



The Application of Scaffolding Instruction Mode in College English Reading Teaching

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Abstract

College English is one of the most important teaching subjects in universities. It is mainly to train students' language ability so that students can combine their own majors and languages to improve professional cross-cultural communication ability. Students are the main body of learning and teachers are the organizers and guides of learning activities. In college English reading classes, teachers should guide students (especially non-English majors) to exert their subjective initiative in learning, actively participate in classroom activities and gradually cultivate and improve their autonomous learning ability. The scaffolding instruction model is a combination of the zone of proximal development and constructivism. It is also one of the most focused teaching models in college English reading teaching. This paper expounds the connotation and composition of scaffolding instruction mode and analyzes the existing problems in the current college English reading teaching process, explores the advantages of scaffolding instruction mode and puts forward the application path of scaffolding instruction mode in college English reading teaching. Teachers build scaffolding, create situations and guide students to learn English independently. In order to achieve college students' English learning level and English application ability to improve.

Subject Areas

Language Education

Keywords

Scaffolding Instruction, English Reading, Independent Learning

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of the economy and technology, the trade among

countries has become more and more close, and English, as an international language, plays an increasingly important role. College English reading teaching is an important medium for Chinese college students to improve their English reading ability. As one of the four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, reading plays a very important role in foreign language learning. College students, especially non-English majors, lack motivation for reading and learning. In the actual college English classroom teaching, the researchers found that many non-English major students do not have a high level of class participation, only when approaching the periodic test or College English test Band 4 and Band 6, they will listen to the teacher carefully and students have low interest in English learning and poor subjective initiative. In this case, the students' self-learning consciousness is poor and their English reading ability cannot be improved. After consulting the relevant literature, the author found that most previous studies focused on the improvement of the reading ability of students in junior high school and senior high school and there were few studies on students in higher education. Therefore, the author expounds on the application of scaffolding instruction mode in college English reading classrooms to improve the learning autonomy of non-English majors and achieve the improvement of college students' English learning ability.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Research Status of Scaffolding Instruction at Home and Abroad

Scaffolding instruction means that teachers provide learners with a variety of well-designed teaching activities and external support then gradually make learners become the center of learning. Michael Pressley (1997) [1] described their research on scaffolding instruction in an article in which they argued that students could achieve higher reading levels through scaffolding provided by teachers and peers. Raymond (2000) [2] believes that scaffolding instruction refers to the support structure provided by people with more knowledge (including teachers) for students to improve their learning level. Ellis Rod (2013) [3] combined scaffolding instruction with language teaching based on Lev Vygotsky's ZPD theory. He believes that the scaffolding provided by teachers or higher-level peers and the various activities in the classroom can affect students' learning and development.

Before 2004, the research on scaffolding instruction mostly concentrated on the theoretical level and the research on teaching practice was less. In 1996, Chinese researchers Zhang Jianwei and Chen Qi [4] made a brief introduction to scaffolding instruction, including its framework and advantages. He Kekang was the first person to study scaffolding instruction in China. In 1997, Chinese constructivist He Kekang [5] gave a detailed description of scaffolding instruction and gave the definition and five specific steps of scaffolding instruction which have also been adopted by many later practitioners—scaffolding construction, entering situations, independent exploration, cooperative learning and effect evaluation.

Lu Ziwen and Kang Shumin (2008) systematically discuss several stages of the scaffolding instruction model in English teaching methods and strategies.

2.2. Research Status of Scaffolding Reading Teaching at Home and Abroad

The research on the application of scaffolding instruction in reading classrooms originated from foreign scholars. Gibbons (2002) [6] in his book *Scaffolding Language, Scaffolding Learning: Teaching Second Language Learners in the Mainstream Classroom*, clearly points out that adopting scaffolding instruction activities in the second language reading classroom environment can effectively improve students' reading learning skills. Emily Rodgers (2016) [7] discussed how to use scaffolding to teach reading vocabulary. The results show that when using scaffolding to teach, teachers should consider how much instruction to give to students and pay more attention to the classification of scaffolding. Peter Smagorinsky (2018) [8] believes that scaffolding instruction takes students as the core. In the teaching process, teachers can use scaffolding to cultivate students' independent learning ability, exploration ability and problem-solving ability so as to help students grow into independent learners.

