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The Cultivation Strategies of Viewing Skills in High School English Video Teaching

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Abstract

With the rapid advance of information technology, video has become one of the most important ways to obtain information for modern people. General Senior High School Curriculum Standards: English（2017 Edition, revised in 2020）has added viewing as a new skill which is as important as listening, speaking, reading and writing. As the significant part of multimodal discourse, video discourse is the main object to view. Video teaching can help students to learn culture nature, enrich life experience and form correct values. However, some educators have insufficient understanding of the viewing skills. They often simply ask students to watch videos but not guide students to dig deeply into the content of them. Therefore, this thesis is to illustrate how to guide students to apply viewing strategies and cultivate high school students' viewing skills in video discourse based on the pre-viewing, while-viewing and post-viewing mode with teaching cases.

Keywords

Viewing Skills; Video Teaching; Multimodal Discourse

1. Introduction

1.1. Background to the Research

Since the 20th century, the way of presenting human knowledge, information and culture has undergone historical changes, from the language appealing to cognition and reason to the graphic image appealing to sensibility and emotion. Nowadays, visual culture is everywhere, and video has become of the crucial ways to obtain information. "Viewing" has become the most important way for us to understand the world and build relationships in this era. *General Senior High School Curriculum Standards: English（2017 Edition, revised in 2020）* has added viewing as a new skill which is as important as listening, speaking, reading and writing. This new skill is not only line with the development trend in the digital media era, but also an objective requirement for future language learners.

1.2. Purpose and Significance of the Study

General Senior High School Curriculum Standards: English（2017 Edition, revised in 2020） has made a special explanation for the "viewing" skill: viewing in language skills usually refers to the skills of understanding meaning by using figures, tables, animations, symbols and videos in multimodal discourse. The ability to view is a comprehension skill that cultivates students' ability to understand meaning in the process of deconstructing and constructing visual objects (He & Yang, 2023). The development of viewing skill is also a gradual process: from being an auxiliary means to promote language understanding and expression, it eventually develops into viewing itself as a multimodal ability or visual literacy, which organically integrates various modes or media to construct or express meaning (Wu & Li, 2021). In recent years, attention has been paid to the cultivation of viewing skills. First, "viewing" not only enriches the connotation of the concept of language ability, but also positively promotes cultural awareness, thinking quality and learning ability. In addition, it is also beneficial to facilitate the flow of the learning process from the right brain model to the left brain model, thus contributing to the formation of language learning concepts and structures, and itself is conducive to the improvement of the quality of left-right brain coordination thinking (Wu & Li, 2021). Furthermore, cultivating the awareness and ability to view can enhance the ability to understand, analyze, identify, interpret, construct and convey visual information, and develop students' visual literacy, critical thinking ability and creativity.

Therefore, the cultivation of viewing skills in each version of the textbook is not only reflected in the listening and reading text through pictures, charts, tables, concept maps, flow charts, schematics and other forms, but also a special video section is set up to systematically cultivate the skills. Integrating video teaching into high school English classes is the requirement of curriculum standards, and it is also the requirement of talent training in the new era of diversified media, diversified access to information and diversified meaning expression (Liu & Fang, 2023). Video discourse is an important form of multimodal discourse. In order to develop the viewing skills, it is necessary to help students learn to interpret, analyze and evaluate video texts in the teaching process (Chen, 2024)..

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Video discourse

Video discourse is an important form of multimodal discourse. It constructs meaning and realizes the expression about the theme by using linguistic, visual, audio, gestural and spatial semiotic resources. Video transmits multi-modal information to students in an all-round way at the same time, bringing a variety of sensory stimulation, and its information load is more concentrated than that of reading class or listening class (Chen, 2024).

