

A study on the cultivation strategies of cultural awareness in junior middle school English reading teaching

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Abstract: The cultivation of cultural awareness can not only enhance students' interest in reading and improve their English reading ability, but also enable students to improve the level of cross-cultural communication through learning different cultures, form the correct values and cultural identity, so as to improve students' core quality and promote their all-round development. This paper aims to understand the current teachers' cultivation of students' cultural awareness and students' cultural awareness learning through questionnaires, and analyzes the reasons according to the survey results, and gives corresponding solutions from the three perspectives of reading before, during and after reading.

Key words: junior high school English; Reading teaching; Cultural awareness

1. The raising of problems

According to the English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2022 edition) (hereinafter referred to as "Curriculum Standards"), English courses should cultivate students' core qualities, including language ability, cultural awareness, thinking quality and learning ability. In junior middle school English teaching, the cultivation of cultural awareness is particularly important for junior middle school students because of their immature minds. In junior middle school English reading, each reading text in each unit has a corresponding theme. Teachers can cultivate students' cultural awareness through reading teaching. Through the design of teaching activities, students can feel the similarities and differences between Chinese and foreign cultures, deepen their understanding of Chinese culture, and improve their cultural literacy.

2. Overview of cultural awareness

According to the Curriculum Standards, "Cultural awareness refers to the understanding of Chinese and foreign cultures and the appreciation of excellent cultures. It is students' cross-cultural cognition, attitude and behavior choice in the new era." The learning of cultural knowledge is not limited to understanding and memorizing specific knowledge points, but more importantly, discovering the attitudes and values behind them. According to the Curriculum Standards, cultural awareness is divided into three levels (see page 24 of the Curriculum Standards). It can be seen that the cultivation of cultural awareness in junior high school involves various aspects, such as communication, diet, customs, entertainment, festivals, etc., which is of great help to the improvement of students' cultural literacy.

These three levels of standards are the requirements that junior middle school students need to meet. It can be seen that the cultivation of cultural awareness not only improves students' knowledge level, but more importantly, exerts a positive impact on students' cultural appreciation ability, cross-cultural communication ability, understanding of other cultures and deepening local cultural awareness.

3. Research methods

In order to understand teachers' cultivation of students' cultural awareness and students' learning of cultural awareness, the author conducted a survey by sending questionnaires.

According to the three different dimensions of cultural awareness in English Curriculum Standards, namely cognition, behavior and attitude, the author designed a questionnaire about the current situation of cultural awareness of junior middle school students in combination with the grading standards of cultural awareness in English Curriculum Standards (Table 1) and the cross-cultural competence evaluation Scale of Chinese college students. The questionnaire contains 18 questions, including 1-6 cognitive dimension, 7-12 behavioral dimension and 13-18 attitudinal dimension. The author selected 252 students in Grade two as the survey objects, and issued a total of 252 questionnaires, 252 of which were valid. At the same time, the author distributed questionnaires to 52 junior middle school English teachers to understand the current teachers' views and opinions on the cultivation of cultural awareness in junior middle school English teaching. The main contents of the investigation include teaching objectives, teaching content, teaching strategies, teaching evaluation, etc. spss26.0 was used for reliability and validity analysis, and the reliability and validity of the two questionnaires were good.

4. The existing problems and causes of cultural awareness cultivation in reading teaching

Through the questionnaire survey of teachers and students, the author finds that there are corresponding problems in the cultivation of teachers' cultural consciousness and students' cultural learning consciousness in reading teaching. In the pre-reading stage, although most teachers have a certain understanding of the cultural consciousness in the curriculum standards, some teachers only pay attention to the teaching of language skills in reading, and there is a phenomenon of inadequate explanation of cultural knowledge in the text. However, most of the teachers believed that the cultivation of core literacy should focus on the cultivation of students' language ability and learning ability, accounting for more than 40% each, while only 5% of the teachers chose cultural awareness. It can be seen that cultural awareness has not been attached importance by teachers. On the other hand, students' understanding of Chinese culture is higher than that of foreign

culture, and their emphasis on foreign culture is not high. In the middle school, 55% of the teachers' cultural teaching is "average" and they do not have a relatively complete cultural teaching strategy. At the same time, although 80% of the students identify with and respect foreign culture, they generally have low self-trust in cross-cultural communication in class. In the post-school stage, most of the teachers chose language ability and learning ability when supplementing students' extra-curricular learning resources, while only 8% chose cultural awareness. At the same time, most students lack understanding of foreign customs and etiquette.

