

The Influence of Mobile Apps on Chinese College Students' English Learning

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Abstract

In the era of rapid development of mobile Internet, the traditional way of learning has been impacted by the new media. As far as Chinese college students' English learning is concerned, it is gradually transiting from traditional paper media to BYOD (bring your own device) mode, which makes English learning tend to be more electronic and portable in order to conform to the trend of the times. But correspondingly, the new media mode, taking learning APPs as an example, is also aggravating college students' English learning anxiety. This paper takes college students (mainly undergraduates) as the research object, and uses the method of questionnaires to study the influence of mobile terminal APPs and other facilities on their English learning and the resulting English learning anxiety during the higher education stage.

Keywords

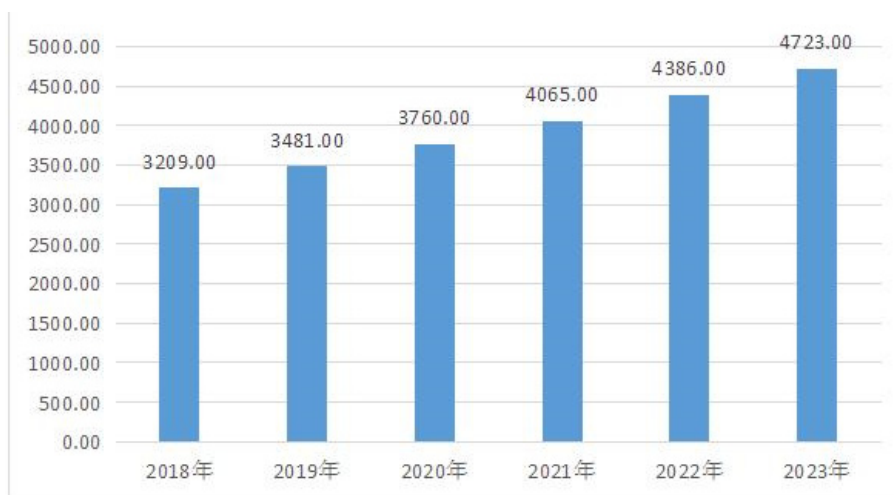
Internet Plus; Higher Education; BYOD Mode; Learning Anxiety.

1. Background

1.1. Current Situation of the Development of New Media Society

New media is a new type of media based on the Internet platform. At present, the development of the Internet in China has been highly popularized, and the scale of its users has been very large. *Statistical Report on Internet Development in China* shows that as of June 2021, the scale of Internet users in China has reached 1.011 billion, and the Internet penetration rate has reached 71.6%.

Table 1. Growth trend of the number of enterprises in China's new media industry in 2018-2023



With the rapid development of the Internet, correspondingly, the development foundation of new media in China is now very mature, from WeChat to Weibo, from "Internet Plus" to "Plus

Internet", from "Internet of Everything" to "Intelligence of Everything" -- e-commerce, artificial intelligence, VR, AR. All kinds of trades and professions emerge in endlessly.

1.2. The Impact of New Media on Higher Education

In such a new media era, taking the more popular and characteristic field of higher education as an example, we can effectively and vividly analyze the current new media environment, which is characterized by fragmentation of learning time and diversification of learning content. New media (especially mobile terminal app and other forms) has occupied the majority of the higher education field with its irreplaceable convenience, instantaneity and abundant resources

1.2.1. BYOD Mode

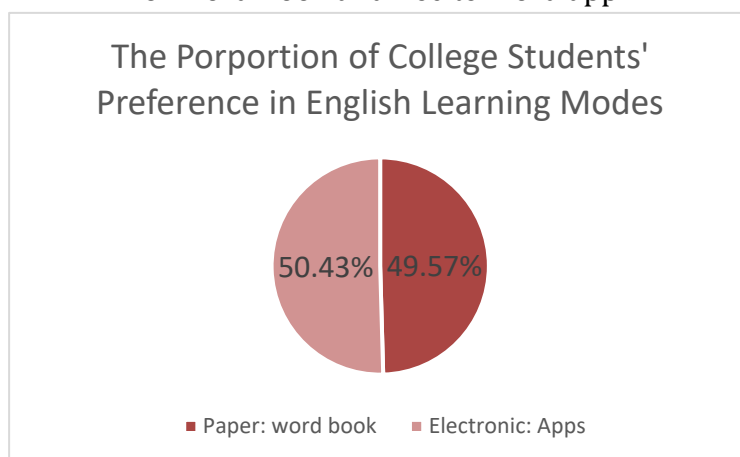
In 2015, the *International education informationization development 2015 horizon report (higher education edition)* has already proposed that "BYOD (bring your own device)" mode as "Significant Advances in Educational Technology in Higher Education " in the "Adoption Phase: Within 1 Year ".

