

# Post Adaptability of Graduates – A Case Study of Business English Majors from H University

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**Abstract:** In recent years, the number of graduates in employment has increased significantly because of a boom in the number of graduates along with the advancement of the *Enrollment Expansion Plan of Colleges and Universities* in China. The issues about career selection and graduate employment have been enthusiastically discussed in academic circles as these issues are constantly emphasized by all walks of life. However, academic researchers often neglect matters pertaining graduates when they are already holding positions. This study believes that being employed is not the end point, but a new start, which means that matters pertaining graduates after being employed should also be cared about. This study specifically focuses on the post adaptability of graduates after being employed. In this study, through questionnaires, a number of employed Business English majors from the graduating class of 2011 to 2016 at H university in Shaanxi Province were selected. After that, using the variables from *The Fitness Subscale of Adolescent Mental Health Quality Questionnaire*, the participants' post adaptability was studied.

**Keywords:** Post adaptability; Graduates; Business English

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**Publication date:** August 2021; **Online publication:** August 30, 2021

## 1. Introduction

This section briefly introduces the background, purpose, and significance of the study as well as the structure of the thesis. First of all, the social and current academic background are discussed. Secondly, the purpose of the thesis and its significance for graduates, their schools, and companies are explored. Last but not least, the structure of the thesis is mentioned.

### 1.1. Background of the study

In recent years, a vast number of graduates from universities have applied their skills and knowledge to social construction. Essentially, they have always been regarded as the “bridge” between schools and the society, the “detector” of teaching effects of schools, as well as the “living water” for the sustainable development of various companies. Graduates, as the future and hope of the society to a certain degree, play a significant role in the healthy development of the society and economy.

There has been a growing number of graduates as universities expand their enrollment plans. This had led to the situation where the number of employed graduates has significantly increased along with some emerging matters relating to them.

“The employment situation among graduates is becoming more serious due to the impact of the international financial crisis (Zhu Xiaodong 220).” In the process of choosing a career, graduates who have just stepped into the society would firstly feel confused and develop a sense of maladjustment due to facing numerous options of careers. As time fleets by, many graduates are still facing the dilemma of being incapable of landing a job as soon as they graduate due to many unwittingly missed opportunities although

schools and many other sectors in the society have continuously contribute to solve this problem. This brings up another issue, which also directly leads to this situation, where most education are more concerned about assisting graduates to adapt to the society when they are still in schools.

## **1.2. Purpose and significance of the study**

This section briefly introduces the purpose of the thesis and its significance. The latter includes its significance for graduates, their schools, and companies.

### **1.2.1. Purpose of the study**

The employment of graduates is a matter of concern by all walks of life as “employment is people’s greatest livelihood.” In addition to that, the matters concerning graduates are closely related to the healthy development of the society. Academia generally believe that graduates are experiencing employment pressure under the current social environment. There is a negative correlation between graduates’ social adaptability and employment pressure; the worse their social adaptability, the greater the employment pressure (Ji Liya 185). The question of how to improve the adaptability of graduates has become the focus in solving this problem with the term, “adaptability” being introduced into the discussion of this problem.

This paper has chosen “post adaptability of graduates” as the research title and selected several employed graduates with Business English major from the graduating class of 2011 to 2016 at a university in Shaanxi Province as the research subjects.

## **1.3. Structure of the study**

This study consists of eight sections. The first section is an introduction where it mainly describes the research background, the purpose, significance, and structure of the study. The second section is a literature review, in which it briefly explains the key terms as well as summarizes and comment on previous research at home and abroad. The third section is a theoretical framework which expounds a theory used in the thesis. The fourth section is the research methodology, which includes the research questions, instrument, participants, process, and data analysis. The fifth section is the results and discussion, which includes detailed data and analysis on the questions concerned. The sixth section is the conclusion, in which the summary of the findings, implications, limitations, and prospects for future studies are included. The seventh section displays the questionnaire used in this study and the eighth section includes the list of works cited.

