


大学英语快速阅读系列

总主编 王健芳

大学英语 快速阅读教程

第3册

主编 黄媛

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大学英语快速阅读技巧(代序)

一、阅读理解概述

应用语言学认为,阅读是一种积极的、相互的、建设性的思维活动。阅读能力的高低,直接表明了学生综合应用语言知识的实际能力的高低。阅读能力由两个值来衡量:阅读理解准确率和阅读速度。对大学英语来说,要求在达到上述阅读速度的同时阅读理解准确率不得低于70%。“阅读效率”是指在限定时间内完成某一阅读任务时阅读理解的准确率。实际上它也是用阅读理解准确率和阅读速度这两个指数来衡量的。

二、影响阅读理解的因素

影响阅读理解能力提高的因素有很多,主要涉及三个方面:语言基础、阅读实践、阅读技巧。这里主要谈谈快速阅读技巧的获得。

三、快速阅读技巧的培养

快速阅读就是指利用视觉运动的规律,通过一定的训练方法,在较短的时间内阅读大量的书籍、报刊等资料的一种科学的学习方法。快速阅读这一概念的内涵由阅读材料的快速性、阅读材料的无声性和阅读方法的科学性构成。

(一) 阅读材料的快速性

快速性的关键是眼肌能训练,即用特殊方法,使眼肌能灵活自如,达到视角、视幅、视停、视移等视觉最佳状态,使视线如行云流水般地快速阅读。训练方法可按手指法(即目光随着手指左右,上下移动,头不要摇动)、图谱法(如点、圆、抛物线等图形目光沿着图形而快速移动)、词谱法等来进行快速阅读的基本功训练。当眼肌能训练适应之后,可采用快速阅读初级方法之一:跳读法。所谓跳读法就是指眼光从一个“字群”跳到另一个“字群”进行识读(字群是由多个单词组成的)。这个过程眼球按“凝视→跳跃→凝视”的程序进行连续不断的运动,如:

The boy in /the small boat/was reading a book.

当跳读练习熟练之后,就可进行练习扩大视力识读文字的单位面积的训练。

首先进行五个单词的练习,练习是主视区总应放在中间,也就是主视中间的3个单词,两边单词用余视力扫视。如:

They/have a bright/classroom.

在练习五个单词达到熟练之后,就可加宽视区练习,一下看六个单词,七个单词,甚至达到九个单词,逐渐加宽视区范围,延长目光移视的长度,这样就能缩短凝视时间,达到快速阅读的目的。

(二) 阅读材料的无声性

快速性只是快速阅读的先决条件,速读的关键还在于“无声”训练。在阅读速度上,无声要比有声快,这是因为有声阅读是眼、脑、口、耳四个器官一起活动。进行有声阅读时,文字符号首先反映到眼睛,再传到大脑,大脑命令口发音,耳在监听辨别正确与否;而无声阅读只是运用眼和脑两大器官,省去了口的发音和耳朵的监听,因而它的速度要比有声阅读快。在阅读过程中,快速阅读的信息变换方式为:书面信息→眼睛扫描信息→大脑记忆中枢的信息。因此学习者应用特殊的方法和手段消除读音和心音。所谓特殊手段就是用自身单声调鼻音,单声调心声或外界背景音乐抵消并消除读音和心音的手段,最后达到无音阅读。

(三) 阅读方法的科学性

阅读的时候,必须通过直觉、联想、想象、逻辑分析和综合判断等一系列思维活动,才能把顺次进入视觉的一连串文字信号转换成概念和思想,完成阅读过程,要完成其过程,必须进行科学阅读,进行科学阅读可由下列几个方法获得。

1. 快速泛读(Fast Extensive Reading)

这里的泛读是指广泛阅读大量涉及不同领域的书籍,要求读得快,理解和掌握书中的主要内容就可以了。要确定一个明确的读书定额,定额要结合实际,切实可行,可多可少。这样就能渐渐养成快速阅读的习惯。

2. 计时阅读(Timed Reading)

