

Effective Construction of Multiple Writing Scaffolds in High School English Reading and Subsequent Writing Instruction

Yijiao Huang

China West Normal University, Nanchong, Sichuan, 637001, China

Abstract

In high school English teaching, reading is the main means of language input, while writing is the main way of language output, and the two complement each other. At present, many English teachers adopt the way of reading followed by writing to teach writing, but there are still some problems about how to build effective language scaffolds for students in the teaching practice of reading followed by writing. In this paper, we will introduce how to build language scaffolding, content scaffolding and thinking scaffolding for students through reading texts through an open lesson on writing, starting from the inseparable relationship between reading and writing.

Keywords

Reading Followed By Writing; Reading and Writing Together; Writing Scaffolding.

1. Introduction

Reading and writing is a new type of English writing question that has emerged in recent years. This type of question meets the current social requirements for the development of students' comprehensive language skills, but at the same time, it also puts forward higher requirements for the development of students' abilities. Reading and writing requires students to be able to accurately grasp the key information and language features of a short text, and to use vivid language and accurate language structures to complete the writing. Creative thinking skills are also a necessity in this process. Therefore, the writing task of continuing to write an essay that is logically connected to the original material and has a complete plot and structure is a comprehensive examination of students' language use skills, creative thinking skills and emotional and attitudinal values.

In the current practice of teaching English writing in high schools in China, writing teaching is often carried out in isolation from the teaching of other boards. In particular, the current situation that writing teaching is divided from reading teaching seriously restricts the improvement of students' English writing ability. Therefore, the current situation of English writing teaching in China is in urgent need of reform. The emergence of the question of reading followed by writing reflects the importance of combining reading and writing teaching. Because reading is an important means of language input, while writing is the main important means of language output. As we all know, there must be enough language input before there can be stable language output, so teachers should seize the intrinsic connection between reading and writing, read with writing, read to promote writing, and guide students to apply the language knowledge they have learned, the layout they have realized, and the emotional thinking they have stimulated consciously to writing, so as to achieve the purpose of applying what they have learned (Wang Chuming, 2015). In the real reading and writing teaching practice, how to build different scaffolds for students to carry out writing training in a step-by-step manner is a big problem that many teachers feel troubled by. In this paper, we will propose strategies for building multiple scaffolds and analyze cases of reading and writing practice to solve this problem.

2. The Strategy of Building a Multiple Scaffolding for Reading and Subsequent Writing

The term "scaffolding" comes from the term "scaffolding" in the construction industry and is now used by educational scholars to describe a peer leader or a person who helps another person in the learning process. Scaffolding theory was first derived from the famous educator Vygotsky's theory of the zone of most recent development. The key to helping students improve is to design instructional activities based on students' NDAs in order to scaffold instruction effectively. In the process of scaffolding reading and writing, teachers can focus on the following scaffolds according to the characteristics of the text and the cognitive level of students:

2.1. Building Language Scaffolding

In a classroom where reading is followed by writing, students are able to appreciate the author's linguistic style by reading the raw material, interacting with the reading material and imitating the linguistic form in the process of interaction. Consistency of language style is an important goal for reading followed by writing activities to achieve synergy. Therefore, teachers can guide students to organize the language in the reading text by blocks of language from multiple perspectives according to the characteristics of the text.

2.1.1. Refine the Language of the Topic

The topic-centered organization of language has specific contextual requirements, meets specific communicative needs, and is easily integrated with students' life experiences and emotional experiences, thus making it easier for students to "get in and get out" and leave a deep impression (Liang, 2014). Refining the language of the topic is an important stage in the reading and writing task. In this stage, students can understand the linguistic style of the context of the source material and thus make their writing synergistic with it. At the same time, teachers can expand students' vocabulary on relevant topics according to their actual language level and the actual needs of communication, thus providing a linguistic knowledge base for subsequent writing.

2.1.2. Summarize the Functional Language of the Discourse

Different genres of discourse have different linguistic functions. From the function of the discourse, teachers can direct students' attention to the different functions of different discourses and the linguistic forms that perform such functions, i.e. functional language. Reading followed by writing requires the output of a genre that is generally based on expository, narrative and explanatory texts, or a combination of both. When the source material is story-telling based, the output of the read-after-write is mostly narrative. The function of the narrative part, for example, is to make the reader feel the event by describing it in vivid language and narrating it in an organized way, while the function of the expository part is to analyze an event and a character to make a fact clear. Therefore, organizing the language in the source material in relation to the genre and the function of the discourse in relation to the features of the discourse will ensure that students can use the language correctly, and thus ultimately develop their language skills.