With the popularity of the BYOD mode, smart cell phone and other mobile devices as "Internet Plus" mobile terminals have successfully used various forms of vivid education to develop into one of the main means of education--apps, public accounts, short videos and so on.

1.2.2. APP Learning

As for the current situation of English learning in higher education, from the abundant electronic resources such as words and resources of old exams to the flourishing app for reciting words, from the readily available online courses to the fast and convenient BYOD (bring your own device) mode. The full name of BYOD is "Bring Your Own Device ", which is usually translated as" bring your own device ". It refers to the use of mobile devices when working or studying, including cell phone, tablet, laptop and so on, in people's work and study environments.

Table 2. The Distribution of College Students' English Word Learning Modes --The Proportion of Word Book and Recite Word app



Compared with the traditional paper media which is heavy and difficult to carry, the way of adult learning is beginning to change to the BYOD mode to in line with the fast-paced development trend of such a learning society. According to the data, although the developing time of reciting word APPs is very short, the willingness of contemporary college students to choose to use electronic APPs to recite words has reached 50.44%, which has been developed in just a few decades. During this period, reciting words in new media has already surpassed

the traditional way of using paper media such as word books--how many new changes are being made in the field of higher education because of new media?

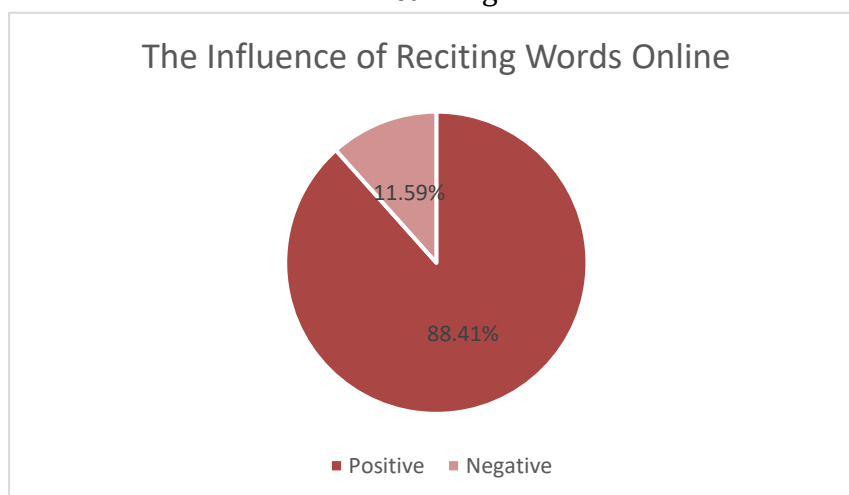
2. Formulation of Questions

2.1. The Influence of Mobile Terminal Apps on College Students' Education

"New media is quietly changing our lives. It is planted in every corner of the world and is constantly being recognized and accepted by people."

Higher education, as an important part of lifelong education, has also undergone great changes because of the sudden prosperity of new media. With the development and wide application of new media, the fragmentation of information forms, the diversification of knowledge acquisition and the wide dissemination of information have impacted the current implementation and management of higher education to varying degrees. But at the same time, the technological advantages offered by the new media environment are also a point that cannot be ignored.

Table 3. The Influence of Reciting Words online, Online Classes and Other APPs on English Learning



2.1.1. Positive Impact

Mobile terminal APP, as one of the most widely used forms of new media, is doing a significant impact on the field of higher education.

On the positive side, APP application is the most convenient and effective way for college students to learn independently, and one of the most remarkable characteristics of mobile terminal mode is its convenience and diversity. Whether it is Baidu APP as a search engine for learning resources, or Zhihu as a platform for learning experience sharing, or GoodNote as a note-management application, these APPs can be used as learning resources. For college students who study independently, it is no doubt that they are making full use of the massive resources and convenience of network media such as cell phone and computer to open up a more rapid development path for their own learning.

