

Research on Questioning Strategies to Improve Students' Thinking Quality in English Reading Teaching in Senior High School

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Abstract

The key to the cultivation of thinking quality lies in the teaching of reading, in which teacher questioning plays an important role. Based on Bloom's classification of cognitive objectives, this paper expounds the principles of problem design, and explores how to design problems to improve the cultivation of thinking quality in reading teaching in combination with the characteristics of the three stages of reading teaching: pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading, so as to help students obtain information and develop thinking.

Keywords

Classroom Questioning; Thinking Quality; Reading Teaching.

1. Introduction

The English Curriculum Standards for General High School (2017 Edition Revised in 2020) (hereinafter referred to as the *Curriculum Standards*) proposes that the core qualities of English discipline include language ability, cultural awareness, thinking quality and learning ability. Among them, thinking quality refers to the ability and level of thinking in terms of logicity, criticality and innovation. The development of thinking quality helps to improve students' ability to analyze and solve problems, enable them to observe and understand the world from a cross-cultural perspective, and make correct value judgments on things (Ministry of Education, 2020). Therefore, the cultivation of thinking quality plays a vital role in English teaching. The cultivation of thinking quality should run through the whole classroom, but the key lies in reading teaching, and questioning is an important help for the cultivation of thinking quality. At present, the cultivation of thinking quality in high school English classroom is not enough. First, under the pressure of teaching, teachers' pay more attention to the cultivation of language ability, so they will not consciously cultivate students' thinking quality from the perspective of questioning; Second, because teachers themselves lack understanding and attention to the quality of thinking, they cannot raise high-quality questions in reading teaching, so they fail to achieve the teaching goal of cultivating and developing the quality of thinking. This article mainly discusses how teachers use questioning strategies to achieve the teaching goal of cultivating and developing students' thinking quality in senior high school English reading teaching from two aspects of question design and reading teaching strategies.

2. Questions Design Focusing on Thinking Quality

(1) Theoretical basis

Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives divides educational objectives into three areas: cognitive domain, effective domain and psychomotor domain. Bloom (1956) designed the educational objectives in the cognitive field from low to high as knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Knowledge refers to the information that can be

obtained directly from the text; Comprehension refers to answering questions through reinterpretation and reorganization of information; Application means that knowledge can be applied to new situations; Analysis refers to reasoning or analyzing knowledge, finding the connection between knowledge and drawing corresponding conclusions; Synthesis is to integrate sporadic knowledge into systematic knowledge, emphasizing creativity; Evaluation is to judge the value of text materials and give some reasons. The process from knowledge to evaluation is the process from low-order thinking to high-order thinking. Therefore, if teachers want to gradually cultivate students' thinking quality, they should grasp these six dimensions and design high-quality classroom questions.

(2) Questioning principles

1) Grasp the gradient of the questions

The gradient of teachers' questions is mainly reflected in the gradual design of questions. According to Bloom's Taxonomy, the problems in English reading teaching can be divided into display problems, reference problems and evaluation problems (Wang Jinyin, 2021). For example, in the knowledge and comprehension stage, teachers can ask some demonstrative questions, and students can find answers directly from the text. This stage can test whether the students can sort out the context and main idea of the passage. In the application and analysis stage, teachers can ask some referential questions. On the basis of understanding the basic information of the article, students can interpret the deep meaning of the article and analyze the text characteristics, writing characteristics, writing intention or author's emotion (Wang Jinyin, 2021). At the stage of synthesis and evaluation, teachers can ask some evaluative questions. The teacher refers to guiding the students to further explore the theme meaning and the author's point of view, combine their own cognition and experience, comprehensively use language to evaluate, criticize, innovate, and other issues, and point to the students' high-level thinking (Wang Jinyin, 2021).

2) Control the difficulty of the questions

The difficulty of the questions should adapt to the existing cognitive level of students, which requires teachers to understand the actual situation of students in daily teaching. The difficulty of the questions should be in the zone of proximal development, and the questions should be designed around students' cognitive level, language ability, daily life and other aspects. The zone of proximal development means that the starting point of the question setting is the students' existing cognitive level, and the goal of the question is the students' potential and possible development level. Only such in-depth question setting can effectively promote the students' positive thinking activities (Luo Yuan, Zhu Shenhai, 2021).