## **2. Literature review**

This section briefly introduces key terms, related theories, and previous studies. Frist, two main terms which are “graduates” and “post adaptability” are expounded. A major related theory standing in the thesis is then discussed and finally, previous studies of post adaptability at home and abroad are introduced.

### **2.1. Key terms**

There are several key terms which are used in the thesis. Two of the terms which are “graduates” and “post adaptability” are briefly introduced in this section.

#### **2.1.1. Graduates**

In this study, “graduates” refer to a group of previously full-time undergraduates who had already graduated after four years of studies in universities.

### **2.1.2. Post adaptability**

At present, to some extent, there is no accurate definition of the term “post adaptability” in academic circles. The boundaries between that term and other terms, such as “career adaptability” and “job adaptability” are relatively vague. This study holds that “post adaptability” refers to a relatively balanced and comfortable psychological state that individuals have after holding a new post.

Post adaptation is a dynamic process. The first thing to face after graduating is the change from an accustomed student status to a new identity as an individual at a new post. At the same time, realizing the existing mismatch with the new environment is compelling. An individual will have adverse expectations of his or her own development trend along with negative emotions. However, if fortunate, the individual would actively match himself or herself with the setting; thus, these adverse effects would be eliminated or mitigated, indicating that adaptation has occurred.

### **2.2. Previous studies on adaptability at home and abroad**

This section includes about two parts, in which previous studies about adaptability both at home and abroad are described here.

The theory of adaptability, as one of the theories in the field of psychology, has been widely used in more than 20 fields, such as politics, economy, and culture. The study of this theory often begins with the study of the origin of its term, “adaptability.” By its source, academics generally believe that it is derived from the term “adaptation,” which was put forward by Darwin in his work, *The Origin of Species*, in 1859. He stated that adaptation is about the need for species to change themselves moderately, matching with the conditions of the real environment in order to survive (Chen mingzhong, Yan Jingxiong 182). Pang Yu and her colleagues believe that the term “adaptation” came from a Latin word, “Adaptatus” (33).

### **3. Theory of mentality adapt ability of college students**

Lu Chunli believes that the term “mentality adapt ability” is not an empty concept, but a highly operable one (4). Therefore, in June 2004, she put forward the theory of mentality adapt ability of college students in her study.

She argued that it is one of the most important signs of college students’ mental health and the concentrated embodiment of their comprehensive quality (Lu Chunli 4). In addition, she proposed five aspects in mentality adapt ability of college students: academic adaptation, interpersonal relationship, social adaptation, collective adaptation, and self-integration (Lu Chunli 4). These five aspects have reflected the structural composition of college students’ mentality adapt ability, in which they are able to better meet the requirements of factor analysis and for explanation (Lu Chunli 14).

### **4. Research methodology**

This section includes five subsections, which are research questions, research instrument, research participants, research process, and data analysis. Research questions describe three questions that have been analyzed in this thesis. Research instrument describe the questions set in the questionnaire. Research participants introduce the background of the subjects participating in the study. Research process explains the whole process of the survey. Data analysis expounds the process of addressing the data obtained.

#### **4.1. Research questions**

The following three questions have been analyzed based on the data obtained from the questionnaires distributed via Wenjuanxing platform ([www.wjx.cn](http://www.wjx.cn)):

- (1) Are graduates able to adapt to their initial posts?
- (2) If not, what are these maladaptations?
- (3) What can people do in order to alleviate these maladaptations?

#### 4.2. Research instrument

This study explored the post adaptability of graduates. In order to determine the degree of their adaptation to their initial posts and the maladaptations that they are suffering from, as well as provide targeted suggestions, a survey questionnaire was developed to gather information for the thesis.

