

# An Attempt to Task-based Teaching in Intensive English Reading Course in Higher Vocational Education

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**Abstract:** *With the continuous progress of the time and the continual development of society, the frequency of international communication has been increasing. So higher vocational education must pay more attention to improve students' English ability. And the most important thing is to develop communicative ability of students' language. Now this thesis takes the English reading teaching in the higher vocational English as the research object, and first analyzes the current situation of English reading teaching, and then finds that there are a series of problems such as lack of excellent students, fuzzy teaching goals for teachers and rigid teaching methods. Therefore, after analyzing, this article starts with the analysis of the task-based teaching method, and puts forward the application research of task-based teaching method in intensive English reading in higher vocational education, so as to effectively improve the teaching quality of English.*

**Keywords:** *Task-based Teaching; English Intensive Reading; Higher Vocational Education*

## 1. Introduction

When setting up teaching activities of higher vocational education, the school should start with students' interest in learning, and make teachers try to explore scientific and reasonable teaching methods which could meet the English development needs of higher vocational students, so as to improve students' English learning efficiency and reading ability. However, the existing ordinary teaching methods or teaching models in higher vocational education can no longer meet the needs of the time. Therefore, teachers should try to use task-based teaching method to carry out teaching activities, aiming to stimulate students' interest in English learning and improve their English reading ability. Finally, the language communication skills of vocational students can be effectively improved through this method.

## 2. The Status Quo of English Reading Teaching in Higher Vocational Colleges

### 2.1 The Poor Quality of Students

Students in universities are more active and interested with learning, while students in higher vocational colleges have a bad performance in learning related knowledge of various subjects compared with students in universities, and they do not master well the course knowledge. Since the students in higher vocational colleges have not developed good study habits in their previous studies, it may be difficult to adapt to the fast-paced learning mode when they enter the higher vocational colleges, and they may feel difficult to fully understand and digest the knowledge imparted by the teachers. <sup>[1]</sup>And, those problems are particularly obvious in the teaching of English reading, because many students in higher vocational colleges have relatively small vocabulary, and for some short articles, they feel difficult to read, let alone some longer ones. So they have great obstacles in understanding the content of the article, which leads to the unhealthy emotions of being tired of learning and disgusting.

### 2.2 The Fuzzy Teaching Objectives

Many English teachers in higher vocational colleges often pay attention to the teaching of English vocabulary and grammar when they make teaching plans, but habitually ignore the importance of English reading and do not cultivate students' English reading ability. In fact, English reading ability requires more time and energy to improve than grammar and vocabulary learning. Although grammar and

vocabulary are important in English learning, if a student does not have time to effectively improve his reading ability, he will be more and more struggling in English learning in the future. And when teachers arrange reading tasks, they will only feel disgusted and do not want to complete them. Under such circumstance, their reading ability will still be terrible, and they will waste a lot of precious study time and energy.

### ***2.3 Rigid Teaching Method***

In the teaching, many teachers of higher vocational colleges insist on using indoctrination and cramming teaching methods. They believe that only in this way can students receive knowledge more quickly. Those teachers are self-centered and use the one-way transmission model to impart the knowledge. So most of the time, they just tell students the contents and key points of the course in class, while students can only passively receive knowledge which leads to the lack of thinking for most of students. Under such learning mode, students' abilities of creativity and innovation will be stifled, because they do not dare to ask teachers for questions when they don't understand the knowledge. In the long run, there have been more and more blind spots in learning for students, and their interest in learning has also plummeted. There are also some other teachers who are used to reading textbooks while teaching, and do not expand students' thinking ability, which causes a dull atmosphere in class. Gradually, students will feel boring and refuse to interact with teachers in class or review after class.

## **3. The Application of Task-based Teaching Method in Intensive English Reading in Higher Vocational Colleges**

Many vocational students have unclear goals in English learning, and they perfunctorily and carelessly finish the reading tasks assigned by the teachers. Actually, they ignore the cultivation of English reading ability<sup>[2]</sup>. Therefore, in most cases, they are difficult to complete English reading activities efficiently. However, the task-based teaching method can not only improve students' speed of English reading, but also make students' English learning more interesting.

### ***3.1 The Pre-task Stage***

The pre-task stage is also called the preparation stage, which mainly involves pre-class preparations. This stage has a direct impact on the arrangement of the task while learning. On the basis of a high degree of integration with teaching practice, English teachers analyze difficult points of the tasks, and then design scientific and acceptable English teaching tasks which are suitable for higher vocational students. At the same time, teachers should also inform students about relevant precautions to ensure that those tasks can fully stimulate students' interest and internal motivation in learning. They should ensure that students can actively participate in tasks and explore their interest in English reading. Teachers should also do other preparations, such as stipulating the time of reading, supervising the development of students' tasks, so that students can complete tasks with a sense of urgency, and actively think over the new contents of English learning. Finally, teachers should take advantage of internet and textbooks to look up the knowledge to prepare their teaching.

### ***3.2 The Mid-task Stage***

In the task, the English teachers should teach the content of the textbook rationally and flexibly according to his/her understanding to the textbook, and create the teaching situations. Teachers could use role-playing, group discussion, interviews and other diversified methods to guide students to practice language knowledge and rules so as to achieve meaningful communication. In this stage, students' abilities of finding, analyzing and solving problems will be promoted. The most important thing is that their language communication skills will be improved.

### ***3.3 The Post-task Stage***

This stage mainly involves the summary of the learning, and mainly focuses on inspecting, evaluating and summarizing the completion of the previous tasks. Teachers should put forward the difficulties about vocabulary and grammar in the process of completing tasks, help students correctly and comprehensively understand the effect of tasks, strengthen students' ability of self-reflection, and optimize the ideas of finishing tasks<sup>[3]</sup>.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The advantages of task-based teaching method are very excellent, because it emphasizes “learning by doing” and “use in learning”. English teachers in higher vocational colleges should change the traditional teaching modes and continuously improve their own quality and teaching abilities. In the teaching process, teachers should pay more attention to the students, formulate scientific and feasible English reading curriculum plans to stimulate students’ interest and potential in learning. In a word, teachers should carry out the task-based teaching method all the time during the English teaching and let the English reading ability of every higher vocational student can be effectively improved so as to completely master the ability of English reading.

#### **References**

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