This form of "Internet Plus Education" undoubtedly shows the public a more open and innovative "educational ecology" than the previous classroom learning form -- knowledge generating, sharing, accessing and using are going to be more convenient, and high-quality educational resources will become a resource bank within everyone's reach, which is more likely to achieve lifelong learning. Even more, it has laid a solid foundation for furtherly building a learning society.

2.1.2. Negative Impact

On the negative side, compared to the traditional school education, the strong self-consciousness needed by college students has always been a big problem. The new media learning with strong openness is undoubtedly another severe test for the college students.

Highly fragmented learning time, more diversified knowledge needs, and greater judgment ability for moral judgment are the characteristics of learning that make college students more adaptable to such an open educational ecology, but also put forward higher demands for learners. If they can not have a strong self-management ability, then it is impossible to learn through the network media.

At the same time, due to the emergence of a large number of punching clock mechanisms and sharing platforms, some learners' learning anxiety has been strongly aroused. Taking the most obvious oral anxiety as an example, similar to the situation in the English classroom, the lack of self-confidence is the main factor -- the fear stimulated by the contrast between the strong speakers in today's social platforms. And the English classroom, the fear of teachers and classmates' negative evaluation of their oral English is the same.

2.2. Research Question

In order to better understand the English learning situation and English learning anxiety of college students, and to further carry out targeted research on improving college students' English proficiency, this paper intends to answer the following three questions:

- (1) What is the English learning situation of college students in the new media environment?
- (2) What are that main form and causes of college students' English learning anxiety?
- (3) How to explore ways to solve college students' English learning anxiety?

3. Research Process

3.1. Questionnaire

- (1) What is your gender? Male; Female
- (2) What is your stage? Specialist; Undergraduate; Other
- (3) How do you tend to learn English? Paper media, such as textbooks, extra-curricular guidance books, etc; New media, such as online courses, app, etc.
- (4) Do you prefer to use when reciting words? Paper, word book; Electronics, reciting word app
- (5) What is your opinion about the impact of various APPs such as reciting words and online classes on English learning? Positive influence is the main factor; Negative influence is dominant.
- (6) If you have English learning anxiety, what do you think is the most annoying (choose 3)? Oral anxiety; Listening anxiety; Reading anxiety; Vocabulary anxiety; Writing anxiety; Other
- (7) What do you think are the manifestations of listening anxiety (multiple choice questions)? I don't understand what's being said; Afraid to miss every detail; I understand, but I can't spell; Read the text but do not understand it; When you listen, you are distracted by a certain answer; Other
- (8) What do you think are the effective ways to alleviate listening anxiety (multiple choice)? Watch more British and American TV series; Practice listening materials over and over again; Carrying out special intensive listening training; Other

3.2. Data Analysis

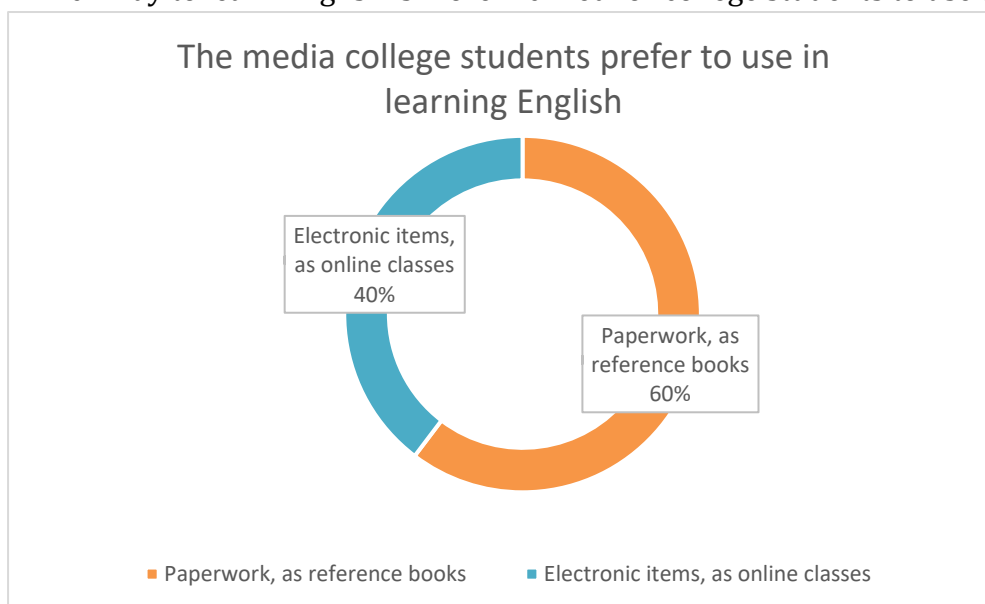
In this study, electronic questionnaires were used to collect 690 questionnaires within the specified time, and 690 valid questionnaires were collected, with an effective rate of 100%.

