

# A Discussion on the Improvement Strategies of English Reading Teaching in Senior High School

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## Abstract

In English teaching, reading comprehension is a very important part, accounting for a large proportion of the entire English teaching. National English curriculum standard for general high school provides detailed explanations on the specific content requirements and teaching of discourse and pragmatics, and requires the cultivation of students' language skills, learning abilities, thinking qualities, and cultural qualities in the teaching of reading. The teaching of English reading in middle schools has always been highly valued, which takes up too much time and energy of teachers and students. However, the teaching efficiency is not high, and students' reading comprehension ability is low. Therefore, teachers must adopt scientific and effective reading teaching strategies, teach students to learn reading methods, cultivate good reading habits, cultivate efficient reading skills, and improve their reading proficiency.

## Keywords

Reading Comprehension; Teaching Strategies; Reading Proficiency.

## 1. Introduction

National English Curriculum Standard for general high school (2017 Edition, 2020 Revision) set clear requirements for students' English reading strategies. The NECS point out that the cultivation of students' core competence includes language ability, cultural awareness, thinking quality, and learning ability. It further clarifies that learning ability is related to students' awareness and ability to use strategies in English learning, in order to broaden learning channels and improve learning efficiency. The NECS divide the content of high school English courses into six elements: thematic context, text types, language knowledge, cultural knowledge, language skills, and learning strategies. Effective use of learning strategies is a means to help students better understand what they are reading and express what they want, thereby improving reading ability. In addition, developing learning strategies is a necessary condition for students to form autonomous learning and lifelong learning abilities. Regarding English reading, the new curriculum standard recommends that students understand the purpose and content of the text based on the type and characteristics of the text, and understand the internal relationships between paragraphs or sentences based on the key words and pronouns in the text.

## 2. The Important Reasons for English Reading

First of all, English reading can help students improve their language skills, and it is one of the important ways to learn a language. Through reading, you can learn new words, phrases, sentence patterns, and grammatical structures. Second, reading can help us understand various topics and themes, thereby accumulating a large amount of cultural background knowledge and increasing our knowledge reserve. Third, reading can help us understand and analyze complex information, improve our reasoning and logical thinking abilities. It can also help us understand different cultures and values, enhance our cultural awareness and cross-cultural

communication skills. Besides that, Reading can help us learn and master knowledge faster and improve learning efficiency. In short, English reading is very important for learning and improving comprehensive language proficiency. Therefore, it is particularly important to stimulate students' interest in reading and improve their reading efficiency in English teaching.

### **3. Problems in English Reading Teaching**

#### **3.1. English Reading is Taught in a Single Way**

Due to the influence of traditional teaching mode, the current English reading classroom teaching process in China is still relatively single. Although with the deepening of the new curriculum reform, innovative reading teaching mode has gradually become the core of high school English teachers' exploration. As the influence of test-oriented education, this innovative reading teaching method is still not totally realized. In reading, teachers do not combine students' listening, speaking, reading, writing and viewing. In actual reading teaching, some teachers still adopt traditional teaching methods, impart language knowledge in a teacher-centered way, ignore students' dominant position, interact less with students, and conduct incomplete motivational evaluations of students' performance. Teachers pay attention to students' reading aloud and verbal knowledge in their reading lessons, and do not pay attention to the training comprehensive skills. In the teaching of reading lessons, teachers often teach on a certain knowledge point in the text, or simply present the general meaning of the text to the students, based on a single word, grammar and sentence pattern test point in the test. With such a single way of teaching, it will ignore the development of students' mental abilities.

#### **3.2. Students Lack Interesting of Reading**

The current English reading teaching often ignores the differences between students and does not respect students' interests and hobbies. Many teachers will require students to choose reading materials from the established textbooks when assigning English reading homework for students, but the learning materials obtained through this method have great limitations. Therefore, this often leads to unsatisfactory teaching results, because some of the reading materials in the textbooks are relatively boring. The new curriculum reform requires that students be the center of the entire classroom teaching, and teachers should only guide and correct students. However, in the current stage of English reading teaching process, there are still many teachers who tell students about reading content word by word, resulting in students' relatively weak English reading learning ability, generally low reading quality, and difficult to develop students' interest in English learning. In addition, because many students blindly rely on the teacher's teaching in the English reading class, the ability to think is weakened, and the understanding of knowledge is relatively lacking, resulting in reading comprehension that is difficult to exert practical results. In the process of English reading teaching, high school English teachers need to pay attention to the cultivation of students' core competence, which can effectively solve the problems of students' narrow reading range, reading interest and poor reading level in current English teaching. In the teaching of English reading, high school English teachers adopt the method of guiding with correct answers, which hinders the cultivation of students' reading thinking ability, and standardized answers can indeed help students' thinking not deviate from the main idea of the article, but also bind students' divergent thinking.