Yu Lehua (2018) [9] applied scaffold teaching to the reading teaching of students in a middle school. The experimental results show that, compared with other students, the reading enthusiasm of the students using the scaffolding instruction has been significantly improved. Wang Xiaoli (2018) [10] believes that the effective realization of English reading teaching goals does not depend on teachers' passive education of students. Teachers should establish different kinds of teaching support so that students can achieve teaching goals under the role of support. Liu Houling (2018) [11] believes that scaffolding instruction is helpful in improving students' reading ability, but the research does not directly propose the aspects of students' reading ability and does not make a detailed analysis of students' detailed comprehension ability, logical reasoning ability, summary ability and induction ability. Zhang Yali (2019) [12] pointed out that in strategy teaching for English reading learners, teachers should consciously construct different language scaffolding according to students' cognitive ability so that they can use the learned reading strategies more actively. Yang Li (2020) [13] believes that scaffolding instruction can improve students' initiative in English reading and stimulate their reading potential so as to effectively improve the teaching effect of English reading in senior high school.

3. Theoretical Basis

3.1. Piaget's Constructivism

Piaget was a Swiss psychologist and the earliest proponent of constructivism. It has been developed and perfected by scholars such as Bruner and Vygotsky. Piaget's constructivism has a certain influence on the educational thought and teaching methods of many Western countries. In the aspect of educational thought, the theory emphasizes the process of teachers' construction of students' thoughts.

The main body of information processing is students and teachers play the role of guide, evaluator and information provider in the construction process. Students explore independently through their original knowledge and experience, exchange information among group members and acquire language knowledge by self-construction in this process. Therefore, constructivist theory not only emphasizes people-oriented but also pays attention to the sociality, situational and initiative of learners in the learning process. Jonasser (1994) [14] proposed that learning in constructivism is not only the input of knowledge but the interaction between new knowledge and existing knowledge. Constructivism emphasizes that the learning process must be a two-way process that students need to process the information they learn and that teachers need to provide appropriate guidance to students and make certain assessments. Constructivism also emphasizes the initiative of learners in learning, students independently explore new knowledge based on existing knowledge and actively communicate and discuss with teachers or peers.

3.2. Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development

Vygotsky (1978) [15] was an outstanding psychologist during the founding of the former Soviet Union. He mainly studied child development and educational psychology, focusing on the relationship between thinking and language, children's learning and development. Known as the "Mozart of psychology" for his important contributions to the field of psychology, his theory of cultural history has had a wide influence not only on the former Soviet Union but also on Western psychology. He believes that there are two different levels of children's intellectual development, the actual level of development and the potential level of development. The former refers to the ability of children to complete learning tasks independently and the latter refers to the ability of individuals to complete tasks with the help of others. The area formed between the two is the recent development area. Vygotsky believes that through different teaching methods, teachers can help students narrow or even eliminate this gap so that students gradually have the ability to solve more complex problems independently. Therefore, in the process of teaching, teachers should first clarify the actual level of students but also pay attention to their potential development level, walk in front of students' cognitive development and constantly narrow the gap between students' cognitive level and potential development level. In the process of cognitive development, students need the help and support of teachers or peers, which is called "support". The use of scaffolds will help students cross the zone of proximal development and thus achieve higher levels of cognitive development.

4. The Application of Scaffolding Instruction Mode in College English Reading Teaching

4.1. Build the Scaffolding

It is necessary to determine the student's ZPD before constructing the scaffold-

ing. In the pre-class stage, teachers can learn the reading level of students by reading test papers, including the mastery of vocabulary, reading speed and reading style. Teachers set up appropriate scaffolding according to students' zone of proximal development and guide students through different types of scaffolding so as to improve students' reading ability. For example, set up a question scaffolding: when the teacher explains the new reading passage, he can ask the students questions so that the students can read the articles with questions which is more targeted. Chart scaffolding: teachers can ask students to infer the general content and main topics of the article according to the charts in the article. Strategy scaffolding: Before class, teachers can consciously teach students some reading strategies such as guessing the meaning of new words through context, skimming, scanning and so on. Situational scaffolding: teachers can create many virtual situations and practical situations that can activate students' thinking according to actual needs and stimulate students' enthusiasm and interest in participating in reading learning.

