

The Analysis of Junior Middle School Students' Perceptions Regarding English Homework from the Perspective of Double Reduction Policy

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Abstract: With the purpose of reducing burdens on students and their families, the Chinese government issued an education policy named the “Double Reduction Policy”. This policy will alleviate pressure on students and lower Chinese families’ high financial budgets. The most important is to improve the quality of education and promote students’ overall development. With the ideology of “Double Reduction Policy”, this study uses quantitative and qualitative methods to explore students’ perceptions of English homework. Furthermore, this study aims to search out the relation between students’ perceived purposes of English homework and the purpose of present homework, students’ preferred English homework types and present homework types, students’ perceived effects of English homework, and the practical effectiveness of present English homework. The results show that students’ perceptions of English homework have a strong positive correlation with the present English homework. That means teachers should keep effective and attractive homework instead of abandoning all the homework design strategies. However, the data also implies that ability-oriented homework should be combined with teaching design and immersed into students’ perceptions of all studies.

1. Introduction

The rapid development of science and technology and the complex global environment have demanding needs for comprehensive human brains. Then, in 2022, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the Chinese State Council proclaimed the “Double Reduction Policy” simultaneously. This education policy is to relieve burdens of students and make every family reduce the tutoring expenses. Thereby, students have spare time and energy to strive for their dreams out of personal motivation and pursuit.

Of all burdens, homework is placed on the top one. Meanwhile, homework was first defined as the time students study to acquire knowledge or some skills from class outside the classroom (Druian, Bulter, et al., 1987)^[1]. The initial definitions have one common sense that emphasizes that homework is not in school or classroom. However, the development of education research enriched its meaning to expand the roles played by homework (Blazer, 2009)^[2]. For this study, homework’s meanings are not limited by the boundary of the environment. All the work done by students to

enhance teachers' presentation or recently learned skills is the homework to be discussed for the whole study.

For homework, the biggest challenge teachers face is to shorten students' time and promote the efficiency of it. And the research on present English homework and its value are of enormous significance. Students' perceptions of homework determine whether the homework does a favor in lifting the level of learning. Based on student-centered pedagogy, this study deeply examines the relation between students' perceptions and present English homework from the aspects of purposes, homework type, and effects. These dimensions are to test if the present homework is by students' understanding or not.

1.1 Research Question

What is the relation between students' perceptions and the present English homework from the aspects of purposes, homework type and effects?

1.2 Hypothesis

Students' perceived purposes of English homework have no relation to the purpose of present homework designed by teachers.

Students' preferred homework types have no relation to the present English homework types designed by teachers.

Students' perceived effects have no relation to the effects of present English homework designed by teachers.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Studies at Home

Domestic scholars have been embarking on the academic study of homework design, strategies, students' motivation, and so on. The surge of such papers comes out in 2020. From 2020 to 2021, the amount increases to 123. For 2022, the published papers on homework from the perspective of the "Double Reduction Policy" is up to 230(Wang, Long and Pan, 2024)^[3]. Some of them elucidate some shortcomings of traditional homework, and many collect some data to explore present homework design and students' acceptance. The research on students' homework in four provinces shows that excessive homework has resulted in a shortage of sleep and fewer extra-curriculum activities(Guo, Liu, and Zhao, 2006)^[4]. Based on such problems, one scholar appeals to some foreign educational methods and puts forward some specific measures to solve them, like developing students' ability to form homework calendars and timely review all their effects(Wang and X, 2010)^[5]. To meet students' various needs for homework, one study explains that interactive homework in America is of great value for Chinese teachers to learn and it exactly produces the ideal effects of homework(Zhou and Lu, 2011)^[6]. "Double Reduction Policy" conducted student-centered education to invisibly cut down the load on students(He and Liu, 2021)^[7]. Discipline-integrated homework is an effective methodology to for practicing "Double Reduction Policy"(Yv, Yang, Miao and Jiang, 2024)^[8].

2.2 Studies Abroad

Studies abroad prefer to examine homework on practical application of teaching design, teachers' competences, students' cognition, and the like. The evaluation of homework sent is part of the

research. Parents are supposed to join in the evaluation to cover the part teachers do not evaluate in class(Molina, Vasquez, Reyes, and Elisa, 2019)^[9]. Besides, the internal and external value of homework designed to reduce students' pressure is worth researching for performing homework's function(Wang and Limpapath, 2022)^[10]. In addition, students' interpretation of homework has a strong relation to their academic performance in Cross River State senior high school(Laetitia, Udosen, and Ajake, 2023)^[11].

