# Research on Implementation Modes of English Major SPOC for Listening and Speaking Skills Development

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*Abstract:* This paper analyzes the implementation modes of the English major SPOC (Small Private Online Course) for listening and speaking skills development, combining the characteristics of the course and aiming to improve students' language skills. It discusses the positioning and implementation path of SPOC construction, which is designed in three parts: pre-class, in-class, and post-class, with the textbook as the basis, skill training as the entry point, modern teaching technology as the support, and the concept of synchronous training of listening and speaking input and output being adhered to. The teacher and students are involved in classroom construction, catering to the needs of personalized learning. The research results show that this teaching mode changes the traditional single classroom teaching mode, enriches classroom content, inspires students' learning interest, and is more conducive to personalized guidance for students and more effective use of self-learning time, thus helping to achieve the learning objectives and providing an effective reference for other courses.

## 1. Introduction

English listening and speaking skills courses are one of the traditional professional skills courses in English majors, characterized by practicality, applicability, and professionalism, requiring long-term and continuous training of listening and speaking skills, as well as producing fluent and authentic spoken output. However, the current teaching situation is still dominated by "cramming" course teaching, which primarily focuses on teaching listening and speaking skills, while students' training time, listening and speaking exercise feedback, and other aspects often fall short of the standard for skills training, making it difficult to achieve the goal of listening and speaking skills training in the lower-level grades. The development of SPOC-based flipped classroom for listening and speaking skills courses is a reform and breakthrough aimed at current curricular problems, which can fully utilize information technology to provide intelligent, personalized, diversified, and mobile teaching and management methods for classroom teachers, innovating the traditional classroom teaching of English listening and speaking skills courses. In 2000, Maureen J. Lage and other scholars proposed the concept of flipped classroom teaching. SPOC is a blended teaching model that combines physical classrooms and online learning. Compared with MOOC (massive open online courses), it is easier to achieve teacher-student interaction, improve student participation, and promote students' deep experience of personalized and complete learning processes [1]. Establishing an SPOC flipped classroom is a deepening reform of MOOC. While integrating MOOC educational ideas, it integrates

micro-courses, flipped classrooms, and intensive teaching of small-scale and niche teaching. Compared with MOOC, it emphasizes the characteristics of "smaller student scale" and "more targeted teaching" to meet the special requirements of "small classes" and "emphasis on practical skills" in teaching language skills. The flipped classroom has gradually been accepted by the Chinese education sector, and many universities hope to pilot the reform of flipped classrooms in English teaching [2]. The SPOC English teaching mode is not only a revolutionary innovation in teaching methods but also an innovation in breaking traditional English learning concepts [3]. The SPOC flipped classroom is highly compatible with the learning characteristics of English listening and speaking skills. The use of the SPOC online and offline combination teaching mode is also an effective way of exploring teaching reforms.

## 2. Overall Design Idea of the Course

### 2.1. Course Orientation

Listening is one of the main forms of communication in human speech activities. In the English listening and speaking skills course, listening and speaking should be regarded as a form of communicative behavior, while speaking is an important means of expression of thoughts and transmission of intentions. The purpose of speaking in the English listening and speaking skills course is to encourage students to actively think and analyze, express their ideas orally, or actively output through exchanging ideas with teachers or other students through the design of teaching activities [4]. This course is one of the compulsory courses in the undergraduate stage of English majors, which is offered according to the *National Undergraduate Teaching Quality Standard*. The course aims to transition from solidifying language pronunciation foundations to natural language expression, and to improve language expression and critical thinking abilities. Besides, it strives to integrate language input and output training and cultivate the thinking ability. Unlike other course types, professional English listening and speaking skills courses always face Western ideologies and values directly, posing higher requirements for teachers and resource usage [5]. Therefore, it is necessary to naturally integrate ideological and political education concepts into professional skills courses and instill patriotism, cultural confidence, and innovation spirit in training.

