

Research of Teacher-Students Reading Based on Learning Cell Platform

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Abstract: Reading plays a core role in Yuwen education in China. In recent years reading whole books (not just pieces) has been given more attention. It even gets written in the new curriculum standard. However, guidance from teacher on students reading a book is absent. The potential of information technology in the reading process is also neglected. This paper aims to construct a model for teachers to guide students' book reading using a ubiquitous learning platform--Learning Cell Platform (LC for short). It can record students' reading experience and reflections, promote wide discussion and sharing, help managing personal and group knowledge, and allow teacher to track students' reading. Considering this, guided by Aidan Chambers' ideas about children's reading, a model for teacher-students reading based on LC platform is constructed. It contains four stages: 1) Teacher-students read together; 2) Read and think on one's own; 3) Discuss online and in class; 4) Reflect on the reading process. In order to test the effects of the model and LC Platform, a practical research is conducted. Results show that all students' reading abilities improved, especially those who used LC platform. This implies that the model is effective and LC platform plays a role in improving students' reading ability.

Keywords: *teacher-students reading, Learning Cell platform, book reading*

INTRODUCTION

Reading plays a core role in Yuwen education in China. Students can not only get information through reading, more importantly, they learn to know the world, gain language skills, develop thinking abilities, and acquire unique aesthetic experience(Huaiyuan Li 2013). The new curriculum standard (Ministry of Education in China 2011) for Yuwen pointed out “(students) should read more books, read good books, and read whole books (not just chapters/pieces)”. As a matter of fact however, in most schools, teacher’s assistance on students reading whole books confines to give a recommendatory bibliography each term. More guidance from teachers is needed.

Aidan Chambers once said that “without enabling adults who are thoughtful readers to give you guidance, it is all but impossible to become a thoughtful literary reader yourself” (Chambers 2011a). The enabling adults make children willing to become a thoughtful reader by helping them choose classical books, provide them “Uninterrupted, Sustained, Silent Reading” time, read aloud to them, and conduct communication after reading.

In primary schools, students are going through the stage of “learning to read” and “reading to learn” at the same time. They are badly in need of help in reading. Teachers, “the enabling adults” as Aidan chambers put it, can give students all the assistance talked above and thus may help students develop better reading skills.

However, only guidance from enabling adults is not enough. Readers still have to undertake the key job, namely read, think, and discuss, preferably note all this down and make it shareable to all. In this way not only students can manage their own reading, but also teachers can better help students since they are aware of their reading progress and reflections. Learning Cell (LC for short below) Platform, developed by group members of Modern Educational Technology Institute in Beijing Normal School, provides a perfect place for this: students can write down their reading experience and reflections dynamically (with powerful function of version control and comparison), manage their whole reading process, and talk about books with classmates beyond school. Teachers can easily track down students’ reading and give specific assistance on individual students.

This paper focuses on constructing an effective teacher-students reading model and examine the effect of using LC Platform in the reading process.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How to organize the entire process of teacher-students reading a whole book by using LC platform? (The model)
2. Is the model effective in enhancing students’ reading abilities?
3. Does LC platform plays a role in enhancing students’ reading abilities?

RESEARCH METHOD

Teacher-Students Reading Model

Instructed by Aidan Chamber’s ideas about children’s reading, and considering LC platform’s functions, a Teacher-Students Reading Model is constructed as Figure 1 below.

