Academic English Teaching for Postgraduates Based on Self-regulated Learning Environment: A Case Study of Academic Reading Course

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Received: October 29, 2015   Accepted: December 25, 2015   Online Published: April 25, 2016
doi: 10.5539/elt.v9n5p214         URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n5p214

Abstract

This study selects postgraduate students in the first grade as the participants, based on their needs analysis, classroom presentations and performance of assignments completion, through the methodology of case study, the results show that students at the university level even the graduate levels still struggle with academic English. Thus, this study focuses on foreign language teachers how to guide postgraduate students in academic reading course, so as to implement students’ self-regulated learning strategies and enhance their motivations, as well as how the students to adjust to experience and respond to the teaching process through the adjustment. Accordingly, we theoretically construct self-regulated teaching and learning environment, expectations for enlightenment to the teaching practices of academic English instructions, especially in reading academic journal articles in English. The future direction should be towards to assessing and applying the learning environment model.

Keywords: self-regulated learning, academic reading, case study, teaching model, language learning environments

1. Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that academic practices of learning and constructing knowledge are locally negotiated and constituted. In the contemporary global linguistic landscape, English is increasingly replacing local languages as the medium of instruction (MOI) in schools and Universities. This has, more than ever, necessitated the provision of Academic English as an integral element of education. Research into teaching model for the foreign language classroom is situated at the interface of motivation research and classroom practice. Teaching model can be defined as instructional interventions consciously applied by foreign language teachers to elicit, enhance, and sustain student motivated behavior, as well as protect it from competing (and thus potentially distracting) action tendencies (Guilloteaux & Do˘rnyei, 2008). No single motivational strategy can always motivate every learner in any situation because of the dynamic character of the classroom context. The effectiveness of a strategy is the result of the interaction between constellations of contextual variables, some of them probably culture-specific, and others culture-neutral. Such variables include approaches to learning and teaching, educational ideology, individual learners and teachers’ personality traits and emotional states, and the composition of the learner group (Cheng & Do˘rnyei, 2007; Do˘rnyei & Csíze’r, 1998). Different learning environments may either enhance or neutralize the effectiveness of some strategies, but research is needed into the specifications of these environments.

One of the fundamental goals of modern education is to develop students’ ability to lifelong learning. Compared to acquiring other knowledge, language learning is a very special psychological process in terms of the complex factors interacted with, and sometimes the special needs of the learner play their own initiative and creativity. One of the primary goals of foreign language teaching is no doubt that students should cultivate the autonomous learning ability. For a long time, even though the English teaching community has had much exploration on how to improve the English teaching quality through theoretical research and empirical studies, almost all the studies have always been around to start teaching the major task, the emphasis is teaching material and teaching methods, and ignore various constituent factors of the foreign language teaching environment, and ignoring the impact of psychological feelings and social relationships on learners. Thus, according to relevant learning
The traditional model of academic English teaching has many unavoidable drawbacks, and thus it cannot meet the needs of cultivating students’ self-learning ability, or satisfy their requirements for the input with the high quality and considerable quantity, so as to participate in the actual communication and that in academic activities in particular. Thus, in order to construct a new model of academic English teaching, the main points of this issue is not how many specific language teaching project established, the key lies in how to motivate students, how to cultivate students’ ability of self-learning, provide opportunities for self-study. To help students clear about the learning objectives, what teachers have to do is to help students gain the ability to be independently to achieve these goals. The subject of learning is student, especially for postgraduates’ academic language learning. Teachers in the classroom should mobilize the students’ enthusiasm, initiatives and requirements and teach them creatively organize and arrange for their own learning. Only in this way can we cultivate successful learners, foreign language teaching can meet the needs to real success for postgraduates’ academic enhancement purpose.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 The Definitions of Academic English

As pivotal changes keep on sweeping across over the world of higher education, tertiary-level academic English is encountering a period of agonizing professional transition. Conflict is a typical feature as teachers for academic English struggle to keep up their professional lives while working inside new administrative frameworks that embrace altogether different perspectives about the nature and purpose of foreign language education. As for the definition of academic English, Gillett’s interpretation is typical in that it is described as the ‘language and associated skills that students need to undertake study in higher education through the medium of English.’ (Gillett, 2004).

