

An Innovative Analysis of English Reading Instruction Based on an Integrated Approach of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

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Abstract

English language reading instruction needs to move urgently from language decoding to cultural interpretation and critical thinking in the context of globalization. Factors impacting the effectiveness of reading curriculum include vague teaching objectives, delayed evaluation, fragmentation of teaching and evaluation in teaching practices from traditional education models, which often trap students in passive receptor and examination-driven training paradigms and hence, fail to develop the higher order reading literacy. The "teaching-learning-assessment" integration philosophy is a way to change teaching logic through system thinking, recognizing the dynamic interaction of objectives, activities, and evaluation, and offers a theoretical lens to confront the fragmented and surface-level reading instruction. English language reading course is in immediate need to take a parameters to address demonstrably as new liberal arts education competency for composite foreign language talent, based upon the teaching-learning-assessment framework, and to focus on deep understanding interpretation of texts, as a innovative model of instruction for in-depth text interpretation pedagogic for critical thinking skills.

Keywords: "Teaching-Learning-Assessment" Integration, English Major Reading, Backward Design, Multi-dimensional Assessment, Critical Thinking Skills

1. Introduction

The essence of reading instruction in the English language hinges upon the ability to guide learners to go beyond the surface level of linguistic symbols and engage in a dialectical understanding of the elements that construct meaning in text, and the interpretation of cultural difference. The prevailing approach to teaching often compromises this process through vague goal-setting and piecemeal assessment, meaning that learners became skilled at only taking information while failing to develop critical thinking skills. The integrated model of "teaching-learning-assessment" through a closed-loop system of goal-directed objectives, integrated assessment, and learning through activity ultimately shifts the reading instruction value chain [1]. At its core, it is about developing assessment as a learning tool instead of an end product, and that the teaching activities are the ground for the development of capabilities. This paper focuses on the localized implementation of the model of reading instruction in the field of English language education, analyzing its underlying functions to identify ways to disrupt misalignment of teaching and to encourage student agency, with a view to offer evidence-based interpretation as to how reading instruction can move from "delivering knowledge" to "developing competency."

2. The Theoretical Foundation of the "Teaching-Learning-Assessment" Integration and Characteristics of English Reading Instruction

2.1 The Core Essence and Principles of the "Teaching-Learning-Assessment" Integration

Underpinning the theoretical underpinnings of the "teaching-learning-assessment" integrative framework is the interplay of educational goal taxonomy and constructivist learning theory, recognizing the organic unity of teaching purpose, learning actions, and assessment tools. The structure requires the teacher to determine the baseline goals for students' reading proficiency using observable, measurable goals to begin, and then to define observable behavioral indicators of professional core competencies such as critical thinking or cultural decoding. The teaching tolls must be mapped only to hierarchical levels of goals, such as training students in inferencing skills through tasks of close reading and refining interpretive skills through practices of cross-cultural comparison, to ensure the students' cognitive processes were being evaluated and developed step-by-step from surface-level

comprehension to depth-level analysis. The assessment dimension allows for the assessment to break free from the constraints imposed by the usual end-of-semester tests, to emerge within the entirety of the reading task process and to use analytical rubrics, allowing teachers to generate real-time diagnosis of students' logical rigor in their interpretation of the text, validity of evidence in reading the text, and cultural attunement. Therefore, the operational principles of this model are provided by threefold potentiality: vertical consistency of teaching activities and assessment tools depending on objectives; fluid adaptability of between-process feedback and stage-based growth of abilities; and interactive generation by teachers' decisions and students' self-regulatory capacities. This model transforms evaluation into a continuously optimized learning tool, enabling the classroom to form a spiral-ascending closed loop of “goal-driven—task practice—feedback calibration.”

