A Brief Study on Applying the Situational Teaching Approach into English Classes for Rural Primary Students

ABSTRACT

Students in rural primary schools have had the privilege of learning English in the recent years. However, the credibility and efficiency of instructors who teach the subject has been questioned since the teaching employs the "grant and accept" mode. This method of teaching limits the capacity of students to actively interact amongst themselves and with the teacher hence inefficiency. This paper exploits this loop and categorically analyses the situational teaching practice, which is a more efficient method of teaching that has been approved by the new curriculum, as a potential seal. This paper therefore focuses on pedagogy in English teaching with a special focus on primary students in rural areas. The aim of the study is to analyze how situational teaching can impact on student on student learning with the intent of recommending it as a better approach.

The article provides conceptual and theoretical frameworks as a background to depict the problem in rural schools and to analyze the research variables. The researcher uses situated cognition and learning theory, constructivism teaching theory, multiple intelligence theory. This ensures research reliability while validity is ensured through the researcher's use of questionnaire, tests and interview as research tools. Students and teachers in both schools that use situational teaching approach were used as the research sample in representation of rural schools which is the research population. Information obtained from the tools is used to describe the current situation of learning English in rural schools.

Research findings include both the pros and cons of situational teaching and this paper analyzes and summarizes the problems that face the application of situational teaching method in rural primary school English teaching, and analyzes the reasons for the existence of the problem. The paper provides recommendations to alleviate existing problems by providing corresponding improvement measures that will make situational teaching more applicable, reliable and efficient as a method of teaching English in rural primary schools. The researcher projects that with application of the recommendations there will be better quality of rural primary school English teaching which will prop up the professional development of primary school English teachers in rural areas.

Keywords: situational teaching; situated cognition theory; rural primary schools;

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Chapter 1 **Introduction**

1.1 The Research Background

The Chinese education system is gradually adopting English as a compulsory subject from primary level Three. Mandatory introduction of the subject since 2003 indicates that the Country has forecasted the importance of English thus the reason to introduce it into the curriculum in an elementary level of primary school (Luo, 2008). English class sessions are however fewer that those of other core subjects such as Mathematics and Chinese. This is ironical since not much reinforcement is provided on English as a subject yet its introduction in primary schools is aimed at helping the students gain a desirable proficiency of the subject and the language (Hu, 2007).

1.1.1 Importance of English Teaching in Primary School

English has been recognized as an official language globally being the 21st century where globalization is picking up faster. The world is becoming smaller each day and people interact with each other despite of their origin and nationality. This necessitates the need for a global language and English seems to serve the purpose (Hoa & Tuan, 2007). China is growing up spontaneously with regard to economies and infrastructure thus in no time it will develop into a super power. Recently, other countries outsource Chinese professionals as masses flock into China with the quest for education and career developments (Cheng, 2013). . This is evident that China, like other English speaking countries needs to support its citizens to learn English in order to open up more avenues for the country's growth. For this reason, the Ministry of Education implemented policies in the Education sector to introduce English in the curriculum as a compulsory language (Hu,

2007). Brightening the future generation of Chinese students is however faced with challenges include the mode of facilitation by teachers and students' enthusiasm to learn.

1.1.2 Primary School English Teaching in English New Curriculum Standard

The reform of basic education curriculum in our country advocates the teaching strategy of contact life, with the purpose of enriching the direct experience of students. The 2011 edition of New English Curriculum Standards for Primary Schools emphasizes that students should be able to apply English in their day to day lives without limitation (Cheng, 2013). . This means that they should have the power to communicate in English. Attaining efficiency in English as a language in schools therefore depends on students, who where mandated to create an environment with boundless opportunities to practice English language. It is therefore essential for students to use their experiences, practice, perceptions and participation to develop an effective learning strategy. The two-sided nature of the new curriculum also requires the teachers and school administrators to fashion a teaching environment that aligns with the students' real life experiences to ensure the language is applicable to as many situations and possible (Cheng, 2013). . It is mandatory that teachers integrate English learning into life experiences by employing skillful and natural approaches. Therefore, in primary school English teaching, it is very important to make good use of teaching methods so that students can perceive the actual life situations in the small classroom environment, and integrate them into the social environment so that they can truly apply what they learn.

1.1.3 Current Conditions of Primary School English Teaching

On the basis of the country attaching great importance to basic education in rural areas, the current situation of English teaching in rural primary schools is still not optimistic. There are still many problems to be solved in the teaching process. With the continuous deepening of the new curriculum reform, experiential teaching came into being to meet the needs of social development and new curriculum reform. Experiential teaching mainly aims to create teaching situations through teachers' intention and guide students to participate in experiential learning so that students can form new knowledge structures and promote students' development through personal experience (Hoa & Tuan, 2007).

According to Li (2007), the foundation of the primary school English learning in rural areas in China is poor, the teaching resources are relatively lacking, and the rural primary school English teachers lag behind in teaching concept. In view of the current situation of teaching, experiential teaching as a new type of teaching method highlights the students' subjectivity. According to the content of Compulsory Education English Curriculum Standard, the English curriculum in compulsory education should be aimed at all the students and embody the idea of taking students as the main body. In terms of teaching objectives, teaching content, teaching process, teaching evaluation and utilization of teaching resources, so we should consider the development needs of all students (Luo, 2008). Therefore, we must follow the laws of physical and mental development of rural pupils and learning characteristics, create teaching situation close to the students' actual life, stimulate students' interest, and create a harmonious learning atmosphere. Students should be made masters of learning to cultivate students' active participation in the sense of autonomous learning to meet the primary English curriculum objectives proposed by English Curriculum Standards so as to

enable students to develop and improve English language thinking ability, ability of using, cooperation and communication ability to enable rural primary school English teaching become rich and colorful (Luo, 2008).

