

Effective Teaching Methods for Reading

Zaineng Zhang

Yunnan Qujing Nationalities Middle School, Yunnan Qujing 655000

Abstract: Language competence and reading ability are two important elements in reading. So, reading is a very important part in language teaching and learning. Then, how to teach reading well? In the essay, the following important aspects have been suggested to be considered when teaching reading principles of teaching reading, methods of teaching reading and stages of classroom activities. They will be of great significance to help Chinese teachers of English in high school in English teaching.

Key words: teaching; reading skills; ability; principles; methods and activities.

To learn a foreign language is not simply to know the language itself, but to use it to communicate. Then, reading ability comes to be the important skill in communication. As an English language teacher, improving the students' competence in reading is one of the main tasks of teaching English. So, it is necessary to study widely about reading itself, then to master how to teach.

1. Definition of reading

"What teachers believe reading to be is precisely what they will teach in their classroom." (Robinson R and Thomas I 1987) Different teachers have different views in reading; the following statements may help teachers to categorize the thoughts of reading.

In contrast, Adrian Doff hold another view of reading. 'Reading is a purposeful activity; it involves looking at sentences and words, recognizing them and understanding them. It is a process of making sense of written language, and this process relies on a reader's expectation or anticipation of what a text could mean.' (1998) In other words, reading is a complex process, and it is the access to acquiring indirect knowledge. In modern society, reading still plays an important role in communication. Acquiring reading skill plays an important role in communication. Acquiring reading skill has become the expectation of all the foreign language learners, and the teaching of reading has been one of the important goals in English language teaching.

2. It is mentioned that language competence and reading skill is an indivisible whole. So, good teaching of reading is effective English language teaching, and the teaching of reading plays an important role in English language teaching. Its importance lies in the following aspects.

2.1 Helping students understand the text and develop reading ability

In reading class teachers play the guiding role. They guide students to read; they may ask questions, which can motivate students' interest to starting reading; they may also say something about the background of the text or give some clues about the text before reading. In addition, after reading, students may be asked to give the main idea of the text, and teachers may contrast the text with the real life and bring students to the deeper understanding of the text. This helps students understand the text in a higher level.

2.2 Improving other skills of language

In the class, students are required to do all kinds of activities, such as writing, listening, speaking and so on. All these language skills are integrated in reading class, although some of them may be omitted; there is still a chance to be improved after a long time of teaching.

2.3 Motivating learners and building the learners' confidence

Some students read not because they want to but because they have to, so, teachers are necessary to motivate them to read by asking questions or do some interesting activities, for some weaker students, reading is a great trouble, thus teachers need to help them build their confidence. Being confident enough, readers have interest to read more and out-of-class reading will become possible. The more they get, the higher their level will be.

3. Teaching reading

3.1 Principles of teaching reading

To teach reading, we should know the following teaching principles.

3.1.1 Combining cognitive ability and sensuous ability with inferential ability

According to the analysis of the reading process, we divide reading process into two stages: sense and cognition. Sense is the process of looking at sentences and words, then being aware of them. Cognition is the process of recognizing words and sentences and understanding them. Sense and cognition can be separated completely in their reading process. Moreover, in the teaching of reading, the ability of sense and cognition are natured alternatively. In other words, they are interwoven. Sensing the words and being aware of the relationship of words are based on language competence. While nurturing the students' language competence is not only the task of the language teaching but also the task of the text teaching. Besides sense and cognition, sometimes, we need to guess something unknown that is inference. Inferential ability, which is based on the context and background knowledge, is very important for the reader to understand the reading material. To improve inferential ability, we should get the help of basic knowledge, such as history and culture.

3.1.2 Combining comprehension and speed

Reading ability and comprehension, In general, reading ability is considered to be comprehensive. But strictly speaking, this is not true.

Reading ability and comprehension are not equal; we all know that comprehension and speed are the two elements of reading efficiency. Reading ability also involves these elements. Good comprehension with poor speed can't be regarded as strong reading ability. On the contrary, high speed with poor comprehension is not strong reading ability. The task of teaching reading is to improve reading ability, so the nurturing of comprehension and speed should be combined and the former should be based on language competence. While, to improve the later, the following teaching strategies should be considered.

