



新维度外语系列教程



# 英语学习技巧教程

## A Course of English Learning Skills

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 北京理工大学出版社  
BEIJING INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY PRESS

· 013034974

H319.3  
168

新维度外语系列教程

图特编目(CIP)数据

英语·学习技巧·教程 / 黄婷婷, 胡红萍主编. — 北京: 北京理工大学出版社, 2013.  
ISBN 978-7-5640-7503-7

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北京理工大学出版社

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邮编 100081

电话 (010) 68914773 (办公室) 68914930 (发行部) 68911084 (编辑部)

网址 <http://www.bjpu.com.cn>

经 销 全国各新华书店

印刷 天津泰晤士印刷有限公司

开 本 710毫米×1000毫米 1/16

印 张 17

字 数 195千字

2013年4月第1版 2013年4月第1次印刷

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定价 28.00元

H 319.3

168

 **北京理工大学出版社**  
BEIJING I' SS



北航 C1642367

013034313

野藤限系部代京華北

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图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

英语学习技巧教程 / 黄婷婷, 胡红萍主编. —北京: 北京理工大学出版社, 2013.4

ISBN 978-7-5640-7563-7

I. ①英… II. ①黄… ②胡… III. ①英语-学习方法 IV. ①H319.3

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字 (2013) 第061033号

北京理工大学出版社



出版发行 / 北京理工大学出版社

社 址 / 北京市海淀区中关村南大街5号

邮 编 / 100081

电 话 / (010) 68914775 (办公室) 68944990 (批销中心) 68911084 (读者服务部)

网 址 / <http://www.bitpress.com.cn>

经 销 / 全国各地新华书店

印 刷 / 天津紫阳印刷有限公司

开 本 / 710毫米 × 1000毫米 1/16

印 张 / 12

字 数 / 192千字

版 次 / 2013年4月第1版 2013年4月第1次印刷

印 数 / 1 ~ 4000册

定 价 / 26.00元

责任校对 / 周瑞红

责任印制 / 王美丽

图书出现印装质量问题, 本社负责调换

# 前言

## (Preface)

当今社会，英语在我们的生活中无处不在。据统计，全世界 60% 的广播节目和 75% 的电视节目是用英语制作播出的，互联网上多达 80% 的信息都是以英语为媒介传输的，绝大部分国际会议以英语为第一通用语言。随着我国改革开放的推进，政治、经济、文化等各个方面都逐渐与国际接轨，加入到英语学习大潮中的国人也越来越多。学生学英语，老人学英语，甚至北京秀水街的小贩也会说几句日常英语，可以说英语学习已经深入到每个人生活的方方面面。

在这样的时代背景下，我们也看到了很多问题。比如现在的“95后”大学生有很大一部分是从小学低年级，甚至幼儿园就走上了英语学习的道路，经过十多年的学习，他们本应该达到相当水平，但在实际生活中我们看到的却是这样的现象：大学生遇到外教或者留学生，几句简单的问候之后就没了下文，支支吾吾好不容易凑了个破碎的英文句子还是让对方云里雾里；英语课堂上经常出现“中式英语”，甚至夹杂着中文来表达自己的思想；本专业的英文文献对很多研究生是座无法逾越的大山，他们有能力写出高品质的学术论文，但苦于英语写作水平欠佳而无法在国际上发表。在多年英语教学过程中，笔者与很多学生交流了学习的心得。一直以来他们的英语学习都是依附于教材和老师，缺乏独立的学习能力和学习技巧，只能从零散的各种资料中寻求有用的信息。一本能让英语学习者系统掌握英语学习技巧和策略的书能让他们拨开迷雾，提高学习效率。正是基于这样的目的才有了本书的诞生。



本书从 10 个大的方面系统回答了“如何学习英语”这个问题。首先是听、说、读、写 4 种基本语言技能的学习技巧和策略。其次是词汇和语法这两方面的基本学习方法；同时针对目前很多学生在实际交流中出现的因为发音不准确而造成的交流困难特别介绍了语音训练的方法。再次是关于文化学习技巧的讨论，还介绍了两种学习英语的有效工具：网络和词典。最后强调了笔记的重要性以及应该如何记笔记。除此之外，本书还特别增加了语音集训部分，着重给出了英语国际音标中每个元音和辅音的发音规则和技巧，同时提供了大量的练习供教师和学生使用。

全书采用了边学边练的形式，即在介绍技巧时大多都附有练习，教师可以在课堂上和学生一起讨论解答，把学到的知识用活，也可以把部分练习设为课后作业，督促学生在课下消化吸收。

