

# Research on English Reading Teaching in Senior High School Based on China's Standards of English Language Ability

Yang Deng, Lingling Li

China West Normal University, Nanchong, Sichuan, China

---

**Abstract:** Reading takes up much larger score proportion in English examination. It has been said that "readers win the world", which makes "how to improve students' reading ability" become the focus of English teachers. Based on this, starting from the problems in senior high school English reading teaching, this study discusses the guiding role of the "reading scale" in "China's Standards of English Language Ability", and hopes to have some implications for English reading teaching in China.

**Key words:** China's Standards of English Language Ability; reading scale; English reading teaching

---

## 1. Research Background

Reading is not only a psycholinguistic process, in which readers can deal with the text information and actively interact with the text, but also a sociolinguistic process affected by various factors. Language learning is inseparable from reading. It is the main way for students to contact and learn foreign languages. At present, English reading teaching in China mostly adopts the traditional teacher-centered teaching mode, and students' enthusiasm for learning English is not high. In addition, most high school students' learning process is passive and painful, which leads to the low efficiency of English reading teaching.

In 2018, "China's Standards of English Language Ability (CSE)" were formally issued by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China and the State Language Commission. The standards graded the English ability of Chinese English learners in detail for the first time, and put forward a unified measurement standard. The establishment of the standards fully considers the actual situation of English teaching and learning in China, and points out the direction for English teaching and evaluation in China. The standards emphasize the comprehensive and coordinated development of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and pay attention to the development of English comprehensive application ability.

## 2. An Overview of the "Reading Scale" in CSE

As a sub item of CSE, "reading scale" has formed nine levels of English reading ability descriptors, which provides a scientific and unified standard for explaining and evaluating the English reading ability of students in all stages. The "reading scale" includes one general scale, six reading cognitive ability subscales and three reading strategy scales.

Zeng and other scholars believed that reading ability included cognitive ability and reading strategies. CSE points out that reading comprehension ability refers to the ability of using various knowledge and strategies to construct meaning

around the materials they read, including the ability to identify and extract written information, the ability to summarize and analyze written information and the ability to criticize and evaluate written information. The reading comprehension ability scale includes six aspects: understanding written description, understanding written narration, understanding written explanation, understanding written instruction, understanding written discussion and understanding written interaction.

### **3. "Reading Scale" in CSE and English Reading Teaching in Senior High School**

The standards divide learners' English ability into nine levels. Among the nine levels, level 4 corresponds to the level of senior high school. In the general table of reading comprehension ability, the description of level 4 is to be able to read different types of materials with simple language, such as short stories and letters, extracting detailed information and summarizing the main idea. Students should be able to read narrative and argumentative papers with simple language and a wide range of topics, distinguish facts and opinions, and make simple inferences. Students should be able to read complex language materials and understand the relationship between meanings by analyzing sentences and text structure. As mentioned above, the reading comprehension scale includes six aspects and it also puts forward corresponding requirements for level 4 learners in these six aspects. For example, in understanding written descriptions, the scale requires level 4 learners to understand the characteristics of scenery when reading simple language travel notes. When reading lyric prose with simple language, students will be able to identify the author's emotional expression.

### **4. Current Situation of English Reading Teaching in Senior High School**

4.1 The purpose of reading teaching is utilitarian and teachers pay too much attention to the score

Some schools pursue academic achievement blindly and ignore the cultivation of students' comprehensive English ability. In order to achieve the goal of taking the exam and make the students get good grades, most of the reading tasks assigned by teachers are relatively single. Most teachers teach the contents of books and rarely expand them, so students don't understand the truth and cultural heritage contained in the reading materials enough. The amount of English reading of students is mostly limited to the tasks assigned by teachers, which is a common problem. Influenced by this trend, English reading teaching has become a reading exercise class with high-intensity training of exercises and high-frequency explanation of exercises. And some educators cannot correctly understand the irreplaceable role of reading teaching in improving students' comprehensive English ability.

4.2 Teachers' teaching methods are single

Influenced by exam-oriented education, some teachers still adopt the traditional teaching mode. The method used by teachers is that the teachers lead students to sort out the context of the article, underline language knowledge points, review the questions, and then return to the original text and locate the answer range, so that the students can select the correct answer quickly and correctly. This kind of method will lead teachers to explain the articles indiscriminately, and then make students form the bad habit of relying on teachers. This teaching method may enable students to master the examination skills quickly and get high scores in the examination, but it disassembles the reading materials, focuses on some knowledge points, ignores the original meaning of the reading materials, so that students cannot realize the humanistic connotation hidden behind the materials. The cultural attribute of language determines that foreign language teaching should not only pay attention to instrumentality, but also pay attention to humanism. This kind of teaching regards students' learning as a passive acceptance process rather than an active construction activity.

