

The Current Situations and Cultivation of College Students' Reading Ability

—Taking Engineering University as an Example

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Abstract—The paper mainly discussed the current situation of college students' reading ability and the way that how to cultivate their reading ability. From some of the related research we can see the current situations of college students' reading ability is declining. The contemporary college students' reading ability need to be improved. Reading habits need to be further guided. The reading quantity is obviously insufficient. The study analyzed three causes for the declining of college students' reading ability. The decline of college students' reading comprehension ability, the innovation-lacking education methods and the effect of the Internet all have great influence on the lacking of reading ability of college students. The cultivation of reading ability correlated with those current situations and causes. The result shows that college students need to establish good habits, improve methods and foster reading interests to strengthen the comprehensive reading ability.

Keywords—college students; reading ability; current situations; causes; decline; cultivation

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the main channels for people to input information and a process of extracting and attaining the information from the authors' spiritual products. Base on this, reading has become an important way for college students to acquire knowledge and enhance humanities. The university period is the key period of each adolescent to feel and cultivate social ability and achieve socialization. College students are in preparation for entering the society through learning concept of value, behavior norms and social skills of socialization. An important way of acquiring these knowledge is to read.[1] So it is necessary and critical for college students to improve their reading ability. College students should have good reading ability, not only in order to ensure the smooth completion of their university studies, but also lay the foundation for their future work and study to obtain accurate information and enhance their reading ability. So the cultivation of independent reading ability is a significant course for every college student.

In addition, with the development of the Internet, the main carrier of reading has gradually expanded from the original paper books to electronic books, web browsing and other media. This makes the types of reading materials more and more abundant, and there is no doubt that it is a great test for

the cultivation and promotion of college students'. Reading habits need to be further guided. The reading quantity is obviously insufficient. These factors will directly lead to the decline of college students' read in reading ability. According to the survey, the contemporary college students' reading quality, reading ability need to be further improved guided. The reading quantity is obviously insufficient. These factors will directly lead to the decline of college students' reading ability.

II. THE NECESSITY OF COLLEGE STUDENTS' READING ABILITY IMPROVEMENT

The social environment of the nationwide reading and the improvement of the reading ability of college students interact and influence each other.

As the data from the sixth and seventh national reading survey shown, there are 69.2%, 68.8% of the respondents generally believe that in today's society to read the personal survival and development is "very important" or "more important" respectively. Especially to increase knowledge, broaden their horizons proportion, with the purpose of reading up to 62%, is the purpose of reading the highest survey options. As the old saying goes that wisdom in hold, elegance in mold. Good reading ability of college students to change their own temperament, improve their moral self-cultivation, of course will improve the comprehensive quality of their own. As the whole society and the family increasingly focus on this group of college students who should pay more attention to their own critical thinking ability, active reading, and then their reading ability can be improved. So they will help promote the reading level of the whole society. So the reading atmosphere of the whole society is inseparable from the reading ability of college students.

III. THE CURRENT SITUATIONS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS' READING ABILITY

According to the Research of Engineering University Students' Reading Situation, the survey is based on the sample of 2010 undergraduate students in Beijing Construction University.[6]

The questionnaire is divided into 4 aspects of the survey. First aspect is about reading methods and habits. The results

show that deep reading (or word reading of the academic literature) accounted for 33.8%, shallow reading more, accounting for about 67.2%. It shows that reading depth maybe is not very meaningful. They don't pay much attention on the right reading habits. Second is about reading time. The average reading time within a week is around 2 hours. Most respondents read extracurricular books about 3 hours, but not so much. In a word, the amount of reading time is too limited. We find that the amount of books is very insufficient through the time analysis, especially for these engineer students. Third is about the reading materials and reading taste. Reading theme of entertainment and leisure accounts for 62.9%. Inspirational and success materials account for 46.7%. Literature and history and philosophy and art class account respectively for 46.7%, 37.8%. It tells that the selection of these reading materials for these engineer students is not very high.

Based on the analysis of the survey data, the paper concludes that current problems exist in college students' reading ability as followed.

