A RESEARCH ON THE APPLICATION OF GRADED ENGLISH PICTURE BOOKS IN EIGHTH GRADE ENGLISH READING TEACHING

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ABSTRACT
Reading is one of the important ways for learners to acquire language skills. The "New Curriculum Standard for Junior High School English" emphasizes the importance of English reading, and English teachers should focus on cultivating students' English reading literacy. This requires teachers to explore new teaching methods and select suitable reading materials as supplements to textbooks. English graded picture books are excellent reading materials that compensate for the deficiencies of textbooks and stimulate readers' interest through beautiful illustrations, thereby cultivating students' reading habits. English picture book reading teaching can meet the requirements of the new curriculum standard and cultivate students' core literacy, making it an excellent teaching model. Using this teaching model in eighth-grade English reading instruction can enhance the efficiency of English teacher's reading instruction and improve students' independent learning abilities. This article employs methods such as questionnaire surveys, interviews, and classroom observations to understand students' reading situations and issues in reading teaching, grade students' reading levels, select appropriate graded English picture books for students, and design English reading teaching by integrating picture books with textbooks.

Keywords: Graded English Picture Books, Grade 8, English Reading Teaching Design

1. INTRODUCTION
In this section, the research background of the thesis, literature review and the significance of the study will be represented.

1.1 Research Background
In 2014, the Ministry of Education first proposed the development of students' core literacy, which includes language proficiency, thinking quality, learning ability, and cultural character in the English subject. Improving students' English literacy can be achieved through effective pathways such as English reading. This requires teachers to pay attention to the cultivation of core literacy in English reading teaching. Combining English graded picture books for reading teaching and ensuring students have sufficient language knowledge input, can not only improve students' overall English proficiency and cultivate their core literacy but also help students better adapt to the needs of social development. The 2017 version of the English curriculum standard proposes that learning a language requires a large amount of input, and English learning needs diverse course resources. English courses should be tailored to students' English proficiency and needs, and teachers should select appropriate materials as supplements to textbooks for students. In the process of English reading teaching, teachers can select suitable English picture books for students according to their English reading level and developmental characteristics, integrate them with English textbooks, and improve teaching efficiency to make English teaching more consistent with

English curriculum standards. In view of the current situation of junior high school English reading teaching, in the process of English reading teaching, teachers often pre-teach relevant vocabulary and grammar knowledge to reduce students' reading obstacles, and conduct reading teaching mainly through questioning and explaining related knowledge points, with textbook exercises as the main focus. These practices often result in students understanding the text in a fragmented manner, lacking a comprehensive grasp of the overall text, and making the reading teaching process dull and unable to stimulate students' reading interest. Fortunately, with the emergence of English graded picture books, teachers gradually realize that English graded picture books are excellent supplementary materials for reading teaching. Many teachers have engaged in the practice of graded picture book reading teaching and achieved excellent results. However, most of the research focuses on primary school reading teaching, and there are still many issues to be addressed in actual picture book teaching. The application of English graded picture books in junior high school reading teaching is relatively rare, and there is a lack of teaching design in this area.

1.2 Literature Review
The literature review will be introduced from theoretical foundation, and related studies both at home and abroad.

1.2.1 Theoretical Foundation
Piaget's theory of child cognitive development keeps primarily divided into four stages, the sensorimotor stage, the preoperational stage, the concrete operational stage, and the formal operational stage. According this theory, the formal operational stage remains where eighth-grade students are placed. During this stage, students think in propositional terms, are able to solve problems through logical reasoning, induction, or deduction, and possess the ability for hypothetical-deductive reasoning. At this point, they demonstrate abstract logical thinking, reversibility, compensatory thinking, increased flexibility, and reflective abilities. However, during this period, students' development of abstract logical thinking is still in its early stages, and vision is the most direct way for students to perceive things. "When graphic content involves children's life experiences, it can help them understand and thus demonstrate a higher level of observational skills; conversely, students can only cite or describe unfamiliar content, often leading to incorrect answers" [1]. Picture books, as reading materials primarily focused on visuals, can effectively promote students' observational skills. Such reading materials align with the perceptual, cognitive, and thinking development characteristics of eighth-grade students, and have distinct advantages in promoting their emotional, cognitive, and intellectual development. Since picture book stories are closely related to students' daily lives, they easily evoke emotional resonance and enhance their emotional experiences. Therefore, it can be said that English picture books are one of the most suitable types of books for eighth-grade students to read. The Lexile leveling system is a well-established reading standard developed in the United States. This system is based on quantitative measures of text complexity and reading ability, allowing educators to more accurately match picture books to students' proficiency levels. It provides numerical grading standards, making it easier for teachers and parents to make selections. The author will select English picture books for students based on the Lexile leveling system's scale and the students' actual circumstances, as referenced from the website https://www.jianshu.com/p/f25e378d40a8[2].

