

# The Importance of Critical Reading and Language Learning Psychology in Language Learning

Zitong Gao

Jinshan Vocational Technical College, Zhenjiang 212200, Jiangsu, China

**Abstract:** The object of this paper is the improvement of critical reading and summarizes the research in this field. It can provide strategies and research about critical reading. It is of reference value to language learners and educators. Besides, psychological factors are also one of the important reasons that affect learning efficiency for learners. Through the elaboration of this paper, language learners can know how to better perform critical reading, and educators can give better guidance to students according to their language learning psychology.

**Keywords:** Critical reading; Language study; Language learning psychology

## 1 Introduction

It is usually hard for non-native language learners to be critical readers. Language reading can be hard for some learners. Specially, critical reading is including getting accuracy information with high reading speed, summarizing with personal language and comprehensive reading. The following will be a literature review of critical reading. It can provide strategies and research about critical reading. While using well these strategies for reading is not an easy thing, it can improve satisfying and handle hard material with a high reading speed.

The second purpose of this paper is to make educators better use of psychological tools to promote learners to achieve a good learning cycle through the study of learners' psychological feedback. For second language learners, psychological factors is a major part in their learning process. This paper will analyze it from a number of different perspectives. It will focus on readers in psychological changes as well as the importance before reading preparations.

## 2 Critical reading

Reading is an active process, not a passive one, it is important for readers must engage with text when reading. Main aim of this chapter is to improve critical reading skills and comprehensive reading skills. A critical approach to reading means asking readers why this particular author has written this particular text, what is the text really about, what appears to be the author's main point, which aspects does the author focus on and why? The more self-questioning student do, the more helpful it is for language learning.

Carreres& Noriega-Sánchez(2011) presented the importance of translation in language teaching. They believe that task-based translation could become more useful in both language teaching and learning<sup>[1]</sup>. After the research section, they provide recent applications and some practical examples. Their research about translation and language learning. It applies productive ways in language learning methods. This essay can help both reading and writing methods, because translation is a higher level of learning languages. In order to get accurate translation, language learner should explore more language tools, which can improve language ability in a fast speed<sup>[1]</sup>. Although this essay could help language learners and provide several theories, it is need more empirical research to support. In general, this paper focus on three important areas, which are process rather than products, learner-centredness and methodological adaptability. As the learner concern, it may work well in both language test result and language learning process.

Axelrod and Cooper (1990) note that critical reading is usually hard for language learners and they provide some useful learning experience<sup>[2]</sup>. In reality, reading is still an important issue in language learners, especially in the second language learners. While there are a lot of language learners, only a few of them know how to deal with difficult reading. In this article, the authors give readers some useful suggestions about critical reading. There are nine main recommendations in this chapter, which are previewing, annotating, outlining, summarizing, taking inventory, analysing, identifying basic features, comparing and contrasting and exploring the personal responses<sup>[2]</sup>. This article is useful for beginner language learners, because the their difficulties are usually about reading and the improvement of reading speed. Especially in summarizing part, because summarizing means readers can remember and understand the content of essay. Then, it is also useful for advanced language learners, because the strategies can make up for readers' defects. However, the limitations of this essay is that they not consider about the reading habit differences. If there is another research about reading habits, this essay will be more objective. Generally, the reading actively, thoughtfully, critically can improve productivity and it would improve satisfying and confidence to readers. Finally, the nine recommendations can lead readers feel that reading is an interesting thing. In order to achieve this goal, reading critical should be encouraged and used in real study.

J, Larson et al. review an ongoing interdisciplinary research effort designed to understand university students' reading practices and classroom discussions within the context of reading communities. Authors selected both quantitative and qualitative measures to gathering data about college student behaviours and attitudes regarding assigned course readings and classroom discussion when reading communities are used. Authors mainly focusing on to investigates university student behaviours and attitudes related to course readings and classroom discussions when reading communities are used. Also, they attempting to find out to explore how reading communities influence students' perceptions of overall learning. This is a useful and relating article to the reading improvement, as research date shows that reading communities is helpful methods of engaging students in active learning that allowing students to merge their thinking with the content, and to both acquire knowledge and actively use that knowledge in and outside the classroom<sup>[3]</sup>.

Because this project is an ongoing interdisciplinary effort, more research and data analysis could be done. Using reading communities in other disciplines would provide an opportunity to assess whether reading communities have value in other academic domains.

It is real issues for universities often struggle to ensure students are completing course readings and to engage them in meaningful classroom discussion that promotes critical thinking. Even though Interdisciplinary Reading communities in university is a pilot project but it is useful way to - promote active learning and critical thinking through classroom discussion. Reading communities at campus such as small, peer-led reading discussion groups, literature circles are a practical way, thereby encouraging active reading and learning.