3.2 Method of teaching reading

In English language reading, we may read the material of extensive reading and intensive reading. So, different teaching methods are needed for different reading materials in the teaching experience, extensive reading material must only be taught in extensive teaching method. Additionally, for intensive reading material, we not only teach intensive teaching method, but also teach extensive teaching method.

In the teaching of intensive reading material, there are two different situations:

- ★ The language part is easy, and the teaching of vocabulary and grammar had been done before the stage of teaching reading.
- ★ There are few new words and new grammar in the text, students can read by themselves easily, language teaching can be done after teaching reading.

Briefly, different types of texts should be taught in different ways.

3.2.1 Intensive teaching method

Intensive teaching method is the process that forms the part into the whole. By studying the text word by word, sentence by sentence, readers finally comprehend every paragraph and the whole text.

To study intensive teaching method, we should know the teaching aims, first, improving the ability of comprehension and evaluating, students should understand every word and every sentence through intensive reading, and also get main idea of the whole text. At the same time, they can discuss and evaluate the writing style of the text and give out their own opinion. Second, obtaining and enrich knowledge at a great deal, especially some new language points. Third, improving their ability of using the knowledge freely and improving reading skill. In intensive reading, students can consolidate other skills, such as writing, speaking and they use the language more freely and get improvement in reading skill, and also strengthen the ability in further reading.

Knowing the teaching aims, then we should learn the guiding role of the teacher. In the teaching of intensive reading, a teacher's explanation is very essential, but it should be brief, then the students should be provided with more activities. This does not mean a teacher's explanation should be cancelled. The teacher can play the guiding role in various ways. They may guide the reading skills and strategies, or they may check comprehension and organize practice.

3.2.2 Extensive reading method

There are two kind of explanation for extensive teaching method. One is that it is the teaching process from the whole to the part, or from global study to detailed study. The other is that it is completely fast reading. Its purpose is just getting the main idea of the text, it is equal to scanning. Extensive teaching method can be used both in extensive reading material and intensive reading material.

When using extensive teaching method in the teaching of intensive reading material, the teaching aim is the same as using intensive teaching method, but the teaching pattern is different. The main difference is that the teachers' explanation is omitted in the teaching stage, because new language can seldom be seen in such text, or new language teaching had been done ahead of text teaching.

When using extensive teaching method in the teaching of extensive reading material, the reading is just getting the main idea of the text. There are two stages in teaching. Stage 1, students read by themselves in the limited time. Stage 2, checking comprehension.

4. To teach reading, we should consider the following classroom activities.

4.1 Pre-reading activities

Pre-reading activities should be considered first. Then what is the importance of Pre-reading activities? In our daily lives, we do not normally read because we have to but because we want to. So, before reading, students should have their motivation of wanting to read. But how to motivate students' interests to the text. First, students should clarify the purpose of reading, what do we want to find out? What information do we want to check or clarify? What opinion do we want to match against our own? Second, students should have some ideas of what we are going to read about. They may have certain questions in mind and also make a number of productions or guesses, and this arouses their interests in the topic and makes them want to read. Before reading a text, we can do many things, which will make it easier for students to understand the text and help them focus attention on the text as they read.

4.1.1 Presenting some new words and vocabularies

How to present new vocabulary? We do not need to present all the new words in a text before reading it, but students can guess the meaning of many new words from the text. It is quite possible to understand a text without understanding every word, and it is possible to guess many unknown words from the context. By asking students to guess the new words, they can focus more attention on the new words, and this makes them want to know what the words actually mean and work hard actively to find the exact meaning.

4.1.2 Introducing the text

It is necessary and important for students to know the main idea of the text before reading, and also some background about the text is useful to understand the text. To help students in their reading, the teacher can give a summary of the text with gaps, let students try to guess what words should go in the gaps, or students may discuss the topic and give their own point of view. All in all, to introduce the text may be helpful for students to understand the text.

4.1.3 Preparing for silent reading

Before silent reading, students should be given a few questions to think about as they read and discuss the answers afterwards the main points of the text, so that after the first time of reading, they should have a good idea of what it is about. Guiding questions should concern with the most important points of the text, not focus on minor details, and they should be fairly easy to answer and not too long.