本书适用于英语专业与非英语专业学生使用，同时也可以为其他水平的英语学习者提供策略的引导。

感谢中南财经大学外语学院在本书编写过程中所做的指导。感谢编者的诸位同事和朋友的大力支持。感谢北京理工大学出版社的热心扶持和鼎力资助。

用英语编写一部英语学习技巧与策略的教材对我们来说是一个新的挑战，虽然在编写过程中我们克服了许多困难，始终力求做得更好，但学术水平有限，本书中一定会有不少的疏漏和谬误，恳请专家、使用本书的教师同行及其他读者批评指正，以便修正。

2012 年 12 月

编者



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# Unit 1

## How to listen

Listening is widely considered as the most important language skill. The first step in learning a foreign language is to make an effort to listen, just like the process you followed as a child in the course of Chinese acquisition. Some aspects of listening are under conscious control of the listener, while others are automatic and not under direct control. The conscious aspects of any goal-oriented behaviour are viewed in psychology as “strategies,” and it’s widely documented that expert performance in any behaviour involves planning and selection of appropriate strategies. A useful listening strategy will improve both your listening speed and listening comprehension. The following questionnaire (Table 1-1) will be used to raise your awareness to be a good listener.

**Table 1-1 Listening strategies**

1. Do you try to guess if you don't fully understand what is being said?	5 4 3 2 1
2. Do you use your knowledge of the world in understanding a conversation, a movie, or a radio/TV broadcast?	5 4 3 2 1
3. If you don't understand, do you try to keep listening because you may get a clue as to what was meant?	5 4 3 2 1
4. When you don't understand, do you pinpoint for your conversation partner what exactly you did not understand?	5 4 3 2 1
5. When you don't understand completely, do you summarize what you have understood and ask your conversation partner for verification?	5 4 3 2 1

If you score high on this section (20-25), you are using effective strategies to improve your listening comprehension. If your score is low (less than 15), you need to work on improving your listening comprehension techniques.



**Exercise 1** Please list possible listening situations you encounter in your daily life and the process of English learning.

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (3) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (4) \_\_\_\_\_



### Three types of listening

All listening situations you listed can be classified into three types.

#### 1. Intensive listening

Intensive listening refers to listening for precise sounds, words, phrases, grammatical units and pragmatic units. The ability to listen intensively whenever required is an essential component of listening proficiency. The prototypical intensive listening activity is dictation, the transcription of the exact words that a speaker utters. Some variations of “pure dictation” are displayed as follows.

##### 1) Dictogloss

It started as an experimental method of Merrill Swain (1995) and has since been developed by other teachers and researchers. With dictogloss techniques, learners hear an extended passage. The learners do not take notes. After finishing the listening, the learners are required to reconstruct the passage as completely and accurately as they can.

**Exercise 2** Now you will hear a short passage. After finishing the listening, retell the story.

##### 2) Listening cloze

Learners will be provided with a partially completed passage and required to fill in words, phrases or sentences as they listen. This activity focuses on particular language features, e.g. vocabulary spelling and verb phrases.

#### 2. Selective listening

Selective listening tasks encourage learners to approach real spoken texts by adopting a strategy of focusing on specific information rather than trying to understand





and recall everything. A popular and useful form of selective listening is note-taking. It is widely viewed as an important macro-skill that often interacts with reading, writing and speaking especially in the process of lecture-listening comprehension.

**Exercise 3** Now you will hear a passage, listen carefully and answer the following questions.

(1) When did Australia host its first Olympic Games?

\_\_\_\_\_

(2) How long did Sydney Olympic Games last?

\_\_\_\_\_

(3) What was the new event in Sydney Olympic Games according to the speaker?

\_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Interactive listening

Interactive listening refers to listening in collaborative conversation in which learners interact with each other. It is an important means of language development. Learners usually experience interactive listening activities in real life to achieve communicative outcomes.

#### Exercise 4

When do you experience interactive listening? What are your purposes of the listening situations you mentioned?

(1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

One method of changing intensive listening or selective listening into interactive listening is to pause the task. By pausing the spoken input (the tape or the teacher) and allowing for some quick response, listeners can slow down for further understanding.

#### Exercise 5

Now you will hear a story from the teacher. The teacher will pause at four points. You are required to make predictions for the missing parts.

(1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

(3) \_\_\_\_\_



(4)



## How to be a more effective listener

### 1. How to prepare for listening

#### 1) *Listening regularly*

Second language listening is hard work. It needs regular practice. Usually, listening to English materials every day for even 30 minutes is more effective than 2 hours a week. Therefore, you need to arrange several periods of time for listening in one day. In addition to language materials specially prepared for your course, you should make a regular effort to listen to the foreign language outside the classroom.