The video discourse used in high school English unit teaching discussed in this

thesis has the following characteristics: in terms of genre, video discourse involves news reports, documentary excerpts, film and television clips, keynote speeches, song MV, etc. related to the unit theme; from the source, the video discourse includes the videos in the audio-visual section of the textbook or supporting resources, as well as the video discourse supplemented by the teacher around the unit theme; in terms of form, most video texts are short videos that help students construct unit themes and form big ideas.

2.2. Multiliteracies

Debes. J, a representative of the International Visual Culture Association, first proposed the concept of visual literacy to refer to our ability to understand, create and communicate visual images, that is, the ability to read, interpret, draw and communicate with images (Debes. J, 1968). The New London Group developed the concept of multiliteracies. It refers to the ability of learners to use information and communication technology creatively based on their previous knowledge and experience to critically read and understand the information provided by multimedia through language, visual, auditory and other modes. The cultivation of multiliteracies involves the cultivation of viewing skills (The New London Group, 1996).

2.3. Multimodal Communication Theory

Another theoretical basis is multimodal communication theory. The term multimodal is used to describe the way in which we construct and represent meaning by integrating different semiotic resources through multiple senses. The multimodal communication theory breaks through the limitation of the traditional language-centered single modal analysis method, and its core idea is that human communication is the interaction and complement of the meaning constructed by multiple modes (Cope. B, 2005) In the process of teaching, educators help students learn to interpret, analyze and evaluate multimodal discourse, which is also to cultivate student’s viewing skills.

3. The Cultivation Strategy of Viewing Skills

This thesis mainly takes video discourse in high school English textbooks as examples to illustrate how to apply viewing strategies in video teaching for cultivating students' viewing skills and improving their core competence.

Viewing video discourse involves the use of multiple viewing strategies, including predicting, connecting, comparing, navigating, skimming, scanning, self-questioning, determining importance, imaging, inferring, summarizing/paraphrasing, synthesizing and self-monitoring (Department of Education WA, 2013). To better cultivate the viewing skills, educators need to guide students to use these strategies through various activities. This thesis will focus on some of these strategies in the

application of video teaching.

For video teaching, educators can design the teaching process based on the pre-viewing, while-viewing and post-viewing mode and the characteristics of multimodal discourse to guide students to apply viewing strategies and develop viewing skills.

3.1. Pre-viewing

Video discourse involves various topics, large amounts of authentic materials and large quantities of information. It is comparatively difficult to comprehend for most students. Thus, it is necessary for educators to design some activities to activate students'prior knowledge and reduce comprehension barriers.

3.1.1. Predicting

Educators can present some video screenshots or some pictures related to the topic and ask students to predict what the video might talk about.

For example, The Lantern Festival, the video of Unit 1 Festivals and Celebrations, Compulsory Book 3 mainly talks about the Lantern Festival and its related activities. Before watching the video, educators can ask students to answer some questions based on the pictures.

Q1: What can you see in these pictures?

Q2: How do you feel about these pictures?

Q3: What might be talked about in the video?

The first question mainly guides students to observe the basic elements of the picture, including the main body of the picture, color, background, spatial distribution, etc. The second problem is to guide students to perceive the pictures, so that students can feel the atmosphere of the festival and people' s happiness from the pictures. Based on the analysis of the above question, students predict that this video is about the Lantern Festival and its related activities.

3.1.2. Connecting

Connecting refers to build the connections between new knowledge and prior knowledge, including the connection of learning content to oneself, to other materials and to the world (Keene & Zimmermann, 1997). As for some topics that students are familiar with or interested in, educators can encourage students to share and exchange their ideas to activate their prior knowledge and build connection with the video content.

For example, the Great Wall, the video of Unit 1 Cultural Heritage, Compulsory Book 2. Students are very familiar with the Great Wall, the educator can encourage students to share their knowledge about it. Then educators present the information shared by students with the form of table, such as the history, function, symbolic meaning of the Great Wall and so on. This can enrich students background

knowledge and help them to better understand the video content.

