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Factors Related to the English Listening and Speaking Abilities of Undergraduate and Junior College Students in China: An Empirical Study Based on CGSS2021 Data

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Abstract: Background: In the context of global knowledge economy integration and the internationalization of higher education, English listening-speaking proficiency has emerged as a fundamental core literacy for university students. Nevertheless, Chinese university students generally face the predicament of Deaf and Mute English. Concurrently, existing research exhibits systematic limitations in its understanding of influencing factors, particularly lacking in-depth exploration of the rule of multi-dimensional factors, such as differences between undergraduate and junior college students, and family capital. Objective: To systematically examine the association between English listening-speaking proficiency among undergraduate and junior college students and multidimensional factors, including gender, academic stage (tertiary), institutional hierarchy, pre-tertiary institutional provenance, disciplinary category, family socioeconomic status, and parental educational attainment. Methods: Utilizing data from the Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS) 2021, 227 valid samples of undergraduate and junior college students were selected. A composite score of English listening-speaking proficiency(self-assessed listening+-speaking)was constructed. Stepwise multiple linear regression modeling was employed to analyze the independent predictive effects of explanatory variables: gender, age, ethnicity, tertiary program stage, pre-tertiary institutional classification, institutional hierarchy level, disciplinary category, family socioeconomic status, and parental educational attainment. Results: Respondents demonstrated overall below-average English listening-speaking proficiency (mean composite score: 5.63±1.58), exhibiting a pyramid-shaped structural imbalance wherein oral competence constituted a disproportionate disadvantage (40.97% scoring in the low-competency stratum). Multivariate analysis revealed: (1)male students' proficiency was significantly lower than female peers'(β = -0.413, p = 0.029); (2) undergraduates significantly outperformed junior college students (β = 1.212, p <0.001); (3) paternal educational attainment demonstrated a significant positive association with proficiency (β = 0.277, p <0 .001). Conclusion: Significant stratified differentiation manifests in undergraduate and junior college students' English listening-speaking proficiency, with the Deaf and Mute English predicament being prominent. Gender disparity, the academic stratification chasm (reflecting institutional segregation of educational resources), and the intergenerational transmission of paternal cultural capital constitute the core drivers of this competency differentiation. An imperative exists to systematically enhance students' pragmatic linguistic competence and bridge the competency divide by: reengineering curricular architecture, optimizing resource distribution, and pioneering intergenerational support mechanisms.

Keywords: English Listening and Speaking ability; CGSS 2021; University Student; Junior College Student
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1.Introduction

1.1 Research Background

The deepening integration of the global knowledge economy and sustained advancement of higher education internationalization have propelled English listening-speaking proficiency to the status of a strategic cornerstone competency for university students engaging in international academic discourse, cross-cultural collaboration, and global opportunity acquisition [1]. China's Standards of English Language Ability (CSE) explicitly mandates that learners in tertiary education possess the capacity for "effective interpersonal and academic exchanges in English", establishing definitive normative benchmarks for linguistic competence development [2]. Yet a structural contradiction warrants critical attention: converging empirical evidence consistently documents the pervasive Deaf and Mute English predicament among Chinese university students—characterized by superior receptive skills(listening) relative to underdeveloped productive abilities(speaking), with overall proficiency exhibiting substantial deficits relative to internationalized academic and professional demands [3-5]. This entrenched competence misalignment not only constrains individual competitiveness within the global labor market and professional advancement ceilings, but also constitutes a critical misalignment with Chinese higher education's strategic objective of cultivating "globally competent talent", presenting an imperative necessity for reconciliation [6-7].

