

Strategies for Implementing Extensive Reading Instruction in Primary School English Reading Classes

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Abstract

Extensive reading instruction plays a significant and indispensable role in enhancing students' English reading literacy. This paper elaborates on the concept and functions of extensive reading instruction and, based on specific lesson examples, explores its practical application in primary English reading. It outlines a pedagogical progression from "utilizing carefully selected multiple text resources to develop students' integrative capacity for breadth in multiple-text reading," to "achieving graded advancement to foster students' in-depth learning ability," and finally to "implementing diversified evaluation methods to enhance students' transferable expressive ability." The ultimate aim is to deepen students' understanding of textual thematic meaning, promote the dual development of reading ability and thinking quality, and thereby advance their overall English reading literacy.

Keywords

multiple texts reading; English teaching; reading literacy; primary education

1. Introduction

The English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2022 Edition) emphasize that English language skills are a vital component of communicative competence. These skills encompass listening, speaking, reading, viewing, and writing, along with their integrated application. Among them, reading ability serves as the foundation and prerequisite for the development of other skills. The depth, breadth, and richness of reading are critical factors in enhancing students' thinking quality (Ministry of Education, 2022).

Multiple texts reading breaks away from the traditional single-text reading model in English instruction, evolving into a reading approach that combines innovation with educational value. However, several issues persist in current extensive reading instruction in primary school English: the selection and integration of resources re-

main insufficient, limiting opportunities for in-depth reading; teachers tend to focus on single-text instruction, with teaching materials confined to textbooks; and the evaluation methods are relatively monotonous and unengaging. These often involve simply requiring students to read extensively, while neglecting the development of their abilities, thereby preventing multiple texts reading from fully realizing its potential in supporting English learning. This paper, grounded in a specific lesson example, explores the practical application of multiple texts reading in primary English reading instruction. It examines the instructional process from “utilizing carefully selected multiple texts resources to develop students’ integrative capacity for breadth in multiple texts reading,” to “achieving graded advancement to cultivate students’ in-depth learning ability,” and finally to “employing diversified evaluation methods to enhance students’ transferable expressive ability.” Through this process, students gain a deeper understanding of thematic meaning, improve their reading ability, and develop core competencies in the English subject.

2. Related Studies on Extensive Reading Instruction

Research on the application of extensive reading instruction offers practical guidance for enhancing English classroom teaching in primary schools. Accordingly, many frontline educators have explored this instructional approach from two main perspectives: “practical application” and “teaching strategies.”

In terms of “practical application,” studies have primarily focused on analyzing the current state of extensive reading instruction. Chen (2023) began by identifying existing issues within multiple texts reading and proposed a teaching practice framework from four dimensions. Yang (2022) examined challenges in text selection and combination within multiple texts reading instruction and suggested corresponding coping strategies. Li (2019), based on current teaching conditions, introduced the concept of leveled multiple texts reading in English, and explored its practical implementation in areas such as the categorization of leveled reading materials and instructional strategies for leveled extensive reading instruction. In terms of research on “teaching strategies,” Chen (2024) focused on the exploration of thematic meaning, integrating lesson examples of extensive reading instruction to elaborate on specific implementation methods. Liu (2023) proposed instructional approaches such as comparative reading, collective construction, consensus building, and transfer application. Fan (2020) introduced strategies for extensive reading instruction in special units of the nationally compiled textbooks under the “1+X” framework. Xie (2023) attempted to construct approaches and methods for implementing extensive reading instruction based on interdisciplinary integration.

Building upon previous studies on both “practical application” and “teaching strategies,” the present research relies on concrete lesson examples to conduct an in-depth exploration of the practical application of extensive reading instruction in primary English reading. It aims to investigate instructional strategies from the per-

spective of aligning theory with practice.

3. Overview of the Multiple Texts Reading Pedagogy

3.1. Concept of the Multiple Texts Reading Pedagogy

Multiple texts refer to a set of texts that are intrinsically connected in meaning and can be understood as a coherent whole. Multiple texts reading is thus a structured process through which students interpret these texts collectively in order to grasp their content and meaning (Chen, 2023). Zhang (2016) defines multiple texts reading as an instructional process in which diverse texts are logically integrated around a specific topic to form a unified reading whole, guiding students to engage in inquiry and knowledge construction centered on that topic.

