

On the Reconstruction of Teachers' Role of Business English Reading Classroom Teaching Based on Literature Circle

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Business English reading teaching under the mode of "literature circles" focuses on cultivating students' autonomy in reading, group cooperation, and the exchange of ideas among group members. In this teaching mode, teachers are no longer the masters of the reading classroom, but the helpers, participants, and researchers in the process of students' reading. The reconstruction of teachers' role can promote the benign development of relationship not only between teachers and students, but also between students and students, inject new impetus and vitality into the classroom, and improve students' reading literacy.

Keywords: business English reading, literature circles, teacher's role, reconstruction

Introduction

Business English reading ability is an important embodiment of business English language application ability. Reading a lot of systematic business background materials helps to combine the fragments of English language knowledge and business knowledge into a three-dimensional, concrete framework which is beneficial to expand vocabulary and consolidate learned language knowledge. English reading helps to foster English language sense; vice versa, it is good for the intuition of using the authentic English. It also helps to expand students' knowledge, broaden their vision, and be aware of cultural differences between China and the Western. Most importantly, it assists to improve students' English writing and speaking ability and cultivate their comprehensive English application ability by gaining reading experience.

Business English reading is a basic course for Business English major. Good reading ability can help students acquire a lot of knowledge and enhance their insight into literature as well as critical thinking. However, there are many problems in business English reading teaching. Traditionally speaking, it focused more on text-analysis, which overlooked the transformation of the input into output. Students are unlikely to witness the results of reading and experience the fun of reading. Poor reading habits lead to low reading efficiency, poor effect, and chaotic information input, while serious lack of business English vocabulary affects reading comprehension ability and lack of business background knowledge leads to the inability to understand the true connotation of the text.

Literature Circle

In 1994, Harvey Daniels published *Literature Circle: Voice and Choice in a Student-centered Classroom*.

Acknowledgement: This work is one of the results of "Research on Reading Teaching Mode of Business English Majors From the Perspective of Literature Circles" (Project No.: 2021SCG112) and supported by Laboratory Opening Project in Quzhou University (Project No. KFXM201808).

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Since then, the concept of the “literature circle” has attracted wide attention. Harvey Daniels (1994) said:

Literature circle is a temporary reading group, in which the group members choose and read the same literature works independently. After completing the independent reading, the group decides the content to be discussed together. Each member prepares for discussion and presentation according to their specific roles and responsibilities in the group. After completing the circle discussion, the group members rotate to form a new reading group, select the new reading materials, and go to the next literature circle. (p. 13)

The reading mode of “literature circle” has been studied systematically and deeply, which is mainly divided into two stages. In the 1990s, researches chiefly concentrated on the thinking on the reading mode of “literature circles” from the theoretical level. Harvey Dennis (1994) first put forward and described the concept of the “literature circles”. Katherine L. Schlick Noe, together with Nancy Johnson (1999), introduces the basic processes of the “literature circle” and suggestions for the implementation of each step. Later, Daniels (2002) described the following 11 key elements of literature circle:

1. Students choose their own reading materials.
2. According to the selection of books, a small temporary groups will be formed.
3. Different groups should read different books.
4. Group meets on a regular, predictable schedule to discuss what they read.
5. Children use written or drawn notes to guide their reading and discussion.
6. Discussion topics will be decided by the students.
7. The goal of the group meeting is an open and natural dialogue about books, so personal relations, differences, and open-ended questions are welcome.
8. Teachers act as facilitators, rather than as group members or instructors.
9. Evaluation is conducted through teachers' observation and students' self-evaluation.
10. A playful and interesting spirit pervades the whole room.
11. When the book is completed, readers share it with their classmates and then form new groups centered around the new reading choices.

When time moved to the 21st century, researches have shifted to center on how to apply literature reading mode in teaching practice, exploring the practice and significance, such as Marcia C. Huber (2001), Warren Rogers and Dave Leochko (2002), and Susan Van Zile (2002). They mainly discuss the application of literature reading teaching method from junior to senior students and provide some targeted guidance and suggestions. Christine Boardman Moen (2008) shown how to implement the classroom literature circle role allocation, group discussion, class library role allocation, and other issues with humorous illustrations. Karatay (2017) proved that the teaching mode of literature circles is an effective way to cultivate students' ability to find themes and keywords in the reading material.