Focusing on undergraduate and junior college students—a critical transitional cohort—the differential distribution of their English listening-speaking proficiency constitutes an outcome shaped by multifaceted latent factors. Persistent scholarly limitations exist regarding attributional perspectives toward this group's competence stratification: macro-level policy analyses predominantly address systemic constraints(e.g., uneven regional resource allocation, urban-rural disparities) while failing to engage institution-/individual-level specificities [8-9]. Conversely, micro-empirical investigations typically examine singular demographic attributes (e.g., gender, age) or restricted educational-background variables(e.g., secondary school categorization) in isolation, neglecting integration of multi-dimensional determinants—delineated through individual background attributes (gender, ethnicity, age), core educational-experiential characteristics (tertiary program stage, institutional hierarchy level, disciplinary category, pre-tertiary institutional provenance), and family capital endowments (socioeconomic status, parental educational attainment)—within a unified analytical framework to systematically test their discrete correlative influences [10-12]. Crucially, whether structural differentiate between undergraduate and junior college education systems—encompassing multi-dimensional institutional compartmentalization across student selection mechanisms, curricular objectives, pedagogical resource investment, and internationalized practice opportunities—constitute pivotal predictors of oral-aural competence stratification remains empirically unverified using nationally representative sampling. This systematic absence of multi-factor association assessment profoundly constrains both mechanistic understanding of collegiate English proficiency differentiation and the design of granular intervention strategies[13-14].

This study aims to transcend prevailing research constraints by leveraging nationally representative and academically authoritative data from the China General Social Survey 2021 (CGSS-2021) to conduct systematic multidimensional empirical analysis of correlative factors among undergraduate and junior college students. The primary objectives are: (1) utilizing a national probability sample and multiple linear regression modeling to concurrently examine independent statistical associations between the composite English listening-speaking proficiency score and the following variables: gender, age, ethnicity, tertiary program stage (junior college/undergraduate), graduation from provincial key-point secondary schools, enrollment in ministry-affiliated institutions, disciplinary classification (STEM fields/non-STEM fields), self-assessed family socioeconomic status, paternal educational attainment, and maternal educational attainment; (2) precisely identifying robust independent predictors of collegiate oral-aural competence with directional magnitude quantification; thereby advancing an empirically grounded framework for comprehending multidimensional stratification mechanisms, facilitating evidence-informed differentiated pedagogical reforms and resource optimization within higher education institutions, and ultimately

informing nationally-scaled policy solutions to the Deaf and Mute English predicament.

2.Methods

2.1 Sources of Data

The data employed in this study originate from the China General Social Survey (CGSS 2021)administered by theNational Survey Research Center (NSRC) at Renmin University of China. Initiated in 2003, CGSS represents China's inaugural nationally representative, comprehensive, and continuous academic survey project. Targeting Chinese citizens aged 18+, CGSS employs face-to-face interviews to conduct repeated cross-sectional surveys capturing multi-level data spanning societal, community, household, and individual dimensions. The survey implements multi-stage stratified probability proportional to size (PPS) sampling, encompassing 100 county-level units plus 5 major metropolitan areas, ensuring robust population representativeness. CGSS 2021 constitutes the most recently released wave, covering 320 communities across 19 provinces with 8,148 valid responses (56.14% urban residents; 45.15% male; mean age = 51.64 years; mean educational attainment = 9.20 years; 73.07% married) [15]. This investigation focuses exclusively on undergraduate and junior college students, with data scrubbing procedures yielding 227 valid cases for analysis.

2.2 Variable Construction

2.2.1 Explained Variables

The dependent variable in this study constitutes respondents' English listening-speaking proficiency. The item "How would you rate your English listening ability?" served as the measurement basis for English listening competence, with this raw variable comprising a five-point ordinal scale (1 = cannot understand at all, 2 = relatively poor, 3 = average, 4 = relatively good, 5 = very good). Concurrently, the item "How would you rate your English speaking ability?" operationalized oral proficiency measurement, featuring an identical five-point ordinal scale (1 = cannot speak at all, 2 = relatively poor, 3 = average, 4 = relatively good, 5 = very good). The composite English listening-speaking proficiency score was constructed through summation of both item scores [16-19].

