

Research and Practice on the College English Intensive Reading Teaching Model in Application-oriented Universities

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Abstract: Intensive reading teaching is the core component of college English reading teaching, which is related to the improvement of students' English practical application ability. What kind of educational concept should be upheld in intensive reading teaching? This paper argues that the discussion of 'fusion of horizons' and 'logic of question and answer' in philosophical hermeneutics has new implications for college English intensive reading teaching: it emphasizes the openness of the text and the subjectivity of the reader in the reading process, highlighting the dialogue and interaction between teachers and students in teaching. This requires that we must pay attention to the possibility of students' participation in multiple understanding in reading, and explore a new teaching mode of college English intensive reading according to the theory of the relationship between hermeneutics and teaching.

1. Introduction

Intensive reading plays an important role in college English reading teaching. It is a basic course for students to forge their English ability and plays an irreplaceable role in shaping their language application ability. Therefore, the renewal and reform of relevant teaching concepts are particularly important. In the current teaching practice of academic circles and teachers, some effects have been achieved in the teaching methods such as flipped classroom and divergent thinking. However, there is not much discussion on how to understand the nature of these teaching methods or the reform of teaching thinking. In fact, this is related to the expansion of the fundamental problem of teaching concept. From the perspective of this paper, the subject and object of college English intensive reading teaching are teachers, students and texts; therefore, the innovation of teaching concept should be carried out around these three factors. Philosophical hermeneutics attaches importance to the ontological status of readers and works, which is a theoretical resource that can be used for reference in the process of college English intensive reading teaching. Some scholars have pointed out that philosophical hermeneutics has a certain backwash effect on the "target model" curriculum concept of instrumental rationality, and explored a new teaching path conducive to the common growth of teachers and students.[1]

2. Intensive Reading of Works Based on 'Fusion of Horizons' and 'Logic of Question and Answer'

German philosopher Gadamer introduced hermeneutics into the reading of works, regarded the text as an open structure, and pointed out two ways to realize the two-way communication between the text content and the reader's thinking:

First, the cognition and understanding of this article is viewed as a 'fusion of horizons' of historical horizon and present horizon: Horizon (Horizont), also known as vision, is the area where the reader can see. This area (Gesichtskreis) covers and accommodates everything seen from a foothold.[2]

Secondly, on the basis of the above, Gadamer further puts forward the 'logic of question and answer' of spiritual science, and believes that text reading is a spiritual activity. Only by reaching the question and answer 'interaction'[3] in interpersonal communication between reading subjects and objects can the sublimation of understanding and reflection in the reading process be realized.

These two concepts have important implications for the way, thinking and depth of text reading. Both of them try to clarify such a thinking: studying and appreciating works is not a simple interpretation or annotation, but a discussion and exploration of the text. In this context, the reader as the 'reading subject' and the text as the 'providing reading subject' enlighten each other, making the reading process a relatively equal and mutually advancing dialogue, thus constructing the interpretation picture of 'horizon sharing'. This text interpretation approach and "picture" can essentially avoid two extreme orientations of reading: first, advocating "text centralism" and making the text become the barrier and shackles of readers' thinking; the second is to believe in 'reader thinking first', so that readers become the master and wanton deconstruction of the text.

Philosophical hermeneutics emphasizes that when the reading subject understands the text with its own insurmountable historical existence (including prejudice caused by social value judgment and public opinion pressure, prejudice caused by his own life experience and cognitive vision), two different horizons will be derived. However, readers must not ignore the author's horizon. Only when the "interpreter's 'foresight' and the content of the explained can be merged together to produce meaning, will there be a real understanding. Gadamer calls this process 'fusion of horizons'". [4]

To understand the teaching of English intensive reading from the perspective of philosophical hermeneutics is to highlight the multi-dimensional interaction among the text, teachers and students as the main participants in the process of intensive reading. Intensive reading of works is a process of teaching and learning, which is based on high-frequency communication between teachers and students. Based on each other's cognitive level and values, the process of jointly constructing the meaning space of the text is expected to achieve the perfect integration of teachers' and students' interpretation horizons, text content and author's intention.

The communication and interactive reading mode provided by hermeneutics aims to strengthen the consciousness of "equal dialogue" intensive reading teaching, attract and drive learners to actively participate in it, explore and analyze problems, so as to perfectly integrate into the process of text interpretation and reflection, and give full play to the subjective role of teachers and students in English intensive reading teaching.[5]

3. The Significance of Philosophical Hermeneutics to English Intensive Reading Teaching

Philosophical hermeneutics emphasizes the subjective status of participants in intensive reading teaching and tries to reshape intersubjectivity. Therefore, its significance is embodied in the way of text reading, the meaning of text and the reshaping of the role of teachers and students.