计时阅读指每次进行5~10分钟的阅读即可,不宜太长。因为计时快速阅读,精力高度集中,时间一长,容易疲劳,精力分散,反而乏味。阅读时先记下“起读时间”(starting time),阅读完毕,记下“止读时间”(finishing time),即可计算出本次阅读速度。随手记下,长期坚持,必定收到明显效果。

3. 略读(Skimming)

略读又称跳读(reading and skipping)或浏览(glancing),是一种专门的、非常实用的快速阅读技能。所谓略读,是指以尽可能快的速度阅读,如同从飞机上鸟瞰

(bird's eye view) 地面上的明显标志一样,迅速获取文章大意或中心思想。换句话说,略读是要求读者有选择地进行阅读,可跳过某些细节,以求抓住文章的大概,从而加快阅读速度。据统计,训练有素的略读者(skimmer)的阅读速度可以达到每分钟 3 000 到 4 000 个词。

阅读时,先把文章粗略地浏览一下,看看文章中是否有自己工作和学习需要的或自己感兴趣的资料和信息,然后确定这篇文章是否值得细读。在查找资料时,如果没有充分时间,而又不需要高度理解时,就可以运用略读技巧。“不需要高度理解”并非指略读时理解水平可以很低,而是说略低于一般阅读速度所取得的理解水平是允许的。

一般阅读的目标是在保持一般阅读速度的条件下,获得尽可能高的理解水平,通常达到 70% 或 80%。略读时,理解水平略低一些是预料之中的事。

略读有下列四个特点:

1) 以极快的速度阅读大量材料,寻找字面上或事实上的主要信息和少量的阐述信息。

2) 可以跳过某个部分或某些部分不读。

3) 理解水平可以稍低一些,但也不能太低。

4) 根据文章的难易程度和达到的目的,不断灵活地调整阅读速度。

略读可以运用下列技巧:

1) 要利用印刷细节 (typographical details), 如书或文章的标题、副标题、小标题、斜体词、黑体词、脚注、标点符号等,对书和文章进行预测略读 (preview skimming)。预测略读要了解作者的思路、文章方式(模式),以便把握大意、有关的细节及其相互关系。

2) 以一般阅读速度 (200~250 wpm), 阅读文章开头的一、二段,力求抓住文章大意、背景情况、作者的文章风格、口吻或语气等。

3) 阅读段落的主题句和结论句。抓住主题句就掌握了段落大意,然后略去细节不读,以求得略读速度。

4) 注意转折词和序列词。转折词如 however, moreover, in addition 等;序列词如 firstly, secondly 等。

5) 若无需要,不必阅读细节。

4. 寻读 (Scanning)

寻读又称查读,同略读一样,寻读也是一种快速阅读技巧。熟练的读者善于运用寻读获得具体信息,以提高阅读效率。

寻读是一种从大量的资料中迅速查找某一项具体事实或某一项特定信息,如人物、事件、时间、地点、数字等,而对其它无关部分则略去不读的快速阅读方法。运用这种方法,读者就能在最短的时间内掠过尽可能多的印刷材料,找到所需要的

信息。例如,在车站寻找某次列车或汽车的运行时刻,在机场寻找某次班机的飞行时刻,在图书馆查找书刊的目录,在文献中查找某一日期、名字、数字或号码等,都可以运用这种方法。

作为一种快速寻找信息的阅读技巧,寻读既要求速度,又要求寻读的准确性。具体地说,寻读带有明确的目的性,有针对性地选择问题的答案。因此,可以把整段整段的文字直接映入大脑,不必字字句句过目。视线在印刷材料上掠过时,一旦发现有关的内容,就要稍作停留,将它记住或摘下,既保证寻读的速度,又做到准确无误,所以寻读技巧也很有实用价值。

寻读与略读不同。略读时,读者事先对材料一无所知,而寻读则是读者对材料有所了解的情况下进行的。例如,寻读电话号码簿,读者知道受话人的姓名,还知道电话号码簿是按姓的字母顺序排列的。这样,在寻找 Jack 的电话时,就可以利用书页上方的标识词,再按姓的字母顺序很快翻到以 J 开头的书页,从而找到 Jack 名下的电话页码。