Every single research builds rich resources for teachers selectively used for effective teaching. At this study, it targets the present English homework and explores students' perceptions of the present homework. It differs from searching out all the drawbacks of present homework. Instead, this study tests the relation between students' understandings and the intentions of present homework from the purposes, types, and effects. All of these papers are conducive to the further development of Chinese education as well as the front teachers.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participant and Procedure

This study follows a “question-hypothesis-test” track. The data was produced from the self-made questionnaire. To make the questionnaire more scientific and objective, this study has cited some questions from the relevant studies(Liang, 2010; Qian, 2012; Dong 2020; Chen, 2019; Lu, 2022)^{[12][13][14][15][16]}. There are 12 organized questions and three pairs are used for data analysis. The three pairs in Table 1 are used to ask students :

Table 1: Dimensions and Questions

Dimensions	No.	Questions
Purpose	1.	Which purpose do you think is the present English homework designed by teachers for?
	2.	Which purpose do you think should be of the English homework?
Homework types	3.	What type of English homework designed by teachers do you usually do?
	4.	What type of English homework is your favorite one?
Effects	5.	To what extent do you think the present English homework does help to your motivation to study?
	6.	To what extent do you think the present English homework does help to improve your study?

This questionnaire is distributed to some students. The sample students are randomly selected from grade 7 and the amount of the sample is 274. This study was done in Weishan Experimental Middle School, which is located in Weishan County, Jining Municipality of Shandong province. This study uses the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) online to analyze the collected data (Online Application Software, 2024)^[17]. The first step is to test the reliability by the Cronbach alpha reliability system. The second step is to test the correlation between two factors. And the instrument for analyzing data is Pearson Correlation (Hauke, 2011; Arndt, 1999)^{[18][19]}.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

All the collected data about students' perceptions of English homework are analyzed by texting reliability and analyzing the correlation.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics 1

Items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation(CITC)	Cronbach Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach α
No.1 Question	0.427	-	0.598
No.2 Question	0.427	-	

From Table 2, it's obvious that the data used for analyzing purposes are reliable. The reason is that Cronbach α of 0.598 which is between 0.5 and 0.6 for two items and CITC of 0.427 which is more than 0.3. That means the data can be analyzed further.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation 1

	Mean	Std. Deviation	No.1 Question	No.2 Question
No.1 Question	1.650	0.914	1	
No.2 Question	1.700	0.893	0.427**	1

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

From Table 3, we can see that students' perceived purposes of homework is in positive relation to the purpose of homework teachers designed for. It also signifies that students have accepted teachers' ideologies about homework. For these sample students, their teachers are in accordance with their students.

Table 4: Reliability Statistics 2

Items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation(CITC)	Cronbach Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach α
No.3 Question	0.505	-	0.670
No.4 Question	0.505	-	

The data from Table 4 identifies that statistics upon homework types can be used for searching out the correlation. The table shows Cronbach α of 0.670 which is between more than 0.6 and CITC of 0.505 which is more than 0.3. The reliability can be supported by two groups of data.

Table 5: Pearson Correlation 2

	Mean	Std. Deviation	No.3 Question	No.4 Question
No.3 Question	1.780	1.069	1	
No.4 Question	2.290	1.149	0.505**	1

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

As shown in Table 5, it can be predicted that students' favorite homework types are not in conflict with homework types assigned by teachers. Instead, teachers have designed homework types to cater to students' needs. Their perceptions of homework are in positive relation.

Table 6: Reliability Statistics 3

Items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation(CITC)	Cronbach Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach α
No.5 Question	0.816	-	0.893
No.6 Question	0.816	-	

It can be seen from Table 6 that the Cronbach α of 0.893 is the highest rank of reliability and CITC is above 0.3. The data about effects from the present homework is full of reliability. The relation between effects students desire and teachers design for can be put into scientific analysis with research instrument.

Table 7: Pearson Correlation 3

	Mean	Std. Deviation	No.5Question	No.6 Question
No.5Question	2.050	0.925	1	
No.6 Question	1.840	0.801	0.816**	1

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

The data from Table 7 shows that there is a positive relation between students' perceived effects of homework and teachers' designed effects. It validates that students' understanding of homework has something in common. Both teachers' and students' viewpoints are mutually helpful to each other and follow the student-centered pedagogy.

4. Findings

Based on the premiere studies of English homework, some disadvantages are revealed. Then the hypothesis in this study puts forward that students' perceptions of English homework have no relation to the homework designed by teachers. With the data analysis, it can be concluded that present English homework keeps up with students' development and cognition. The hypothesis proves invalid. Students' perceived purposes, perceived effect and preferred homework types are in line with the present English homework designed for.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

“Double Reduction Policy” promotes high-quality education and it intends to reduce the pressure and develop students' abilities. Homework is one part of the teaching procedure as well as a teaching tool to consolidate students' skills and knowledge learned from class. Effective English homework will invoke students' interest in learning and exploring by themselves. Therefore, relevant studies on teaching design and homework will improve education and cultivate students' various competencies. This study aims to search out the relation between students' perceptions of homework and teachers' ideologies for homework. The result shows that they are consistent with each other. However, the limited time and resources will make this study more to discuss. The author of this study will make more efforts to improve in the future studies.

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