

Original Paper

A Comparative Study on the Design of Reading Teaching Activities for Novice and Experienced Primary School English Teachers: Based on the “View of English Learning Activities”

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Abstract

From the perspective of English learning activities, based on the three dimensions of the classification framework: learning and understanding activities, application and practice activities, transfer and innovation activities, this paper compares and analyzes the design of teaching activities in reading class between a novice teacher and an experienced teacher. Based on research results, this paper puts forward the following suggestions: 1. Teachers should pay attention to different types of activities and balance the proportion of different activities. 2. Teachers should focus on the use of transfer and innovation activities, and pay attention to the cultivation of students' thinking quality. 3. Novice teachers should learn more from experienced teachers and attach importance to the connection and progression of activities.

Keywords

view of English learning activity, reading teaching, novice teacher, experienced teacher

1. Introduction

The 2017 version of the English Curriculum Standards for General High Schools (hereinafter referred to as the New Curriculum Standards) puts forward for the first time the concept of core literacy in the English discipline. The New Curriculum Standard requires teachers to cultivate students' language competence, cultural awareness, thinking capacity, and learning ability, and to help students develop core literacy in the English discipline. In order for teachers to understand this new concept better and implement it correctly in the classroom, the New Curriculum Standard puts forward a new path - a view of learning activities pointing to the core literacy of English, i.e., when designing English

teaching activities, teachers design three types of activities, namely, Learning and Understanding, Applying and Practicing, and Transferring and Innovating, to help students to understand the parts of speech, express their opinions, perceive the culture, improve the ability of language and use of language, develop their thinking, and form the correct three concepts. The introduction of the New Curriculum Standard (NCS) has put forward new requirements for teachers: they should be student-centered, integrate the six elements of English language learning, and explore a teaching model that is conducive to the formation of students' core literacy. However, there are still some problems in the process of carrying out the new curriculum reform: for example, the fragmentation of teaching content, the shallow level of theme grasping, the lack of in-depth discourse teaching, and the too rigid integration of emotions (Wang, 2017). Therefore, teachers should continue to explore and integrate the cultivation of students' core literacy into the teaching process.

Reading is one of the most important ways for students, especially elementary school students, to input language. In the process of reading, students first need to use their vocabulary knowledge and grammar knowledge to understand and sort out the text, while the process of summarizing and integrating the text exercises students' thinking skills. In addition, the cross-cultural and even interdisciplinary knowledge contained in reading texts can help students broaden their horizons and learn a wider range of knowledge. When students elaborate or imagine the text, it is a transition from input to output, which is a test of students' comprehensive linguistic ability. In the usual test can also be seen, the reading board accounted for more points, so reading teaching has always been the "main event" of English teaching. However, in the actual teaching process, it is difficult for teachers to change from the traditional mode of reading teaching, to implement the concept of English learning, and to be truly student-centered. Therefore, how to design reading activities that point to students' core literacy based on the concept of learning has become an urgent problem for elementary school English teachers to solve in their teaching practice.

2. Method

2.1 Research Question

This paper mainly draws a framework based on the division of English learning activities in the New Curriculum, and this paper observes, compares, and analyzes qualitatively and quantitatively the instructional activity design of a novice teacher's and an experienced teacher's reading class based on the three dimensions of the classification framework and nine specific observation perspectives. The specific framework is as follows:

Table 1. Classification of English Learning Activities

English Learning Activities	Content
Learning and understanding activity	Perception and attention Acquisition and combing Generalization and integration
Applying and practicing activity	Description and interpretation Analysis and judgment Internalization and application
Transferring and innovating activity	Reasoning and argumentation Criticism and comment Imagination and creativity

This study addresses the following three questions:

- 1) What are the characteristics, similarities, and differences in the design of reading activities in the learning and understanding category between novice and experienced teachers of English in elementary school?
- 2) What are the characteristics, similarities, and differences in the design of reading activities in the applying and practicing category between novice and experienced teachers of English in elementary school?
- 3) What are the characteristics, similarities, and differences in the design of reading activities in the transferring and innovating category between novice and experienced teachers of English in elementary school?