Hyland and Hamp-Lyons noted that academic English “… focuses on the specific communicative needs and practices of particular groups in academic contexts. It means grounding instruction in an understanding of the cognitive, social and linguistic demands of specific academic disciplines.” This targets the aim of teaching English not only to improve English-language proficiency, but also to equip students with communicative skills appropriate for engaging in various academic activities, such as being learning-active in lectures and seminars, participating effectively as learners in discussions, and giving oral presentations. Interest in academic English, and systematic involvement with academic English practices, has stretched far beyond Anglophone countries (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002). Goldenberg explains that academic English is a term that refers to more abstract, complex, and challenging language that will eventually permit you to participate successfully in mainstream classroom instruction. Academic English involves such things as relating an event or a series of events to someone who was not present, being able to make comparisons between alternatives and justify a choice, knowing different forms and inflections of words and their appropriate use, and possessing and using content-specific vocabulary and modes of expression in different academic disciplines such as mathematics and social studies (Goldenberg, 2008).

2.2 Self-regulated Learning Concept in Foreign Language Learning Context

Self-regulated learning (SRL for short, similarly hereinafter) is an important research subject in the field of education research. It has become an important topic in educational and psychological research over the last three decades (Bembenutty, 2011). SRL refers to the process for learners taking the initiative to adjust the cognition, emotion and behavior, including cognition, behavior and motivation in order to enhance the learning effect and achieve learning goals, which including elements of cognitive, behavioral and motivation in three areas (Zimmerman, 1990). Regarding the concept of SRL, it is important to distinguish the conceptions between broad and narrow angles. In a broad sense, learning is self-regulated if the learner is free to decide what, when, where and how to learn. This implies that most of the learning in academic settings, for instance, in schools and universities, is only partly self-regulated and partly teacher/instructor regulated or regulated by the affordances and requirements of the learning environment of which the teacher/instructor may be a part. As Boekaerts pointed out, an adequate model of self-regulated learning in the broad sense would have to consider how the achievement of imposed goals (related to the demands of the learning environment) as well as the achievement of personal goals is regulated by the individual (Boekaerts, 2002).

Self-regulated learners often have learning strategies and meta-cognitive theories under the guidance of the inherent characteristics of motivation. They are more likely than other students to have a good performance in the classroom, more excellent in academic performance. Self-regulated learning strategies include cognitive strategies, meta-cognitive strategies and motivational monitoring strategies. On the cognitive level, the
individual needs the specific operation and practice; and in the meta-cognitive level, specifically how to use individual policies in a given area according to ability, background, and mission requirements. Self-regulated learning is usually a “three-stage” cycle process, which includes planning, implementation and self-reflection (Zimmerman, 2001). For instance, learners in the planning stage mainly analyze the main tasks and personal motivation, which is also strategic planning process. In addition, to master a skill or successful completion of a task, learners need to choose the suitable method and situations or strategies.

2.3 The Research Progresses in Strategies for Foreign Language Learning

Learning strategies can be defined as goal-oriented action, but generally not mandatory. In other words, there is not a single or right strategy to help learners to achieve their goals. Since the action of the individual itself is constantly changing, sometimes it is possible to change the physical environment, and thus choose plans and strategies, along with the needs for continuous adjustment. Learning strategies should be “adjust measures to local conditions”, according to the actual situation, the individual characteristics and specific tasks involved to select. In essence, self-regulated learning needs to coordinate the relationship between better learning environment, learner characteristics and learning performance. Language learning strategies are the learner’s goal-directed actions for improving language proficiency or achievement, completing a task, or making learning more efficient, more effective, and much easier (Oxford, 2011b). Table 1 summarises important models and theories of learning strategies in the field of SRL research in the context of foreign language learning, which have been developed during a period and classifies the fruits of each of the representatives according to Oxford framework, so as to have a a more intuitive understanding of the progress of language learning strategies research related to SRL. Moreover, attempts towards clearer definitions of strategic learning, and towards more justifiable and qualitative instruments have been made to measure them.