1.2.2 Related Studies Both at Home and Abroad

English picture books, utilizing both illustrations and concise text, have garnered widespread attention and research in recent years. Scholars abroad have explored their application in reading instruction, encompassing language acquisition, reading skills, and literary appreciation. Kelly Booker studied teaching strategies utilizing picture books to enhance reading comprehension and writing skills, consequently improving students' reading comprehension and writing abilities[3]. Tiedt investigated the use of picture books to stimulate the thinking abilities of upper-grade students across various thematic domains[4]. Dean and Grierson proposed that teachers can assist students in effectively selecting appropriate readings and lay the groundwork for students to learn writing strategies across a wide range of genres through guided practice with reading and writing picture books[5]. This article adopts the Lexile leveling to correlate English reading proficiency with grade levels, facilitating the selection of appropriate reading materials. Chinese scholars predominantly focus their research on English picture books in relation to core literacy, reading skills, and teaching strategies. Experts such as Wang Qiang, Cheng Xiaotang, and Chen Zehang have devoted attention to studying the role of English picture books in primary and secondary school reading instruction. Wu Xinze combines specific examples of reading teaching in the design of English picture book reading in primary school, exploring the design of English picture book reading teaching in primary school[6]. In addition to elementary school teachers, some university professors have also conducted research on picture books from various perspectives. Jiang Lihua, based on the practical teaching of picture book reading, studied the design of open-ended activities suitable for cultivating students' thinking abilities[7]. Research on picture book reading instruction in China is in a developmental stage, with a focus on elementary school English reading education. There is relatively limited research on the application of picture books in junior high school settings.

1.3 Research Significance

Research on graded English picture books is relatively scarce in our country at present. This study elucidates the concept of picture books, analyzes relevant literature on picture book reading instruction both domestically and internationally, and investigates the current situation of English picture book reading instruction through literature review and interviews. Therefore, based on the theory of English picture book reading instruction and understanding students' reading interests, English reading levels, and the current situation of English reading instruction, appropriate English picture books are selected for discussion. This study explores the application design of integrating English picture books with textbooks in English reading instruction, which holds significant theoretical significance. It is hoped that this application design can be implemented in eighth-grade English reading classrooms to enhance the quality of junior high school English reading instruction, improve students' English reading literacy at this stage, actively respond to the requirements of the new curriculum standards, and possess important practical significance.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

In this section, including research questions and participants, research methods, and research process.

2.1 Research Questions and Participants

The research questions cover challenges in student reading learning, difficulties in reading instruction, and assessment of students' English reading proficiency. This study selected a class of 44 students from a junior high school in a township in Guang'an City, Sichuan Province, China. Among them, there are 18 female students and 26 male students, accounting for 41% and 59% of the total number of students, respectively.

2.2 Research Methods

This paper distributed 44 questionnaires to investigate students' English reading frequency, attitudes towards English reading, obstacles in reading learning, English reading tools, reading comprehension abilities, learning motivations, and needs. All questionnaires were successfully collected anonymously. Additionally, interviews were conducted with two English teachers of this grade to understand the current situation of English reading teaching and the problems encountered by students in reading learning. Through the questionnaire survey and interviews, the study aimed to understand students' reading learning situations and the challenges faced by teachers in reading instruction, and to determine the English reading proficiency of students as a basis for selecting appropriate extracurricular reading materials and designing English reading classroom teaching combined with textbooks.

2.3 Research Procedures

The present study employs a combination of questionnaire surveys and interviews with English teachers to delve into the issues students encounter in English reading learning and the current situation of English reading teaching. The questionnaire survey aims to gather students' perceptions, interests, and difficulties in English reading, while interviews with English teachers provide insights into their evaluations of students' English reading abilities and current teaching strategies and challenges. After analyzing the questionnaire and interview data, an understanding of students' English proficiency

levels and related issues needing resolution is obtained, leading to the proposal of targeted solutions. Among these solutions is the selection of extracurricular reading materials tailored to students' levels and interests to stimulate their reading interests and enhance reading abilities. Additionally, the author will design relevant English reading classroom teaching content based on the eighth-grade English textbooks to promote the enhancement of students' overall language proficiency.

3.RESEARCH RESULT AND ANALYSIS

This section comprises the results and analysis of the student questionnaire survey, the analysis of the interview results with teachers, and the findings from the questionnaire survey and interviews.