2.2 Research Design

One novice teacher and one experienced teacher were the subjects of this study. Ms. L is a novice teacher, in her internship, and has less teaching experience. Mr. M, an experienced teacher, has won the first prize in the National Quality Lesson Competition several times, and has given observation lessons and lectures at the Famous Teachers' Forum. Teacher L's lesson was the Read and Write section of Part B in Unit 3 What would you like? In the first book of the fifth grade of the Renjiao version of English. The content of the session is two notes written by Wu Yifan and grandpa to Robin the Robot, in which they talk about the food they like and hate, and Robin cooks for them. Teacher M's lesson was the Read and Write section of Part B in Unit 1 My Day, the second book of the fifth grade of English in the Renjiao edition. The session was a reading and writing segment, which consisted of Robin the robot acting out Robinson in Robinson Crusoe and introducing himself.

This study records and analyzes the class transcripts of the two teachers, classifies the activities designed in their classes into three categories: learning and understanding activities, applying and practicing activities, and transferring and innovating activities, and compares their designs. This study

hopes to help primary English teachers optimize the design of reading activities and generate more efficient classrooms.

3. Result

3.1 Characteristics and Similarities and Differences in the Design of Reading Activities for Learning and Understanding between Novice and Experienced Teachers

Based on the view of English learning activities, learning and understanding activities can be divided into three aspects of perception and attention, acquisition and combining, and generalization and integration. Qian (2019) believed that when designing learning comprehension activities, teachers need to create relevant situations to activate students' old knowledge based on the thematic context of the discourse and, at the same time, pave the way for the learning of new knowledge in terms of language and cultural knowledge. Students should be guided to sort out and integrate information, understand the content and implied meaning of the discourse, and learn language knowledge in context in learning comprehension activities, and this level of activity is to help students acquire and form new knowledge structures.

3.1.1 Characteristics of Novice Teachers' Designs for Learning and Understanding Reading Activities

The novice teacher designed two perception and attention activities and acquisition and combining activities in the Pre-reading stage and the While-reading stage, respectively. First, at the very beginning of the class, a fast-paced rap song was played. The lyrics of the song contained the words and sentence patterns that students had learned in the unit, which used students' old knowledge to stimulate students' interest in learning and helped them enter the learning state quickly in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere. In the second activity, the teacher created a situation in which the teacher was the owner of a restaurant, and today was the restaurant's grand opening, so if the students behaved well in class, they could get coupons for the restaurant and redeem the coupons for food. Then the teacher shows some pictures of food and introduces my favorite food is... It's My favorite food is...It's/They're.... My favorite food is...It's/They're...It's/They're...It's/They're...It's/They're...It's/They're...What about you? Unlike the perception and attention activities in the Pre-reading stage, the learning and understanding activities designed by the novice teacher in the While-reading session were all acquisition and combining activities. The teacher created a situation in which Robin was the chef of a restaurant, and Robin would cook according to the notes written by the guests, but the restaurant was too busy, so Robin talked to the students on the phone and wanted to ask for the children's help. The teacher shows two notes in the PPT and asks the students to judge which one is from Wu Yifan and which one is from grandpa. This link is the link for the students to read the text for the first time and get the general idea of the text. The link is set up to give the students a preliminary understanding of the text, which is conducive to the unfolding of intensive reading. Immediately after, because the restaurant is too busy, accidentally broke the plate, both notes are stained with some dirt, and the handwriting is a little hard to read, so the teacher set up a Listen and choose part, let the students according to what they hear to complete the

note. The process of listening to the recording is to help students get the general idea of the text, while the process of filling in the blanks is to grasp the key information. Through listening to the recording and adding, the teacher helped students to get and sort out the text content. After grasping the general idea of the article, the teacher asked the students to read the article again carefully and circle the food that Wu Yifan and grandpa like to eat respectively, this link is the process of helping the students to sort out the article again.

To summarize, the novice teacher used the learning and understanding activities in the Pre-reading stage to attract students' attention and help them activate the old knowledge as well as in the first half of the While-reading stage to help students sort out the content of the text. At the same time, we can also see that the novice teacher did not use the generalization and integration activities in the learning and understanding activities, which made the second and third activities in the While-reading session a bit similar and failed to help students further integrate the new knowledge.

