

The Application of Genre-Based Teaching Methods in Expository Reading Instruction for High School English

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Abstract: Expository writing is a crucial component of English learning, particularly prominent in the English tests taken by high school students, where this genre carries significant weight. Given its importance, teachers should enhance their guidance on reading expository texts in the classroom, employing genre-based teaching methods to enable students to master the characteristics of expository writing. Through detailed instruction, ensure that students can thoroughly comprehend the information conveyed in expository texts, thereby elevating their overall English reading skills and analytical abilities.

Keywords: Genre-Based Teaching Method; Senior High School English Reading; Expository Texts

Introduction

In high school English curricula, the cultivation of reading skills consistently occupies a central position, with the comprehension and analysis of expository texts presenting a particular challenge. To address this issue, the author of this piece adopts a genre-based teaching approach, integrating it into the instruction of expository reading in high school English. Genre teaching is an educational method that emphasizes the analysis of text structure; when applied to expository teaching, it assists students in grasping the logical construction of the genre, leading to deeper understanding and retention of expository texts.

1. The Positive Impact of Genre-Based Teaching on Expository Reading Instruction in High School English Classes

1.1 Genre-based teaching enhances high school students' genre awareness in English reading.

Cultivating students' genre awareness is pivotal to driving high school students' success in expository reading and establishing a robust foundation for reading comprehension. In the pedagogical practice of teaching expository reading, the adoption of a genre-based teaching method ensures that the entire instructional process is closely aligned with the discourse structure of expository texts, guaranteeing that students gain a profound understanding of the internal logic and rhetorical techniques employed. This approach not only focuses on the intricate analysis of language but also integrates considerations of sociocultural contexts and the analytical examination of text structure, prompting students to realize that the significance of reading extends far beyond rudimentary vocabulary and grammatical learning.

At the outset of the instructional activities, through meticulous observation of the students' learning conditions within the class, the author noticed a pronounced deficiency in genre awareness among most students. However, following the introduction of a genre-oriented approach to expository reading instruction by the teacher, students exhibited a marked increase in genre sensitivity. Their enthusiasm and confidence in reading soared to unprecedented levels. This transformation powerfully attests to the positive impact of genre-based teaching in the realm of expository text instruction.

1.2 Genre-based teaching enhances high school students' English reading comprehension abilities.

Expository reading comprehension, as a pivotal component of the high school English curriculum, shoulders the responsibility of nurturing students' critical thinking and information processing skills. Students' performance in reading expository texts directly mirrors their capacity to understand and analyze complex information. Prior to the introduction of genre-based teaching, through observations of students' everyday reading behaviors, the author identified a pervasive lack of adequate reading skills within the class, with students struggling to accurately grasp the main themes and structures of expository texts. However, after implementing genre-based teaching methods in expository reading instruction, a significant transformation took place.

This pedagogical strategy zeroes in on the characteristics and functions of genres, encouraging students to view texts from a broader perspective, comprehend the writing intentions behind different genres, identify their target audiences, and discern the ways information is

presented. As genre-based teaching progressed, students gradually honed their skills in recognizing and analyzing the structural patterns of expository texts, enhancing their abilities to extract key information and infer underlying implications.

By concentrating on the genre-specific elements of expository texts, students became more adept at discerning the organizational frameworks and stylistic features that define these texts. They learned to differentiate between factual details and opinions, to evaluate the reliability of sources, and to synthesize information across multiple texts. Genre-based teaching, therefore, not only improved students' reading comprehension but also fostered their critical reading skills, enabling them to engage more deeply with the material and to think critically about the content and form of expository texts.

This transformation is not only evident in students' more profound grasp of expository text content but also reflected in their attitude towards reading—with markedly increased interest and self-confidence. Students began to proactively explore the cultural and social contexts underlying the texts, enhancing their awareness of cross-cultural communication and critical thinking.

2. The Application of Genre-Based Teaching Methods in Expository Reading Instruction for High School English

2.1 Applying Genre-Based Teaching to Identify the Subject of Exposition

When initiating expository reading instruction, the primary objective is to assist students in pinpointing the theme or central concept of the text. To achieve this goal, educators can guide students through the following strategies to delve into the subject matter of the instructional text:

Firstly, teachers should encourage students to pay attention to the article's title and opening paragraph. Titles often directly or indirectly disclose the main topic of discussion, while the introductory paragraph typically outlines the purpose and key points of the text. Both serve as effective cues for quickly identifying the subject of exposition. By skimming these sections, students can initially grasp the central idea, laying the groundwork for further reading.

Secondly, since expository texts aim to thoroughly elucidate specific topics, authors frequently employ various explanatory techniques such as definitions, examples, comparisons, and contrasts to enhance clarity and persuasiveness. Throughout this process, certain keywords recur, serving as links between different explanatory segments. Thus, teachers can instruct students to identify and record these high-frequency terms, analyzing their usage context to infer the essential attributes of the subject and the author's perspective.

Moreover, instructors can motivate students to focus on supplementary elements within the text, such as subheadings, charts, and lists, which often highlight various aspects of the subject, aiding in the construction of a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Through these methods, students are not only able to efficiently discern the subject of expository texts but also learn to analyze and evaluate the structure and arguments of the articles, thereby enhancing their reading comprehension skills and critical thinking abilities comprehensively.

