

An Inquiry into English Reading Teaching in Senior High School in the Context of Themes

-- FLTRP Edition (2019) High School English Textbook Compulsory1 Unit1 "A New Start"

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Abstract

In the introduction part, this paper first expounds the importance of reading teaching based on topic context, and then analyzes the current problems faced by reading teaching based on topic context in senior high school English: This paper summarizes the necessity of reading teaching based on the topic context. Finally, combining with practical reading teaching cases, this paper discusses how to teach English reading in high school according to the topic context provided by the text.

Keywords

English Teaching; Reaching Reading; Thematic Meaning.

1. Introduction

Subject context has been added to the curriculum content of the English Curriculum Standards for Senior High Schools (2017 Edition, 2020 Revision) (hereinafter referred to as the "New Curriculum Standards"), emphasizing that under the guidance of subject context and relying on discourse, the teaching of units as a whole is carried out. The thematic context includes three categories: "man and society", "man and nature" and "man and self". The newly revised versions of high school English textbooks are also based on the three theme contexts, choose the theme that conforms to students' learning and life, and decide the compilation of the textbooks with the unit as a whole. The newly revised versions of senior high school English textbooks emphasize the importance of unit design as a whole, pay attention to the exploration of thematic meaning, and change the disadvantages of fragmented and fragmented knowledge learning before. The thematic context of a unit is mainly carried by individual discourse in the unit. Discourse refers to the actual language units used and is the whole language composed of a series of continuous paragraphs or sentences in the communication process. In other words, the so-called discourse refers to any natural language that expresses complete meaning in a certain context that is not completely constrained by the sentence (Hu Zhuanglin, 1994). Discourse can take many forms, including text, pictures, and diagrams. In teaching, we tend to pay most attention to reading texts, and the reading texts in a unit carry the thematic context of the unit, so teachers need to use reading texts to guide students to explore the thematic meaning of the unit.

2. Problems in Reading Teaching based on Thematic Context

2.1. Teaching Out-of-context

It has been only a few years since the concept of subject context was first proposed in the new curriculum standards. For some high school English teachers, it is a relatively new thing and concept. Teachers who are accustomed to the traditional reading teaching methods can hardly

change their teaching ideas and methods. As a result, there are still many teachers who teach reading out of context and pay attention to students mastering key vocabulary and sentence patterns through discourse learning, and the teaching focus is still on the learning of language knowledge.

2.2. The Understanding of the Subject Context is Not Comprehensive Enough

Some teachers follow the new curriculum standards and begin to explore reading teaching based on thematic context. However, as this is a fresh attempt, many teachers are unable to accurately and comprehensively understand the thematic context of the unit when exploring the meaning of the unit theme, and often only stay at a relatively shallow understanding, which will affect their establishment of the overall goal of the unit.

2.3. Students' Language Proficiency is Insufficient

To explore the topic context through discourse, students first need to be able to understand the surface meaning conveyed by the discourse, which means that students should have a certain language level and be able to read the lines of the article. Only based on the understanding of the surface content of the article can they further expand. the meaning of the subject is explored (read between the lines and read beyond the lines).

2.4. The Deficiency of Students in the Training of Thinking Quality

In the past, the teaching neglected the training of students' thinking quality, which resulted in students being unwilling to use their brains to think in the process of learning and only willing to accept passively. Therefore, when guiding students to explore and think about the topic context, it is difficult for them to generate their own ideas, and reading teaching based on the topic context is also difficult to take root in actual teaching.

3. The Importance of Reading Teaching based on the Subject Context

The new curriculum standard puts forward that English subjects should develop four core qualities: language knowledge, cultural awareness, thinking quality and learning ability. Reading text carries a lot of language knowledge and contains rich cultural connotation. Reading teaching based on the topic context is mainly completed through the design of teaching activities at various levels, so that students can develop their own thinking quality through the exploration of the topic context while learning language knowledge. When completing the activity, they can learn the strengths of others through the communication and cooperation with peers and teachers. Taking the reading teaching of Unit1 "A new start" of FLTRP Edition as an example, this paper discusses how to conduct senior high school English reading teaching based on the thematic context provided by the text, so as to further improve students' reading learning strategies and develop their core literacy.

