



# Learning Strategies of Excellent English Majors from the Perspective of “Metacognition” Theory: A Case Study of Undergraduate Colleges and Universities in Zhejiang Province

Jiayi Zhang, Lin Zha

School of Humanities, Huzhou College, Huzhou, China

Email: Z18857507636@163.com

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## Abstract

Excellent English majors can set a good example for ordinary English majors, and their learning experience can be important materials for morality cultivation in English teaching and learning. Excellent learning strategies are not only the cultural window that highlights students' characteristics, but also reflect learners' cultural confidence in cohesive learning methods. The paper sets out to analyze and condense the valuable learning experience and learning strategies of excellent English learners recorded on the WeChat official accounts of undergraduate colleges and universities in Zhejiang Province in the past three years from the perspective of the “Metacognition” Theory, and to reveal how these excellent learners make use of “metacognition” mainly in terms of cognition, metacognition, resource management and so on, and to explore the operation mechanism behind it, thereby providing more effective references for the excellent English majors, and some guidance on learning strategies for the general English learners.

## Subject Areas

Learning Strategies, Excellent English Majors

## Keywords

“Metacognition” Theory, Cognitive Subject, Cognitive Tasks, Cognitive Strategies, English Learning Strategies, Excellent English Majors

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Research Background

With the rapid development of China's economy and the increasingly frequent exchanges between China and foreign countries, internationalised and high-quality composite applied English talents play a very important role in driving China's development. Society's demand for English majors is expanding, and excellent English majors play an important role in the advances of the country and society. The English major aims to cultivate students with solid English language fundamentals, strong skills of listening, reading, writing and translating, and good humanistic qualities, Chinese sentiment and international vision, with relevant theoretical knowledge of literature, economics, management and law, mastering basic theories and practices of international business, possessing strong cross-cultural competence, business communication skills and innovation and entrepreneurship, and being able to adapt to the national and local economic and social development. The students are capable of meeting the needs of national and local economic and social development, foreign exchange and cooperation. However, English learning is a complex process that involves not only the accumulation of language points but also the cultivation of language skills. The learning strategy of excellent English majors is conducive to the effective implementation of the English professional training programme and the cultivation of English professional talents.

### 1.2. Research Purpose

Based on "Metacognition" Theory, this paper summarizes the learning experience and strategies of excellent English majors in universities and colleges in Zhejiang Province and explores the mechanisms behind them. Combined with specific cases, the paper analyses how excellent English majors use cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and resource management strategies in the process of learning English. It also explores the operation mechanism behind the learning strategies of excellent English majors.

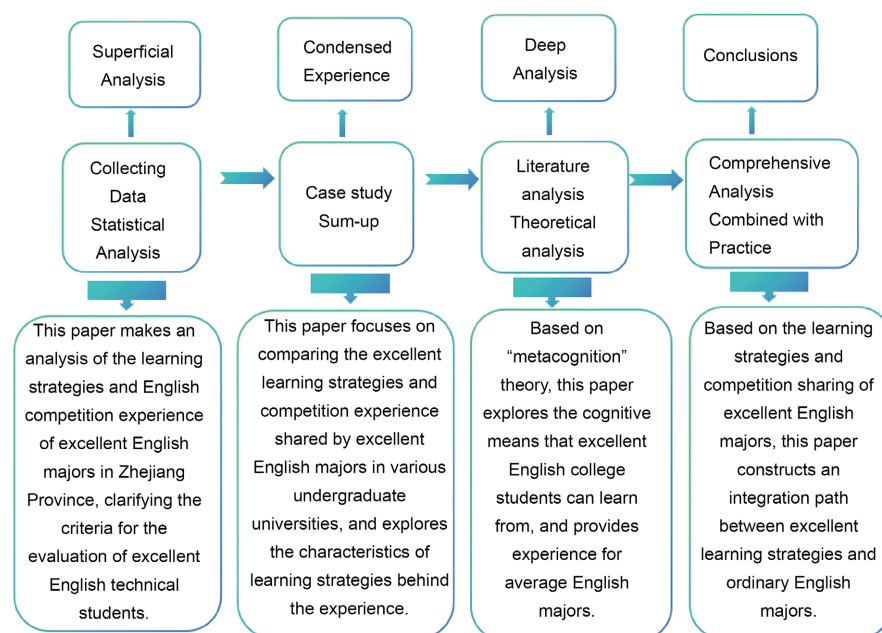
### 1.3. Research Methodology

Literature Review: This study presents a comprehensive review of scholarly research on metacognition and English learning strategies. (See **Figure 1**)

It encompasses an examination of previous domestic and international studies, as well as relevant findings from various websites and forums. This study aims to identify the developmental direction of the article by synthesizing the research status and trends among exceptional English college students while integrating existing research outcomes.

