

The Analysis of the Current Situation of College Students' English Reading Affection: Taking the Non-English Major Freshmen of Taishan University as an Example

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Received 16 June 2021; accepted 22 August 2021

Published online 26 September 2021

Abstract

With the definition of the concept of English reading literacy, reading affection has become an important topic in English reading research. Reading affection is an important regulatory factor in the reading process, which directly affects the quality and effect of reading. In this study, 143 non-English major freshmen from Taishan University were sampled to implement an English reading affection questionnaire survey, and the current situation of learners' English reading affection was analyzed from the three dimensions: reading attitude, affective experience and value evaluation. The survey results show that college students have a certain affective attitude towards English reading, but the overall positive affection needs to be improved.

Key words: Reading literacy; Reading affection; Reading attitude; Affective experience; Value evaluation

Lu, L., & Li, Q. (2021). The Analysis of the Current Situation of College Students' English Reading Affection: Taking the Non-English Major Freshmen of Taishan University as an Example. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 21(1), 37-40. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/hess/article/view/12321> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/12321>

Reading literacy is one of the core literacy of learners (Li, 2018). Wang Qiang and Aona Rentuya (2015) pointed out: "Foreign language reading literacy consists of two parts: foreign language reading ability and foreign language reading character. Foreign language reading ability is composed of foreign language decoding ability and foreign language reading comprehension ability; foreign

language reading character includes foreign language reading habits and foreign language reading experience. The two parts complement each other: reading ability is the foundation of reading character, and reading character is a strong support for the continuous development of reading ability." With the definition of the concept of foreign language reading literacy, reading affection has become an important topic in the field of foreign language reading research. The topic has aroused more and more attention and discussion. Reading affection not only affects the improvement of reading skills and the formation of reading habits, but also directly reflects the reading experience. However, there are currently few researches on college students' foreign language reading affection.

THE CONNOTATION OF READING AFFECTION

In the late 1970s, Krashen, an expert in second language acquisition research, proposed the theory of language monitoring mode. The Affective Filter Hypothesis (The Affective Filter Hypothesis) believes that the learner's affective factors are involved in the process of language acquisition, play a role in filtering language input, and directly affect the input and output of language learners. Positive affections can effectively promote language learning and improve learning efficiency; negative affections hinder language learning, suppress cognitive functions such as understanding and memorizing, and affect learning efficiency. Reading affection is "obtained and formed through all the process of reading activities or under the influence of others, and runs through the entire reading activity." It is a kind of stable affection towards reading activities (Ge, Li, & Zhang 2011)." Reading affection is the emotion for reading activity. At different stages of reading activity, reading affection has different

manifestations: reading attitude, affective experience and value evaluation.

Before reading, reading affection focuses on attitudes towards various reading activities or preferences for reading-related activities. Different individuals may have different affective states when dealing with reading activities. Some individuals have active reading attitudes, and some individuals are often in a passive state. The individual learner's previous reading experience directly affect the formation of reading attitudes. Different reading attitude reflects different reading affection. The function of reading affection in this stage is mainly referred to motivation and preparation before reading (Ge, Li, & Zhang, 2011). It is generally believed that when the learner is in a certain negative affective state, the real reading process will not occur, and the development of English reading teaching is almost meaningless. In reading activities, the performance of reading affection is the individual's affective input and subjective experience towards the reading activity being carried out. Individuals themselves participate in reading activities and respond directly to reading activities. There are two possibilities for this response: reading actively or reading passively, thus forming different real individual affective experiences. While reading, the individual may feel pleasant and happy, or unpleasant and depressing. The function of reading affection played at this stage is mainly manifested in the "regulation and maintenance of reading process" (Ge, Li, & Zhang, 2011). After reading, reading affection is manifested as the value evaluation of the reading activity, and the individual may give a positive or negative evaluation of the value of reading process. The individual's evaluation of the value of reading activities will affect the individual's attitude towards reading again. In other words, an individual's affirmative evaluation of the value of a reading activity will enhance the individual's motivation to participate in the reading activity again. Thus, the individual's reading attitude is also more active, affective investment and reading experience are also more positive; A negative attitude towards reading activities will reduce the learners' motivation to participate in reading activities again. In this case, the learners who have a high degree of affective filtering would lead to the inefficient reading effect and low quality. In the passive situation, even if a learner participate in the reading activity, his or her affective input is negative and he or she would have an unpleasant reading experience, thus affecting the continuous occurrence of the reading activity. It is not difficult to explain although the reform of college English reading teaching has achieved gratifying results and reading has been regarded as the best language skill for Chinese college students to master, the current research on college students' English reading ability shows that this is not the case. College students still often get stuck in English reading (Shang and Zhang, 2015). At present,

college English reading still has many obstacles such as: vocabulary barriers, grammatical and semantic barriers, language perception barriers, reading habits barriers, logical reasoning skills barriers, cultural background barriers (Zhou, 2013; Lu, 2013).

RESEARCH PROCESS AND DATA ANALYSIS

This research aims to learn about the current situation of college English learners' reading affections. The questionnaire adopts the reading affection questionnaire compiled by Li Xingyong (2012) according to Ryan and Smith (1995), which has high reliability and validity. There are 25 questions in this questionnaire. 1-10 surveys students' attitudes towards reading, 11-20 surveys students' affective experience during reading, and 21-25 surveys students' evaluation of reading activities. Reading activities are mainly designed in two forms: free reading and required reading. This part adopts the Likert five-point scale form, and the options are represented by the numbers "5, 4, 3, 2, 1" respectively "very pleasant; pleasant; indifferent; unpleasant; very unpleasant". The author collected the information of 143 valid questionnaires and used SPSS17.0 for descriptive statistical processing. Now the data obtained is presented in three parts: reading attitude, affective experience, and value evaluation.