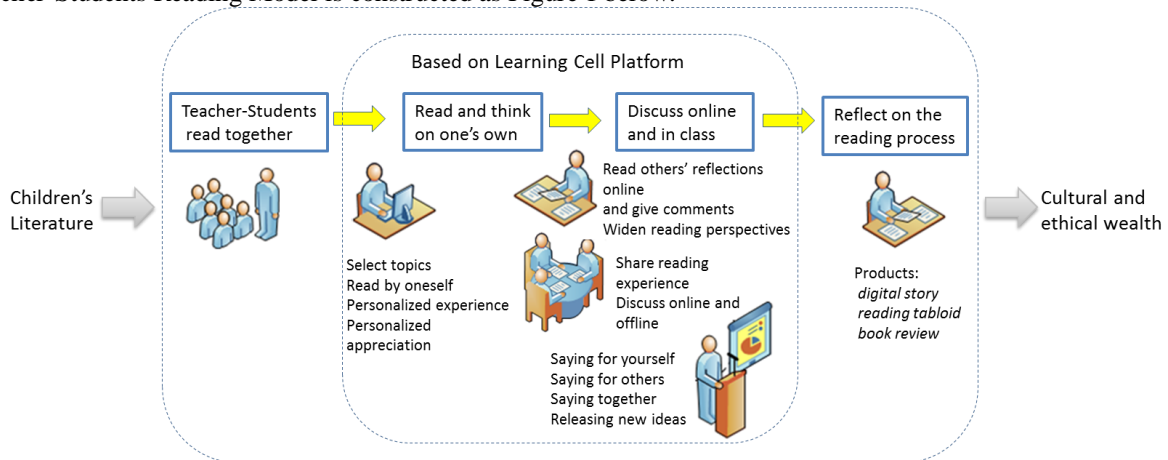


Figure 1 Teacher-Students Reading Model

The model consists of four stages. In stage one, the “read aloud” method is used. Each day either teacher or student would read a chapter to the whole class. This makes reading easier, arouses students’ reading interest, and builds a good reading atmosphere. In stage two, teacher design different topics for students according to the book. Students read the book again on their own from certain perspective of the topic they choose and write down their personalized thinking on LC platform. In stage three, students share their reading experience and talk on LC platform. Some discussion classes are also held. By sharing children soon accumulate a body of understanding that reveals the heart of a text and its meanings, even quite complicated or abstract ideas can be approached this way (Chambers 2011b). In the last stage, students look back on the whole process and summarize their gains.

A Case Study

Two Grade Four classes in a primary school in Heilongjiang Province were enrolled. Class Two (48students), the experimental class, applies Teacher-Students Reading Model based on LC platform. Class One (43 students), the control class, follow the same processes but doesn’t use LC platform. The whole reading process lasted for a term.

Quizzes were chosen from the book “Reading Abilities Test for Grade Four (including 1st and 2nd term)” (Hug Chinese 2010) to test reading abilities of students from both classes before and after the experiment. The pre-test items were chosen from the 1st term and post-test from the 2nd term to exclude natural increase in students’ reading abilities. Reliability analysis of the two quizzes showed a Cronbach’s α 0.808 and 0.628. All test papers were recovered and validated. T-test result of pre-test in two classes showed no significant difference.

RESULTS

A t-test was conducted to verify if reading abilities of the students from both classes was improved. The results are presented in <Table 1> below. The average score increased from 40.74 points to 59.76 points in experimental class and from 41.21 to 54.17 in control class, both showed significant results statistically ($p<.01$). This can be interpreted that the Teacher-Students Reading Model is effective in improving students’ reading abilities.

Table 1 T-test Results of Reading Abilities Test Score in Each Class

	Pre-test (M±SD)	Post-test (M±SD)	t 值	df
Experimental Class	40.74±10.21	59.76±3.17	-14.41**	48
Control Class	41.21±9.21	54.17±6.16	-10.33**	43

From Table 1 we can see that the average post-test score was 59.76 in Class Two that used LC platform and 54.17 in Class One that did not use LC platform. To examine whether there exists a statistically significant difference, another t-test was conducted (see Table 2). The t-test result proved a significant difference ($p<.01$). This can be interpreted that LC platform played a role in improving students’ reading abilities.

Table 2 T-test Results of Reading Abilities Post-test Score in Two Classes

	t	Df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Post-test Score	-5.41**	63.07	0

CONCLUSIONS

This study aims to construct an effective Teacher-student Reading Model based on LC platform. The model is mainly guided by Aidan Chambers’ ideas on children’s reading. In this model, students play the main role and teacher plays the leading role. Design of the process makes reading easier for students who have low interest and abilities in reading, allows students to go deeper in the text from certain perspective, and makes wide and deep interaction possible between students and teacher, outside and inside school. The case study conducted show that the model is effective and LC platform plays a role in improving students reading abilities. Yet followed-up studies are needed in each stage of the model to refine it.

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