4.2. Enter the Situation

After a brief introduction of relevant background knowledge on the current learning topic, the teacher designs a series of questions to guide the students into the situation and think independently. It should be noted that the design of the situation should be in line with the cognitive level of students, close to students' lives, so that students do not have obstacles to understanding and can stimulate students' interest in reading. In addition, the design of the situation should guide students to use their new knowledge to achieve the purpose of applying what they have learned. In classroom teaching, teachers can create situations in a variety of ways. For example, through pictures or audio to let students brainstorm and enter the situation. When teaching new reading materials, teachers can ask students to imagine the corresponding reading situation and guide students to use existing knowledge to complete the understanding of the new reading materials. For example, there is an article in College English Volume 3, called *Beat your Fear -Swimming through fear*. The teacher can lead the students to recall whether they have encountered dangerous situations at the seaside, or ask the students to imagine that they are the protagonists and what will they do in dangerous situations.

4.3. Independent Exploration

As the saying goes, it is better to teach a man to fish than to give him fish. The teacher is not the indoctrinator of students' knowledge but the guide of students' learning. Teachers should teach students how to learn and encourage independent learning. When using scaffolding instruction, the use of scaffolding should be gradually reduced with the improvement of students' cognitive level and students should be encouraged to think independently and discover true knowledge. Teachers should encourage students to consult books or dictionaries in-

dependently after class, solve reading problems independently and complete assigned reading tasks when they are faced with knowledge they do not understand or have difficulties. Through this teaching method, students' ability to solve problems independently has been exercised and students' discourse knowledge and independent learning ability has been cultivated.

4.4. Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning can stimulate students' interest in reading and enable students to take the initiative to learn knowledge. In the traditional teaching classroom, it is difficult to make every student can be questioned by the teacher and have the opportunity to speak. In the cooperative learning mode, the members of the group communicate closely and the students speak more frequently and participate more. At the same time, through group consultation and division of labor within the group, the situation that originally had different views became unanimous. For example, when explaining the new sentence structure in the article, the teacher can divide the students into groups and ask them to discuss the sentence structure and the general idea in the group so as to cultivate the ability of independent thinking. Students brainstorm, express their opinions and jointly achieve the mastery of what they have learned.

4.5. Effect Evaluation

The content of effect evaluation includes self-learning ability, contribution to group collaborative learning and completion of the meaning construction of the learned knowledge which means completion of the required task to achieve the expected goal. For example, after the teaching is completed, teachers can ask students to rate their performance and whether they meet the expected goals. The results can be used as the basis for teachers to improve their teaching methods next time. After each article is finished, teachers can also ask students to write an essay on the relevant topic of this article so that students can become independent and active learners in this dynamic evaluation.

5. An Analysis of Advantages and Disadvantages of Scaffolding English Reading Teaching Mode

It is conducive to improving teachers' teaching literacy. Scaffolding instruction pays more attention to students' independent learning. In the traditional teaching mode, teachers say everything at once, which is not conducive to cultivating students' ability of independent thinking. Scaffolding instruction is more conducive to teachers to renew teaching concepts and change teaching methods so that every student can participate in classroom activities. Teachers use scaffolding instruction in English reading to carry out independent learning and promote the communication between teachers and students and among students. Under the scaffolding instruction, students' learning efficiency is improved because students can understand each other's learning weaknesses and carry out targeted training

which speeds up the teaching progress and enables students to learn more knowledge. In addition, as teachers pay more attention to the principal status of students, they only play a guiding role and are more able to exert students' subjective initiative and tap their learning potential. In addition, the students' participation in the class is also improved and they are full of interest in reading lessons.

However, scaffolding instruction also has disadvantages. If the teacher provides too much support in the class, it will interfere with the students' attention and cannot grasp the key points of the class. In addition, it will occupy too much classroom teaching time and cannot complete the classroom teaching task in time. Therefore, it is worth thinking about when teachers set up and remove scaffolding.

6. Conclusion

Scaffolding instruction combines theory with practice and pays more attention to students' independent learning. It is helpful to improve the current situation of college English teaching and the English reading ability and level of non-English majors. The teacher withdrew the support in time after reading, reflecting the temporary characteristics of the support. In addition, this study helps provide a reference for college English reading teaching.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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