3.1.2 Characteristics of Experienced Teachers' Designs for Learning and Understanding Reading Activities

The learning and understanding activities designed by the experienced teachers included all three levels. In the Pre-reading section, the experienced teacher first used the song "A Sailor Went to Sea" to introduce the classroom. Although the keywords or sentence patterns of this unit did not appear in the song, the theme of the song sea inextricably linked to the discourse Robinson Crusoe. The teacher used the song to introduce the classroom and bring the students into the context of the discourse initially. After that, the teacher designed a perception and attention activity for students to review the sentences and phrases they have learned in this unit, and he presented the sentence patterns I often...I always...Sometimes I...etc. and the sentence patterns go fishing, play basketball, take a dancing, etc. on the PPT. basketball, take a dancing class and other phrases, and ask students to say what they do on weekends. This activity aims to establish a connection with this language chapter from the students' existing knowledge structure. Immediately after that, the teacher showed a clip from the movie Robinson Crusoe. Before showing the movie, the teacher asked the students three questions so that they could watch the movie with the questions. Teachers use the original movie to let students have a preliminary understanding of Robinson, paving the way for the later study of the text, and the more interesting form of the movie clip also makes students interested in the English subject in the longer term. After watching the movie, the teacher asked the students to imagine how they would feel if they were Robinson. By putting themselves in the shoes of Robinson, the teacher builds up the character image of Robinson in the students' minds. In the Pre-reading stage, the teacher didn't rush to start the teaching of the text, but used four sensing and noticing activities to let the students have a preliminary perception of the text and build up their interest in reading the text.

In the While-reading session, the experienced teacher first asks students to read the text and determine the correctness, and change the mistakes into correct ones. This activity helps students grasp the details of the text and belongs to the category of acquisition and combing. In order to help students better sort

out the text, the teacher then played a text animation and turned the color of key phrases red in the subtitles for emphasis. After playing the text, the teacher asked the students to say what they (referring to the main characters Robinson and Friday) did in the morning, afternoon, and evening, and the teacher organized the students' answers into a table. This activity summarizes and explains the text on the basis of helping students to acquire and sort out the text, so that the structure of the text is more clearly presented to the students, paving the way for the retelling activity later.

In learning and understanding activities, the three aspects of perception and attention, acquisition and combining, and generalization and integration are progressive, and the activity design of experienced teachers follows the principle of progressive teaching. From pre-reading to while-reading, experienced teachers design teaching activities with layers of progression, so that students can understand the text more easily.

3.1.3 Similarities and Differences in the Design of Reading Learning and Understanding Activities between Novice and Experienced Teachers

In terms of the design of learning and understanding activities, both novice and practicing teachers chose to use perception and attention activities to open the classroom in the pre-reading stage, including a song introduction to stimulate students' interest and free talk to help students review old knowledge. These activities included an introductory song to stimulate students' interest in learning and a free talk to help students review old knowledge, and in the first half of the while-reading period, both novice and experienced teachers designed acquisition and combining activities based on listening and reading tasks to help students understand the main meaning of the text. However, the difference was that the experienced teacher designed a generalization and integration activity on the basis of helping students complete the acquisition and combining tasks, and used a table to help students memorize the key information, which was a better way to exercise students' logical thinking skills, while the novice teacher designed two similar acquisition and combining activities without gradually increasing the difficulty of the tasks, which might make the students less interested in the class.

3.2 Characteristics and Similarities and Differences in the Design of Reading Activities for Applying and Practicing between Novice and Experienced Teachers

In the applying and practicing activities, teachers should guide students to carry out activities around the theme and help them internalize their knowledge. In activities at this level, teachers should give students ample opportunities for language output, and through various activities let them consolidate the language knowledge they have learned in the learning and understanding activities and exercise their language output ability.

3.2.1 Characteristics of Novice Teachers' Designs for Applying and Practicing Reading Activities

In this study, the applying and practicing activities designed by the novice teachers appeared in the While-reading stage and the Post-reading stage, and the types involved included internalization and application, analysis, and judgment. After the middle part of the While-reading stage, i.e., the intensive reading of the text mentioned above, the session of circling Wu Yifan and grandpa's favorite foods, the

teacher led the students to explore their favorite foods. From the food preferences of the characters in the text to discussing the students' own food preferences and drilling the new sentence patterns learned, it is a process in which the teacher helps the students to internalize the new knowledge and apply it. This activity can help students learn new sentence patterns while learning how to use the learned sentence patterns in life contexts. After consolidating the new sentence patterns, the teacher asks the students to have a group discussion and asks them to think about what Robin will make for Wu Yifan and grandpa to eat. This session is designed for students to analyze based on the content of the article. In the article, Robin ends up making chicken ice cream for Wu Yifan and grandpa, so the teacher asks students to think about why Robin would do that. This session is also to analyze the content of the article, as long as students compare the content of the article, they can find out that Robin made the "dark cuisine" by mixing the two people's favorite food directly together, which requires students to internalize the text.

