

Exploration of English Listening Teaching Practice Based on Personalized Learning

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Abstract: *Personalized learning is a learning theory proposed based on individual differences among students. Attempting to apply personalized learning theory in listening teaching has certain practical significance and value in improving students' listening abilities. The study attempts to clarify the connotation and implementation principles of personalized listening teaching, analyze and compare the listening learning situation and data analysis of two classes, in order to confirm the importance of personalized teaching.*

Keywords: *Personalized Teaching, Listening Ability, Teaching Practice*

1. Basic Conceptual Definition and Basis

1.1. A review of research on listening teaching

After decades of development, English listening teaching has summarized some teaching experiences and suggestions. For example, Yang Jianli (2003) believes that there is a connection between metacognitive strategy training and improving the listening comprehension ability of English learners. "Strategy training can not only improve students' listening skills, but also drive teaching reform and encourage students to learn more actively and proactively." [1] Ren Xiaotao (2002) from the perspective of linguistic discourse theory and the functional characteristics of discourse, it is proposed that "discourse theory should be introduced into listening teaching, and English listening teaching should be improved by utilizing discourse knowledge to enhance students' listening comprehension level." [2] By analyzing the dimensions that affect listening comprehension, Wang Shouyuan (2003) proposed that attention should be paid to each stage of students' listening learning from low to high levels in the listening teaching process, and it is suggested to cultivate students' skills of prediction ability and attach importance to the role of listening training strategies in improving listening, develop listening skills by combining listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, and make full use of modern teaching equipment to improve a good language environment for students. [3]

Some scholars have summarized the current situation and shortcomings of high school listening teaching and put forward feasible suggestions. Ren Jing (2014) believes that the impact of the lag in high school listening teaching is due to the teacher's biased understanding of listening teaching and the personality traits of students, such as negative attitudes and anxiety. [4] Through data analysis, Yang Jin (2000) believes that "anxiety seriously troubles students", but not all anxiety is harmful, and attention should be paid to distinguishing between promoting anxiety and inhibiting anxiety. [5]

1.2. The Theoretical connotation of personalized teaching

Personalized teaching is a concept that combines teaching with behaviorist cognition, and is the theoretical basis for guiding the development of teaching. It involves viewpoints from constructivist theory, humanistic education theory, multiple intelligence theory, and procedural teaching theory.

Constructivism believes that the understanding constructed during the interaction between individuals and the environment varies from person to person, some are more comprehensive, some are more one-sided, and some are completely wrong. This requires students to exchange opinions with others on a certain issue. [6] Constructivism advocates the method of group cooperative learning, through social learning, students can find differences in communication with other group members, constantly correct their understanding, and make it closer to right answer.

The humanistic teaching theory emphasizes “people oriented”, encourages the exploration of individual potential advantages, respects individual differences, believes that everyone has their own advantages, and through exploration, self-worth can be realized. In teaching process, teachers should pay attention to the psychological needs of students, satisfy their curiosity, satisfy their thirst for knowledge, respect their individual differences, and view them with an appreciative eye. [7]

The theory of diversity holds that any student must have development potential in a certain aspect or aspect, and can correspondingly develop under the influence of education. “Teaching according to aptitude” is the core of the theory of multiple intelligences in teaching. Therefore, education should create a variety of scenarios for students that are conducive to discovering, demonstrating, and promoting various intelligences, providing diverse choices for their learning, enabling them to leverage their strengths and avoid weaknesses, stimulate their potential intelligence, and fully develop their personalities. [8]

The program teaching theory proposes the “operant conditioning learning theory”, which means “specific problem specific analysis”. Teaching students should choose the appropriate method based on their actual learning situation and gradually achieve teaching tasks. Program teaching is an individualized teaching method that allows students to learn self teaching materials at their own speed and level. It decomposes the knowledge of each subject into a series of knowledge items according to its internal logic, which are connected and gradually deepened. Then, students learn each knowledge item one by one in the order of the knowledge items, and provide timely feedback and reinforcement, so that students can ultimately master the knowledge they have learned to achieve the predetermined teaching objectives. [9]

The Curriculum Standards for Ordinary High School English require that teaching design should conform to the physiological and psychological characteristics of students, follow the laws of language learning, and strive to meet the needs of students of different types and levels, so that each student can achieve healthy physical and mental development. [10]

In summary, advocating personalized teaching is not only a theoretical guidance, but also an effective method and strategy for practicing listening teaching.