2.2.2 Explanatory Variables

This study incorporated the following explanatory variables: gender (male; female), age (continuous), ethnicity (Han; ethnic minority), tertiary program stage (junior college; undergraduate), graduation from provincial key-point secondary school(yes; no), enrollment in ministry-affiliated higher education institution (yes; no), disciplinary category (STEM fields [science/technology/engineering/agriculture/medicine]; non-STEM fields), self-assessed family socioeconomic status (below local average; at/above local average), paternal educational attainment, and maternal educational attainment—where parental education variables were operationalized through the item "What was your father's/mother's highest educational attainment?", originally featuring a thirteen-category classification (1 = no formal education; 2 = private tutoring/literacy programs; 3 = primary school; 4 = junior secondary school; 5 = junior upper-secondary school; 6 = general upper-secondary school; 7 = specialized secondary school (zhongzhuan); 8 = skilled workers' school (jixiao); 9 = adult education college certificate; 10 = full-time college diploma; 11 = adult education bachelor's degree; 12 = full-time bachelor's degree; 13 = graduate degree), subsequently recategorized into a five-level ordinal variable to enhance interpretability while aligning with China's educational hierarchy: "1 = primary education or below"(original 1–3), "2 = junior secondary education" (original 4), "3 = upper-secondary education"(original 5–8), "4 = college credential" (original 9–10), and "5 = bachelor's degree or higher" (original 11–13).

2.3 Statistical Analysis

Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS 25.0 software. Categorical data were presented as frequencies and percentages, while continuous variables were expressed as mean±standard deviation. Given that respondents' English listening-speaking proficiency scores approximated a normal distribution, whereas parental educational attainment and age violated normality assumptions, univariate analysesof proficiency scores employed independent samples t-tests (for binary variables) and Spearman's rank-order correlation (for continuous variables). Multivariable analysis utilized a stepwise multiple linear regression model. All statistical tests adopted a two-tailed significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

3.Results

3.1 General Characteristics of Respondents

Among 227 respondents, 104 were male (45.81%), 123 female (54.19%); 199 Han ethnicity (87.67%), 28 ethnic minorities (12.33%); 43 junior college students(18.94%), 184 undergraduates (81.06%); with age expressed as mean ± SD = 20.56±1.32 years. Regarding parental education: 38 fathers (16.74%) attained primary education or below, 87 (38.33%) junior secondary education, 55 (24.23%) upper-secondary education (including junior/general high schools, specialized secondary schools (zhongzhuan), and skilled workers' schools (jixiao)), 23 (10.13%) college credentials, and 24 (10.57%) bachelor's degrees or higher; 67 mothers (29.52%) held primary education or below, 70 (30.84%) junior secondary education,51 (22.47%) upper-secondary education, 19 (8.37%) college credentials, and 20 (8.81%) bachelor's degrees or higher. Other general characteristics are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1 The General Characteristics of the Respondents and the Results of T-test of English Listening and Speaking Ability

Variables	N (%)	English listening and speaking ability, Mean ± SD	t	*p*
Gender			-2.46	0.015
Male	104(45.81)	5.37 ± 1.49		
Female	123(54.19)	5.87 ± 1.58		
Ethnic group			-1.31	0.191
Han	199(87.67)	5.59 ± 1.54		
Ethnic minorities	28 (12.33)	6.00 ± 1.66		
Tertiary Program Stage			6.15	< 0.001
Undergraduate Studies	184 (81.06)	5.92 ± 1.46		
Junior College	43(18.94)	4.42 ± 1.37		
Whether graduated from the provincial key high school			-2.24- 2.24	0.026
No	191(84.14)	5.54 ± 1.51		
Yes	36(15.86)	6.17 ± 1.72		
Whether he or she is studying at a university affiliated to the central government or other state ministries			-2.31	0.022
No	209 (92.07)	5.57 ± 1.52		
Yes	18(7.93)	6.44 ± 1.82		
Profession			1.37	0.173
Non-science, engineering, agriculture and medicine	140(61.67)	5.75 ± 1.56		
Science, engineering, agriculture and medicine	87(38.33)	5.46 ± 1.55		
Economic status of the family			-0.92	0.358
Below the local average	43(18.94)	5.44 ± 1.40		
Local average or above	184 (81.06)	5.68 ± 1.59		