3.2.2 Characteristics of Experienced Teachers' Designs for Applying and Practicing Reading Activities

Experienced teachers design three applying and practicing activities in the second half of the While-reading stage. The first activity of While-reading is for students to read and judge, and to change the wrong sentences. The process of reading is the process of learning comprehension, while the process of judging and changing is the process of analyzing. The second applying and practicing activity is that after letting the students perfect the table according to the text content, the experienced teacher lets the students retell the table. Retelling the story is to let the students return to the text again on the basis of the students' full comprehension and internalization of the text, using the table as a framework for the students to make discourse outputs. This activity is both a re-understanding of the text and a test of language learning, and it belongs to the descriptive and interpretation activities. After studying Robinson's day, the teacher asked students to talk about their own day, and students could model their language output after the sentences in the text. The learning and understanding of the text gave students a scaffold for language output.

After the oral presentation, the teacher asked the students to make friends with Robinson, so they were asked to write a self-introduction letter to Robinson. This activity of Post-reading is a more complete opportunity for discourse output, which deepens students' internalization of what they have learned even further than the previous activity.

3.2.3 Similarities and Differences in the Design of Reading Applying and Practicing Activities between Novice and Experienced Teachers

Comparing the design of novice teachers and experienced teachers on application practice type activities, the author found that both teachers started to design applying and practicing activities in the second half of the While-reading stage. In the process of implementing classroom teaching, consolidation training is an important part of English classroom teaching. Consolidation can help teachers understand students' knowledge mastery and adjust teaching strategies in time, and it can also help students consolidate their language knowledge and improve their language skills. Therefore, both

teachers designed applying and practicing activities to carry out consolidation training. It is worth noting that both teachers preferred internalization and application activities. This type of activity can give students the opportunity to output the complete discourse, which is both a motivation to promote reading and a test of students' reading results, and appropriate language output can enhance students' interest in reading. However, the core qualities of the English subject include not only language ability but also the development of thinking quality, emphasizing the cultivation of students' thinking and discerning ability, and the analysis and judgment activities in the applying and practicing activities are an effective way to promote the development of students' thinking quality. Novice teachers designed the activity of analyzing causes and experienced teachers designed the activity of judging modifications to help students practice logical thinking. These are the similarities between the two teachers in the design of applying and practicing activities.

The difference between the two teachers was that the experienced teacher generated a table based on the information organized in the pre-reading period, which was a new knowledge structure and a language scaffolding formed by students through careful reading and continuous thinking in the process of comprehending the text. After completing the table, the experienced teacher designed a retelling activity, asking students to retell the text according to the table to help students absorb and internalize the new knowledge and improve their language skills. The experienced teacher's design of the applying and practicing activities was also interlocking, with each of his activities paving the way for the latter one, so that students could gradually improve their language skills. The novice teacher, on the other hand, did not consider the articulation between activities and the progression of difficulty when designing the activities. She designed the internalization and application activities directly after the acquisition and combing activities, which spanned a wide range of difficulty and were challenging for students.

3.3 Characteristics and Similarities and Differences in the Design of Reading Activities for Transferring and Innovating between Novice and Experienced Teachers

The transferring and innovating activities are for students to explore the value behind the discourse, to identify the author's writing attitude, and to appreciate the writing techniques of the discourse, that is, for students to apply the newly learned knowledge structure, to solve the problems in brand new situations through independent learning and to synthesize the language skills, so as to promote the development of students' literacy.

3.3.1 Characteristics of Novice Teachers' Designs for Transferring and Innovating Reading Activities

The novice teacher designed a transferring and innovating activity in the last part of the While-reading stage. According to the text, Robin made chicken ice cream for Wu Yifan and grandpa, what would Robin make if he did it again? Why? The teacher showed three pictures for students to choose from. This session builds on students' proficiency with the text by allowing them to make reasonable inferences based on the text, and the process of asking students why is the process of argumentation. The activity is designed to help students learn independently in the future in a new context and based

on a new knowledge structure, to realize deep learning and to promote the transformation of competence into literacy.