Arleen P. Mariotti review features about five techniques which are helpful in the classroom to help students comprehend and learn. The point from Arleen mentioned that reading is a complex process, Yet, teachers some time feeling surprise when they students come away with little or no comprehension of what they read<sup>[4]</sup>. According to the extensive research over the years indicate that there are at least five essential components in classroom which are can be help students comprehend and learn. This view mainly focusing on some useful strategies which are very helpful and practical when student's reading comprehension such as giving background and connecting to students' prior knowledge; providing a strong vocabulary program; setting aside ample opportunity for actual reading and writing in the classroom; allowing time for students to talk about the reading; and incorporating teacher-directed instruction and modelling of reading/thinking strategies<sup>[4]</sup>. In addition, it is helpful to improve student critical and comprehensive reading as author mentioned five techniques which are practical and useful improve student comprehensive reading ability. The main limitation of this opinion is the study mainly suggesting some reading skills about text book version, so how to link these methods with flat screen is really need considering as internet becomes main reading resources. The five basic techniques suggested in this article is helpful to improve the ability of comprehensive reading.

### **3 Scientific psychological intervention**

As mentioned above, many articles are analyzed according to how to be critical reading. The scientific psychological intervention will be analyzed and studied in the following paper in different 3 points.

#### **3.1 Explicit knowledge & Implicit knowledge**

Reading is a continue process and it is really hard for readers reading actively<sup>[5]</sup>. Engaging active reading is an important thing. For second language learners, it is more hard to be a critical reader, because the reading habits and the different language culture. The limitation of vocabulary can also be another reason for non-critical readers. It is the process of the brain where you look the words on the sentences and understand the meaning of them<sup>[5]</sup>.

There is still other weakness when reader reading essays. First one is the lack of vocabulary. Because of that, it is very hard to know what is the main point. In some situation the meaning could be guess; however, it is impossible to guess the meaning in the every situation. The second one is grammar issue. Grammar is a central part to learning a new language<sup>[6]</sup>. Syntactic differences will present difficulties in language learning. This usually happened in the long sentences. Because the long sentences usually have more complex grammar and sentence's structure, it is hard to get the correct meaning. These two barriers will become the core issues, which need to overcome in the next stage.

#### **3.2 Learning style**

Most authorities in the field generally agree upon four basic learning styles: auditory learners, visual learners, kinesthetic learners, and tactile learners<sup>[7]</sup>.

Learners are getting a lot out of lectures, verbal explanations, tapes and oral instruction are generally classed as auditory learners. Before learning a language systematically, most of learners are auditory learners, because this is the most common learning style in second language learners<sup>[7]</sup>.

However, after a systematic study of a language learning method, auditory learners may changed to a visual learners<sup>[7]</sup>. Specific manifestations are as follows : Read silently and make good use of any illustrations that go with the text.

#### **3.3 Emotions and learning**

Usually for beginners of a foreign language, they are usually reluctant when local people talk to them, especially for introverted learners. For the relief of negative emotions, it is helpful to also think about specific things that new language skills are applied. Assertiveness is a learned skill. When talents and learning skills are shown, the self-confidence from learners will be increased.

In a virtuous cycle of good mood and confidence, students' learning behavior will be changed. The study plan that was difficult to implement in the past can be completed efficiently in the future. The sense of accomplishment will help students to face difficulties in language learning more actively.

While helping students learn, educators should also give students more positive recognition. When students realize that they are making progress and have a gift for language, they will shift from passive learners to active learners, which called kinesthetic learners. A kinesthetic learner should try to find an academic tutor for help and support. The tutor is not only responsible for providing

a support system to the learner, but the tutor can help the learner set goals, help to make sure the learner is on track, and provide both encouragement and helpful criticism.

#### 4 Conclusion

In conclusion, at the beginning of the paper attempted to point reading, especially in critical reading part. Also the abilities to comprehensive reading are needed in language learning. For improve this skill at first, there are several research and articles above, which helpful in critical and comprehensive reading. These skills including previewing, annotating, outlining, summarizing, taking inventory, analysing, identifying basic features, comparing and contrasting and exploring the personal responses, which are straight connected with language learners. Then, a successful critical reader might relate the articles with their own experiences and understand the cause and effect relationship. But The aim of critical reading is not to find fault, but to assess the strength and weakness of the evidence and the argument. So it is always good to consider what we read not as fact, but as the argument of the writer. This is the first step to engage in critical reading. Although this paper analyses the technical skills well, it still need to explore more about the mentality and reading habits effects. Critical reading can be an essence in language learning, also it takes large part of understanding argument. The ability of critical reading need to be brought to the forefront in language learning. In the last part, some psychological factor can be helpful to improve critical and comprehensive reading such as how can educators use psychological factors to motivate students to learn.

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