Table 1. Models and theories of learning strategies in relation to SRL (Oxford, 2011a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Representatives</th>
<th>Major Models and Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Vygotsky</td>
<td>Learner self-regulation, arising partly from Vygotsky’s 1930’s sociocultural, ‘cognitive-historical’ work (in Russian), published in English translation in the West in the 1970s. Vygotsky described self-regulated, higher psychological processes (often now called ‘strategies’) such as analyzing, synthesizing, planning, monitoring, and evaluating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late 1970s</td>
<td>O’Neil and O’Neil &amp; Spielberger</td>
<td>O’Neil et al. emphasized the importance of three learning strategy types: ‘cognitive strategies’ (for cognitive information-processing and schema development), ‘metacognitive strategies’ (for executive control over cognitive strategies), and ‘affective strategies’ (for managing emotions and motivation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early 1980s</td>
<td>Holec</td>
<td>Holec employed the term ‘autonomy’ to refer to the L2 learner’s attitude of responsibility, and ‘self-direction’ to refer to the learning mode, situation, or techniques/strategies in which the attitude is manifested. Holec argued that L2 learners, especially in self-access centers, can make all major decisions about learning, from objectives through evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late 1980s</td>
<td>Dickinson and Stevick</td>
<td>Dickinson reversed the terms, using ‘self-direction’ for the L2 learner’s attitude of responsibility and ‘autonomy’ to describe the learning mode, situation, or strategies. In Stevick’s interview-based book, seven highly diverse learners employed a range of self-regulatory strategies and tailored these strategies to particular situations, goals, language areas, and languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994–1997</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Finding that many distance L2 learners lack confidence and self-management, White showed that these learners need to be taught metacognitive and affective strategies to function effectively in distance education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Representatives</td>
<td>Major Models and Events</td>
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<td>1998-2000</td>
<td>Cohen and Boekaerts, Pintrich &amp; Zeidner</td>
<td>Cohen distinguished between language use strategies and language learning strategies. He examined learning strategy instruction and assessment, through which teachers play significant roles in helping learners become more aware, autonomous, and proficient. Boekaerts, Pintrich &amp; Zeidner examined self-regulation in learning, psychology, health, and other areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2003</td>
<td>Brown Leaver and Vansteenkiste et al.</td>
<td>Brown offered a straightforward, strategic guidebook for self-directed ESL learners. Leaver outlined specific, individualized study plans for strategic, motivated, highly advanced learners in self-study or informal learning. Vansteenkiste et al., who applying self-determination theory, found that intrinsic motivation was tied to deep-processing strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2007</td>
<td>Chamot</td>
<td>Chamot discussed key issues and research regarding strategy instruction, such as the appropriate language for strategy instruction, and the integration or non-integration of strategy instruction into regular L2 instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2011</td>
<td>Chamot and Oxford</td>
<td>Chamot showed that the CALLA (Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach) model of strategy instruction and content-based L2 instruction resulted in significant gains in content knowledge and skills, English proficiency, and learning strategies. Oxford offered a new theory of L2 learning strategies that addressed definitional and ‘grain size’ problems and that integrated sociocultural and information-processing concepts. The logical framework included strategies and metastrategies for three dimensions (cognitive, affective, and sociocultural-interactive), along with innovative strategy assessment and strategy assistance in a range of settings.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

2.4 The Influence Factors of Self-regulated Learning in Academic English Teaching

Self-regulated learning theory argues that students are the subject of learning, and that learning is a voluntary action of individual students. In the teaching process, the teacher ought to fully mobilize the students’ cognitive, emotional, behavioral, physiological and many other factors involved, in order to give full play to the initiative of students, promoting active exploration and their development, and forming positive performance in self-efficacy. Self-regulated learning includes thoughts, feelings, strategies and plans in advance and continually adjust a series of actions, and ultimately set their own learning goals (Zimmerman, 1996). Self-regulated learning ability does not increase with age and natural development. Therefore, students need much support from the self-regulated learning environment, in order to gradually mature and become self-regulated learners. Self-regulated learning emphasizes the interdependence effect of objectives, content, process and evaluation between the four elements, thus focusing on regulation of student relations and interaction between these elements. Action, environment and the individual interacted with these actions, among them, the behavior and environmental influence each other. The learner is the main body of actively participated in the learning process and control the learning process, self-regulated learners learning behavior not only in the knowledge and skills of learning, but also in behavior, the formation of personality traits. For the academic English teaching, in the students’ self-regulated learning process, teachers should pay more attention to cultivating students’ will quality, mobilize students’ enthusiasm and initiative, cultivate students’ self-monitoring and meta-cognitive abilities. Students in the learning process should set goals and plans in the process of learning, and the learning process of self-monitoring and timely evaluation in the evaluation of constantly adjust strategies in order to achieve the best learning effect (Su, Fang, & Song, 2011). That is, it is possible to examine strategic learning both in terms of a learner’s self-regulation of the learning task, but also in terms of the cognitive and behavioural strategies they employ.