The concept of literature circles has been introduced into China at the beginning of this century. Since then, many scholars have been actively engaged in exploring the significance of the teaching mode of literature circles to Chinese language teaching as well as English teaching. Studies carried out mainly focuses on the literature circles mode overview, evaluation, implementation strategies, implementation suggestions. Liu Miao and Jin Yanfeng (2006) introduced the background and concept of literature circle for the first time, which is followed by a series of studies mainly centered on commenting on literature circle reading theory, the application of literature circle in children's literature extracurricular reading teaching, and the application of reading teaching both in high school and college. Ban Yuanjing (2016) and Lv Xuhong (2013) discussed the application of

literature model in college English reading and literature reading. Dai Binbin (2012) and Ding Lihua (2015) focused on the application of literature model in high school English reading.

The above research results mainly focus on the theoretical and practical discussion of the literary circle, and have been tried at different ages. It is found that literature circle has a positive impact on the reading, thinking, and interpersonal communication of students at different stages, which is worth further exploration by educators. However, there are few studies applying literature circle to business English reading teaching in college.

The Theoretical Basis of the Reading Mode of Literature Circles

The reason why literature circle has been concerned and popularized by experts and scholars at home and abroad is that the model of literature circle comprehensively embodies the concept of constructivism, cooperative learning, and readers' reaction to literary criticism, which can give full play to the initiative of students, engage them in reading and discussion actively, and make students get a sense of achievement.

First of all, the constructivism theory believes that students are the protagonists in learning, emphasizing the interaction between teachers and students. This theory holds that learning is the generation process in which learners' original cognitive structure will be interacted with the sensory information received from the environment and the new meaning of information will be actively constructed, among which "scenario", "collaboration", "communication", and "meaning construction" are its four major elements (Yao, 2009). According to Yu Deying (2015), the teaching mode of literature circle is based on the student-centered and pays more attention to the creation of the corresponding teaching situation in order to guide students to actively explore knowledge, discover knowledge, and construct the learned knowledge.

Influenced by this theory, the process of reading is regarded as the interaction between the reader's original language knowledge and the new information provided in the text. In this process of interaction, readers take the initiative to process, store, extract, and use the new information. At the same time, readers need to cooperate and communicate with their peers in a certain situation, realize selectively perceived external information through cooperation and dialogue, and construct the meaning of current things. Therefore, the view of constructivism embodies the characteristics of the literature circle mode. It takes students as the main body and encourages students to communicate and cooperate, which is conducive to students to sort out information, summarize laws, and construct significance.

Secondly, cooperative learning advocates students to explore and interact with each other in groups, aiming at the group members to help each other and make progress together. The main characteristics of cooperative learning include: Group members have common learning goals; group members need to communicate effectively, exchange, and share; group members have clear personal tasks; and to gain consistent progress through personal sharing, summary, and reflection with others. In the reading group of literature circle, each member assumes different roles and reading tasks (as shown in Table 1). Through the cooperation, communication, and discussion within the group and between groups, the reading process is full of interest and fully reflects the value of reading. It can be seen that cooperative learning provides strong theoretical support for the teaching mode of literature circle.

Based on the concept of constructivism and cooperative learning, students are divided into different groups by literature circle and assigned with different role tasks. They should not only understand the author and the intention of the work, but also recreate the work according to their own role. In this process, students become the dominant player of reading. The interaction between students and the text and the process of reproducing the text are the core embodiment of readers' reaction theory of literary criticism.