1.3. Basic principles of personalized listening teaching

The concept of personalized listening teaching is based on individual differences in listening proficiency, learning habits, teaching experiences, etc. It is a proposition centered on individual development. It is a theoretical guidance for listening teaching and a specific method for practical application and development of listening teaching. The principles are as follows.

(1)Respect the objective reality of individual differences among students. As a key point in listening teaching, there must be differences in each student's listening level and basic knowledge of phonetics. Fully understanding the differences in listening acquisition among each student is the prerequisite and foundation for conducting personalized listening teaching. Only by acknowledging and respecting this objective fact can we truly carry out personalized listening teaching.

(2)Adhere to the humanistic care concept of “people-oriented”. Students may encounter obstacles to the development of their listening abilities to some extent in their listening learning. Therefore, we need to help students make up for their shortcomings and encourage them to overcome difficulties. “Putting people first” requires affirming the value of students and providing them with positive evaluations and affirmation, which is the guiding spirit for developing personalized listening teaching.

(3)Make a phased plan for individual student development. The developmental stage of each student's ability varies, whether high or low. When conducting personalized listening teaching, targeted strategies and methods should be implemented for the stage in which the student is in. Fully understanding the stage of students' listening proficiency is a necessary environment for conducting personalized listening teaching, and it is also a specific method and strategy for personalized listening teaching.

(4)Explore the potential “advantageous intelligence” of individual students. Each student has their own development advantages in listening acquisition ability, and it is necessary to fully recognize their strengths, achieve personalized teaching, and continuously tap into their potential. Exploring the strengths of students is not only a recognition of their intelligence, but also a key link in the development of personalized listening teaching.

In listening teaching, it is important to carefully adhere to these principles, and based on the actual situation of listening teaching, to effectively carry out personalized listening teaching and improve the level of listening teaching.

2. Personalized Teaching of English Listening

2.1. Explanation of English listening teaching issues

The problems in listening education can be summarized as follows.

(1) The awareness of listening teaching lags behind. The form of listening teaching is single, and the traditional teaching mode still occupies the classroom of listening teaching. The traditional teaching model of students listening to audio to do exercises, students answering answers, and teachers organizing and analyzing is boring, and students have low interest in learning, resulting in poor listening teaching effectiveness. However, teachers cannot accept some new listening teaching models, such as group cooperative learning, student-centered classroom, and so on.

(2) Daily listening teaching lags behind. Some schools have not fully recognized the importance of listening teaching, and compared to learning vocabulary, sentences, and grammar, daily listening teaching has not really been put on the agenda. The four basic skills of “listening, speaking, reading, and writing” are interdependent and indispensable. However, due to the backwardness of teacher awareness and the baton of the college entrance examination, teachers have not been able to handle the relationship between listening learning and English teaching well, which has led to the loss of favor in listening teaching.

(3) The listening preparation process is lagging behind. The daily teaching of listening is not given enough attention, but the phenomenon of cramming before the big exam is not uncommon. Due to the requirements of the exam score line, before the listening exam or semester summary exam, teachers will always give students some “strategies” to prepare for the exam. It is not difficult to see from this phenomenon that the purpose of students' listening learning has been “exam oriented”, and teachers have failed to grasp the law of gradual development of phonetic knowledge, misunderstood the role of listening learning strategies.

(4) The design of listening classes lags behind. The listening classroom still centers around the teacher, and listening learning does not consider individual differences among students. All listening learning is carried out around the same set of textbooks and in the same way. The form of listening teaching is single, and students' impressions of listening classes remain at a dry level, with low enthusiasm.

2.2. Case study analysis

In order to confirm the importance of personalized teaching in listening teaching, this study retrospectively analyzed the listening preparation of two high school third grade classes (referred to as A and B classes) and compared relevant data. Basic situation: Class A has a good listening foundation, while Class B is relatively weak. Preparation for the exam includes four rounds of review, selecting different preparation materials, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Comparison of difficulty levels for four rounds of listening materials

Material Information	One round of materials (simulated test paper)	Second round materials (Blue Book)	Second round materials (Red Book)	Four round materials (previous year's test papers)
Number of words	About 950words	About 1100 words	About 950words	About 950words
Reading speed	155 words per minute	175 words per minute	155 words per minute	155 words per minute
Difficulty level	Approaching college entrance exam	Over college entrance exam	Approaching college entrance exam	Approaching college entrance exam

After the college entrance examination, we compared the average scores of Class A and Class B in four rounds of review and the college entrance examination scores for a total of five times for data comparison. The specific data are shown in Figure 1 and 2.

