

On Outcome-Based English Visualizing Reading Strategy

Qin Ling

Dianchi College of Yunnan University, Kunming, Yunnan, China

Keywords: Obe, Poa, Visualizing

Abstract: Visualizing Reading Strategy Simplifies Reading Materials with Vivid Visual Images and Students Get More Fun But Less Anxiety in Reading, Therefore Becoming More Focused and Involved in the Classroom Activities. the Outcome-Based Teaching Design When Applying the Strategy Enables Clear Teaching Objectives to Teachers and Distinct Learning Objectives to Students. in This Way, Students Can Improve Their English Proficiency in Reading, Writing and Speaking and Cultivate Their Independent Learning Ability and Critical Thinking.

1. Introduction

Outcome-Based Education (Obe) Put Forward by the American Scholar William g. Spady Advocates That Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Are Organized Based on a Clear Set of Learning Outcomes-What Students Can Actually Do with What They Know and Have Learned. a Similar Conception Production-Oriented Approach(Poa)Was Proposed by Wen Qiufang, a Professor in Peaking Foreign Language University, Who Holds That All Teaching Activities Should Be Around Teaching “Production”-Outcomes, and Teachers Should Design the Teaching Process Following the Route: Motivating-Enabling-Assessing. a Clear Teaching and Learning Outcome or Aim is the Core of Both Conceptions, Sticking to the Learning-Centered Principle and Learning-Using Integrated Principle. with Learning-Centered Principle, a Teacher is an Instructor to Establish the Conditions and Opportunities Making Sure Effective Learning Happens and to Achieve the Given Outcomes. with Learning-Using Integrated Principle, Students Learn to Listen and Read for Input, and Learn to Write, Speak and Translate or Interpret for Output. in the Classroom, All Teaching Activities Should Be Closely Related to the Actual Application, and Students Can Apply What They Have Learned Instantly in Class. Therefore, to Promote Teaching and Learning Efficiency, This Thesis Probes into the Application of Outcome-Based English Visualizing Reading Strategy.

2. Literature Review

Generally speaking, visualizing reading strategy is defined as readers’ being able to imagine and picture the scene, characters and a story in their minds while reading a story text. In *Materials Development in Language Teaching*, Professor Tomlinson of University of Liverpool contends that students can visualize the reading material while or after reading by drawing a picture. Some other Chinese scholars probed into the application of visualizing reading strategy in Chinese courses for primary school students. In their views, visualizing reading strategy means students turn a text into a visual picture, chart or a mind map and the same to have a better understanding of the text. Students can get an outline of the text, draw a cause and effect chart, and do inter-textual reading, in which students get more fun and find the text more interesting. Others believe that when students visualize (draw a picture) while reading an English text, they can better understand the language and their lack of language competence, thereby becoming more dedicated into English learning.

The above studies demonstrate that visualizing reading strategy does help promote students’ interest in reading, but its application in English teaching is relatively deficient and the existing researches fail to prove its efficiency in improving students’ reading skills. Visualizing reading strategy in this thesis refers to that under the teacher’s guidance, students read a text, draw a picture, a chart or a mind map and the same, to illustrate the main idea or some details of the text and then

try to retell part of the text with the help of the picture, a chart or a mind map. In the retelling, teachers provide students the important words, expressions and sentences from the text for reference. In this way, with a close and deep reading, reading the text is not the end but a means to improve their reading, speaking and writing abilities.

Professor Wang Shouren of Nanjing University points out that how to improve college English teaching qualities and how to make it an interesting and lifelong beneficial course to students is a significant issue facing all college English teachers. According to a previous study on the most impressive English class, 152 of 240 students believe with pictures and videos, they find an English class more interesting and vivid and they become more focused, and 56 of them believe group work learning model can reduce their anxiety and make them more involved in the classroom activities rather than being a passive listener. 9 Of them believe and the English play show or a dubbing show impressed them the most. 12 students refer to English class related to vocabulary, another 3 to the physical display like food, and the other 6 students to English songs and games. Therefore, visualizing reading strategy visualizes the reading materials with pictures and mind maps, which meet the need of most students.

3. The Application of Visualizing Reading Strategy

3.1 Outcomes

When applying the visualizing reading strategy, the whole teaching process is designed outcome-based or production-oriented, that is to say, the outcomes are the starting point of the teaching process. Teachers know what knowledge and skills they are to teach and students are fully aware of what is expected of them. All the teaching and learning activities serve to reach the outcomes.

The visualizing reading strategy is applied into College English reading and Writing Course and all the reading materials are from the textbook is New Horizon College English Reading Book 1. Generally speaking, one of the outcomes when applying the visualizing reading strategy is to improve students' writing and speaking abilities through reading. More specifically, students read the text thoroughly and draw a picture, or a chart, sometimes a mind map, and then retell the reading text based on the picture. The actual outcomes of text A of Unit 2 *A child's clutter awaits an adult's return* are firstly to show the mess of the daughter's bathroom and bedroom with pictures drawn by students while reading, and to help students retell part of the text looking at the picture. Students can use the 5Ws and 1H (where, when, who, what, why and how) to draw a chart and retell the story of heroes in text A and B of Unit 4 *Heroes among us*. For the story of Cliff Young in text A of Unit 5, students are expected to write and make a news report based on a timeline mind map. The other outcome is language learning-students are required to better understand and properly and flexibly use some important words, expressions and sentence structures related to certain topics.