A. Lacking of good reading habits

In the first place, the college students are lacking of good reading habits. For one thing, college students lack of independently reading ability. Due to the absence of the teacher's request, college students during the university period will have various period of confusion, which also makes the decline of learning efficiency or even losing learning efficiency. It is not helpful and favorable for college students to train the independently reading ability. For another thing, most college students just have the shallow reading, accounting for 67.2%, according to the survey. They may not have an effective combination of learning and thinking. Nowadays the rapid development of the network makes our way of reading changed greatly. In the fast and convenient reading mode, people would prefer to scan just to get information, floating on the surface of the reading, but this cannot appreciate the material in heart and taste the deep reflection. All these will make the independent reading ability reduced.

B. The reduction of reading quantity

Due to the lack of mandatory reading requirements as well as free time on the loose, college students' extracurricular reading time is significantly reduced. They only satisfy the amount of knowledge that the teachers impart in the classroom. The lack of reading makes the reading knowledge and the background knowledge is not rich enough, which may lead to the decline of college students' reading ability.

C. The imbalanced reading structure and strong utilitarian

According to the survey, nowadays the college students' reading structure is imbalanced and has a strong utilitarian.[2] Now after graduating from the University, whether the students choose to continue their study or work directly, they need professional knowledge learning. So students have to learn the professional knowledge in order to increase their core competitive ability, and the professional knowledge is more conducive to the future development in their workplace. Due to the emphasis on professional knowledge, the college students make use of the less time to reading classics and famous novels

and ignore the elevation of the humanity literacy. This phenomenon, not only shows the students' pragmatic, but also reveals their anxiety for the quick success and instant benefits. And it is inconsistent with the social demand of the type of the talents and also contrary with expectation of finding advocated versatile talents of the mind in the field of education.

D. The low level of reading taste

Last but not least, college students' reading taste is not very high and excellent. According to survey, we can find that most college students read the entertainment and leisure books. Fewer students read classics and famous novels. It is acknowledged that without so many academic pressures, many students cannot effectively manage their own spare time, but spend more time in reading entertainment programs, fashion magazines, and even martial arts novels, romantic novels, etc. If college students do not have a strong will of self-control, such reading material will lead to the lack of interest in learning, lack of dynamics in the class. This situation will cause the negative impact on college students to improve their reading ability.

IV. THE CAUSE ANALYSIS FOR THE LACK OF THE COLLEGE STUDENTS' READING ABILITY

The above describes the current situations of college students' reading ability; we can clearly see that college students' reading ability needs to be further improved. And the lacking of reading ability is largely due to the following aspects.

A. The weak reading comprehension ability

Comprehension ability is the most important factor in reading ability. The whole process of comprehension is based on the understanding from the language to the content and from the part to the whole. Then on this basis, readers need to deepen the understanding of the language form and part of the content. The process of comprehension needs to follow this rule. The ability of comprehension is based on the width and depth of students' knowledge reserves.[3] Therefore, the main reasons for the lacking of understanding ability are narrow range of knowledge, background information and the insufficient amount of reading quantity, especially in English reading. For instance, we see "He is Shylock" in the English reading. If students do not understand the knowledge of Shakespeare's plays in the UK, it may be interpreted as "he is a person named Sherlock." But the students who know about Shakespeare's drama and possess the abundant background information will learn about that the meaning is he was a miser. In addition, Lazy mode of thinking is also resulting in the weak reading comprehension. College students are just floating on the surface of the reading and lacking of deep thinking. Reading without thinking is equivalent to dining without chewing. As the old saying goes that learning without thought is labor lost, thought without learning is perilous. The process of reading and thinking process must be combined and we need to learn to post questions in reading. We should know that we have right to challenge the authority. In the process of constantly challenge and transcendence, we will gradually get rid of the lazy mode of thinking and go beyond ourselves or even to establish our own authorities. [4]

B. Lacking of innovation in education methods, resulting in students' weak reading ability

On the one hand, this point reflects in some of the middle school education style. Teachers pay attention to put the overall knowledge to students, as the result that students lack of knowledge of the inquiry process, understanding and internalization. So when students are in self-reading, they lack of innovation and reading comprehension. On the other hand, college students' reading test is based on a test paper to evaluate the overall reading ability of students, which has great limitations. And in the examination system, the students also pay much attention to the cultivation of skills, So on the surface, the students can give the right answer to the question, but in fact they do not really understand the meaning and purpose of the original text. Therefore, if the teaching methods can be innovated and paid much heed to the students' reading comprehension ability, it will be of great help to improve the reading ability of college students.