1.2 The Research Purpose

Human beings build up their cognitive and social abilities at a tender age and their childhood experiences have a great impact on their personality, thinking capacity and moral development in the course of their lives. Students in primary schools are at their best stage of learning another language other than their native of first language (McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2017). Using this opportunity alongside an effective teaching method multiplies students learning capabilities. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to point up how situational teaching can be used to create student-friendly and an effective English teaching and learning environment.

Children have minimal life experiences and they are open to more life experiences and they are also curious to learn new things. English is controversial with too many rules that make the language subject to rejection by many students if not well administered. English courses are technical especially on the three key areas of study; literature, writing and reading. Literature changes from time to time making it uninteresting, writing involves a number of rules such as syllabication, punctuation and verb congregation while reading is highly associated with teasing due to different reading pace and heavy accents among students (Cook, 2016). Despite the children's ability to match up its nominal and automatic nature, teaching English by use of scenarios to stimulate the curiosity of students and stimulate students' motivation for knowledge boost effectiveness. Narrow social experiences and thinking capacity of primary school children makes the students unable to grasp abstract information (Zhang, 2011). Through the situational teaching

approach, teachers are able break down abstract information into a simpler form that can be embodied and visualized by the students. This includes teaching content by use of a variety of ways to concretely show the teaching content, such as multimedia, games and story situations to make the corresponding teaching content more concrete, interesting and vivid.

1.3 The Research Significance

1.3.1 Theoretical significance

This thesis is about the application of situational teaching in the rural elementary school English. The study provides empirical results and observation that can be used by the Chinese Education Ministry to formulate policies that will ameliorate teaching of English in rural primary schools. This study visualizes the actual situation in rural areas not only by providing theoretical support for implementation of the new curriculum reform in rural areas and development of basic education, but also by providing teaching and learning experiences these schools. Yuan and Shi (2014) argue that traditional teaching methods in rural primary schools are ineffective and the poverty levels and scanty resources in the schools make the situation worse. The study compares Traditional and Situational English teaching approach and presents findings which appraises the use of latter.

1.3.2 Practical significance

Currently, the level of mastery and use of English in China is wanting. Similarly, English teaching in primary schools is poor and this study is significant in pointing out the gaps that should be addressed. The teaching methods of teachers and students' learning methods tend to be more

traditional, which seriously affects the quality of teaching (Cai, 2014). The situational teaching method is the opposite of these traditional teaching methods and its implementation would be a scapegoat to ameliorating teaching and learning experiences (Sun, 2014). This study is therefore significant to students as it aims and improving their performance and to the teachers as it aims at improving their experiences and job satisfaction. Ideally, identification of problems in the traditional teaching method allows for adjustments in the curriculum since the study provides recommendations that would optimize situational teaching in rural primary school. This strategy will help in cultivating student interest in learning the language, boost their performance and knowledge and help tem communicate effectively with the environment.

1.4 Thesis framework

This thesis consists of five parts. Chapter one is introduction, which sets up the research background, the purpose and significance of the research. Chapter Two is literature review and it highlights the theoretical framework of the thesis. This introduces the related definitions and theoretical basis of situational teaching and research status at home and abroad. Chapter Three is research methodology, which illustrates the research questions, respondents, research tools including interview guide and questionnaire, and procedures. Chapter Four is data analysis and discussion. All the data are analyzed by SPSS19.0 and presented in tables. Chapter Five is the conclusion part. Major findings, limitations, useful implications and suggestions for future research are summarized in this chapter.

Chapter 2 **Literature Review**

2.1 The Research on Situational Teaching Approach

2.1.1 Definition of Situational Teaching Approach

Situational teaching is a pedagogy that requires teachers to apply their skills and creativity to bring out an image out of texts during learning (Li, A, 2011). This entails creating concrete scenes that may arouse students' emotion and attitudes that help in creating students' learning experiences. The approach originated from the Palmer's oral teaching method and it gained popularity when a British scholar, Hornby, endorsed the practice (Zhang, 2011). Britain embraced the practice and introduced it in its education system between 1930s and 1960s. China adopted the practice in 1970s and has been using the approach in teaching the core subjects including Chinese and Mathematics.

Situational teaching has a significant impact to students' future life and role in the society. The experiences help to further refine and process educational content and respond to the needs and expectations of the society (McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2017). Integration of class work with activities such as role playing, vivid portrayal of language, class games, poetry recitation, painting, gymnastics, tourism, sightseeing, and music appreciation creates a concrete image of the situation. The aftermath of such a situational approach is instilling subtle influence to students making the learning more quality.

2.1.2 Features of Situational Teaching Approach

Situational teaching approach manifests as a double function system; cultivating function and

enlightenment function. According to Chu (2010) the cultivating function manifests when situational teaching nurtures students emotionally and purifies their feelings. Education is discipline that involves alteration of one's psychological state with the aim of capacity building. In situational teaching, students' ideological consciousness is nurtured, giving them a good influence. This function of situational teaching acts as a filter that purifies people's feelings making them sublimated (Li, A, 2011). It eliminates the negative elements of emotion and retains the positive elements. This purified emotional experience is more effective in assistive cognitive function in terms of accommodation, motility, infectivity, enhancement, orientation, adaptability and signaling.

