The Application of Situational Experiential Teaching in English Reading Teaching in Senior Middle School

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Abstract

The National English Curriculum Standards for General Senior Middle School (2017 ed., 2020 rev.) promotes the establishment of an environment for students to experience English teaching, letting students enter the English world and improve their core literacy to meet teaching expectations. This paper analyzes the connotation of situational experiential teaching mode, then combines teaching examples, thus first creating multi-modal situation, enhancing real sense of students' experience; secondly basing on the situation task, training students' problem-solving ability; and thirdly applying situational role and cultivating students' ability of transfer and innovation, which explores the application of situational experiential teaching method in English reading teaching in senior middle schools from the three aspects.

Key words: Situational experience; Reading teaching; Senior middle school English

1. INTRODUCTION

The National English Curriculum Standards for General Senior Middle School (2017 edition, 2020 revision) (hereinafter referred to as *The Curriculum Standards*) analyzes the characteristics of foreign language learning activities, which can be an immersive experience with a clear sense of process and hierarchical construction, whose activities based on exploration and cooperation are of great help to foreign language learning. Thus, the teaching model and teaching method can be optimized in depth, so that the "view of English teaching activities" has been revealed, making the teaching content structured and let students feel the immersive experience, reducing the exclusion of students to knowledge, enabling them to acquire knowledge efficiently which is helpful to improve the core literacy of the subject (Mei & Wang, 2020). The above goals can be achieved by guiding students to have empathy and get immersive experience of the set situation so as to think and explore. With the consolidation and deepening of knowledge, the concrete application and the improvement of knowledge compatibility, situational experiential English reading teaching can achieve the above goals. The power of "contextualization" is to stimulate students' excitement, improve their enthusiasm and initiative in learning, and at the same time, with the filling and covering of knowledge, let students think deeply in the preset atmosphere. *The Chinese College Entrance Examination Evaluation System* points out that "the four-winged" pays much attention to comprehension, application and innovation, examines students' ability to apply knowledge analysis to solve problems by setting real problem situation, allowing students to answer questions from various angles, making the profit of learning by "rote learning", "working on the problems mechanically" and "excessive assignments tactic" greatly reduced, leading students to complete the transfer from "problem solving" or "question answering" to a higher level of "problem solving" and "how to be a person and how to do things" (Ministry of Education, 2019) . With the implementation of the new curriculum reform, English teachers have

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gradually realized the importance of experiential teaching in middle school reading teaching, and some teachers have begun to create experiential teaching situations in teaching activities. However, there are many front-line teachers who are often unsatisfactory in embodiments of these ideas, receiving poor feedback and obtaining limited new knowledge for the reason that the atmosphere they create does not allow students to have empathy, not allowing students to think deeply in it, and having poor relevance to the teaching content. In order to implement the new curriculum reform concept, some of the teachers deal with the situation experience type teaching activity in surface and simplification, making experiential teaching only in form. Thus the students lack the depth of the thinking of reading content, which is difficult to produce emotional experience to read text, unable to get effective knowledge and difficult to form the real problem solving abilities. And still some of the teachers do understand the significance of experiential teaching, but they are at a loss in teaching practice. On the one hand, they are not clear about which teaching content can be used in situational experiential teaching, and on the other hand, they do not know how to carry out situational experiential teaching according to specific learning conditions. Therefore, we can obtain a new idea of English reading education in senior middle school to improve students' English learning ability and practical application ability. That is to make an atmosphere of multi-modal, a situation for students to make immersion and a realistic preset scene, which can let students think deeply under the guidance of this atmosphere, applying what they have learned and getting innovative migration in practice. This kind of learning activity of integrating language and ideological culture helps students to perceive and understand the connotation of reading passages, so that they dare to express themselves and show their goals and real emotional attitudes, followed by the emergence of diversified divergent thinking and critical thinking.