### 2.2. Design Concept

Based on the above course orientation and design concept, the English listening and speaking skills course is specifically divided into three modules: "Skill Explanation", "Listening and Speaking Training" and "Moral Education". "Skill Explanation" focuses on explaining specific listening skills, laying a solid foundation for listening teaching. "Listening and Speaking Training" aims to enhance expression connotation through thinking content, while "Moral Education" aims to help students establish the correct view of life and values by exploring elements of ideological and political education concepts in the course. The course adopts a mixed teaching mode of online and offline, with teaching conducted in a cross-cutting manner. Horizontally, the course focuses on textbook content and explores topics of interest to students. Based on the content of each unit, it further refines corresponding training points. Vertically, the course focuses on training listening and speaking skills and improving efficiency through skill explanations, solidifying skill foundations. Through moral education, it aims to enhance expression connotation and infuse the concept of ideological and political education throughout the entire process of the English listening and speaking skills course. The course emphasizes the use of "one material, multiple applications" method, designing different exercises based on a unified material and repeatedly training, deepening memory of key words and expressions, and improving thinking abilities. For example, the course can design simulated

interviews based on the content of "China's national image promotional films". The course also increases the diversity, quantity, and difficulty of exercises, adding follow-up reading, group simulated interviews, debates, and required completion of listening and speaking materials during listening and debate exercises. Through discussion and oral presentations, students can output their personal understanding of the course materials.

## 3. SPOC Course Construction

### 3.1. Organization and Implementation Process

The course adopts a blended teaching model of flipped classroom with online and offline combination, using the SPOC model. SPOC requires high-quality online teaching resources for students [6]. Based on the material of traditional listening and speaking skills courses, students learn listening and speaking strategies according to knowledge modules, and complete a large number of selected exercises that match the listening knowledge module. Combined with classroom feedback on listening exercises' difficulties and questions, the course is enriched with vivid activity designs such as pictures, news releases, classroom presentations, small group discussions, and reflective explorations, creating student-centered teaching activities that enhance listening, comprehension, analysis, and thinking skills. The course aims to improve listening and speaking skills as the primary requirement, gradually cultivating students' critical thinking skills and cross-cultural awareness through targeted, diverse, and multi-language input and output learning. It also enhances students' emotional understanding and national pride, laying a solid foundation for cultivating foreign language talents with Chinese sentiment, an international perspective, cultural confidence, and cross-cultural communication skills.
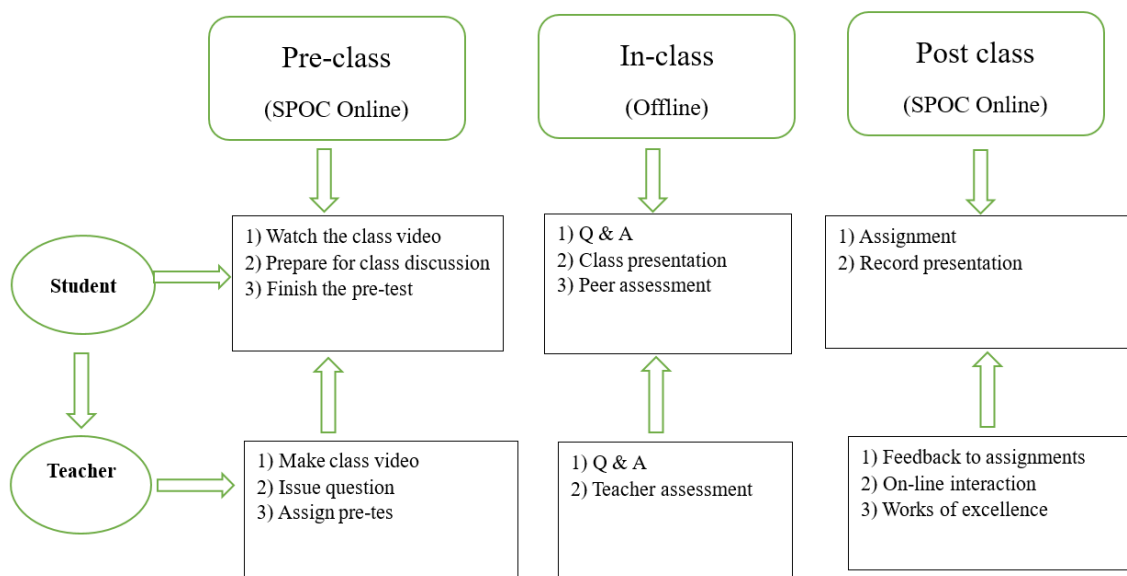