In addition, video might involve some new words, educators should help students to comprehend these words by presenting corresponding pictures, inferring meaning with word formation or designing passage exercises with new words (Luo, 2024). Besides, educators should also lead the students to read these new words aloud so as to reduce the audio-visual difficulty to a certain extent.

3.2. While-Viewing

Video discourse is a complete multimodal discourse, so educators also need to analyze and teach it from the perspective of discourse analysis. Educators can guide students to analyze the video from what, who, how, why to determine the importance of the video and check their prediction. Then, educators need to design various activities to help students deeply interpret the video and express their ideas based on video content by applying viewing strategies.

3.2.1. Determining the Importance

Determining the importance refers to the ability to judge the important content when viewing the video. Before playing the video, educators should remind students to pay attention to the text information, animation, scene transformation, characters, events, colors, etc. When students first watch the video, educators can play the video without subtitles and ask students to visually capture the information in the video as much as possible. After watching the video, educators can invite students to share and exchange the information they’ ve got and describe the important content of the video.

For example, Earth University, the video of Unit 5 Working the Land Option Book 1 mainly introduces a special university to promote sustainable farming. Before watching the video, educators remind students to take notes about the video from who, what and why and pay attention to the text information, animation, scene transformation, etc. After the first watching, educators invite students to share their ideas. Then, educators summarize the key information from students and present it on the slides (See chart 1).

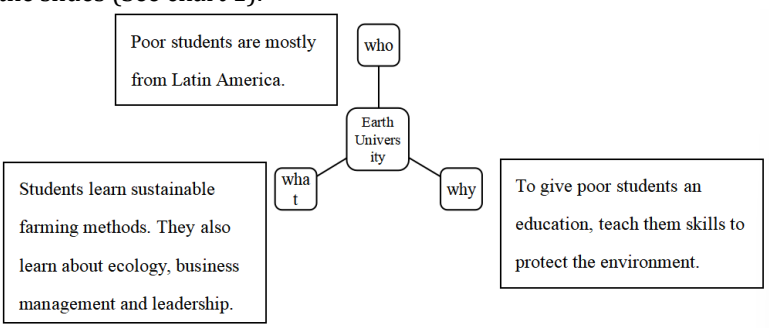


Chart 1 the main content of *Earth University*

3.2.2. Summarizing/ Paraphrasing

Summarizing/paraphrasing refers to the ability to identify, refine, record key information and express the essence of information in their own language. After determining the importance, educators need to guide students to grasp the specific information of the video and paraphrase the important content.

Also take The Great Wall as example. After the first viewing, students have grasped the main content, that is, ordinary people's protection for the Great Wall. The video can be divided into several parts, the significance, problem and protection of the Great Wall.

When playing the video for the second time, educators can deal with it in segments. For the problem of the Great Wall, educators ask students to answer the following questions.

Q1: What are the problems facing the Great Wall?

Q2: What caused the problems?

For the protection of the Great Wall, educators design a table and ask students to complete it (See table 1).

Table 1. The protection of Great Wall from people

who	what
Mei Jingtian	Pull weeds
Archaeologists	Measure the section of the Great Wall
Surveyors	
The State Administration	Announce the total length of the Great Wall
Volunteers	Clear the rubbish

In order to make students better understand the contribution that ordinary people make to protect our cultural heritage, educators also ask students to fill in the blanks in the sentences.

Mei Jingtian has been pulling weeds these past 30 years, for weeds not only affect the wall's image, but will also speed up its collapse, as their roots grow into the cracks in the bricks, thus cause damage.

Volunteers come to the Great Wall regularly, usually come a month. They said, "We need to protect the Great Wall, so we can present it the future generations and let our culture imprint live on.

Then the educator guides students to think about the following questions and discuss them in groups.

Q1: Why is it important for Chinese to protect cultural heritage sites like the Great Wall?

Q2: Why are so many people involved in the protection of the Great Wall?

The first question can help students realize the significance of the Great Wall. The second question can make students realize that the protection of cultural heritage requires not only the management and support of the government, but also the active participation and practical actions of ordinary people.

