

# An Analysis of Learning Strategies for Advanced English Courses

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**Abstract:** *In the new information age, in the face of learning, we need to change from the traditional conservative learning to innovative learning in the future, online learning platform is a good way, it can provide a strong platform support and technical guarantee for independent innovative learning. Based on the "Advanced English" course in college English courses in China, this paper proposes a new learning mode -- the "Advanced English" independent innovative learning mode with the help of the network learning platform. Students can base on the teaching innovation practice, give full play to the information and interactive learning process supported by the online learning platform, and improve their own independent learning ability. Various practices have proved that this method is rich in content and highly interactive in the learning process, and very effective in the learning process.*

**Keywords:** *Network teaching platform; Independent and innovative learning; Advanced English*

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, how to improve students' self-learning ability has been one of the hottest topics in foreign language education. As one of the main courses for English majors, advanced English learning course aims to cultivate students' comprehensive English ability, especially in reading comprehension, grammar, rhetoric and writing ability. Its reading content covers a variety of topics. The difficulty also varies. The course helps students improve their language skills, exposes them to a wide range of literary works, and improves their ability to study independently. However, when teachers explain how to read texts, students rarely take the lead, and often teachers take the lead, without giving full play to students' dominant position. This paper analyzes the current situation of education and puts forward appropriate teaching methods to think and study this problem. Nowadays, with the rapid development of science and technology, the emergence of new disciplines, the continuous interaction and integration of humanities and natural sciences, and the rapid development of social information and knowledge transmission technology, all these have intensified the cultural exchanges<sup>[1]</sup>, conflicts and cooperation around the world, and the development of undergraduate English education in China has ushered in new opportunities and challenges. Nowadays, the demand for English professionals in various sectors of society is growing rapidly, and higher standards and expectations have been put forward for the ability and quality of English professionals. Therefore, the Ministry of Education commissioned the National College English Teaching Steering Committee to formulate the English Teaching Syllabus for College English Majors, which was officially approved and implemented in March 2000. The English Teaching Syllabus for College English Majors emphasizes the cultivation of students' innovative ability and requires the cultivation of students' innovative ability to be carried out in the whole learning process.

## 2. Importance of developing learning strategies

O'Malley and Chamot(2003) argue that excellent language learners may have several learning strategies, which can also be used by learners who have not found effective learning strategies suitable for them. They can also be used by learners who have not yet found their own effective learning strategies. In other words<sup>[2]</sup>, learning strategies can be learned through learning, so teachers need to realize the importance of identifying effective learning strategies and helping students acquire them. In the course "Advanced English", we focus on students' ability to consciously use learning strategies. Students are encouraged to keep LLP diaries twice a week in extracurricular reading classes. One of the purposes of this course is to train students to use learning strategies. By observing the students' journals, the authors can find the students' common use of cognitive, metacognitive, and emotional strategies. Not only that, but also encourage students to exchange journals and learn from each other.

### **3. The exploration of the cultivation mode of independent learning ability -- A new dimension of "Advanced English" course learning**

"Advanced English" is the core course for undergraduates to study English in college. It is designed to enrich students' knowledge, deepen their understanding of society and life, cultivate their ability to analyze and evaluate excellent articles<sup>[3]</sup>, and encourage students to think logically and independently by reading and analyzing works of famous writers in the fields of politics, economy, literature, education, philosophy and so on. And strengthen and improve the students' own English language ability. Different from the traditional English immersion classroom, the emphasis is on textbooks and teachers. Teachers give intensive lectures and students passively accept a lot of information, resulting in students' heavy dependence on teachers. Because of this, the teaching effect of traditional English teaching is far from reaching the requirements of education objectives. In order to achieve the educational objectives of the Advanced English course, students need to have a strong ability to study independently. However, through the investigation of the independent learning ability of Chinese English learners, we can know that the current situation is quite severe, and the ability of students in independent learning is not high. In the process of in-depth English learning, the author emphasizes the cultivation of students' independent learning ability, and tries to combine the theoretical achievements of Holec, Lit-tlewood and other domestic and foreign scholars to develop a new cultivation mode of independent learning ability.

