

Original Article

Classroom Teaching Practices of Reading-to-Writing Model in Middle School English Based on Thematic Meaning Exploration

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Abstract - The teaching activity of the reading-to-writing model based on thematic meaning represents the most effective and direct approach to fostering a connection between reading and writing skills. In light of the aforementioned, this paper takes Unit 4, "Why don't you talk to your parents", from the second book of the eighth grade English in Junior Middle School as a case study to investigate the potential of reading-to-writing model based on the thematic meaning in the classroom, with the aim of fostering the development of students' core competencies in the English discipline. The study revealed that in the reading-to-writing model based on the exploration of thematic meaning, teachers should prioritize the students as the main body, utilize the discourse as the carrier, and create a real context for students. By exploring, deepening, expanding and perfecting the thematic meaning, teachers can investigate the thematic meaning and connotation of the discourse and facilitate the transformation of students' linguistic knowledge into linguistic competence and the transformation of learning ability into thinking ability, thus enhancing students' core literacy.

Keywords - Thematic meaning, Junior high student, Reading-to-writing model.

1. Introduction

The English Curriculum Standards for General Senior High Schools (2017 Edition Revised in 2020) stipulate that in English teaching, thematic meaning should be regarded as the fundamental principle guiding the teaching content and activities. This approach is designed to facilitate the attainment of teaching objectives based on the cultivation of core literacy. The core qualities of the English subject include language knowledge, language skills, cultural awareness, and thinking quality. Despite the fact that a considerable number of English teachers employ a variety of forms in designing teaching activities, including listening, reading, writing, and revision lessons, they frequently fail to comprehend the thematic meaning of the teaching material fully. There is still a dearth of in-depth thinking on how to combine reading and writing based on thematic meaning effectively. Concurrently, the advancement of students' comprehensive linguistic proficiency is regarded as the paramount objective of English language instruction. Among these, reading and writing, as two key aspects of language input and output, play an important role in the internalization of students' language knowledge, the expansion of their cognitive abilities and the cultivation of their affective attitudes when taught in conjunction. Based on this, it is of paramount importance for teachers to consider the most

effective methods for the reading-to-writing model based on English teaching, with the aim of fostering the growth of students' fundamental literacy skills in the English language.

2. The Importance of Reading-to-Writing Model

2.1. Promoting students' Comprehensive Language Ability

Listening, speaking, reading and writing are the four basic skills. Reading represents the process through which students are exposed to a plethora of linguistic materials, including vocabulary, grammatical structures and expressions. Writing represents the process of language output, whereby students are required to apply the knowledge and skills acquired during the learning process to the actual act of writing, with the aim of enhancing their language abilities. The reading-to-writing model serves to interconnect these two aspects, thereby establishing a complementary relationship between them. This facilitates the internalization and externalization of language knowledge on the part of the learner during the learning process (Xue, 2021).

Furthermore, reading-to-writing not only addresses the enhancement of reading and writing abilities but also



facilitates the growth of students' listening and speaking competencies through reading and writing exercises. This approach enables a comprehensive advancement in students' language proficiency. In addition, reading and writing teaching activities in good design can fully reflect the characteristics of in-depth learning, emphasize the transformation of knowledge to competence and the development of competence to literacy, based on the establishment of morality and education, and jointly point to the goal of human development(Wang, 2020).

2.2. Enhancing Students' Learning Interests and Motivation

Reading-to-writing model is designed to stimulate students' learning interest through the utilization of diverse reading materials and writing tasks. When students perceive a close relationship between the reading materials and their lives, interests, or learning needs, they are more likely to invest time and energy in reading and learning. Concurrently, the provision of positive feedback, such as a sense of accomplishment in the writing process, will serve to bolster students' self-assurance and motivation to learn, thereby fostering their active engagement in the English language learning process.

2.3. Improving Teaching Effect and Learning Efficiency

In comparison to the conventional approach of segregating reading and writing, the reading-to-writing model helps teachers to clarify the teaching objectives and content. Teachers can facilitate students' acquisition of specific language knowledge and skills by designing targeted reading materials and writing tasks. Furthermore, the reading-to-writing model's emphasis on the internalization and externalization of language knowledge can markedly enhance teachers' pedagogical efficacy and students' learning efficiency. The language knowledge and experience accrued by students during reading can be applied and consolidated during writing. Additionally, the feedback and guidance provided during writing can assist students in identifying and rectifying issues encountered during reading in a timely manner.

2.4. Responding to the Requirements of Social Development

In the context of the ongoing process of globalization, English has become an indispensable instrument for facilitating international communication. The traditional approach to teaching English, which separates reading and writing, is no longer aligned with the development needs of contemporary society. Reading-to-writing model based on thematic meaning exploration necessitates a re-examination of the content of the textbook by English teachers. This should entail the selection of thematic discourse-related content, the formation of a unit teaching theme, the refinement of the thematic meaning of the unit, and an awareness of the generative and integrative nature of the

curriculum. Furthermore, teachers should consider the linking of students' acquired knowledge, life experience and the inevitable needs of social development, adopting the reading-to-writing model. This should be accompanied by the implementation of more open and flexible teaching(Song, 2024). Reading-to-writing model based on thematic meaning exploration not only facilitates the development of students' language skills but also cultivates their comprehensive qualities, including the capacity to think critically, the ability to innovate, and the capacity to learn independently. Such qualities are fundamental prerequisites for individuals in the modern era.