3. Research Method

3.1 The Participants and Their Situations Analysis

For postgraduate students in the first grade, most of them have experienced phase of undergraduate dissertation writing and graduation design, received some academic training, they have a general understanding of the scholarly journal articles. Furthermore, through the needs analysis and classroom observations of postgraduate students, it was found that they have academic requirements for English journal articles (especially their research
field for each one), to grasp the depth. However, their capabilities in reading and understanding of English academic papers only stay in the primary stage, their thinking methods such as logic thinking, critical thinking, creative thinking, etc. also need to be formed under the guidance of teachers. In view of this situation, the new teaching mode is in urgent need of design throughout the whole process of teaching and learning, which aims to mining and cultivate students’ creative thinking ability, the ability to explore the issue, independent research and development capacity and ability to cooperate.

3.2 A Case Study of Academic Reading Instructions for Postgraduates

The case study was composed of three sections. For each section, the teacher and all of the students were involved in the relative teaching and learning activities interacted with each other. In the first section, the teacher was required to understand and check the students’ pre-class preparation and completion of the task in the form of lectures and asking questions, to give priority guidance for the existing problems of students and feeling weak areas. In the second and third section, students with academic team as a unit, display reading and understanding of English journal articles, appraisal between peer students; The teacher offered immediate and effective review and feedback, and give the corresponding improvement suggestions.

In pre-class preparation, the teacher explained the basic structure of the English academic journal article, including the important parts and its content. Besides, the teacher offered the students two or three micro videos (about 10 minutes each), the theme was “A Time-Efficient Way to Read Academic Articles”, etc., while providing a sample article published in an academic journal. According to their disciplines and research directions, graduate students were asked to identify academic journals in related areas with high impact factors, and to select an article from their research field of study or topic of interest; In accordance with the lecture the teacher explained on the structure and content of the English academic articles, with the assistance of the micro video and text information provided by the teacher, each student independently finished the reading and translation (translation or “sight interpreting” all available), and are summarized. For example, some important information contained in the title, research methods, research instruments or materials, analysis of the results, discussion, and conclusion in different expressions and so on; Later students were divided into groups according to their academic interests, and each group made preparations before class and panel discussions as well as classroom presentation.

The second section is classroom presentation and review. Subject to interest (or similar professional) as the unit, set up a number of groups, each group member was less than 3 peers. Discussion based on each team member and group reading, the selected one of the papers, making Powerpoint slides courseware, quiz report of the group to read and understand the selected papers, each report for about 10 minutes; The reporters will firstly indicate article sources in their report, including the journal name, volume number, year, title, author, the main research areas of interest and other information, in order to study the subject in depth or observe the tracking research of these authors. Moreover, the reporters attempt to report the research themes, content, methods, findings and innovations, etc., as well as in a typical research paradigms and ways of expression, to make a simple assessment as the dual identities of readers and researchers of this paper; After each report is completed, the first (designated in advance) by the other team members to peer review, pointing out highlights and need to be perfect, followed by the questions of other peers about the contents of the report; and then the same group members to make their answers and comments to these questions which proposed by formulated group and other groups. For the teacher, to guide students to clarify the content and function of each part of the English articles, clarify some of the common terminology and concepts in related area; On the basis of the report by each group, combined with specified group reviews and other students’ questions, the teachers for timely completion of reviews, and point out the presence of advantages, bright spot and the understanding deviation as well as the direction for future improvement.

The third or final section is after-class consolidation. According to the evaluation of teachers and students to the issues and feedback raised in the review stage in the classroom, each team member make more objective understanding of the articles in the same group. Its own reality, to improve reading report, the final results will be presented with a Word document, together with the original papers be sent to the teacher for review again. For the teachers, to read the report revised by each member to make summative assessment, and arrange students began preparations for the next assignment.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 The Status Quo of Academic English Learning for Postgraduates

University students, especially those for whom English is not the first language or their major, can arrive at the university level and even the postgraduate levels still struggle with academic English. In addition, a large
number of our students were not considered English language learners and just got by, but they arrived at the university as English language learners who never developed the academic English they needed for higher education. Since the university is committed to an open-door admission policy, many of our students arrive ill prepared for the academic challenges that face them. The results confirm that that many English language learners do not develop academic language proficiency. The researchers then consider several factors that contribute to their poor performance. We need provide a number of suggestions for improving the academic performance of English language learners and struggling readers, giving examples from teachers who have worked successfully with these students.

