

A Study of English Multiple-text Reading Teaching in Senior High School under the Thematic Meaning

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Abstract

With the continuous deepening of education reform, the traditional single-text reading teaching mode has gradually failed to meet the needs of students' comprehensive development. As an emerging teaching mode, thematic multiple-text reading teaching, with its unique advantages and characteristics, provides students with broader reading horizons and deeper thinking training. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the application value, implementation bias and practice strategy of high school English multiple-text reading teaching under the thematic meaning, so as to provide new ideas and methods for the improvement of high school students' English core competencies.

Keywords

Thematic Meaning; Senior High School English; Multiple-text Reading Teaching.

1. Introduction

With the implementation of the English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2022 Edition), the organization of English curriculum content puts more emphasis on the leading of themes and the integration of multiple discourses. In high school English teaching, multiple-text reading teaching, as an integrative and exploratory teaching mode, provides a broad platform for students to deeply understand the text, explore the meaning of the theme and expand their thinking horizons. Yu Zeyuan and Yuan Lingyi (2016) believe that multiple-text reading teaching is the process of students' holistic reading of multiple-text under the leadership of teachers. It seeks to guide reading in a way that is closer to life, thus helping students to cultivate reading interest, develop reading ability and improve reading literacy.

2. The Application Value of English Multiple-text Reading Teaching in Senior High School under the Thematic Meaning

2.1. Developing language skills

As a rich language learning method, multiple-text reading provides high school students with an extensive and authentic language input environment. By reading a series of interrelated texts on the same topic, students are not only exposed to rich vocabulary, similar grammatical structures and authentic expressions, but also learn and master these language elements naturally in real contexts. This immersive reading experience greatly enhances students' comprehension and absorption of language knowledge, enabling them to subconsciously improve their all-round abilities in listening, speaking, reading and writing, and laying a solid foundation for future language practice.

2.2. Deepening textual understanding

In multiple-text reading teaching, digging deeper into the thematic meaning plays an important role in high school students' understanding of the text. Thematic meaning is the soul of the text, which runs through the text and is the key to grasping the text. According to Zhang Ling, Fu Feiqin (2022), by systematically exploring thematic meaning, students are able to deeply

understand the internal logic and deeper meaning of the text, thus avoiding superficial understanding of the text. At the same time, this teaching method also encourages students to interpret the text from different perspectives and levels, which helps to develop their deep reading ability and critical thinking.

2.3. Enhancing reading literacy

Reading literacy is a multi-dimensional concept, which not only includes basic reading comprehension skills, but also covers multiple dimensions such as reading strategies and reading attitudes. In multiple-text reading teaching, students are encouraged to use a variety of reading strategies to deeply comprehend, analyze and evaluate texts, which not only helps them master more reading skills, but also develops their critical thinking and independent thinking skills.

3. The Implementation bias of English Multiple-text Reading Teaching in Senior High School under the Thematic Meaning

3.1. Lack of relevance in the selection of topics

Yu Zeyuan, Wang Yanling, and Huang Limei (2013) argued that a topic is not a fixed idea or concept, but an open-ended question that allows for discussion and inquiry. In high school English multiple-text reading teaching, topics are not only the starting point for guiding students to carry out reading, but also the core of highlighting the meaning of the topic during the whole reading process. However, in the current teaching practice, the selection of topics often lacks a clear goal and direction, and does not closely focus on the thematic meaning, which makes it difficult for students to accurately capture the core ideas and deeper meanings of the text when reading. This lack of targeted topic selection not only reduces the effect of multiple-text reading teaching, but also hinders students' in-depth understanding and reflection on the meaning of the theme.