The enlightenment function of situational teaching provides students with a good hint or inspiration. Richards and Rodgers (2014) argue that the socialization of man forms the "sum of all social relations." This process of conversion from natural persons to social ones is in fact entirely the result of a combination of environmental, social, family, school, ethnic and geographical factors. Some of these influences have been perceived by us, but more often we have been unknowingly influenced by us. Bulgarian clue scientist G. Louzanov pointed out: "We are taught and educated in the environment we live in, and only for the purpose of teaching and educating them" (Rogers, 2015).

Certain elements of situational teaching provide some clues to the original cognitive structure of the person, and through the internal integration of thinking, people will either realize or create new cognitive structures (Chu, 2010). Clues provided by the situation serve as a wake-up or inspirational wisdom. For instance, a person who is in a certain problem or a situation can be inspired by a certain reminder or encounter something to solve the problem smoothly.

2.1.3 Advantages of Situational Teaching Approach

Scholars have conducted empirical researches on situational teaching approach and its impact on teaching and learning. According to Yu (2012) situational teaching approach creates a condition, physical and psychological, favorable for teaching and learning. In such an environment, students are motivated to learn and they are aroused in the pleasure of inquiry. As a result, learning activities are transformed from passive into self-need, an essential initiative towards acquiring desirable quality education.

In addition, situational teaching optimizes the learning process. Students are able to manipulate their perceptions on education and embrace it as something constructive behooving the perception that education is torturous and tough (Szeto, 2015). Ideally, situational teaching helps students to make out textbooks as tools that provide knowledge in an aesthetic fashion. Li (2018) consents that listening analysis is a multifaceted feeling that requires efforts more than just attention thus better teaching experiences aggravate students' enthusiasm to learn hence better performance.

Further, situational teaching approach deepens the outcomes of teaching and learning (Li, A, 2011). Cognitive capacities are improved since in the pleasures of creation, situational teaching naturally co-operates with the interaction between the two hemispheres of the brain whose integration optimizes their functionality (Pennington, 2014). Therefore, depending on situational strategies is essential in transforming the memory of the recurrence into a flexible use of knowledge.

The application of situational teaching in the education system widens students' knowledge on modernization and globalization. The teaching approach involves activities that make students cognizant with their environment and the world at large. As a results, students' capacities to balance

the development of two signal systems; variable closed readouts are open-ended broad-based storage, are widened (Pennington, 2014).

2.2 Related research on Situational Teaching Approach in China and Abroad

2.2.1 Related Researches Abroad

Taking a panoramic view of the domestic and foreign research status, widespread attention has been given to situational teaching method in the field of education. The advent of relating education to situation was pioneered by an American philosopher Dewey, who came up with the ideology that "Thought is originated from situations which are related to direct experience" (Dan & Cai, 2012). His assertion is that situational teaching method ties together the process of teaching and learning, and thinking.

Phennington (2014) studied the concept of the Direct Method during the 1890s. This is a natural method of learning that advocates students to learn foreign languages alongside their native languages at elementary levels. The model should be facilitated by intuitional means such as material objects, pictures, gestures, movements and scenario simulation, in order to cultivate language thinking by making students create direct link between language and material objects (Jones, 2010). This was a great innovation to first use situation in teaching foreign languages.

A more detailed explanation of the application of situational teaching in the United Kingdom was presented in 1920s. The approach was known as Situational Language Teaching and its applicability was based on facilitating the basic structure of the target language through fostering the development of oral ability thus making full use of the situation (Kozan & Richardson, 2014). This approach also encourages the use of meaningful simulated situations in teaching.

Since then, with the progress and development of science and technology, Audio-visual Method emerged in the 1950s in French. This method requires extensive use of slide, movies and other equipments to create a variety of language situations and organize listening and speaking exercises. According to Huang and Chiu (2015) audio-visual method lays stress on the value of language situations, which greatly enriched the situational teaching method.

In the 1960s, Suggestopedia, which was derived from the Bulgarian psychologist Georgi Lozano, enhanced the development of situational teaching to a new level. Through elements such as relaxing music, vivid and interesting drama and attractive games a pleasant situation is created in the classroom teaching (Rogers, 2015). This stimulates students' learning interest and intention because they learn happily. The approach also allows for an interaction between students' emotion and reasoning by giving a full play to the potential of the brain hence achieving the unexpected teaching effect. Huang and Chiu (2015) believe that the external environment extremely impacts on students' leaning capacities and situation creation and application is a means of implementing Suggestopedia teaching. It was the onset of combining the creation of situation and emotional effects, which made significant progress in situational teaching.

According to Cook (2016) the Communicative Approach arose in the 1970s in Europe, which emphasizes the authenticity of language materials, which is to say，the teaching materials are selected from real life and/or closely related to the real life. The research also avows that teaching activities are organized around communication tasks that are proposed in the real life. In this way, the teaching process is a communicative process and the basic principle of the communication is to learn the language in the situation and use it in the situation.

In an essay about Situated Learning Perspectives published by Hilary Mclellan (Cook, 2014) in 1996, the author uses collective research results of situated cognition and learning theory. This

research is a breakthrough as it brings innovation into situational teaching. Students are provided with situations by use of computer. Further, Hilary Mclellan endorses that classroom teaching evaluation case study, and the theoretical research and practical research on situational teaching have been applied gradually in education research (Cunningham, 2014). These include basic education, advanced education, adult education and vocational education, which is an inevitable requirement of social progress. In the current world, creating situation on the basis of constructivism teaching theory in the network environment is popular in the field of education.