Text analysis: By analyzing a multitude of collected and organized learning cases from official WeChat public accounts of undergraduate colleges and universities over the past three years, this study identifies and summarizes key characteristics pertaining to the learning strategies employed by outstanding English

majors in Zhejiang Province. These encompass listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translating. Such analysis serves as an indispensable foundation for comprehending effective English learning strategies.



**Figure 1.** Technology road map.

Case study: Focusing on excellent English majors in Zhejiang Province who have shared their successful learning strategies, this study uses metacognition to further explore these methods. Consequently, through this analysis, it becomes evident that metacognition exerts a unique influence and significance on English language acquisition.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Overseas Research on Excellent English Majors

Since 1975, when Rubin (1975) was the first to describe the common characteristics of successful English language learners, many researchers have studied how to learn English from the student's perspective. Some have described learners' conceptions of language learning [1]. Some have investigated learners' metacognitive strategies, and others have examined learners' cognitive strategies. Neil Naiman, Maria Fröhlich., H. H. Stern, and Angie Todesco (1996), in their book *The Good Language Learner*, point out six characteristics of good English language learners [2]. First, they have the ability to adjust their learning styles to suit themselves. Second, they have the ability to be actively involved in the learning process. Third, they are aware that language is not only a system of rules but also a tool for communication. Fourth, they are able to enrich their knowledge of the language. Fifth, they develop the target language as a system independent of the first language, and sixth, they have a realistic sense of the need for language learning.

Vandergrift (1997) found that metacognitive strategies were extremely helpful for good English learners in improving their listening comprehension [3]. Additionally, Takeuchi (2003) investigated the strategies of Japanese good learners of English in developing their speaking ability and found that they built up speaking vocabulary through pronunciation practice, memory-fixed collocation, dictation practice and contextual learning at the beginner's level, while at the intermediate level they focused more on continuous self-study and looked for opportunities to open their mouths [4].

All in all, not only do these studies reveal the learning strategies of excellent English learners, but they also provide valuable learning experiences and methods for English learners in general.

## 2.2. Domestic Research on Excellent English Majors

In China, Professor Wen Qiufang (1995) of Beijing Foreign Studies University used qualitative research to analyse the learning methods employed by a pair of successful and unsuccessful learners of English to summarise the differences in the article "Differences in Methods between Successful and Unsuccessful Learners of English", but the sample size is slightly insufficient [5]. Wang Xiao (2012) comparatively studied the learning strategies of excellent learners and ordinary learners of English at universities from the perspective of metacognitive strategies [6]. It is slightly unfortunate that the above studies did not cover issues such as the learning strategies of excellent English majors.

## 2.3. An Overview of "Metacognition" Research

"Metacognition" Theory is an important research topic in the field of psychology and education, which involves individuals' awareness, monitoring and regulation of their own cognitive processes. From 1977 to 1980, it was the initial stage when the research on "metacognition" was just starting, mainly focusing on the basic concepts and functions of "metacognition". From 1980 to 1990, it was an upward phase, in which research gradually went deeper and began to explore how "metacognition" affected learners' knowledge acquisition, transfer and internalisation, and problem solving. In the stable stage (1990-2003), researchers were relatively fixed, and their research directions were clear, and the research connotation of "metacognition" was more comprehensive and profound. Then, it came to the stage of technological application in 2005 when foreign scholars began to design technological environments adopting "Metacognition" Theory. After 2005, foreign scholars began to develop "metacognitive" skills and then promote scientific learning. Chinese research on "metacognition" started late, with the earliest journal article published in 1988. Since 2000, quite a few master's theses on "metacognition" have been published, such as Yang Zhiyong's (2002) study on "metacognition" in problem solving, and have gradually become a key research direction for scholars in the field of education. In particular, the application of "Metacognition" Theory in teaching and learning has been widely researched and practiced.

Nowadays, “Metacognition” Theory is committed to bridging the general gap between psychology and learning, and it is believed that there is an isomorphic relationship between psychological mechanisms and learning ability. Therefore, academics will pay more attention to the study of psychological mechanisms in learning, and provide experience for Chinese and Western English learning. At present, from the research findings at home and abroad, it can be seen that people tend to attach great importance to English learning, although there is little research on the combination analysis of “excellent English majors” and “Metacognition” Theory.

However, the current research provides a certain basis for this project. This paper not only provides a reference to our excellent English majors and realises the innovation of application value, but also further emphasises the guiding role of “metacognition” in English learning and competition strategies, thus expanding the research and development of “Metacognition” Theory and Cognitive Strategies.

### **3. Definition of Relevant Concepts**

#### **3.1. “Metacognition” Theory**

“Metacognition” Theory is a concept proposed by American psychologist John Hurley Flavell in the 1970s. He defines “metacognition” as an individual’s knowledge about their cognitive processes and outcomes or other related things, and the ability to achieve a specific goal or task. The cognitive process is actively monitored and continuously adjusted and coordinated according to the cognitive object, namely cognition of cognition. In 1981, he provided a concise summary of “metacognition” as “knowledge or cognitive activity that reflects or regulates any aspect of cognitive activity” (Flavell John Hurley, 1981) [7].