3.1. Change the Way of Text Interpretation

For a long time, the traditional English reading education has more or less solidified "utilitarian" thinking. It only regards English intensive reading learning as the skill training of language tools, which makes most students only pay attention to the memory of basic knowledge and the training of language skills, while ignoring the understanding of text context and generative meaning. In this teaching mode, students blindly pursue pre-set answers, resulting in the lack of humanistic care in teaching.

In fact, English intensive reading is a process in which students use their knowledge to experience reading. The teaching of intensive reading in the perspective of hermeneutics emphasizes the communication, communication, dialogue and collision between students and texts, expands their horizons and thinking depth, and improves their interest and attention in intensive reading of works.

3.2. Extending the Meaning of the Text

The openness and indeterminacy of the text itself, as well as the blank, the calling structure and the reader's subjective initiative, together determine the possibility of the text having multiple meanings. The reader's comprehension and understanding of the meaning of the text is a continuous circular evolution process. In the teaching of English intensive reading, students exist as a unique subject with active thinking. Teachers should seize the opportunity to guide them to give full play to their imagination and creativity in the calling structure of the works, realize the multiple interpretation of

the text in a real sense, enrich and expand the meaning of the text, and obtain the appreciation and rich experience of the text. In fact, successful English intensive reading teaching is always accompanied by the generation and extension of text horizon, student horizon and text implication, so as to achieve long-term teaching and learning effect.

3.3. Promote the Reshape of Teachers' Role

The intensive reading teaching under the influence of the traditional reading teaching mode is based on the specified teaching reference book as a model, using the text intensive reading tips and after-school exercises to limit or even replace the students' intensive reading horizon and intensive reading practice activities. In this one-dimensional, replicative reading teaching method, although some degree of teacher-student communication can be carried out through the way of questioning and speaking, only a few students participate, and most of the other students only listen passively and lack active thinking. Only passive acceptance can not take the initiative to speak.

Therefore, in the context of the new round of curriculum reform and the continuous evolution of the concept of "participatory learning", English intensive reading instructors urgently need to achieve a gorgeous turn of identity: from a simple knowledge transmitter to an enlightener and guider of inquiry and interactive reading. On this basis, organize students to carry out subjective 'individual intensive reading', and achieve the 'fusion of horizons' between the reader and the content of the work in interactive communication (covering questions and answers, appreciation and speech).

4. Philosophical Hermeneutics and New Model of English Intensive Reading Teaching

"Logic of Question and Answer" and "Fusion of Horizons" are the core concepts of the teaching concept and mode of English intensive reading. This requires not only exploring the subjective composition of teachers and students (such as the individual narrative of self-experience), but also innovating the realistic relationship between teachers and students (such as building a teacher-student dialogue mechanism based on problem communication).

4.1. The Principles of Exploring the Teaching Model of English Intensive Reading from the Perspective of Hermeneutics

Taking students as the main body of intensive reading, focusing on exploring students' self-perception and personalized experience, leading, encouraging and inspiring students to seek the meaning of reading in multiple dialogues with works, with their own lives and with others.

In the process of organizing intensive reading, teachers must be based on students' existing knowledge and practical level, and be good at using the terms they have mastered and known, which is the premise for students to understand the connotation of the text accurately and comprehensively. The realization of this principle requires teachers, on the one hand, to carefully evaluate students' mastery in the preview link before the start of intensive reading, and on the other hand, to actively give students detailed guidance in reading techniques and methods and personal experience.

4.2. 'Logic of Questions and Answers' and Interactive Intensive Reading Teaching

Modern education strengthens the interactive intersubjectivity between teachers and learners. Freire, a famous Brazilian education scholar, believes that 'without dialogue, there is no communication; without communication, there is no education.' Real education is not through 'Party A' for 'Party B', nor through 'Party A' about 'Party B', but through 'Party A' and 'Party B' together ('A' with 'B'), with the world as the intermediary.[6] The 'logic of question and answer' in hermeneutics inspires English intensive reading teaching to construct a dynamic communication space with multi-dimensional interaction among teachers, students and works. Therefore, it is committed to establishing an "equal dialogue" teaching mode that fits the "logic of question and answer" theory, and placing the work at the interactive level with the reader to examine the significance of intensive reading, which will promote the "fusion of horizons" between students' horizons and text content.