3.2. Lack of intertextuality in text combinations

The text selection in multiple-text reading teaching is directly related to the teaching effect and students' learning experience. In high school English multiple-text reading teaching, intertextuality among texts is crucial for improving students' reading comprehension and expanding their thinking horizons. Wu Xiaoxiao (2022) emphasized that teachers should consider the intertextuality and logical relevance of the discourses when choosing texts for multiple-text reading, and pay attention to the diversity and matching of the discourses. However, the selection and combination of texts in current teaching practice often lacks intertextuality, resulting in a lack of intrinsic connection and mutual support between texts, making it difficult to form an effective reading synergy. This isolated way of combining texts not only weakens students' ability to understand the text as a whole, but also reduces the advantages and value of multiple-text reading teaching.

3.3. Lack of inquiry in the design of activities

The fundamental purpose of multiple-text reading teaching is to promote students' in-depth understanding of knowledge and the development of reading ability. However, in the current practice of high school English multiple-text reading teaching, the activity design often lacks depth and inquisitiveness, which restricts students' active thinking and interest in inquiry, thus hindering their effective reading. This lack of exploratory activity design not only weakens students' initiative and participation, but also affects the overall effectiveness and quality of multiple-text reading teaching.

4. The Practice Strategy of English Multiple-text Reading Teaching in Senior High School under the Thematic Meaning

4.1. Careful selection of texts based on thematic content

In multiple-text reading teaching, teachers should carefully select texts that are both interrelated and distinctive. These texts should be centered on the same theme, but with different perspectives and viewpoints, etc., so that students can feel the diversity and richness of the texts in their reading. By comparing, analyzing and summarizing the commonalities and differences between different texts, students can gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of the theme and at the same time develop their critical thinking and multicultural literacy.

For instance, in the first volume of "Graded Multiple-text Reading" for Grade 11, the texts "What Spring Means to Me", "Floods in Australia", and "Snow Poems" all focus on the theme of weather, but each presents a distinct perspective and genre. "What Spring Means to Me" explores the significance of spring through the narrative of Groundhog Day, adopting a style that combines narration and commentary. "Floods in Australia" is a narrative that shows how people make use of floods by recounting the actions of Tom's family before the flood. "Snow Poems" is a collection of two poems that celebrate the beauty of nature and falls under the genre of poetry. When teaching these texts, teachers can guide students to explore the theme of human and nature through in-depth analysis, evaluation and expression, that is, the enlightenment nature gives us, how humans and nature can coexist in harmony and how to prevent natural disasters. Such exploratory activities are conducive to cultivating students' higher-order thinking skills, including critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem-solving abilities.

4.2. Set up a hierarchical chain of questions to trigger deeper thinking

In the process of in-depth inquiry in multiple-text reading teaching, the teacher plays the role of a guide, carefully constructing a series of chains of questions from shallow to deep and progressing step by step, which is crucial to helping students dig deeper into the thematic significance of the text. These question chains are like ladders, from the basic information of the text to the deeper meaning of the text, not only guiding students to carefully analyze the structure of the text, revealing the hidden character traits, but also encouraging students to explore the author's unique perspective and insights. This process not only exercises students' thinking skills, but also allows them to experience the joy of learning and growing in exploration.

For example, when teaching "Unit 2 Wildlife Protection" in the compulsory high school English Book 2, teachers can use hierarchical question design to guide students to understand the unit content step by step. First, teachers should start with basic knowledge and ask some basic questions about the current status, species and distribution of wild animals to help students build a preliminary understanding of the unit topic and activate their existing background knowledge to lay the foundation for further learning. Next, teachers can raise the depth of the problem and explore analytical questions such as the challenges, causes and impacts of wildlife conservation. Such discussions can encourage students to analyze and summarize the difficulties and priorities of conservation work in combination with the text content, thereby developing their logical reasoning and critical thinking skills. Finally, teachers can ask contextual or open-ended questions, such as "If you were a wildlife conservation expert, what specific steps would you take to protect endangered species?" This type of problem encourages students to apply their knowledge to practical situations and come up with innovative solutions, thereby deepening their understanding of unit topics and improving their overall literacy.