**Exercise 6** Write down your listening plan for this week.

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#### 2) *Choosing appropriate materials*

Start with the right level of difficulty.

If you are a beginner or intermediate language learner, beginning with very short TV segments on familiar topics with clear pronunciation is a good choice. As an advanced learner, you can listen to more complex materials, such as lectures, speeches, movies and any program on radio or TV.

Choose the materials that you are interested in.

Interests are the best teacher. People listen for information or entertainment. Therefore, choosing the materials that you enjoy is both informative and entertaining. You will put more effort and attention on them. Also, you can combine your major and English learning together to improve both of them.

**Exercise 7** Now you major in journalism. What kind of listening materials can you choose? Discuss with your classmates and write down your answer.

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### 3) Prediction

It's extremely difficult for foreign language learners to use the natural listening skills which we all use in our native language. So before listening, listeners should know what to expect to hear, both in general and for specific tasks. You can get information from the background introduction, cultural knowledge, class discussion, preview exercise or even common sense. In addition, you will get useful information with the help of the questions you have to answer.

**Exercise 8** The following are three questions for three short passages. Read them carefully and predict what you will hear for each item.

(1) Why did Sue enjoy the assignment?

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(2) What type of accommodation does he rent?

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(3) How many customers were involved in robbing the bank?

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Before listening, you can underline some key words in the questions. Usually, the listening materials will offer explanation for these key words. Therefore, you should pay attention to wh-words and nouns.

**Exercise 9** Please underline the key words in Exercise 8.

## 2. How to focus selectively on information

### 1) Catching the focus

Stress is an extra force used in speaking a particular word or syllable. Speakers



often use stress to emphasize the information they want to express. Usually, stress indicates speakers' attitude or thoughts. It's useful to get what speakers want to say from stress. In a listening test, stress can help you to locate the right answers.

**Exercise 10** There is a short conversation below. Guess what the man and woman mean when they stress different words. (The stressed words are in bold type.)

M: Are you enjoying your meal?

W: I thought the soup would be very nice.

(1) Are you **enjoying** your meal?

\_\_\_\_\_

(2) **Are** you enjoying your meal?

\_\_\_\_\_

(3) Are **you** enjoying your meal?

\_\_\_\_\_

(4) I thought the soup would be very **nice**.

\_\_\_\_\_

(5) I thought the soup would be **very** nice.

\_\_\_\_\_

(6) I thought the **soup** would be very nice.

## 2) Predicting speakers' attitude and the completeness of the information from intonation

Intonation is the variation of the pitch of syllables while speaking, which is not used to distinguish words. With intonation, you can understand speakers' attitudes and feelings. There are two most basic patterns in intonation: falling intonation and rising intonation.

Falling intonation means that the pitch decreases with time. It shows the assertion and completeness of the information. Rising intonation means the pitch of the voice increases over time. It shows the uncertainty and incompleteness of the information.

**Exercise 11** Please read the following items and choose the best answer.

(1) W: John knows New York quite well. That's because he's from this city.

M: John is from New York? ↗

Q: What did the man mean?

A. He didn't know John was from New York.



- B. He knew his friend John.  
 C. He knew John was in New York.  
 D. He didn't know New York quite well.

(2) W: Justin, did you go to the lecture on the French Revolution last night?

I have never heard such an interesting history lecture before.

M: Yes, wasn't it marvelous! ↘

Q: What did the man think of the lecture?

- A. It was misleading.  
 B. It was enjoyable.  
 C. It was rather boring.  
 D. It was just so so.

**Exercise 12** Please read the following sentences and determine whether the information is complete or not. Write C for the complete ones and I for the incomplete ones next to the sentences.

- (1) I'd like you to meet my friends, Vanessa... ↗ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (2) Flight number 823 from Tokoy is delayed... ↗ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (3) We have a wide variety of language courses including Arabic, Tagalog, Thai... ↗ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (4) Educational multimedia can be delivered via CD-ROM or over the Internet... ↘ \_\_\_\_\_

### 3) Recognizing signpost words

Signpost words refer to the words or expressions that connect two different kinds of information together used in both writing and speaking. They can tell listeners about what is coming next. Therefore, it is very useful to help listeners to understand and grasp what speakers want to say. Signpost words can be divided into two categories.

#### ● Logic connectors in the context

Logic connectors often display the logic connections in the context. Like traffic lights function in traffic control, logic connectors play a vital role in listening comprehension if listeners can make rapid response to them.

**Exercise 13** There are a number of incomplete statements, each containing a common signpost word (They are in **bold type**). What do these words tell you about the following information? Select your answers from the options in the



list below and write the appropriate letters beside the statements.

