

Research on Strategies for Enhancing College English Learning Motivation among Art Major Students

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Abstract: *The foundation of college English learning motivation generation for art major students lies in the bidirectional moderating effect of intrinsic motivational structure and artistic cognitive style on foreign language engagement, whereas the conflicts between disciplinary thinking paradigms and language discipline, sensory channel-specific anxiety, and marginalized ecological niche constitute significant resistances. The study theoretically analyzes the motivational composition and attenuation mechanisms, and proposes three activation paths: task-based input reconstruction grounded in artistic materials, aesthetic-experience-driven output feedback loops, and embedded integration of creative processes with language practice. Furthermore, it establishes three maintenance mechanisms: collaborative networks of artistic communities, art-achievement-mapped evaluation, and project-integrated schedule regulation, thus forming a complete strategy chain from activation to maintenance, which provides a theoretical framework aligned with the disciplinary characteristics for English teaching in art majors.*

Keywords: *art major students; college English; learning motivation; intrinsic motivation; artistic cognitive style; motivation maintenance mechanism.*

Introduction

The issue of English learning motivation among art major students has long existed in the context of higher art education, and its particularity originates from the structural differences between the cognitive paradigm of art disciplines and the language discipline system. The linear logic, grammatical accuracy evaluation, and decontextualized language input methods relied upon by general English teaching form an inherent tension with art students' cognitive style characterized by intuition priority and holistic perception, leading to the continuous decline of learning motivation. Revealing the intrinsic composition and resistance characteristics of English learning motivation among art major students, and exploring activation paths and maintenance mechanisms that align with their cognitive preferences, are of significant theoretical value and practical necessity for improving the effectiveness of college English teaching in art education. Existing studies mostly approach from the perspectives of pedagogical improvement or external incentives, with less attention paid to deep variables such as art students' identity, aesthetic-driven mechanisms, and disciplinary niche. Based on this, this study starts from theoretical analysis and systematically constructs an analytical framework and intervention strategies for English learning motivation of art major students, aiming to provide theoretical support for teaching design and curriculum reform in this field.

1. Theoretical Analysis of English Learning Motivation for Art Major Students.

1.1 Intrinsic Composition of Language Learning Motivation for Art Students

The intrinsic composition of English learning motivation for art major students exhibits characteristics different from those of science and humanities students. Its motivational system takes aesthetic drive and emotional expression as core dimensions, and the sensitivity to perceptual elements such as form, color, and rhythm in artistic creation can be transferred to the awareness of rhythm and structure in linguistic symbols, forming a willingness for language contact based on artistic intuition. Intrinsic interest motivation occupies a dominant position, manifesting as the pursuit of aesthetic experience in texts such as English literature, lyrics, and film dialogues, rather than instrumental goals. Meanwhile, the non-disciplinary tendency in art students' identity prompts language learning

motivation to rely more on self-realization than on external evaluation, and this intrinsic motivational structure requires researchers to focus on the congruence between artistic cognitive patterns and language learning objectives, rather than simply applying general motivation theories. Furthermore, there exists an isomorphic relationship between the internal evaluation criteria established by art students in their creative process and the self-feedback mechanism in language learning, both of which take personal aesthetic preference as a frame of reference, which provides a unique psychological basis for the sustainability of motivation, and also implies that the key to activating intrinsic motivation lies in reconstructing language behavior as an aesthetic practice rather than as rule compliance^[1].

1.2 The Moderating Effect of Artistic Cognitive Style on Foreign Language Engagement

Artistic cognitive style, characterized by intuition priority, holistic perception, and image-based thinking, produces a bidirectional moderating effect on engagement in the foreign language learning process. In language activities such as listening and speaking, which require immediate responses and emotional involvement, art students' holistic cognitive mode facilitates rapid capture of intonation and prosodic information, resulting in higher emotional engagement; whereas in tasks such as reading and writing, which depend on linear logic and detailed grammatical analysis, their cognitive style may lead to insufficient local engagement. The mechanism of this moderating effect is reflected in art students' tendency to adopt a direct "form-meaning" mapping strategy, avoiding rule-based and stepwise language processing procedures. The nonlinear influence of this cognitive style on foreign language engagement implies that enhancement strategies need to design cognitive adaptation plans separately for different language skills, rather than uniformly increasing the total amount of engagement.