After the data collection, the personal information of the students was preliminarily counted, including 497 boys, accounting for 72.07%, 193 girls, accounting for 27.93%; Most of them are undergraduates, the remaining 2.17% are junior college students, and 3.33% are postgraduates or doctoral students.

3.2.1. The Current Situation of College Students' English Learning in the New Media Environment

Compared with the heavy and inconvenient traditional paper media, the current learning style of college students is gradually but turbulently changing to the new media in order to conform to the fast-paced development trend of today's learning society. Various electronic modes are gradually "invading" the classroom learning of college students, such as online classes, word reciting app, intensive listening software. As can be seen from the data obtained from questions (2) and (3), in a very short period of development electronic media has occupied about 40% of the learning media market for college students with a rapid posture, and word reciting app has become the first choice with an absolute advantage over traditional word books.

Table 4. Which way to learn English is more inclined for college students to use the media



Obviously, college students in the new media environment have gradually become familiar with and have made excellent use of these emerging media which had optimized and revolutionized the English learning industry.

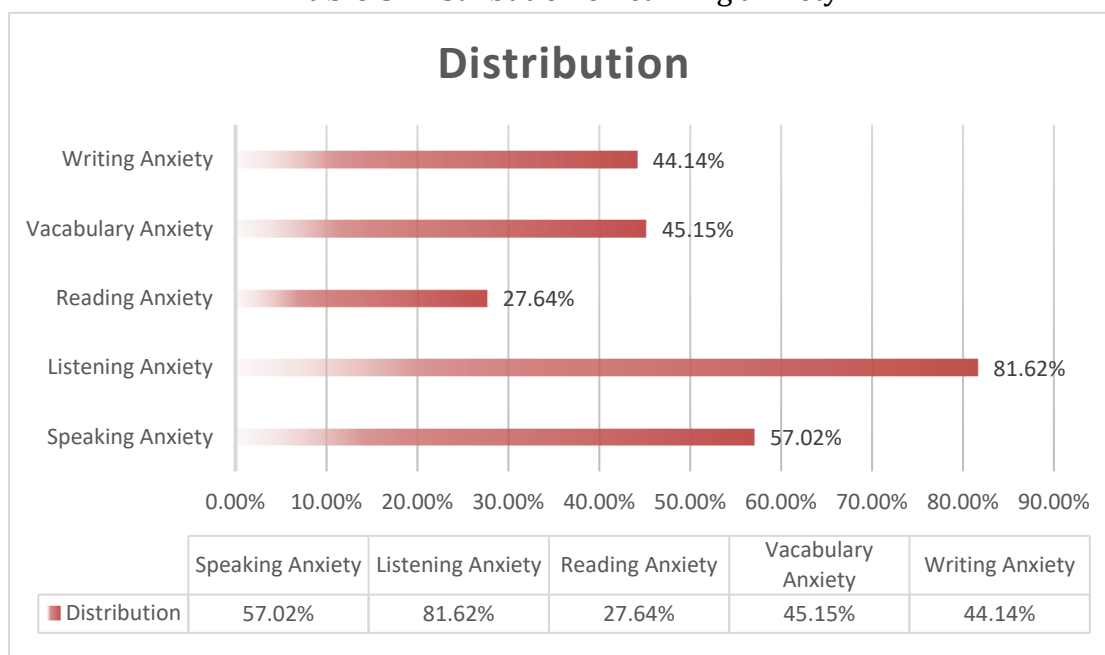
3.2.2. English Learning Anxiety

Language anxiety is a complex psychological phenomenon peculiar to language learners, which refers to a psychological state of restlessness and fear of making mistakes in the process of language acquisition. Horwitz proposed in his article published in 1986 that foreign language learning anxiety is a kind of anxiety related to the subject and learning environment.

Obviously, in the new media era, foreign language learning anxiety has been updated with the change of learning environment. According to statistics, at least 50% of the students have more than moderate anxiety in online English learning.