2. THE CONNOTATION OF SITUATIONAL EXPERIENTIAL TEACHING

Situational experiential teaching has been used for a long time, such as in some Western countries. This kind of teaching has formed a very advanced education and teaching system, which has been widely used in all levels of education and teaching activities. Students are expected to feel their own thoughts and emotions and construct their own knowledge system through personal experience, so as to obtain a good learning experience. But this kind of situational experiential teaching was not put forward alone until a famous French educator in the twentieth century, he is Rousseau. On the one

hand, he believes that children should acquire new knowledge from the surrounding environment and things, and nature is the source of knowledge, because such manifested things can stimulate children's enthusiasm for learning and are easy to understand, which is in line with children's acceptance ability and level, and has profound significance for children's acquisition of life skills and long-term development. On the other hand, he objected to the replacement of the natural society book with a boring curriculum. Many foreign countries attach great importance to developing intelligence, creating wisdom, developing students' personality, cultivating innovative consciousness and improving practical ability through practice. In their educational reform, many countries attach great importance to the educational idea of situational experience. With the implementation of the new curriculum reform in China, situational experiential teaching has been paid more and more attention. At present, various aspects of situational experiential teaching have been studied in China. Li L.H。 (2012) believes that there are three ways to create experiential teaching situation: multimedia animation to create teaching situation, to create practice teaching situation, to create story teaching situation. As for the general idea of experiential teaching, Xin J.X. (2003) recognized the idea of aiming at the target, constructing teacher-student relationship and centering on curriculum. As for the method of experiential teaching, Liu H.M. (2011) suggested that students should be provided with a rich audio-visual environment to give students a sense of freshness, and the setting should be story-telling with questions mixed in, so as to stimulate students' enthusiasm and give full play to their intelligence and wisdom. As for the characteristics of experiential teaching, Xin J.X. has his unique views. He agrees that experiential teaching deepens the understanding of the birth and independence of life, the uniqueness of life and the overall unity of life. Li Z.H. recognized the following dimensions such as: to introduce geographical knowledge and humanistic background; to establish a teaching atmosphere conducive to students' immersion; to structure new class, strengthen the main sense; to establish a close relationship with real life of geography experiential teaching method. Chinese scholars have studied the ways, ideas, characteristics, significance, modes and approaches of experiential teaching. Some of these dissertations and articles focus on theoretical research, while others focus on practical application. Combined with the specific characteristics and requirements of the subject content, the theory and practice of situational experiential teaching application in each subject are fully analyzed and studied.

In a broad sense, situational experience teaching refers to that students will, under the guidance of teachers, contact with real social life, get in touch with

nature closely, appreciate and get practical experience and thinking from it. In the narrow sense, situational experience teaching means that students should experience and learn wholeheartedly in the school environment and in the environment preset by teachers, so as to acquire knowledge. The author thinks that situational experiential teaching should be a combination of the generalized situational experiential learning of real environment experience with extracurricular activities and the narrow-sense situational experiential learning of in-class life. Through personal experience, students can obtain a learning method that knowledge can generate emotion. The process of students' independent experience is that the teacher presets the environment according to the teaching content and creates the teaching atmosphere to serve the teaching practice, while teachers lead students to think independently and gain inspiration through active practice, which is the significance and difficulty of English reading in senior middle school English teaching. The author believes that introducing "situational experience" teaching into English reading teaching in senior middle school advocates taking students as the core factor and taking English activities as the carrier, so that students can experience, understand and use English in the context of activities. Thus, it stimulates students' English reading enthusiasm, makes up for the shortcomings of traditional reading teaching model, and greatly improves the actual efficiency of English reading teaching.

As can be seen from the latest content of *The Curriculum Standards*, when creating the situation, it is necessary to consider its authenticity, connect students' existing knowledge with the situation, ensure its effectiveness, and give full consideration to the location, situation, object and purpose of communication. In the set context environment, to ensure the high efficiency of students communication (Ministry of Education, 2020). The high emotion of students can accelerate the internalization of knowledge and deepen the good situation. At present era, "Internet +" provides many multi-modal teaching resources and experience methods for the perceptive process of English reading teaching activities, which is conducive to finding English reading discourse situations from real life practice. Multi-modal information is conducive to deepening students' situational perception, strengthening students' visualization of thinking, and sharing teaching and learning to obtain achievement experience. In the course of exploring the situational experience English reading teaching of new textbooks, the author combines task-based teaching method to create multi-modal situations to enhance the sense of reality of students' experience. Based on the situation task, training students' problem-solving ability, using the situation role problem, training students' transfer and innovation ability and so on of these three aspects

can be used to train students' abilities in comprehensive use of language skills, multi-thinking, creative solution to problems in different situations, rational expression of views, feelings and attitudes.

