

Cultivating Junior Middle School Students' Thinking Quality In English Reading Teaching

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Abstract

With the further reform of the new curriculum standard , the concept of English subject core literacy becomes a focus in current education. The thinking quality as a core literacy has aroused educators' attention. Many researches on how to enlighten and promote students' thinking quality have made some progress. However, in the realistic teaching of English reading, many teachers often neglect the cultivation of students ' thinking ability in reading teaching. So this paper aims to explore some strategies of training students' logical, critical and creative ability in junior middle school English reading teaching through deeply understanding the connotation of thinking quality, reflecting the present situation of English reading teaching in junior middle school, and taking a reading text in Go For It, Grade8 English textbook ---He Lost His Arm But Is Still Climbing as a case.

Keywords: thinking quality; English reading teaching; junior middle schools; strategies

1. The connotation of thinking quality

The relationship between language and thinking is very close. Learning and using language depends on thinking. At the same time, learning and using language can further promote the development of thinking. Learning and using English can enrich the mode of thinking. It is widely believed that many activities in English classroom teaching can promote the development of students' thinking quality.

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Thinking quality is one of key competences in English subject core literacy, which refers to the mental development that students get through the study of English subject. And it is also the closest dimension to the individual personality development. The quality of thinking represents the level and characteristics of students think in logic, criticism and creativity in the process of learning and by means of discrimination, classification, generalization, inference and analysis. Thinking quality breaks the unidirectional orientation of subject teaching knowledge, and this concept is listed as an independent dimension in the English subject core literacy system for the first time, which shows that thinking plays a more and more important role in English teaching and learning.

2. The present situation of English reading teaching in junior middle schools

In current junior middle school English reading teaching, the cultivation of students' thinking quality still needs to be improved. In English reading classes, teachers and students pay more attention on grammar, sentence structure and other language knowledge, but less involve in the training of thinking, and overemphasize the communicative function of language. Besides, they emphasize too much on the out world around students but lack of attention to the inner world of students. Therefore, it is the need of curriculum reform to take the cultivation of thinking quality as a dimension of the goal of English curriculum. Some effective methods of cultivating students' thinking quality in reading teaching also should be proposed and practiced.

3. The strategies of cultivating students' thinking quality in reading teaching

Reading is a process of interaction between thinking and language. Reading comprehension level reflects a person's language ability and thinking ability to a great extent. The key to cultivating students' thinking ability is to find good topics that can arouse students' interest and enthusiasm and have a real understanding of the text from a cross-cultural perspective.

3.1 Analyze titles and illustrations to develop predictive ability

The titles and illustrations are important clues for readers to predict the content of the article, which is not only intuitionistic, but also a space for students to imagine.

For instance, the article in Go For It, Grade8, Unit 1, 2b --- *He Lost His Arm But Is Still Climbing*, with a picture of a climber climbing on the steep rock. While teaching this part, teachers can show the students the title and the picture of the text to make them predict the content of this story. For example, teachers can ask students some questions, like what can we learn from the picture? Why he lost his arm? What happened to him? What do you know about climbing? When students make prediction, they actually communicate with the text. Although the prediction is not necessarily same as the text, when students read the passage with the purpose of verification, they will think positively and collide with the spark of thinking.

3.2 Focus on the details of the article to cultivate the ability of reasoning

Reading is a process in which readers actively participate in and form their own views. Teachers can design activities step by step to cultivate students' analysis, reasoning and judgment ability. For example, in

the article *he Lost His Arm But Is Still Climbing* mentioned above, as the writer describe events in a certain order, finding the order of the events will help students to understand what they are reading.

In the process of guiding students to read, teachers can design some deep comprehension tasks to let students form the habit of thinking from different angles and cultivate students' ability of thinking, such as judgment, induction, reasoning and so on. Through surface writing material, teachers can make students understand the deep meaning of the article so as to improve the breadth and depth of students' thinking. For example, students can be asked to analyze the psychological changes of the protagonist Aron while he was in a difficult situation, and the students can also analyze the understanding of life that Aron has gained after he has experienced the predicament and so on.

3.3 Understand the whole text to cultivate the ability of generalization

After students have a certain understanding of the article as a whole, the teacher can carefully design some questions of deep understanding so that the students can discuss with each other and express their own opinions, such as the central idea of the article, the author's writing intention, predicting the development or result of the event plot further urges students to understand the author's viewpoint, attitude and improves students' thinking quality.

Take the text *he Lost His Arm But Is Still Climbing* for instance, after learning this passage, students can deeply feel Aron's adventurous spirit and his courage and decisiveness, and they can understand the importance of making good decisions. Then, after studying this article, teachers can summarize the full text and understand the main purpose of the article with students. For example, teachers can ask students: Do you have the same spirit as Aron? Let's think about it before we find ourselves "between a rock and a hard place", and before we have to make a decision that could mean life or death. Through this method, it not only generalizes the article in details, but also guides students to think about how to face difficulties when they are in trouble or how to make decisions when it means the choice of life and death, which thus achieves the dual effect of sublimating the theme of the article and promoting the development of students' thinking.

4. Conclusion

The cultivation of English thinking quality can't be accomplished overnight. It is necessary to carry out different activities in English teaching, especially in reading teaching. As Zhu Ping(2013) said, "Reading is a process of interaction between thinking and language. Reading comprehension level reflects a person's language ability and thinking ability to a great extent, and so is English reading." So in the English reading teaching, teachers should be good at adopting various teaching methods flexibly, guiding students to interact positively with the article, making students deeply understand and think about the text, training students' creative thinking, critical thinking, analysis and reasoning thinking.

At the same time, "When everybody adds fuel, the flames rise high". The cultivation of students' thinking quality is a topic that every educator or educational learner pays close attention to. Although this paper puts forward some views on the cultivation of students' thinking quality in English reading teaching, it is far from sufficient. It is hoped that more researchers will pay more attention to and develop better ways

to improve students' thinking quality.

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