Through the above problems, it can be concluded that teachers pay more attention to the cultivation of students' learning ability in reading teaching, but their awareness of cultural cultivation is still not high, and their awareness of integrating cultural knowledge into activity design is not high in teaching design. In addition, students are relatively short of guidance on extracurricular reading of cultural knowledge. As a result, students participate less in cultural awareness training activities in class, and the amount of extracurricular reading of cross-cultural communication ability and cultural knowledge is not high.

5. Training strategies

Based on the above conclusions, the author gives corresponding training strategies before, during and after reading according to the problems existing in the cultivation of cultural awareness in junior middle school English reading teaching.

1. Cultivation strategies of cultural awareness before reading

Before reading teaching, teachers need to have a clear understanding of the theme and teaching objectives of this unit. Teachers should conduct in-depth interpretation of the reading texts in the unit according to the teaching objectives, dig out the cultural consciousness contained in the articles, and carry out teaching design according to the unit theme, so as to promote students' cultural awareness.

(1) Clarify the teaching objectives and guide the formation of students' cultural consciousness

Clear teaching objectives can help teachers grasp the teaching points of this lesson before teaching and improve the teaching quality. In junior middle school English teaching, although many teachers take the cultivation of cultural awareness into consideration when setting the teaching objectives, most of them master the cultural knowledge in reading texts, but ignore the cultivation of students' cultural values and intercultural communication ability, which is difficult to meet the grading standards of cultural awareness in English Curriculum Standards. Therefore, teachers should make clear the teaching objectives, so that students can improve their cultural awareness and cross-cultural communication ability while improving their reading level.

Take the reading lesson of Unit 7, Section B 2b of Grade 8 English for example. The reading text is mainly about the fact that human misbehavior has led to a drastic decrease of giant panda cubs, and the relevant part has taken appropriate measures and called on people to protect giant pandas. For example, in the goal of cultural awareness, group discussion or role-playing activities on measures to protect endangered animals at home and abroad can be designed to improve students' cultural awareness and intercultural communication level.

(2) Go deep into textbook texts and expand teaching resources

The textbooks contain a lot of cultural knowledge, which is worthy of teachers to dig deeply and cultivate students' cultural awareness through teaching. Therefore, before reading teaching, teachers should dig deeply into the texts in the textbooks, extract the cultural knowledge contained in the texts, and carry out in-depth processing, and design novel and authentic activities combined with the real context, so as to enhance students' cultural awareness.

In addition, when designing activities, teachers should supplement them with appropriate teaching resources. In traditional teaching activities, some teachers cultivate students' cultural awareness only through oral language or pictures, which is monotonous and boring, making students unable to have interest in the learning content. Teachers can use film clips, short stories or short literary works to design teaching activities, improve the interest and diversity of activities, ensure that students can improve their international vision in the process of learning, help students understand the culture and customs of different countries, and improve cross-cultural communication skills.

2. Cultivation strategies of cultural consciousness in reading

English reading in junior high school contains rich cultural elements. Teachers need to design different types of activities through reading in order to help students enrich cultural knowledge and broaden their cultural horizons, so as to form a correct and positive cultural value orientation.