3. The Importance of Thematic Meaning Exploration in the Reading-to-Writing Model

The English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education proposes six elements of curriculum content, with thematic meaning representing the initial element. This element primarily delineates the scope of themes for the English language curriculum, thereby underscoring the significance of thematic meaning inquiry. Thematic meaning exploration enables students to enhance their reading comprehension and writing abilities through the examination of specific themes. This process facilitates the internalization and transfer of language knowledge, allowing students to construct a systematic knowledge framework gradually. Secondly, teachers facilitate students' analysis of the text from multiple perspectives and levels, thereby encouraging in-depth learning. This not only exercises students' language skills but also promotes the development of their thinking quality. The process of inquiry enables students to develop critical thinking, articulate their own opinions and express themselves creatively in writing. This gives them a solid foundation on which to learn and live. Therefore, thematic meaning exploration is an essential teaching strategy for reading-to-writing in junior high school. Teachers should actively employ this strategy to create a more favourable learning environment for students' comprehensive development.

4. A Teaching Practice of Reading-to-Writing Model in Middle School English Based on Thematic Meaning Exploration

The fundamental objective of the reading-to-writing model is to construct a conduit between the author and the reader, facilitating the transmission and reception of information. The reading-to-writing model based on the exploration of thematic meanings requires teachers to focus closely on specific thematic contexts and to guide students in analyzing texts in depth and multiple reading comprehension tasks. This approach enables students to draw on language forms and information at all levels effectively. This process emphasizes the deepening of the content of the text, with the objective of ensuring that it is fully absorbed and internalized by the students. Subsequently, in consideration of the

distinctive attributes of diverse textual forms and the varying learning circumstances of students, teachers must devise pedagogical strategies that facilitate the transfer of the essential elements of content and language forms gleaned from reading to writing practice. This approach aims to foster a mutually reinforcing and enhancing relationship between reading and writing skills. In order to facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of reading-to-writing classroom teaching based on thematic meaning exploration among junior high school English teachers, this paper presents an illustrative case that elucidates the implementation of reading-to-writing teaching activities based on thematic meaning in junior high school, with the objective of enhancing students' comprehensive abilities.

4.1. Exploring Discourse Themes

Reading-to-writing activities based on thematic meaning exploration and the concept of teaching around thematic meaning exploration advocated by the curriculum standards are essentially the same (Yang, 2020). This paper takes Unit 4, "Why don't you talk to your parents", in the eighth grade, as an example, focusing on the significance of the theme and carrying out the teaching design of the reading-to-writing model. The overarching theme of this unit is "Interpersonal Communication," which seeks to equip students with the skills to navigate the challenges of adolescence constructively and instill positive values. This unit comprises two reading articles. There are two reading articles in this unit: Thirteen's Letter, Mr. Hunt's reply in Section A, and Maybe You Should Learn To Relax in Section B. Section A focuses on the common family problems of teenagers and the positive measures to deal with them, while Section B briefly analyses the common problems of overloading of extracurricular learning among teenagers in China and abroad, and expresses the common views and opinions of parents and experts. The reading and writing task of this unit is to contribute an article to an English journal based on the reading of Maybe You Should Learn to Relax. The article should express views on extracurricular learning classes and provide reasons for them. The writing component is designed to facilitate the development of critical thinking skills, the expression of personal opinions, and the provision of advice in response to real-life scenarios.

4.2. Focusing on Teaching Objectives

The students have already acquired knowledge of the subject matter pertaining to problems through the initial unit of study. Furthermore, they have demonstrated proficiency in the processes of acquiring, sorting, summarizing and concluding information through reading. However, there is a need to enhance their abilities in oral expression and writing. In light of the aforementioned considerations, the teacher established the following learning objectives:

Learning comprehension: Students can use the vocabulary and sentence patterns for asking questions,

describing problems, making suggestions and giving evaluations.

Practical application: Students will be able to relate to real-life situations and produce integrated language output in the target language.

Transfer and innovation: By combining the structure of this unit, students can construct a structured guide for writing a letter of advice from beginning to body-ending to complete the writing output further.

4.3. Designing Teaching Activities

4.3.1. Creating a Situation and Introducing the Theme

Step 1 The teacher presents the class with a series of recorded anecdotes detailing the challenges encountered by individuals in their daily lives. Following the viewing of the video, the teacher poses the following questions to the class:

Q1: What can be discerned from this video?

Q2: What is the most common problem from this video?

Q3: What are the main sources of stress for students?

Step 2 Teacher invites students to share their solutions when they encounter these problems:

Q1: When you are troubled by these problems, what will you do?/ Can you give some advice for those students who are troubled?