**3.1 Results and Analysis of Questionnaires**

The data in Figure 3.1 shows that 54.55% of students spend more than 20 minutes reading, while 45.45% of students spend less than 10 minutes reading English articles. According to the "Compulsory Education English Curriculum Standard" (2022 edition), eighth-grade students are required to read over 100,000 words. Reading at least 1-2 times per week, with encouragement to reach 3-4 times, and maintain each session for 20-30 minutes[8]. Nearly half of the students in the class have not met the standard for English reading duration, indicating a lack of interest in reading

English articles and a failure to develop good reading habits. This may suggest that students are aware of the importance of English reading, but due to a lack of interest in independent reading or busy academic schedules, many students do not spend enough time reading. The following figure illustrates the situation.
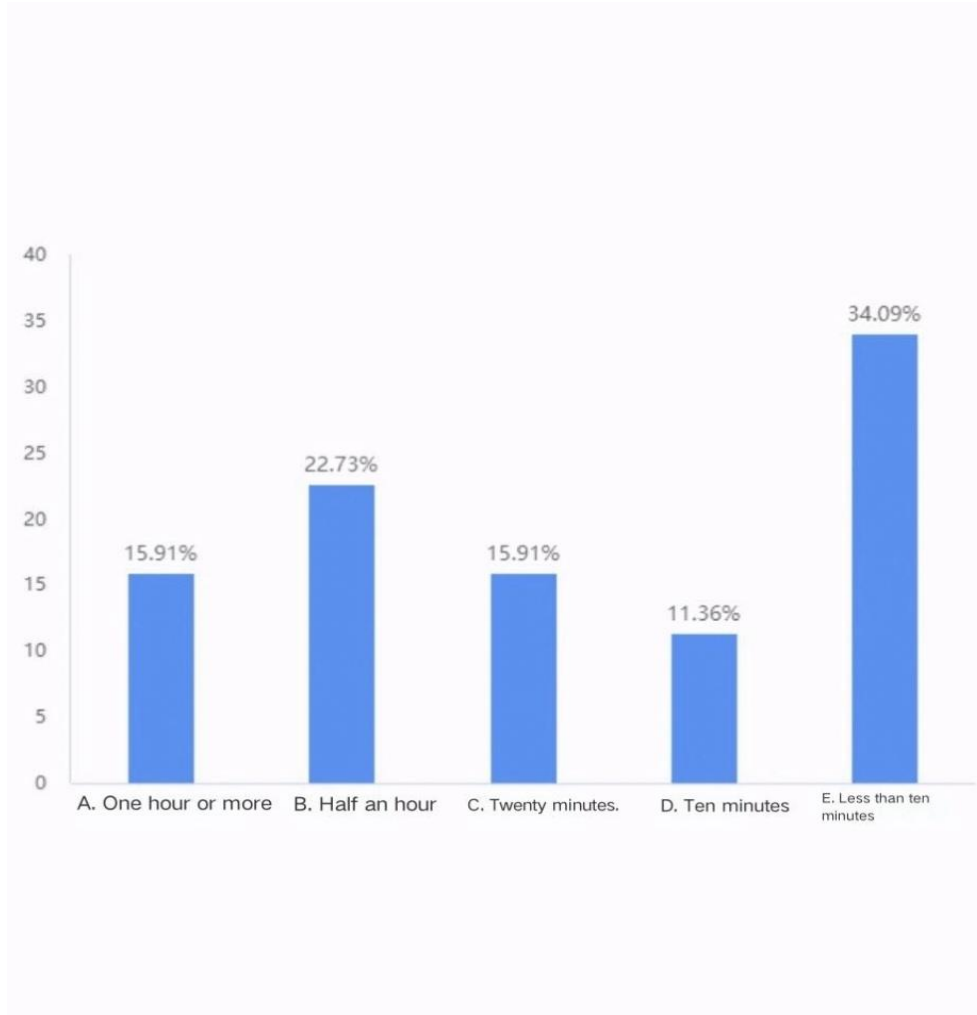