Table 1
Frequency distribution of reading attitude

N	Valid Missing	143 0
Mean		38.3217
Std. Deviation		5.49853
Minimum		20.00
Maximum		50.00
Percentiles	25	35.0000
	50	39.0000
	75	42.0000

Table 1 shows the frequency distribution of subjects' reading attitudes. The average reading attitude of the 143 subjects was Mean=38.32 points, the highest score was 50 points, the lowest score was 20 points, and the standard deviation SD=5.499. The data shows that 25% of the learners' reading attitude scores are between 42-50, 50% of the learners' reading attitude scores are between 35-42, and 25% of the students' reading attitude scores are between 20-35. On the whole, learners have a more positive reading attitude towards English reading activities, and at the same time, there is a big difference in reading attitudes among learners.

Table 2
Frequency distribution of affective experience of reading

N	Valid	143
	Missing	0
Mean		33.4406
Std. Deviation		6.39060
Minimum		19.00
Maximum		50.00
Percentiles	25	29.0000
	50	33.0000
	75	38.0000

Table 2 shows the frequency distribution of subjects' affective experience of reading. The average value of the affective experience of the 143 subjects was Mean=33.44 points, the highest score was 50 points, the lowest score was 19 points, and the standard deviation SD=6.39. The data shows that 75% of the learners' affective experience scores are below 38, and another 25% of the students' affective experience scores are between 19-29, and the learners' affective experience is average. It can be seen from Table 3 that only a small part of the subjects had a more pleasant experience in the reading process, but the overall reading experience of all the subjects is less pleasant, and the affective experience between the subjects is quite different.

Table 3
Frequency distribution of subjects' value evaluation

		How do you feel about sharing what you've read with your peers?	How do you feel when you read what you choose yourself?	How do you feel when you read what the teacher asks to read?	How do you feel if the teacher asks to write something after reading?	How do you feel if you really want to write something after reading?
N	Valid	143	143	143	143	143
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.63	4.24	2.90	2.66	3.97
Std. Deviation		1.012	.724	.974	.979	.919
Minimum		1	2	1	1	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5
Percentiles	25	3.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	3.00
	50	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00
	75	4.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00

Table 3 shows the frequency distribution of subjects' value evaluation of reading activities. There are five questions in this part, respectively, "How do you feel about sharing what you've read with your peers?", "How do you feel when you read what you choose yourself?", "How do you feel when you read what the teacher asks to read?", "How do you feel if the teacher asks to write something after reading?" "How do you feel if you really want to write something after reading?". It can be seen from Table 3 that the subjects showed two distinct distributions of post-reading activities. The average value of peer-sharing reading Mean=3.63, SD=1.01, and 50% of the subjects scored 4-5 points. The data shows that most learners have a very high evaluation of peer-sharing activities after reading; the evaluations of activities, teacher-asking reading and its post-reading activities are significantly different. The average value of the subjects' self-choosing reading Mean=4.24, SD=0.724, 75% of the subjects scored between 4-5, that is, "relatively pleasant and very happy", the value evaluation is very positive; at the same time, as for post-reading activities, the average value of the activity that the subjects freely select Mean=3.97, SD=0.919, 50% of the subjects had a value evaluation between 4-5, and the value evaluation was positive. On the contrary, for the reading activities and post-reading activities asked by teachers, the value

evaluation is negative, and the average values are Mean=2.90 and Mean=2.66, respectively.

RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

From the above data analysis, it can be seen that: firstly, most college students have a more positive attitude towards English reading, yet a small number of them have more pleasant affective experience in the reading process. Furthermore, the overall reading experience of the subjects is less pleasant, which is reflected in the indifferent affective involvement in the reading process. The individual differences in affective experience of reading are large, and some students still have relatively negative affective experience of reading. This should be related to the over-emphasis on intensive reading in current college English teaching, and seldom gives students the opportunity to continue silent and independent reading. Less reading makes students lack the real reading experience. Secondly, most college students do not like to read English textbooks and articles in the workbook, and have relatively negative evaluations of required reading. The reason for this situation can be traced back to the utilitarian reading in the high school stage, that is, the test-oriented reading by learners to improve the scores of the reading test. A large number of

reading activities only need students to pay attention to the correct answer, but not to the feelings in the reading process, which will eventually lead to students' dislike of reading. Thirdly, most college students are positive about self-selected reading and freely-chosen post-reading activities, and feel pleasant to share and communicate with their peers. However, traditional text explanation methods such as word recognition, paragraph analysis and central idea induction are the main methods in class (Li, 2018), continuous silent reading and sharing activities after reading are limited.

Since "reading is a powerful means of developing reading comprehension ability, writing style, vocabulary, grammar and spelling. In addition, reading is pleasant, promotes cognitive development, and lowers writing apprehension." "reading is the only way we become good readers" (Krashen, 2004), the author proposes that more reading time is set aside for sustained silent reading plus shared reading so as to improve college students' active and positive reading affections.

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