为了有效地进行寻读,读者应运用下列技巧。

1) 利用材料的编排形式。资料多半是按字母顺序排列的。如词典、索引、邮政编码簿、电话号码簿以及其它参考资料簿等。当然并非所有资料都是按字母顺序排列的。例如,电视节目是按日期和时间排列的。历史资料是按年代排列的,报纸上的体育版面是按比赛类别(足球、排球、网球)排列等等。不管资料来源怎样,它都是按照某种逻辑方法排列的。例如,要知道某事是何时发生的,要查日期;某事是谁做的,要查人名等。

2) 利用章节标题和说明。寻读之后,首先看看文章标题或章节标题,确定文章是否包含自己所需要的材料,或者哪一部分包含哪些材料,这样可以直接翻到那个部分,进行寻找。

3) 抓提示词。读者找到包含所需信息的章节,准备寻读。这时,要留心与那个具体信息有关的提示词。例如,在报纸体育运动版上寻找某田径运动员的某项运动成绩,他的国名是提示词。在百科全书上寻找纽约市的人名,翻到 New York City 那一章后, population, census, inhabitants 等词就是提示词,找到提示词,就可以采用一般阅读速度,获得所需要的信息。

当然,阅读方法还有许多,学习者可以在大量的阅读实践中获得。掌握并应用一定的阅读技巧,对于抓住重点,提高阅读理解速度和理解能力大有益处,而阅读技巧则是通过大量的阅读实践而习得的。在实际阅读中,并不是单一使用某一种技巧,很多时候是各种技巧的交替使用。

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Unit 1

Section A

Passage 1

(Reading Time: 6½ minutes)

Being a Pleasant Conversationalist

The first impression one gets of a person, for good or for bad, is usually his appearance; the second is the sound of his voice. A voice that is too high, or rasping, inaudible, or otherwise unattractive is a very great handicap to one's personality. One should study to have an attractive voice as well as an attractive appearance.

Learn to be Good at Conversation

A good conversationalist is popular anywhere, so conversation is an art worth studying. Notice what makes other people's conversation attractive or unattractive. Practice saying only things which are interesting to others. It is bad taste in society to talk a great deal about one's self or one's family. There are many interesting and fascinating subjects of conversation these days—world issues, social problems, literature, art, music, psychology, education, science, sports, hobbies or any other special interest one has in common with others. Nothing reveals more quickly what kind of person you are than the things you talk about.

Subject to Avoid

There are certain things which are considered bad manners in Western countries to talk about in society. It is very important to know these and avoid them. The subjects to be avoided: bodily functions, or anything connected with the more private parts of the body, intimate sex relations, details of birth, details of unpleasant illnesses; bed-bugs, fleas, lice, cockroaches (clearly people

are not supposed to know that these exist!); income or salary of friends, or prices of their possessions; the age of the person one is talking with; personal questions or remarks, such as, "Why don't you get married?" or "I should think you would want to have some children." Some of these are permissible in Chinese society, but they are all taboos in Western society.

Speaking about one's Country

It is not good manners to speak of one's own country as if it were more important or better than others. But neither is it good to speak depreciatingly of one's country or call it "unworthy". Western manners do not require one to say anything which is untrue, but it is best to avoid being too frank about things which would make people feel unhappy—unless by doing so you feel some good might come of it. Speak naturally but not boastfully of the good things in your own country, and speak appreciatively of what you can approve of in the foreign country.

The Right Attitude

In a conversation or discussion it is bad manners to take more than your share of the time in talking when others wish to talk also. It is bad manners to interrupt anyone else when he is talking. It is bad manners to be dogmatic and sure of your own point of view, suggesting by your speech or action that no one else's is of any value. It is bad manners to get cross or surly or angry in a conversation or discussion. If you are thinking as much of others as of yourself, you will not make any of these mistakes.

Wit and humor are great assets to any conversation, and if you can be the person who knows how to tell a funny story or to make witty remarks without too much sting in them, you will not only add to your popularity, but may save many a conversation from becoming an unpleasant discussion or a rude argument.