2.2 The Core Objectives and Advanced Requirements of English Reading Instruction

The reading course for the English major is charged with developing cross-cultural communicators whose ultimate goal, as affirmed by Kress (2003), requires students to demonstrably analyze the authors' formal part-whole relations of sentence structures and syntax as well as the rhetorical organization of literary and academic texts. However, these advanced demands crisscross with requirements for critical thinking skills to gather meaning beyond the surface and to identify the ideological presuppositions of an author, the non-fallacious constructions of arguments, and tests media and the historical perspective to create a multicultural reading of texts. Development for students must encompass cultural depth to the level of cultural interpretations through the lens of ethnic psychological patterns and the power-discourse coding that transform the text into the field of comparative literature, as well as help students build systematic decoding skills from fragmented knowledge of language. Expectations for teaching standards consistently underscore the goal of developing critical thinking skills. Teachers must support their students in making a dialectic connection of textual textuality with theoretical stances. However, teaching literature transcends the traditional expectation of literary interpretation as a mere story summary or structuralist type of reading and moves toward an investigation of humans and their existence. This type of training expects students to remain aware of their own cultural position, as well as maintain an empathetic relation to the logical beliefs of other cultures [2].

2.3 The Significance of the Integration Concept in Addressing the Challenges of Traditional Reading Instruction

The integrated framework reconnects the fragmented skill development in traditional teaching into an organic whole, enabling teachers to transform vague critical thinking requirements into observable text analysis behavior standards. The formative assessment mechanism continuously tracks the developmental trajectory of students' cultural decoding abilities, enabling teachers to adjust the cognitive complexity of text interpretation tasks based on real-time feedback data. Students' agency is deeply activated through dynamic assessment feedback, transforming their literary interpretation practices from passive reception to active construction of cultural meaning networks. The closed nature of the teaching system is thus broken, with teacher-student dialogue continuously deepening around the rationality of textual evidence and the reflexivity of cultural perspectives. Course design gains scientific basis for continuous optimization, enabling teachers to precisely intervene in cognitive blind spots based on trends in the validity of students' arguments. The reading classroom ultimately transcends the limitations of a venue for language knowledge transmission, evolving into an experimental field for the reconstruction of cultural cognitive paradigms [3].

2.4 The Unique Characteristics and Challenges of Implementing Integration in English Reading Instruction

Because English language reading is culturally interpretive in nature, any evaluation must involve a system far more complex than a purely linguistic evaluation. The ideological tensions and historical contexts inherent within literary texts require that educators construct evaluation dimensions with cultural diagnostic positioning. This characteristic requires educators to continuously reconfigure their professional knowledge structures, developing an advanced proficiency with any cultural critical tools (e.g., postcolonial theory) while also creating observable metrics to gauge interpretive behaviors that express abstract objectives (e.g., “cultural stance reflective capacity”). In essence, the construction of evaluation standards contains its own contradiction: with too much quantification the artistic creativity of literary interpretation risks being suppressed, while with a complete absence of standards evaluation coherence can be severed. Consequently, there must be a fluid balance between the rigor of the academy and the interpretive possibilities expected in the construction of evaluation standards. Cultural cognition, that is, the cognitive biases that are subconsciously created by the cultural thinking patterns formed by students' mother tongues, further complicate cross-cultural text analysis and evaluation as students develop tracking criteria to record and monitor manifestation changes in cultural sensitivity. In this light, the polysemic nature of literary interpretation instead brings into question the accuracy of the evaluation feedback. A teacher will need to

distinguish (i.e., give feedback) between “reasonable diverse interpretations” from “misreadings that do not really align with evidence provided in the text”, so that feedback remains navigational for cultural cognitive calibration.