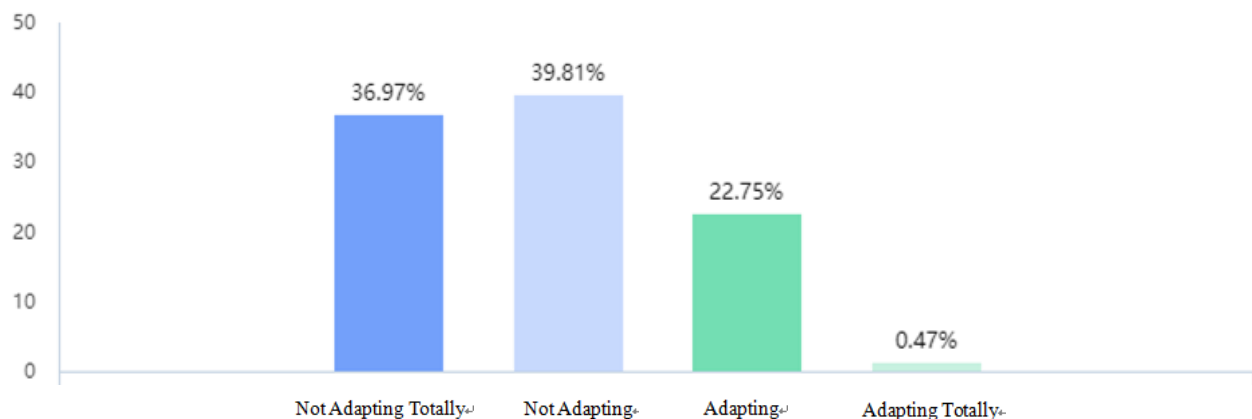
The questionnaire consisted of 19 questions, in which 18 were close-ended questions and 1 of them was an open-ended question. In order to look for suitable participants, the first question was set to filter. The second and the third were set to obtain basic information from the participants. The fourth to the sixth were set such as to determine the factors which might have an influence on the post adaptability of graduates. The seventh, fourteenth, and fifteenth questions were set such as to study the degree of adaptation of graduates to their posts and the changes. The eighth was set such as to determine the performances that the graduates have if they do not adapt to their posts. For the purpose of analyzing how to alleviate the issues faced by graduates and to put forward effective suggestions for graduates, colleges, and employers, the ninth to nineteenth questions were included in the questionnaire.

#### 5. Results and discussion

All the research topics in this thesis have been analyzed according to the data obtained from the questionnaires. The study found that most participants were not able to adapt to their initial posts and suffered from some maladaptations at their initial posts. In regard to that, several suggestions have been put forward at the end of this section.

##### 5.1. Degree of post adaptability of graduates

**Figure 1** shows that 76.78% of the graduates from all the questionnaires collected felt a sense of maladjustment during their first posts, 22.75% of the graduates were relatively adapting to their posts, and only 0.47% of the graduates fully adapted to their posts.

