

## *Original Paper*

# An Empirical Research on the Effectiveness of the English Communication Ability Cultivation Program for International Applied Talents in Guangzhou College of Commerce

Yandong Zhang<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Guangzhou College of Commerce, Guangzhou, Guangdong 511363, China

Received: February 12, 2024

Accepted: March 22, 2024

Online Published: March 26, 2024

doi:10.22158/jetss.v6n2p18

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/jetss.v6n2p18>

### ***Abstract***

*With the acceleration of globalization, Guangdong, as one of China's emerging economic development engines, has an increasing demand for international applied talents, among which English communication ability is particularly critical. This study designed a cultivation program to enhance the English communication abilities of international applied talents in Guangzhou College of Commerce, an institute in Guangdong, which included a series of training courses. The program was implemented over a one-year period with 300 college students. Through empirical research methods, by comparing the English abilities of participants before and after the training, the effectiveness of the cultivation program was verified. The results showed that participants' English communication abilities were significantly improved after systematic training, thereby affirming the positive role of the proposed cultivation program in enhancing the English communication abilities of international applied talents in Guangzhou College of Commerce. This study not only provides useful references for the training of international applied talents in Guangzhou College of Commerce and other institutes in Guangdong, but also offers new perspectives and practical foundations for future research in related fields.*

### ***Keywords***

*Guangzhou College of Commerce, International Applied Talents, English Communication Skills, Cultivation Program*

## **1. Introduction**

Guangdong, as an important platform for advancing national strategies and regional coordinated development in China, has gathered numerous high-tech enterprises and international business institutions, becoming a vital window for economic exchange between China and the world. This

region not only occupies a significant position in China's economic development, but also stands as a hot spot in the global competition for international talents. With the acceleration of globalization, there is a growing demand in Guangdong for applied talents proficient in the international lingua franca—English. English communication ability has become a key indicator of the level of internationalization of talents (Zhang & Liu, 2020).

English communication ability not only concerns the mastery of language knowledge, but also involves the comprehensive demonstration of qualities such as cross-cultural communication skills, critical thinking abilities, and innovation. For businesses in Guangdong, employees with excellent English communication skills can engage more effectively in international business exchanges, promoting the globalization of enterprises (Shi, 2020).

However, the region currently faces several challenges in cultivating English communication abilities, such as training content not matching the actual needs of globalization and a lack of innovation in training methods (Hou & Cao, 2020). This study aims to explore in-depth the strategies for cultivating English communication abilities of international applied talents in Guangzhou College of Commerce, an institute in Guangdong, based on the actual needs of local enterprises and educational institutions. It proposes a set of English communication ability cultivation programs with practical guidance significance and verifies the effectiveness and feasibility of this program through empirical research methods (Martinez et al., 2024). This study intends to provide references and insights for English education and talent cultivation in Guangzhou College of Commerce and other institutes in Guangdong, to promote the cultivation and development of international applied talents within the region.

## **2. Research Methods**

### *2.1 Data Collection*

#### 2.1.1 Selection of Training Participants

Within Guangzhou College of Commerce, this study selected students from three international programs as the research subjects: International Business, International Finance, and International Accounting respectively. These programs represent students' different levels of English proficiency in the college. From these programs, the study employed a random sampling method to select a total of 300 students with different levels of communication ability as research participants. This diversity ensures the universality and reliability of the research results, making the findings more generalizable and representative.

#### 2.1.2 Training Content and Methods

The training program designed for this study was comprehensive and in-depth, aimed at enhancing students' English communication skills in all aspects. The training covered the four fundamental skills of English: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, with special emphasis on improving students' language application abilities in real communication scenarios. The training adopted a blended approach of online and offline modes, flexibly utilizing various teaching strategies and activities, such

as interactive teaching, role-playing, group discussions, speeches, and simulations of real-life situations, thus enabling students to effectively use English in practical environments.

### 2.1.3 Methods of Data Collection

To accurately assess the training effects, this study designed a comprehensive testing scheme, including pre-training tests and post-training tests. These tests covered all four aspects of English: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, aiming to deeply evaluate students' English communication abilities. All participants were required to complete the same set of tests before and after the training. This not only helped in assessing the improvement in each student's abilities, but also ensured the comparability of data, providing a solid foundation for subsequent data analysis. Through these rigorous and detailed data collection methods, this study aimed to gather high-quality data to accurately assess the effectiveness of the English communication skills training program.

## 2.2 Data Analysis Methods

### 2.2.1 Data Preprocessing

After collecting the data, the first step is to preprocess it to ensure the accuracy and validity of the analysis. This stage includes the following key steps:

**Integrity Check:** Verify that the pre-test and post-test scores for each student are completely recorded in the dataset, ensuring no data is missing.

**Outlier Detection:** Identify and review values that significantly deviate from the rest of the data. If any outliers are found, further investigation will be conducted to determine whether these data should be excluded from the analysis.

**Data Consistency:** Ensure all data formats are consistent, such as making sure scores are assessed and recorded on the same scale.