According to the scholar, “Metacognition” involves an individual’s knowledge, experience, and monitoring of his or her own cognitive activities, and it allows the individual to assess his or her own learning process and adjust his or her learning strategies based on these assessments. For example, in the process of learning, students, on the one hand, carry out a variety of cognitive activities, such as perception, memory and thinking, and on the other hand, they have to actively monitor and regulate their various cognitive activities, and this kind of perception, remembrance, and rethinking of the cognitive activities themselves, such as their own perception, memory, and thinking, is known as “metacognition”. “Metacognition” mainly includes metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive experience and metacognitive monitoring.

#### **3.2. Types of “Metacognitive” Theories**

“Metacognition” Theory consists mainly of metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive experience and metacognitive monitoring (Flavell John Hurley, 1976) [8]. Metacognitive knowledge involves an individual’s knowledge of his or her own cognitive processes, learning materials, personal abilities and learning strategies,

which includes understanding his or her strengths and weaknesses on specific tasks and the cognitive abilities required for different tasks; it includes three main aspects: knowledge about the individual, knowledge about the task, and knowledge about the strategies. Knowledge about the individual refers to knowledge about one's own cognitive abilities, such as memory, attention, and problem solving skills. Knowledge about the task refers to knowledge about a particular learning task or problem, such as the difficulty and requirements of the task. Knowledge about strategies just refers to awareness of effective learning strategies, such as retelling, refining, organising, etc. Metacognitive experience refers to the cognitive and affective experience that accompanies an individual during cognitive activities, such as feelings about the difficulty of a task or satisfaction with one's own cognitive process, e.g., in the process of solving a problem, an individual may experience emotions such as confusion, anxiety, or self-confidence, as well as cognitive assessment of one's own problem-solving strategies, progress in solving a problem, etc. Metacognitive experience is the source of motivation for metacognitive activities, which drives individuals to engage in metacognitive monitoring and regulation. Metacognitive monitoring refers to the monitoring, checking and controlling of an individual's cognitive state, cognitive resources and cognitive strategies during the cognitive process, which includes planning, monitoring and evaluating one's own cognitive process; metacognitive monitoring helps individuals to identify and evaluate their own learning state, such as the level of comprehension, concentration and so on.

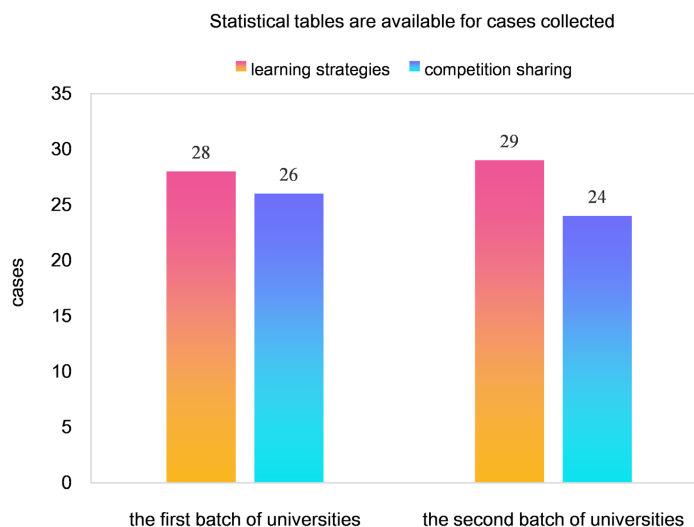
## **4. The Learning and Competition Experience of Excellent English Majors**

### **4.1. Disaggregated Analyses to Lessons Learned**

Based on the existing 53 posts of experience sharing of excellent English majors from the first batch of universities and 49 posts of experience sharing of excellent English majors from the second batch of universities that have been collected, the study organized and summarized their sharing of learning strategies and competition. These experiences and suggestions are categorised according to the different aspects involved in the experience sharing posts. They can be divided into two major aspects, namely, learning and competition. The experience of learning can be divided into listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating, while those competitions can be divided into scientific research competitions, disciplinary competitions and so on.

For example, firstly, sharing on listening includes choosing the listening materials and listening skills. Secondly, the sharing on speaking includes speaking practice methods, pronunciation and intonation, fluency and expression. Thirdly, the sharing of reading includes the choice of reading materials, reading skills, vocabulary and grammar. Fourthly, the sharing of writing includes writing skills, grammar and spelling. Fifthly, the sharing on translating includes translating skills, translation practice and cultural awareness. Sixthly, the sharing of

scientific research competitions includes topic selection and preparation, research methods and processes, results presentation and defense, reflection and summary. Seventhly, the sharing in discipline competitions includes an accumulation of knowledge and sharing, test-taking skills and strategies, simulation training and practical exercises, psychology and adjustment involved in competition. (See **Figure 2**)



**Figure 2.** The table of case statistics.

## 4.2. Case Study on Excellent English Majors

### 4.2.1. Learning Strategies

The excellent learning experience collected was organised and classified, which can be summarised as follows.