In recent years, studies by some foreign scholars show the positive function of authentic situation in language learning. Richards and Rodgers (2014) suggest that the critical characteristics of authentic activities is key in achieving authenticity and argue that tasks that do not mirror real life activities have negative effects on students' development of robust knowledge. Brown (2004) explores the nature and effectiveness of contextualization as a way to improve outcomes for academically underprepared college students. Practitioners who use the method of contextualization observe positive results and the available quantitative evidence indicates that it has the potential to increase achievement. Guevara, D.& Ordonez, C. (2013) describe that the kindergarten teachers used a variety of gestures, especially role-playing, reading stories and singing songs and their impact on the students' attitude towards the English class and on their learning was outstanding. They revealed that the students became enthusiastic and active and improved their oral skills considerably.

2.2.2 Related Researches at Home

Zhang, Q. (2018) points out that the brain function of children, mobilized and fully utilized by traditional instillation teaching, is only a mechanical, emotionless and connected part that is very

unfavorable to promoting children's development. To overcome the cumbersome, one-sided and inefficient shortcomings of English teaching in primary schools, Fu (2014) endorses the focus on the development of children from the perspective of whole-body teaching. In the primary school English classroom teaching, it is possible and plausible to adopt the teaching method of "creating situations".

Zhao Lihong (2013) uses multiple intelligence theory as a theoretical tool, uses qualitative research methods, and through in-depth children's English classroom teaching, catches typical teaching cases and makes careful observation and in-depth analysis of the excitement level and intelligent active status of students during the process of situational teaching. Discovering, motivating, and invoking student-related intelligence has a direct effect on improving and maintaining their high levels of excitement, and it is of special significance to create a teaching environment that is full of pleasures, interests and challenges to enable students to achieve an ideal learning state (Li, 2018). The level of excitement of students provides useful enlightenment and provides a reference method for mobilizing students' multiple intelligences to promote English teaching.

Further, Li Zhiying (2016) affirms that English is a linguistic subject. Therefore, the purpose of learning English is not to simply understand English knowledge, but rather to develop students' ability to use spoken English to communicate. Primary school students are sensual decision rational, so in daily primary English teaching, we should make reasonable use of various teaching methods and teaching aids, arouse students' interest in learning (Fu, 2014). Situational teaching method has unique advantages in primary school English teaching. By creating appropriate teaching situations, teachers can not only arouse students' enthusiasm for learning English, but also provide students with the opportunity to communicate in English proficiently.

Zhao Tingting (2017) provides a sentiment that China's innovation and development of education invokes an enrichment of teaching methods constantly. In primary school English teaching, the application of situational teaching method has promoted the improvement of primary English teaching efficiency. Under the requirements of the new curriculum standards, primary English teachers need to use innovative teaching methods to stimulate primary school students' enthusiasm for learning, guide primary school students to conduct their own learning, and voluntarily devote themselves to primary school English learning activities.

Shao Xiaoxia (2017) further affixes that the transformation of knowledge, the change of learning styles, the update of teaching media and the expansion of teaching resources in the digital era call for the transformation of primary and secondary English teaching methods. The key to change lies in paying close attention to the needs of English learning subjects and using digital resources to build an open exchange platform (Jia, 2018). In addition, implementation of the principle of "two-way courses that are both instrumental and humanistic," and promoting exchanges and cooperation with "leading" and "subjective" promotion is essential in facilitating education as the driving force, based on how the presentation modes of 'traditionalization' and 'digitization' complement each other (Shao Xiaoxia, 2017). Ideally, with the teaching contents of 'textual resources' and 'digital resources' as the carrier, the strategy is to promote English classroom teaching in primary and secondary schools.

2.2.3 Summary of Related Researches

To sum up, in the past ten years, the academic research on situational teaching in English teaching has made some achievements in terms of quantity and quality. The main focus is on the cognition and importance of situational teaching and its application in English teaching Application

and other aspects, which provides a broad idea for the application of situational teaching in English teaching of rural primary schools. From related researches on teaching methods both home and abroad, it is conclusive that situational teaching provides a rich environment that invokes empathy and resonance emotions amongst students. Further, the approach enhances wisdom and enlightenment that emanates in the form of polymorphism and multi-thinking. As such, students are triggered to learn quickly and deeply by their interests and feelings. However, after deeper analysis, there are also some shortcomings in the process of research, which are mainly reflected in the following aspects:

First of all, the research is fragmented, and there is no systematic and comprehensive discussion of the situational teaching method from a holistic point of view. Furthermore, although most scholars have studied the application of situational teaching methods, most of them are based on theoretical research and carried out. There are not many situations in which the situational teaching model explores and conducts empirical research independently. In particular, no specific research has been done to apply the situational teaching method to English teaching in rural primary schools, which deserves our attention and putting it into practice. This study attempts to make up for the above research deficiencies, based on the existing research, a systematic and comprehensive study of rural primary English situational teaching.

2.3 Theoretical foundations of Situational Teaching Approach

2.3.1 The communicative theory

The communicative theory was developed by Davito who uses his work on Communication Science to explain its relation with the practice of teaching English (Li, J, 2011). English teaching in

China is aimed at making its people able to communicate using the language. The theory refers to communication to three perspectives. First, communication entails a series of activities. This relates to situational teaching approach which involves multifaceted class activities and engagements such as storytelling, audiovisuals and games. Second, the theory relates communication to an interaction in that it can only be facilitated by two or more people and never a single person. Situational approach in English teaching compels students to interact with each other as they learn. This is contrary to traditional teaching methods which focus on performance. The third aspect of the theory is the continuity of communication. It is through communication that people interact.

Situational teaching approach focuses on bringing imagery in learning to ensure students understand what is being taught through vivid situations. Based on the communicative theory, the approach empowers students to learn English and use it and for that reason, the approach advocates for realism in speaking, reading, hearing and writing the language (Cao, 2017). Students' enthusiasm to learn makes them participate actively in class thus they communicate to each other and help each other learn the language in the process of teaching.