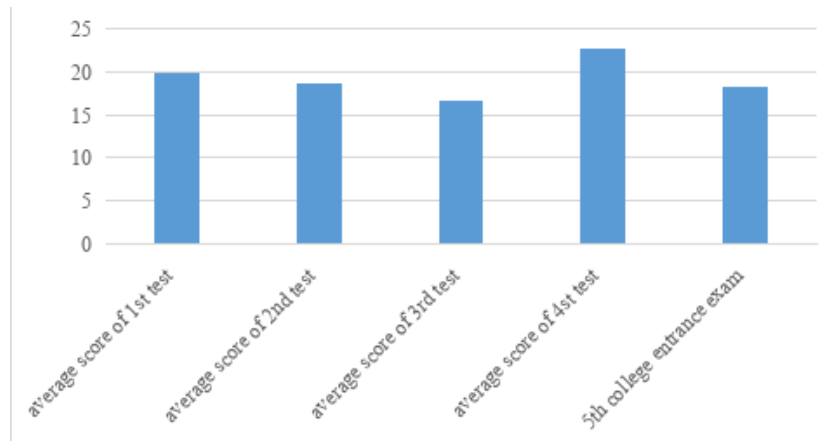


Figure 1: Bar chart of listening scores in class A.

From Data Figure 1, it can be seen that the score of Class A has changed. From the first survey data to 19.70 points and the fourth prediction data to 22.5 points, the average score has increased to 2.8 points. However, the listening score in the college entrance examination is 18.19 points, which is lower than the score in the two simulated tests. In the second round of review, students organized tests on their own but lacked self-awareness, resulting in a decrease in average scores. In the third round of testing, which is also organized by students, due to the fact that the materials in the red book far exceed the difficulty level of the college entrance examination questions, students experience discomfort and the average score significantly decreases. Comparing the scores of the college entrance examination, 26 students showed a downward trend in their average listening scores. Among these students, 22 of them scored lower than the bottom score, accounting for about 84.6%.

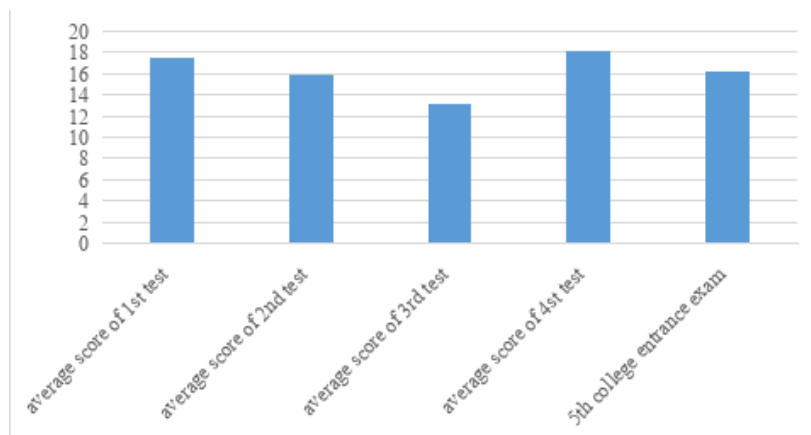


Figure 2: Bar chart of listening scores in class B.

From Data Figure 2, it can be seen that the situation of Class B is as follows: from the first survey data of 17.38 points to the fourth prediction data of 18.03 points, the average score has increased to 0.65 points, while the listening score in the college entrance examination is 16.20 points, which is lower than the score in the two simulated tests. In the second round of review, students organized tests on their own but lacked self-awareness, resulting in a decrease in average scores. In the third round of testing, which is also organized by students, due to the materials far exceeding the difficulty level of the college entrance examination questions, students showed discomfort and the average score significantly decreased. Comparing the scores of the college entrance examination, it was found that the average listening score of 26 students showed a downward trend. Among these students, 8 of them scored lower than the bottom score, accounting for about 30.7%.

Through data comparison, the study concluded that the difficulty of the materials in the red book far exceeds the ability of students, and students have lower acceptance, which has a significant impact on their listening scores.

2.3. Summary of student feedback

To further confirm the research findings and address the negative impact of red books on exam

preparation, we conducted interviews with some students. The summary of student feedback is as follows:

(1) Students with poor foundation generally indicate that the difficulty is too high and they are unwilling to listen anymore. In order to cope with the teacher's mistakes, they often choose to randomly choose. Students with good foundation will carefully summarize the text and, if necessary, listen to the audio again.

(2) Students with poor foundations believe that when they try to solve real problems again after using the red book, they always feel that the correct answers they hear are incorrect and must interfere with the information. They cannot believe their own way of doing the problems, and become hesitant when doing them. Many times, they choose the right questions and always correct them; Students with a solid foundation believe that doing real problems again after using the red book feels less difficult. Sometimes I struggle to see if my options are correct.

