

# **Application of Situational Experiential Teaching in High-grade Primary Schools' English Teaching**

**Dongmei Li**

19, Keji Rd., New Songshan District, Jinzhou City, Liaoning Province, 121013, People's Republic of China  
lidongmei1231@163.com

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**Abstract:** This paper discusses the necessity and significance of situational experiential teaching in primary schools' English teaching. Situational experiential teaching has always been an important strategy in English teaching, which is in line with the concept of deepening education reform and is conducive to stimulating students' interest in English learning, improving their activeness in English class and reducing their anxiety in the process of English learning. The definition of situation and situational experiential teaching is discussed. This paper also puts forward several ways to create situation. It also displays a teaching case, demonstrating how to apply situational experiential teaching in primary school English class, which proves that the use of situational teaching method for the actual teaching of English is an effective teaching method.

## **Introduction**

According to The New Standards for English Courses (2017 edition), "the main purpose of English courses in compulsory education is to lay a foundation for students to develop their comprehensive language proficiency, and create favorable conditions for them to continue English learning and develop in the future." "Modern foreign language education focuses on the process of language learning, emphasizes the practicality of language learning, and advocates that students should contact, experience and understand the real language in context, and learn and use language on this basis." Situational experiential teaching can well meet the teaching requirements. Primary school students do not have the environment to use English, even if they learn it in class. Therefore, they'll forget it after class because they haven't practiced it over time. In order to change this situation, it is necessary for teachers to provide students with a practical environment to apply English. Therefore, in the process of English teaching, teachers should try their best to create and provide real language situations so that students can have English conversations as in real situations.

By interviewing colleagues and primary school English teachers, the researcher can understand their thoughts, questions and confusion about the application of situational teaching in the classroom, which is of great help to analyze the application of teaching theory in primary school English and is of great significance to the theory of English teaching.

The application of situational experiential teaching method to high-grade primary schools' English teaching can make students feel that learning is rather interesting and highlight the initiative and creativity of students in activities (J.J. Xu 2016). It can also help them learn a foreign language in a relaxed and pleasant environment. Primary school students are young, compared to the traditional boring learning mode, interesting situational experiential teaching can often achieve better practical results. Furthermore, the application of situational teaching method in English

teaching is conducive to the cultivation of students' emotional experience, which is conducive to the achievement of emotional teaching objectives (Ju Yang, 2018).

### **Situational Experiential Teaching Approach**

**Situation and its classification.** Situation refers to the specific natural environment or social environment in which people move and their emotions change. In form, the information contained in situation is small, generally from the real life, and is a description of a scene, scenery. From the connotation, the situation is relatively simple, specific, intuitive and attractive. According to the different contents, the situation can be divided into: close to the actual life situation; real object display situation; picture demonstration situation; role-playing situations, etc. Situation is a small world of English teaching, which is created by teachers with the help of specific media, pictures and objects or vivid language.

**Situational Experiential Teaching.** Scholars both at home and abroad have defined situational teaching from different perspectives. Situational Language Teaching, which originated in Britain, is a new teaching method based on the traditional direct teaching method. English scholar Hornby introduced situational teaching in detail in Oxford Progressive English Course for Adult Learners in 1954. Hornby (1980:85-89) defined situational teaching like this: situational teaching refers to the creation of vivid and specific teaching situations for students according to the needs of classroom teaching, so that students can acquire language knowledge in an almost real language environment. This kind of situation must help students understand new vocabulary and sentence structure, that is to say, combine new language knowledge with situational teaching content. Jilin Li, who first studied situational teaching in China, proposed in 1995 that the classroom teaching using situational teaching is a teaching method combining vivid scenes with language description. By creating scenarios, students' learning enthusiasm can be stimulated and students' active participation in the teaching process can be promoted. Junkui Mi (2017) believed that the setting of the situation can support students' learning objectives and promote their learning.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that as a kind of teaching method in primary school English education, situational experiential teaching means that the teachers guide the students to understand, practice and acquire the language skills in real situations, in order to stimulate the students' emotional experience and have good command of the language. While applying this teaching method, the teacher must have a better understanding of the students' cognitive characteristics and try to create related situation and teaching activities adjusting to the teaching content.

**Situation Creation.** Teachers need to take the learning needs of students as the starting point and consciously design the situations to be more enjoyable and relaxed. Teaching situations and activities should always focus on teaching objectives, match with teaching contents and should be closely linked to real life. Teaching activities closely related to real life are more likely to attract students' attention, and at the same time, can help students apply what they have learned to real life. The creation of teaching situation is to let students use the knowledge they have learned in the realistic situation, so as to firmly grasp the knowledge.

The successful situation creation needs to mobilize all kinds of means to achieve.

There are several useful ways to create the teaching situation in high-grade primary school English.

First, situations can be created by using real objects or stick figures. Real objects can improve classroom atmosphere and the knowledge acquired by this way can leave a deep impression on students, improving the students' understanding and mastery of knowledge. Stick figures play an

active role in English teaching in primary schools. Stick figures can be vivid and concise although they are simple. Animals, characters, plants and daily articles can be outlined and created by just a few quick simple strokes (Suyu Ye, 2018). By using visual learning learners are exposed to the natural setup of the environment (Andrew Philominraj, 2017) When we teach weather, we can simply draw the symbols of the weather, which can resolve the teaching difficulties and turn the abstract knowledge into concrete knowledge. Vivid and intuitive images make students' memory of language knowledge more firm and accurate.

Second, situations can be created by using games and actions. As the mental development of high-grade primary school students is not mature, obscure professional teaching cannot achieve the teaching objectives, and students have a great enthusiasm for games and actions. In teaching, teachers can design games or relevant actions to achieve teaching objectives. If teachers add some easy games in the teaching process, it can ease the students' anxiety in learning English and will have significant effect on the improvement of students' interest in learning and the teaching process will be carried out smoothly.