4. English Reading Teaching Practice in Senior High School in the Context of the Theme

4.1. Study the Text Deeply and Analyze the Topic Context

The subject context of "A new start" in Unit1 of FLTRP Edition (2019) is "People and self". The first unit is about the freshmen's study and life in the first week after entering the school and some suggestions for their study and life in high school, or its theme is "adaptation". When freshmen just enter high school, they may be afraid of new and unknown challenges while looking forward to new life. This unit can lead students to understand high school life slowly and eliminate their worries. Through the First discourse "My First Day at Senior High" (Meng Hao's first day at senior high school), students can resonate with the content of the discourse,

draw the distance between students and English subjects, stimulate students' interest in follow-up learning, and reflect on their own mental journey of the first day at school through the learning experience of Meng Hao's first day at school. The purpose is to allow new high school students to adapt to the new learning environment in a short time. Then the second part is in the form of an interview, in the voice of a senior senior, to give some high school life advice to freshmen. After learning this text, part of students' questions about their future study and life can be answered. At the same time, it can also guide students to think about what kind of problems they may face in their future study and life, identify the problems in advance, and think about countermeasures. The last discourse is a brief record of a girl's learning life for a week, which is actually presented as a pre-writing discourse. After reading the record of the girl's learning life for a week, students need to write a summary of their own life for a week on that day, so as to train students' writing ability and enable them to check and fill in the gaps in this way. In general, the three passages all focus on the theme of new life in high school, from the first day, to giving advice, to the final week summary. Through the study of this unit, students can gradually adapt to the new study and life, know how to get along with others, think about the problems they will face and propose some solutions, and get ready for the future study and life. At the same time, students can accumulate some expressions commonly used in narrative essays and give suggestions in the context of the unit theme consciously or unconsciously.

4.2. Based on the Subject Context, Determine the Unit Teaching Objectives

One of the purposes of in-depth study of the texts is to design the overall teaching objectives of the unit based on the thematic context. Through the above analysis of the main texts of the unit, the author considers the four dimensions of core literacy proposed by the new curriculum standard to design the teaching objectives of the unit.

4.2.1. Language Knowledge Objective

In the process of learning each text, learn some new and necessary vocabulary and English expressions. The vocabulary and expressions that need to be learned can be divided into receptive knowledge and productive knowledge. Some words are receptive knowledge, and students can recognize their meaning when they see them. Others are productive knowledge, where students should be able to use relevant words or expressions in written or spoken language.

4.2.2. Cultural Awareness Objectives

In the teaching of this unit, teachers can introduce students to the daily study life of high school students in other countries, find the differences in middle school learning in different countries by comparing their own study life, and understand and respect such differences.

4.2.3. Thinking Quality Objectives

By learning each discourse of this unit, students can analyze their current problems in learning, think about solutions to problems, and make plans for their high school life in the next three years.

4.2.4. Learning Ability Objectives

Learn from the given text content how to solve the problems we encounter in our study life.

4.3. Design Reading Teaching Activities based on the Subject Context

Reading teaching is an important way to develop students' thinking quality, which includes logical thinking, critical thinking and creative thinking. The focus of reading teaching based on thematic context is not only to enable students to learn language knowledge, but also to develop students' thinking quality in the process of guiding students to explore the meaning of the theme, which is a gradual and gradual process, which requires teachers to study the text and

thematic context in depth. Design activities at all levels from knowledge understanding to transfer and innovation to applied practice, and make good use of the question chain to help students better realize the transition of activities at different levels. It has been mentioned above that this unit contains three main texts, but only the first two texts are pure reading texts, so this paper only discusses the activity design of the first two texts. Although the two texts exist independently in different positions of the unit, they both serve the thematic context of this unit, and it is expected that students can explore the meaning of the theme bit by bit through activities.

4.3.1. Make Full Use of the Opening Page of the Unit to Introduce the Unit Theme and Activate Students' Existing Knowledge and Experience.

Since the first discourse of the unit follows the Starting out at the beginning of the unit, the Starting out of each unit can be flexibly used by teachers as the introduction of the first unit to stimulate students' background knowledge. Arouse students' interest in learning. The Starting out of this unit provides a one-day video of the school life of American middle school students. The video records the whole process from going to school, having classes at school, having meals at school, having activities at school to finishing school. Using this video to introduce the first discourse teaching can trigger students to think about their daily learning and life process. Teachers can guide students to think about the difference between American high school life and Chinese high school life through "what is the difference between American high school life and Chinese high school life". Understand the differences, and recognize and respect the cultural differences of different countries. As the school routine of American middle school students played in the leading-in stage, it also guided the students to compare the differences between Chinese and American school life, which naturally led to our First teaching discourse "My First Day at Senior High" and led the students to understand Meng Hao's first day at school.