3.3.2 Characteristics of Experienced Teachers' Designs for Transferring and Innovating Reading Activities

The experienced teacher designed a transferring and innovating activity in the last part of the whole lesson. He asked students to reflect and asked them what they had learned from the story, some students thought they had learned how to retell the story in terms of skills, while others had learned the importance of friendship from Robinson and Friday. This is an exploration of the values within the discourse, which is a critical and commentary activity, and students were able to appreciate the emotional value of the main characters and realize friendship as an indispensable emotion in life, which elevated the English classroom after emotional education. Such activities can deepen students' understanding of the significance of the theme and make them grow in a correct outlook on life, worldview and values.

3.3.3 Similarities and Differences in the Design of Reading Transferring and Innovating Activities between Novice and Experienced Teachers

In terms of the structure of the whole classroom, both novice teachers and experienced teachers put the transferring and innovating activities at the end of the classroom. These kinds of activities are generally designed to improve students' ability to learn and use English, and they can promote students' development of critical thinking and cultivate students' diversified thinking, which are higher-order thinking activities. Therefore, teachers usually place such activities after students understand and internalize new knowledge, and this arrangement is in line with the order of students' knowledge acquisition. The difference is that the novice teachers arranged the transferring and innovating activities at the end of the While-reading and designed the applying and practicing activities again in the Post-reading session, while the experienced teachers arranged the transferring and innovating activities at the end of the whole classroom. In comparison, the arrangement of the experienced teachers was not as logical as that of the novice teachers in designing and did not help students advance in the hierarchy of thinking. Help students cascade.

4. Discussion

Based on the view of English learning activities, this paper has the following findings by comparing the characteristics and similarities and differences in the design of learning and comprehension activities, application and practice activities, and transfer and innovation activities between novice and experienced teachers of elementary English:

1) Both novice and experienced teachers favored learning comprehension activities to lead in, but made less use of activities that emphasized thinking. In the pre-reading stage, teachers used songs and simple dialogues to create an authentic situation while activating students' background knowledge and helping them to familiarize themselves with the topic. Judging from students' responses, the activities designed

at this stage are effective and stimulate students' interest in reading. In the while-reading stage, the teacher enables students to grasp the general idea of the text through listening and fast reading activities, and then presents the key information of the text in different forms to help students improve their ability to grasp the key information. In addition, there is an imbalance in the proportion of different activities. Sensing and noticing activities are often used in the pre-reading stage to create a situation to stimulate students' interest in learning, acquiring and sorting activities are often used in the first half of the while-reading stage to help students understand the main idea of the text and construct new knowledge structures, and summarizing and integrating activities are less frequently used, while summarizing and integrating activities are less frequent. generalization and integration, which are more thinking activities, are less frequent.

2) Both novice and experienced teachers used more internalization and application activities in the Applied Practice category, and the experienced teachers were more reasonable in the articulation of the activities. Both teachers designed enough practical activities to give students the opportunity to complete the output of the texts, and appropriate language output could enhance students' interest in reading. However, the novice teachers did not take into account the gradual increase in difficulty between activities and designed several activities with similar functions, which would make students tired of the class. On the other hand, the experienced teacher pays close attention to the articulation between activities and the progressivity of difficulty when designing activities, and the activities he designs increase in difficulty step by step from the acquisition of new knowledge to the consolidation of application and then to the transfer of innovation.

3) Novice and experienced teachers do not make enough use of transfer and innovation activities. Learning and comprehension activities, application and practice activities, and transfer and innovation activities are a progressive process, from discourse-based, in-depth discourse to the transcendence of discourse, from language input to language output, and from low-level activities to high-level activities. Novice teachers and experienced teachers are more inclined to carry out learning comprehension activities based on language knowledge development in activity design, which accounted for more than half of all activities, followed by application practice activities pointing to the development of language proficiency, and transferring and innovating activities to develop thinking skills are the least. This shows that teachers pay the most attention to the cultivation of students' language ability in the reading class and neglect the cultivation of thinking ability. From the perspective of deep learning, most of the activities involved by the teachers stayed at the shallow learning level, and there were fewer activities to help students learn deeply.

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