(1) Enrich teaching activities and improve students' cultural identity

Activities run through English reading teaching. However, in actual English teaching, some teachers fail to integrate cultural awareness into classroom activities and still pay attention to language knowledge and skills, which leads to the lack of students' cognition and understanding of different cultures and the comparison and identification of cultures, thus hindering the accuracy and appropriateness of students' use of English. Therefore, in reading teaching, teachers should present the cultural elements embodied in the textbook text to students through different kinds and different levels of activities, so that students are the main body, truly let students experience, perceive and compare the similarities and differences of different cultures, and cultivate students' cultural awareness.

Take the reading text of Unit 8 Section B 2b "Thanksgiving in the United States" in the eighth grade of Junior High School English Edition as an example, the main content of the article is to introduce Thanksgiving Day and the steps of making Turkey. This text focuses on Western culture and special holiday food, which can help students understand Western culture and cultivate students' cross-cultural awareness. Teachers can cultivate students' cultural awareness by designing different activities.

For example, teachers can prepare videos about "Thanksgiving Day" for students, so that students can clearly understand the origin, characteristics and customs of this holiday. Through the form of videos, it can not only introduce the holiday clearly and clearly, but also

increase students' interest in learning and reduce the boredom of teachers' oral explanation or presentation of a single picture. For example, teachers can make students feel the differences between Chinese and foreign festivals and cultures by asking students about Chinese traditional festivals and the representative food during festivals. Through communication, students can not only master the cultures of different countries, but also exercise their cross-cultural communication ability. At the same time, teachers can also guide students and parents to make festival food together and share this activity with classmates in a video, so as to truly feel the culture from practice and build up cultural confidence.

(2) Create a cultural environment and enhance the cultural atmosphere

Culture is recessive and progressive, and needs long-term cultivation. In the process of teaching, teachers should avoid direct input of cultural knowledge to students, resulting in passive acceptance of knowledge. On the contrary, teachers should create a cultural environment according to the unit theme in reading teaching to provide students with an immersive cultural atmosphere and enhance students' sense of cultural experience. For example, teachers can guide students to communicate and explore through various activities such as situational dramas, role playing and dubbing, so as to improve their cultural awareness and intercultural communication ability through communication.

3. Strategies for cultivating cultural consciousness after reading

After the completion of reading teaching activities, teachers should continue to strengthen the cultivation of students' cultural consciousness through other ways to consolidate and strengthen the cultural consciousness contained in the text.

(1) Make use of extracurricular reading to explore cultural phenomena independently

Cultivating cultural awareness in reading is a long-term task. Therefore, teachers should constantly increase the reading amount of students, so that students can find the cultural differences between China and the West from English reading, and finally form the correct cultural awareness. However, due to time constraints, teachers cannot lead students to conduct extracurricular reading in class. Therefore, teachers should assign corresponding reading tasks to students, put forward open questions in combination with the texts in class, and guide students to carry out extracurricular reading after class. This can not only improve students' reading quantity and interest in reading, but also form the awareness of active exploration and thinking and improve students' ability.

(2) Enrich the forms of homework and strengthen students' cultural awareness

Homework plays a role in consolidating and strengthening knowledge. Teachers can use a variety of homework forms to integrate the cultivation of cultural consciousness into the homework, so that students can strengthen and innovate the cultural knowledge in the text. For example, the reading article in Section B 2b of Unit 10 of the textbook for Grade 7 of the Human Education Edition is about birthday food around the world. Teachers can assign assignments to students about finding birthday food around the world, drawing handwritten newspapers, and writing out the countries and food in English, so that students can not only independently understand the birthday customs of different countries, but also learn about the birthday customs of different countries. They can also exercise their drawing ability and promote students' all-round development while drawing the handwritten newspaper.

6. Conclusion

Cultivating students' cultural awareness in junior high school English reading teaching not only meets the requirements of the new curriculum standards, but also helps students' all-round development. Junior high school students still have certain misunderstandings and blind areas about different cultures when learning English. Therefore, teachers should cultivate students' cultural awareness in English reading teaching, based on the texts in the textbooks, through a variety of meaningful activities. To help students set up good cultural values and improve their intercultural communication ability.

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