

Cultivation of Students' Critical Thinking Ability in English Teaching

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Abstract: In order to study the problems of cultivating students' critical thinking in English teaching, this paper first defines the relevant concepts, then analyzes the problems and causes of cultivating students' critical thinking in English teaching, and finally puts forward the Countermeasures of cultivating students' critical thinking in English teaching, so as to provide some reference for the cultivation of students' critical thinking in English teaching.

Keywords: Critical thinking; English teaching; Student

1. Introduction

Not everyone is born with critical thinking. Some educators have already begun to train students' thinking in the process of training students. In the United States, in the 1960s, many scholars began to study early education. They began to train students' thinking from their childhood. Cultivating students' critical thinking and developing students' core literacy through English teaching has become one of the important tasks of deepening the reform of English teaching in basic education. There are many reasons for ignoring the cultivation of students' critical thinking in English teaching. Only by in-depth analysis and excavating the deep reasons behind the problems can we find effective countermeasures and change the current situation of ignoring the cultivation of students' critical thinking in English teaching, which is also the important reason and basis of this paper.^[1]

2. Problems in cultivating students' critical thinking in English Teaching

2.1 Being less-valued in teaching objectives

With the proposal of core literacy, English curriculum undertakes the task of developing students' thinking and core literacy. Critical thinking, as an important part of the "thinking quality" of the core quality of English discipline, has become a new goal and task of English teaching. However, the author found that the current English teachers still set classroom teaching goals from the three dimensions of knowledge, ability, emotional attitude and values. Few English teachers bring the cultivation of students' critical thinking into their classroom teaching goals.

2.2 Restriction of teaching methods and evaluation system

A study shows that communicative approach and situational teaching method are commonly used to improve students' English language expression ability, but the effect on the cultivation of students' critical thinking is not very prominent. Despite the application of critical discussion in the classroom, however, the discussion method is basically a mere formality and fails to play its role in improving students' critical thinking. Inquiry and debate are two effective ways to improve students' critical thinking, while they are often neglected by the teachers for being time-consuming and high requirement of language proficiency.

2.3 Low awareness of critical thinking cultivation

In traditional classes, teachers' authority students' obedience are commonly stressed, which leaves no room for both teachers and students to be critical in their thinking and expression.

3. Analysis on the cultivation of students' critical thinking in English teaching

3 . 1 Reasons for teaching objectives

At the beginning of the English course, the English course attaches importance to the mastery of students' double basic objectives of English language knowledge and language skills. When setting class teaching objectives, English teachers also focus on the mastery of language knowledge and language skills. Teaching activities are also designed around the consolidation of memory of language knowledge and language skills.^[2]

3 . 2 Reasons for teaching methods

Critical thinking teaching emphasizes interactive teaching methods, debate and so on. Calling for critical thinking means that we should bid farewell to the traditional receptive passive learning methods in the past, create a rich and real language environment, design English teaching activities for the purpose of exploring meaning, move towards a comprehensive, relevant and practical learning process, adopt more teaching methods such as analysis, evaluation, exploration, discussion, debate and practical application, move from surface learning of language knowledge to in-depth learning, and finally complete the integration of knowledge, culture and thinking.

3 . 3 Reasons for teachers and students

Ideas affect individual behavior. If teachers don't have the consciousness of cultivating students' critical thinking, they certainly won't consciously cultivate students' critical thinking in teaching; If they think that students with critical thinking will raise more questions or objections, which will bring "trouble" to their teaching, or that students' English level is too low to carry out critical thinking, they are also unlikely to consciously cultivate students' critical thinking in teaching.

4 . Cultivation of students' critical thinking

4 . 1 To attach importance to the cultivation of students' critical thinking in teaching objectives

With the proposal of core literacy, the goal of English teaching should also change from content-based and application-oriented, focusing on the cultivation of comprehensive language application ability to the cultivation of students' core literacy. Critical thinking, as an important part of thinking quality in the "core quality" of English discipline, has been included in one of the teaching objectives of English discipline and should be paid heed to. I believe that teachers should fully consider the influence of students' language level, thinking characteristics and other factors when setting teaching objectives. The goal of the first stage can be set to be able to distinguish between facts and opinions, ask questions, say whether you agree or disagree, and give reasons less fully; The second stage goal can be based on the first stage, and can use complete sentences to express their views orally or in writing and state some reasons; In the third stage, students can not only state their views and give reasons, but also give specific examples and evidence for their views. In the fourth stage, students can freely use critical thinking according to the situation and form habits.

4 . 2 To improve teaching methods

To develop students' thinking, we should start from encouraging students to study actively and independently, and guide them to find, put forward, analyze and solve problems. Teachers should give students the opportunity to ask questions and give them enough time to think actively. At the beginning, teachers can help students use the existing information and knowledge or use various resources to find information and find answers or solutions to problems. Then, teachers should boldly give the right to ask questions in class to students, let students ask questions boldly, especially encourage students to question boldly and ask in-depth questions, and then teachers and students explore and discuss together.^[3]

4 . 3 To establish an evaluation system based on the cultivation of students' critical thinking

At present, the development of students' core literacy has become a new direction of English teaching. Breaking through the shackles of traditional single evaluation methods and adopting evaluation methods that pay attention to students' critical thinking are important issues for English teachers to consider. Introducing subjective evaluation for students, cultivating critical thinking requires them to form unique judgment and thinking about the world and themselves. This kind of judgment and thinking is also an important sign of the improvement of students' critical thinking.

4 . 4 To improve teachers' awareness and ability of critical thinking

To improve teachers' awareness and ability of critical thinking, it is mainly realized through the following two aspects: First of all, change the concept of teachers, cultivate their open mind and tolerant spirit, and establish a safe and equal relationship. In addition, teachers' thinking ability can be improved through learning and training.

There are two very effective ways to improve teachers' critical thinking: learning and training. On the one hand, teachers can learn the relevant knowledge of critical thinking and improve their level of critical thinking through journals, magazines, books or network resources. On the other hand, it can provide systematic and special critical thinking training for English teachers.

5. Conclusion

This paper starts with the objectives, contents, methods and evaluation of English teaching, so as to comprehensively improve and enhance students' critical thinking. The author realizes the importance of combining English language teaching with the cultivation of students' critical thinking in the future, and has done some research work. However, due to the author's own knowledge level and ability, more work needs to be done to conduct more in-depth analysis and research. What are the effective methods? Can we establish a systematic teaching model? These problems should be explored in the future teaching practice. At present, the work done by the author is also very primary and basic. If you want to carry out the next step of in-depth research, you need not only the support of certain educational objective conditions, but also the continuous efforts of educational workers, perseverance and dedication.

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