Using the Whole Book Approach to Improving Reading Literacy and Teaching

Reading to Primary School Students in China

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Using the whole book approach to improving reading literacy and teaching reading to primary school students in China

Chao Wang

University of Wisconsin-Platteville

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Author Note

Chao Wang, Cohort15, MSE English Education, University of Wisconsin-Platteville

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Contact: kellerca@uwplatt.edu
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Abstract

For Chinese primary school students, English is a foreign language that is rarely used, which is not closely linked to the life of primary school students. The lack of language environment makes it difficult for them to find out.

However, it is far from enough to make use of class time to carry out English reading teaching activities to cultivate students' reading literacy. This kind of study method for only the contents of the textbooks, not only restrict the development of students reading ability. Still can give students bring an adverse effect in terms of language application.

In addition, the neglect of the importance of English reading is more common in the process of learning English. In primary school English teaching, reading is the primary link for students to acquire basic English knowledge. Language is just an integral whole. In the reading teaching, teachers should cultivate students to set up an overall understanding of the consciousness of the text, lead the students from the perspective of the overall grasp the text content, stimulate students interest and enthusiasm of learning English language, to improve their learning ability. Therefore, research on teaching activities based on the whole book reading has its significance.

Key Words: whole book approach, reading literacy, schema theory, whole language approach
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Introduction

At present, most of the methods of English reading teaching used in primary school are presented in the form of short stories, dialogues, paragraphs and stories etc. according to a certain topic or language point.

After teaching a single short stories, dialogues, paragraphs and stories etc. for a long time, teachers have solidified the thinking and mode of English reading teaching. The ways of reading teaching and learning are limited to both teachers and students.

Both teachers and students are used to teach and learning according to the idea of "vocabulary teaching, sentence teaching and article teaching". Students accept English reading passively and lack enthusiasm, independence and innovation of learning and exploration in English reading.

Statement of the Problem

1. singleness of teaching method

Influenced by exam-oriented education, English teachers tend to weaken the reading training and strengthen the training of answering skills in the teaching process. One of the characteristics of exam-oriented English teaching is that the teaching method is unitary.

Taking reading teaching for Chinese primary school students as an example, teachers regard English reading as an extension of the teaching activities on
vocabulary and grammar but ignore cultivation of their core reading quality. Students have no chance to find, think and solve problems independently in reading, let alone to get pleasure from reading English works.

2 students' lack of interest in reading

Due to less teaching hours, but a lot of teaching materials, teachers often take the completion of teaching indicators as the primary purpose, they do not have the time in class to students' reading interest. This also directly leads to the fact that students regard the after-class practice as the ultimate purpose of reading and fail to experience the charm of English reading. However, unlike the straightforward study of vocabulary or grammar, reading is a more interesting part of English learning, because students can learn about the culture or information of different countries through reading.

The study of teaching mode of “reading the whole book” has the value of effectively promoting the reform of teaching and learning methods, that is, helping teachers to transform from the acceptor and executor of the curriculum to the designer, organizer, implementer and reflectors of the curriculum; It is helpful to change the teaching concept from "transferred" and "skilled" to "focusing on the construction and expression of personal meaning from the perspective of students". It is helpful to change the teaching mode from rigid single-part teaching and fragmented indoctrination to the guidance and support of deep learning.

Definition of Term
1. The whole book

The whole book is presented in relation to a single short chapter in the textbook. "According to students' language ability and cognitive ability, the whole English book can be a picture book with no more than 10 pages and about 50 words, or an English literature book with more than 100 pages and about 30,000 words" (Zhang Jinxiu, 2018).

In combination with the actual situation of primary school students, the whole English book referred to in this study refers to the fictional and non-fictional English picture books, graded books, popular science books and other books, except textbooks and supplementary materials, that are included in classroom teaching to promote the development of primary school students' English reading literacy and core discipline literacy, and are used as explicit teaching carriers.

“These books are bound by the cover, inside page and back cover, containing the author's unique ideas, rigorous structure, complete content, etc., with a complete theme meaning and the content and logic inseparable characteristics, highlighting the integrity and integrity of the books. Short stories, poetry, essays, magazines and other do not belong to the scope of this study.” (Li Jing, 2019)

2. Reading Literacy

In relevant international studies, PISA and PIRLS programs focus on the definition of reading literacy, but the subjects are different. The PISA program is aimed at eighth grade students, while the PIRLS program for primary school students
is consistent with this study.

PISA 2009 defines reading literacy as "the ability to understand, use and reflect on written material in order to achieve personal goals, to form personal knowledge and potential, and to participate in social activities" and has been used to this day.

PIRLS 2011 defines reading literacy as the ability of an individual to understand and use written language that is socially desirable or personally valuable.

The concept of "reading literacy" proposed by the international council on educational achievement (IEA) refers to students' ability to understand and use written language, to construct meaning from various articles, to learn from reading, to participate in activities of the reading community in school and life, and to have fun in reading.