2.3.2 Behaviorist theory of learning

The behaviorist theory explains that learning processes have more significant impact to the outcomes than the conditions of learning (Shao, 2017). This has been regarded as the foundation of Situation Language Teaching. There are three key processes in the approach; knowledge and material reception, cognitive action on the material through repetition and application of the knowledge of material in real life situation to become a habit. Essentially, the theory implicates that people form behaviors out of learning and they are taught between good and bad during the process to filter their habit formation into positive.

Situational teaching approach is facilitated by the three tenet of the behaviorist theory. A fail in one of the processes jeopardized that efficacy of teaching and learning processes. Specially, teachers who use situational teaching pass knowledge through the three processes. The teacher passes information orally to the students who are at the receiving end, the realistic environment created by the teacher through images allows the students to use their cognitive skills to sink the knowledge and the interactions in class through activities facilitates the third process, practice and habit formation (Yuan & Shi, 2014).. Situational approach thus aligns with the assertion that giving primacy to analogy over analysis can project learning of English.

Chapter 3 Research Design

3.1 Research Hypotheses and Questions

3.1.1 Research Hypotheses

Based on the aim of the research and support studies in literature review and research theories, this study aims at testing the following hypotheses:

Situational English teaching approach can improve the interest of rural pupils in learning English.

Situational English teaching approach can improve teaching and learning outcomes in rural primary schools.

It is plausible to use Situational Teaching Approaches as a way of improving English proficiency for students in rural primary schools.

3.1.2 Research Questions

Based on the research hypotheses, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

Can Situational English teaching approach improve the interest of rural pupils in learning English?

Can Situational English teaching approach improve teaching and learning outcomes in rural primary schools?

Is it plausible to use Situational Teaching Approaches as a way of improving English proficiency for students in rural primary schools?

3.2 Research instruments

3.2.1 Participants

The participants of the study were 3 primary English teachers from three primary schools in Xingtai and 30 students from classes of Grade Five in each school. Thus, the study used a sample size of 93, 3 of which were English teachers and 90 were primary school students with similar English level. 60 students (38 male and 22 female) and 2 primary English teachers (1 male and 1 female) formed the experimental group while 30 students (18 male and 12 female) and 1 female primary English teacher formed the control group. Different characteristics of the two sample strata were similar in both control and experimental groups.

3.2.2 Data collection and instruments

1. Questionnaires

The study used both close-ended and open-ended questionnaire questions to enhance uniformity of the responses for structured questionnaire with a large number of respondents, covering a larger geographical region in a cost-effective manner, despite its likelihood of socially undesirable responses to certain questions and misinterpretation of the questions (Creswell, 2014). The questions included a 5-likert scale with based on Daly and Miller's (1975) recommendations. This tool was used to capture complex aspects and the questions were fashioned to capture different dimensions of the study as recommended by the Writing Apprehension Test developed by Daly and Miller (1975). The questionnaires had 15 questions from three aspects of attitudes towards learning English, impact of situational teaching approach on student results and students take on situational teaching. The model also ensured data reliability and credibility.

A single set of 90 questionnaires was designed for 90 primary students to check whether students in the experimental class have more positive affective factors than those in the control class towards English learning. The questionnaire was administered twice, before the experiment and after the experiment on a test-retest basis with an interval of 14 days to gauge the variability with reference to Standards of English Curriculum and Bloom's taxonomy.

2. Interview

In order to get knowledge of primary school English teachers' views and attitudes towards situational teaching, the researcher interviewed 3 English teachers from three primary schools in Xingtai. The interview sessions were guided by an interview schedule with three questions testing on effectiveness of situational teaching with regard to students' interest, teaching and learning outcomes and if the approach is applicable.

3.3 Research Procedure

The study was conducted in 20 weeks consecutively whereby situational teaching method was applied in the experimental sample set and the traditional teaching method was used in the control sample set. However it was progressive in four significant stages.

3.3.1 Stage 1- Pre-test

The pre-test was carried out before the experiment, during the first two weeks of the research, with the purpose of testing whether there were any differences in students' English level between the experimental class and the control class. It was designed by the researcher according to the knowledge that the participants had learned in Grade Five. Combined Standards of English Curriculum with Bloom's taxonomy, a questionnaire designed for students in both experimental and

control sample sets on the basis of theoretical and practical research of recognized scholars was administered. The questionnaire was used to get an understanding of students' affective factors toward English learning before the experimental teaching. The three teachers of English were interviewed to gauge their perspectives about the state of English teaching. Interview and questionnaire data were collected and analyzed.

3.3.2 Stage 2- Implementing experimental teaching

During the third week into the study and the school semester, the situational teaching approach was administered to the experimental sample set. Teachers used technology to demonstrate and make English classes more vivid and lively. The learning environment was modified into an interface that allowed communication and discussion as students were enthusiastic to participate. Contrary, the control sample set continued using the traditional teaching methods without any deviation. The experimental period lasted 15 weeks into the research period.

3.3.3 Stage 3- Data collection.

In order to get a better understanding of the perspectives of teachers about situational teaching method, on the 18th week of the experiment, the researcher carried on an interview with the 3 teachers of English from three primary schools in Xingtai. This was at the beginning of the second semester in the Chinese academic year. In the interview, the researcher conducted a face to face conversation with respondents mainly about the impact of situational teaching on students' interest, listening and speaking ability and teaching efficiency in primary English teaching. The teachers' answers to the questions were recorded and summarized. Similarly, the researcher administered questionnaires to the 90 students and they were filled in the presence of the researcher who would

explain further what the questions asked for and also help students who cannot write to fill the questionnaires through an interactive interview.