For instance, teachers can broaden their educational resources. Taking the Reading Comprehension Section B from the 2020 National College Entrance Examination (NCEE) Paper II as a teaching case study, the first two paragraphs discuss: some parents believe that they will purchase any high-tech toy for their children aged 2 to 4 if they think it will benefit them. However, research indicates that children who engage in puzzle play demonstrate superior spatial skill development. When explaining this passage, teachers should first instruct students to swiftly identify the subject of exposition within the text. Through analyzing the first and second paragraphs, the text states, "Some parents will buy any high-tech toy if they think it will help their child, but researchers have found that puzzle play might lead to better spatial skills in young children." Under the teacher's guidance, students will be encouraged to consider which part of the content the author emphasizes and which words are the core vocabulary. Students will notice that the sentence following the "but researchers have found..." transition is the focal point, with "puzzles" and "spatial skills" emerging as pivotal terms.

Based on this sentence analysis, students can discern that the primary subject of exposition is the influence of "puzzles" on the development of spatial skills in children. Subsequently, the teacher guides students to further analyze the second paragraph, confirming the status of "puzzles" as a key vocabulary term, thus zeroing in on the core topic of the expository text. In the initial phase of instruction, teachers employ genre-based teaching methods to lead students in dissecting the article and determining the central content of the expository piece. Following this, revolving around this central theme, teachers and students collaboratively outline the structure of the article and explore reading strategies, enabling students to systematically comprehend and absorb the information presented in the text.

Through this pedagogical process, students not only grasp the subject of exposition but also learn how to read effectively based on genre-specific characteristics, cultivating critical thinking and independent analytical skills. This provides students with a practical reading methodology for when they encounter similar types of articles in the future.

2.2 Employing Genre-Based Teaching Methods to Guide Students in Identifying Discourse Structures

As an often encountered genre in senior high school English education, expository texts exhibit diverse structures, typically encompassing definitions, comparisons, explanations, and other techniques aimed at clearly elucidating characteristics and examples of subjects. This allows students to acquire rich English knowledge. It becomes evident that discourse structures are constrained by their genre attributes, implying that educators need to emphasize guiding students in understanding the distinctive organizational forms of expository texts to achieve effective communication and comprehension.

In the practice of teaching expository texts, the teacher's responsibility lies in assisting students in mastering discourse structures and genre characteristics. This not only benefits current learning but also lays a solid foundation for future autonomous reading and writing. By becoming familiar with the organizational patterns of expository texts, students can quickly apprehend the structure of similar genres when encountered, understand the essence of the text, and concurrently acquire basic skills in composing expository texts, setting the groundwork for deeper exploration of the art of the English language.

In implementing genre-based teaching methods in English expository text reading, we use Module 1, "Healthy Lifestyle," from the elective compulsory textbook of Senior High School English published by the People's Education Press as teaching material. This module focuses on introducing healthy lifestyles, specifically exploring which behaviors have positive or negative effects on individual health. The teacher's role is to guide students in becoming acquainted with the structural features and genre traits of expository texts, ensuring they can not only comprehend such texts but also apply learned knowledge in writing exercises.

During actual lessons, teachers organize a series of instructional inquiry activities to stimulate student engagement and critical thinking. For instance, the teacher might pose questions such as: "What factors do you think influence human health?" and "Discuss your healthy lifestyle." Further probing questions could include: "Which living habits do you believe have a positive impact on the human body?" After students share their thoughts, the teacher guides them to reflect on the article title, quickly skim-read the text, and verify whether their perspectives align with the content.

The text meticulously analyzes various behavioral habits impacting human health, indicating that in teaching expository texts, teachers should instruct students to progressively validate and explore the themes of each paragraph, assisting them in comprehending the overall structure while reading. Teachers should also briefly introduce the writing context, confirm students' understanding that the text belongs to the expository genre, then guide them in identifying the central idea of each section.

Upon completing the preliminary reading, teachers may ask students to independently create a thematic summary chart, summarizing the core content about exercise and healthy habits from the text. With the aid of charts, teacher and students delve deeper into textual details together. Subsequently, teachers lead students through detailed reading to locate elements promoting English learning within the text, summarize the impact of healthy habits on the body using information from the text, and integrate these insights into the charts.

Integrating all teaching steps, teachers guide students in macro-level text analysis, enabling them to rapidly and clearly grasp the meaning and genre structure of the text, thereby gaining a deeper understanding of healthy living habits and their effects on physical health. Through this course of study, when encountering similar texts in the future, students can apply analogous methods for analysis, thoroughly grasping the main theme and accurately capturing the core information of the text.

Once students have a comprehensive understanding of the content, teachers can organize group discussions to explore how the text articulates good living habits through explanation, examples, and contrasts. This phase aims to deepen students' understanding of the text.

Finally, teachers encourage students to emulate the genre structure and writing techniques of the text in their own creations, allowing them to choose their own topics, such as the impact of sports on health, discussions on specific dietary habits, or even topics outside the realm of health. Such exercises assist students in comprehensively and deeply mastering the writing methods of expository texts, enhancing their language proficiency.

3. Conclusion

In senior high school English instruction, expository texts serve as a vital genre, where reading instruction plays a crucial role in nurturing students' reading comprehension skills and integrated language abilities. Integrating genre-based teaching methodologies into the reading of expository texts at the high school level systematically enhances students' reading comprehension levels and linguistic application capabilities, laying a robust foundation for their future academic pursuits and professional careers. Through this approach, students not only master reading strategies but also develop critical thinking, innovative awareness, and intercultural communicative competencies, thereby achieving a holistic growth in English literacy.

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