**Listening:** In terms of the choice of listening materials, many students shared that they spent at least 2 hours a day listening to news from VOA (Voice of America) Slow English and ST (Standard English) to improve their adaptability to different speeds and accents. The BBC English News App was recommended as it provides news materials at different difficulty levels. In terms of listening skills, the importance of listening intensively is emphasized as well. Learners can listen to one sentence at a time and make sure that they understand it completely before moving on to the next sentence, which can help to improve their ability to grasp the details.

**Speaking:** Speaking practice methods were introduced, and it is recommended that students practice at least 30 minutes of speaking dialogue per day with a tutor or language partner. Learner practices 30 minutes of oral dialogue practice with a foreign teacher or language partner, improving fluency and accuracy through actual communication. Participating in group activities such as English Corner or Speaking Club where learners can practice speaking with other learners is recommended. In terms of pronunciation and intonation, the use of pronunciation software and online video tutorials to correct pronunciation is shared, emphasizing

accuracy for oral communication is important; the naturalness of intonation can be achieved by imitating movies and speeches in English.

**Reading:** For the selection of reading materials, different types of reading materials such as original novels, news reports, and academic essays in English are recommended. Learners should attach great importance to reading English masterpieces and understanding Western culture. In terms of reading skills, techniques of skimming and scanning are shared, which help readers obtain key information in a limited time effectively, and the use of glossaries and notes contributes to comprehending vocabulary and difficult sentences.

**Writing:** Writing skills are introduced on how to write English essays, reports, emails and other types of articles, including structural arrangement, paragraph division, sentence construction and so on. Moreover, the excellent English majors recommend writing an English diary or a short essay on a daily basis to exercise and improve writing skills.

**Translation:** In terms of translation skills, they shared how to understand the meaning of the original text accurately and translate it appropriately by adopting the techniques of literal translation, free translation and so on, and emphasised the importance of paying attention to the context and cultural differences in the process of translation; in practical exercises, they recommended translating English articles, books or websites continuously to improve translating abilities; according to them, taking part in translating competitions is strongly recommended for it can help the participants accumulate translation experience and improve their translating skills accordingly.

#### 4.2.2. Competition Sharing

**Scientific research competitions:** Firstly, they clarify their research interests and goals, choosing creative and feasible topics related to English subjects; they also use the library resources on campus and search for relevant literature of the past three years both in Chinese and English, which help understand the current hot research topics and cutting-edge dynamics; setting up a team consisting of members from different professional backgrounds is strongly recommended for they can conduct in-depth research from multiple perspectives and at different levels; appropriate research methods are adopted according to the nature of the topic, such as empirical research, case study, questionnaire survey and so on; in the presentation and defence of the results, the questions with the corresponding answers that may be asked by the judges are predicted in advance; in the defence process during the competition, the participants should try to remain confident, calm, clear and answer accurately to the questions of the judges; finally, they reflect on the shortcomings and mistakes in the research competition and sum up the lessons they have learned. All in all, the ability to conduct scientific research and cooperate with others can be greatly improved by participating in the scientific research competition.

**Discipline Competitions:** In addition to learning from textbooks, learners read

English original works and academic papers extensively to broaden their horizons. They can recite at least 50 new words every day and review the words they have learnt to improve their vocabulary; they do more past exam papers and simulated exercises to get familiar with types and difficulty level of the examination; finally, it is very important to believe in one's own strengths and abilities, maintain a positive state of mind, reduce stress by exercising, listening to music, etc., and to maintain a good mental state.

It can be found through the above learning strategies that excellent English major learners focus on the accumulation of basic knowledge, the enhancement of professional skills, the enrichment of practical experience, the broadening of international horizons and the cultivation of independent learning ability. At the same time, they make effective use of modern technological tools such as WeChat to carry out daily learning and professional enhancement.