#### ***3.1 Establish learning objectives and content***

Lit-tlewood's research on the second language learning environment of East Asian students shows that students in most East Asian countries lack prior autonomy. Independent learning of East Asian students is mostly student-led and teacher-dominated. Students who continue to learn according to their own goals after starting work can be said to acquire proactive autonomy. It's possible to be completely independent of outside influences. Zhang Lixin and Li Xiaoxiang (2004) compared the independent learning ability of Chinese and Western European students and found that most Chinese students were unwilling to participate in the formulation of learning plans. Therefore, backward-based autonomous learning is one of the most basic modes for cultivating Chinese students' autonomous learning ability, which also means that learners do not set their own learning goals. If the teacher or the course sets goals, they will strive to achieve these goals. Therefore, at the beginning of learning English, educators can explain the learning objectives and contents of relevant courses to learners. Therefore, students can adopt the following learning modes: first, introduce the theme; The second is the introduction of humanities; The third is a brief introduction to the author; The fourth is the overall understanding of the text; Fifth, detail understanding; Sixth, language explanation; Seventh is the course discussion; Number eight is unit exercise, for example: In terms of humanistic knowledge, the textbook used in this course is the fifth and sixth volume of the New English Course, which is edited by Li Guanyi and involves the humanistic background knowledge of English-speaking countries and even European countries in history, science, literature, religion and so on. We can learn about famous figures in different countries in this course. The author invites students to use the Internet and library resources to carry out an encyclopedia project, that is, each student to create an encyclopedia, which mainly includes the humanistic background knowledge of each unit, cultural stereotypes in cross-cultural communication, knowledge of high and low context, of course, background culture and religious knowledge should also be included. With this kind of learning, after one or two units, students gradually master the humanistic background knowledge of each unit independently. In this learning process, the teacher is the leader and the students are the actors. The teacher clearly points out the learning objectives and contents, cultivates the students' ability to solve problems independently and stimulates their independence.

#### ***3.2 Determine the content process***

In order to cultivate students' initiative, stimulate their potential and help them develop their independent learning ability, students can adopt the following three methods based on the requirements of the course units: The first method is based on the teaching syllabus formulated by the teaching unit, through the teacher's concentrated teaching and discussion, students' independent thinking and problem-solving ability can be cultivated; The second way is that students independently study the second text of each chapter in a group. Although the learning situation of students is different, the division of labor among group members is clear, and most students show their own advantages. For example, some students with poor English foundation are particularly good at making PPT, while others are good at logical thinking. Through this exercise, students gain confidence in learning, which in turn increases their motivation to learn, thus forming a virtuous circle, in this way, students show strong independent learning

ability. The third way is for students to do extracurricular reading, in this stage, in addition to textbooks, students also need to read independently throughout the semester. Teachers can provide students with some reference books, but this is not compulsory, students are free to choose their own learning materials. Not only that, students can keep a language learning project journal twice a week. Teachers can regularly check the progress of students' independent learning, and students can use this way to improve their own development and make up for the shortcomings.

#### **4. Methods of learning advanced English courses**

##### ***4.1 Construction of independent and innovative learning mode supported by online teaching platform***

According to the author, English learning is a process in which learners actively experience and explore English knowledge and learning patterns, and a process in which learners establish new connections and generate new ideas and viewpoints according to the general laws of language science. An innovative mode of independent English learning supported by online learning platform is based on the online teaching platform, based on knowledge and experience acquisition of independent and innovative learning theory, aimed at cultivating students' innovative ability. Under the guidance of the faculty, students combine course content and supplementary materials with targeted and selective independent learning to achieve innovation in content, teaching methods and learning outcomes. In this model, students emphasize active participation in the learning process, students dare to raise different questions, and solve problems in an exploratory way, combining knowledge acquisition scenarios with practical application scenarios, allowing students to complete real learning tasks in practical activities, and coordinating the teacher-student relationship. The interaction between teacher and student, student to student, individual student and learning resources is pulled in to create a harmonious integration scene, which leads students into a democratic, equal, harmonious and meaningful learning environment.

##### ***4.1.1 Enter the situation and define the learning task***

Before class, the teacher used the online learning platform to set the task situation, assign the preview task to the students, and put forward directional questions; In class, students use the online learning platform to enter the problem situation created by the teacher, and actively express their own opinions, and interact with classmates, to clarify specific learning tasks. During these activities, teachers act as guides and encourage students to discuss the topics they are about to explore from different perspectives and perspectives.

##### ***4.1.2 Choose materials and study independently***

The teacher prepares rich study materials based on the unit topic, either from the textbook or supplementary materials related to the unit topic. Students are encouraged to use the Internet to collect and search additional material related to the topic to support their learning, think for themselves, solve learning problems, and develop their creativity. Teachers can monitor students' learning progress through the "student notes", "course forums" and "emails" provided by the online learning platform, and can monitor students' learning situation through the statistical data of students' learning provided by the online learning platform. The progress of different students is monitored and handled separately.

