我的教育專欄(338)呼籲走回油印考卷的時代

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 很多家長埋怨孩子在高中的英文太難了，我就看了一下各個高中職英文期中考的考卷，實在把我嚇昏了。大多數考卷有八頁之多，我實在佩服現在的高中生，不知他們如何應付這種考試的?

 現在一般高中的英文考卷裡，常常有長篇大論的文章，要可憐的學生閱讀以後再回答問題；或者要學生在文章中做克漏字填充。以下的文章是我寫的，但也是一篇高中英文考卷中可能出現的文章:

In our history book, war is often mentioned. The students are taught which country wins in a certain war. Therefore, to most students, war is like a computer game. They seldom connect war to the misery caused by war. Novels and movies often describe the bravery of soldiers. They seldom make people think how terrible it is to be soldiers in the battle fields. Novels often describe how soldiers find that they are out of ammunition, without mentioning that they are often out of food and water. Besides, people seldom pay attention to the fact that those brave soldiers may not be able to come back home. Not only soldiers are involved in a war, civilians also suffer by the war. Every war creates a large number of widows and orphans. In war movies, people are excited to see bombs falling down from bombers without thinking how many homes will be destroyed and how many innocent people will die.

It is time for us to give our students a different picture about war. We should talk more about the suffering of people in any war. When we talk about Napoleon, we should talk about how many widows and orphans he had created.

 要知道，如果文章是中文寫的，而且內容是我們熟悉的，那麼看這類文章時幾乎可以一目十行，不需要逐字地看。以我來講，我現在看英文新聞，因為先看到了新聞的標題，所以知道這一則新聞大概會說些什麼，看起來就很快。但是如果我現在讀的是一本英文小說，我就不可能一目十行了。現在很多高中的英文考卷，往往有六篇這種相當長的文章，要能在一小時之內看完這些文章，還要回答刁鑽的問題，我認為太難了。

 我曾經將一份英文考卷給幾位教授看，有一位教授說，他一看到有八頁之多就嚇昏了。另一位說，太過分了。幾乎所有教授的回應都認為這種考題不可思議。

 我當年是在師大附中念高中的，我的同學都告訴我，從前高中英文考卷只有一頁，特殊情況之下才有兩頁，因為當年考卷是油印的。我真懷念當年的高中時代，英文老師教得好，可是考試並不太難。

 現在高中老師必須出這些難的題目來考學生，乃是因為現在的大學入學考試都是這種樣子的。不要說考大學了，就以考高中來看，以下的一段是考高中時的閱讀文章。

The wind keeps blowing.
The door keeps opening.
Will you be with me, my dear Lucy,
When I look for candy
Down there in the dark, dark kitchen?

The wind keeps crying.
The door keeps shaking.
Will you be with me, my dear Lucy,
When I pick up my toy puppy
Out there on the high, high balcony?

Wish you could always be with me
And make them go away with your Do-Re-Me.
I remember last Halloween
They ran away when you started to sing,
“Dear Tommy, my little king,
Close your eyes and have a sweet dream.”

So please stay with me and sing
To stop them kicking the door, riding the wind,
And pulling me down to their house under the ground.
They’ll go away if you sing here for me,
In a voice that gets a black cat’s hair standing,
The strongest legs shaking, and the window glass breaking.

(ideas from Matthew Sweeney’s poem)

 考試領導教學，高中老師被迫一定要出這種題目，整個英文教育被扭曲了。最嚴重的是，學生不可能對英文有興趣的，因為一份考卷長達八頁，要看六篇文章一定是痛苦的事。教改的口號是快樂學習，這種考卷怎麼可能使學生覺得學習是快樂的，這應該叫做痛苦學習。

我在師大附中的時候，英文考卷沒有那麼難，但是我在大學時可以看懂英文教科書，可以寫英文論文，可以寫英文教科書，也可以在美國念書和工作，我的同學們也都如此，可見得現在的做法是沒有必要的。

我建議教育部將民國46年左右的大學入學考試以及高中入學考試的英文題目找出來，我相信當時的考題要簡單得多，可是當時的大學生和高中生並沒有英文程度低落的現象。我本人當年沒有經過如此可怕的考試，但我的英文程度也沒有比現在一般人的程度低。教育不能使學生對學習感到痛苦、挫折，這是教育部絕對應該注意的事。

希望回到油印考卷的時代，每份段考考卷只有一頁。