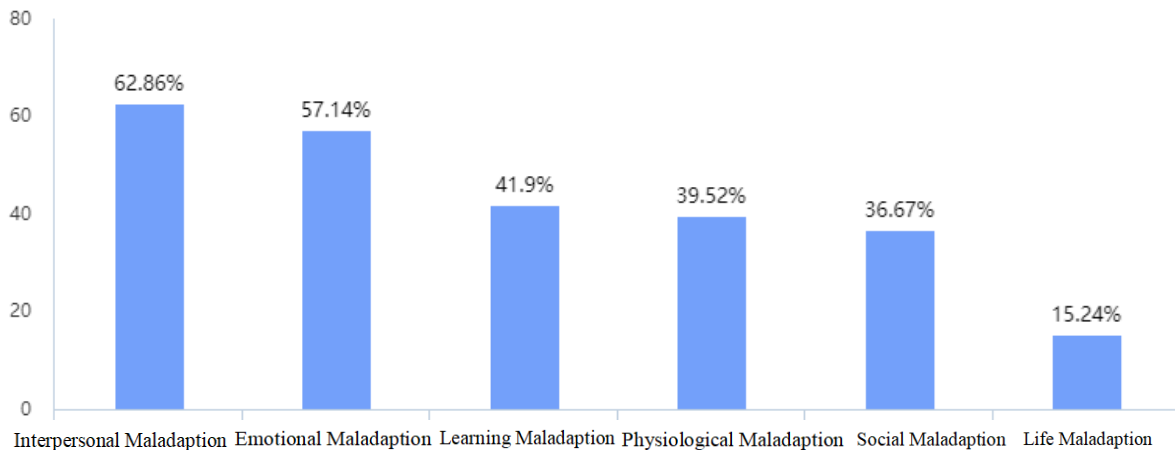


**Figure 1.** Degree of post adaptability of graduates

Therefore, it can be appreciated that almost all the graduates, in the face of their initial positions, were not able to fully adapt to their posts based on the above data.

## 5.2. Post maladaptations

The data recovered from **Figure 2** indicated that more than half of the graduates had unhealthy emotions, such as frustration, confusion, etc., and they also had issues with interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, more than 40% of the graduates felt that they were not able to fully apply what they had learned in their university years or even acquire new knowledge. In addition, less than 40% of the graduates felt that they were unable to integrate into the new environment, and had some unpleasant physical reactions, such as nausea, vertigo, and so on. A small number of graduates, about 15.24%, felt that their life was difficult to some extent in those days.



**Figure 2.** Major post maladaptations

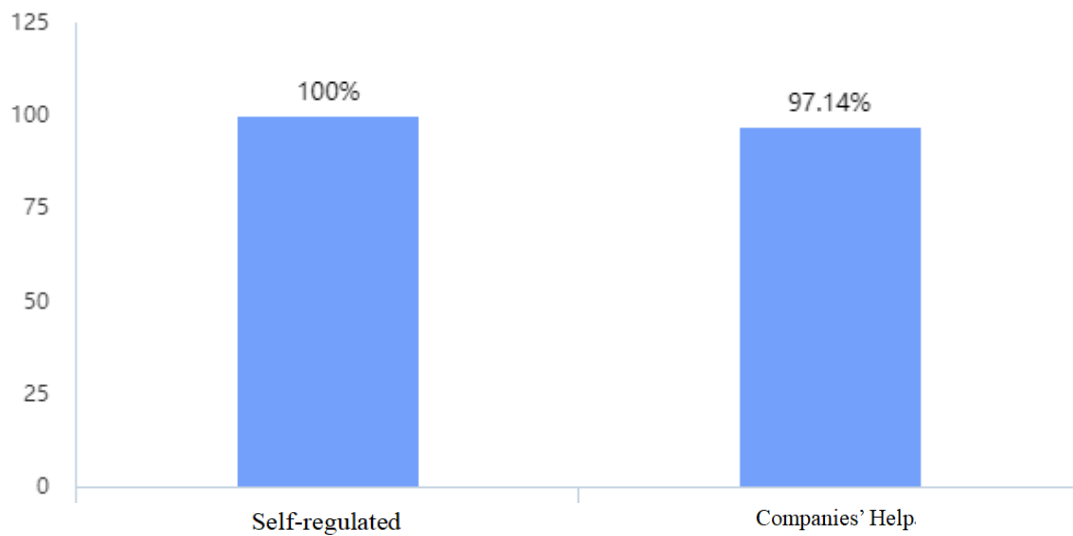
There are many existing post maladaptations, such as having fever, nervous breakdown, feeling lonely, etc. However, all these can be categorized into six major types of adaptation issues during their initial posts: issues with interpersonal adaption, emotional adaption, learning adaption, physiological adaption, social adaption, and life adaption.

## 5.3. Suggestions to alleviate maladaptations

It is evident that most of the participating graduates were not able to adapt to their initial posts and were suffering from some maladaptations then. A far more important issue is on how to alleviate these maladaptations. Several valid and targeted suggestions for graduates, their schools, and companies have been recommended.

