



The Practice of Discourse-based English Reading Teaching in High School from the Perspective of English Learning Activities — Taking the Unit Theme "Launching Your Career" as an Example

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Abstract: The paper outlines the meaning and significance of the English Learning Activity View and analyses the concept of writing teaching based on the English learning activity view. Take Summer Camp Helpers Wanted, a writing board in the selective compulsory for Launching Your Career of the Public Version of High School English (2019 Edition) as an example, explore how to implement the English learning activity view in high school English writing teaching, that is, to introduce the topic before writing to stimulate the students' interest in writing; to cultivate the students' higher-order thinking during writing; and to cultivate the students' ability to evaluate each other in high school from the perspective of English learning activities. It is argued that teachers should actively establish correct teaching concepts and optimize the teaching design by applying the English Learning Activity View to effectively improve students' language proficiency, thinking ability, cultural awareness and learning ability, thus improving students' core literacy of English.

Keywords: teaching English writing; English learning activity view; core literacy of English

1. Introduction

The English Curriculum Standards for General Senior Secondary Schools (2017 Edition) (hereinafter referred to as the Curriculum Standards) puts forward a view of English learning activities that points to the development of core literacy, and makes it clear that activities are the basic form of English learning, and that they are the main ways for students to learn and try to use the language to understand and express their meanings, to cultivate their cultural awareness, to develop their diversified thinking, and to form their learning abilities[1]. (Ministry of education,2020)

The core literacy of the English the key achievement of students after learning English with the characteristics of the discipline, and is the concentration of the nurturing value of the discipline.[2] (Cheng Xiaotang & Zhao Siqu,2016)

2. The meaning and significance of the activity-based view of English language learning

Curriculum Standards points out a series of English learning activities reflecting the characteristics of comprehensiveness, relevance and practicability. In the process of solving problems, they can develop their language knowledge, language skills development, cultural understanding, diversified thinking development, value orientation judgement and learning strategy [1].

English Learning Activities View is not only the process of integrating and developing language knowledge and language skills, but also the process of increasing cultural awareness, improving thinking quality and learning ability. Teachers should study the discourse before creating reasonable writing teaching activities, i.e., make an in-depth interpretation of the discourse's theme, content, stylistic structure, linguistic features, etc., and design activities reflecting the three levels, i.e., discourse-based, in-depth, and transcendental activities, on this basis.[3](Mei Deming & Wang Qiang, 2018)

3. Definition and meaning of discourse analysis

According to the New Curriculum, discourse is a linguistic unit that expresses meaning, including oral discourse and written discourse, and it is a common form in which people use language. In the process of using language, language users not only need to use vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, but also need to organize the language into coherent discourse[1].

Therefore, teachers should study the discourse in depth before teaching, i.e., make an in-depth interpretation of the discourse's theme, content, stylistic structure, linguistic features, author's point of view, etc., and analyse it through the three elements of What-Why-How, answering the reflection questions at the beginning of these three steps as a starting point to

form a layer-by-layer, interlocking Process. Specifically, the first step is to analyse the What of the written to be taught, that is, to analyse the thematic context and content information of the discourse. The second step is to analyse the deeper meaning of the discourse, i.e. to further analyse the author's intention, emotional attitude or value orientation. The third step is to analyse the problematic features, content structure and linguistic characteristics of the discourse. This can effectively solve the one-sided problem of "missing parts of speech" in English teaching.(Wang Jian,2023)

4. A Case of Teaching English Writing Based on Discourse in High School from the Perspective of English Learning Activity View

Teaching content analysis

The teaching content is selected from the Apply for a summer job part of the Using Language section of Unit5 Launching Your Career in the Selective Compulsory of High School English.The thematic context of this lesson is people and society, and the content is related to public utilities and voluntary services.

What: A job advertisement entitled Summer Camp Helper Wanted, a volunteer application letter from Kelly Xu. The main content of the recruitment notice is to recruit summer camp volunteers, and it clearly states that the requirements for volunteers include ability, experience, attitude and personality.

Why: Teachers assign the task of writing an application letter, which helps students to reflect on whether they have the qualifications of a qualified volunteer in the process of learning and writing, and then set up a correct attitude towards life, endeavour to develop their own comprehensive ability.