4.2 Teachers’ Role in Language Course from the Self-regulated Learning Perspectives

In previous studies of self-regulated learning, researchers pay more attention to the students, and less attention to the role of teachers (Hilden, 2007). Numerous studies indicate that the use of self-regulated learning strategies and student achievement significantly correlated. Through the instruction and training of self-regulated learning ability is helpful to improve the academic achievement. Furthermore, studies have found that self-regulated learning process can be taught, and can lead to students’ motivation and performance improvement. How will the role of teachers (Hilden, 2007). Numerous studies indicate that the use of self-regulated learning strategies and student achievement significantly correlated. Through the instruction and training of self-regulated learning ability is helpful to improve the academic achievement. Furthermore, studies have found that self-regulated learning process can be taught, and can lead to students’ motivation and performance improvement. How will make teaching methods research into real classroom practice of this issue, and leading the researchers realized that the teacher as an important decision-makers in the context of teaching situation, plays an indispensable role in the implementation of education reform and innovation of teaching (Fullan, 1993). Training students to learn self-regulated learning skills, it largely depends on the ability of teachers, enthusiasm and opinions and so on. Although teachers cannot be certainly reach an expert level of understanding and skills, but they can provide students with a variety of strategies of self-regulation, and to show them how to monitor the process of learning, and how make positive attitude towards learning outcomes to help students find themselves learning the most useful content.

The foreign language classroom based on self-regulated learning, for teachers and students, it represents a new teaching paradigm. To a certain extent, the implementation of its success does not lie in the effectiveness of psychological sense, but in whether teachers are willing to accept it or not, and has made major changes in teaching methodology. In the self-regulated learning environment, teachers are the “leaders” of learning, to have a clear understanding of the students’ evaluation. In the process of teaching, teachers guide students in self-regulated learning environment, need to personally participate in planning, monitoring, reflection, and try to constantly revise practice. Many researchers found that only teachers themselves become self-regulated learners, show enough enthusiasm in learning different subject matter, rational use of teaching strategies to deal with complexity and difficulties in the process of classroom teaching, to show students a clear demonstration of their own to solve the problem methods and processes, in order to effectively help students become self-regulated learners. In the teaching process, teachers should also be combined with the contents of teaching, and depending on the situation of the students, organized students to learn the knowledge content of conceptual understanding, and on the basic principles, basic methods and the basic process and actively communicate with students.

Teaching is the process of sharing individual ideas and thoughts and the dialogue with each other, between teachers and students, between students and students and share their ideas and thoughts in the process. In the classroom teaching, teachers should create opportunities as much as possible to students through self-display, explore and discover the construction of individual knowledge. To design the structure of teaching, all the students can participate for the purpose of the use of learning materials and equipment, and have the opportunity to interact with teachers and peers. Training students not only to acquire self adjustment ability, but also must be based on the learning of the previous discussion of self adjustment mechanism and the comprehensive elements in cognition, motivation, behavior, and context plans, monitoring, control and reflection ability, especially on goal setting and self-efficacy, meta-cognition, attribution and other aspects of training, and not just for students to increase self-study time or task. Teachers guide students to absorb new knowledge through guiding students to communicate with each other, fostering collaborative team spirit, better access to knowledge and ability to problem-solving.

4.3 Constructing Self-regulating learning Environment for Critical Academic English Learning

Constructivist learning theory suggests that, in general, the learning environment is composed of four elements of language environment, collaborative learning, conversation communication and meaning construction. “Language environment” refers to the teacher-led, for the students to construct an authentic language environment. The main content of the instructional design to be considered is for students to create an appropriate language “environment”, which plays an important role in constructivist learning theory, and it is a necessary prerequisite for the construction of meaning. Research on the relationship between classroom learning
environment and self-regulated learning also shows that teachers should be through open, real situation tasks, establish a teaching environment highly characterized by self-regulated learning, to teach students in the field of strategic knowledge, demonstrate effective learning use strategies, organize materials and activities to support the use of strategies, and to provide effective support and practical opportunities through feedback, guidance and help students develop self-regulated learning skills and expertise (Zimmerman, 2011). Teaching environment construction based on self-regulated learning strategies is very urgent, but to a certain extent, a high level of teachers’ professional knowledge and teaching skills of its successful implementation is crucial.