4.2.1. Construct ‘Interactive Teaching’ Model

The high frequency use and scientific improvement of “interactive teaching” [7] will greatly improve learners’ enthusiasm for active English intensive reading, and will raise students’ English communication, understanding ability and comprehensive language application level to a new level. At the same time, the specific implementation of teaching interaction is as follows:

Pre-class preview targeted guidance. Teachers encourage students to obtain the background of writing works and the author’s life experience through online academic search and library access to materials. Guide students to use the attached CD or authoritative dictionary to complete the basic vocabulary. Inspirational guidance of classroom communication. [8] For the question of reading objectives, teachers should not limit students’ divergent thinking completely according to the ‘given answer’, but guide them to achieve their own understanding of the text ‘objective’ or ‘close to objective’ through inter-group discussion, teacher-student opinion exchange and thinking collision. Interactive expansion guidance after class. Teachers organize discussion groups to organize literature collation and induction around intensive reading works, and present the results of cooperation in the form of printed tabloid and ‘Corner’ salon.

4.2.2. Integration: Reach a Consensus in Question and Answer

Gadamer pointed out: “Whoever wants to seek understanding must in turn ask what is behind the speech.” “If we return to the back of what has been said, we must have gone beyond what has been said.” [9] The principle of “logic of question and answer” emphasizes the profound meaning of rational cognition of literary works in the mutual inspiration and mutual influence between the appreciator and the text. The interactive question and answer between the two will construct a logical “question” and “puzzle” chain. On the one hand, this interlocking ‘question and answer chain’ dispels the old concept of taking pure works as the teaching center and transferring knowledge as the teaching purpose. On the other hand, it also deepens the students’ thinking space, which is conducive to the establishment of multi-dimensional and diversified ‘equal dialogue’ teaching mode, [10] realizes the self-reflection of teachers and students, and achieves the consensus between teachers and students and the text.

4.3. ‘Fusion of Horizons’ and the Dialogue Strategy of English Intensive Reading Teaching

The text is an open and appealing meaning structure. Interactive reading can stimulate readers’ imagination and comprehension to supplement the potential meaning space provided by the text. The “fusion of horizons” in intensive reading teaching also aims to stimulate students’ interest, imagination and creativity in intensive reading. Its concept includes the following kinds of fusion: the communication and fusion between teachers and students as readers and texts as intensive reading objects, the dialogue, communication and fusion of horizons between teachers’ teaching and students’ reading, and between students’ free discussion.

4.3.1. Into the Text Intervention: Build a Dialogue Platform

The literary works of any era are the reflection of the specific social, political, economic and cultural conditions at the ideological level, and are a historical text across time and space. This inevitably has an inherent distance with the current students. In addition to the lack of students’ academic vision and life experience, their examination and thinking of the text are inevitably superficial. Therefore, in the initial stage of leading intensive reading (including preview and pre-class tips), teachers should guide students to get close to the text by setting up the teaching method of problem situation, and provide them with the common sense of the text and the author’s creative background, so as to broaden students’ reading horizon and carry out targeted and profound dialogue with the works.

4.3.2. ‘Soul Dialogue’: Change the Passive Way to Interactive Communication, Highlighting the Dynamic Generation

Intensive reading teaching should be a process of “soul dialogue” on the spiritual level, in which

teachers and students, students and individuals open their hearts to each other, understand, accept and accommodate each other. Because in the reading appreciation, students' thoughts and feelings into the author's works. The relaxed mood of teachers and students urges each other to read passionately. Each side experiences the dignity of the 'subject' and the satisfaction of the soul, highlighting the vitality of the teaching interaction mechanism. In fact, teachers' 'teaching' is like the process of writers creating texts, and students' 'learning' is like the process of readers' intensive reading of 'texts'. Teachers need to carefully design the 'calling structure' of teaching texts to stimulate students' 'horizon of expectation' and realize the two-way integration of teachers' 'teaching' and students' 'learning'. [11]

5. Conclusion

In a word, with the gradual advancement of college English teaching reform, the single teaching model with "cramming education" as the means and "obtaining standard answers" as the sole goal will be replaced by the two-way interactive teaching mode with "interactive question and answer" as the way and "obtaining the fusion of horizons between teachers and students and texts" as the main thinking. Philosophical Hermeneutics broadens the thinking of college English intensive reading teaching research. The discussion of 'fusion of horizons' and 'logic of question and answer' in spiritual science enlightens teachers to attach importance to students' participation in multiple understanding in reading, pay attention to the three-dimensional and instant communication between teachers, students and texts, let the classroom atmosphere of intensive reading teaching alive, stimulate students' interest in English learning, mobilize students' enthusiasm for classroom participation, turn passive learning into active learning, and effectively improve students' language ability and communicative ability, so as to obtain the expected and ideal college English intensive reading teaching effect.

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