3.2. The Role of the Multiple Texts Reading Pedagogy

3.2.1. Enabling Students to Grasp the Text Theme Meaning

Guided by a unifying theme, the multiple texts reading pedagogy integrates multiple texts in an organic manner, enabling students to develop a systematic and in-depth understanding of the text theme meaning through multidimensional engagement with texts. In traditional single text teaching, students' comprehension of the theme is often constrained by the limited perspective of a single text. In contrast, multiple texts reading, through the structured design of issue-text-activity, guides students to engage in meaning association and comparative analysis across different texts, thereby fostering a comprehensive grasp of the thematic connotation (Chen, 2024).

3.2.2. Promoting the Dual Enhancement of Reading Ability and Thinking Quality

Extensive reading instruction facilitates students' advancement in language comprehension and cognitive development through the comparison, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of multiple texts. This approach not only enhances students' skills in information extraction and semantic understanding but also fosters their abilities in systematic reading and critical thinking through cross-text association and integration (Liu, 2023).

4. Application Strategies for Extensive Reading Instruction

4.1. Carefully Selected Multiple Texts Resources: A “Breadth Integration” Strategy with Sequential Progression

Centering on the theme, multiple texts reading resources are systematically integrated to form a structured and cohesive body of texts. This includes in-unit texts closely related to the theme, out-of-unit texts aligned with the core concepts, and extended reading texts across various genres (see Table 1). Together, these form a multidimensional cluster of texts unified under the overarching theme.

Table 1. Sample Recommendation List for Unit Theme Multiple Texts Reading

PEP Grade 5, Second Semester – Unit Theme Multiple Texts Reading Recommendation List				
Unit guarantee	Theme Material 1	Material 2	Material 3	Category
Unit 1	My day Story time	《My day》	《The Snowy Day》	Same Theme
Unit 2	Season Story time	《Yellow time》	《Seasons book》	Same Theme
Unit 3	School calendar Story time	《The Months》	《Chicken Soup with Rice》	Same Content
Unit 4	When is ...? Read & write	《Diary of a Worm》	《Diary of a Fly》	Same Genre (Diary)
Unit5	Whose ...? Story time	《Whose dog is it?》	《Whose hat is it?》	Same Content
Unit 6	School rules Story time	《Following Rules》	《Library Lion》	Same Perspective (Rules)

4.1.1. Theme-Oriented Integration of Thematically Related Resources

Based on textbook content, student interests, instructional goals, and curriculum standards, the thematic scope is determined. On this foundation, the theme is further expanded to explore a variety of subtopics and entry points related to the central theme. Select themes that are both educationally valuable and engaging for students, ensuring that the content offers sufficient depth and breadth to suit learners across different grades and proficiency levels (Kou , 2023). Reading resources on similar topics should be integrated and sequenced progressively from simple to complex, catering to the diverse reading needs of students at varying levels.

4.1.2. Internal and External Integration: Combining Texts with Shared Viewpoints

Reading materials should be tiered according to students' varying levels of English proficiency, offering multiple levels of difficulty. A series of reading tasks and activities should be designed around the central issue, including pre-reading questions, reading comprehension, viewpoint identification, and comparative analysis. These tasks aim to encourage students to apply their language knowledge to express their own perspectives and opinions on the topic. Connect in-class and extracurricular resources to integrate texts with similar viewpoints, aiming to comprehensively enhance students' English reading ability, critical thinking skills, and intercultural communication competence.

4.1.3. Genre Expansion: Integrating Reading Resources Across Text Types

I identify texts of corresponding genres in the textbook and seek relevant supplementary reading materials. Design a series of reading tasks to help students understand the characteristics and reading strategies of various genres. Organize diverse reading activities to support students in exploring and mastering the expressive styles and structural features of selected genres. By using genre as a thematic focus for resource integration, students' English reading literacy can be systematically

developed.

4.2. Implementing Graded Advancement: Application Strategies of "Deep Traction" in Reading from Easy to Difficult

By analyzing the developmental stages of students' cognitive development and aligning with their authentic learning experience needs, carefully selected thematic content is drawn from diverse text resources to match students' proficiency levels. Through reading practice, students consolidate their language foundation via lower-order tasks, and deepen thematic exploration through higher-order tasks, thereby achieving a progressive transition in reading ability from information extraction to meaning construction.