3. Key Issues Faced in Implementing the “Teaching-Learning-Assessment” Integration in English Major Reading Instruction

3.1 Vague Teaching Objectives that are Disconnected from Assessment

The issue of vague learning objectives in English language reading instruction is most prominently manifested in overly abstract and general course syllabi. Some learning objectives remain at the superficial level of improving reading comprehension skills without specific, detailed standards for skill proficiency levels. Under such objective-oriented evaluation activities, it is naturally difficult to accurately align with the actual developmental progression of skills. The arbitrary nature of evaluation activity design stems from the teaching team's lack of ability to break down objectives. The content of various stage-based assessments often implicitly deviates from or even conflicts with the core educational objectives. Evaluation tasks designed during lesson preparation rely heavily on personal experience and neglect alignment with teaching objectives. The focus of unit assessments often deviates from the key ability dimensions set in the course syllabus. The implementation of classroom teaching based on vague objectives naturally fails to provide effective evaluation guidance. The two-way disconnect between objectives and evaluation further prevents teachers and students from focusing on specific areas of skill growth. Students struggle to grasp the required skill standards and find it difficult to identify structural deficiencies in their knowledge systems through assessment feedback. The entire teaching process thus devolves into a chaotic state where objectives and evaluation cancel each other out. The lack of hierarchical descriptions of teaching objectives and precise alignment with evaluation dimensions prevents students from receiving effective feedback on their progress in text analysis depth and logical reasoning skills [4].

3.2 Single, Outdated Assessment Methods with Weakened Feedback Functions

The existing assessment system in university English reading courses overemphasizes standardized summative assessment models, which also does not allow for full visibility into a student's actual growth spurts and/or shifts relative to more subtle idiosyncrasies such as their disciplinary depth of text analysis, levels of cultural understanding, and critical vocationality potential. The reading assessment activity embraced by teaching units is also frequently limited to old-style delivery forms that emphasized closed-book exams, with unnecessary explanatory commentary. Such an assessment design was meant to be unidimensional and simply overlooks the many important elements of any ability measure such as, among others, the construction of thinking pathways, emotional understanding, even the efficacy of any strategic means of understanding employed. The severe lag time in summative assessment results means students are unlikely to get timely diagnostic feedback regarding their learning status in the middle of the learning process and to, therefore, work on adjusting their cognitive strategies or effort directions during that timespan, during which they could be optimizing their growth, it will be lost if missed. The lake time especially if it is orientated primarily in regard to assessment feedback information, is significantly disconnected from students' cognitive engagement processes and emotional experiences constituted in real classrooms, which weakens the actual regulating role, and the intrinsic motivation meaning the evaluation result may have to students' subsequent learning behaviors. The evaluation process itself lacks a dynamic adjustment mechanism that accompanies the teaching process, unable to promptly address specific knowledge gaps or skill deficiencies exposed by students during instruction, thereby weakening the evaluation's role in providing data support for actual teaching improvements.

3.3 Teaching Activity Designs that Fail to Effectively Support Objectives and Assessment

The primary challenge in designing classroom activities that effectively align with core instructional objectives lies in the fact that teachers often overlook the process of backward decomposition of instructional objectives during lesson preparation, leading to classroom organizational structures that deviate from the intended trajectory of skill development or even result in directional misalignment. Some lively group discussion activities in the classroom appear to advance text analysis work, but in reality, due to the lack of structured problem-based design, they deviate from the goal of cultivating deep critical thinking and fail to build a solid foundation for achieving higher-order cognitive objectives. Some teachers' designed reading task chains fail to adequately consider the continuous progression of target competency points, and the abrupt cognitive challenges instead create avoidable cognitive gaps at knowledge point transitions, disrupting students' continuous grasp of the text's internal logic and systematic understanding. The imbalance in the gradient arrangement of task difficulty also hinders the accurate capture of learning trajectories by evaluation tools. Tasks that are either too simple or too difficult generate distorted evaluation data, significantly weakening the reflective effect of assessment feedback on students' actual ability levels. The deep learning challenges revealed by evaluation results are rarely effectively converted into

optimization criteria for subsequent classroom tasks, leaving the diagnostic function of assessment idle throughout the iterative process of teaching activities [5].