### **4.3. The Uniqueness of Excellent English Learning Strategies**

Compared with the traditional learning strategies, the English learning strategies of excellent English majors have something in common with theirs. In terms of goal setting, both traditional English learning strategies and excellent strategies focus on clear learning goals and building the foundation of basic knowledge, often setting a good goal at the very beginning, laying and focusing on the development of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and so on. Moreover, both ordinary learners and excellent English majors have certain needs for English learning, and their learning strategies are mostly from their own perspectives. However, there are differences between them, and excellent English majors are better than ordinary English learners. With the development of globalisation and informatisation, there is an increasing demand for cross-border composite talents in the country and society. This requires that English majors not only have solid English skills but also master other professional knowledge and skills and be able to play a role in international communication and cooperation. Therefore, excellent English majors pay special attention to the overall development of language skills and self-driven learning, which is deeply reflected in the outstanding learning strategies summarised in this project, such as Huang Yinuo from Taizhou University, who pointed out that “learning English at university is not copying the learning ideas of high school, but really learning for oneself”. In terms of competitions, for example, Yang Ying, a successful graduate school student from Ningbo University, mentioned in her brief description of her journey to graduate school that “English majors don't have as many opportunities to participate in scientific research competitions as science majors do, so they need to identify their own strengths and weaknesses, and choose competitions or scientific research projects that can give full play to their own strengths!” Ordinary English learners are able to recognise their own strengths, plan various activities, choose strategies, and come up with various ways of solving problems before a cognitive activity according to the specific goal of the cognitive activity, which all reflects that the learning strategies of

excellent English majors are more comprehensive, adaptable, practical and autonomous. Moreover, they are more forward-looking than ordinary English learners. (See **Figure 3**)



**Figure 3.** The illustration demonstrating the experience of Huang Yino and Yang Ying.

## 5. Learning Strategies Guided by Metacognition

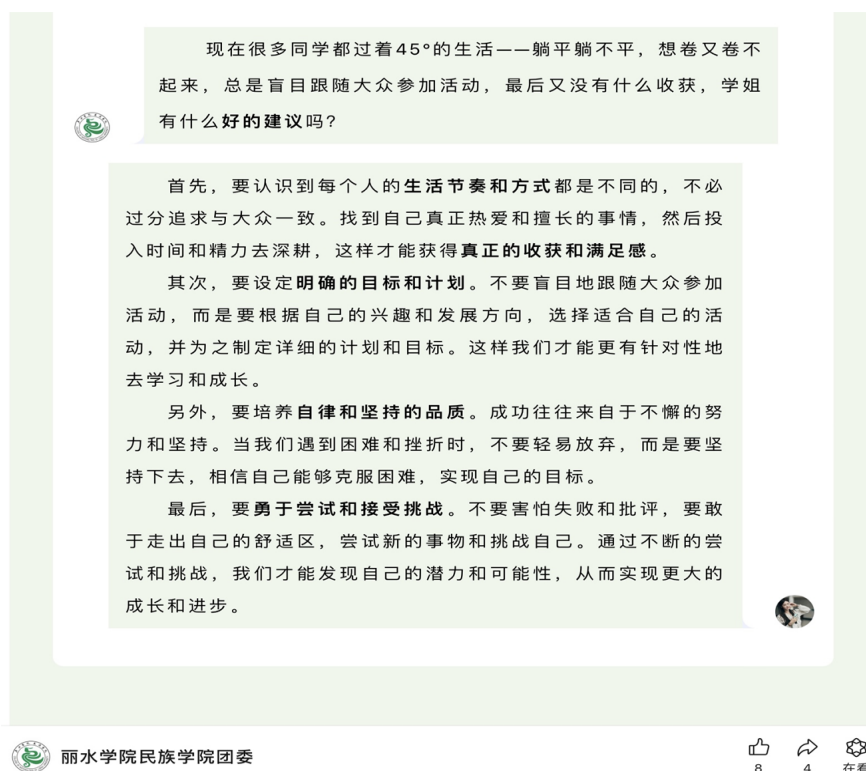
The learning strategies of excellent English majors often reflect their deep metacognitive knowledge and unique cognitive mechanisms. Generally speaking, excellent English learning strategies need to possess a variety of requirements such as clarity of learning objectives, personalised learning plans, diversified learning resources, positive learning attitudes and so on.

### 5.1. Knowledge about the Cognitive Subject

Knowledge about the cognitive subject just refers to all of the subject's knowledge about himself and others as cognitive processors. This includes knowledge about the cognitive processing characteristics and cognitive abilities of individuals themselves and others as learners, as well as knowledge about cognitive differences between themselves and others. It mainly includes: knowledge about intra-individual differences, knowledge about inter-individual differences and knowledge about the subject's cognitive level and various subject factors that affect cognitive activities (Lin Chongde, Yang Zhiliang and Huang Xiting, 2003) [9].