3.2 Current Status of Respondents' English Listening-Speaking Proficiency and Univariate Analysis Outcomes

Respondents' current English listening-speaking proficiency status is detailed in Tables 2 and 3. As presented in Table 2,

overall listening competence (M = 2.91, SD = 0.71) marginally exceeded oral proficiency (M = 2.73, SD = 0.70), both falling within the lower-middle range (5-point scale). Listening ability distribution exhibited a centrally clustered pattern: nearly half (48.46%) self-rated as "average", while high-competency groups ("relatively good" [17.62%] and "very good" [3.52%]) demonstrated lower proportions. Notably, 26.87% reported "relatively poor" listening skills, with 3.52% indicating "cannot understand at all". Oral proficiency deficiency proved more pronounced: 38.33% self-assessed as "relatively poor" speakers, supplemented by 2.64% reporting "cannot speak at all". The intermediate level ("average") comprised 44.05%, whereas high-level cohorts ("relatively good" and "very good") collectively constituted <15%.

Univariate analysis of the composite English listening-speaking proficiency metric revealed (Table 1): female respondents demonstrated significantly superior proficiency to males (5.87 ± 1.58 vs. 5.37 ± 1.49; t = -2.46, p = 0.015); undergraduates significantly outperformed junior college students (5.92 ± 1.46 vs. 4.42 ± 1.37; t = 6.15, p < 0.001); graduates of provincial key-point secondary schools exhibited enhanced competence (6.17 ± 1.72 vs. 5.54 ± 1.51; t = -2.24, p = 0.026); and students enrolled in ministry-affiliated institutions manifested significantly higher proficiency (6.44 ± 1.82 vs. 5.57 ± 1.52; t = -2.31, p =0 .022).

Spearman's rank-order correlation analyses in Table 3 revealed statistically significant positive associations between parental educational attainment and listening-speaking proficiency (ρ = 0.245-0.316, p < 0.001).

Table 2. Current Status of Respondents' English Listening and Speaking Proficiency Metrics

	Completely unable to understand/speak (1 point)	Relatively Poor (2 points)	Average (3 points)	Relatively Good(4 points)	Very Good (5 points)	Mean ± SD
English Listening Ability	8(3.52%)	61(26.87%)	110(48.46%)	40(17.62%)	8(3.52%)	2.91 ± 0.71
English Speaking Ability	6(2.64%)	87(38.33%)	100(44.05%)	30(13.22%)	4(1.76%)	2.73 ± 0.70

Table 3 Spearman Correlation Analysis of English Listening and Speaking Ability

Variables	English listening and speaking ability	Age	Father's education	Mother's education
English listening and speaking ability	—			
Age	0.017	—		
Father's education	0.316***	0.040	—	
Mother's education	0.245***	-0.021	0.645***	—

Note: * * * p < 0.001

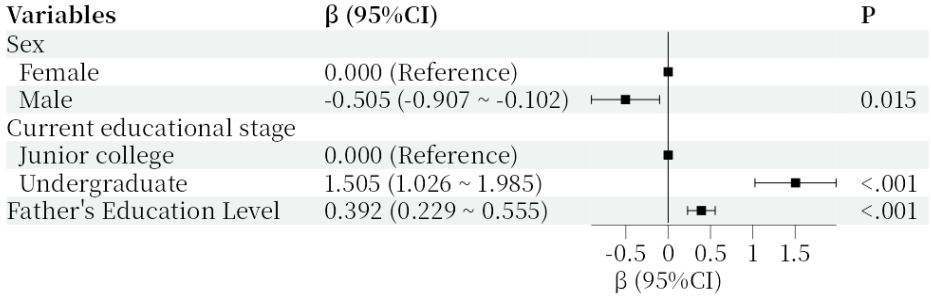
3.3 Results of Multiple Linear Stepwise Regression

Multiple stepwise linear regression analyses revealed significant predictive effects of gender, tertiary program stage, and paternal educational attainment on respondents' English listening-speaking proficiency (see Table 4 and Figure 1). Significant gender-based disparities emerged: male respondents demonstrated lower proficiency scoresthan females (β = -0.413, 95% CI: -0.781 ~ -0.045, p = 0.029). Using undergraduates as the reference category, junior college students exhibited significantly lower proficiency (β = 1.212, 95% CI: 0.723 ~ 1.700, p <0.001). Paternal education demonstrated a persistent positive association, with children's proficiency scores exhibiting progressive enhancement alongside elevated paternal educational attainment (β = 0.277, 95% CI: 0.116 ~ 0.437, p <0.001).