3. Schema Theory

Modern schema theory holds that individual memory cannot store experience, and experience needs to be expressed by certain propositions or forms, and these experiences are organized and arranged in an orderly and hierarchical manner. Relevant scholars point out that schema is a constantly updated experience structure and cognitive framework. When an individual encounters unfamiliar and unfamiliar things, only by associating them with his own experience structure can he understand them.
3. Whole Language Approach

The concept of whole-language teaching was proposed by Ken Goodman, an American scholar, in the mid-1970s. He (1986:27) advocated that language is inclusive and indivisible, and opposed to dividing language into several abstract components and fragments, such as words, phonetics and grammar. He also opposed to separate cultivation of listening, speaking, reading and writing, emphasizing that "the whole is always greater than the sum of its parts". Goodman (1986:19) believes that words and sentences without a specific context have no meaning, and the primary function of language is ideation.

I think that Compared with a single short chapter in the textbook, the whole English book has a complete and detailed context, rich and coherent content, diversified themes, diversified expressions and beautiful language. These characteristics are more helpful for students to activate their thinking, learn language, feel culture and enlighten their minds in the process of meaningful reading.

4. The overall concept of foreign language teaching

The overall concept of foreign language teaching is put forward by Chinese scholars Christopher Kelly, emphasized the overall view, the overall learning view, teaching as a whole. Among them, the overall teaching refers to the foreign language teaching must adhere to the overall input, the overall interaction, the overall output of whole into the whole principle, the overall teaching.
Purpose of the Study

Through this research, I hope to be able to explore the use of the whole book method in primary school English reading teaching. The whole book reading method takes English as the carrier and combines reading the whole book with output. This method can help students broaden their reading horizon, deepen their experience of reading English books, build their own cognition, and form a good habit of reading English books. I also hope that this study can be used as a reference for front-line teachers in the English reading teaching of the whole book, so as to improve teachers' ability in the designing, implementation and evaluation of English reading course.

Significance of the Study

From the perspective of the research content, there are few systematic theoretical researches on the whole book reading methods in China, and most of them are practical researches on the existing reading strategies and methods in foreign countries. Although most studies on reading English books focus on reading methods and strategies, there is little discussion on which reading methods and skills students should master at what stage, and how to effectively use these methods according to the characteristics of books and reading needs.

In addition, the current English book reading teaching lack of the ability of specific indicators, teaching method guidance content system and evaluation system, etc.
Review of Literature

Schema theory and reading literacy

Schema theory is based on the principle that all languages do not have meaning in themselves, and what gives meaning to them is the schema knowledge that people use in the process of reading. When acquiring information, the information in the cognitive framework possessed by the individual itself provides a basis for the prediction process, and the empirical framework of the individual, as a typical image, reflects some laws of reality, thus giving meaning to the textual information.

The real and effective reading teaching should cultivate the meaning constructors, strengthen the connection between the text information and the readers' own experience frame, and promote the readers' own experience frame to be constantly updated, regenerated and spiral. Readers with a certain basic reading literacy can build a higher level of core literacy.

The Whole Language Approach and The Whole Book Approach

The whole language approach holds that if provide real language environment to humans, they can easily and quickly learn a language.

Kenneth Goodman defines the Whole Language Approach as: "Whole Language is producing a holistic reading and writing curriculum which uses real, authentic literature and real books. It puts learners in control of what they read and write about".
John Dewey (1929) advocated "student-centered", "activity-based learning". Goodman, K (1986) viewed that "the whole language is a set of beliefs about how learning happens and a set of principles to guide classroom practice". In 1952, French psychologist Jean Piaget held that "theories of developmental learning that led to a new understanding of learning processes." (1952)

And the book “what's whole in whole language” (1989), which advocated "Authenticity" and "Empowerment".

"Authenticity" means leading the students into the real language environment, then the students will have communicative needs for true purposes to develop their proficient reading and writing skills. "

Empowerment" means teachers and students have the right to choose reading materials and decide reading and writing environment.

In the late 1990s, experts began to pay attention to and study the whole language research method. According to Qin Xinggui, the whole language is not a specific teaching method, but a basic theory of language learning and teaching.

The linguist Krashen systematized and theorized a large number of theories about second language acquisition.

Krashen believes that the distinction between learning and acquisition is fundamental, and that language acquisition is more important than language learning. Only through language acquisition can learners use a second language as native speakers do and use it fluently without much thought. The authenticity of the whole
language approach is to some extent the inheritance of language acquisition. The whole language teaching method provides students with original reading materials and real learning environment, enabling them to acquire language naturally.

**The research status at home and abroad**

European and American countries have advanced and high-quality research results on how to cultivate excellent readers. American scholar morte Thomas j. Adler and Charles van doren mentioned in the book “How to Read a Book” reading is divided into four levels, namely the basis of reading and viewing reading, analysis, reading and readings on the subject. And he mentioned the methods of reading different kinds of books, such as how to read practical books, story books and novels, epics and plays, history books, science and mathematics books and so on, and he pointed out that reading has methods and skills, and reading needs training.

