

Explore the Teaching Design of English Reading based on the Alignment of Teaching, Learning and Evaluation

Na Wang *

Department of Foreign Languages, Chongqing Normal University, Chongqing, 401331, China

* Corresponding author Email: 1269546339@qq.com

Abstract: The “Alignment of Teaching, Learning and Evaluation” emphasizes the integration of teaching content, learning process and evaluation method in the whole teaching process, through which students’ comprehensive ability, teachers’ professional development and teaching reform can be facilitated. Taking *Living Legends (Reading and Thinking)* from Lesson 2, Unit 3, Book 1 by People’s Education Press as an example, this study explores how to guide students to complete the knowledge input, intake and creative output from text interpretation to practical application, then to innovation and transformation based on text and students analysis, aiming to sort out the specific methods and steps of integrated teaching, learning and assessment from macro planning to micro classroom teaching, and provide practical enlightenment for integrated reading teaching, learning and assessment in senior high school and useful data for theoretical research on teaching evaluation.

Keywords: Alignment of Teaching; Learning and Evaluation; Subject Core Literacy; English Reading Teaching of Senior High; Teaching Design.

1. Introduction

Teachers’ professional competence is the key to the effective implementation of the English curriculum and teaching reform. Teachers should profoundly understand the principles, goals, and requirements specified in the English Curriculum Standards, always bear in mind the goal of developing the students’ English subject core competency, continuously optimize teaching methods, improve teaching quality, implement the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education, and promote professional development in parallel with curriculum reform (The Ministry of Education, 2020). And several suggestions on teaching are presented in the New English Curriculum Standards for Chinese Senior High Schools (2020ed), among which “optimizing the relationship between teaching, learning, and evaluation, and promoting teaching and learning through evaluation” indicates the principle of the “Alignment of Teaching, Learning and Evaluation”, which highlights the role of evaluation in the whole process of teaching and learning. It means that the setting of teaching objectives, the design of learning activities and the formulation of evaluation criteria should be carried out around the cultivation of core literacy of students, ensuring that each step serves to enhance the ability of students and requires teachers to constantly notice students’ performance and progress through formative evaluation in the teaching process, adjust teaching strategies according to students’ practical learning needs, and use evaluation results to promote the improvement of students’ learning and teaching methods (Tong & Li, 2024). The skill of reading plays multiple roles including learning content, learning channel, etc., which can enable students to understand the information, opinions, emotions, and attitudes conveyed in written texts and can lay the foundation of using language and cultural knowledge they have learned to conduct interactions for different purposes and audience. In the meantime, the core competence of language ability, cultural awareness, thinking capacity, and learning ability can be cultivated. Taking *Living Legends (Reading and Thinking)* from Lesson 2, Unit

3, Book 1 by People’s Education Press as an example, this study explores how to guide students to complete the knowledge input, intake and creative output from text interpretation to practical application, then to innovation and transformation based on text and students analysis, aiming to sort out the specific methods and steps of integrated teaching, learning and assessment from macro planning to micro classroom teaching, and provide practical enlightenment for integrated reading teaching, learning and assessment in senior high school and useful data for theoretical research on teaching evaluation.

2. The Practice of Reading Teaching Design Based on the Alignment of Teaching, Learning and Evaluation

The following teaching design is conducted by referring to Wang Qiang’s (2019) summary of fundamental elements regarding the designing and implementation of the integration of teaching, learning, and evaluation. Specifically, 1) follow the principles of fostering virtue through education; 2) study content by asking “what, how and why”; 3) understand students in terms of overall performance, given knowledge and experience, existing ability and attitude, deficiency; 4) set up objectives centering the theme and discourse based on the core literacy; 5) select methods of activity-based approach to launch hierarchical activities of learning and understanding, applying and practicing, transferring and creating; 6) and look for evidence of learning to evaluate students’ performance, find problems, give feedback and make adjustments.

2.1. Text Analysis

The theme of this unit belongs to “man and society”, including sports activities and events, great athletes and sportsmanship, sports and health. This lesson lies in the second period; the reading material *Living Legends* is a biography sketch, chosen from a sports magazine column, introducing the achievements, challenges and mental strength of Lan Ping and Michael Jordan, two legendary athletes. The

first part introduces: 1) what Lang Ping has achieved as a player, coach and an individual. 2) the difficulty Lang Ping has encountered and how she dealt with. The second presents: 1) Michael Jordan's impressive basketball skills. 2) his attitude towards failure and the fact he shared his success by helping others.

The structure of these two short biographical sketches is clear, both including two parts: describing them masters in their sports and how they set good examples for others. Words and expressions (legend, honor, glory, medal, championship, graceful, impressive, strength, injury, failure, set an example, lose heart, give up, fall apart), figures of speech (parallelism, hyperbole, personification, metaphor) and the past perfect tense are used to depict their achievements, challenges and mental strength. Also, various writing techniques (narrating an event, using linking device, giving examples, direct quoting) are adopted to demonstrate their mental strength.