Figure 3.1 Student Reading Duration

According to the data in Figure 3.2, 20.45% of students engage in English reading voluntarily, while 61.37% do so to improve their English proficiency or in response to requests from teachers or parents. Additionally, 18.18% of students engage in English reading for other reasons. This indicates a lack of intrinsic motivation among students for English reading, with their reading activities primarily influenced by external factors such as exam pressure and prompting from teachers or parents. The following figure illustrates the situation.
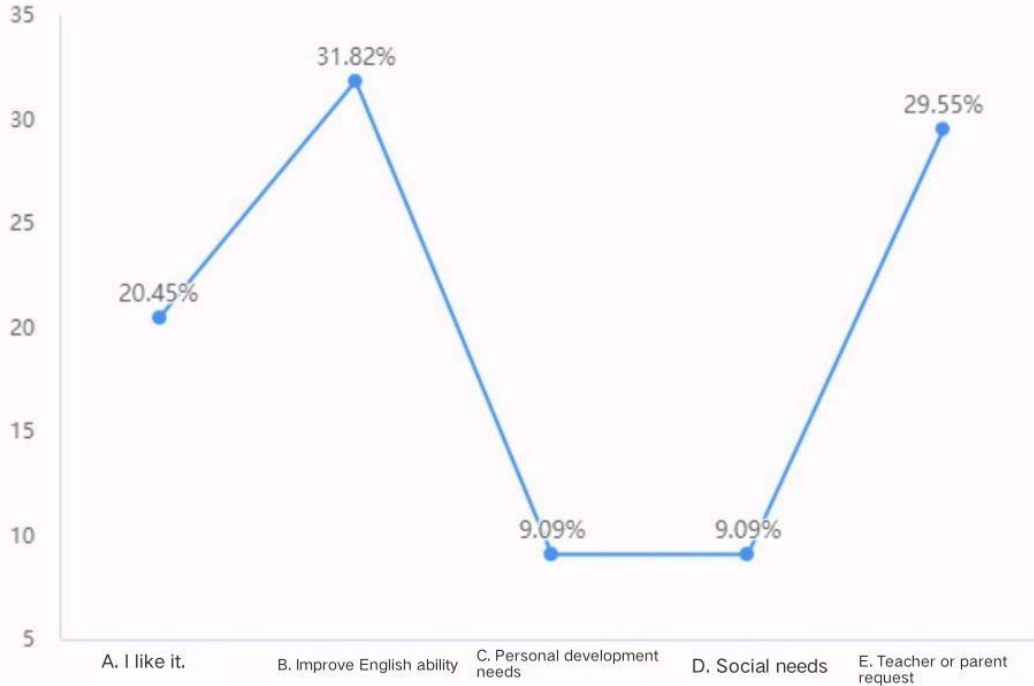
Figure 3.2 Primary Reading Motivations of Students

According to the data presented in Figure 3.3, 18.18% of students give up directly when encountering unfamiliar words while reading English texts. Meanwhile, 45.45% of students rely on tools such as dictionaries, phones, or computers before continuing their reading, and 25% try to guess the meanings of words from context or simply ignore unfamiliar words initially. This indicates that some students experience a fear of difficulty, with 75% of students not employing scientifically sound strategies when encountering unfamiliar words. Students need to enhance their ability to infer word meanings from context. Due to poor English fundamentals and an abundance of unfamiliar vocabulary, students face reading difficulties and lose confidence, leading to feelings of frustration. Additionally, students may not effectively utilize reading strategies taught by teachers, which, to a certain extent, reduces reading speed and accuracy in answering questions. The following figure illustrates the situation.
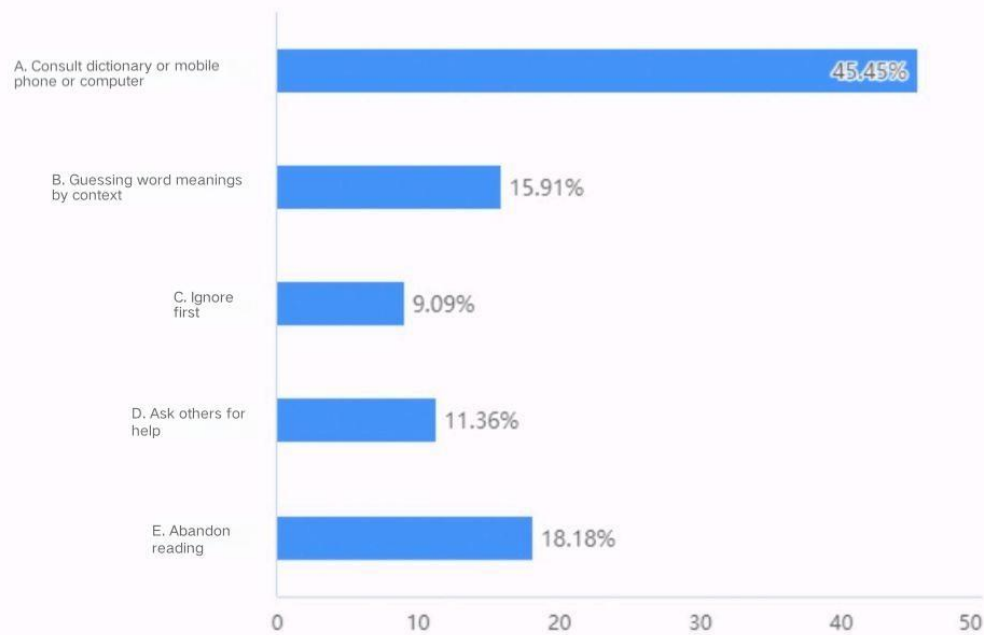
Figure 3.3 Approaches Students Use to Handle Unfamiliar Words