2.1 Creating Multi-modal Situations to Enhance the Reality of Students' Experience

Discourse can take many forms, including oral, written, also includes audio, video, that is, multi-modal form. It can be found in *The Interpretation of The General Senior Middle School English Curriculum Standards* (2017 edition, 2020 revision) (hereinafter referred to as *The Interpretation of the Curriculum Standards*) that not only the content in the textbooks should be included, but also students should be actively guided to do a good job in the extension of extracurricular listening and reading activities (Mei & Wang, 2020) .

According to the actual situation, situational experiential teaching is usually used at the beginning of a class. The novel form can greatly arouse students' interest and focus students' attraction on the class. When teaching English reading, it is necessary to choose appropriate teaching methods and students' acceptance ability. In the context of setting the situation, it needs to combine with the actual situation, fully mobilize the enthusiasm of students, in which they can truly express themselves, express their real feelings. When teachers create the situation, the most fundamental is to take students as the foothold, from their point of view to carry out design, enrich forms, so as to stimulate their innovation consciousness, enhance the activity of their thinking, create a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere, increase their acceptance, better access to knowledge.

For example, *Explore Peru* in the *Reading and Thinking* section of Unit 2, a compulsory course in the new textbook of *PEP* edition, is mainly aimed at introducing relevant geographical knowledge and local customs of Peru to students and broadening their horizons. So at the beginning of the course, a video can be played, mainly about the introduction to the country of Peru, to increase students' interest. Then, the students were introduced to the national flag, national flower, capital and animal representatives of Peru. The teacher asks the students about the multi-modal situation:"What did you see in the video? What impressed you most?"The students replied: "The Andes Mountains." "The beautiful scenery impressed me most." Teacher's supplementary description of students' answers:

The above steps not only summarize students' feelings after experiencing the videos and pictures, but also show in advance some new words and expressions of describing places in the later reading texts (see the italics part). They also show students how to describe scenic spots vividly, paving the way for the context and language preparation for the later reading links.

Then, the author used new media such as *Douyin* and *B Website* to find short English introduction videos with Chinese and English subtitles about four distinctive places in Peru. The short video is equipped with English introduction and charming scenery. Because of the use of new media, students are intoxicated with the situation, as if they were on the scene, which broadens their vision and enlightens their minds. The presentation of multi-modal information and the questioning of students' personal experience can not only create a good learning atmosphere for students at the beginning of the course, but also help students deepen their overall sense of Peru in the context, and stimulate students' curiosity and interest in reading texts with Peruvian characteristics. Therefore, when students get emotional recognition, they can increase their enthusiasm for learning, gain something in learning and improve their interest. No matter watching videos or participating in discussions, students are involved in "seeing" or "speaking" with multiple senses, that is, multi-modal. Multi-modal information can give students a strong sense of impact and help to cultivate students' stronger language sense.

2.2 Training Students' Problem-Solving Ability Based on Situational Tasks

"*The Interpretation of the Curriculum Standards*" points out that in school education, In school education, attention must be paid to the cultivation of related abilities other than knowledge, in particular, some emotional and ability expansion, like the ability to communicate with people, writing ability, the control of their own emotions, the increase of the ability to resist pressure, the training of organizational ability and so on (Mei & Wang, 2020).

In English teaching, especially in senior middle school, it is necessary to improve students' ability and level of practical application of English. The setting of the environment enables students to place themselves in it, deepens their influence on the knowledge they have learned, and combines the knowledge they have learned with real life to improve their practical application ability. When the theory and practice are combined together, it helps to develop students' thinking and expression ability. In the process of English reading teaching, in order to help students better basic knowledge and improve the ability to solve problems, it is necessary to provide students with the opportunity to exercise their ability in a planned way. When carrying out various kinds of activities, students should participate in and practice together to enhance their hands-on ability, understand the purpose of learning in the process of learning, thinking, enlightenment and practice, and constantly improve their knowledge system and improve their cognitive level.

The Specification of Chinese College Entrance Examination Evaluation System advocates that students express independent and creative views through their own logical thinking, observe and think about the same problem from multiple perspectives, think and solve problems divergently and backwards using different methods flexibly and creatively, identify key features and valuable new problems in complex and novel situations through keen insight, transfer the learned knowledge to new situations, solve new problems and draw new conclusions, and reflect and verify their new conclusions scientifically to ensure the reliability of new conclusions (Ministry of Education,2019). In the reading teaching activities of new textbooks, the author pays special attention to the training of students' thinking and the transformation of the knowledge learned into effective knowledge or ability that can be applied to real life.