When students choose their own topics, they can focus more closely on an area of interest and, they can present their research to the other students, offering diverse subjects or fields to learn about. This was the case in the practices of a Academic English reading class. Students were instructed to rely on their experience and interest when choosing a research topic from the academic journals, a collection of magazine and journal articles on medicine. This example reveals some advantages of student selection. One is that their choices may inspire other students to confront issues they have not previously considered. Another is that topics teachers may consider too subjective, may be more readily accepted when proposed by students. And, finally, teachers cannot always predict issues their students will find compelling. By contrast, there exist disadvantages for students’ self-selection. One was that the variety of topics excluded the possibility of in-depth, whole-class scrutiny of a particular area. Another disadvantage was that students who had less compelling reasons for choosing their topics seemed to pick randomly and were therefore not as engaged as others. That is, offering students a choice of topics does not guarantee that they will be strongly attached to the one they select. Despite these limitations, certain advantages emerged from self-selection. One is that when students initially shared their topic choices with the rest of the class, some asked for explanations of the choices, leading to productive discussion of unexplored questions and beliefs.

In spite of the fact that psycholinguistic methodologies perceive the significance of collaboration, they see teaching in terms of providing input and tend to concentrate on cognitive procedures and on the acquisition of specific linguistic features as opposed to seeing second language development as learning a social practice by utilizing the language in correspondence with different learners. This part consequently takes sociocultural theory as its starting point. Sociocultural theory joins individual mental procedures with the cultural, institutional as well as historical context, and underlines the role of cultural intervention in the development of higher psychological functions (for instance thinking, reasoning, self-awareness, or the use of signs such as language). According to Lantolf, three cultural factors play a fundamental role in this mediating process, namely activities (e.g. play, education, work), artifacts (including language and technology) and concepts. These cultural factors mediate the relationships between the individual, between people and the physical world, and between people and their inner mental worlds. Humans in all of their manifestations are organized in accordance with the various activities, artifacts, and concepts that they jointly construct through history. (Lantolf, 2006)

5. Suggestions

5.1 Needs Analysis and Rights Analysis for Critical Academic English Learner

The overarching goal of critical Academic English is to help students perform well in their academic courses while encouraging them to question and shape the education they are being offered. It is both pragmatic and critical, grounded in the demands students face but open to the possibility of changing them. The interplay between stability and change is theorized through the relationship between needs analysis and rights analysis. Needs analysis is critical Academic English’s method for collecting data about target requirements, as it is in traditional Academic English. Rights analysis is critical Academic English’s framework for studying power relations, building community, organizing students, and bringing about greater equality between language and content teachers. The most effective way to engage students might be to try a mix of teacher and student choice with whole-class selection of a theme as a third alternative. Each possibility has its benefits: firstly, teacher-generated themes allow students to fulfill externally imposed requirements, an essential component of an Academic English class whose students are in or will be in content classes where no choice is offered; Secondly, individual student’s choice allows for a wider selection of research areas and sharing of findings with others; and thirdly, whole-class selection of a shared topic requires democratic decision making, an important component of community building in a critical classroom. Critical Academic English engages students in the types of activities they are asked to carry out in academic classes while encouraging them to question and, in some cases, transform those activities as well as the conditions from which they arose. It takes into account the challenges non-native English speakers (NNES) face in their content classes while viewing students as active participants who can help shape academic goals and assignments rather than passively carrying them out. By encouraging students to consciously engage in academic life, it aims to increase their participation in the workplace, future academic life
5.2 Effective Practices to Support Academic English Teaching Based on Case Study

Based on the review of the research and the observations of model programs for struggling English language readers and writers (Freeman & Freeman, 2009), in accordance to Short and Fitzsimmons list nine effective instructional practices (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007) The above academic reading course case shows that teachers and students could incorporate all of these.

1). Integrate all four language skills—reading, writing, speaking and listening—into instruction from the beginning. The participants were involved in all four of the skills throughout the whole lessons. They read, they wrote, they presented, and they listened to the teacher and to one another during lectures, discussions, and sharing sessions.

2). Teach the components and processes of reading and writing. Since most of the students had developed basic decoding skills, the teacher showed them how to preview their reading, make predictions, paraphrase, and infer, also taught them the processes of writing, including brainstorming, drafting, and editing.