According to the data presented in Figure 3.4, 56.82% of students desire assistance in acquiring vocabulary and grammar knowledge, while 9.09% hope for teachers to teach reading skills, and 15.91% require assistance in understanding text structure. This indicates insufficient vocabulary accumulation, limited mastery of grammar knowledge, and inadequate comprehension skills among students regarding English texts, as they can only grasp the superficial meaning of the articles. The following figure illustrates the situation.
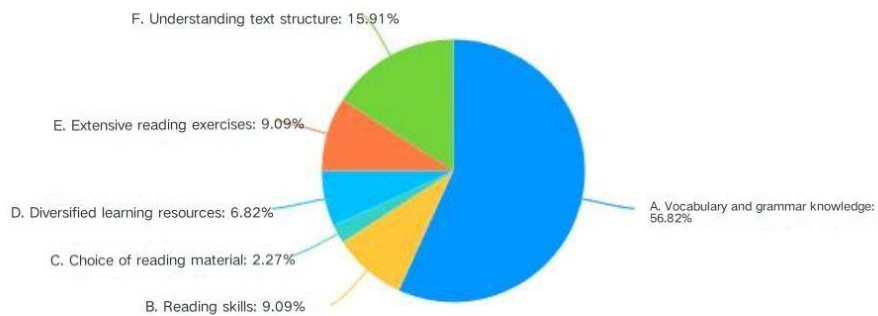
Figure 3.4 Most Needed Assistance for Students

3.2 Analysis of Interview Results

In this section, analysis of student learning and analysis of teaching will be introduced.

3.2.1 Analysis of Student Learning

During the interviews, the author discussed with teachers about students' issues in reading skills, comprehension abilities, and learning attitudes. Teachers pointed out that the most common difficulty students face in reading learning is insufficient vocabulary. Many students lack adequate vocabulary accumulation, leading to frequent word look-ups while reading, which slows down their reading speed and affects comprehension. Additionally, teachers mentioned that students struggle with understanding sentence structures, logical relationships, as well as a lack of knowledge about cultural backgrounds and connotations. In teaching practice, teachers observed common errors among students when understanding reading materials, including inaccurate word meanings, incorrect analysis of sentence structures, and a lack of grasp on the context. These errors often hinder students' comprehension and impact their overall understanding of the text. Finally, teachers noted that students exhibit different behaviors in English reading classes; some actively participate in classroom discussions, think independently, and offer insights, while others may be more passive, providing simple answers without deep reflection. In conclusion, teachers identified that students primarily face challenges such as insufficient vocabulary, difficulties in understanding sentence structures and logical relationships, as well as a lack of awareness about cultural backgrounds and connotations. These factors collectively affect students' reading abilities and overall learning outcomes.

3.2.2 Analysis of Teaching

During the interviews, the author discussed with teachers about teaching methods, activity design, and assignment arrangements in English reading classes. The teachers mentioned that they mainly use the lecture method, which may not effectively promote student-centered learning. This approach can result in passive knowledge reception, lack of interaction and collaboration, difficulty in meeting individualized needs, thus hindering comprehensive skill development and compromising learning outcomes. Regarding the implementation of reading teaching, teachers indicated that pre-class activities involve explaining vocabulary and their Chinese meanings, along with expanding related knowledge. Students are required to read relevant articles before class, and in the classroom, new words and grammar are explained through sentence-by-sentence translations, using activities from the textbook to help students reinforce knowledge. However, the predominant use of Chinese translations during word explanations and the sentence-by-sentence translation method in article explanation may disrupt the integrity of the text and fail to effectively enhance students' text comprehension skills. Additionally, relying solely on textbook activities for reading instruction may lead to monotonous and less engaging reading activities. Lastly, concerning homework assignments, teachers typically assign tasks such as reading aloud texts, reviewing lesson content, and completing exercises in workbooks or textbooks. However, these homework formats are often mechanical and one-sided, potentially not conducive to improving students' overall language application abilities. In conclusion, the issues in teacher's reading instruction include a heavy reliance on the lecture method, lack of interactivity and collaboration, as well as relatively monotonous classroom activities and homework formats, which may not effectively enhance students' text comprehension skills and language application abilities

3.3 Findings from the Questionnaire Survey and Interviews

According to the survey, students face several challenges in English reading. They recognize the importance of English reading but due to busy schedules and time constraints, they lack interest in independent reading, resulting in insufficient reading duration and frequency, and a lack of good reading habits. Additionally, they lack intrinsic motivation for English reading and struggle with encountering unfamiliar words, requiring proper guidance on reading strategies. Furthermore, students have limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge, leading to insufficient text comprehension abilities. Interviews revealed that students mainly face challenges related to insufficient vocabulary, difficulty understanding sentence structures and logical relationships, as well as a lack of understanding of cultural backgrounds and connotations.