In the experience shared by Jiang Qiqi from Lishui University, it is said, "First of all, it is necessary to realise that everyone's rhythm and way of life are different, and there is no need to overly pursue consistency with the masses. You should keep your passion and curiosity for learning, and keep pursuing new knowledge and skills to keep yourself informed. In addition, you should focus on listening to your inner voice and ignore external comments and noise." All the above-mentioned words imply the knowledge about the differences between individuals, the differences between people in cognition as well as in other aspects, and the awareness of the fact that different people may have different learning speeds, memory, attention, and so on. At the same time, the awareness of intra-individual differences is fully involved in the experience she proposes, with a correct understanding of one's own interests, hobbies, study habits, abilities and limits. It aims to

stimulate intrinsic motivation to understand one's cognitive strengths and weaknesses and how to overcome them. Interest, curiosity and desire for learning itself are very important intrinsic motivators for learning, which allow one to continue learning, to be able to intervene in overcoming difficulties, to meet challenges positively, thus taking pleasure in learning activities. Intrinsic motivation can be self-cultivated. Jiang Qiqi always maintains her passion for English learning, so she is able to create various opportunities to promote English learning and gain more knowledge. (See **Figure 4**)



**Figure 4.** Jiang Qiqi's experience.

## 5.2. Knowledge about Cognitive Tasks

Knowledge about cognitive tasks just refers to the subject's knowledge about the task requirements, goals, and difficulty of cognitive activities. It involves a comprehensive understanding and assessment of the nature of the task, task goals, task difficulty, and required skills and resources. It mainly includes knowledge of the nature of the task, knowledge of the task goal, assessment of the difficulty level of task and knowledge of the required skills and resources (Lin Chongde, Yang Zhi-liang and Huang Xiting, 2003) [9]. Shao Jiajie, a successful graduate school student of Ningbo University, said in her learning experience, "English learning in university is no longer a generalised memorisation of vocabulary phrases and familiarization with texts, and no longer confined to a large number of written exercises, but rather, it is an in-depth delving into English as a comprehensive language system,

in terms of phonetics, listening, and speaking practice”. English language learning requires multiple forms of neural stimulation, and the subject needs to be aware of the nature of the task, such as the type of task (e.g., memory task, comprehension task, evaluation task, etc.), the domain of the task (e.g., mathematics, language, science, etc.), and the complexity of the task. For example, in a memory task, the subject needs to specify the content of the memory, the way of memory (e.g., mechanical memory, comprehension memory, etc.), and the goal of memory (e.g., long-term memory, short-term memory). At the same time, the subject needs to specify the task goal, *i.e.*, the standard or result to be achieved in order to complete the task. For example, in a reading task, the subject needs to specify his/her reading goal, such as understanding the main idea of the text, obtaining specific information or analysing the structure of the text, etc. While Shao Jiajie knows the importance of assessing the difficulty of the task, she can choose the appropriate strategies and methods to cope with it better. (See **Figure 5**)

回溯大学前三年，我把更多的精力放在了学习方面。不可否认，大学的英语学习与我所构想的相去甚远，不再是泛泛的背单词词组、熟读课文，不再局限于大量的书面练习，而是**将英语作为一种综合的语言体系**，从语音、听力、口语实践等方面进行深入钻研。看似分裂的学习模块让最开始没有做好心理准备的我**有强烈的不适应感**，但徘徊于“听说读写”中，我逐步领悟了英语学习需要多形式的神经刺激。英语学习是无形的“综合”而非有意的“割裂”。

英语专业的学生都会戏称自己是“pre”人，每个学期都在抓耳挠腮，思考自己想要阐释的主题和ppt的设计制作。我承认我是被迫成长的，由一开始的“社恐”心理到逐步克服，我不仅**提升了自信心**，也**拓展了信息搜集和整合能力**。我对我的主题有了更全面和深刻的理解，同时也多次经历了自己咀嚼消化新知识后通过表达传输给别人的过程。真的享受“由内至外”的这个过程，就会发现presentation变得更有意义也更生动有趣。我想我能够在进行面试官面试时克服自身的紧张心理，自如的表达阐述自身想法，离不开一次又一次的presentation。presentation使你**乐于表达自我**，也使你**向内延伸自我**。和每个期末都要“邂逅”的论文一样，它也能促使我们一直保持**好奇心和探索欲去发现自己的兴趣方向**，从而**投入时间去做多元化的深入研究**。这对于大二以后的专业分流也有所助益。

空虚和迷茫，是进大学后很常见的状态，日子一下从中学时代如上弦箭般的紧张落到无拘束

宁波大学外国语学院

8 1 1 写留言

**Figure 5.** Shao Jiajie’s experience.

### 5.3. Knowledge about Cognitive Strategies

Knowledge about cognitive strategies just refers to the subject’s knowledge about various aspects of cognitive approaches to fulfill a particular cognitive need (Lin Chongde, Yang Zhiliang and Huang Xiting, 2003) [9]. The cognitive means utilised by excellent English majors in their cultural learning cover three areas, namely cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies and resource management strategies, which means working together in their learning process enables them to better understand and apply the cultural knowledge they have learnt.