3.3.4 Stage 4-Post-test

After 20-week experiment, the post-test was given to students in both experimental sample set and control sample set respectively in order to check whether situational teaching improved students' English score more significantly. The Same questionnaire designed for students was used once again. It was answered by students in both experimental and control sample sets after the experiment for the second time. Post-test and questionnaire data were collected and analyzed.

Chapter 4 Data Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Analysis and discussion of pre-test and post-test

The questionnaire was used to analyze whether situational teaching can change students' emotional attitudes toward English learning. The same questionnaire was used twice with one time before the experiment and the other time after the experiment. 90 questionnaires were distributed to 90 students in five minutes before the same class hour ended on the same day, 90 valid questionnaires were collected. In order to ensure the accuracy and operability of the experiment, students in the two classes were tested before the experiment to check whether there are any significant differences in English score between the control class and the experimental class before the experiment. The full mark of the test paper is one hundred. The exam results in the spring term in 2017 were collected and analyzed by the software SPSS as follows

There were 15 questions in the questionnaire from three aspects of interest in English, interest towards learning English and confidence, learning and teaching outcomes and students' proficiency in English. The marking system of the questionnaire was measured with five points in the Likert Scale (l. Strongly disagree; 2. Disagree 3.Uncertain 4. Agree 5.Strongly agree). Each question has five options and each option from A to E scores 1 point, 2 points, 3 points, 4 points, 5 points in turn. Te researcher analyzed and calculated the mean score as shown in Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 below. In all the analysis, a $\beta = 0.05$ confidence level was used.

	The first time		The second time	
	Control Class	Experimental Class	Control class	Experimental class
Mean score	2.41	2.49	2.61	3.25

Table 1: Results of the survey about students' interest in English

Table 1 represents an average score of pre-test and post-test results of both experimental and control groups. The figures are a representation of students' interest in English. Data from Table 1 shows that the mean score before and after the experiment for the control sample set is 2.41 and 2.61 respectively. There is a positive change of 0.2. In the experimental sample set the mean score before and after the experiment are 2.61 and 3.25 respectively thus a positive deviation of 0.64. The deviation margin in the experimental sample set is bigger than that of the control set indicating that more students in the experimental class embrace English than students in the control set. Therefore, using situational teaching make students more interested in English.

	The first time		The second time	
	Control Class	Experimental Class	Control Class	Experimental Class
Mean Score	2.36	2.37	2.43	3.35

Table 2: Results of the survey about students'performance and attitude in learning English

Table 2 above presents average scores of pre-test and post-test results of both experimental and control groups on student's performance and attitude in learning English. The results from Table 2 show a positive deviation of 0.07 that is from a score of 2.43 to 2.36, in the control froup and a

positive change of 0.98, that is, from 2.37 to 3.35 in the experimental class. This data set shows that students in the experimental class that used situational teaching showed an improvement in performance in English courses compared to students in the control class that used traditional learning methods. Further, students in the experimental group were more vibrant and had a positive attitude in English. Therefore, situational teaching can improve the efficiency of attending classes and change students' attitude towards learning English significantly.

	The first time		The second time	
	Control Class	Experimental class	Control class	Experimental class
Mean score	1.70	1.77	1.76	2.24

Table 3: Results of the survey on plausibility of situational teaching approach

Table 3 above presents average scores of pre-test and post-test results of both experimental and control group on students take on the situational method of teaching and if it is recommended. Data from Table 3 shows that the mean score before and after the experiment for the control sample set is 1.70 and 1.76 respectively. There is a positive change of 0.06. In the experimental sample set the mean score before and after the experiment are 1.77 and 2.24 respectively thus a positive deviation of 0.46. The deviation margin in the experimental sample set is bigger than that of the control set indicating that students in experimental group recommend the application of situational teaching in English unlike students in the control group.

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test of experimental class -	83.8667	15	6.28907	1.62383
	Pre-test of control class	82.8000	15	6.77390	1.74901

Table 4: Paired-Sample Statistics of the experimental and control class in the pre-test

Table 4 shows that the mean of experimental and control classes is 83.87 and 82.8 respectively hence a difference of 1.07. This implicates that students in the experimental group gained the aspects of situational teaching that are being tested by the study i.e. student interest, output and recommendation.

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	S.D.	S.E. Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the [Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-test of experimental class - Pre-test of control class	1.06667	5.65012	1.45885	-2.06226	4.19560	.731	14	.477

Table 5: Paired Samples Test of the experimental and control class in the pre-test

Table 5 provides more data to support Table 4. The lower limit and upper limit of 95%

confidence interval of the difference are -2.062 and 4.196 respectively and has a significant (p= .000) difference, which shows that there is no significant difference between the two variables. Significance possibility of two-tailed t-test is 0.477> 0.05, which also suggests that there is little obvious difference between the two variables. Therefore, the statistics can support the comment that: there was no significant difference in the score of English between the experimental group and the control group before the experiment.

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std.Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test of experimental class	83.8667	15	6.28907	1.62383
	Post-test of experimental class	90.0000	15	4.81070	1.24212
Pair 2	Pre-test of control class	82.8000	15	6.77390	1.74901
	Post-test of control class	83.4000	15	6.67404	1.72323

Table 6: Paired-Sample Statistics of the experimental and control class in the pre-test and post-test

From Table 6 above, the mean of the experimental class in the pre-test and in the post-test is 83.87 and 90 respectively. The mean in the two tests differs by 6.13. This data is further analyzed in Table 7 below.