### 2.2.2 Hypothesis Setting

**Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** There is no significant difference in students' English communication abilities before and after the training, indicating the training effect is not significant.

**Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** There is a significant difference in students' English communication abilities before and after the training, indicating the training effect is significant.

### 2.2.3 Statistical Testing

**Difference Calculation:** For each student, calculate the difference between their pre-training and post-training test scores (post-training score minus pre-training score).

**T-value Calculation:** Use the mean of the differences, the standard deviation of the differences, and the sample size to calculate the t-value.

**P-value Calculation:** Based on the calculated t-value and degrees of freedom (sample size minus one), consult the t-distribution table to find the corresponding p-value.

### 2.2.4 Results Interpretation

**Significance Judgment:** If the calculated p-value is less than the predetermined level of significance (e.g., 0.05), then reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis, concluding that there

is a significant difference in students' English communication abilities before and after the training.

Effect Evaluation: If the p-value is significant, it indicates that the training effectively improves students' English communication abilities; if not significant, it suggests that the training effect is not evident.

Through this series of detailed and specific research methods, this study aims to accurately evaluate the effectiveness of English communication skills training for college students in Guangzhou College of Commerce, providing a scientific basis and reference for future research and practice in related fields.

### 3. Empirical Analysis

This study obtained the following results through empirical analysis. The table below illustrates the changes in students' English proficiency scores before and after the training.

**Table 1. Assessment of the Effectiveness of English Communication Skills Training: Paired Samples t-Test Analysis**

	Pre-training	Post-training	Difference
Mean	59.944	74.837	
Std. Deviation	9.842	10.777	
Std. Error Mean	0.568	0.622	
95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			14.348 to 15.437
t		53.648	
df		299	
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.0	

The table displays the results of the paired samples t-test, including the means, standard deviations, standard errors, the 95% confidence intervals, t-values, degrees of freedom (df), and two-tailed significance levels (Sig. (2-tailed)). From interpreting the table, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Mean: The mean scores before and after the training were 59.944 and 74.837 respectively, indicating that the students' average scores significantly increased after the training.

Standard Deviation (Std. Deviation): It indicates the variability of scores before and after the training, with a standard deviation of 9.842 before the training and 10.777 after. This shows that the distribution of students' scores became more dispersed after the training.

Standard Error (Std. Error Mean): It reflects the precision of the mean estimate; a smaller standard error indicates a more stable estimate of the mean. In this study, the standard errors before and after the training were 0.568 and 0.622 respectively, both relatively small, indicating that the mean estimates are relatively stable.

95% Confidence Interval: It ranges from 14.348 to 15.437, suggesting that we can be 95% confident that the average increase in student scores falls within this interval. This further validates the significance of the training effect.

T-value and Degrees of Freedom (df): The t-value is 53.648 with a degree of freedom (df) of 299. The magnitude of the t-value indicates the significance of the difference in scores before and after the training, and together with the degrees of freedom and corresponding p-value, it can be used to determine whether this difference is statistically significant.

Significance Level (Sig. (2-tailed)): It is almost 0, far below the conventional significance level of 0.05, strongly rejecting the null hypothesis (i.e., the assumption that there is no difference before and after the training). This means that the training has a significant positive effect on improving students' English communication abilities.

In summary, this empirical analysis clearly demonstrated the significant positive impact of the English communication skills training program on participants, providing strong evidence support for the effectiveness and feasibility of the training content and methods in the English communication ability cultivation program.

## **4. Discussion**

### *4.1 Effectiveness of the Training Program*

The empirical analysis of the training program's effectiveness on enhancing English communication skills among international applied talents in Guangzhou College of Commerce revealed notable improvements in participants' proficiency after training. This significant enhancement in communication skills underscores the program's efficacy, demonstrating that a well-structured and comprehensive training tailored to the specific needs and dynamics of international business communication can yield substantial benefits. It emphasizes the importance of adopting innovative and practical teaching methodologies, such as interactive learning, role-play, and real-life scenario simulations, in cultivating highly proficient English communicators. This positive outcome not only validates the program's design and execution but also highlights the pivotal role of targeted English training in bridging communication gaps, thereby fostering a more globally competent and competitive talent pool within the region.

### *4.2 The Importance of English Communication Skills*

The crucial role of English communication skills for international applied talents, particularly within Guangdong, cannot be overstated in today's globalized business environment. As the lingua franca of international trade, diplomacy, and academia, English serves as a key to unlocking myriad opportunities across borders. This study's findings further illuminate the strategic necessity for regions aspiring to enhance their global standing and economic competitiveness to invest in robust English language training programs. Such proficiency is not merely about language acquisition but encompasses understanding and navigating diverse cultural nuances, which is vital for successful

international collaborations and negotiations. Therefore, the emphasis on developing English communication skills extends beyond individual competency to becoming a cornerstone of national strategy for fostering an internationally adept workforce capable of driving forward economic growth and international cooperation.