The core issues identified in the survey and interviews include low interest in independent reading, lack of intrinsic motivation, inappropriate handling of unfamiliar words, limited vocabulary, inadequate comprehension abilities, and a lack of understanding of cultural backgrounds and connotations. Currently, there are also issues in English reading instruction, as teachers primarily use the lecture method, lack interaction and collaboration, and employ relatively monotonous classroom activities and homework formats, failing to effectively enhance students' text comprehension abilities and comprehensive language application skills.

To address these issues, the English graded picture book teaching method can be adopted. Graded picture books have the advantage of containing fewer words and simpler language, making them suitable for students to master basic vocabulary and language structures in a short period. Additionally, the themes and plots of these picture books are interesting and can attract students' interest, enhancing their reading experience. Therefore, integrating graded picture books into the design of eighth-grade reading classroom instruction is beneficial for addressing these issues.

4. TEACHING DESIGN BASED ON THE GRADED ENGLISH PICTURE BOOKS

This part presents the process of picture book teaching and design cases for picture book reading instruction

4.1 Graded English Picture Book Teaching Process

This 45-minute graded English picture book reading expansion class is meticulously structured to optimize the instructional time, encompassing pre-reading activities, during-reading activities, post-reading activities, and homework assignments. During the pre-reading phase, captivating multimedia content such as engaging videos, melodious songs, or evocative images of the picture book cover is strategically employed to inaugurate the lesson, with the specific aim of captivating students' attention and swiftly immersing them in the classroom environment, thereby laying a solid foundation for effective learning. The during-reading activities entail the creation of pertinent story scenarios tailored to the content of the picture book, wherein students are organized into groups and participate in activities such as jigsaw reading and reading circles to navigate through the provided materials. Commencing with skimming to glean the main ideas of the designated paragraphs, they subsequently collaborate within their groups to amalgamate the content they have perused, thereby piecing together the complete story plot. This is succeeded by intensive reading, during which students respond to inquiries posed by the teacher and explicate relevant vocabulary and grammar utilizing visuals, English definitions, and examples. Additionally, the teacher may furnish a mind map of the novel to facilitate students' comprehension of the principal theme of the text. In the post-reading segment, students partake in role-playing and engage in role-based

activities under the guidance of the teacher. These activities, including role-playing based on the content of the picture book, serve to deepen students' understanding and enhance their overall comprehension. Furthermore, students collaborate in groups to deliberate and devise potential denouements for the story, subsequently sharing their ideas. The teacher then directs students to recount the story based on the mind map and pertinent picture book illustrations, with the ultimate goal of aiding students in mastering the language knowledge acquired and refining their ability to synthesize language, thereby fostering the development of their overall English language proficiency. Regarding the homework assignment section, students are encouraged to adapt or continue writing the story, gather additional pertinent materials, and nurture their creativity.

4.2 Picture Book Reading Instructional Design Case
The following is a case of teaching design for picture book reading, including analysis of picture book materials, teaching objectives and content, and instructional design case reflection.

4.2.1 Analysis of Picture Book Materials
Co-developed by Professor Wang Qiang and renowned English reading expert Jill Eggleton, the Multidimensional Reading series, published by the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press in collaboration with New Zealand Learning Media, comprises 22 levels. This series features rich and diverse themes, vivid content, and a wide variety of genres and subjects, seamlessly integrating international advanced reading concepts with the requirements of English teaching reform in China. It stands out as an outstanding graded reader series that fully aligns with the spirit of the curriculum standards. Integrating the novel Dr. Flockter from the 15th level of the Multidimensional Reading series into the reading teaching design aligns with the objectives of Module 2, Unit 2 "They have seen the pyramids" from the eighth-grade English textbook published by the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. The graded picture books in this series are characterized by rich and exquisite illustrations, concise and clear text, and vivid and interesting storylines, all of which are conducive to stimulating children's interest in reading. The themes covered in these books span a wide range of topics, thereby facilitating children's acquisition of knowledge across social, natural, and daily life domains. Consequently, this approach not only meets the requirements of English curriculum reform but also proves to be effective in enhancing English reading teaching efficiency. Moreover, integrating the novel into the teaching design can contribute to the cultivation of students' multiple intelligences, such as creativity, aesthetic sense, and observation ability. Additionally, it has the potential to bolster students' language expression and independent learning abilities. Importantly, the incorporation of such literature can aid in instilling correct life views and values among students, thereby promoting their comprehensive development. The narrative of "Dr. Flockter" revolves around an animal scientist who embarks on an adventure in the Amazon rainforest in search of new species. The story unfolds through Dr. Flockter's thrilling encounters with army ants, piranhas, and various other perils in the rainforest, showcasing his intelligence and quick thinking in critical moments. His successful escape from danger, using vines to reach a small island, culminates in the unexpected discovery of a new type of frog. With a length of approximately 500 words, the story features a gripping plot that captivates the reader, offering a captivating adventure while underscoring the magic and grandeur of nature. The vivid and exquisite illustrations further enrich the imaginative space of the narrative.