Although the writer uses different writing skills to introduce two great athletes from different countries, the purpose remains the same: to show Lan Ping and Michael Jordan are both living masters in sports alive today and their living spirits/good qualities/sportsmanship set good examples for generations forever. Living legends go beyond nation and gender. Young people in the new era must temper their character.

Regarding the non-verbal teaching materials in textbook, a picture is provided to help students develop the reading sub-skill of making predictions based on title, sub-titles, picture, and leading paragraph. As for the activities provided, the PWP model of teaching process is recommended.

2.2. Student Analysis

The students, being freshman in senior high school, are located in the transitional period of language learning. They have obtained basic language knowledge and skills. And they have been exposed to some topic-related language items and relevant background information in last period. Meanwhile, they are familiar with the names of many famous athletes and interested in the stories behind celebrities. Therefore, it's easy for them to finish the cognitive reading at a lower-level.

But most students are not familiar with the layouts and stylistic features of sports magazine. They don't make the

most of reading sub-skills like making predictions based on relevant clues (headings, subheadings and illustrations). They lack the ability to adopt various writing skills to describe a character. And they just barely scratch the surface of Lan Ping and Michael Jordan, not knowing and can't resonate with their challenges and precious mental strength. It hinders them from higher-level comprehensive and critical reading. In other words, students are expected to improve their thinking capacity of describing and interpreting, analyzing and judging, reasoning and arguing.

Thus, some visual organizers, explicit instruction of strategies and well-designed, hierarchical questions will be prepared to guide students to develop their logical and critical thinking step by step.

2.3. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to, 1) sort out the structure and main ideas of the text through skimming based on the given information, 2) retell the text to explain why Lan Ping and Michael Jordan can be called living legends, 3) analyze the role of various writing skills and infer the writer's intention, 4) interpret the meaning of LEGEND from different perspectives by using words and phrases learned in this class, 5) talk about other athletes that students admire by using the language items and writing skills learned.

2.4. Teaching Procedures

2.4.1. Activities of Learning and Understanding

Specifically, activities of learning and understanding mainly include text-based activities such as perceiving and noticing, retrieving and summarizing, and generalizing and synthesizing. For example, teachers create situations around the theme, activate students' existing knowledge and experience, prepare students with necessary language and cultural background knowledge, and lead them to the problem to be solved. On the basis of this, in order to solve the problem, teachers should encourage students to obtain new knowledge from texts, establish connection between the information through sorting, summarizing, and integrating information, form new knowledge, and comprehend and understand the meaning and cultural value orientation of the text (The Ministry of Education, 2020).

Table 1. Activities of Learning and Understanding

Stage	Activities (teacher and students)	Evaluation
Greetings (1')	Have a short conversation. CW	
A brief introduction to this lesson (1')	Introduce the main content. CW	The teacher observes if students are concentrated.
Lead-in (3')	Explore the meaning of title. CW Q: What's the meaning of living legend?	Students can give responses under the guidance of teacher.
Pre-reading (5')	Skim and answer. IW Q: (1) Where does the passage probably come from? (2) What are the standards of being a living legend of sports? (3) What's the text mainly about?	① Students can give correct answers through skimming with the help of teacher. ② Teacher observes if students are listening and taking notes.
While-reading (20')	Activity 1: Jigsaw reading (read, fill and retell). PW	① Students can finish the table and retell the stories of Lang Ping and Jordan. ② Students give comments and evaluation to others' retelling by referring to the points (including main points, coherent, logical and clear, confidence and pronunciation) provided by the teacher.

An enthusiastic greeting and a casual conversation about their latest activities in school can help to attract their

attention. Introduction to the main content encouraging students to be concentrated and active directly can help students receive teacher's high expectation for them. Then students are exposed to the topic and main content of this lesson naturally. It can arouse their willingness to keep exploring and to assume responsibility for themselves, which in return, sets a desirable environment for the learning activities in this class. Lead-in by posing questions to guide students to explore the meaning of the title can stimulate their thinking and existing cognitive structure. During this process, the new word "legend" is presented; student's ability of viewing will be trained; and students will be topically prepared for reading the text. And by interpreting the title, students will be intrigued and motivated to explore more information in the reading material.

In the pre-reading stage, three questions are designed to help students familiarize themselves with the genre, organizing clue and main ideas of the text. As analyzed, most students are not familiar with the layouts and stylistic features of sports magazine. They don't make the most of reading sub-skills like making predictions based on relevant clues. Therefore, explicit instruction of strategies will be given to guide them to discover the discourse knowledge and to practice the sub-skill of making prediction through skimming. Besides, those three questions serve to help students get a basic understanding of the topic-related knowledge, which lays the foundation for the detailed reading later. Students' thinking level at this stage is remembering and understanding. And the six components of learning content are integrated, including theme (living legend), discourse(genre), language knowledge (legend, master, athlete), cultural knowledge (the standard of being "living legends of sports"), language skill (reading sub-skills of predicting and skimming) and learning strategy (make predictions). After finishing the tasks in pre-reading stage, the first objective will be achieved.