Table 4 Multiple Stepwise Linear Regression Results of the Respondents' English Listening and Speaking Ability

Variables	β	S.E	t	p	β (95%CI)
Intercept	4.128	0.282	14.644	<0.001	4.128 (3.575 ~ 4.680)
Sex					
Female					0.000 (Reference)
Male	-0.413	0.188	-2.199	0.029	-0.413 (-0.781 ~ -0.045)
Current educational stage					
Junior college					0.000 (Reference)
Undergraduate	1.212	0.249	4.859	<0.001	1.212 (0.723 ~ 1.700)
Father's Education Level	0.277	0.082	3.384	<0.001	0.277 (0.116 ~ 0.437)

Figure 1 Forest Plot of Multiple Linear Stepwise Regression Model



4.Discussion

4.1 Current Status of Respondents' English Listening-Speaking Proficiency: Pyramidal Structural Imbalance and the Persistent Deaf and Mute English Predicament

This study identified marked structural misalignment in English listening-speaking proficiency among undergraduate and junior college students. While listening competence (M = 2.91) marginally exceeded oral proficiency (M = 2.73), both resided within the lower-mid range (5-point scale) and exhibited a notably divergent pyramidal distribution. Regarding listening: high-competency tiers ("relatively good" or "very good") constituted merely 21.14% (17.62% + 3.52%), whereas intermediate competency ("average") encompassed 48.46%, and low-competency tiers ("relatively poor" or "cannot understand at all") comprised 30.39% (26.87% + 3.52%). Oral proficiency deficits proved more acute: low-competency prevalence ("relatively poor" or "cannot speak at all") surged to 40.97% (38.33% + 2.64%), intermediate representation reached 44.05%, and high-competency cohorts ("relatively good" or "very good") demonstrated significant contraction, aggregating below 15% (13.22% + 1.76%).

This pronounced disparity—receptive skills (listening) demonstrating relative superiority over productive skills (speaking)—confirms the persistent manifestation of the Deaf and Mute English predicament within China's tertiary foreign language education [20]. Empirical data unequivocally indicate that while students' self-assessed comprehension competence remains modest overall, it consistently surpasses their expressive proficiency. The fundamental etiology resides in the systemic decoupling of language input and output mechanisms. As emphasized by Krashen's Input Hypothesis, comprehensible input constitutes the bedrock of language acquisition through its qualitative adequacy and quantitative sufficiency [21]. Nevertheless, prevailing collegiate English pedagogy in China remains predominantly teacher-centered knowledge transmission, engendering critical deficits in authentic context-bound oral production opportunities both within and beyond classrooms. This input-output imbalance directly impedes the development of oral communicative competence, perpetuating the comprehension-production dissociation dilemma [22, 23].

More critically, the severe scarcity of high-proficiency cohorts warrants urgent attention. This study reveals that merely

21.14% of respondents attained "good" listening proficiency (relatively good + very good), while oral proficiency achievers plummeted to 14.98%. These proportions fall substantially below the CEFR B2-equivalent benchmark mandated by China's Standards of English (CSE) for "effective participation in social communication" among tertiary learners [24]. This competence deficit reflects a fundamental misalignment in collegiate English pedagogy: prevailing curricula and practices remain constrained by deep-rooted examination-oriented paradigms. With CET-4/CET-6 pass rates dominating evaluation frameworks, pedagogical resources disproportionately prioritizetest-amenable competencies—reading, writing, and listening (particularly test-taking strategies)—while systematically marginalizing oral training. This resource allocation imbalance entails collective communicative incapacitation among Chinese undergraduates in international academic and junior contexts [25-28]. The pervasive deficiency in fundamental oral proficiency—evidenced by >80% (low-level 40.97% + intermediate 44.05%) struggling to sustain basic academic discourse—directly contradicts China's strategic mandate to cultivate "globally competent talent". Crucially, effective cross-cultural communication and negotiation constitute core dimensions of global competence, yet students' oral proficiency shortfall has emerged as the critical bottleneck constraining global engagement [29].

