

Integrating Writing with Reading

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Introduction

Reading and writing have been considered two different language skills that should be studied separately. As a result, many college students in China find it hard to put their thoughts into English. The process genre approach can be successfully applied to integrate writing into the reading class. In this approach, besides linguistic knowledge, the writing genre, the schematic structure, and the writing skills of the in-class reading materials are also stressed. The writing skills are in turn utilized in guided writing, from outline writing, drafting, to revising. The purpose of such a teaching process is to achieve multilevel understanding of the reading materials and a sound basis for the writing of different genres.

Procedure

To demand students' active participation, a lesson using the process genre approach can be divided into the following phases: understanding specific information, in-class collective writing and after-class writing practice.

Understanding of the Reading Materials

- **Preview Requirements:**
 - Master the main linguistic knowledge or the language points.
 - Catch the main idea, find the topic sentence of each paragraph.
 - Try to determine the genre of the article.
- **Understanding Specific Information:**
 - **Objectives:**
 - understanding the main idea, mastering the main language points
 - **Activities:**
 - Ask several students to tell the main ideas of the text, or give a brief summary
 - Ask questions and answers about the specific information to make sure the students understand details of the text
 - Explain the language points. As is required for preview, students should have mastered the language points before coming to class. So the teacher's job is just to check to see if they have. The way to check is to ask students to the blackboard to do paraphrasing and or to give explanations and examples.
 - As the students carry on with the language points, the teacher should pay close attention and be able to make necessary adjustment and supplement.
- **Analysis of Writing Skills:**
 - **Objectives:**
 - Understand the typical features and the writing scheme of the genre of the text.
 - **Principle:**
 - Using a heuristic teaching style, the teacher gives out some clues for the students to think about and infer from. Then the teacher gives final confirmation.
 - **Activities:**
 - Analyze the genre of the article. Ask the students to think about the purpose of writing according to the main ideas they have derived. Decide the genre of the text.
 - Analyze the writing skill and the schematic structure of the text. Through discussion, students should be able to decide the functions of each paragraph, and the specific diction to support the main ideas.

In-class Collective Writing

- **Objectives:**
 - Utilize the specific writing skills and the schematic structure just derived.
- **Principle:**
 - Instead of being the information provider, the teacher should just be the organizer of classroom activities, the person who writes on the blackboard.
- **Activities:**
 - Group discussion of the topic of the writing the teacher provided.
 - Collective writing. Using the output of discussion, the class will write a paragraph collectively. Each group provides a sentence, following the writing scheme very closely.
 - Comment on the total output. The teacher will make comments on sentence coherence, semantic conformity, the specific writing process, and make necessary adjustments. Reasons must be given as to why the change is necessary.

After-class Writing Practice

Students should write an article using the writing skills and the specific diction achieved. The teacher must read every piece of writing very carefully; select the best ones and the ones with typical errors to use as examples for further comments.

Example

The following is an example of writing analysis of the writing of refutation, and a paragraph of writing finished in class.

- The schematic structure of a piece of refutation writing.
 - The first paragraph: Present the ideas/opinions to be refuted
 - The second paragraph: Show the disagreement
 - The third paragraph: Refute the first wrong idea
 - Writing skills:
 - 1. present the idea again
 - 2. show disagreement/ I think he is wrong
 - 3. use illustrations to support one's own idea
 - The fourth paragraph: Refute the second wrong idea
 - Writing skill:
 - 1. present the idea
 - 2. show disagreement/ I have news for him
 - 3. use illustrations
 - The fifth paragraph: Conclusion
- In class collective writing of refutation. (in brackets are the reasons for the original sentence, the reasons for the correction and other comments). The topic is It is not necessary to work hard once we enter college.

Paragraph One

Some people say that college should be a time for relaxing and fun. [*present the wrong idea*] But in my opinion, college is a time for studying [*Show one's own attitude*]. In the future, we will work in the society. If we don't have enough knowledge and ability, we will lag behind [*illustration 1*]. Our lives are limited, but study is unlimited. The fact that we entered college does not mean we have mastered all knowledge [*illustration 2*]. So we must study hard. We must read, write, think and do a lot of things to get (us) ready for our future lives. [*conclusion*]

Paragraph Two

Some people say [*Somebody says, later 'them' is used, therefore, the subject should be plural*] the time at college is to relax and have fun [*Present the opposite idea*]. I disagree with them [*Show one's own attitude*]. First, I think we must face the society. If we want to get a good job, we must study hard [*Illustration 1*]. Second, we must define our goals. We must cherish our time, spend the time on studying, and not waste time to make girlfriends or boyfriends. And we also have to face examinations [*illustration 2*]. Third,

the study in college is crucial to building a positive attitude towards life [illustration 3]. If we (you the person used should be relevant) relax and have fun, we (you ibid)ll have no motivation and our future will not bright.

The Requirements of the Teacher

1. The Ability to Organize Communicative Activities

The genre process approach is a quite demanding approach, in which a two-way communicational learning environment is critical. The teacher must use heuristic teaching style. Only through deductive teaching can students acquire the ability to evaluate and analyze the reading material as well as the ability to read for general information.

2. Very Sound Basic Linguistic Skills

Besides the linguistic knowledge, grammar rules, and cultural background information generally required for teachers of other approaches, teachers must also master the schematic structure of the relevant genre of the text, and be competent to use the relevant writing skills.

3. An Ability to Deal with the Unexpected in Class

This quality is essential to perform in-class collective reading, since it is quite unpredictable. Even though the main idea of the passage is unchanged, different class will come up with different paragraphs. The teacher must be able to adjust unsuitable linguistic phenomenon, observe coherence and conformity in writing, stimulate creative and logic thinking, and grasp the students attention in class.

References

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