4.2.1. Differentiated Reading Materials to Broaden Reading Horizons

Based on students' age characteristics, foundational English proficiency, cognitive development stage, and curriculum standards, reading texts of varying difficulty levels are selected and organized to meet diverse learning needs and broaden reading horizons. For lower grades, reading materials focus on themes such as everyday life, fairy tales, and school life. In intermediate grades, a wider range of topics is introduced, with an emphasis on developing students' information extraction and comprehension skills. In higher grades, the content expands to include cross-cultural communication and contemporary issues, aiming to enhance students' critical thinking and deep understanding.

4.2.2. Progressive Development of Reading Skills to Enhance Reading Ability

By selecting reading materials appropriate to students' proficiency levels and adopting a step-by-step instructional approach, students are guided to master a range of reading skills (Feng, 2020), thereby achieving continuous improvement in their overall reading ability.¹ In the development of foundational reading skills, students acquire basic vocabulary and learn to recognize the meanings of common words through reading simplified short texts. By engaging with simple sentence structures, they develop the ability to extract key information and comprehend the basic meaning of sentences.

The next stage involves the expansion of intermediate reading skills. When reading multi-paragraph texts, students gain a deeper understanding of the logical connections between paragraphs and the overall structure of the text. By analyzing contextual clues, they learn to predict the progression of the storyline or infer textual information.

At the advanced level, reading skills are further refined through engagement with multiple texts or a set of texts centered on a common theme. Students are guided to compare viewpoints and evaluate the reliability of information, thereby fostering independent thinking and critical judgment. The PEP Primary English textbook pub-

lished by People's Education Press is organized around specific themes. According to the Level 2 objectives outlined in the English Curriculum Standards, there are 24 themes, including family, hobbies, friends, and change. Reading resources related to similar themes, both in and outside the classroom, are integrated and structured progressively, with the "Let's Read" section of the textbook serving as the foundation.

Take Unit 2 of Grade 6, "Last Weekend," as an example. The "Read and Write" section features a letter of complaint about an event that occurred last weekend. Based on the Theme of "last weekend," multiple reading Texts centered around events that took place during that time are integrated.

Level 1:

My stay at Holiday Hotel

My weekend at Holiday Hotel was good. Our room was not big but everything was very cool. The bed was very soft.

My parents saw a film. The film was very interesting. My son watched TV. The TV was big and new. We also ate some good food, and they were nice and tasted yummy. I went swimming in the swimming pool. The water was clean and warm. That was amazing.

We enjoyed our stay very much.

Level 2:

My name is John. I am from New York. I had a long holiday last month. We went on a trip. I went to Hangzhou with my parents by plane. We saw the West Lake. Jack is my cousin. He went to Beijing by train. He visited the Great Wall. Lily is my pen pal. She is from Canada. She is in Guangzhou now. She went to Hong Kong by bus. She ate delicious food and bought some beautiful clothes. Andy is Lily's classmate. He is from the UK. He went to Huangshan by plane. He climbed the mountains and saw the famous trees.

The text in Level 1 is a commendation letter, which serves as an alternative version of the complaint letter found in the book. It extends and develops the original text. While the original text highlights the shortcomings of a hotel, this version adopts a perspective shift and presents a letter of praise expressing satisfaction with the hotel. Therefore, this stage involves a relatively low-difficulty reading of the same text. Subsequently, two additional texts are introduced in Level 2 and Level 3. In Level 3, students are encouraged to independently revise and enhance the text. Through this progressive multiple texts reading approach, students gain a comprehensive understanding of the theme "Last weekend," broaden their reading experience, and develop a deeper and more thorough grasp of the theme.

4.2.3. Theme Continuation and Expansion to Enhance Reading Literacy

Focusing on a specific theme, students engage with multiple texts resources of varying difficulty levels to deepen their cognition of theme throughout the reading process. Through cross-text comparison, analysis, and discussion, students develop

stronger reading skills and reinforce their core English reading literacy. During the multiple texts reading of *Maisy's Christmas Eve* and *True Blue Santa*, teachers provide reading scaffolding to guide students in summarizing the story through six key elements: story characters → story background → story beginning → conflict arises → problem solving → story ending. With group collaboration, students begin to tackle the difficult words and sentences in the stories. After group discussions, students summarize their findings and engage in group reading of the text paragraphs, explaining the main ideas. Divide the class into two groups for a debate. Students choose their own stance—either in favor of "Summer Christmas" or "Winter Christmas"—and form groups freely. Each group then presents their viewpoint. Through this series of activities, students learn to articulate the differences in weather, season, and activities between the two types of Christmas in their own words.