3). Teach reading comprehension strategies. The teacher lectured on academic reading strategies and the students took notes in the first section. As they read, the students practiced these strategies and then used terms such as context and strategy as they discussed the journal articles.

4). Focus on vocabulary and terminology development. The teacher continually worked with the students on vocabulary and terminology. The teacher always kept the vocabulary instruction in a context of academic atmosphere, often involving the students in reading the academic journal articles.

5). Build and activate background knowledge. The choice of a sample article was critical in activating background knowledge. The teacher had students brainstorm what they knew about fundamental structure and farmwork of an academic journal article before they read the text. In this way, the teacher helped them activate fundamental background knowledge of academic reading.

6). Teach language through content and themes. The teacher used the micro-video and sample academic journal article as the theme, and through that integrated unit of study, the teacher taught the students the literary content required by the standards, including finding textual evidence and using different resources, such as the academic database, libraries resources and new research materials by the linkage of previously existing sources from Internet.

7). Use the foreign language and mother tongue strategically. Through the preview, view, review strategy, the teacher took advantage of the students’ mother tongue, but separated the languages and avoided concurrent translation while presenting their reading works.

8). Pair the most advanced technology with existing interventions. The teacher used interventions suggested by Short and Fitzsimmons, including project-based instruction and heterogeneous student grouping in different subjects and research fields. For one of their projects, the students investigated many academic articles from various areas using the Internet and library as their sources. They also learned how to make a PowerPoint slide to present their ideas to other peers.

9). Motivate students through their various different choices in selecting from the vast of academic journals and articles. The teacher included different elements of choice throughout his or her teaching. Students usually could choose their partners in group for implementing their assignments.

6. Conclusion

In the fresh field of strategic language learning research, Rubin began to concentrate on the successful language learner and watched: the differential achievement of foreign language learners proposes a need to look at in subtle element what successful language learners utilize. In addition to the need of exploration on this topic, it is recommended that teachers can set out to help their less successful students to enhance their performance by giving careful consideration to learner strategies as of now seen as productive (Rubin, 1975). Rubin’s definition of language learning strategies is ‘the techniques or devices that a learner may use to acquire language’ (Rubin, 1981). A further definition proposed by other researchers is ‘the special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information’ (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990). Later research argued that learning strategies promote learning by aiding the acquisition, storage, and retrieval of information and also make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations’ (Oxford, 2001). Specialists in this field, in this manner, widely agreed on the theoretical benefits that learning strategy research accommodated to foreign language education.
This study is the direction many researchers in the field of strategic learning are moving in. In addition to the previous model (Rose, 2011), which merges elements of cognitive and memory strategies from SLA (Second Language Acquisition) and language cognition theory with motivation control and self-regulation theory, there have been movements in a similar direction. Lin and Oxford (2009) developed and applied a model of strategic learning that incorporated self-regulation into a framework that examined strategic learning from psychological and sociocultural theories from micro and macro perspectives. In addition to this, Oxford (2011) published her Strategic Self-Regulation model earlier. Another model, developed by Weinstein (2009) examines strategic learning from the perspectives of learner skills, learner will or motivation and self-regulation. The use of the term self-regulation in all four of these models makes Dörnyei’s impact on the shift of research into strategic learning clear. However, it is important to realize that models that incorporate theory from both areas in order to research a language learning task are still in their infancy, and thus research that applies these models to various language learning tasks are needed to develop them to their full potential (Rose, 2012).

This case model for postgraduates’ academic English reading instructions was divided into three stages: pre-class preparation, classroom presentation (review) and after-class consolidation. Teachers are the necessary guidance to students’ self-study, cooperation and explore ways of learning, which truly reflects the leading role of teachers, and students’ subject status. Therefore, this model was based on the knowledge level of graduate students, through the teacher’s guidance and interpretation, combining with the students to watch the lecture “micro” video and text data after the pre-class, through an independent inquiry of students, as well as their group learning and collaborative learning, complete understanding of English academic knowledge and absorption, and in the form of a “real” show reading practices. Finally, through comment between students and timely evaluation of teacher’s coaching and feedback, teachers and each student can actively participate in the whole teaching process, work together to build a “flipped classroom”, to enhance classroom interaction and collaboration between teachers and students and between students and students, which construct from the perspective of self-regulated learning environment.

Acknowledgments
This research was funded with financial support from the Dali University Youth Staff Research Fund Program (2008X49).

References


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