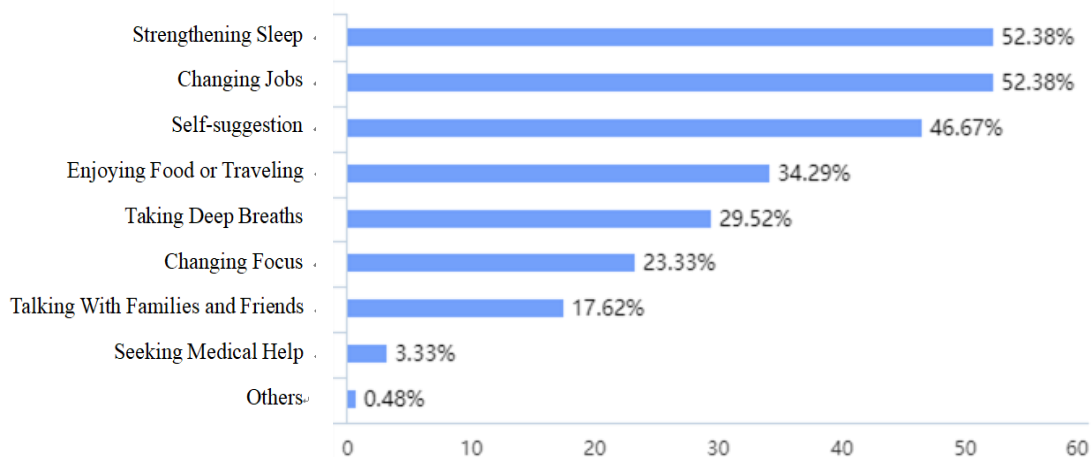
### 5.3.1. Suggestions for graduates

The survey found that when the graduates were not adapting to their posts, they were able to self-regulate, and all of them had alleviated their sense of maladjustment effectively as shown in **Figure 3**.



**Figure 3.** Means of alleviating maladaptations

As shown in **Figure 4**, more than half of the graduates (52.38%) chose to ease their discomfort by strengthening sleep and changing jobs; 46.67% of them felt that self-suggestion is an effective way; more than one-third of them (34.29%) chose to leave their jobs to travel or enjoy food; 29.52% of them felt that taking deep breaths to relax when feeling nervous is effective; 23.33% of them temporarily shifted their focus to other things; less than one-fifth (17.62%) talked to their families and friends when maladaptations occurred, while a few graduates sought medical help instead.



**Figure 4.** Ways used by the participating graduates to alleviate maladaptations

It can be appreciated from the above data that graduates themselves play a key role in effectively alleviating their own sense of maladjustment. Maladjustments, to some degree, can often be greatly reduced via their own measures.

First of all, in the face of stress, graduates should believe that in their own efforts, they will be integrated into the new environment by putting their mentality in the right place and often giving themselves hints. Secondly, when feeling anxious, graduates should temporarily withdraw from their work and do something they are interested in so as to shift their attention to something more relaxed before returning to their posts. Last but not least, they should also open up to their families and friends to share not only their joys but also their troubles since by listening and sharing, anxiety and discomfort can often be alleviated.

## **6. Conclusion**

This section includes three parts: summary of the findings, implications and limitations, as well as prospects for future studies.

### **6.1. Summary of the findings**

There are some major findings based on above sections.

- (1) This study learned that most graduates generally have a sense of maladjustment when they are in the face of their initial posts.
- (2) These maladaptations are usually manifested as issues with interpersonal, emotional, learning, physiological, social, and life adjustments.
- (3) In order to alleviate maladaptations, the three most popular ways that have been used by graduates include strengthening sleep, changing jobs, and self-suggestion.
- (4) For graduates to adapt to a new environment, the top three methods that graduates hope for their companies to use include increasing work arrangements, holding meetings or parties, and providing opportunities to learn new skills.

### **6.2. Implications and limitations**

This study hoped to explore the post adaptability of graduates adequately and comprehensively; however, there are still many limitations due to the lack of full academic ability.

The research subjects in this study only included a group of graduates from one major of one university; thus, the conclusion can only explain the current situation of the major to some degree. There is a limited value of reference for peers who might have the ability to study the post adaptability of graduates from other majors.

### **Disclosure statement**

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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