4.3. Enriching Diversified Evaluation Methods: Application Strategies of “Transfer expression” through Analogical Insight

To construct a three-dimensional evaluation system and overcome the limitations of single assessment, innovative adoption of diversified evaluation methods is essential (Yu, 2013). By integrating multiple evaluation carriers, a panoramic assessment can be conducted on students' core competencies, including text decoding ability, depth of content understanding, critical thinking level, and cultural awareness perception.

4.3.1. Reading and sharing in different fields to showcase Language proficiency

The "Daily Little Reader" activity is implemented within each class, where group reading materials are practiced through a lead-reader model followed by student participation. Outstanding students are selected as reading experts at the grade level, thereby forming a group reading evaluation model based on the reading expert approach. Within the context of primary school English group reading, students undergo systematic training to become familiar with English group reading materials of varying difficulty and themes. Through recitation, they demonstrate strong pronunciation and intonation, and are thus eligible for selection as group recitation experts at the school level.

4.3.2. Staged performance and display to highlight Pragmatic Competence

Through staged performance, each student is given the opportunity to demonstrate their English pragmatic competence in a manner and at a time that suits them best. By integrating comprehension with creative expression, this approach fosters well-rounded development in reading, comprehension, and expression, thereby effectively enhancing their overall pragmatic competence in English.¹ By utilizing resources from the online learning platform, students engage in English dubbing of

various audio and video materials. This approach enhances their English listening and speaking skills, pronunciation and intonation imitation ability, and emotional expression ability in an engaging and enjoyable manner.

Grade-level characteristic practical activities are implemented to encourage students to apply their language knowledge through hands-on experiences. For example, in the theme expert competition, students are evaluated based on language accuracy, beautiful pronunciation and intonation, and appropriate body language. Awards are given by grade at the end of term (see Table 2).

Table 2. Talent Competition Scoring Sheet

	Group 1	Group 2	Group3	Group 4	...
Vocal Expression (3 points)					...
Body Expression (3 points)					
Proficiency (3 points)					
Props (1 point)					
Originality (Bonus 1-5 points)					
Total Score					

Select appropriate materials from the multiple texts reading resources shared by the reader for adaptation or creation. Each grade nominates a group of students to participate in the school-level stage play selection, and the best group is ultimately chosen to compete at the municipal level.

4.3.3. Categorized Works Exhibition to Enhance Transfer Ability

By organizing students' reading and writing works into categories for display, a platform for communication and learning is established. This approach not only facilitates peer interaction but also reinforces knowledge transfer ability through hands-on practice. In this progressive process of exploration, students experience the joy of English learning while overcoming challenges, thereby effectively improving their comprehensive language application ability.

The "reading poster sharing session" serves as a dynamic medium for students to showcase their reading achievements. Centered around the texts they have read, students engage in poster creation to present their in-depth interpretation, unique insights, and creative ideas derived from their understanding. From extracting the core information of the text and organizing English expression language to designing layout composition and selecting appropriate visual elements, each step represents a re-organization and re-creation of their reading gains. Students engage in good article recommendation card exchange based on their favorite texts. Through the exchange of perspectives, they not only transcend the limitations of individual reading and broaden their reading horizon, but also deepen their comprehension of the text and enhance their literary appreciation ability through mutual inspiration.

5. Conclusion

This study transcends the limitations of traditional single-text reading by integrating texts that share common themes, viewpoints, and genres, thereby exploring the practical application of multiple texts reading in primary English reading instruction. Through diversified approaches such as contextualized recitation and task-based intensive reading, students are guided to develop a deeper comprehension of the texts. This not only enriches the content of reading instruction by constructing a multidimensional reading material repository anchored in themes and expanding students' cognitive horizons, but also fosters a collaborative thematic space. Within this space, students engage in processes of analysis, comparison, synthesis, and evaluation of textual information, enabling them to examine issues from multiple perspectives and form individualized insights. Through the interplay of language practice and critical thinking, students achieve a transformative shift in their reading ability—from fragmented understanding to systematic construction—thereby advancing the development of their core competencies in reading.

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