(Objective1: sort out the structure and main ideas of the text through skimming based on the given information.)

In the 1st activity of while-reading stage, first, the task of jigsaw reading is arranged to help students read the lines

(cognitive reading). In so doing, students will decode the linguistic data and sort out the structural knowledge of the topic. Second, as analyzed before, the reading material is a little long and complex for students at this period. Therefore, conforming to students' cognitive level and the rule of SLA, they will do jigsaw reading, which is consistent with the general principle of learner-centeredness and the specific principle of learnability in the lesson planning. Third, by filling in the blanks with key words from the text, students will learn the focal words and phrases of this lesson. Fourth, by retelling what they read about Lang Ping and Jordan to each other with the help of thinking map, students can consolidate the new words and expressions, practice their spoken and listening skills, and reorganize the structure of the discourse, which will lay the foundation for the writing task after class. Meanwhile, their logical thinking can also be improved. Fifth, through guiding students to do peer-evaluation, along with teacher's complementary comments, students will pinpoint their strengths and weaknesses. At the same time, the writing skills of narrating a story, metaphor and direct quoting are briefly introduced, which lays the foundation for activity2. Finally, after finishing this task, the 2nd objective will be reached. (Objective 2: retell the text to explain why Lan Ping and Michael Jordan can be called living legend.)

2.4.2. Activities of Applying and Practicing

The activities of applying and practicing mainly include in-depth text learning activities such as describing and interpreting, analyzing and judging, and internalizing and utilizing. On the basis of activities of learning and understanding, when doing activities of applying and practicing, teachers guide students to participate in activities to describe, interpret, analyze, and judge following the themes and the newly formed knowledge structure, in order to gradually realize the internalization of language and cultural knowledge, consolidate new knowledge structure, promote the automation of language use, and help students turn knowledge into ability (The Ministry of Education, 2020).

Table 2. Activities of Applying and Practicing

Stage	Activities (teacher and students)	Evaluation
While-reading (20')	Activity 2: Comprehensive reading (read, underline, and analyze). IW+GW	① Students can underline the sentences or expressions that describe Lang Ping and Jordan's professional competence/skills and mental strength. ② Students can speak out the mental strengths and writing techniques with the help of teacher. ③ Students are thinking and taking notes.

In the 2nd activity of while-reading stage, students will conduct comprehensive reading (read between the lines) based on the preparatory work in activity1. As analyzed before, most students just barely scratch the surface of Lan Ping and Michael Jordan, not knowing and can't resonate with their challenges and precious mental strength, which hinders the development of critical thinking and cultivation of correct values and attitude. Therefore, students will read the text again, underline and analyze the sentences which describe Lang Ping and Jordan's professional skills and mental strength. During this process, students will conduct analyzing and judging; the integration between language and content can be achieved; students will deepen their understanding of the encouraging stories and good qualities

embodied in Lang Ping and Jordan, which lays the foundation for the synthesizing activity in post-reading stage. And the analysis of writing skills lays a foundation for writing task after class. And focusing on the guided-inquiry of writing skills, the difficult point will be resolved. Thus, the 3rd objective can be realized. (Objective 3: analyze the role of various writing skills and infer the writer's intention.)

2.4.3. Activities of Transferring and Creating

The activities of transferring and creating mainly include reasoning and arguing, criticizing and evaluating, imaging and creating, and other learning activities that go beyond the text. Teachers guide students to reason and argue about the value orientation or author's attitude behind the text,

appreciate its stylistic features and rhetoric techniques, explore its relevance to the meaning of the theme, criticize and evaluate the author's viewpoints, deepen the understanding of the theme. Then in new contexts, by using new knowledge and autonomous, cooperative, and inquiry-based learning methods, students try to comprehensively use

language skills, conduct multiple thinking, creatively solve problems in unfamiliar situations, rationally express opinions, emotions, and attitudes, reflect correct values, achieve deep learning, and transform abilities into competencies (The Ministry of Education, 2020).

Table 3. Activities of Transferring and Creating

Stage	Activities (teacher and students)	Evaluation
Post-reading (7')	Critical thinking (think, discuss, share and write). GW	①Teacher observes if students are engaged in group discussion. ②Students can write down the key words describing Lang Ping and Jordan's good qualities.
Summary (2')	Summarize and self-reflect. CW	①Teacher observes if students are listening attentively and thinking. ②Students finish the self-reflection checklist.
Assignments (1')	1. Please write a passage about "a living legend of sports" in your heart and send it to LLS@sports.net. Pay attention to: ①Provide supporting evidence. ②Use various writing techniques. 2. Keep checking the self-reflection table.	Teacher observes if students are listening attentively by looking at their eyes, facial expressions and postures.