【 design idea 】 By watching the videos recorded by the students themselves about various problems they encountered in their lives, the students can see the pressures faced by other students so that they can empathize with them and quickly integrate into the class topic. In this process, the teacher guides students to watch the video and summarize its content. Based on this, the teacher invites students to share the specific problems and solutions they have encountered. This shows that the teacher focuses on the problem itself in terms of the existing realities of the students and draws the students into the significance of the subject matter from the very beginning.

4.3.2. Studying the Discourse and Expanding the Theme

It is pointed out that studying a discourse means making an in-depth interpretation of its theme, content, literary structure, language features, and author's viewpoints. Teachers are advised to interpret the discourse from three aspects: firstly, the topic and content of the discourse, the question of What; secondly, the stylistic features, content structure and language characteristics of the discourse, the question of How; and thirdly, the deeper meanings of the discourse or the author's writing intention, his emotional attitudes or value orientations, the question of Why. (Zhu, 2023).

The teacher guides the students in exploring the thematic meaning of the article while they study the passage. Maybe you should learn to relax, which is the most important part of exploring the thematic meaning.

Step 1: The teacher guides students to observe the pictures and the title in the passage and to infer the main idea of the passage according to the information in the pictures and titles:

Q1: What is the passage mainly about?

Step 2: The teacher guides students to read the article quickly to answer the following questions and clarify the structure of the article:

Q1: What is the common problem for many students these days?

Q2: Who gives their opinions about the problem?

Q3: What is the structure of this passage? How many parts can you divide into?

Step 3 Students read the article again and answer the following questions in the reading:

Q1: What after-school classes do Chinese students take and why?

Q2: Circle the activities Taylor's children do after classes and underline the reasons.

Q3: Is Taylor for or against after-school classes, and why?

Q4: Read para 3 and judge whether Linda is for or against after-school classes and why?

Q5: What is the Dr. Green's advice? What does she say?

Step 4 Teacher guides students to think about the following questions:

Q1: What is the intention of the author?

Q2: Which aspects of the article can be reflected?

[Design idea] Step 1 develops students' ability to predict reading discourse and prepares them for close reading. Concurrently, Step 2 helps students to sort out the theme of the article, guiding them to pay attention to the title and graphic information, the interconnections between paragraphs, the chapter structure of the article, and to form a structure map of the article by analyzing the structure of the

article, while Step 3 guides students to read the content of each paragraph carefully. The teacher devises different types of questions to help students to grasp the article. Simultaneously, the teacher gives appropriate reading strategy guidance so that students can accurately obtain the details of the article while mastering different reading skills to improve their reading ability. Step 4, as the last activity in the reading, is for the teacher to guide students to analyse the stylistic and linguistic features of the article, to understand the author's intention of writing in-depth, and to accumulate relevant language expressions to pave the way for writing further.

4.3.3. *Theme-led, Practical Writing*

After guiding students to explore the thematic meaning through the above activities, teachers should guide students to analyse the chapter structure and stylistic features related to the theme around the theme words of writing to stimulate students' thinking. Through the inquiry activities of While-reading, students have an in-depth understanding of the chapter structure, stylistic features, language expression, and thematic meaning of the text, and then take "What is your opinion about after-school classes" as the core theme and the elements of writing are organized in the form of a mind map, so that the theme can be structured, clarified and visualized. Students transfer and apply the writing skills learned in the text to writing, promote reading by writing, and combine reading and writing effectively in accordance with the principles of language learning (Hu, 2024).

[Design idea] Step 1 creates real contexts related to students' lives to stimulate students' enthusiasm for writing and provide relevant materials for students' subsequent writing. Step 2 guides students to transfer what they have learnt from reading the text to writing to promote reading and combine reading and writing effectively. Steps 3 and 4 cultivate students' independent and cooperative inquiry skills through students' self-assessment and mutual assessment, and in this process, the teacher gives appropriate guidance.

4.3.4. *Sublimating the Theme, Transferring and Innovating*

The English Curriculum Standards for Senior High Schools present English learning activities that point to the development of the core literacy of the subject, and it emphasizes that when designing English learning activities, teachers should integrate language, thinking, and culture through a layered approach. Specifically, these activities include three levels: learning and understanding, application and practice, and transfer and innovation.

According to the third level of this view of activities, transferring and innovating, it requires that when designing activities, students are guided to not only be able to understand and apply what they have learned but also be able to innovate on the basis of it, so as to help them understand and appreciate.

The teacher creates the following situation: Cindy and Peter are your good friends, recently they have some problems and are in a bad mood. Please write a short essay according to the prompt to talk about the problems they are facing and your suggestions. Students write according to the prompt and focus on how to describe the problems and deal with the conflicts of growing up. The activity internalizes the language and deepens the theme.

5. Conclusion

Reading-to-writing teaching model based on thematic meaning exploration should design and implement reading and writing activities centred on thematic meaning, take the discourse as the carrier of teaching, emphasize the

application of language in real life, promote writing with reading so that the teaching can be closer to the real situation and life, thus improving the student's ability to interpret the discourse, and prompting the comprehensive development of their writing ability and even the core qualities of the English language subject.

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