1.3 Construction of a Disciplinary Attribution Model for the Decline of Learning Motivation

Based on the disciplinary attribution analysis of the decline in language learning motivation among art major students, a model composed of three variables — curriculum conflict, evaluation system misalignment, and disciplinary cultural isolation—can be constructed. Curriculum conflict manifests as the extensive time resources occupied by professional skill training activities (such as studio work, piano practice, and rehearsal room sessions), which compresses the space for sustained investment in language learning. Evaluation system misalignment is reflected in the cognitive rupture between the existing language assessment methods centered on standardized tests and grammatical accuracy, and the formative evaluation systems (such as portfolios and performances) that art students are accustomed to. Disciplinary cultural isolation is embodied in the fact that the social networks within art institutions, organized primarily around professional studios, rarely provide natural contexts for English use, and language learning is perceived as an external task detached from the professional community. This model attributes the decline in motivation to structural factors rather than individual incompetence, and provides clear intervention targets for subsequent strategy design. The three variables exhibit a superimposed amplification effect: curriculum conflict exacerbates the scarcity of time resources, evaluation misalignment further weakens the willingness to invest, and disciplinary isolation blocks the natural field for language use; together, they constitute a systematic mechanism for motivation decline, among which evaluation system misalignment is identified as the most intervention-ready starting node^[2].

2. Structural Characteristics of English Learning Resistance for Art Major Students.

2.1 The Conflict Interface between Artistic Disciplinary Thinking Paradigm and Language Discipline

The artistic disciplinary thinking paradigm operates primarily through nonlinear image generation, perceptual intuition, and formal experimentation, whereas the language discipline embedded in college English teaching emphasizes recursive drilling of grammatical rules, linear arrangement of syntactic structures, and hierarchical organization of semantic logic. The conflict interface between the two is first manifested in cognitive processing pathways: art students are accustomed to capturing emotional and visual schemas from the overall context, whereas language discipline requires decomposition down to the levels of morphemes, phrases, and clauses for item-by-item correction. Secondly, there exists an opposition at the level of evaluation criteria, as artistic creation encourages creative deviation from norms, while language discipline defines such deviation as error. The incommensurability of these paradigms leads art students to produce cognitive resistance when receiving disciplinary instructions in

language teaching, which manifests as symbolic participation in practice engagement or intentional neglect of grammatical precision, thus constituting a deep source of learning resistance.

2.2 Perceptual Channel Analysis of Language Anxiety Generation in Art Students

Language anxiety in art students does not originate from the fear of social evaluation described in general foreign language anxiety scales, but is generated and solidified through specific perceptual channels. These channels include a high sensitivity to the visual form of written texts in the visual channel, as well as a personalizing interpretive tendency toward phonetic rhythm and intonation in the auditory channel. When immediate spelling feedback or pronunciation correction occurs in English classrooms, art students tend to internalize external evaluation as a negation of their own aesthetic judgment, rather than as a mere deficiency in language competence. Another perceptual channel involves somatic sensation, as the bodily awareness accumulated in artistic training (such as the pressure of holding a brush in painting or muscle memory in dance) imposes additional self-monitoring load on oral movements and vocal cord vibration during language output, and this excessive monitoring amplifies the sense of disfluency in production, thereby catalyzing anxiety experiences. The specificity of perceptual channels suggests that intervention for language anxiety should start from perceptual regulation rather than from standard emotional appeasement strategies.

2.3 Niche Influencing Factors of English Learning Marginalization

In the academic ecosystem of art institutions or art programs within comprehensive universities, English learning is often relegated to a marginalized ecological niche. The influencing factors can be summarized into three types of niche factors: resource allocation factors, social network factors, and time-economic factors. In terms of resource allocation factors, professional spaces such as studios, piano rooms, and rehearsal halls dominate physical resources, whereas the provision of spaces required for language learning, such as self-study environments and language corners, remains relatively scarce. In terms of social network factors, the communities formed among art major students, which are bonded by project creation and mutual critique of works, predominantly use Chinese and professional terminology (e.g., composition, tonality, body control) in their daily communication, and English lacks an interface to enter these social networks, thus creating a vacuum zone for language use. In terms of time-economic factors, the input-output cycles of art assignments (such as series of works and performance rehearsals) are characterized by indivisibility and high density of deadlines, which in the time allocation pattern suppress language learning activities that require dispersed and sustained investment. These three types of niche factors mutually reinforce each other, making English learning a subsidiary task detached from core professional activities, and this marginalized status further weakens the self-sustaining capacity of learning motivation^[3].