Third, situations can be created by using music and songs. The wonderful music melody will bring students into a specific mood. There are songs and chants in every unit of elementary school textbooks, which are required to be learned by teachers and students. Paying attention to the teaching of English songs will make students fall in love with English and make English become relaxed and pleasant.

Fourth, situations can be created by using role play. Students have a strong interest in acting, so teachers can add sitcoms and modern drama to situational teaching. This can better mobilize the enthusiasm of students to participate in the classroom activities, at the same time it can also improve the learning efficiency of students.

Fifth, situations can be created by using multimedia. Multimedia can be used for English word spelling teaching to improve students' correct understanding of sound. Besides, teachers can also make some interesting videos to let students easily learn the correct pronunciation of letters or words while watching the video and improve students' interest in English learning.

In the course of teaching, we should pay attention to the combination of interest and teaching content. Min Wan (2017) believed that situational teaching method can well combine teaching objectives, teaching contents and teaching forms, and stimulate students' interest in learning and positive learning attitude through vivid situational creation. Teachers should also pay close attention to students' participation in the situation created in the teaching process. In the course of teaching, we should also pay attention to the infiltration of culture. Language is the carrier of society and culture. Many English words and sentences have connotations related to cultural background, and can also reflect the cultural traditions and customs of people who take English as their mother language. Students should be taught relevant cultural knowledge. This can stimulate their interest in learning English culture and broaden their horizons. Situation creation must have a sense of reality. It cannot be divorced from the reality of students' life. Only in this way can they be motivated to use relevant language knowledge and the English knowledge they have learned can be truly applied. (Yan Wang, 2017)

## Teaching Cases

Classroom teaching plays an important role in primary school English teaching. Primary school students have the advantage of learning English in a natural environment (Gang Cheng, 2018). Now let's take a class as an example to illustrate how to apply situational experiential teaching approach in class.

The teaching case selected here is Unit 12, *I Like Spring*, Grade Five (The First Volume) by Liaoning normal university press.

#### Analysis of the teaching material

This unit is about how to simple words and sentences to describe four seasons. Based on the conversation between Bob and Yuanyuan, seasons are studied. The content is interesting and conforms to the characteristics of students at this stage.

#### Analysis of learning situation

The fifth grade students have certain English foundation and are eager to express themselves. They hope to be recognized and praised by teachers and classmates. English teachers should make full use of the resources around them and create opportunities of language communication for children, making students feel the excitement and fun of learning English in activities.

#### Teaching objectives

##### A. Knowledge and skill objectives

1. Vocabulary: spring, summer, autumn, winter, nice, tree, flower, bird, people, go hiking, go camping, love.

2. Understand and correctly use the following sentences:

Spring is a nice season. It's nice and warm. Spring is warm and windy. Summer is hot and rainy. Autumn is cool and sunny. Winter is cold and snowy. We wear sweaters. We wear raincoats and boots on rainy days. We wear jackets and pants. We go hiking and have picnics.

3. Finish "Let's play a guessing game" in group.

##### B. Moral teaching objectives

1. Cultivate students' love of nature and life

2. Stimulate and maintain students' interest in English learning.

#### Important points in teaching

1. Vocabulary: spring, summer, autumn, winter

2. Sentences: describe four seasons in simple sentences.

#### Difficult points in teaching

1. The pronunciation of spring, summer, autumn, winter

2. How to describe seasons

Teaching methods: Situational teaching method; task-based language teaching

#### Teaching Steps

##### Step One: Warm up

Ask students do they know how to say four seasons in English.

##### Step Two: Learn the new words, phrases and sentences

With the help of the multimedia picture, the teacher taught the students the words in it: spring, summer, autumn, winter, go hiking, go camping and fly kites. With body language, the teacher taught the words: warm, hot, cool, cold.

##### Step Three: Practice

After the students had got familiar with these words and phrases, the teacher asked the students to play the guessing game. The teacher described a season and asked students to guess which season it is. (A game was introduced here to put the students in the real language communication activity.) Then the teacher asked students to do pair work. Two students were in a group, with one asked questions and the other answer.

##### Step Four: Consolidation

The teacher asked students to describe pictures, which represented different seasons and relative activities. For example, spring is warm and windy. It is green. We wear sweaters. We plant trees.

We can fly kites.

The students were asked to tell their desk mates which season they like best and why. (In this step, the teacher creates a situation in which students talk about their favorite seasons. This activity taught the students language points and also cultivated students' love of nature and life.)

Words and sentence patterns were presented in different forms and the students could grasp the key points and difficulties in the process of using English. Hence the students reviewed and consolidated the words and phrases that they have learned in this class.

Step Five: Homework

Listen and read the text for three times. And then describe pictures in simple sentences in groups.

After class reflection:

This class mainly taught students how to describe seasons through a series of created situations. While using English, students truly realized the communicative and practical function of language.

## Conclusion

Teachers in practice teaching should make full use of situational experiential teaching approach, give full play to students' principal position, create reasonable situation and improve the quality of teaching. It can be fully proved that the use of situational teaching method for the actual teaching of English is an effective teaching method. While implementing situational experiential teaching method in primary school English teaching, teachers can learn to respect students' emotional needs and pay attention to each individual students' emotion, better stimulating students' interest in learning English and improve their enthusiasm for learning English. The students can actively think and solve problems in situations. It is helpful for students to understand what they have learned (Yafen Hu, 2018). The students become the main body of the classroom. It enables most students to participate in the classroom activities and promotes the practical application of students' English.

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