3.4 Teachers' integrated design and implementation capabilities require improvement

English language teachers generally lack systematic planning capabilities when integrating teaching objectives, learning tasks, and assessment measures. The research and teaching mechanisms supported by higher education institutions have not yet provided sufficient space for teachers to explore pathways for the deep integration of teaching, learning, and assessment. Some teachers are accustomed to mechanically appending the assessment phase to the end of the teaching process, thereby severing the immediate guiding value of assessment tools for teaching practice. The process of converting teaching objectives into evaluation criteria lacks robust support from professional collaborative discussions, making it difficult for classroom assessments to accurately reflect progress toward achieving the predefined competency dimensions. Individual teachers' reform initiatives often result in a disconnect between goal adjustments and evaluation improvements, exhibiting an internal logical fragmentation. The existing teaching evaluation system in higher education institutions is currently unable to precisely guide teachers in reconstructing a teaching model where the three elements are mutually embedded.

4. Core Strategies for Innovating English Major Reading Instruction Based on the “Teaching-Learning-Assessment” Integration Approach

4.1 Establishing a Goal-Oriented Backward Design Framework

The teaching team must anchor the development of clear and measurable course competency objectives to the core competency requirements of the English major as the initial coordinates for instructional design. Course developers need to prioritize the design of an evidence collection roadmap for assessing students' cognitive development, clarifying the depth of text analysis and cultural interpretation dimensions required for professional reading and their specific manifestations in individual teaching units. Teachers should then plan a stepwise sequence of teaching activities aimed at core objectives, ensuring that each teaching step fulfills the dual mission of conveying key knowledge elements and cultivating specific thinking skills. The design of assessment tasks should be deeply embedded in the core stages of the entire teaching process rather than placed at the end of a unit, making formative assessments a continuous tool for verifying the alignment between students' learning trajectories and predefined competency objectives. Instructional designers should continuously review the internal consistency between instructional activities and assessment components, dynamically adjusting the specific parameters of classroom tasks to bridge the subtle gaps between actual learning outcomes and target competency metrics. Regular course calibration discussions conducted by professional teaching and research groups will drive the ongoing dynamic adaptation process of the target framework, teaching activities, and assessment tools. The diverse assessment evidence collected during the implementation of teaching units forms a comprehensive competency development profile, providing substantive improvement guidance for the reverse design of the next teaching cycle. This goal-tracking mechanism, which runs throughout the teaching process, truly achieves the deep integration and mutual enrichment of the three elements of teaching, learning, and assessment at the practical level, ultimately establishing a professional reading teaching evidence chain closed loop centered on the growth of students' higher-order thinking [6].

4.2 Innovating an Embedded, Diversified Formative Assessment System

The English teachers have come up with a system to collect multimodal assessment evidence of students' interpretation in the readings in real-time throughout the teaching process, and developed an observation profile of the learners' trajectory of critical thinking. The assessment architects have developed real-time assessment scales that engage with the cognitive pathways related to deep reading by synthesizing multiple sources of evidence such as, annotation analysis, oral reports, and reflections on classroom discussions to build a student's profile of abilities. The learning IT tools record, automatically, the students' patterns of cognitive behavior from the digital reading platforms, where students were effectively presented the quantity and frequency of their adaptations in text processing strategy and the depth of association with cultural concepts. The evaluation teams analyze the differences in the students' interpretation of complex texts at different stages of learning to help diagnose either cognitive gaps or cultural blind spots in their professional skill development. The real-time feedback systems in classrooms focus on the typical problems of argumentative flaws as student groups, in critical thinking task, so personalized improvement suggestions are written to increase critical thinking. Teachers collaboratively review multiple rounds of evaluation reports to identify trends in ability development, adjusting the difficulty gradient of teaching tasks to precisely address individual students' cognitive development gaps. Interdisciplinary evaluation coordination meetings regularly calibrate cultural dimension assessment criteria to ensure the professionalism of literary criticism standards and their alignment with social and cultural contexts [7].