It is considered impolite, when in a small group, for two people to talk together in a language unfamiliar to the others. If for any reason you find it absolutely necessary to do so, you may say to the others, "Would you pardon me, please, if I explain something to Mr. Spooner in Chinese?"

(650 words)

Exercise

Direction: Select the most appropriate answer for each of the following questions.

1. A good conversationalist is one who _____.
 - A. studies art
 - B. does not talk about himself or his family
 - C. talks about things which sound interesting to others
 - D. shares the same interest or hobby with the listener
2. If a middle-aged woman is still single, it would be better for you _____.
 - A. to ask her directly, " Why don't you get married?"
 - B. to avoid talking about her marital status
 - C. to pretend you don't know her
 - D. to ask about her marital status in a round-about way
3. When talking about your own country, you should _____.
 - A. make your listener believe how powerful your country is
 - B. be modest enough to avoid mentioning the good things in your own country
 - C. speak of the things in the foreign country in an appreciative way
 - D. tell what good things are really like in an objective manner
4. The expression "get cross" (Para. 5) is closet in meaning to _____.
 - A. interrupt others
 - B. skip the conversation topic
 - C. cross the arms
 - D. become angry
5. Wit and humor are considered valuable to a conversation due to the following traits EXCEPT _____.
 - A. they will make your talk interesting
 - B. they may end an impolite argument
 - C. they sometimes carry wounding effects
 - D. wit and humor will make the speaker more popular

Passage 2

(Reading Time: 5 minutes)

What Does Convenience Food Bring to People?

Convenience food helps companies by creating growth, but what is its effect on people? For people who think cooking was the foundation of civilization, the microwave is the last enemy. The communication of eating together is easily broken by a device that liberates household's citizens from waiting for mealtimes. The first great revolution in the history of food is in danger of being undone. The companionship of the campfire, cooking pot and common table, which have helped to bond humans in collaborative living for at least 150 000 years could be destroyed.

Meals have certainly faded from the rise of convenience food. The only meals regularly taken together in Britain these days are at the weekend, among rich families struggling to retain something of the old symbol of togetherness. Indeed, the day's first meal has all but disappeared. In the 20th century the leisure British breakfast was undermined by the corn flake; in the 21st breakfast is vanishing altogether a victim of the quick cup of coffee in Starbucks and the cereal bar.

Convenience food has also made people forget how to cook. One of the apparent paradoxes of modern food is that while the amount of time spent cooking meals has fallen from 60 minutes a day in 1980 to 13 minutes a day in 2002, the number of cooks and television programmers on cooking has multiplied. But perhaps this isn't a paradox. Maybe it is because people can't cook anymore, so they need to be told how to do it, or maybe it is because people buy books about hobbies — such as golf, yachting — not about chores. Cooking has ceased to be a chore and has become a hobby.

Although everybody lives in the kitchen, its facilities are increasingly for display rather than for use. Mr. Silverstein's new book, "*Trading up*", looks at mid-range consumer's milling now to splash out. He says that industrial-style Viking cook pot, with nearly twice the heat output of other ranges, have helped to push the "kitchen as theater" trend in hour goods. They cost from \$1 000 to \$9 000. Some 75% of them are never used.

Convenience also has an impact on the healthiness, or otherwise, on food.

Of course there is nothing bad about ready-to-eat food itself. You don't get much healthier than an apple, and supermarkets sell a better range of ready-meals for you. But there is a limit to the number of apples people want to eat; and these days it is easier for people to eat the kind of food that makes them fat. Three Harvard economists in their paper "Why have Americans become more obese?" point out that in the past, if people wanted to eat fatty hot food, they had to cook it. That took time and energy. A good chip needs frying twice, once to cook the potato and once to get it crispy, which discouraged the consumption of that cost of food. Mass preparation of food took away that constraint. Nobody has to cut and double cook their own fries these days. Who has the time?

(521 words)

Exercise

Direction: Select the most appropriate answer for each of the following questions.