##### ***4.1.3 Work in groups and actively participate in activities***

After the teacher divides the students into a group or different groups in a homogenous way to complete a common task, the students can use the online learning platform to actively share their ideas, such as the key points of knowledge, the way to obtain learning resources, and expand their range of knowledge by answering questions, discussing and evaluating, and solving problems cooperatively. So as to cultivate the growth of students' creative thinking from different angles; Online learning platforms can also be used to introduce and display group learning results. For unsolved or complex problems existing in group discussion, teachers can use online learning platform to show and explain, guide students to make analogy, logical thinking and systematic analysis, find ways to solve problems together with students, experience the thinking process of knowledge generation, and thus innovate teaching methods. Teachers learn and teach on an equal footing with students, which makes students happier both physically and mentally. Students change from a dull and passive learning state to an active learning state. They actively communicate and discuss with classmates, raise questions about learning content, and dare to express different opinions.

#### ***4.1.4 Display and evaluate results***

On the online learning platform, students can display their own learning achievements and those of group members at the same time, which innovates the display way of learning achievements and enables diversified and process-based evaluation of learning achievements. Teachers use the online learning platform to discuss the assessment criteria for different types of learning tasks and improve students' comprehensive, analytical and assessment abilities. They can also allow students to work in groups outside the classroom to summarize learning and create group learning materials such as group PPT, supplementary reading, expanded resource websites and learning reflections, which can then be uploaded to online learning platforms for sharing and evaluation. Some multiple process assessments are introduced in the learning process to improve students' independent and innovative learning ability. The "diversity" here is mainly reflected in the following aspects: First, with the help of evaluation, students can not only understand their own learning behavior, grading and academic evaluation, but also evaluate their own innovative ability, such as the willingness and interest of independent innovative learning and the strength of cooperation spirit with others; Second, you can use the teacher or other students to evaluate; Third, there are a variety of assessment methods, which can combine written assessment and oral presentation of students, qualitative and quantitative assessment, classroom discussion and online assessment; Fourth, the evaluation criteria is based on the students' self-development, and the teaching process emphasizes the activation of students' potential and personal development. The independent innovative learning mode supported by the online learning platform makes use of the open learning environment created by the online learning platform, which is not restricted by time and space, combines student-centered learning with the guidance and supervision of teachers, takes innovative learning content and teaching methods as the breakthrough point, and then cultivates students' independent learning and innovative development ability.

#### ***4.2 Expand cultural learning and improve critical thinking ability***

In addition to developing their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, English majors, especially senior students, also need to focus on cultural learning and mental training. The English syllabus clearly states that Advanced English is a course that develops comprehensive English language skills, especially in reading, grammar, rhetoric and writing. By reading and analyzing the works of well-known authors, students will broaden their knowledge, deepen their understanding of society and life, develop their ability to analyze and evaluate good writing, think logically and independently, and strengthen and improve their English language skills. Students can carry out some relevant exercises in each class, using reading comprehension, vocabulary learning, stylistic analysis, Chinese-English translation, composition and other ways to improve their English level. For example, first, students can read the editorial, politics and book reviews in British and American newspapers and magazines, understand their main ideas, and can distinguish facts from details; Second, students can read and understand general historical biographies and literary works, and be able to read and understand the value of these two kinds of works; Third, students can analyze the ideas, layout, and rhetoric of articles on these topics. Today's society is in an era of information explosion, which requires people to actively study, students only through constantly updating knowledge, constantly improving the level of cultural learning, expand the scope of knowledge, to keep up with the pace of The Times. At the same time, given the huge amount of information and constantly updated knowledge, students must also use their logical thinking ability to understand what is good and evil, and develop their resistance to lies; Not only that, from the current situation of postgraduate entrance examination and employment, both require English majors to have a wide range of educational knowledge and strong thinking ability. In addition to continuing education, the future of English professionals can be roughly divided into teaching, translation and career change (more or less related to English jobs, such as foreign trade). As for the prospect after graduation, the rich range of knowledge will undoubtedly become the foundation of graduates' career and pave the way for their future development. Strong thinking ability will certainly help cultivate the ability to think independently, solve problems and make choices in the future study and work.

### **5. Conclusion**

Independent learning mode is one of the most popular teaching modes abroad at present, which is an effective supplement to classroom teaching. The improvement of students' awareness and ability of independent learning is also a necessary factor to promote the improvement of teaching quality. In the independent learning under the network environment, the learning content is relatively rich, and the corresponding learning guidance materials can be easily obtained through hyperlinks. Therefore, as long

as the students determine the purpose of learning, they can set up learning objectives according to their own situation, choose the learning content needed to complete the goal, choose their own learning methods according to the learning content, and then step by step to complete the learning objectives, and finally achieve the learning objectives.

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