### 5.3.1. Cognitive Strategies

Cognitive strategies are a series of methods and techniques used by learners in the process of information processing, designed to help learners effectively extract information from memory, and their basic functions mainly include: effective processing and organisation of information, so that learners can systematically understand and master knowledge; systematic storage of information in different categories facilitates learners to retrieve and apply it quickly when needed. Cognitive strategies are divided into **retelling strategies, refining strategies and organising strategies.**

Qiao Huan, a student at Huzhou University, said, “English learning is not an overnight process, and it takes time and effort. In my own case, I have accumulated nearly twenty books of related notes, and I will continue to stick to them.” Effective processing and organisation of information enable learners to understand and master knowledge in a systematic way; she links new information with existing knowledge to increase the significance of new information, and constructs the refined knowledge to form a higher level of information processing strategy, which helps learners to understand knowledge in depth and form long-term memory, which helps to make full use of induction and outlining strategies to summarise and organise knowledge such as concepts, phrases, rules, etc., and which strengthens the grasp of the structure of the learning materials, all of which are fully reflected in the cognitive strategies. Therefore, the cognitive strategies of refining and organising strategies are fully reflected. (See **Figure 6**)

Q: 您能取得如此的成就一定离不开平常的学习积累, 在学习与竞赛方面有什么可以分享的经验吗?

A: 九层之台, 起于垒土。我平时坚持高效学习、阅读赏析、积累英语日语笔记、进行翻译练习, 每个人的学习习惯不同, 适合的学习方法也因人而异, 建议找到最适合自己的学习方法。就我自己而言, 我用的是番茄ToDo (我目前打卡超过700天), 背单词用软件墨墨背单词、新东方专四专八词汇书。英语学习不是一蹴而就的过程, 而且要日积月累, 就我自己而言, 相关的笔记已经积累了近二十本, 我也将继续坚持下去。关于具体的阅读、翻译学习技巧可以在学院开设的专业课上学到。

\* -final- \*

在采访的最后, 学姐也给外小鱼们带来了衷心的建议:

1. 设立长期目标, 并将其细化为多个短期目标。
2. 多去图书馆学习、多向老师请教、多与同学交流。

我爱英语竞赛

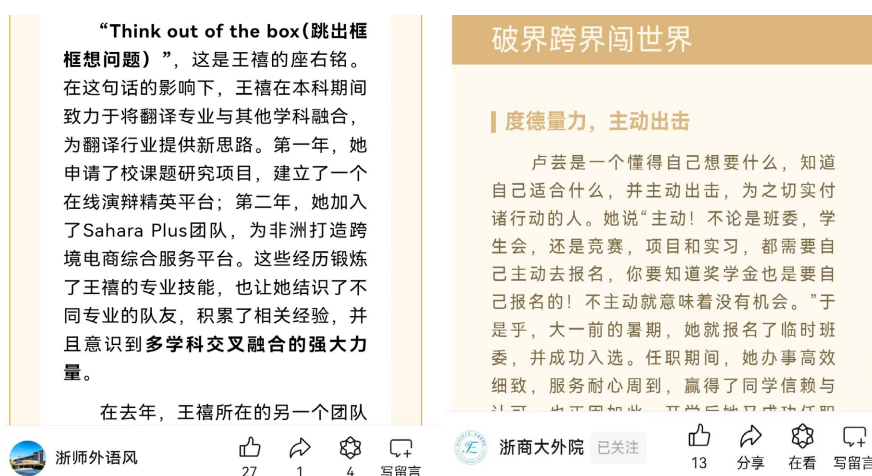
9 1 在看 写留言

**Figure 6.** Qiao Huan’s experience.

### 5.3.2. Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognitive strategies are strategies for learners to actively monitor and regulate their own cognitive process on the basis of metacognitive knowledge, which monitors and guides the use of cognitive strategies. They mainly consist of three types: planning strategy, monitoring strategy, **and regulating strategy**.

For example, Wang Xi from Zhejiang International Studies University proposed “Think out of the box”, which is a profound embodiment of the regulating strategy in metacognitive strategy, no longer sticking to the inherent thinking, trying to think out of the original framework, regulating their own learning methods to think about the problem. For another example, Lu Yun, a successful graduate school student from Zhejiang Gongshang University, said “cracks the boundary to break into the world, measures her strength and takes the initiative.” She is such a person who knows what she wants and what she is suitable for, and takes the initiative to put it into action. In her English learning process, not only does she fully embody the strategies of effort management and support-seeking in the resource management strategies that will be mentioned later, but she also embodies the strategies of planning and regulating. The cognitive mechanisms of excellent English learning strategies are explored, which lays a solid foundation for further in-depth analyses of excellent English majors’ learning strategies. These knowledge and mechanisms work together to make their learning process deeper, more efficient and more relevant. (See **Figure 7**)



**Figure 7.** The illustration demonstrating the experience of Wang Xi and Lu Yun.

### 5.3.3. Resource Management Strategies

Resource management strategies are strategies that assist learners in managing the environment and resources available to them and play an important role in learner motivation and learning outcomes. Through the rational use of resource management strategies, learners can better adapt to the learning environment and adjust it to suit their needs, thus improving learning efficiency. It can be divided into the following aspects: **time management strategies, learning environment management strategies, effort management strategies and seeking support strategies**.