4.2.2 Teaching Objectives and Content

Teaching Objectives:

By the end of the class, the students should be able to:

1. improve students' ability to observe picture information and predict background information about the story through pictures.

2. grasp the main idea of the story and extract key information through independent reading and group cooperation.

3. empower students to retell the story in their own words using learned vocabulary, phrases, grammar knowledge, etc.

4. To facilitate student's competence to conduct a reasoned analysis of the qualities of the story's protagonist and delve into their own reflections, gains and inspirations.

Teaching Steps

Step 1 Pre-reading: (6 minutes)

Activity1: Teacher guides students to observe the cover of picture books to obtain information such as characters, title, author, publisher, etc. To teach them to read the title, let students guess the characters' professions, and ask students where the story takes place and what the main character is doing. (2 minutes)

Questions: What can you see from the book cover? What might Dr. Flockter do for a living? Where is he? What is he doing?

[Design intention] The cultural background of this lesson is set in the Amazon rainforest. By encouraging students to observe the cover to infer character information, it helps them grasp the basic details of the book and fosters the habit of correctly interpreting picture books, prompting them to think critically. This approach is conducive to stimulating students' curiosity and guiding them to establish a cognitive framework related to the story.

Activity 2: Play a video introducing the Amazon rainforest and ask students what they saw in the video. (4 minutes)

Questions: What did you see in the video?

[Design intention] Video possess the capability to attract student's attention and ignite their interest. As a complement to traditional teaching methods, they offer additional background knowledge, expand learners' horizons, foster empathy and comprehension skills, and foster rich and immersive learning experiences. Videos facilitate students in gaining insights into relevant animal-related knowledge.

Step 2 While- Reading Activities (28-29 minutes)

Activity 3: Students listen to the recording and read pages 2 and 3 to understand why Dr. Flockter is in the rainforest and how long he has been there. (2 minutes)

Questions: Why was Dr. Flockter in the rainforest? How long has he been there? How would you feel if you were him?

Activity 4: Divide students into 4 small groups and have them read pages 4 to 10. Each group reads 2 pages, shares within the group, and then discusses and exchanges information with other groups to form a reading circle to understand the content of this part. The teacher asked the students to answer questions after completing the reading. Questions: What will happen to him? (8-9 minutes)

Present the content of page four, explain the word "ghost," and discuss the reason for the moving logs. (2 minutes)

Present the picture on page six, guide students to observe and understand the meaning of the phrase "army ants" and "giant pincers." (3 minutes)

Present the picture on page eight, guide students to understand the story plot through a series of questions and pictures, explaining why Dr. Flockter runs so fast. (3 minutes)

Questions: Why does the main character in the story run so fast?

Present the picture on page 10, explain the words "swarm," "sting," and "skeleton." (3 minutes)

Present the picture on page 12, explain the word "piranhas," and ask students if piranhas are a new animal. (2 minutes)

Questions: Is the piranha a new animal?

Present the picture on page 14, where Dr. Flockter discovers a new species called a toad. Ask students how they would feel if they were the main character and have them read aloud the sentences describing the author's feelings. (4 minutes)

Questions: How would you feel if you were him?

Activity 5: Invite several students to share the content of the story they understood. (2 minutes)

[Design intention] Guiding students to appreciate picture books is an effective educational approach. It allows students to immerse themselves in aesthetics, promotes English language acquisition, nurtures emotions, and enhances their love for art. Through reading such picture books, students not only experience artistic beauty but also engage in rich associations, thereby improving learning outcomes. Utilizing group cooperation on pages 4-10 can help students understand the development of the story, grasp relevant key words and phrases, and ultimately achieve independent reading ability. Furthermore, cooperative reading can improve reading efficiency and assess whether students genuinely comprehend the story. By posing guiding questions, teachers encourage students to apply existing cognitive frameworks to problem-solving, thereby promoting the integration of new knowledge and the establishment of cognitive frameworks.

Activity 6: Provide a mind map to help children organize the story and understand the main idea. (2 minutes)

[Design intention] Mind mapping, with its myriad advantages, facilitates students in intricately delineating the storyline, comprehending the essence of textual discourse, and adeptly discerning minutiae to expedite their quest for answers.