4.2 Correlates of English Listening-Speaking Proficiency: Gender Gradient, Academic Stratification Chasm, and Paternal Intergenerational Cultural Capital Transmission

Multivariate modeling in this study delineates gender, tertiary program stage, and paternal educational attainment as constituting the core tripartite predictive structure for collegiate English listening-speaking proficiency. This finding underscores the multidimensional complexity of competence stratification in higher education, necessitating mechanistic analysis through three constitutive dimensions: socio-cultural construction, institutional selection mechanisms, and intergenerational capital transmission.

4.2.1 Gendered Disparities: Divergent Trajectories in Socio-Cultural Capital Accumulation

The gendered proficiency gradient manifests differential socio-cultural capital accrual. Male undergraduates demonstrated significantly lower listening-speaking proficiency scores than females—an advantage that remained robustly significant in multivariable modeling. This disparity may originate from socially constructed differential socialization: females internalize linguistic competence as pivotal cultural capital earlier through societal expectations, thereby driving sustained pedagogical investment (e.g., higher participation rates in extracurricular English activities). Neurocognitive evidence further suggests females' heightened phonological-prosodic sensitivity potentially enhances linguistic input processing efficacy [30]. Concurrently, latent preferences for female oral fluency within educational assessment systems may establish a self-reinforcing feedback loop [31].

4.2.2 Academic Stratification Chasm: Institutional Compartmentalization in Higher Education Resource Allocation

The academic stratification chasm exposes institutional stratification fractures in higher education resource allocation. junior college students exhibited significantly lower listening-speaking proficiency scores than undergraduates—a disparity whose core predictive influence was further confirmed by multivariable modeling. This pronounced gap reflects China's higher education system's hierarchical selection mechanisms and resource distribution logic: undergraduate institutions leverage Gaokao English cutoff scores to select linguistically competent cohorts, while their institutional privilege facilitates access to intensive linguistic resources (e.g., qualified instructors, foreign-taught courses, international exchange programs). Conversely, junior colleges remain entrenched in a vicious cycle of "weaker student foundations → scarce language training resources → constrained applied competence development", imposing pronounced constraints on productive skill acquisition—particularly oral proficiency—which demands extensive practical immersion [32].

4.2.3 Paternal Educational Capital: Intergenerational Transmission Effects of Institutional Credentialization

This study demonstrates that elevated paternal educational attainment exerts a persistent statistically significant positive effect on offspring's English listening-speaking proficiency. Notably, maternal educational attainment failed to achieve statistical significance in the modeling framework. This differential impact pattern originates fundamentally from divergent conversion efficiencies of distinct cultural capital typologies within the Chinese higher education field.

Per Bourdieu's capital theory, capital valuation hinges upon the symbolic congruencebetween its typological manifestation

and the institutional demands of specific fields (e.g., higher education environments). Elevatedpaternal educational attainment demonstrates heightened convertibility into explicit, institutionalized resource credentials. Within China's socio-cultural context, highly educated fathers leverage their structural dominance in familial economic decision-making and social networks to efficiently transmute academic advantages into structured linguistic practice opportunities directly utilizable by offspring—opportunities meticulously aligned with higher education field exigencies. Exemplary mechanisms include: securing multinational corporate internships via junior networks; facilitating access to international academic conferences (auditing/participation); and leveraging institutional alumni resources to broker premium overseas exchange programs. These socially embedded linguistic praxis arenas create critical conduits for students to bridge the chasm between classroom instruction and authentic contextual application [33].