2.2. Build Content Scaffolding

The greatest advantage of reading and writing is the combination of language imitation and content creation, which unleashes the user's imagination and enhances his or her ability to use the language accurately (Wang, 2012). Reading followed by writing requires students to be able to connect raw materials with subsequent language output, so the process of scaffolding content for students requires teachers to help students imitate language forms and create content at the same time, ultimately transforming language knowledge into language ability. Therefore, teachers can use the following tools.

2.2.1. Designing Multiple Language Situations Related to Language Forms

Teachers should create new situations related to the texts they read, so that students have the opportunity to make full use of the organized language blocks for the purpose of internalizing language and developing competence (Liang, 2014). Designing relevant situations from multiple perspectives is conducive to fully engaging students' imagination and creativity, thus internalizing the language forms they have learned and helping them broaden their ideas about writing.

2.2.2. Designing Training to Enrich the Content of Writing around the Theme

The requirement of the reading and writing questions is usually to continue writing two paragraphs with a given opening phrase, which are usually sentences that contain the theme of the text and at the same time, these sentences are usually the key sentences in the text. Therefore, teachers should guide students in the process of building content scaffolding to summarize the theme of the source material and make a logical connection between the content of the sequel and the theme of the article.

2.3. Build Thinking Scaffolds

Writing is a process that combines language, content, and thinking, so stimulating and enhancing students' thinking around textual themes will be an important prelude to subsequent student writing. Teachers should set up activities around themes during the reading stage so that these activities stimulate students' thinking and encourage critical thinking in particular. Writing is a process that combines language, content, and thinking, so stimulating and enhancing students' thinking around textual themes is an important prelude to subsequent student writing. Each reading passage has different stimulus points, so teachers can set up a hierarchical chain of questions to explore the content of the text and develop students' critical thinking skills. The questions teachers ask during the reading process can be classified as display questions, reference questions, and assessment questions. Demonstration questions emphasize the recognition and understanding of text information; reference questions focus on the extraction, processing and application of text information; and assessment questions guide students to evaluate text information. The answers to assessment questions are often not directly available from the text, and students need to think about the questions from different perspectives in order to reach an evaluation or conclusion. Assessment questions train students to think critically and are often the entry point for scaffolding their thinking about reading and writing.

2.4. Building Emotional Scaffolds

Each text contains a unique emotional value. In the process of building a scaffolding for reading and writing, teachers should strive to explore the emotional factors in the text so that students can put themselves in the shoes of the characters' inner emotions. The emotional experience is the relationship between the author and the reader, which can stimulate the students' real emotions, so that they can better understand and grasp the text. Therefore, in the teaching process of reading and writing, teachers should actively explore the emotional information in the text from the students' perspective and take appropriate methods and activities to lead students to experience the emotional attitudes contained therein. This is conducive to students' active integration of their true feelings in writing practice and enriching their own writing content.

3. The Teaching Practice of Building a Scaffolding for Reading, Writing and Follow-up

The teaching content used in this open lesson is a narrative story. The story is about Barton and Clinton, who have a misunderstanding because of a lost gold coin, and then resolve the misunderstanding. The story is not long and easy to understand. The ups and downs in the text are interesting, which can effectively attract students' interest in reading and pave the way for subsequent writing, and is good material for reading and subsequent writing.

3.1. Teaching Ideas

This lesson is a combined reading and writing lesson, consisting of two parts: reading and writing. The teacher introduces the two main characters of the article through storytelling, and then guides students to quickly obtain the key information of the article through reading the text, to clarify the course of events, and finally to build the scaffolding of language, content, thinking and emotion for subsequent reading and writing by predicting the subsequent development of the plot. The writing part is based on the reading of the text and the subsequent writing according to the requirements of the college entrance examination, and the evaluation activities such as self-assessment, other assessment and teacher assessment are conducted.

3.2. Teaching Steps

Step1: Introduction - Plot Introduction.

The teacher used role-play to introduce the main characters and the main storyline of the article. The teacher adopts the humorous form of role-playing to introduce the two main characters, Barton and Clinton, and the general plot of the article to the students.

[Design Intent].