In the post-reading stage, students are guided to conduct critical thinking (read beyond the lines). Based on the hierarchical tasks before, students have come to a point where task of synthesis is possible. In this process, students need to summarize good qualities of living legends by themselves, which will contribute to the cultivation of positive feelings and attitudes. And through group work, students will improve their cooperative ability. Finally, through summarizing and selecting six words depicting good qualities whose initial letters make up the word "legend", the retention of good qualities will be long and students will be educated morally. The 4th objective will be achieved. (Objective4: interpret the meaning of LEGEND from different perspectives by using words and phrases learned in this class.)

Regarding the summary, first, give a clear, concise and complete summary with the help of visual (pictures, different colors, highlighting markers) and auditory (teachers' oral presentation) tools to reinforce the focal and difficult points demonstrated on the blackboard. In so doing, students will construct a structural knowledge of this lesson, which will strengthen their sense of satisfaction and obtainment. Then self-reflection can help students pinpoint their own strengths and weaknesses. The check list is made according to learning objectives, which will serve to the integration of teaching, learning and evaluation.

The two tasks assigned can help students consolidate what they have learned in class, deepen their understanding of topic-related knowledge, and further the inquiry of topic-related activities. The performance-based feature of the first task makes it convenient for teachers to evaluate and give feedback. The second task provides a good opportunity for students to reflect their learning and make adjustments.

3. Findings

The alignment of teaching, learning and evaluation insists the whole process of evaluating, breaks the separation of teaching and evaluation, and helps to realize the goal of fostering virtue through English education. Students' language use ability is not only demonstrated by exams and

tests, but also by students' performance in daily classes. Therefore, formative evaluation is particularly important. By monitoring students' performance, we can achieve the effect of promoting learning. Under the concept of the alignment of teaching, learning and evaluation, teachers design activities guided by learning objectives, and timely evaluate the degree of achievement of objectives in each step in the whole process, so as to find problems, provide targeted feedback, suggestions and improve students' learning.

The alignment of teaching, learning and evaluation reflects the student-centered principle by enriching students' learning experience. It emphasizes the internal consistency between evaluation, learning content and learning process. Li Liang (2022) states that "For evaluation, teachers should collect and interpret students' learning evidence dynamically by means of questioning, observation, performative tasks, homework, etc." Therefore, the methods of evaluation should be diversified, which is not necessarily an activity or a task, but the most appropriate one according to the specific learning content. The most convenient observation method is also very useful for assessing the achievement of some goals.

4. Conclusion

To facilitate students' core literacy cultivation, teachers' professional development and teaching reform, front-line language teachers should conduct the integrated lesson planning and implementation by taking the curriculum standards and students' learning conditions as the starting point, understanding the New Curriculum Standards and texts profoundly, setting effective objectives, choosing appropriate methods, reflecting and adjusting after class in time. In addition, teachers should adopt a variety of evaluation methods. In addition to observation, tests, questions, homework, etc., students can also participate in the formulation of evaluation criteria with the help of teachers, through which students will participate in evaluation, conduct self-evaluation and mutual evaluation, and then develop metacognitive awareness such as monitoring, reflection and adjustment and autonomous learning ability (EARL, 2003).

Last but not least, teachers should make good use of the reflection journal. By reflecting on the teaching process and the feedback of students after class, teachers can draw up useful experience, so as to continuously improve the knowledge level and practical skills of teaching design and implementation under the concept of the alignment of teaching, learning and evaluation.

References

- [1] EARL L. Assessment as Learning: Using Classroom Assessment to Maximize Student Learning [M]. California: Corwin. 2003:28.
- [2] Li Liang. Interpretation of English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2022 Edition): from the Perspective of Teaching, Learning and Evaluation [J]. Journal of Tianjin Normal University (Elementary Education Edition), 2022, 23 (05): 13-17.
- [3] The Ministry of Education. New English Curriculum for Chinese Senior High Schools [M]. Beijing: People's Education Press, 2020.
- [4] Tong Xinze, Li Zhuo. The Design and Thinking of Integrated Teaching of Junior Middle School English Reading for Writing Based on “the Alignment of Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation” [C]. Sichuan Western Literature Compilation Research Center, Mianyang City University. Innovation Research on Foreign Language Education and Translation Development (15). 2024:6.
- [5] Wang Qiang, Li Liang. The Alignment of Teaching, Learning and Evaluation in English Classrooms in the Context of Cultivating Core Literacy: Significance, Theory and Methods [J]. Curriculum, Teaching material and Teaching Methods, 2019, 39(05):114-120.