Figure 1: Design concept of SPOC online and offline teaching

The figure 1 shows the implementation process of online teaching for the listening and speaking skills course with three stages: pre-class, in-class, and post-class, where pre-class and post-class are both conducted online while in-class is conducted through traditional face-to-face instruction. The course is organized and implemented through "SPOC platform video self-study before class + classroom teaching + post-class consolidation and practice". Pre-class learning materials are provided, including introductory materials, questions, and learning tasks. Teachers modularize the content of the textbook to break the traditional teaching mode, emphasize listening and speaking strategies, and

focus on pronunciation and intonation, discourse knowledge, and basic listening skills, which are divided into 20 systematic knowledge points. Micro lectures in the form of videos are recorded and embedded into the textbook content to provide macro guidance and introduce the course. In-class teaching emphasizes teacher-student and student-student interaction to address difficult concepts and demonstrate key skills. According to Bloom's cognitive taxonomy, the online course primarily focuses on comprehension, retention, and some application, while in-class flipped learning can focus on higher-order abilities, such as application, analysis, evaluation, and creativity[7, 8]. In class, students mainly listen to the materials, make group reports, and conduct peer evaluations to cultivate teamwork spirit and improve thinking and innovation skills. Finally, while consolidating students' basic skills, their innovation and thinking abilities are also cultivated. In the post-class section, a large number of listening exercises are used to train listening strategies, and the combination of "viewing, listening, and speaking" is truly achieved. Specific video teaching materials are released at regular intervals each week, with corresponding listening knowledge points and extensive exercises assigned as homework. Guided by the exercise list, students independently choose the time to complete video watching, assignments, participate in practice, proofread text, listening, discussion, audio recording, and other activities. The participation in this multi-element interactive mixed teaching mode is more diverse and varied. Classroom tests are conducted on corresponding knowledge points. Within this implementation framework, the platform's "self-built material" function is utilized to encourage students to collect and organize audio and video materials, continuously expand and update the existing audio and video material library, and help students understand the key and difficult points of communicative output tasks. After the task is assigned, teachers use diversified teaching methods to inspire students' exploratory thinking about communicative scenarios, mobilize their reasoning consciousness, and enhance their reasoning abilities and learning motivation towards general French communicative scenes [4].

The implementation model places both teachers and students in equally important positions as the main subjects. Teachers and students jointly participate in constructing classroom knowledge, and the students' participation throughout the process affects the teacher's course planning, theme initiation, organization of in-class and out-of-class activities, and the eventual design and supplementation of content. Based on the feedback from the students' completion of listening exercises after watching videos, the class mainly focuses on meeting the requirements of the course outline and considering the students' personalized needs and autonomous learning abilities, allowing the students to become true active learners in the learning process. The asynchronous SPOC blended teaching model empowers students with complete and in-depth learning experiences, which helps to enhance their learning motivation and improve course completion rates [9].

## 3.2. Achievement Evaluation

The assessment of the listening and speaking skills course adopts a blended teaching method of online and offline settings, emphasizing the cultivation of learning philosophy and the establishment of correct perspectives on learning and achievement [10]. Consequently, the evaluation method is correspondingly modified. In addition to traditional achievement-based evaluations such as mid-term and final examinations, formative evaluations are integrated into a "pre-class, in-class, and post-class" process-based evaluation system. The out-of-class extension and expansion section is entirely accomplished on the SPOC learning platform, with emphasis on the feedback mechanism of online communication and learning. The pre-class video study and pre-class assessments account for 10%, classroom participation for 20%, and post-class extension homework completion for 30%. The mid-term and final exams make up 40%. The online section covers the learning of audio and video materials, online interaction, assignments, attendance, group tasks, and the number of chapter

readings. The offline study data include classroom interaction, in-class testing records, mid-term and final examinations, etc. This approach truly establishes a process-based course evaluation system with "multi-dimensional assessment and multi-faceted evaluation".

## 4. Conclusions

The incorporation of both online and offline components in the SPOC platform is an emerging trend in the development of English language teaching. After nearly 7 years of reform and experimentation, the present study has created a mature and comprehensive "blended teaching model" that applies SPOC courses in daily teaching. This approach has effectively addressed the issues in traditional listening and speaking, skills courses and showcased a good demonstration effect, thus bearing significant promotional value. The implementation model of this study has significantly enhanced the students' autonomous learning capabilities and maximized the auxiliary learning function of the Internet, fully promoting student agency in the learning process.

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