The purpose of this session is to arouse students' interest in reading. Before moving on to the text, teachers usually design questions around the text topic to activate students' prior knowledge, make connections between it and the new knowledge they will learn, and clear the way for reading. The teacher sets up the main information of the text and scaffolds the content for the students to read next in this session.

Step2: Reading - building a scaffold.

Skimming.

After a quick introduction of the master and the gold coin, the teacher guided the students to review the four elements of the story (characters, actions, feelings, settings) and then invited them to read the article aloud, guiding them to quickly access the "four elements" of the article and summarize the main content of the text by reading it.

Table 1. Four Elements

Characters	Barton, Clinton, other veterans
Actions	Clinton showed a gold coin, (missing) Everyone agreed to be searched. (except Barton)
Feelings	too proud, self-important, disgraced, angry
Setting	After 1 st World War/ at a get-together party

[Design Intent].

This activity guides students in analyzing reading materials to train them to acquire information and process information in English. Before starting the activity, the teacher guided students to review the four elements of narrative stories to facilitate their successful

completion of the related activity next, and this practice scaffolds the content for students' subsequent writing.

Scanning.

The teacher shows the students several parts of writing a narrative story and compares it to 'A story mountain'. Then ask the students the following questions to guide them to get the details of the story through reading.

Q1 What is the function of the 'problem' part of one story?

Q2 What's the problem of this story?



Figure 1. A Story Mountain

[Design Intent].

The purpose of this activity is to give students an understanding of the basic structure and plot line of a narrative story. The teacher guides students to look for details about the 'problem' part of the text so that they can understand that this part of the narrative story can bring the plot to a climax. It helps to improve students' ability to narrate in English, and to model and prepare the structure and content for the subsequent reading and writing.

Step3: Writing - Language Output.

Predict.

Based on the students' skimming and searching, the teacher designed the following questions for students to predict where the story would go next.

Q1: What did he find? / where did he find it? (Actions).

Q2: What would he do next? (Actions).

Q3: How did he feel? (Feelings).

Q4: Why...blankly? (Feelings).

Q5: Why did Barton refuse to be searched? (Actions& Feelings).

Q6: What was ending? (Actions).

[Design Intent].

This activity consists mainly of referential and evaluative questions. The main focus is on the actions and feelings of the main character of the text. The teacher asks these questions to set up teaching situations that can initiate students' thinking and make them think. It is conducive to stimulating students' imagination. At the same time, it facilitates the internalization of students' accelerated knowledge and enables them to transform language knowledge into language skills in language practice. Since reading and writing are more demanding on students' imagination and creativity than ordinary writing activities, the group discussion, in which students express their different opinions, is conducive to making students' thinking inspired by their communication with others and to promoting the joint development of students' imagination and expression.

Writing.

The teacher clarifies the following reading and writing requirements to students and moves on to the independent writing stage.

The number of words in the short text to be continued should be about 150;

The continuation section is divided into two paragraphs, and the opening phrase of each paragraph has been written for you:

[paragraph 1].

A few years later, Clinton made some changes in his house.

[paragraph 2].

Barton looked at Clinton blankly.

[Design Intent].

The purpose of this activity is to assign writing tasks based on the requirements for reading followed by writing after the Advanced Placement exam and to guide students through the language output. The focus of this activity is designed to help students deepen their understanding of the content of the text while providing opportunities for them to create content.

Assessment.

Students develop self-assessments and other assessments based on the following writing scoring rubric. The teacher presents several pieces of student writing in class and critiques them.

Table 2. Assessment

Grading Criteria	Self-assessment	Mutual assessment	Teacher assessment
Writing/Word count (5)			
Articulation with reading text and opening phrase (5)			
Richness of content/ Use of assigned vocabulary (5)			
Coherence of the assignment (5)			

[Design Intent].

The teacher sets the grading principles for reading and writing from five perspectives: writing and word count, the degree of connection with the given short text and paragraph openings, richness of content and use of key words, richness and accuracy in the use of grammatical structures and vocabulary, and coherence of the work. The assessment is based on teacher assessment, self-assessment, and mutual assessment, reflecting the diversity of assessment

methods. At the same time, students become the main subject of evaluation, which is conducive to their reflection in the process of evaluation, thus promoting the improvement of students' writing ability.

4. Summary

In summary, this paper explains in detail how to effectively scaffold students in the teaching of reading and writing in high school English. It also shows that teachers can use the "scaffolding" theory and the "nearest developmental zone" theory to help students improve their writing skills effectively.

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