For instance, Xu Yuxin from Taizhou University points out that it is important to plan time wisely and read more English books in general in order to improve overall English literacy. She can make good use of time management strategies and coordinate study time. The time that can be freely disposed of for study every day is limited, but there are relatively more learning activities. Therefore, in the process of English learning, excellent English majors should reasonably allocate their study time and try to avoid wasting time. When planning time, it is important to distinguish between what must be done and what can be done.

When it comes to how to balance activities and studies, she pays more attention to the academic aspect, so she engages herself in competitions that are closely related to her own professional development, and promotes her studies by taking part in them. For example, it is a good opportunity to improve her professional ability while she is preparing for the National English Competition for College Students. She is clear about the tasks she needs to complete for her own development, and uses the strategies of time, environment and tools to maximise the efficiency of her learning. Learning environments can be chosen, improved and created, and the use of learning tools is important for lifelong learning. The use of libraries, computers and the Internet, and social human resources contributes to making learning English more efficient and maximise the benefits. (See **Figure 8**)



**Figure 8.** The Illustration demonstrating the experience of Xu Yuxin and Huang Yino.

## 6. A Path to Integrating Excellent Learning Strategies with General English Students

Firstly, excellent English majors tend to be highly aware of their learning strategies. They know clearly their learning objectives, their current learning level and the standards they need to achieve. This self-awareness enables them to make appropriate study plans according to their actual situation and to clarify the key points and difficulties of learning. Therefore, it is necessary to make ordinary English majors realize the central role of “metacognition” in English learning. Secondly,

excellent English majors show strong self-monitoring ability in the learning process. They not only monitor their own learning progress, but also pay attention to various factors in the learning process, such as the learning environment, learning materials and learning methods. Through continuous self-monitoring, they are able to identify problems in their learning in time and take appropriate measures to make adjustments. For example, they may adjust their study plan according to their learning progress, or choose appropriate learning methods according to the difficulty of the learning materials. By improving their “metacognitive” ability, ordinary English majors can learn to better monitor their own learning progress and make timely adjustments to their learning strategies, so as to achieve more efficient learning results. Finally, excellent English majors also show good self-regulation in the learning process. They are able to adjust and optimise their learning strategies according to the results of self-monitoring. For example, they may try to use different learning methods or seek help from others when they find they have difficulties in learning. In addition, they will also reflect on and summarise their learning on a regular basis, so as to better understand their learning situation and make improvement plans accordingly. All these can provide general English majors with learning strategies to gradually improve their own learning strategy level and achieve more efficient learning results.

## 7. Conclusions

The study of the learning strategies of college and university English majors under the perspective of “Metacognitive” Theory shows that “metacognition” has a significant impact on improving students’ independent learning ability, so that ordinary English college and university majors can understand the learning strategies of excellent English majors and learn from them, thus helping them to consciously improve their learning methods, enhancing the efficiency of English learning, and then improving their English proficiency. From the paper, it is easy to see that there is a certain pattern in the experience shared by excellent English majors in terms of learning, as well as their unique insights and suggestions in terms of competition. For example, Liu Xue from Lishui University mentioned that it is necessary to have sufficient and accurate planning before the competition. Every day, she would have preparatory debates with her schoolmates on some topics, as well as vocabulary and terminology in various fields. At the same time, she would send relevant videos to the teacher in charge. Her excellent learning experience fully demonstrates that learners have to make good use of the learning environment to learn English and solve problems or achieve goals with others’ help when encountering difficulties in learning. In addition, the experience of taking part in a competition can increase the enthusiasm of ordinary English majors.

Based on the learning strategies and competition sharing of excellent English majors in undergraduate colleges in Zhejiang Province, this paper sorts out the characteristics of cognition and the cultural cognitive mechanism, identifying the

cultural heritage that can be exploited. Moreover, it will further explore the direction of improving the production and utilisation of learning strategies for learners of general English majors and their countermeasures, and identify scientific paths to promote the transformation and integration of theory and practice, so that excellent English learning strategies can become tools for learners of general English majors.

At present, there are not many systematic studies on the learning strategies of excellent English college students in undergraduate colleges and universities in Zhejiang Province; the data accumulated is limited, and the literature available for reference is relatively small; there are deficiencies in exploring the mechanism of the theory of “metacognition” and the combination analysis of the types of learning strategies and “metacognition” is difficult.

Therefore, researchers should further collect and update the corresponding corpus carefully, study “Metacognition” Theory and strengthen the deep integration between them so as to reveal the cognitive and operational mechanisms of excellent learning strategies.

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### Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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