Table 1

Different Roles Acted by Group Members in the Literature Circle

Roles	Be responsible for
Discussion leader	Be prepared for the questions to be discussed, chair the whole discussion, control the time of each part during discussion, and guide the group to communicate based on the whole text rather than paying excessive attention to the details
Connector	Link the reading text with the real life, analyze, compare, and discover the correlation between the inside and outside the text
Word master	Find out the wonderful sentences or paragraphs in the text, read aloud, and appreciate these good sentences and paragraphs to the team members
Summarizer	Present the story development plot and major events in the form of a flow sheet or flow chart
Travel tracer	Present the plot of the work in a drawing way
Culture collector	Find the author's life background and cultural background, geographical environment, customs, and habits related to the content of the text

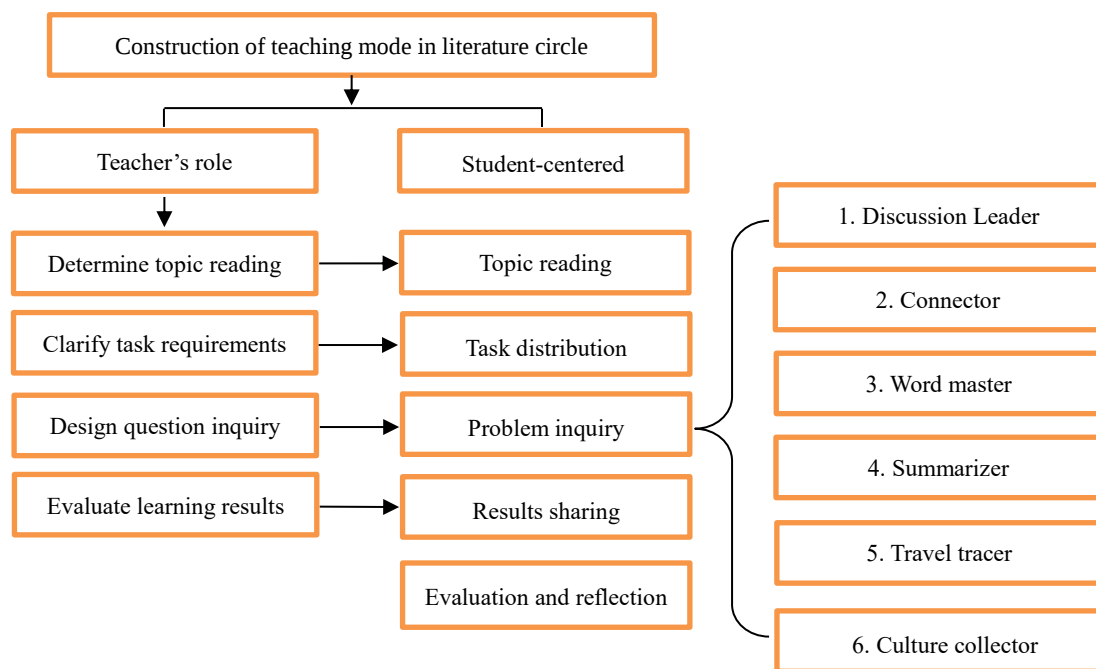


Figure 1. Construction of teaching mode in literature circle.

Construction of Business English Reading Teaching Under Literature Circles

Literature circles are based on the student as the center and on reading tasks, in which students are divided into several groups. Before class, students will choose their role task as well as reading task. In class, they will carry out text analysis, idea exchange, and peer review through discussion followed by after-class reflection. It is a way to build business English reading teaching mode by means of reading, thinking, association, sharing, evaluation, and language output (as shown in Figure 1).

The Reconstruction of the Teacher's Role in the Mode of Literature Circles

In the traditional business English reading classroom teaching, teachers are the main player. Teaching process is carried out according to the syllabus, textbooks are designated for students, and teaching is monotonous, stereotyped, and dull. The development of students' reading and writing ability is not balanced, and their

independent learning and critical thinking ability cannot be effectively exercised. However, under the mode of literature circle, teaching is different from the traditional reading teaching, which focuses on cultivating students' autonomy in reading. Teachers are no longer the masters of the classroom, but the helpers, participants, researchers, and learners of students' reading courses.