- A. Describe a cause.
- B. Give an example or illustration.
- C. Describe a condition and a consequence.
- D. Introduce a classification.
- E. Express a contrast.
- F. Make a comparison.
- G. Provide further information.

- (1) Unfortunately, both Zheng Jie and Li Na lost their semi-final matches, **but**...
- (2) Raw cane sugar, **for instance**...
- (3) We believe we have very suitable instruments at hand: **namely**...
- (4) It is important to note that the omitted reference group in Table 5 is old plants, **while** Table 4...
- (5) We could not use all thirteen products **due to**...
- (6) All products have **more** elastic IV demand estimates **than**...
- (7) The fact that these key results are robust to weighting, **despite**...
- (8) It is also worth noting that **although**...
- (9) This measure requires revenue streams **such as**...
- (10) Physical productivity and prices would be negatively correlated **if**...

#### • Lexical cohesion in the context

Lexical cohesion refers to the use of synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms or co-occurrence of words to make a complete context.

**Exercise 14** Please match the words in column A with their synonyms in column B.

##### Column A

crush  
tremendous  
unlawful  
irrational  
mistake  
overtake

##### Column B

illegal  
unreasonable  
remarkable  
collapse  
error  
outstrip



**Exercise 15** When you hear the following passage in listening practice, please underline words or phrases that belong to the same lexical chain.

A great number of high school graduates continue their education in one of the many colleges or universities in the country. After four years, they receive a bachelor's degree. Some continue studying for a master's degree and perhaps a doctor's degree.

**Exercise 16** According to the words or phrases you underlined in Exercise 15, can you guess what the main idea of the listening material is? Write down your answer and discuss with your partners.

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### 3. How to avoid distractions while listening

**Exercise 17** Can you list some common distractions to listening? Discuss with your classmates and add them to the list below.

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) \_\_\_\_\_
- (5) \_\_\_\_\_
- (6) \_\_\_\_\_

If you do a lot of listening, you already know the benefits of a distraction-free listening environment. It's hard to keep yourself on-task when there is noise or people interrupting you.

Some learners often turn on English radio and let it broadcast while they are doing other things. They can gain nothing from this kind of "practice" because of the lack of concentration.

**Exercise 18** According to the distractions you listed in Exercise 17, think about how to create a distraction-free listening environment and complete the following blanks.

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) \_\_\_\_\_



- (5) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (6) \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. How to make response or ask questions

To be an active listener, anticipating is a vital part in listening process. That is to say, you need to decide what you think the speaker is going to do next.

**Exercise 19** Please fill in the following table with your anticipation.

When you hear the following sentences:

The sentence you hear	Your anticipation
(1) She was hoping to get the job, but...	
(2) There are three main types of computers...	
(3) This is CCTV news. There has been an accident in Shanghai.	



#### Some common problems

**Exercise 20** What are your problems in learning to listen to a foreign language? List them below.

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (3) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (4) \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. The speaking is too fast and you are not able to follow the speaker

If you don't understand a word or phrase, ask the speaker what it means by using "I don't know what...means." You can also ask your partner to repeat what he said.

#### 2. Stopping listening when hearing an unfamiliar word or phrase

Many learners often lose their concentration when they hear an unfamiliar word and then stop listening. Obviously, understanding something is better than getting nothing at all. You should keep listening and concentrate on familiar words.



## Unit 2

# How to read

Reading can be thought of as an active way to draw information from a text and to form an interpretation of that information. Nowadays, the overwhelming majorities of societies and countries around the world are multilingual, and the educated citizens are expected to function well in more than one language. As L2 learners, they are seldom given much time to develop strong reading abilities. However, reading comprehension is remarkably complex, involving many processing skills that are coordinated in efficient combinations. So the primary goal of this unit is to help L2 learners develop some strategies and skills in reading. The following questionnaire (Table 2-1) will be used to raise your awareness to be a good reader.

**Table 2-1 Reading strategies**

1. Do you use your knowledge of the logical sequence of events in the passage to figure out unclear portions of the text?	5 4 3 2 1
2. Do you use your knowledge of the subject matter to figure out unclear portions of the text?	5 4 3 2 1
3. Do you use your knowledge of grammar to figure out unclear sentences or parts of the sentences?	5 4 3 2 1
4. Do you rely on the words that look similar to the words in your native or any other language you know to figure out the meaning of the unfamiliar words in the text?	5 4 3 2 1
5. Do you rely on the context to figure out the meaning of the unfamiliar words in the text?	5 4 3 2 1
6. Do you consider the context when you look up unfamiliar words in a dictionary?	5 4 3 2 1
7. Do you read the whole text first to get the big picture?	5 4 3 2 1