For example, the discourse "*The Freshman Challenge*" in the *Reading and Thinking* section of Unit 1, a compulsory course in the new textbook of *PEP* edition, describes three challenges that Adam, an American student, faced when he entered senior middle school in the first person: how to choose a course, how to join his favorite American football team, and how to adapt to senior middle school life. This essay is a personal statement, divided into four paragraphs, distinct gradation and clear structure. The first paragraph introduces the topic of the text, i.e. "Going from junior senior middle school to senior senior middle school is a really big challenge". The second paragraph is about the confusion I face when choosing a course, i.e. "I had to think very carefully about which courses I wanted to take". The third paragraph is about the choice of extracurricular activities. Adam talked about the reason why he couldn't join the American football team, his determination, and how he adjusted himself and changed his mind in time to join the volunteer club. The fourth paragraph is about how to adapt to senior middle school life as soon as possible. In this paragraph, Adam tells us that he has realized the difficulties and is worried about them. But more importantly, he has the determination and sense of responsibility to make progress positively. The content of the discourse is close to the real life scenes of senior one students and meets the cognitive needs of senior middle school students, so that students can resonate in the situation. It is natural for students to compare their own situation with Adam's and think about "how to adapt to senior middle school life as soon as possible". After a series of exercises to understand, extract and summarize the information, the author asked the students to read the text again and fill in Table 1.

Table 1
Challenges (Difficulties) -- Feelings -- Treatment Methods

Paragraph	Challenge	How Adam Feels	Solution
1	Going from junior senior middle school to senior senior middle school	Confused	
2	Choosing the suitable courses	Serious/ Careful	The school adviser helped him choose suitable courses.
3	Making the school football team	Unhappy	He will find a way to improve in order to make the team next year.
4	Keeping up with the other students in his advanced course and getting used to all the homework	Worried but still happy, confident about his future	He will try to study harder and get used to being responsible for a lot more.

After completing the information extraction tasks in Table 1, students have a deeper understanding of the whole article. Next, the author invites students to discuss the following questions in groups: Do you face the same challenges as Adam? What other challenges are you facing? How do you deal with them? Then make the following requirements: Compared with Adam, note down the courses or clubs you choose, you own challenges, feelings as well as solutions. After completing the tasks in Table 2 and share your results with your partner.

Table 2
Do you face the same challenges as Adam

Course	
Club	
Challenge	
Feeling	
Solution	

Through the training of asking questions and table tasks, students repeatedly read the discourse to understand the challenges faced by the protagonist in senior middle school life and the methods to deal with difficulties, and then compared with their own situation, so as to transfer their thinking to complete Table 2 and communicate with their classmates to solve various problems in life practice. To enable students to transfer the knowledge learned in English reading classes to effective knowledge that can help solve their own problems is one of the concepts emphasized in the college entrance examination evaluation system.

2.3 Using Situational Role Problems to Cultivate Students' Innovation Ability in Transfer

It is proposed in *The Curriculum Standards* that the knowledge system structure must be optimized, the former knowledge should be changed into the improvement of literacy, the once "rigid" knowledge should be transformed into the ability to solve problems in practice, the practical operation should be strengthened to make it into knowledge and skills of its own and should be transformed into inherent literacy (Ministry of Education, 2020). In the teaching of English, especially reading module, when reading an article, students can take the role to read, to understand the connotation of the role is the role of reading aloud angle, so that we can to a certain degree deepen their understanding and knowledge in digestion, still can enhance their own knowledge system construction, improve personal quality and ability.

Welcome Unit, in a compulsory course in the new textbook of *PEP* edition, is a transitional unit before entering senior middle school English learning. It takes the campus life of senior middle school freshmen as the theme and connects the learning and life of junior middle school and senior middle school. In the *Reading and Thinking* section of this unit, the activity topic is "*Describe your first day of senior middle school*". The most prominent thinking exercise in this reading text is to let students relate the content of the text to their own experience and feelings. The students read the personal web page recorded by a Chinese senior middle school student on the first day of school to experience the experience and feelings of *Han Jing*. The second question of the third item in activity 3 asks the students to put themselves in the position to think about countermeasures and experience the feelings of the hero in the text. Activity 4 requires students to summarize the main content of the four periods on *Han Jing's* personal homepage on the first day of school, and then communicate with each other about their own experiences and feelings, and naturally transfer what they've learned in the article to their own situation and express it.