4.3 Designing Task-Based Instructional Activities to Drive Deep Learning

Task designers anchor their designs to the developmentally authentic needs of professional reading literacy, developing task scenarios that are distinct, nuanced and push critical thinking; they design scenarios addressing the key competency dimensions (cultural interpretation; critical analysis) to place students on an appropriate leveled cognitive challenge. Teachers developed close reading task clusters for each text, to activate deep level text processing mechanisms for students. They used common texts like academic papers, literary classic texts, instead of isolating individual texts offered collage like material, providing composite practical paths to locate and harness information and contextual considerations, to discern positions. Authentic task contexts provide the motivation for students to begin integrating background knowledge, and change reading strategies, to solve the complex problems. Analytical tasks focused on cultural conflict or theoretical controversies provided significant opportunities for critical dialogue strategies that go well beyond surface text features. Task designers have worked carefully so that metacognitive prompts are built into the tasks to prompt learners to self-monitor their learning progress, allowing students to develop professional habits of always adapting their cognitive strategies, even throughout comparative reading text processes, or position argumentation processes. The collaborative inquiry task structure capitalized on the unique benefits of deep thinking on your own at the same time thinking collided with peers, allowing the learning community to generate more insightful chains of evidential text interpretations, and therefore having more robust recent debates, academic perspectives. The dynamic observation mechanism embedded by the teaching team accurately captures changes in students' thinking qualities during task execution, transforming the task completion process itself into a vivid source of evidence for assessing professional reading ability development. The open-ended nature of task design grants students creative space to reorganize textual information and express cultural insights. Carefully designed evaluation criteria strike a balanced equilibrium between standardizing academic expression and encouraging innovative perspectives. This task architecture, modeled on authentic professional scenarios, drives the deep integration of language skill training and disciplinary thinking cultivation, gradually nurturing the unique textual interpretation sensitivity and cultural critical thinking penetrating power characteristic of English language professionals [8].

4.4 Establishing a Dynamic Instructional Adjustment Mechanism Based on Assessment Data

The teaching team established a database of common misunderstandings based on student text annotation samples, and the research group used reading logs to mark frequently misread concepts and generate a list of teaching priorities. The subject group held diagnostic meetings every two weeks to analyze gaps in the chain of evidence in students' academic notes and identified logical leaps in critical discussions based on classroom recording transcripts. When restructuring the sequence of textbook units, the lesson preparation group prioritizes addressing cultural blind spots identified through evaluation feedback. They develop a stepwise analytical toolkit to address challenges in understanding cross-cultural metaphors. Teachers compile arguments exposed in peer review records and incorporate fill-in-the-blank logical transition word training exercises into subsequent lessons [9]. Grade-level groups track the quality fluctuation curves of longitudinal assignments in portfolios and make predictive adjustments to the timing of classic text reproduction instruction. Peer observers focused on evaluating data-identified weaknesses during classroom observations and immediately designed corrective reading task cards around student confusion points after class. Teachers monthly reviewed metacognitive reflection entries in electronic learning portfolios, identified strategy transfer barriers, and adjusted the granularity of teaching demonstrations. The department coordinated end-of-term competency profiles with initial-term goal deviation data to calibrate the next phase of cultural critical thinking skill development benchmarks during collective lesson planning. Professional leaders predict teaching transformation trends based on cross-year evaluation comparisons and proactively plan text type proportion balance tables to adapt to new cognitive development trends [10].

5. Conclusion

Teaching, learning, and assessment in reading instruction are innovatively integrated, which fundamentally reconfigures the value framework of English language education. It shifts from being tool-oriented training to humanistic cultivation. Precise learning objectives are fostered by reverse instructional design. A competency development roadmap is constructed through formative assessment. Deep thinking is nurtured by task-based activities. The vitality for continuous evolution is endowed to instruction by a dynamic adjustment mechanism. This transformation demands that teachers should transcend technical operational levels to become designers of course systems and guides of learning ecosystems. Only when evaluation data truly informs teaching decisions and text interpretation is elevated to cultural dialogue can the reading classroom turn into fertile ground for the cultivation of critical thinking. Future research needs to further explore the construction of evaluation standards for interdisciplinary texts and the realization of personalized reading paths enabled by technology, thus enabling English major reading instruction to truly fulfill its mission of cultivating cultural communicators.

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