

English Reading Teaching Practice in Senior High School based on Text Interpretation

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Abstract

Text interpretation is of great significance for English teachers to carry out reading teaching effectively. How should English teachers interpret texts has become the focus. On the basis of the related opinions of different scholars and English teachers on the ways of text interpretation, this paper, combined with the senior high English textbooks from People's Education Press, interprets the text from the perspectives of title, content, genre and author to help English teachers improve their ability of text interpretation.

Keywords

English reading teaching; Text interpretation; Senior high school.

1. Introduction

Reading is an important carrier for high school students to improve their language ability and develop their thinking. Reading teaching has always been an important aspect of high school English teaching. Wangqiang and Chen Zehang (2016) [6] points out that the effective English reading teaching is still not fully implemented, and many students still read in wrong and inefficient ways, which are reflected in the rigid reading of word to word, the rigid translation out of context and cultural background, and only obtaining superficial information without noticing the deep logic and thinking training. Thus, it's common that students can't complete the word meaning guessing, logical reasoning, detail understanding, and general summary questions well. The main reason is the lack of the text interpretation by the teacher.

2. The significance of the text interpretation

Any good lesson has to do with the instructor's deep and unique interpretation of what is being taught. Ye Jianyin(2013)[7] suggests that reading teaching is a dialogue process between teachers, students and texts and the angle and depth of teachers' interpretation of the text directly affect students' learning and understanding of the text. Chen Yusong(2019)[3] suggests that teachers' interpretation of texts determines their choice of teaching mode and the effect of teaching design, and also directly affects students' learning experience, cognitive development dimension, depth of emotional participation and learning effect.

Therefore, we may safely draw a conclusion that if one class is more outstanding than another, there will be many reasons, but text interpretation must be one of the most important factors.

3. Ways of text interpretation

Nuttall(1996)[1] believes that it is not uncommon for the same text to be interpreted differently, or for its meaning to be continuously enriched. To interpret the text is to interpret background, content, language, thinking, strategies, expressions, etc. Zhouya (2014)[10] believes that deep interpretation of the text means the comprehensive use of reading strategies such as extracting and summarizing information, sorting out text structure, inferring implied meaning and critical analysis. Hedge (2015) [2] claims that text interpretation is not only grasping author's ideas

but also forming their own thoughts. Zhang Xianchen (2016) [9] believes that teachers need to interpret the text from ten aspects: text, context, semantics, style, strategy, thinking, grammar, lexical chunks, culture and emotion. Zhang Qiuhui and Wangqiang (2016) [8] hold that teachers can interpret the text from the theme, content, genre, language and author. Liu Linfeng and Xieping (2017) [5] believe that teachers need to interpret the text from five aspects: sorting out the text structure, extracting important details, appreciating language, inferring the implied meaning and evaluating reading content.

Based on the above researches on text interpretation, this paper, combined with the senior high English textbooks from People's Education Press, interprets the text from the perspectives of title, content, genre and author.

4. Practice based on text interpretation

Firstly, teachers interpret the text from the perspective of the title to perceive the full text and its potential connotation. Secondly, teachers interpret the text from the perspective of the genre to grasp the main line and design a collection of organized activities through the main line. Then, teachers interpret the text from the perspective of the content to form the text outline and interpret the deep meaning. Finally, teachers interpret the text from the perspective of the author to make clear the intention of the author.

4.1. From the perspective of the title

The title of an article is closely related to the main content of the text. The title often tells or implies the content of the article or the ideas and opinions that the author wants to express. In reading teaching, teachers should fully explore the connotation of the title and perceive the full text and capture the author's thoughts, emotions and tendency. The teacher can guide students to evaluate whether the title is appropriate. Take *A Pioneer for All People* as an example. Teachers can ask students the following questions. Firstly, do you agree with the title of the text? Secondly, can you think of another title?

4.2. From the perspective of the genre

Different genres have different genre characteristics and textual structures. Exposition, narration, and argumentation are common. From the perspective of genre analysis, teachers can help students understand the genre structure, text mode and text type of the text and analyze the characteristics of the author's layout and set reading requirements of the corresponding style. Teachers should fully analyze the genre characteristics of the text, and carry out reading teaching around the text structure of the genre to extract the main line of the text.

Expository texts can be expressed in a variety of ways, in spatial order, or chronological order, or from phenomenon to essence, etc.

Dai Junrong(2012) [4] suggests that in argumentative essays, the author often adopts the following four ways to carry out reasoning analysis: the type of explaining viewpoints, the type of explaining phenomenon, the type of solving the genre and assertion type. For example, *The earth is becoming warmer—but does it matter*, which is from People's Education Press, Module 4, is a typical argumentation. There are lots of names, statistics, opinions, and difficult words and expressions on this passage. It's hard to deal with the language traditionally. Thus, the text interpretation is significant. The teacher can interpret the text based on the argumentation and facilitate students to read according to the typical features of the argumentation.

The narration has the character clue, the event clue, the time clue, the place clue and the emotional clue, which can be the main line throughout the whole text. Take *Festivals and Celebrations*, which is from People's education press, Module3, as an example. As for the genre,

it's the narration. It tells the origin, celebration and function of the festivals. The teacher can interpret the text from the elements of the narration such as what, who, when, where, why and how to help students learn about the festivals.

4.3. From the perspective of the content

4.3.1. Form the text outline

Teachers can use tables or mind maps to extract key points and sort out structured knowledge and form the text outline. Take *Festivals and Celebrations* as an example. Teachers can draw a mind map of different festivals and celebrations. Then, teachers can add the origin, functions, and so on to the mind map. Even the sublimation of the main idea of the essay should be based on the text. For example, the cultural awareness, such as delivering Chinese traditional festivals to other countries is significant in this passage, and its related activities should also be based on the text.

4.3.2. Interpret deep information

Teachers need to focus on the information gap based on the text. Take *A Pioneer for All People*, which is from People's Education Press, Module 4, as an example. It is arranged through the time order by the author. Besides sorting out the life events of Yuan Longping by the time order, teachers can interpret this passage more deeply by raising questions that students cannot find answers from the text directly. For example, what is Yuan Longping's life goal?

4.4. From the perspective of the author

4.4.1. From specific words and expressions

Key words, sentences, and details in a text are the direct or indirect manifestation of the intention of the author. Interpreting these seemingly plain words and sentences helps to better understand the deeper meaning of the text. Take *A Letter Home*, which is from People's Education Press Module 6, as an example. The teacher can make use of the word "fortnight" in the first paragraph. By explaining the meaning of the word "fortnight" to enable students to understand the author's severe conditions of being a voluntary teacher in the rural school.

4.4.2. From the text structure

Teachers can analyze how writers use the text structure to present ideas in certain situations. Take *A pioneer for All People* as an example. Yuan Longping's dreams were mentioned in the last paragraph by the author. The teacher should analyze the author's purpose of writing the last paragraph.

5. Conclusion

English reading teaching is very important in the stage of senior high school English teaching, and the success of interpreting reading texts directly affects the effect of senior high school English reading teaching. Teachers need to work hard on the interpretation of texts.

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