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					95%Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	S.D.	S.E.Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-test of experimental class post-test of experimental class	-6.13333	4.59606	1.18670	-8.67855	-3.58812	-5.168	14	.000
Pair 2	Pre-test of control class - post-test of control class	-.60000	2.74643	.70912	-2.12092	.92092	-.846	14	.412
Pair 3	Post-test of experimental class -post-test of control class	6.60000	7.34652	1.89686	2.53163	10.66837	3.479	14	.004

Table 7: Paired Samples Test of the experimental and control class in the pre-test and post-test

Table 7 shows that the lower limit and upper limit of 95% confidence interval of the difference are -8.68 and -3.59 respectively and does not indicate a significant (p= .000) difference, which signifies the presence of significant differences between the two variables. Significance possibility of two-tailed t-test is 0.000<0.05, which also suggests that there are great differences between the

two variables. The data indicate that there are significant differences in English score between the pre-test and the post-test in the experimental class. That is to say，students in the experimental class make great progress after situational teaching.

Further, the mean of the control class in the pre-test and in the post-test is 82.8 and 83.4 respectively. The mean in the two tests differs only by 0.6. The lower limit and upper limit of 95% confidence interval of the difference are 2.12 and 0.92 respectively and with a significant (p= .000) difference. Significance possibility of two-tailed t-test is 0.412>0.05, which suggest that there is little difference between the two variables. The above analysis proves that there is no significant differences in English score between the pre-test and the post-test in the control class. This is an indication that students in the control class make less obvious progress after traditional teaching.

As shown in the tables above, in the post-test, the mean of the experimental class is 90.0, which is much higher than that of the control class 83.4. The lower limit and upper limit of 95% confidence interval of the difference are 2.532 and 10.668 respectively and does not indicate a significant (p= .000) difference. The significance possibility of two-tailed t-test is 0.004<0.05, which mean there are significant differences between the English scores of the two classes. The data makes it evident that situational teaching approach can improve student interests, performance outcomes and plausibility.

In conclusion, the data show that the score of each question in the experimental class is higher than that in the control class after the experiment, which suggests the fact that situational teaching is more conductive to the development of students' positive emotional attitude. Students in the control class think there is no obvious change in their interest and attitudes towards learning English using traditional teaching methods before and after the experiment. They think traditional teaching method can hardly improve their listening and speaking skills. And students in the experimental

class think their interest and attitude change obviously before and after the experiment. Through situational teaching, they have more positive learning attitude and become more interested and confident in learning English.

4.2 Analysis and discussion of the interview

In order to get a better understanding of the perspectives of teachers about situational teaching method, the researcher has also carried on an interview with teachers in terms of its impact on students' interest, listening and speaking ability and teaching efficiency. Six teachers of English were interviewed using an interview guide which was developed according to Tompkins' (2004) three stages of process writing: pre-writing, writing and post-writing. The interview questions included;

1. Are you cognizant with the difference between traditional teaching methods and Situational Approach teaching method?

2. Do you enjoy teaching using your current method of teaching? Why?

3. How do your students behave in class? Are they passive or active with reference to participation in class activities and do they show the zeal to learn?

4. Which are some of the activities that take place in your class and what tools do you use while teaching?

5. How do you perceive English? What is the scope of its importance compared to Chinese as a native language?

6. What is the proficiency level of communication of your students? How has your teaching method contributed to this?

7. How do your students perform in class and how satisfied are you with the performance. Do

you think you provide an equitable opportunity for great performance?

8. Would you recommend your current teaching method as the most effective way of teaching? Why?

All the six respondents agreed that the teaching effect of situational teaching method is better than that of traditional teaching method. With reference to Q1, the respondents agreed to know the difference between traditional and situational teaching however theoretically. None of them had employed the situational strategy during the pre-test however, teachers in the experimental group agreed to have practiced situational teaching during the post-test. This indicates that people have an idea of situational teaching strategy but they seem less motivated and empowered to use it in the Chinese education system (Szeto, 2015).

There were different opinions from the respondents with reference to Q2. During the pre-test, five teachers responded that they do not enjoy teaching using traditional method while one of the respondents agreed to be comfortable with the traditional teaching method. However, after the experiment all respondents in the experimental group affirmed that they enjoyed teaching using the situational method because it was more intriguing and makes the class lively. Respondents in the control group reported that they did not enjoy teaching in using their method after the experiment with reasons being slow grasping of content, poor performance and defiance among students.

Responses to Q3 during the pretest were that students are passive and they act like they are being forced into learning English across all respondents. However, after the experiment, respondents who used situational teaching approach reported that students are active, inquisitive and curious to learn more. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), situational teaching can improve students' interest in learning English to a great extent.

During the pretest, the respondents identified text books as their teaching tools according to

Q4. Further, activities that take place in their classes include reading and writing to test oral and writing skills of the students. However, there was a change in response with the respondents in the experimental group after the experiment. They reported that class activities included storytelling, audio visual sessions, and outdoor activities such as sight-seeing and literature plays such as riddles. Moreover, they used tools such as movies, to facilitate learning. Arguably, providing vivid images and fostering a continued virtual situation bring students into a series of stories making them enjoy learning (Pennington, 2014). This promotes non-intelligence factors development in students. The difference in class participation emanates from situational teaching that make students interested in learning the language.

With reference to Q5, all respondents reported that English is a language that serves as a breakthrough for Chinese people to socialize and relate internationally. Therefore, there is need to advocate for its mastery however this should not be ground for extinction of Chinese. English is not only beneficial as a language but also as a culture thus there is more to learning it other than having the power to communicate (Li, J, 2011).