3.2 Teaching Process

While trying to the reach the outcomes, the teaching process follows the route: motivating students to learn by creating their need for language knowledge and skills-enabling students to learn and acquire with the instructions from teachers -assessing the outcomes and learning and teaching process. In this process, the teacher introduces the visualizing reading strategy step by step, and gradually lessens instructions.

Before class, when the visualizing reading strategy was firstly introduced, the teacher helps the students well-prepared. Firstly, the teacher needs to prepare a picture, a video or radio clip related to the topic of the text. For text A of Unit 2 *A child's clutter awaits an adult's return*, a picture of a messy bathroom is provided to the students and students are encouraged to describe the picture. For text A of Unit 5 *Cliff Young, an unlikely hero*, a news report of a civilian hero is provided and students are encouraged to retell the news story. For text A of Unit 6 *To work or not to work-That is the question*, a research conducted by the students themselves and then a research report are the

pre-class assignments. This kind of input material aims at making students aware of their language incompetence and stimulates their desire to learn. Secondly, the teacher chooses carefully the important parts of the text to help students achieve the outcomes. In their meantime, the teacher refines the selected reading material, summarizing the important words, expressions and sentence structures for students, which ease students' learning burden and help them grasp the key language focuses more quickly.

The teacher forms several groups in terms of the personalities and language competence of students, with 5-7 students each group, where weak students and strong students are mixed together. A group leader designated by the teacher acts as an organizer, making sure the task is properly completed, and a mini-teacher after class, giving some instructions replacing the teacher. Thereafter, a task with many mini-tasks is assigned to each group, enabling each group member's involvement and participation. A negotiation on the specific work is available to every single group member. Each group keeps a lasting cooperation mode, in which they establish a more stable relationship, scaffolding each other. A learning journal is required for the students.

Mini-task 1: Language difficulties are put forward by the students in the preview. They try to deal with these difficulties by themselves, and refer to the teacher online or offline when in need. This inquiring task has been practiced before, and students know quite well how to carry it out.

Mini-task 2: The teacher divides the reading material into several parts and each group is to visualize the assigned part. Take text A of Unit 2 *A child's clutter awaits an adult's return* for example, paragraphs 5-13 are divided into 5 parts. Group one are responsible for paragraph 5, drawing a picture of the mess of the daughter's bathroom, group two for paragraph 6 and the mess of the desk drawer, group three for paragraph 7 and the mess of the bookshelf, group four for paragraphs 8-10 and the mess of the closet, and group five for paragraphs 10-13 and the mess of the bed. In their meantime, stuffs like damp towels, rusted shaving blades, empty tubes of toothpaste, nail polish, etc. in the pictures are labeled. Another example is text A of Unit 5 *Cliff Young, an unlikely hero*, for which a mind map is drawn by each group, and key words and expressions are marked in the map.

Mini-task 3: With important words, expressions and sentence structures summarized from the reading material by the teacher, students try to describe the picture of unit 4 themselves by reciting the text or in their own words and try to retell the story of Cliff Young in unit 5.

In class, each group makes an oral report, making the most of the picture or a mind map they prepared before class. The students choose the best speaker themselves and a bonus is given to the speaker and the group he or she is in.

Mini-task 4: One or two speaker from each group makes an oral report.

A teacher-student collaborative assessment is made on the oral report. The teacher adds more knowledge the students didn't involve and correct the mistakes the students made in the oral report. Meanwhile, the teacher collects the learning journal and records every detail of the learning process.

After class, a writing task or another oral report is assigned to consolidate what students have learned and check how much they have learned.

4. Conclusion

From the perspective of language objectives, visualizing reading strategy aims to promote writing and speaking through reading, so as to improve students' English proficiency as a whole. From the perspective of skill objectives, the overall teaching design repeats the practice of visualizing reading strategy, in which the support from teachers is gradually reduced and students realize the significance of the strategy and learn to apply and transfer it. The description of the visual image realizes the integration of learning and application, cultivating students' ability of independent thinking and learning. Students' acquire the knowledge and skills following the route of "input(reading)-output (visual image)-language input(processed language)-output (speaking or writing)". The repeated language input and output help memorize important language focuses based on a deep understanding of the reading materials. A group-task learning mode can enrich classroom activities, stimulate students' interest, and encourage the students participate in the

class to the maximum and emotionally cultivates students' spirit of mutual assistance and cooperation.

References

- [1] Brown,H. 2002. Principle of Language Learning and Teaching[M]. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- [2] Jinfen Xu & Jinnan Kou. The Effect of Task Type on Group Interaction in College English Classrooms [J]. Foreign Languages and Their teaching 298:29-38.
- [3] Nunan,D. 2011. Task-based Language Teaching[M]. Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- [4] Qiufang, Wen. 2015. Developing a Theoretical System or Production-Oriented Approach in Language Teaching [J]. Foreign Language Teaching and Research 47:547-558.
- [5] Tomlinson, B. 2011. Materials Development in Language Teaching [M]. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [6] Van de Pol, J. Monique & B. Jos. 2010. Scaffolding in Teacher-Student Interaction: a Decade of Research [J]. Educational Psychological Review 22:271-296.