(3) Students with poor foundations expressed a desire to choose exam preparation materials that are not too difficult; Students with a solid foundation expressed their preference for suitable lesson preparation materials, while some students expressed indifference.

2.4. The conclusion and inspiration of case study

From data comparison and interview results, it is found that the difficulty selection of listening materials has an impact on students' preparation and problem-solving psychology. This influence varies from person to person:

(1) A class with a good foundation has stronger adaptability than a class with a poor foundation.

(2) Students with poor foundations are not suitable for using listening materials that are too difficult, and their confidence in doing problems is greatly affected.

(3) Students with a solid foundation can better adapt to various materials and are less affected by material changes.

(4) The selection of listening materials exceeds students' abilities and has a significant impact on learning outcomes.

From the comparison of data and interview results, it can be inferred that there are differences in the average listening level between classes, and there are also differences in the listening level of students in the class; Students with different listening levels have different reactions to the same listening material, while students with the same listening level have different reactions to different listening materials; Students with the same listening level have different levels of psychological anxiety, and students with different listening levels have different levels of psychological anxiety; In the process of listening learning, we should fully consider the differences between student groups and individuals, use different listening teaching strategies and materials, and treat students differently.

3. Suggestions for Implementing Personalized English Listening Teaching

3.1. Establishing personalized teaching concepts, cultivating scientific research awareness, and understanding students' specific realities

The biggest obstacle to developing personalized teaching is the lack of recognition and resistance to concepts in terms of ideological concepts. To apply personalized teaching, it is necessary to first establish the concept of personalized teaching, recognize the differences between teachers and students as individuals, especially the individual differences of larger and larger student groups. Teachers should cultivate a sense of teaching and research, actively understand the specific situation of students, accumulate and learn good teaching models, combine personalized teaching theory with the specific reality of students, and truly implement personalized teaching. In listening teaching, fully consider the individual characteristics of teachers and students. The listening teaching ability of teachers has advantages but also shortcomings. When dividing teachers into classes, we need to consider their individual characteristics and choose classes that can leverage their strengths. Students are the focus of listening teaching, and it is necessary to consider the quality of their listening foundation and the strength of their mastery of phonetic knowledge. Different strategies should be applied to students with different listening levels.

3.2. Considering the reality of individual differences, understanding the individual characteristics of students, and treating student development differently

Research the differences in student development, adhere to the “people-oriented” concept, actively develop student strengths, establish a “student development plan” for student development, and make up for shortcomings. In listening teaching, it is important to recognize the differences in students' mastery of phonetic knowledge and listening abilities. Some students have a solid listening foundation, while others may be weak; Or some students may not have enough knowledge in a certain aspect of phonetics, or they may be naturally lacking; Or it may be due to insufficient recognition ability in linking, omission, and if reading. Understand the differences among students and consider whether their shortcomings are innate or acquired through insufficient effort; If it is a congenital lack of qualifications, we need to encourage students and provide psychological assistance to them. Assuming a lack of acquired knowledge, it is necessary for us to consider which aspect of the student's learning process is lacking, analyze the reasons, and develop a listening learning plan based on the developmental factors of each student.

3.3. Recognizing individual developmental differences, implementing multi-stage strategies, and implementing teaching strategies differently

According to Wu Zhenfu's book *Listening and Speaking of English*, we can know that the development of students' listening learning roughly has five stages. [11] In listening teaching, the listening situation in each class is different, and the listening foundation of students in each class is also different. This requires us to make judgments on the stages of student listening development, analyze the reasons, and make reasonable learning requirements and suggestions for students at each stage of learning. For example, if the listening level of students stays at the initial stage, our teaching focus should be on learning the pronunciation of words and memorizing some simple sentences, etc. For example, if the listening level of students reaches a level where they can understand the main idea in discourse, there is no need for us to engage in simple basic phonetic learning. We should expand the vocabulary of students related to the subject matter, strengthen the learning of strategies related to word-guessing and situations-judging, and so on. In response to the differences in the development of students' listening abilities, the teaching strategies implemented by teachers and the learning suggestions given to students must also be based on the different stages of students' listening ability development

4. Conclusion

Introducing personalized learning into English listening teaching is an attempt to develop English listening learning and has certain practical significance. Continuously understanding the individual characteristics of students in teaching practice, actively trying to improve specific strategies in practice, and enhancing the effectiveness of listening learning.

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