3. Activation Paths for English Learning Motivation of Art Major Students.

3.1 Task-Based Language Input Reconstruction Grounded in Artistic Materials

In response to the cognitive preferences of art major students, language input materials can be replaced from general English texts to task-driven inputs that are mediated by original materials from fields such as visual arts, music, theater, and design. Such materials include original audio of artist interviews, English versions of creative notes, calls for submissions for international biennials, and podcasts on artwork interpretation, whose semantic density and emotional resonance connect with art students' professional experience. The task design embeds language comprehension into the process of interpreting these materials, for example, by extracting keywords and reconstructing compositional logic from an English description of a painting, or by completing style-category labeling after listening to a composer's English self-narration. This type of input reconstruction transforms the relationship between language and learners: language is no longer a vehicle for abstract rules, but an operational tool for accessing professional information in the art field. Another feature of task-based input lies in the gradient setting between authenticity and semi-authenticity, which enables art students to complete the translation training from visual images to linguistic symbols under manageable cognitive load, thereby reducing the resistance to language input and enhancing the tendency to actively engage with English materials.

3.2 Aesthetic-Experience-Driven Feedback Loop for Language Output

Aesthetic experience can serve as the driving engine for language output, constructing a feedback loop mechanism that differs from error-correction orientation. When art major students complete language output tasks (such as artwork statements, creative concept elaborations, and art criticism writing), their internal aesthetic judgment system continuously conducts self-evaluation of the formal quality, rhythm, and metaphorical density of the output. When the linguistic expression matches the artistic effect they pursue, a positive feedback based on aesthetic satisfaction is activated, prompting learners to repeat and deepen the output behavior. The establishment of this loop requires language task design to abandon the sole criterion of grammatical accuracy, and instead incorporate aesthetic dimensions such as rhetorical rhythm, vividness of imagery, and the coordination of tone with artistic style. Feedback from teachers or peers also shifts from "error marking" to "aesthetic effect discussion," for example, evaluating whether an English creative statement successfully conveys the chilly atmosphere of a painting. The aesthetic-experience-driven feedback loop transforms language output from an externally imposed performance behavior into an internally driven expressive behavior, and its sustained operation does not depend on external rewards, but is rooted in art students' instinctive pursuit of formal gestalt^[4].

3.3 Embedded Integration of Artistic Creation Process and Language Practice

The artistic creation process exhibits phased characteristics, including conception, material collection, production/rehearsal, revision and refinement, and display and reflection. Embedding language practice into these phases rather than setting it as an independent study period can eliminate the opposition between language learning and professional training. In the conception phase, language practice can be manifested as writing creative keywords, mood board descriptions, or thematic statements in English; in the material collection phase, learners are guided to consult English-original image materials, technical literature, or reviews of similar works; in the production/rehearsal phase, they record operational steps, material experiment logs, or movement sequence descriptions in English; in the revision and refinement phase, they check the degree of alignment between intention and effect against an English self-assessment checklist item by item; and in the display and reflection phase, they complete artwork descriptions in the form of English oral presentations or wall labels. This embedded integration requires that the time granularity of language tasks naturally align with the creative phases, avoiding additional occupation of block time. The deeper effect of integration lies in the fact that language is no longer an external add-on task, but is internalized as a link in the creative tool chain, and each instance of language use directly serves the completeness of the artistic work, thereby transferring learning motivation from within the language curriculum to the self-driving system of professional creation.

4. Maintenance Mechanisms for English Learning Motivation of Art Major Students.

4.1 Design of Language Collaboration Networks in the Context of Artistic Communities

Artistic communities take organizational forms such as studios, creative groups, and performance teams as their basic units, and their internal collaboration is characterized by high-frequency visual communication, peer critique of works, and collective feedback. The design of language collaboration networks can embed English use into these existing community activity processes, rather than constructing a separate virtual "English learning group." Specifically, in the peer critique phase, the design can introduce English expression standards, requiring members to use English to describe formal elements of the works or to propose revision suggestions; in curatorial discussions, it can require members to draft exhibition labels or exhibition statements in English, with the group jointly revising the accuracy of the language expressions. The nodes of the collaboration network include not only individual students, but also supervising instructors, external artists, and peers from international exchange programs, thus forming multidimensional channels for language contact. The effectiveness of this network depends on the clarification of role divisions; for example, a "language observer" can be assigned to record English keywords emerging in group discussions, or a rotating "presenter" can be designated to report progress in English during phased presentations. By positioning English use as a professional collaborative behavior within the community rather than as an additional language exercise, students naturally acquire and repeatedly employ language skills in the context of completing artistic tasks, and the maintenance of motivation does not depend on external incentives, but is rooted

in the sense of belonging to the community and the needs of professional cooperation^[5].