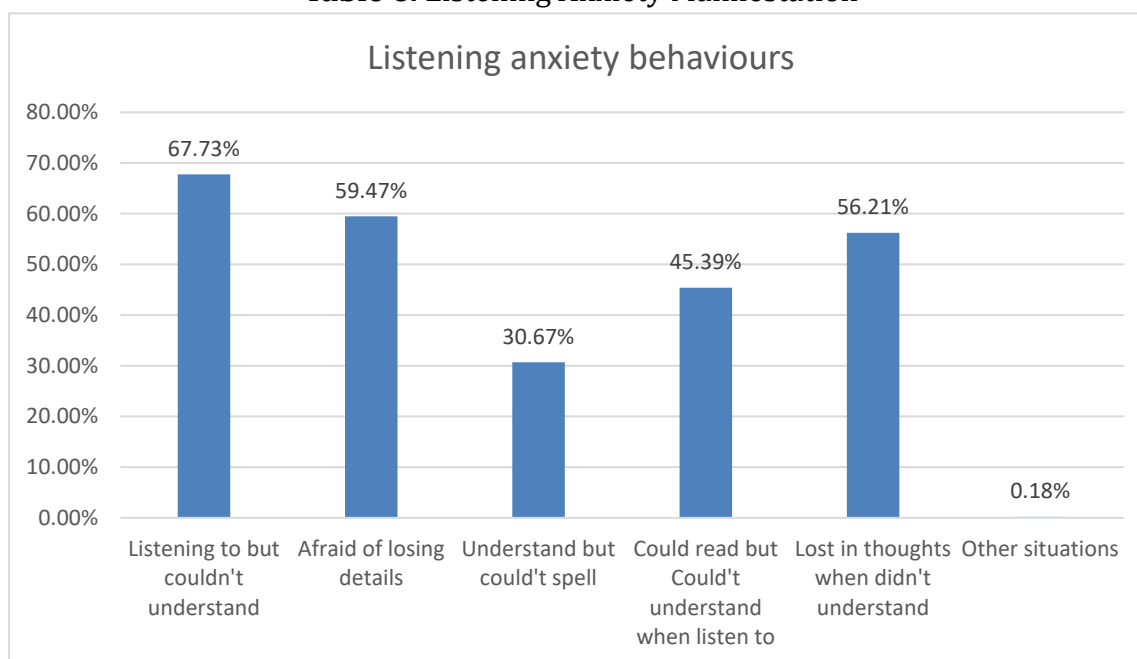
At present, the most important English learning anxiety of Chinese college students still revolves around the four most general aspects of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Table 5. Distribution of learning anxiety



3.2.3. Listening Anxiety

Table 6. Listening Anxiety Manifestation



Taking the most prominent listening anxiety as an example, we can see that there are many reasons for the current listening anxiety, but the main reason is the lack of natural English communication environment.

The serious result of the lack of natural English communication environment can be proved by many materials -- students can not correctly use English as a language tool, but regard it as a very serious subject. Resulting the situation whether in the case of examinations or not, students often hold a highly nervous attitude towards listening. Students are mainly exposed to English listening situations in various tense examinations, so it is inevitable for students to worry about the impact on their listening comprehension of missing any details in the listening process, and it is also inevitable for them to form listening anxiety that can not be simply treated.

3.3. Solutions to Listening Anxiety

In the new media environment, the extremely portable BYOD model not only simplifies the fixed and restrictive places of higher education, but also provides a reliable way to relieve the listening anxiety of contemporary college students.

Aiming at the common problem of listening anxiety, first of all, the ways to deal with in the classroom environment are as follows: First, selectively reduce or increase the difficulty of listening; Second, learning listening strategies, such as pronunciation and intonation knowledge and other basic content of English listening; Third, they can find teachers or classmates as their learning partners to actively communicate with each other in the process of foreign language learning.

In the new media society, the problem of listening anxiety caused by the lack of natural English communication environment is easily solved in mobile terminal APPs, whether extensive listening APPs or intensive listening APPs, which create an exclusive learning space and atmosphere for English learners to the greatest extent, although the various punching clock mechanisms may lead to a new anxiety. Compared to the traditional teaching which sticks to classroom teaching and can easily lead to the fear of negative evaluation, this new way of online learning has greater privacy. At the same time, it also constructs a learning platform far larger than the classroom, and creates a more natural and exclusive way of communication.

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