Its main purpose is to build students' critical thinking and improve their ability to solve practical problems. When the teacher finishes the description of relevant information in the first half, he asks the students questions about the above content. "What happened in the chemistry class? What would you do if this happened to you? " Students can accurately identify the answer to question 1: "The guy next to *Han Jing* tried to talk to her the whole time. " But when students face the second question, they stay on the surface of low-order thinking. Student A replied: "Ask him to be quiet." Student B replied: "Tell him to shut up!" Student C replied: "Tell the teacher." After hearing the students' answers, I asked: "If someone talk to you that way, how will you feel? Will you feel embarrassed? Will it be awkward for you to talk to your classmate again? Or will you be angry with your classmate? " Through a series of second-person rhetorical questions, the author guides students to put themselves into the role of *Han Jing* in the situation, think in others' shoes and experience the

feelings of the parties involved. "Can you think about your life reality and find out a more proper way to solve this problem? " Ask students to discuss the above problems in groups and choose the best solution for the group. By substituting the situational role of "YOU" to students into the experiential questioning form, it not only organically combines the teaching content with the actual life of students, but also embodies the educational orientation of taking students as the center and paying attention to the individual ideas of students.

After the students thought again and communicated with each other, the author confirmed the students' answers after considering the real life scenes: "Make friends with him/her first, and then talk about it in a proper situation." "Buy her a candy and then talk to her in lunch." "Ask him what the teacher said." "Tell him/her you have difficulty in understanding the teacher in the class and ask him/her what the teacher taught for the class after class." "Write a sincere letter to him/her to talk about my true feeling." Finally, the author summed up the problems encountered on the blackboard; students can use the "Why-why-how" mode of thinking, and can also use SWOT analysis when they encounter interpersonal problems in the future: S (strengths), W (weaknesses), O (opportunities) and T (threats). When the situational model is similar to real life, students' mentality will change and gradually become relaxed. Students can choose different ways and languages to communicate with others with appropriate behaviors in different situations when the purpose, occasion and role change. This kind of situation simulation is helpful to the cultivation of students' thinking and cognitive ability, especially in dialectical thinking and critical thinking. Students develop higher-order thinking in the process of experiential understanding and reflection of the role in the situation. The exchange and interaction of the collision of students' ideas not only enlivens the classroom atmosphere, but also enables students to find the fun of using English in the exchange and interaction, and enhances the recognition of the idea that "English learning is closely related to real life".

In addition, the Writing section on page P75 of the compulsory textbook of the new textbook aims to guide students to experience the role of elders by reading four letters asking for help about parents' parenting problems, think about their parents' problems in four different situations, and then give appropriate suggestions. Ask students to give advice to parents who are really confused about the four aspects of communication barriers, children's love, father and son's different preferences, and whether their children should study abroad in high school. Help parents who are faced with family communication difficulties to deal with the common problems of teenagers. In this way, it can give students certain character experience, make students think in the emotion

of the role, and provide students with the opportunity to transfer their self-reflection to their own real life situation, so as to create countermeasures for themselves and their parents. The effective knowledge acquired in the situation can be transformed to continuously improve the construction and supplement of the self-system, learn from the situation, and apply to the situation to carry out continuous transfer and transformation, give play to its characteristics, transform into ability and creativity, and constantly enrich students' experience.

CONCLUSION

The relevant requirements in *The New Curriculum Standards* reflect the country's attention to student education, which can fundamentally strengthen the improvement of national quality level. It is necessary to improve the effectiveness of classroom teaching. From the teachers' point of view, the teaching method of situational experience should be reasonably adopted to enrich the form and content, so as to combine teaching with fun, so that students can be involved in the teaching and actively practice. The relevant management system of teaching should be constantly improved to ensure the order of practical teaching and the teaching evaluation mechanism be built and improved. Students' confidence and pride should be fundamentally enhanced and have better thinking ability and practice level while knowledge acquired at the same time.

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