Aiden Chambers, a British author of children's literature, put forward the reading cycle of "choosing books, reading and responding" in his book creating a reading environment for children in America. By establishing reading areas for children so that children can get books at their fingertips; Ensure that children can read their favorite books quietly every day through quiet and uninterrupted reading time. Through the book clubs, student associations and invited famous, such as drama, painting and manual way, lets the student response to read with pleasure.

In his other book, "Speaking and Listening: Children, Reading and Discussion," Chambers mentions three forms of "sharing" (sharing enthusiasm,
sharing confusion, and sharing relevance) and four forms of expression (speaking to
yourself, speaking to others, speaking together, and sharing new ideas), emphasizing
that "discussion" does play a central role in the reading process, helping to develop
students into readers of depth and breadth.

In the book "Reading Skills Training for American Students", Jennifer
Seravalo, a researcher on children's literacy, set 13 reading goals according to the
book grading system, and introduced a total of 300 reading methods for
"fiction/literature" and "non-fiction/information" texts. She helped teachers engaged
in reading teaching and parents who wanted to improve their children's reading ability
to provide step-by-step guidance, teach reading methods, carry out reading-based
communication and writing, and promote their children to become readers.

In addition, a large number of papers and online articles introduce and cite the
theories, methods, strategies and approaches of graded reading in Europe and the
United States, indicating that European and American countries have advanced and
high-quality research results on how to cultivate excellent readers. All these will
become the methods and strategies for reference in this study.

The first edition of Bruce Joyce's "Models of Teaching" was published in
1972. Up to now, it has been developed into the eighth edition. The revision of each
edition conforms to the new trend of educational reform and development and is
based on the latest research results of students in the world. In teaching patterns,
published by Joy and Weil in 1972, the "teaching pattern" is defined as: "a teaching
pattern is a paradigm or program that constitutes the curriculum and schoolwork, the selection of materials, and the prompting of teacher activities." Joyce pointed out in the seventh edition: "excellent teaching model is made up by a series of teaching mode." In the eighth edition, Joyce et al. introduced 14 teaching modes in four categories: information processing, society, individual and behavior system. They clearly pointed out that "teaching mode is learning mode. When we help the students to obtain information and form a clear thoughts, skills, values, to grasp the way of thinking and expression, also teach them how to learn. The ultimate goal of teaching is to improve students' learning ability. Evaluation of a kind of teaching mode, not only directly to see if it has reached the specific goals, and to see whether it can improve the learning ability, the latter is the main purpose."

Chinese scholars Sun Ziqiang and Wang Biao etc. compared and summarized 15 classical and globally influential modern teaching models and theoretical schools, and defined the teaching model as a relatively stable teaching procedure and method strategy system formed according to teaching ideas and teaching rules, which must be followed in the teaching process, including the combination of all elements in the teaching process, teaching procedures and corresponding strategies. At the same time, it is pointed out that the structure of teaching mode generally includes teaching thought or teaching theory, teaching objectives, operating procedures, roles of teachers and students, teaching strategies, and historical evaluation.

In the passage From "What is Reading? To "What is Literacy?", the author defines reading literacy as "the process of using reading, writing and speaking to
extract, construct, integrate and criticize meaning in the context of social situations through interaction and participation with multi-modal texts".
Summary

The difference between reading literacy and the current actual reading teaching and training objectives in China is that the former emphasizes more on students' initiative in reading, self-reflective consciousness, active learning through reading and further deepening the connection with the society. The latter still takes the knowledge of the textbook as the main learning content and the reading for the main purpose of understanding and applying the language.

No one model is suitable for all students at all times, and excellent teaching is usually composed of a series of teaching models. Therefore, this study will guide experimental teachers to choose, integrate and innovate teaching models suitable for their own reading of the whole book based on their own and students' actual conditions, not limited to the study of a single model.

Han Baocheng pointed out that "the whole book" reading concept is advocated to provide students with "meaningful and nutritious" learning materials. Teachers and students analyze and explore the themes and contents of language materials to help students construct meanings under the guidance and inspiration of teachers, so as to integrate language learning with meaning exploration and emotional experience. This concept provides a theoretical basis for reading the whole book in English.
Conclusion and Recommendation

The enlightenment of this study from the above viewpoints is that the research and development and exploration of teaching mode should actively change ideas, and more should be understood and innovated from the perspective of "learning". Teaching mode of research and development, in accordance with the needs of learners, process and result, and the elements, each link of teaching gives in-depth analysis and discussion, in order to help students form in access to information, ideas, skills, clear values, to grasp the way of thinking and expression, at the same time, learning to learn.

From the perspective of the research content, there are few systematic theoretical researches on the whole book reading methods in China, and most of them are practical researches on the existing reading strategies and methods in foreign countries. Although most studies on reading English books focus on reading methods and strategies, there is little discussion on which reading methods and skills students should master at what stage, and how to effectively use these methods according to the characteristics of books and reading needs.

In addition, the current English book reading teaching lack of the ability of specific indicators, teaching method guidance content system and evaluation system, etc.
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