Learning

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	A Listening	194	28.2	28.2	28.2
	B Speaking	114	16.6	16.6	44.8
	C Writing	93	13.5	13.5	58.3
	D Reading	72	10.5	10.5	68.8
	E Grammar	148	21.5	21.5	90.3
	F Vocabulary	67	9.7	9.7	100.0
	Total	688	100.0	100.0	

The Table above shows that 28.2% of English majors in this university think that they have the difficulty in English listening learning, followed by grammar, speaking, then writing, and finally reading and vocabulary.

Table T13 Strategies of English Listening

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	A Listening while thinking, think actively, understanding, more exercises	239	34.7	34.8	34.8
	B One or two questions are caught each time, wait for the answers, more exercises	294	42.7	42.9	77.7
	C less exercises, decide with sense	128	18.6	18.7	96.4
	D no exercise, luck is important	25	3.6	3.6	100.0
	Total	686	99.7	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.3		
Total		688	100.0		

Table T13 shows that about listening learning, 42.7% of students usually pay attention to listening practice, but in the process of listening, they simply wait for the emergence of listening information related to the answer, without positive thinking, without real understanding of listening material.

Table T21 The parts students want to improve

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	A listening and speaking	408	59.3	59.4	59.4
	B reading and writing	165	24.0	24.0	83.4
	C translation	67	9.7	9.8	93.2
	D professional English	47	6.8	6.8	100.0
	Total	687	99.9	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.1		
Total		688	100.0		

As can be seen from the figure above, among the English learning projects that students hope to strengthen, listening and speaking account for the largest proportion (59.3%), followed by reading and writing (24%) and translation skills (9.6%).

After the questionnaire survey and SPSS software analysis, several conclusions can be drawn about the current listening situation of undergraduate business English majors. First of all, unlike higher vocational students, most undergraduates are interested in English learning. During the period when Shandong Agricultural and Engineering university was mainly engaged in Higher Vocational education, most of the higher vocational could not keep up with English learning in college, and gradually lost their interest in learning English because of their poor English foundation and low scores in college entrance examination. However, the undergraduates have a relatively good foundation, relatively high scores in the college entrance examination. And they have better understanding ability and cooperating spirit and they are taught with diversified ways of learning English after entering the university. Therefore, the author is gratified to find that most undergraduates have a strong interest in learning English. Secondly, it is not difficult to see from T8 and T21 that among the four major English learning skills, listening is still the obstacle for many students, especially for English majors. They should not only understand basic communication, but also professional terms and proper vocabulary such as international news. For those who have just come out of high school and just come out of exam-oriented education, they only know how to do the questions and recite the text. There is no doubt that they do not know how to start. Thirdly,

students know little about the learning methods of English listening. Many students don't know that there are many skills and methods in doing listening exercises, and they don't know that if they master these methods, they will get twice the result with half the effort. They are used to listening to the listening materials from beginning to end according to their past habits. In the long run, the listening level will not be improved. In the high-intensity, informative TEM-4 and TEM-8, students will be in a dilemma, such as walking on thin ice.

#### **4. Transition of Listening Teaching Strategies for Business English Majors in Newly Upgraded Universities**

##### **4.1. The Transition of Teaching Attitude**

At the stage of Higher Vocational education, because of the poor foundation of students, most students can not understand what the teacher is talking about. For a long time, students do not cooperate in class and the classroom atmosphere is not active. No matter how the teacher mobilizes the enthusiasm of students, it is also futile. This situation has brought a series of negative effects to teachers, especially in teaching attitude such as conservative, ignorant of innovation, depression, lack of enthusiasm and initiative. Entering the undergraduate education stage, the students' foundation has been improved, they love learning and know how to cooperate. Teachers' attitudes towards teaching should also be changed accordingly. Undergraduates should not be confronted with the past easy-going attitude. Teachers should be conscientious and responsible, actively prepare lessons, care for students, pay attention to the renewal of knowledge system, and take a positive and active attitude to promote the orderly teaching of business English listening.

##### **4.2. The Transition of Teaching Mode**

At the stage of Higher Vocational education, the teaching mode is fixed and single. During the teaching, the mode of explaining the new words, listening materials, doing exercises, answering questions and explaining difficult points by teachers is followed for a long time. Classroom teaching has become dull. At the undergraduate stage, we should completely change the fixed mode of teacher's lecture and student's listening. We should really let students integrate into the classroom, and make use of various multimedia means to make students become the main body of learning. Students can have group discussion, classroom demonstration or self-learning mode, or even turn over the classroom teaching mode, so that students can study by themselves after class, review and discuss in class, which gives students a broad platform to absorb more knowledge according to their own situation.

##### **4.3. Transition of Teaching Content**

The change of teaching content. Entering the undergraduate stage, it is very difficult to meet the needs of students only to teach textbooks and do listening exercises. Therefore, teachers should interpolate listening skills while teaching textbooks, so that students can get twice the result with half the effort in listening practice. In addition, a lot of extra-curricular knowledge, such as VOA, BBC, English songs, British and American original movies, should be inserted at the same time.

#### **5. Conclusion**

English listening teaching is still a vital part of the four major skills of English learning, especially for business English majors in newly-upgraded universities. The author uses questionnaires to investigate and analyze the students' English listening situation, and finds that listening learning is still a difficult point in students' English learning. According to the differences between Higher Vocational and undergraduate stages, the author draws a conclusion that listening teaching for business English undergraduates should be different from that of the former ones. It also puts forward new teaching methods and strategies, hoping to help the English listening teaching of business English majors in newly upgraded universities.

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