4.2 Art Achievement Mapping Strategies in a Dynamic Evaluation System

The traditional summative assessment emphasizes grammatical normativity and vocabulary coverage in language production, which deviates from the direction of art major students' competency strengths. A dynamic evaluation system constructs a composite assessment framework by mapping artistic achievement indicators onto language evaluation dimensions. The core of the mapping strategy lies in transforming the established quality judgment criteria in artistic creation into a reference system for evaluating language activities. For example, "conceptual integrity" in a portfolio can correspond to thematic consistency in English creative statements; "material experimentation" can be mapped to tentative variations in vocabulary and syntactic structures in English writing; and "formal control" can correspond to rhetorical rhythm and paragraph organization in language output. The evaluation no longer takes error rates as the core indicator, but tracks the extent to which learners deploy their artistic abilities when completing language tasks, as well as the reinforcing effect of improved language competence on the precision of artistic expression. Another feature of dynamic evaluation is the flexibility of evaluation cycles, allowing students to submit corresponding English documentation after completing a full creative cycle (such as a series of works spanning four weeks), rather than submitting independent assignments according to fixed weekly or chapter-based schedules. This evaluation mechanism enables the value of language learning to be confirmed through the reflection of artistic achievement, thereby sustaining learners' continuous willingness to invest in language activities^[6].

4.3 The Schedule Regulation Model for Integrating Language Learning with Art Projects

The advancement of art projects is characterized by phased deadlines and the prominence of deliverable outputs, whereas language learning is often organized in a linear and steady-paced schedule, and the temporal logic conflict between the two constitutes one of the structural causes of motivation decline. The schedule regulation model advocates embedding language learning tasks into the critical nodes of art projects, implementing an integrated rather than a parallel schedule management approach. The regulatory strategies include: setting up a language preparation period at the project initiation phase, requiring the completion of English literature retrieval and key vocabulary database building related to the theme; establishing a language output period before the mid-term review, generating an English version of the mid-term presentation text; and establishing a language packaging period at the final submission stage, completing the final English drafts of documents such as artwork descriptions and artist statements. The output of each language node directly serves the delivery requirements of the art project, rather than functioning as supplementary materials detached from the project. The operation of this regulation model requires the establishment of a superimposed view of the project progress map and the language task map, identifying temporal conflict points (such as intensive production periods of the artworks) and automatically reducing the complexity and quantity of language tasks, while arranging more intensive language processing activities during creative buffer periods (such as drying time, layout, or rehearsal intervals). This integrated regulation enables language learning to no longer compete for time resources with professional progress, but to form a time-economy model of resource sharing, allowing learners to maintain the continuity of language activities without requiring additional willpower investment.

Conclusion

This study, starting from the intrinsic motivational structure and cognitive style characteristics of art major students, constructs a strategy framework for enhancing learning motivation that consists of three components: resistance analysis, activation paths, and maintenance mechanisms. At the theoretical analysis level, the study clarifies the motivation composition dominated by aesthetic drive and the superimposed amplification effect in the disciplinary attribution model; the resistance analysis reveals the structural causes of thinking paradigm conflicts, perceptual channel anxiety, and ecological niche marginalization; the activation paths achieve the integration of language learning and artistic experience through material reconstruction, aesthetic feedback, and creative embedding; and the maintenance mechanisms, with the help of community collaboration networks, dynamic evaluation mapping, and project-integrated schedule regulation, form institutionalized support for the sustainability of motivation. The above strategy system logically forms a progressive relationship from cognitive adaptation to behavioral embedding and then to ecological reconstruction. Future research

can be deepened in the following directions: first, to investigate the differentiated characteristics of motivational structures among students from different art disciplines (such as visual arts, performing arts, and design) in order to enhance the precision of the strategies; second, to examine the mechanisms through which language competence improvement affects the accuracy and depth of cross-cultural expression in artistic creation, so as to provide empirical evidence for the mutual reinforcement between language teaching and professional training; and third, to explore new forms of language collaboration networks in the context of digital media and virtual studio environments, thereby expanding the technological paths and spatial boundaries for motivation maintenance.

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