4.3.2. Design of "My First Day at Senior High" Discourse Reading Activity

Activity 1: lead in

Since the content of this unit is what high school students will learn in the first English class on the first day of school, teachers can ask students about their mood and feelings on the first day of school before formally entering the discourse teaching, so as to connect with the content of the discourse.

Activity2: the timeline of Meng Hao's experiences

After reading the passage, students need to draw a time line of Meng Hao's first day of school, including several stages before going to school, arriving at school, during English class, and after English class. By drawing a time line, students divide the whole article into several parts according to the chronological order, which makes the progression of the whole article more clear. They can also write the narrative essay in this way in the future.

Activity3: what expressions does the author use to describe his feelings?

After drawing a timeline of Meng's school day, the students read the passage again, this time looking for expressions at different stages that described Meng's feelings. By finding out the different expressions that describe Meng Hao's feelings at different stages, students can learn some new vocabulary and expressions, and they can retell Meng Hao's experience of the day with the help of the completed tables. At the same time, students can get a clearer idea of the content of the whole essay.

Activity4: think and share

After mastering the content of the passage, the teacher asked the students to think about what the passage said "well begun, half done" meant. In fact, what this means is that if you have a good start, your probability of success will be greatly increased. By asking students to think about this sentence, students can understand that this is the beginning of a new stage for them,

and they should try to lay a good foundation at the beginning, so that they will not be so laborious in learning later. This also echoes our unit theme "A New Start". Through the study of the first discourse, students can understand Meng Hao's experience on the first day of school, and understand that they should work hard from the very beginning and not relax. This is also the first step to explore the context of the unit theme and understand their current stage.

4.3.3. Activity Design of "High School Hints"

Activity1: predicting

Students guess the general content of the text based on the title and word cloud of the text. The last lesson is to help students open a new chapter of learning, to clarify their own identity and learning stage. In a new learning stage, students are bound to have doubts and confusion about the unknown life. Therefore, this text provides some suggestions on high school study and life to students through interviews in the tone of a senior student.

Activity2: Scan the interview and answer the questions

A: What did Lisa find most helpful when she started high school?

B: How did she deal with new challenges?

C: How did she handle disappointments?

Scanning is an important reading strategy that high school students need to master. Before students start the task, teachers need to give students tips on the skills of scanning, such as focusing on the key words in the question, reading the article quickly, and stopping to read carefully where the key words appear.

Activity3: list your problems and try to help others solve their problems

Students first think about what problems they might face in the future as freshmen. Then the teacher lists the most frequent problems on the blackboard, and then asks everyone to discuss in a group and give some suggestions to solve the problems. Through the first and second activities, students can have a certain degree of understanding of the general content of the article, and some of their doubts about high school campus life may be answered. However, an interview cannot cover all the problems, so this activity can allow students to raise their other questions and discuss the measures to solve these problems together. This activity can help develop students' ability of teamwork and problem solving.

Activity4: think and share

A: what do you think Lisa means by "If you fail, no problem-next time you can fail better"?

B: Think about the words from Maya Angelou: "Be a rainbow in somebody else's cloud." Do you know of any similar sayings?

C: Which piece of Lisa's advice is the most helpful to you? Why?

After solving the surface information of the article, it is necessary to dig deeply into the content of the article to develop the quality of thinking of students. Ask students to think about one or two of the above questions. After learning this text, students should have a deeper understanding of the theme of this unit, because through the study of the two texts and a series of activities, they are not only aware that they are in a new stage, but also aware of the problems they may encounter in the future, and can make preparations in advance to deal with these new challenges. This is one of the spirits that the opening unit of our book tries to convey to students.

5. Conclusion

Unit topic context is not only one of the contents of the new curriculum standard, but also the core of the new textbook, so it should be the teaching focus of teachers. Reading teaching has always played an important role in senior high school English teaching, and developing the thinking quality of senior high school students' core quality through reading teaching is also

the top priority of teaching. All high school English teachers should have the awareness of the significance of the unit theme based on the unit topic context, so that the reading teaching of each unit can be gradual, serve the exploration of the topic context, and develop the quality of thinking and learning ability of students.

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