



Strategies and Implementation of English Homework Design for Senior Primary School Students under the Policy of “Double Reduction”

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Abstract. Homework is an essential part of teaching, it plays an important role in helping students to consolidate knowledge, cultivate the ability, help teachers to test teaching, and extend the classroom. After the policy of “Double Reduction”, to design homework well is worthy of the attention of teachers and researchers. This study investigated the current situation of English homework in senior grades of a primary school in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, China, so as to find out the deficiencies of English homework in senior grades after the implementation of the “Double Reduction policy” and come up with some measures.

Keywords: Double Reduction Policy; Senior Primary School; English; Homework Design

1 Introduction

As one of the crucial ways to evaluate the teaching effect, homework is an effective mean to consolidate knowledge, cultivate ability and extend the class, and it is also a significant link between teachers and students. If the assignment is not arranged properly, it can't achieve the goal of consolidating knowledge and developing language skills, nor can it train students' English ability, and it may also diminish students' enthusiasm for English learning. In order to solve the problems of homework burdens and capitalization of education, 2021 in July, the General Office of the Communist Party of China and State Council General Office issued the “Opinions on Further Reducing the Workload of Students at the Compulsory Education Stage and the Burden of off-campus Training” (“The ‘Double Reduction’ policy”). It states that at the compulsory education stage, the school has put forward clear requirements for assignments inside and outside the school. This means that, on the basis of limiting the amount of homework and completion time, the quality and management of students' homework put forward higher requirements[1]. However, in the actual primary school English teaching, the design, implementation, and evaluation of assignments have not been given sufficient attention, and still have deficiencies.

2 The status quo

2.1 Students vary in level, the homework is not optional enough

Under the condition of doing the same homework uniformly, the survey data shows that 73.38% of the students feel that the homework is difficult and need the help of teachers, classmates, parents. And a small number of students think that the homework is relatively simple, or even very simple. Each student is an individual with a different knowledge base and learning conditions[2]. To solve the individual differences between students and meet the learning needs of students at different levels, teachers should enhance the selectivity of homework.

2.2 The type of homework is single and it lacks of fun and practical

In addition, the survey shows that the types of English assignments are still relatively single. There are more than 50% students who think they often have copying homework. The current homework has ignored the exchange of research, practice activities of the tendency to work. This single form of English homework pays too much attention to students' English test-taking ability, neglecting students' ability in cooperative learning, autonomous inquiry, English application and so on.

2.3 The source of homework is single and it lacks creativity

The Operation Channel is single, and the arrangement of "Operation quantity" and "Operation Quality" is lack scientific, and there is a serious problem with the "Bring-in principle"[3]. According to the survey data, 66.67% of English teachers directly use the after-school exercises in textbooks or workbooks as their homework after class, it does make it easier for teachers to assign and correct assignments and to check students' knowledge of the class. But this kind of exercise is not good enough to the cultivation of teachers' creativity.

3 Research objects and tools

This study is designed to investigate the present situation of English homework in senior grades of primary school students in Xi'an city, Shaanxi province, the questionnaire is divided into student version and teacher version, and a total of 254 valid questionnaires were collected. The questionnaire focuses on the amount of homework, the time needed to complete the homework, the type of homework, the instruction and evaluation of homework, etc. From the results of the survey, 83.33% of English teachers think that the implementation of the "Double reduction" policy on their English homework design has more thoughts than before. However, the questionnaire data shows that there are still many problems in English homework design for senior primary school students, which are described as follows.

Table 1. A survey of the assignments of senior English students in primary schools (Self-painting)

Item	Result	Number	Percent (%)
1.The time it takes to finish the English homework	Within 30 minutes	135	54.44%
	30 minutes-60 minutes	90	36.29%
	Within 2 hours	14	5.65%
	Less than 2 hours	3	1.21%
	Others	6	2.42%
2.The teacher often gives copying assignments	Highly agree	34	13.71%
	Agree	75	30.24%
	Not sure	114	45.97%
	Disagree	22	8.87%
	Highly disagree	3	1.21%
3. English homework is usually corrected by the teacher	Highly agree	54	21.77%
	Agree	131	52.85%
	Not sure	47	18.95%
	Disagree	9	3.63%
	Highly disagree	7	2.82%