Contrastingly, maternal educational capital accumulation predominantly manifests as internalized affective habitus and cultural cultivation (e.g., early linguistic sensitivity nurturing, learning habit formation, cross-cultural interest initiation). These capitals exert foundational scaffolding functions during offspring's preschool and basic education phases. However, upon entering higher education's standardized credentialization field—which prioritizes institutionalized praxis—such embodied capital demonstrates limited convertibility into field-sanctioned formal credentials (e.g., internationally recognized English certifications, tangible academic exchange deliverables, competitive accolades). This attenuated field-specific convertibility precipitates a diminished influence trajectory as undergraduates disengage from their familial origination milieu [34, 35].

4.3 Policy Propositions: Constructing Precision-Enabled Linguistic Pedagogical Ecosystems to Bridge Competency Chasms and Dismantle Intergenerational Transmission Barriers

To dismantle the Deaf and Mute English predicament and mitigate academic stratification and intergenerational transmission effects, an urgent imperative exists to construct a tripartite-integrated linguistic pedagogical ecosystem centered on output-driven pedagogy, precision-targeted resource allocation, and intergenerational capital conversion. Thecore intervention necessitates pedagogical restructuring that prioritizes oral production centrality, mandatorily embedding substantive contextualized communicative tasks (e.g., simulated international academic colloquia, technical negotiation drills) while deploying AI-powered oral diagnostics and VR-constructed immersive contexts to establish high-frequency interaction loops with real-time corrective feedback. Crucially, implementing institutional resource reciprocity requires forging deep linguistic education alliances between ministry-affiliated universities and junior colleges—enhancing junior-stage global communicative competence through shared expatriate instruction, joint certification frameworks, and faculty exchange mechanisms. The transformative breakthrough lies in innovating intergenerational capital conversion pathways: establishing targeted support initiatives leveraging existing international resources to prioritize paternally disadvantaged cohorts' participation in high-impact, low-cost global virtual practicums (e.g., UN online internships), while intensifying differentiated pedagogical scaffolding based on early English learning trajectories. Ultimately, through this policy triad—curricular reengineering, resource synergy, andcapital accessibility enhancement—a systemic competency leapfrogging can be catalyzed: transitioning from "passive reception" to "agentive production", and from "stratified ossification" to "dynamic equilibrium" [36].

4.4 Research Strengths and Limitations

This study's strengths encompass: (1) leveraging nationally representative CGSS 2021 data to pioneer systematic documentationofstructural stratification andintergenerational transmission patterns in undergraduate/junior college students' English listening-speaking proficiency; (2)innovatively validating paternal cultural capital's transmission mechanismvia institutionalized conduits (e.g., hierarchical resource allocation)—transcending homogenizing theoretical paradigms in family background research;(3)methodologically employing multivariable linear regression modelingto control confounders, thereby precisely quantifying independent effects of gender, tertiary program stage, and paternal educational attainment.

This study's core limitations comprise: (1) a constrained sample size (N=227, including merely 43 junior college students) that may partially compromise statistical power; (2) reliance on subjective self-assessment metrics lacking objective criterion validity verification (e.g., TOEFL iBT Speaking scores); (3) unaccounted key instructional moderators—includingEnglish

course rigor and expatriate instructor ratios—constrainingcausal attribution of observed academic stratification. Future investigations necessitate expanded sampling incorporating institutional-level moderators to elucidate underlying mechanisms.

5.Conclusion

Utilizing a nationally representative sample, this study empirically substantiates marked structural differentiation in English listening-speaking proficiency among undergraduate/junior college students, manifesting both pyramidal imbalance and the Deaf and Mute English predicament. Multiple linear regression modeling identified gender, tertiary program stage, and paternal educational attainment as core predictors: males exhibited significantly inferior proficiency to females; undergraduates demonstrated significantly stronger competence than junior college counterparts; and offspring proficiency scores increased progressively with elevated paternal education. These findings indicate paternal cultural capital may exert intergenerational transmission effects on higher education language proficiency via institutionalized conduits (e.g., privileged resource access). Consequently, undergraduate institutions must intensify discipline-specific oral-aural training (e.g., simulated international conferences); junior colleges require juniorly contextualized pedagogy; families should optimize linguistic resource allocation; and educational authorities must implement inclusive language practice initiatives for disadvantaged students to dismantle intergenerational transmission barriers.

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no

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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