#### **3.3. Students Lack Sufficient Vocabulary as Well as Grammar Knowledge**

Vocabulary is the basic knowledge of the English language and the foundation and prerequisite of English reading. The main problem with reading comprehension is vocabulary, and the comprehension of words directly affects the comprehension of sentences and the entire discourse. Without knowing the words, you cannot understand the content of this article, you

cannot understand the author's intention, thus affecting the smooth progress of reading. Therefore, vocabulary has an important impact on improving reading speed and comprehension. In addition, students will be nervous and irritable when they encounter new words, worried that they will not understand the entire text, which will lead to anxiety. In the process of reading, students often encounter some special sentence structures and more complex sentences. This type of sentence is manifested as long sentences and many subordinate clauses and special sentence patterns. This shows that complex sentence patterns have different degrees of impact on students' reading. The fundamental reason is that students lack some grammar knowledge and cannot make a correct analysis of the entire sentence structure, which affects the grasp of the entire sentence meaning. Due to the restrictions imposed by the college entrance examination.

## **4. Strategies to Improve Students' Reading Ability**

### **4.1. Teacher Should Enrich the Form of Classroom Teaching**

In English reading teaching, if teachers use various teaching methods, it is more conducive to mobilizing the learning enthusiasm of students at different levels and improving students' reading ability. Multimedia can help motivate students by introducing real-life situations in the classroom, and can also provide a greater amount of information and rich cultural input. First of all, the use of multimedia technology for reading teaching can integrate a large number of audio and video content, so that the reading content can stimulate students' interest in reading, and improve reading efficiency. Secondly, the use of multimedia technology for reading teaching can change the traditional mode of overemphasizing the main role of teachers in reading lessons. The use of multimedia for reading teaching can enable students to observe and think in context, thereby cultivating students' active learning and reading ability. After class, students can also go to the Internet to search for the required materials, increase extracurricular reading, expand knowledge, improve their reading ability, and enhance their initiative to participate in learning. In addition, the use of multimedia can also provide background knowledge. According to schema theory, background knowledge affects to some extent whether students understand the input material correctly or not. Therefore, before the reading starts, teachers can use multimedia to display some background pictures or play a short recording or video according to the content of the article, to help students deepen their understanding of some background knowledge. Therefore, teachers should attach importance to the application of modern information technology and deeply integrate it with classroom teaching.

### **4.2. Teachers Should Put Students in the Center of Class**

In reading teaching, due to the single teaching form, there is often a dull classroom atmosphere and it is difficult for students to concentrate for a long time, which requires teachers to mobilize students. For example, questioning, conversational and discussion-based pedagogy is used to lead classroom teaching towards creativity. When reading an article, teachers should guide students to grasp the main idea of the whole text, ask questions and inspire students to answer. In this way, students read passages with a purpose, not wasting time and attracting the student's attention. Students can also think deeply by themselves while answering questions. It also improves students' logical thinking ability and language ability. Before reading, according to the main content and chapter structure of the text, put forward predictive questions from different angles, guide students to predict and discuss the content of the text, activate the relevant knowledge networks in the students' brains, and put them in an active cognitive state, so as to generate the desire to read. Instead of teaching new words alone before reading, and then present new words in discussions and contexts, and use this to test or consolidate students' understanding of words. Therefore, teacher should give students more

chance to use language to communicate or express their own idea. In this way, students will consolidate what they have learned and development of language knowledge.

### 4.3. Teachers should Strengthen Students' Training in Reading Strategies

In the process of reading, students need to use certain reading strategies to improve their English reading ability. Therefore, in the process of classroom teaching, teachers should focus on developing students' reading strategies and skills. Reading strategies and skills are always changing according to different purposes and different reading materials. Therefore, in the teaching process, teachers should guide students to use them differently. In reading, the more common reading strategies include browsing, skimming, identifying referential relationships, guessing the meaning of words, and so on. Through extensive reading, it is not only conducive to students to expand their vocabulary, enrich language knowledge, broaden their horizons, and expand their ideas, but also help students understand the cultural background, living customs, and thinking habits of other countries. In order to cultivate and improve students' reading ability, it is difficult to achieve only by relying on teachers' classroom teaching. At present, although the amount of reading provided by secondary school English textbooks has increased significantly compared with the past, it is far from meeting the requirements of the syllabus. Therefore, in the process of learning, teachers can choose reading materials suitable for students' difficulty level to increase students' reading volume, and strive for the active cooperation of parents, and persistently improve students' reading abilities.

## 5. Conclusion

Improving students' English reading skills is very important in teaching foreign languages. Teachers should learn to use modern educational technology, enrich the teaching form of the classroom to stimulate students' interest to learn. Teachers also need pay attention to the individual differences of students, put students at the center of the classroom to stimulate their desire to explore learning. Finally, while accumulating a large amount of vocabulary and related knowledge, teacher should strengthen the training of reading strategies to help students improve their reading level.

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