C. The effects of the network age on College Students' reading ability

With the development of the information age, the development of the network has a profound impact on College Students' reading. All kinds of vivid video, audio, picture information in the network are more attracting to the readers. In comparison, the reading of the book requires a lot of imagination and are more difficult to read than the picture information, video, audio, which leads students to be more responsive to pictures and videos. Therefore, students' reading ability is getting worse. With the development of a variety of readers and mobile phone reading software, college students prefer to use these multimedia reading methods because of its simplicity and convenience. But in the face of the network reading, the key point in the training of reading ability is the ability of attention control and distribution. In accordance with the goal of reading, readers should have a rational allocation of reading time, inhibit irrelevant to the topic of reading information interference, and actively use the network navigation auxiliary function, positioning and reading in the network.[1]Using this method is to avoid the occurrence of irrelevant information, thus losing the interest in the original reading, lowering the reading efficiency or even result in the stagnant reading comprehension ability. In addition, in today's vast network of knowledge, the network has increasing amount of reading reports. So only for "efficiency", but college students ignore their understanding of the content of the reading. College students directly download other people's reading summary or copy other people's reading reports from the Internet to complete the teacher's work. This is particularly reflected in the college graduation thesis writing. Only a few words on the Internet from others' views can form their own article. It is no use of helping elevate their reading ability.

V. THE CULTIVATION OF EFFICIENT READING ABILITY

A. Cultivation of the correct reading methods and establishment of good reading habits

A well-known person said: "a good way can make us better use of talent, but poor methods may hinder the development of

talent." Grasping the efficient method is playing important role of training reading ability. In the reading process, widespread bad reading habits of readers are the stumbling block. There are two habits as followed. The first one is literal reading each paragraph; word-by-word reading method will not effectively understand the whole context. The next mistake is that students always go back and read it ineffectively. Many readers think that their reading comprehension ability is insufficient. So they always go back to read the previous part without reading the whole text. There is no denying that that is the great obstacle to understanding the whole article. Based on these various improper reading habits, the silent reading is of great significance for the cultivation of the ability of rapid reading. Reading method is very meaningful and hard because it requires the reader to concentrate on reading, keep dedicate. We should take method which is from one word to one line, one line to the whole context to expand the reading horizons and strive to achieve fast reading, quick to understand, fast memory. In this way, the readers can achieve the effective combination of brain and eyes. So by the force of gradual accumulation, college students can develop good reading habits, improving the efficiency of reading ability.

B. Development of reading interest and improvement of reading comprehension ability

According to the survey, the reading ability of college students has increasing requirements effectively in today's society. In this case, the amount of class reading for students is very limited. So in order to expand their knowledge and adapt to the requirements of today's society, the need for a large number of college students extracurricular reading is very urgent, which expand the depth and width of wide range. Their reading extracurricular reading materials can be quite extensive. Because students' spare time is relatively abundant, they can choose according to their own interests, cultivate their interest in reading, and enrich the reading level of thinking. On this basis, college students should pay attention to the cultivation of reading comprehension ability. In the process of reading, college students should focus on the evaluation of the formation of the reader's own thinking of the article instead of accepting the views of others just simply and one-sidedly. For others the assessment effectively is not only conducive to the cultivation of independent thinking of the reader, it is also helpful to enrich the theory of others and promote the collision of ideas. In this process, it is helpful for the formation of new ideas. There is one paper illustrating one theory about critical thinking. The writer in that article advocates adopting the Reading-Discussion-Writing Approach to improve students' critical thinking. By this way, independent thinking and opinion will also be improved. Adopting the reading-discussion-writing approach to develop critical reflective thinkers fits for academic award and is helpful to cultivating the comprehensive talents with both language competence and critical thinking ability[5].

VI. CONCLUSION

To be concluded, the paper mainly tells the current situations of college students' reading ability as well as causes of reading ability decline and lacking. Most of the survey result

shows that we college students need to put an eye on the cultivation of reading ability because we are pioneering group of the whole society. The cultivation of reading ability refers to many aspects. Here we talk about the establishment of good reading habits and improvement of reading comprehension ability and critical thinking.

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