4.3. Create inquiry-based activities to deepen thematic understanding

In the process of multiple-text reading teaching, teachers should carefully design challenging and inspiring activities according to the topic and the content of the text in order to stimulate

students' interest in exploration and vitality of thinking. By organizing diversified activities such as group discussions, role-playing and debates, students are able to dig deeper into the thematic significance of the text, the author's writing intention and the cultural values behind the text. These exploratory activities are not only conducive to enhancing students' cooperative ability and creative thinking, but also enable them to practically feel the fun and achievement of learning English, thus enhancing their motivation and satisfaction.

Taking the People's Education Press of the high school English textbook, Compulsory Course 3, Unit 4 "Astronomy: The Science of the Stars" as an example, this unit aims to guide students to understand the basic knowledge of astronomy through a series of activities and texts related to space exploration, stimulate their curiosity about the mysteries of the universe, and cultivate the spirit of scientific exploration. In the teaching of multiple-text reading, teachers can combine the content of the textbook to create a series of inquiry activities to deepen students' understanding of this theme. First, teachers can design an inquiry activity called "The Space Exploration Plan". In this activity, students need to work in groups to discuss and formulate a detailed space exploration plan, and explain why they choose specific celestial bodies for research. Through group discussions, students can not only understand the importance of astronomy but also learn to think from multiple perspectives, cultivating critical thinking. Next, teachers can organize a role-playing activity for students. Students can freely choose roles from the text, such as astronauts, astronomers, etc., and simulate real-life space exploration scenarios to perform how to carry out space missions, observe celestial bodies, and other plots. Such activities can allow students to experience the challenges and joys of space exploration in practice, enhancing their emotional experience and interest in scientific exploration. Finally, teachers can also arrange an English debate competition with the theme of "Should humans continue to explore the universe?". Through the debate, students can not only exercise their oral English expression ability but also learn to view problems dialectically, cultivating logical thinking and critical thinking.

4.4. Diversified evaluations to convey the value of multiple-text reading

The Guiding Opinions on the Reform of the Evaluation and Examination System in Primary and Secondary Schools states, "Diversification of evaluation methods should be emphasized, and open-ended evaluation methods should always be used to evaluate the process and results of students' development." Diversified evaluation will broaden students' horizons, promote students to analyze and explore from different perspectives in reading, connect reading texts together, and realize the independent construction of knowledge.

In multiple-text reading teaching, teachers adopt diversified evaluation strategies, which can not only stimulate students' motivation for independent learning, but also promote their in-depth understanding and critical thinking of reading materials. First of all, the diversified evaluation system emphasizes the plurality of evaluation subjects. In multiple-text reading teaching, teachers can design different activities for students to evaluate independently in group discussions, express their understanding and opinions of the reading materials, and at the same time guide students to evaluate each other and deepen their understanding of the text through exchanges. Secondly, the diversification of evaluation content is also key. In multiple-text reading teaching, the evaluation should not be limited to the degree of students' understanding of the text, but should also include students' innovative thinking, critical thinking ability and emotional attitude. For example, teachers can set situational or open-ended questions for students to put forward their own views and solutions in the discussion, and such activities can not only exercise students' critical thinking, but also improve their language expression skills. Finally, the diversified evaluation system also emphasizes the continuity and development of the evaluation process. Evaluation is not only the judgment of results, but also the attention and guidance to students' learning process. In multiple-text reading teaching,

teachers should embed evaluation into every link of teaching, and through timely and continuous evaluation feedback, help students continuously adjust their learning strategies and improve their reading efficiency.

5. Conclusion

To summarize, high school English multiple-text reading teaching under the thematic meaning not only helps to develop high school students' language skills and deepen textual understanding, but also enhances their reading literacy and lays a solid foundation for lifelong learning. Faced with the existing problems in current teaching, high school English teachers should carefully select texts, set hierarchical question chains, create inquiry-based activities and conduct diversified evaluations, so as to guide students to interpret discourses in multiple dimensions, dig deeper into the meaning of themes, and realize the goal of cultivating and improving students' core competencies through reading.

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