Step 3 Post-reading Activities (8 minutes)

Activity 7: Let students discuss in groups and evaluate Dr. Flockter's outstanding qualities. The teacher then summarizes his qualities and encourages students to learn from him as a role model.

Activity 8: The teacher tells the story plot and invites students to express Dr. Flockter 's psychological changes with facial expressions and act out what the protagonist did with body movements. (3 minutes)

Activity 9: Let students work in groups to use their imagination to discuss how Dr. Flockter leaves the rainforest, give the story a complete ending, and then invite students to share. (3 minutes)

Activity 10: Let students try to retell the main content of the story in their own words. Teachers provide students with a mind map illustrating the general storyline of the story, as well as vocabulary and sentence structures that students may use. Encouraging students retell the main events of the story in their own words utilizing the knowledge they have acquired in this class. (2 minutes)

[Design intention] These activities can immerse students, enhance educational value, awaken their imagination, and stimulate their life experiences, creating resonance with the text context. This transformation turns the textbook content into vibrant story performances. In these activities, each student can successfully overcome their fear of difficulties, leverage their intellectual strengths,

and gain a sense of achievement, thereby further improving their overall English language skills. According to cognitive development theory, social interaction and communication are crucial for cognitive development. Therefore, in activity design, encouraging cooperation and communication among students through group discussions, collaborative projects, and other methods promotes students' cognitive development.

Step 4 Assignment (2 minutes)

The teacher has assigned the task of completing the story's ending, prompting students to imagine how the animal scientist Dr. Flockter departs from the rainforest. Simultaneously, the teacher requires them to search online for more stories about animal scientists to have additional material to share in the next class. During the subsequent class, the teacher will have some students share the learning strategies they employed while reading the picture book.

[Design intention] Continuing the story will help students enhance their innovative thinking abilities and foster their language communication and application skills. Encouraging students to share their learning strategies can guide them in reflecting on their own learning processes, aiding them in understanding their cognitive processes better. This, in turn, promotes metacognitive awareness, enabling them to better manage their learning.

4.2.3 Instructional Design Case Reflection

Firstly, students are able to make simple predictions based on the pictures, grasping the background and main characters of the story. Secondly, with the assistance of group members, students can read the story and understand the gist of the material by gathering information shared among the group. During the implementation of picture book reading instruction, teachers should create authentic reading situations for students, allowing them to immerse themselves in the story, stimulate creative thinking, foster empathy with the author, and transform students' interests into internal motivation, leading them to actively learn, experience, and perceive the content of the text. Teachers should employ a gradient questioning approach to spark student interest and guide them in understanding the storyline of the picture book. Students are able to comprehend and recognize key words and phrases. Lastly, students can use the knowledge they have learned to retell the story in their own words, enhancing their innovative thinking.

5. CONCLUSION
5.1 Summary

Based on the theory of cognitive development, the author conducted a questionnaire survey and interviews with English teachers, unveiling widespread issues of insufficient vocabulary accumulation and lack of interest in English reading among students. Simultaneously, the teaching methods employed by educators were found to be relatively monotonous, with post-class exercises being mechanized. To address these challenges, the author designed a research study that integrates graded English picture books with the eighth-grade English textbook for reading instruction. This innovative approach combines the simplicity of graded English picture books, which are conducive to grasping basic vocabulary and language structure, with engaging themes that capture students' interest and enhance their reading experience.

In the research design, Piaget's theory of cognitive development was applied to teaching practices, aiming to facilitate students in absorbing and mastering English knowledge. Diverse teaching activities were developed to cater to the varying learning needs of students, placing emphasis on active student participation during the teaching process to promote their cognitive abilities and

thinking development. The adoption of more diverse teaching methods, such as group discussions, role-playing, and games, aimed to enhance teaching effectiveness and student engagement, ultimately serving the purpose of improving overall teaching efficacy and enhancing students' foundational English skills.

To conclude, this study, grounded in the theory of cognitive development, has devised an innovative English reading instruction model that strives to help students overcome the challenges inherent in English reading, boosting their reading interest and participation, and ultimately advancing their comprehensive English language proficiency. It is hoped that this teaching model will be widely embraced by English teachers, thereby laying a robust foundation for students' future learning and development.

5.2 Research Limitations

As the research focuses on designing picture book reading teaching for rural schools, it can only rely on literature, online materials, and relevant books for research, and there is currently no condition to practice to verify whether the design is reasonable and what needs improvement. It is necessary to practice and continuously improve the application design of picture book reading teaching in future teaching, and it is also hoped that more teachers can incorporate picture books into English classrooms to maximize their value.

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