3) Control the flexibility of questions

Teachers should usually ask questions according to the law of students' cognitive development in a gradient way, but in actual teaching, the classroom is changeable, and students' reactions are diverse. In the face of such a situation, teachers should flexibly change the order of questions and do not have to blindly cater to the process from low to high. The flexibility of teachers' questioning should also be reflected in the ingenious design of questioning links. When teachers lead students to explore the theme of the article, they need to design interlocking problem chains, guide students to think deeply about the theme, and gradually promote students' thinking development.

3. Reading Teaching Strategies Focusing on Thinking Quality

There are three stages in reading teaching: pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading. Each stage has its own functions and characteristics. Teachers should combine the characteristics of each stage to design questions that are conducive to the development of students' thinking

quality. This paper takes the first volume of English textbooks published by FLTRP edition (*Unit 6 Longji Rice Terraces*) as an example to provide teaching strategies.

(1) In pre-reading, question the background knowledge related to the theme context to activate the thinking

The Curriculum Standards points out that the content of English curriculum is the basis for developing students' key competencies in English, including six elements: thematic context, discourse type, language knowledge, cultural knowledge, language skills and learning strategies. Thematic context covers human and self, human and society, and human and nature, involving the fields of humanities, social sciences and natural sciences, and provides topics and context for discipline education (Ministry of Education, 2020). In other words, each unit will have a clear theme, and students should conduct learning activities under the guidance of the theme. In pre-reading, teachers should activate or pave the way for some background knowledge related to the topic context by asking questions, which is conducive to triggering students' thinking on the topic and activating their thinking.

The theme context of this text is human and nature. In pre-reading, teachers can play videos about terraces and briefly introduce the characteristics of terraces. According to the video content, teachers can organize brainstorming to let students think about these problems. What do you know about the terraces after watching the video? From watching the video, can you guess how the terraces work? These two questions are also one of the main topics of the article. Teachers can encourage students to think actively in pre-reading, so as to activate students' thinking and pave the way for learning the text.

(2) In while-reading, develop thinking by relying on questions with gradient in the text

The Curriculum Standards points out that the types of discourse include oral and written discourse and different stylistic forms, such as narrative, expository, argumentative, practical, interview, dialogue and other continuous texts, as well as diagrams, diagrams, web pages, advertisements, cartoons and other non-continuous texts, providing stylistic materials for language learning. Discourse is the basic resource of English teaching (Ministry of Education, 2020). Therefore, teachers should carefully study the discourse, grasp the meaning of the theme, excavate cultural values, etc., and ask questions in a gradient from low-order thinking to high-order thinking.

In while-reading, teachers should not only let students understand the main idea of the article and learn language and cultural knowledge, but also cultivate students' reading ability and exercise their reading thinking. Therefore, during fast reading, teachers can guide students to summarize the main idea of each paragraph and extract some key words. In careful reading, teachers can check students' reading from some display questions. For example, who builds these terraces? When did they start? When was it completed? Why did people build terraces? How do the terraces work? Teachers can focus on the questions about reasons and working principles. With the teacher's analysis of the text, students have a certain understanding of the basic information of the discourse. Teachers can increase the difficulty of the problem, according to para4, can you a flowchart of the work? Lead students to draw a flow chart of terracing work. This process not only enables students to deepen their understanding of the text, but also develops students' thinking ability of induction and analysis.

(3) In post-reading, ask in-depth questions about the discourse and develop high-level thinking

The Curriculum Standard points out that discourse gives language learning themes, situations and contents, and organizes and presents information with its unique internal logical structure, stylistic features and language forms to serve the expression of thematic meaning (Ministry of Education, 2020). The content of the text is rich, which requires teachers to analyze the text in depth, not only to help students understand language knowledge and cultural knowledge, but

also to let students learn to convey cultural connotation, true value orientation and cultivate thinking mode.

The post-reading stage is mainly for teachers and students to jointly explore the theme meaning, and achieve the purpose of developing students' high-level thinking. According to para5, teachers can ask why do lots of travelers come to visit the wonder? After combing the whole article, the teacher can ask some evaluative questions: What's the purpose of the message? How do you understand the topic (At one with nature) of this unit? The teacher can organize group discussions on the problems in post-reading. During this process, students can exchange ideas with each other, which is conducive to the collision and development of thinking.

4. Conclusion

Effective classroom questioning is one of the means to promote the development of students' thinking quality. Teachers should take the development of thinking quality as one of the teaching objectives, grasp the principle of inquiry, and design appropriate questions according to the characteristics of pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading. In reading class, teachers not only explain language knowledge, but also teach students how to read and gradually develop their thinking in questioning.

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