### **5. English Reading Teaching under the Guidance of "Reading Scale" in CSE**

5.1 Teachers should change the utilitarian teaching purpose and not pay attention to the score excessively

In 2019, the National Education Examinations Authority of China published some documents, which clearly took cultivating morality and talents as the fundamental task of the college entrance examination. In a word, cultivating people

with virtue is the core function of "why to test", the core value of "what to test", and the value guidance of "how to test" in the college entrance examination. From the above requirements, it can be seen that the college entrance examination has placed moral education in a very important position, so teachers should change the previous tendency of focusing on scores only and pay more attention to moral education. As a language discipline, English has its unique cultivation value. As an important part of English teaching, English reading plays an important role in spreading excellent culture and promoting cultural exchange. In reading teaching, teachers should make full use of the characteristics of English reading, fully consider the life experience and social environment of high school students when choosing reading materials, and select excellent reading materials, so that students' characters can be cultivated in the reading process.

#### 5.2 Teachers should change their teaching methods and provide students with rich reading materials

From the college entrance examination in recent years, it can be seen that the texts examined are mostly selected from foreign journals or websites. Therefore, teachers should guide students to read more journals or original English novels from English speaking countries, and pay attention to broadening their international visions. Teachers should provide students with various types of reading materials to enrich their knowledge. We can see that the "reading scale" divides the text into six categories according to its function or purpose: narration, description, explanation, discussion, instruction and communication, and puts forward requirements for students at different levels. Therefore, teachers should provide rich materials for students according to the requirements of "reading scale". In addition, teachers should emphasize the cultivation of intensive reading ability, and especially highlight the cultivation of comprehension ability such as induction, extraction, analysis and comparison.

### 6. Conclusion

CSE plays a very important guiding role in English reading teaching in senior high schools. English teachers in all schools should grade students in combination with the standards, choose correct and efficient teaching methods and try to improve students' English reading ability effectively.

### Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

### References

- [1] Weaver C. (2009). Reading Process: Brief Edition of Reading Process and Practice (3rd ed.). Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- [2] Cheng X.T., Chen P.P. (2019). Constructing a Big Data-based System for Cultivating and Assessing English Reading Literacy. *Technology Enhanced Foreign Language Education*, 2:40-44+60.
- [3] Wang J. (2021). A Study on English Reading Teaching Strategies Based on China's Standards of English Language Ability. *English Square*, 10:103-105.
- [4] Liu J.D. (2019). China's Standards of English Language Ability and English Teaching in China. *Foreign Language World*, 3:7-14.
- [5] Zeng Y.Q. (2017). Principles and Methods of Developing the Reading Scale of China's Standards of English. *Foreign Language World*, 5:2-11.
- [6] Li R.L. (2020). Analysis of English Test Items in College Entrance Examination Based on China's Standards of English Language Ability. *Elementary Education Curriculum*, Z2:30-35+70.
- [7] Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, State Language Commission. (2018). China's Standards of English Language Ability. Beijing: Higher Education Press.

- [8] Li X.H. (2021). English Reading Teaching in Senior High School Based on the Key Competencies of English Subject. *Policy & Scientific Consult*, 5:225-226.
- [9] Wang H.M. (2017). Construction of Senior High School Students' English Reading Literacy. *Journal of Teaching and Management*, 22:49-51.
- [10] Peng W.J. (2021). Problems and Countermeasures in English Reading Teaching in Senior High School. *Jiangxi Education*, 21:26.
- [11] Wang S.R. (2018). The Application of China's Standards of English Language Ability to College English Teaching. *Foreign Language Education*, 39(04):1-4.
- [12] Zhao L.J. (2021). The Embodiment and Implementation of Moral Education in the Reform of English College Entrance Examination Items Design. *Elementary Education Curriculum*, (Z2):27-32.
- [13] Huang J.X. (2021). A Study of the Significance and Realizing Route of Morality Education Guidance in the College Entrance Examination Proposition. *Journal of Fujian Normal University(Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 1:160-167+172.
- [14] Wang C.Y. (2021). Developing Morality, Educating Five Domains Simultaneously and Highlighting the Key Abilities of English Subjects. *Jilin Education*, (Z6):42+49.