#### *4.3 Contribution to Regional Talent Reserves*

Improving English communication abilities of international applied talents within Guangdong serves as a catalyst for regional talent enhancement, significantly boosting the region's appeal to global businesses and institutions. This skillset not only facilitates smoother entry into international markets, but also positions the region as a preferred destination for multinational collaborations and investments. The resultant increase in high-caliber talent with superior English proficiency is instrumental in driving innovation, fostering economic growth, and enhancing the region's global footprint. Moreover, this strategic focus on language skills cultivation aligns with the broader objectives of internationalizing the local workforce, thereby attracting a diverse pool of global talents and businesses. Ultimately, the commitment to nurturing English communication skills among the workforce reflects a forward-thinking approach to economic development, enhancing Guangdong's status as a competitive player on domestic and international stage.

#### *4.4 Future Research Directions*

This study provides a reference for other researchers to conduct related studies. Researchers can conduct more in-depth analyses to verify the durability and actual impact of the training effects. Additionally, researchers can also explore the effects of different types of training methods on improving the English communication abilities of students with various disciplinary backgrounds, to further optimize the training program.

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of systematic training in enhancing the English communication skills of international applied talents in Guangzhou College of Commerce, providing references for future research and practice in related fields. By continuing to optimize training methods and content, it is possible to more effectively cultivate more high-quality talents with international competitiveness for the region and even the country.

## **5. Conclusion**

### *5.1 Validation of the Effectiveness of the Cultivation Program*

This research conducted an empirical analysis on the effectiveness of the English communication skills cultivation program for international applied talents in Guangzhou College of Commerce by constructing a dataset. The analysis results indicate that after a year of systematic training, there was a significant improvement in the English communication abilities of the participating students. This finding confirms the effectiveness of the cultivation program in enhancing the English communication skills of international applied talents in the institute, providing strong support for the talent cultivation strategy in other institutes in Guangdong.

## 5.2 Future Research Directions

Comparative Study of Different Training Methods: Future research could design experiments to compare the effects of different English training methods (such as traditional classroom teaching, online learning, immersive learning, etc.) on improving English communication skills. This would help identify the most effective training approach, providing more specific guidance for English education (Naparan & Bacasmot, 2024).

### 5.2.1 Interdisciplinary Training Effect Analysis

Further research could focus on the performance differences of students from various disciplinary backgrounds after receiving English communication skills training, thereby providing insights for interdisciplinary English teaching.

### 5.2.2 Long-term Effectiveness Tracking Study

Future research should also focus on the durability of the training effects, assessing the long-term impact of the training by tracking learners' English usage and communication over time.

### 5.2.3 Application of Training Methods in Talent Cultivation

Exploring how effective English communication skills training methods can be applied to a broader talent cultivation system, especially how these methods can be integrated into professional skills training across various industries, thereby enhancing the overall international competitiveness of talents (Alarcon et al., 2024).

## 5.3 Practical Significance

The research presented in this paper not only provides empirical support for English education in Guangzhou College of Commerce, but also offers references for the strategy of international talent cultivation in Guangdong and even in a broader geographic area. By continuously optimizing and innovating the English communication skills cultivation program, it is possible to more effectively cultivate high-quality talents who are capable of meeting the challenges of globalization, thereby contributing to the region's economic development and enhancing its international competitiveness.

## Acknowledgements

This research is funded by *Exploration and Practice of English Communication Ability Cultivation for International Applied Talents in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area* (Project NO. 2021XJJXCGPY10), a Teaching Achievement Cultivation Project of Guangzhou College of Commerce.

## References

- Alarcon, L. N., Ewen, A. M., Acuña-Martinez, E., & Cheston, C. C. (2024). Improving Communication with Patients with Limited English Proficiency: Non-English Language Proficiency Assessment for Clinicians. *Joint Commission journal on quality and patient safety*, 50(1), 83-86. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcjq.2023.08.007>

- Hou, S. H., & Cao Y. Z. (2020). Analysis of the Business English Applied Talent Cultivation Model in Independent Colleges Based on Corporate Development Needs. *Enterprise Reform and Management*, (05), 127-128.
- Martinez, A., Warner, A., Powe, N. R., Fernandez, A., & Tuot, D. S. (2024). Association between English Proficiency and Kidney Disease Knowledge and Communication Quality among Patients with ESKD. *Kidney*, 360. <https://doi.org/10.34067/KID.0000000000000398>
- Naparan, E. C. P., & Bacasmot, J. B. (2024). English Language Problems and Communication Competence of Students: The Mediating Role of Smartphone Apps in ESL Learning. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 50(2), 10-30. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2024/v50i21255>
- Shi, L. (2020). Investigation of College English Teaching Reform Aimed at Cultivating Applied Talents from an International Perspective: Taking Independent Colleges of Business Studies as an Example. *Examination and Evaluation (College English Teaching and Research Edition)*, (05), 92-95.
- Zhang, F., & Liu, N. N. (2020). Practice of Constructing a Business English System in Applied Undergraduate Colleges: An Exploration Based on Interdisciplinary Teaching of English Drama Courses and International Business Negotiation Courses. *Modern English*, (02), 5-8.