How: The main character Kelly Xu's application letter is clearly structured, including the beginning, the purpose of writing. The body, the strengths of the application, and the conclusion, the expectations, a structural framework for the student.

Teaching Objectives

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

(1) Perceive and understand what it means to be a volunteer by watching videos of volunteers at the Winter Olympics. (Learning and Understanding)

(2) Refine the specific requirements for volunteers by reading the Summer Camp Volunteer Recruitment Notice. (Acquiring and Comprehending)

(3) By comparing Kelly Xu's qualifications with the recruitment requirements, clarify the relevance of the content of the application letter to the recruitment requirements. (Applying and Practice)

(4) In the practical situation of "applying for volunteers for the 15th National Games", creatively apply what they have learnt in this lesson to independently write a letter of application reflecting relevance and persuasiveness. (Transferring and innovation)

Activity1: Video Introduction

Teachers guide students to watch the video of volunteers for the Beijing Olympic Games and the Winter Paralympic Games and ask questions:

(1) What kinds of quality do good volunteers share?

[Design Notes] Teachers play the video about volunteers, show the enthusiastic and energetic image of volunteers, activate students' schematic background about volunteers, and form the reading expectation of the original text.

Activity2: Obtaining the background of recruitment

By guiding students to read the recruitment notice, the teacher asks them acquire the information on the details of the text

Q1: What is the organization looking for?

Q2: For whom is the summer camp held?

Q3: What will be required to do in the summer camp?

Q4: Where will the summer camp be held?

Q5: When will the summer camp be held?

[Design Notes] It is designed to guide students to clarify the recruitment requirements and understand the details in the original text.

Activity3: Summarising

Teacher presents the table and guides students to summarise and classify the specific recruitment requirements.

Q1: What are the requirements?

Q2: Can you summarise the requirements?

[Design Notes] This activity is designed to train students' logical thinking ability.

Activity4: Analysing and Determining Application Qualifications

After clarifying the specific requirements of the job advertisement, the teacher guides students to analyse whether the application meets the requirements.

Q: Is Kelly Xu a good match for the position?How do you know that?

[Design Notes] It is designed to guide students to analyse whether the applicant meets the recruitment requirements according to the job advertisement.

Activity5: Appreciating Stylistic Features

The teacher guides students to understand what kind of language expressions can increase the persuasiveness of the application letter.

[Design Notes] It aims to guide students to further interpret and appreciate the linguistic and structural features of application letters, and to provide scaffolding for subsequent writing.

Activity6: Applying writing skills

Before initiating the writing task, the teacher guides students to complete the task of translating four sentences in the context.

[Design Notes] This activity aims to internalise and apply previous relevant writing instruction. The teacher pushes students to complete four tasks of translating from Chinese to English.The writing tasks are authentic and current, and promote the use of what students have learnt.

Activity7: Writing the First Draft of an Essay

The teacher asks students to creatively write a volunteer application letter for the National Games.

[Design Notes] It is designed to allow students to transfer what they have learnt in class and write a creative volunteer application letter. In terms of structure and content, students can refer to the framework and content of Kelly Xu's application letter

Activity 8: Appreciation and Evaluation Reference Example

Teacher provides the following mutual evaluation form and asks questions:

Q: What do you think of the writing based on the checklist?

Checklist	
Structure and Content	The beginning part mentions the purpose of the letter.
	The body part includes the advantages of the applicant.
	The ending part contains expectation/gratitude.
Language and Content	The advantages listed in the body part are relevant.
	The advantages listed in the body part are persuasive.
Spelling and Grammar	There are no serious spelling or grammatical mistakes.
Handwriting	The handwriting is neat.

[Design Note] The activity is designed to promote learning through assessment. And it provides a model for students to polish their first drafts after class.

Activity 9: Assignments

Exchange your application letter with your partner,evaluate it based on the checklist, and polish your letter.

5. Conclusion

Rely on multi-type teaching scaffolds to broaden the comprehensive vision of writing teaching.

In the gradual development of teaching activities, this lesson makes use of teaching scaffolds such as content, language and structure to strengthen the integration of content, thinking and language, effectively broadening the comprehensive vision of English writing teaching.The teaching design based on the concept of English learning breaks through the old concept that English teaching is only about acquiring fragmented language knowledge and skills, and provides rich nourishment for the classroom.

References

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