4.2 Reading the text.

Reading the text means beginning to read from global study to detailed study, it is the process, from fast reading to comprehensive reading. First, silent reading. After pre-reading stage, students' interests are aroused by the teacher's eliciting. They have their own opinion about the topic, and they know some backgrounds about the text, then what is going on? And what opinion does the writer hold? And all of these are mysterious for them, and they are eager to know. So, silent reading came on the stage for meeting their demands, they can try to find what they want to know in a short time. After silent reading, a general idea of the text came into students' mind. So, silent reading is necessary to be done ahead of detailed study. Second, comprehensive reading is the process of detailed study. After silent reading, students understand the general meaning of the text, the teacher goes through the text again, checking detailed comprehension and also focusing on important new vocabulary, this is a way of learning new language. The teacher helps students to understand every word and sentence by explaining new language in detail, but the teacher should try to let students ask more instead of teacher explaining more. All the problems should be solved in this stage, but emphasize that teachers do not dominate more but play the guiding role.

4.3 Follow-up activities

Follow-up activities are the activities used as the basis for language practice. The practice should only be done after students understand the text completely, it can be done in the following ways:

Asking discussion questions, for example, the question 'Do you think...?' 'How do you think...?'

Retelling the text with the help of clues. For example, the clue of the text PAPER: the importance of paper—different ways of records in China—the making of paper in the world. Students can look at the clue and retell the text easily.

Role play or pair-work. Let students act out the text or the story.

Gap-filling. Let students fill in gaps of the summary of the text.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, reading is one of the important parts in English language teaching. To be an excellent teacher, learning about the teaching of reading is very necessary and important. Just as the aspects mentioned in the essay, teachers should consider the principles of teaching reading, methods of teaching reading and stages of classroom activities. For us Chinese teachers of English in high schools, we must take the study of teaching reading as a continuing process. Because of learning about the teaching of reading in the teaching life, teachers will achieve a lot in teaching. Students will be successful and get high marks in any examination.

References:

- [1] Chen Qiubo. An analysis of effective teaching methods of English reading comprehension in senior high school [J] . Next Generation, 2019,000(002) : 1-1.
- [2]Liu Ping. An analysis of effective reading teaching methods in senior high school [J] . Education, 2016(11) : 00097-00097.
- [3]Yang Xiaoxia. A probe into the teaching method of effective English reading in senior high school [J] . Scientific Chinese, 2014(12X) : 1.
- [4]Li Lihua. A probe into the teaching method of English reading in senior high school [J] . Reading and writing: Journal of Education and teaching, 2007(9) : 2.
- [5]Fan Xiaohong. On the effectiveness of English reading teaching in senior high school [J] . New Curriculum Learning (middle) , 2013,000(012) : 75-75.
- [6]Huang Xueping. A brief talk on the effective methods of English reading teaching in senior high school [J] . New Curriculum (teacher edition) , 2010.
- [7]Miao Shou Wang. An analysis of effective teaching methods of English reading comprehension in senior high school [J] . Teaching and educating: Higher Education Forum, 2012.
- [8]Pan Suzhen. Effective application of English reading teaching method in senior high school [J] . 2021.
- [9]Liu Yang. A study on the application of situational approach to the teaching of English reading in senior high school. Bohai University, 2014.
- [10]Zhou Sihan. A probe into the teaching methods of cultivating English reading ability in senior high school [J] . English on campus, 2020(18) : 1.
- [11]Li Rui. A brief talk on the teaching method of English reading in senior high school [J] . English for middle school students (foreign language teaching and research) , 2015,000(002) : 39-39.
- [12]Wang Xiaoxia. Research on effective teaching model of English reading in senior high school [J] . English on campus, 2020(2) : 1.
- [13]Jean-claude Xie. A study on the effectiveness of task-based approach in new senior high school English Reading Class [J] . Journal of higher normal vocational school in Zhaotong, 2010,032(0Z1) : 39-41.
- [14]to keep the peace. The application of situational approach in the teaching of English reading in senior high school [J] . English pictorial: Advanced Edition, 2016(5) .
- [15] Sun Yuling. An analysis of how to carry out the teaching of English reading in senior high school [J] . English on campus, 2012(24) : 1.