From the Leader of the Classroom to the Helper

Real reading should be a process of entering into the situation, entering into the context, and entering into the feeling on the basis of adequate language knowledge. Teachers should guide students to the situation provided by the reading materials, integrate their own feelings to feel the connotation of the work, and further enrich their perception of the external world. At the same time, students are organized to conduct cooperative inquiry learning: The interaction between readers in the reading process can help students learn to listen to each other and absorb others' opinions, and experience a multi-level and multi-angle thinking mode. Students can also learn from each other in this communication and cooperation, share diversified thinking, and experience the happiness of thought impact, so that the reading process is more interesting and the value of reading can be fully reflected (Wang, 2017).

The activity of literature circle is a dynamic learning process, with independent ideas running through each stage of grouping, selecting reading materials, reading, discussion and achievement display. Teachers are the guide, but not the leader. The basic principle of literature circle is that teachers let students explore independently so as to develop a mode of lifelong benefit.

Therefore, in the mode of literature circle, teachers should consciously change their roles, from the original classroom leader to the helper, assist students to understand the relevant theoretical knowledge of literature circle, and help students locate their personal roles in the reading task. Moreover, they should also introduce relevant reading strategies, guide students to consciously use the reading strategies in reading, and help them efficiently use these strategies to complete the reading task.

From the Commander to the Participant

The traditional business English reading classroom adopts the indoctrination teaching mode, and the teacher is the master of the classroom, ignoring the students' initiative of independent learning. The mode of literature circle creates a learning community, in which teachers and students participate in discussing reading materials and sharing ideas with each other. The teacher patiently listens to the students' discovery and confusion in the process of reading, and listens to the students' ideological sparks in the discussion, so as to guide the discussion and expand the students' thinking. As an equal participant, teachers can share their reading strategies and skills, share their understanding of the reading content, and communicate with students combined with their own reading experience, life experience, and life perception. In the process of participation, teachers can consciously show students how to do it to achieve the purpose of effective discussion and better reading.

From "Experiential" Teachers to "Research-Oriented" Teachers

The reading teaching method of "follow the book" cannot stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning, nor can it cultivate students' critical thinking ability. The teaching mode of literature circle requires teachers to continuously optimize the reading content and reading teaching process according to students' cognitive level and language ability. Therefore, teachers carefully observe and find out the problems in the specific teaching situation, constantly reflect on the whole teaching process, and study the innovation of teaching methods and evaluation methods.

In the traditional teaching, the evaluator is often the teacher, while in the literature circle mode, the evaluation is made up of three parts: students' self-evaluation, students' peer evaluation, and teachers' evaluation. Each student and teacher in the literature will fill in a self-evaluation form and mutual evaluation form after group communication and discussion, which involves whether the participation is sufficient, whether the participation attitude is positive, the justification of the content, the length of speech time, etc. The combination of above three parties' evaluation is bound to be open, fair, and comprehensible. It is more likely to be accepted by students and will be an inspiration for further study.

Teachers should give affirmation to the students' opinions when evaluation; even if the students' views are not comprehensive, or even individual views are not correct, they should affirm them. Then, teachers can guide their self-reflections, so as to achieve the purpose of mutual learning and common progress. The evaluation of the literature circle mode is an essential and important link. In the evaluation process, teachers should watch carefully, observe carefully, tap the ability and potential of each student, and carefully record their behavior. Teachers should also timely guide students to find problems, solve problems, and change the role of the literature circle activities according to the situation of students with the aim to make each student make the best use of their talents.

Conclusion

The reading teaching mode of literature circle is based on the concept of constructivism, cooperative learning, and the theory of literary criticism. Reading is the interaction between the text and the reader. In the process of reading, the reader will collide their own knowledge, experience, and text information, and complement each other in the sharing and communication with their peers, so as to realize the reconstruction of the new meaning of the text. Therefore, in order to give full play to the nature of reading, teachers should change their identity, abandon the previous roles of authorities, and indoctrinate and adhere to the student-centered principle. Only by doing so can teachers become the helpers, participants, and researchers of the classroom and better assist students to successfully complete the reading tasks, and simultaneously improve their reading quality.

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