1. What might the previous paragraphs deal with?
 - A. The relationship between meals and convenience food.
 - B. The importance of convenience food in people's life.
 - C. The rise of convenience food.
 - D. The history of food industry.
2. What is the paradox in the third paragraph?
 - A. People don't know how to cook.
 - B. The facilities in the kitchen are not totally used.
 - C. People are becoming more obese, thus unhealthy.
 - D. Convenience food actually does not save people thrive.
3. What does the passage mainly discuss?
 - A. The bad effects of convenience food.
 - B. Mr. Silverstein's new book.
 - C. People's new hobby.
 - D. Disappearance of the old symbol of togetherness.

4. Why have Americans become more obese?
 - A. Because of eating chips.
 - B. Because of being busy.
 - C. Because of being lazy.
 - D. B and C.

5. Which of the following might the author mostly agree with?
 - A. There is nothing bad about convenience food.
 - B. Convenience food makes people lazy.
 - C. Convenience food helps companies grow.
 - D. Convenience food is a revolution in cooking.

Section B**Passage 1**

(Reading Time: 7 minutes)

Space Pattern*"We shape our buildings and they shape us."**By Winston Churchill***Architectural Differences**

When we travel abroad we are immediately impressed by the many ways buildings, homes, and cities are designed. The division and organization of space lend character and uniqueness to villages, towns and cities. Yet, architectural differences may also cause confusion or discomfort for the traveler. In the following example, a group of Americans living in a country in South America reacted emotionally to the architectural differences they observed.

The Latin house is often built around a patio that is next to the sidewalk but hidden from outsiders behind a wall. It is not easy to describe the degree to which small architectural differences such as this affect outsiders. American technicians living in Latin America used to complain that they felt "left out" of things, that they were "shut off". Others kept wondering what was going on "behind those walls".

The separation of space inside homes may also vary from culture to culture. In most American homes the layout of rooms reveals the separateness and labeling of space according to function—bedroom, living room, dining room, playroom, and so on. This system is in sharp contrast to other cultures where one room in a house may serve several functions. In Japan, homes with sliding walls can change a large room into two small rooms so that a living room can also serve as a bedroom.

When a home or a city's design is influenced by another culture, "native" architecture can be lost or disguised. For example, a French architect was asked to design Punjab, the capital city in Chadigarh, India. He decided to plan the city

with centralized shopping centers which required public transportation and movement away from the village centers. Eventually the Indians stopped meeting each other socially in their small neighborhoods. Apparently, the introduction of a non-Indian style of architecture affected some of the cultural and social patterns of those living in the city.

Privacy and the Use of Space

Architectural design influences how privacy is achieved as well as how social contact is made in public places. The concept of privacy is not unique to a particular culture but what it means is culturally determined. For example,

... according to Donald Keene, author of Living in Japan, there is no Japanese word for privacy. Yet one cannot say that the concept of privacy does not exist among the Japanese but only that it is very different from the Western conception.

Similarly, there is no word in the Russian language that means exactly the same as the English word "privacy".

People in the United States tend to achieve privacy by physically separating themselves from others. The expression "good fences make good neighbors" indicates a preference for privacy from neighbors' homes. If a family can afford it, each child has his or her own bedroom. When privacy is needed, family members may lock their bedroom doors.

When the American wants to be alone he goes into a room and shuts the Door—he depends on architectural features for screening. The English, on the other hand, lacking rooms of their own since childhood, never developed the practice of using space as a refuge from others.

In some cultures when individuals desire privacy, it is acceptable for them simply to withdraw into themselves. That is, they do not need to remove themselves physically from a group in order to achieve privacy.

Young American children learn the rule "knock before you enter" which teaches them to respect others' privacy. Parents, too, often follow this rule prior to entering their children's rooms. When a bedroom door is closed it may be a sign to others saying, "I need privacy." "I'm angry." or "Do not disturb... I'm busy." For Americans, the physical division of space and the use of architectural features permit a sense of privacy.

The way space is used to enable the individual to achieve privacy, to build homes or to design cities is culturally influenced. Dr. Hall summarizes the