

Study on Improving English Reading Ability of Non-English Majors

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Abstract

English reading plays an important role in both autonomic learning and teaching. English reading entails a variety of skills, such as vocabulary comprehension, text analysis, answer screening. Students need years of learning to achieve success. Based on an assessment of the English reading learning interest, learning status and learning ability of non-English majors, this paper discusses the strategies to improve the English reading ability of non-English majors from the standpoints of English reading learning status, reasoning analysis, influence of English reading learning motivation, and measures to improve reading ability.

Keywords

Non-English Majors; English Reading Ability.

1. Current Status of the Learning of English Reading and Analysis of its Causes

In the context of global integration, the cultural exchanges between countries are becoming more and more frequent, which has led to English learning becoming a required course for many college students. Reading, as one of the five key items of "listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation", is also the one with the highest weight in most Chinese English tests, which has an important influence on the majority of college students. However, considering individual differences and existing teaching methods, most college students are still passive English learners, who lack effective English learning methods. Many non-English major English teachers in colleges and universities still adopt backward teaching concepts, outdated reading materials in teaching content and arrangement, and fail to update students' learning concepts in time. Their teaching content is sometimes seriously divorced from reality, which makes it impossible for students to find a point of convergence between English reading and their own academic development. In the compulsory courses of non-English majors, there are only a few English-related courses, and students are not actively interacting with teachers. They believe that English reading is not closely related to their future study or employment. Under the pressure of college entrance and self-induced anxiety, many students invest a lot of time and energy in English reading, but the final learning effect is not obvious. The long-term effort does not pay off, so students gradually lose confidence in English reading, i.e., their sense of self-efficacy is reduced. Non-English majors should adjust their learning mentality in time. Teachers should provide targeted guidance to students after finding problems in their English reading learning process, and use efficient teaching strategies to help students rebuild their self-confidence and improve their English reading ability.

2. The Main Factors Influencing Motivation to Learn English Reading

1) Academic goal

Many non-English majors only take English courses as one of the tasks to complete their college studies, merely attending classes on time and finishing the English reading tasks assigned by

teachers. Influenced by the college English tests of CET-4 and CET-6 and postgraduate exams, many students only passively study English reading and try their best not to fail national English tests. Under this influence, English reading has gradually become a heavy task for many students. Once passed, most students stop reading English articles and their reading skills could gradually decline.

2) Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to the speculations and judgments made by individuals on their ability to complete a certain behavior. Albert Bandura defines self-efficacy as "the degree to which people are confident that they can use the skills they have to do a particular job." A few non-English majors are still interested in English reading and take the initiative to learn more about it after class to improve their English reading ability. They can get a sense of achievement in English reading, so they will be more assertive about their English reading ability. However, most non-English majors are not interested in English learning and cannot get timely and effective positive reinforcement in English reading, so they do not have a high sense of self-efficacy.

3) The teaching effect

Some teachers of non-English majors still use rote teaching, and cannot effectively convey the processing of English discourse, or the interpretation of the English reading. They rely on only the most basic Chinese interpretation of the word meaning and pick out some words or grammar, and thus cannot really stimulate students' interest in reading, much less give students a positive psychological hint.

4) Lack of necessary understanding of cultural background

Many non-English majors only have a superficial understanding of English words and sentences, without in-depth consideration of the cultural background of different countries (Yang Hongjie; 183). China has a long history and culture with numerous dynasties, mainly influenced by farming culture, and Chinese people are used to relatively implicit language expression. On the other hand, British and America are greatly influenced by the ocean, and their maritime trade is relatively developed. Their language expression is relatively direct and highlights the key points. English is a hypotactic language, in which words and clauses are connected in linguistic form to express grammatical meaning and logical relations. It pays attention to explicit connection, sentence form and structural integrity. Chinese is a parataxis language, which rarely if ever uses linguistic form to connect sentences, but expresses them through the meaning of words and clauses, paying attention to implicit coherence and logical order, as well as the function and meaning of sentences. English sentences are generally pre-centered, while Chinese sentences are generally post-centered. When doing reading comprehension, many college students cannot adjust to the logical changes, so they have trouble understanding the meaning of the article.

3. Measures to Improve Reading Ability

1) Renew teaching methods

Teachers can divide English reading tasks into three stages: First, send the article to the students in advance, ask them to perform a good preparation, i.e., briefly scan the article, understand the general meaning, and mark the new words. Combine the words with the context, then go to find. Second, Teachers first supplement the necessary historical and cultural background for the students, dividing the article into several major sections according to the meaning, and ask the students to summarize. Teachers should pay attention to select relatively new reading materials to stimulate students' interest in reading. But they need to ensure that students can gain knowledge and improve their confidence. When explaining the article, teachers can describe some images or classic characters or scenery, focus on the explanation, so that students can immerse themselves in the article to feel the emotions of the characters,

and grasp the central idea of the article. Teachers are no longer the subjects of the learning. The classes are student-oriented. Teachers try to stimulate students' initiative, require students to work in groups and have a discussion. Group members should actively express and share what they have learned from the article, what they did not understand from the article, and why. Group cooperation can inspire students to think carefully, let them learn to work cooperatively through communication with others, and discover their own bad reading habits. Teachers should listen to the students' group discussion carefully, correct the mistakes in time and guide the students' discussion results. Teachers can also encourage students to make presentations in class and share their reading experiences with others through group work. This not only helps cultivate students' ability to do things independently, but also enables them to understand an article more deeply and comprehensively. Through class speeches, students will have a deeper understanding of English reading articles.

2) Expand Vocabulary

Many non-English majors regard vocabulary as a number. For many words, students only understand their basic meaning rather than understand the use of words in the specific context, and rarely pay attention to the origins of words. Therefore, once students encounter many synonyms, they cannot distinguish or detect them. Most non-English majors are accustomed to rote learning to expand their vocabulary, which is not only slow in taking effect, but also easy to forget. Expanding vocabulary is not only about increasing numbers, but also about understanding how words are used. Knowing the true meaning of a word helps students grasp the author's thoughts and feelings in English reading articles, and is more conducive to students' understanding of the articles.

3) Summarize the idea of the passage

Before learning an English reading, students can guess what the passage will introduce according to the title of the passage. The first time they read the text, they should read it roughly to understand the general structure of the text. The second time reading, they need to read carefully and consider the confusing sentences according to the context. Try to guess the meaning of the author. Try to summarize the passage and analyze what descriptive techniques and techniques the author has used.

4. Conclusion

Since the reform and opening up, the teaching level of English reading in China has been greatly improved, but there are still some problems to be solved, such as backward teaching equipment and ideas, students' low reading interest, insufficient reading quantity. For the development of English reading teaching in the future, more attention should be paid to improving students' interest in reading, in order to transport students into British and American culture and feeling the charm of English.

References

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