Table 2. A survey of senior English teachers in primary schools (Self-painting)

Item	Result	Number	Percent (%)
1.The type of homework which teachers choose	Basic type	6	100%
	Group communication and inquiry	0	0
	Extracurricular activities	0	0
	Others	0	0
2.The resource of homework which teachers choose	Textbooks and teaching materials	4	66.67%
	Unified exercises of grade	0	0
	Internet resources	2	33.33%
	Others	0	0
3.Teachers have doubts about the scientific effectiveness of assignments	Yes	2	33.33%
	A little	3	50%
	No	1	16.67%

4 Strategies of homework design

4.1 Enrich the types of assignments

The scientific principle and the consolidation principle are the important principles of the primary school English homework design and are also the premise and foundation to ensure the reasonable and effective content of the homework. According to the scientific principle and the consolidation principle, teachers should arrange the appropriate knowledge review homework and help students to consolidate the knowledge. [4]Take English assignments as example: First, Copy intensive homework, by copying words, sentence patterns, this type of homework can deepen the understanding of knowledge and memory and it needs to use motivational measures as well. Second, replace the consolidation type of homework, and this kind of homework can help students to practice memorizing objects by replacing parts of the content. Third, Flexible application, the goal is to stimulate students' divergent thinking, combined with the knowledge they learned and new ability to solve current problems. Forth, Design-creative homework, it can reflect students' comprehensive subject knowledge, personal interests, and aesthetic ability in the type of homework. For example, it's a good idea to let students design little gizmos when teachers design this type of homework.

4.2 Design practice assignments

According to the interesting, exploratory and practical principles of homework, teachers should be appropriate and timely design practical application types of homework.

Activity-based homework:

This kinds of theme activities created by the individual or group-specific activity plan provide the foundation for this kind of assignment. Individual activity plans and group activity plans are two categories of activities;

Activity work assignment:

Students in the process of comprehensive practice activities will be formed in a variety of text, performance, hand-made works. Students can record the activities in pictures, videos, etc., or write their own reports to show their work.

4.3 Design creative assignments

This kind of homework means that students collect, cut and paste, show and comment on the picture and text materials related to the study content, edit the special newspaper, to draw and create by themselves. For example, when studying In a Nature Park, teachers can organize students to go to the botanical garden to take photos, collect plant specimens, consult and collect materials, make manuals, hand-copied newspapers and so on.

4.4 Design Research-type homework

Research-type homework, this kind of homework refers to in-depth social visit interviews, and research. Let the student form the explanation in the inquiry process, obtain the answer and carry on the exchange, the examination's own work. The aim is to promote the development of teachers and students in scientific literacy, creativity implementation and so on. For example, in the study of plants, let students go to a nearby park, community walk around, look, touch a model, make specimens, or explain the manual.

4.5 Increase the interest of homework

According to the interesting principle of homework, assignments should be full of fun while training students' thinking.

Survey practice homework.

Let the student personally participate in the investigation practice. These surveys and practices must be conducted in English. In addition, the content of the survey and interviews to news and fun-oriented issues, practical homework to more contact with actual life.

Interactive operation homework.

Parents can join student' homework, like singing ballads, making cards, and making props around the festival, which can not only promote the feelings between students and their parents, but also let the student finish the English homework happily.

Performance-based homework.

Performance-based homework is the teacher creating specific scenes for the students based on the lesson's material and guiding them through dialogue or role-playing exercises using their knowledge.

Group cooperation, communication and inquiry homework.

In order to allow students to benefit from one another when doing a task or piece of homework in a group, teachers must be completely aware of the variances between each student. Diverse activity types are needed to properly build group competitions and enhance the learning format. After a week of study, teachers must create pertinent questions depending on the material covered during that week, set up a quiz, and decide which group will receive rewards based on their performance. [5]

5 Conclusion

The "Double-Reduction" policy has presented additional difficulties for upper-grades English teachers in primary schools. The homework mechanism developed for this

study encourages students' autonomy and home-school collaboration during homework management, as well as creative, practical, and scientific assignment design. The homework should also be varied and entertaining. In light of this, senior English instructors in primary schools should reconsider how homework is designed and managed in order to increase both the effectiveness of English instruction and the quality and effectiveness of homework.

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