Through these activities, students integrate the language skills like "viewing-listening-writing" and "viewing-listening-speaking". These activities also

make students recognize that the non-verbal information like pictures and tables also can convey important information. Students deeply interpret the video content and deeply think and communicate it by integrating the absorbed information and their existing knowledge.

3.3. Post-viewing

During the post-viewing stage, educators should inspire students to deeply study the content of the videos and promote the development of the students' critical thinking and creative ability (Liu & Fang, 2023). Thus, comprehensive and practical activities can be designed to help students can learn to synthesize, transfer and innovate and develop viewing skills.

3.3.1. Synthesizing

Synthesizing requires students to summarize what they learned and constantly revise the concrete understanding in their minds to form the overall cognition. Educators can also supplement videos to help students form structured knowledge and deepen their understanding of the thematic meaning.

For example, Chinese Characters, the video of Unit 5 Languages Around the World Compulsory Book 1 mainly introduces the origin, development history and future trend of Chinese Characters. Through the while-viewing activities, students have got a better understanding of history relevant to Chinese characters. To arouse students' awareness of preserving Chinese culture, the educator designed a discussion activity.

As a Chinese teenager, what can you do to help spread Chinese culture?

Through discussion, students think that they can learn traditional arts, participate in cultural performances like martial arts, Chinese dance, calligraphy and so on, improve Chinese and English to ensure smooth culture exchange, apply social media platforms to expose various aspects, etc. To help students better understand Chinese culture and culture spread, educator supplement the video CHINA CHIC to help students get inspiration of the rise of China Chic.

Homework is the extension of video class and also the test of teaching effect. Educators can ask students to collect resources and excavate visual materials on the Internet based on the understanding of various symbols in the video class, and create multimodal work such as ppt, poster design or video. After learning Chinese Characters, educators ask students to collect resources and choose one of the treasures of Chinese culture to make presentation. Making ppt can cultivate student's ability of application and innovation and inspire students to positively use the viewing strategy in the production process.

3.3.2. Self-monitoring

Self-monitoring should be done throughout the viewing process. Educators can use

self-assessment, peer assessment and other ways to guide students to use self-monitoring strategy for reflecting on the gains and shortcomings of the class. At the end of the class, educators can provide self-evaluation form for students (See Table 2). For the goals that are not achieved, students can review the video in segments to summarize and consolidate what they have learned.

Table 2. The self-evaluation form of Chinese Characters

Evaluation	Yes/No
1. I have learned some new expressions from the videos, such as "unified system", "link the present and the past" etc.	
2. I have understood the origin, development history and future trend of Chinese Characters and known how to introduce Chinese characters from different perspectives.	
3. I am motivated to think of more ways to spread Chinese culture.	
4. I have applied some viewing strategies such as predicting, connecting, determining the importance, etc.	
5. I have been prepared to make a presentation that introduces one of the treasures of Chinese culture.	
6. I have found that pictures, visual effects, sounds, tones and subtitles can be employed to enhance my understanding of the video.	

4. Conclusion

Video teaching is one of the effective ways to develop viewing skills. This thesis illustrated how to guide students to apply viewing strategies and cultivate high school students' viewing skills in video discourse based on the pre-viewing, while-viewing and post-viewing mode with teaching cases. The thesis provided perspectives for educators to analyze video discourse and the viewing strategies for video teaching, which is conducive to enhancing visual literacy, critical thinking and creative ability of students. The cultivation of viewing skills is a long-term process, educators need to deeply analyze the video discourse and constantly improve the quality of video teaching for the development of students' core competence.

Due to time constraints, there was a lack of chance to conduct real experiments and investigations in class. Therefore, the thesis mainly discusses the theory and lacks a certain credibility.

It also should be realized that the understanding and research of the viewing skill are still in the initial stage, and how to promote the development pf students' cognitive ability and communicative ability remains to be studied.

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