Traditional teaching methods limit students to grasping content for the sake of examinations thus poor proficiency, that is, writing and reading (Q6). This is the opinion of all respondents in the study before the experiment. However, during the post-test interview respondents in the experimental group applauded situational teaching method as the reason behind better English proficiency among students. Many students are intermediate and proficient English communicators. Situational teaching contributes to attainment of better proficiency since it integrates reading, listening, self expression and logical communication. McKay and Bokhorst-Heng (2017) asserts that situational teaching approach not only cultivates students' listening and speaking skills but also cultivates students' communicative competence on a certain language basis and can foster and

improve students' listening and speaking abilities.

All Respondents responded that students' performance in English is below average during the pretest (Q7). After the experiment teachers in the experimental group reported that their students improved significantly. Students not only performed well in English tests but also embraced the skill of communicating with their peers in English with no fear of being teased. Situational teaching is core in providing a conducive learning environment (Pennington, 2014). Situational teaching enhances teaching efficiency since it has the capacity to hold the attention of students as asserted by Szeto (2015).

The respondents were not sure of the plausibility of situational teaching however, after the experiment, respondents in the experimental group agreed that situational teaching is an asset and thus they all recommended its adoption in schools due to its vantage points (Q8). However, one respondent from the experimental group added that designing situations can sometimes be difficult and energy and time consuming making it averagely effective as a teaching method. Situation designing requires mutual cooperation between teachers and students in collective lesson preparation (Kozan & Richardson, 2014). In conclusion, most of the respondents think that situational teaching method can improve the efficiency of classroom teaching and students' interest and further develop students' listening and speaking skills.

Chapter 5 Findings and Conclusion

5.1 Major findings

The study scrutinizes Situational English teaching approach and tests the hypotheses that 1. Situational English teaching approach can improve the interest of rural pupils in learning English. 2. Situational English teaching approach can improve teaching and learning outcomes in rural primary schools. 3. It is plausible to use Situational Teaching Approaches as a way of improving English proficiency for students in rural primary schools. A sample size of 96 with 90 students in primary school and 6 teachers of English in primary schools of which 60 students and four teachers were divided into experimental class while 30 students and two teachers into control class. Students in the experimental group were taught using situational methods and control group using traditional methods. After the application of situational teaching method to English class in rural primary school, results attests, through scientific research methods that the research hypotheses are correct.

Responses from interviews ascertain that creating scenes is key in situational teaching method. The teaching approach stimulates students' interest in learning and this is the main reason behind its recommendation by teachers and students. From the analysis of some the figures and discussion of the research, students in the experimental class got higher marks and showed more interest, motivation and confidence in English. It proves that the situational teaching method is feasible and practical.

5.2 Implications

The application of the situational teaching method can make English class more interesting and vivid. So it can arouse the students' interest, motivation, and confidence to help them to cultivate and develop the ability of using English in daily life. The situational teaching method requires the teacher to make full use of a variety of modern techniques and apparatus to create the active, relaxing and real-life situations. Through this way, students are encouraged to be one member to take part in more and more activities during the process of learning and get more chance to show their oral English in class.

Secondly, the application of the situational teaching method leads to much more progress in

the level of students' English. Some of the students think the situational teaching method can motivate their intellectual factors, help them to understand new words, phrase, sentences, some other expressions and grammatical structures, and make students to have a better and deeper understanding of the teaching contents and master the knowledge, so as to improve the quality and the accuracy of using language (Kozan & Richardson, 2014). The more confidence they get, the more effect a person will learn a certain kind of foreign language. Therefore Students truly feel the happiness of learning English.

5.3 Limitations of the study

This section of the study provides a reminiscence of the research highlights the limitations of the study and loop holes that should be filled in future similar studies. The study was aimed testing the impact of situational teaching approach on effectiveness with regard to student interest, learning and teaching outcomes and the credibility of the method in teaching English in Chinese rural primary schools. First, the research took only 20 weeks which equates to a single semester in Chinese academic calendar. This is a limited time for teachers to employ the approach and students to adjust to a new environment. Moreover, other variables that may be intervening and may affect learning processes did not account for the research. They include psychological state of students and teachers, poverty status and cognitive differences.

Owing to practical situation that the students have been impressed by the traditional method, they need time to make themselves adapt to the new teaching mode. In a sense，the effect of situational teaching method could be influenced by the number of the participants. The individual differences between them could not be controlled, and the limited time also contributes to the limited depth of the research. To some extent, with regard to the participants who are only from rural primary school, the practical usefulness of the study will be limited. The research is also limited to pupils and teachers of Grade five in rural primary schools with similar characteristics thus the extent to which the findings would be applicable in other situations cannot be inferred from the study.

Moreover, the process of creating situation is difficult and varies between teachers depending on one's creativity and experiences, and not all schools have similar resources such as computers, thus this cannot be standardized. The creation of situations requires the students' active and positive attitudes to take part in it. However, the students may face different kinds of

problems during the whole process of teaching. Some of the students were not able to finish the job within the time required. In addition, because of Chinese present exam system, most of the students ignore the importance of oral English. It is quite difficult to change the fixed mind completely in such a short time. They may be inclined to following the teachers' lecture and show no interests in thinking or acting on their own to take part in all kinds of classroom activities. There is still a gap between the practical result and expected one.

5.4 Suggestions for further studies

Despite the success of the research, the researcher identified some gaps in the research and recommends areas for further studies on the same topic. The Chinese education system is fixed and teachers have no control of the classroom atmosphere or teaching time. The study this recommends studies on how these two elements affect effectiveness of teaching strategies and asses in an event where the curriculum changes if situational teaching approach will still be plausible. Other researches should also be conducted to attest if traditional teaching strategies account for students fear in taking English courses in other school levels.

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