

Original Paper

A Study on Teachers' Questioning Strategies for the Purpose of Improving Students' Thinking Quality in Senior High School English Reading Teaching

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Abstract

Thinking quality is a key element in developing students' creativity, critical thinking skills and critical thinking. In high school English teaching, questioning is an important means to develop students' reading comprehension ability. However, the traditional way of teachers' questioning is usually aimed at expressing the answers, neglecting the cultivation of thinking quality. The purpose of this paper is to explore the current situation and reasons of questioning in high school, and to explore the specific questioning strategies that can effectively train students' thinking quality in high school English classes.

Keywords

quality of thinking, English reading classroom, questioning strategy

1. Introduction

The curriculum development objectives of English in the 2022 version of the English Curriculum Standard for General Senior Secondary Schools (referred to as the "new standard") shift the focus of attention to the core qualities of students in the English subject, and incorporate the dimension of "quality of thinking" into the connotation of the core qualities of the English subject. The dimension of "quality of thinking" is included in the core quality of the English subject. Reading teaching is an important part of English teaching, and English reading class has an outstanding advantage in the cultivation of students' thinking quality because of its rich cultural connotation of English education and language appreciation value. As an important skill in English reading teaching, questioning is an important factor affecting the efficiency of reading teaching and an important means of cultivating

students' thinking quality. In high school English reading teaching, the reading text is full of information and dispersed, and the quality of teachers' questioning determines the depth and breadth of students' reading text and affects the development and expansion of students' thinking. In this paper, from the current high school English reading classroom questioning in the many problems and the status quo, explores the effective classroom questioning strategy, aimed at asking questions to lead to thinking, to promote the cultivation of students' thinking quality.

2. The Current Situation of Questioning in High School English Classroom

2.1 A Large Proportion of the Questions Were Low-level Questions

Teachers in reading classrooms tend to refer to cognitive questions that focus on yes-or-no answers and close-ended questions that are easily found in textbooks and require little in-depth thinking. When it comes to open-ended and creative questions, given the limited time available, teachers may often provide students with hints, which can greatly affect students' ability to think independently. The type of questioning tends to focus on words, vocabulary and sentence structure, with little textual understanding.

2.2 Teachers Give Students Less Waiting Time

Rowe (1986) divides the teacher's waiting time for questions into two types; the first refers to the time between the teacher asking the question and the student giving the question. The length of time between answers, that is, post-question waiting time, which is the time given to students to think about the question, and the other kind of waiting time, which is the length of time between students' answers to the question and the teacher's or other classmates' feedback, is also known as post-answer waiting time (i.e., the time for students to reconsider, expand, or revise their answers). The author found that most teachers want students to give answers immediately after they ask a question in order to give students more knowledge in the limited 45 minutes. When students are not able to answer immediately after a question is posed to them, the teacher will "quickly" direct the students to respond or call another student up to answer the question, rather than waiting for the student who is unable to answer the question immediately, which may not be understandable in the limited amount of time available. If this goes on for a long time, it is bound to dampen students' motivation and their enthusiasm for answering questions, which is even more detrimental to the cultivation of students' quality of thinking.

2.3 Unequal Opportunities for Students to Answer Questions

In the classroom observation, it is found that teachers tend to ask questions to more active students, so that other students have fewer opportunities to answer, their ability to answer questions and critical thinking is greatly affected, and they will only get worse and worse, forming a vicious circle: good students get better and better, poor students get worse and worse, students don't like teachers, and the class discipline will not be good. Students' academic performance will not be good, which will also affect the enthusiasm of teachers and students in class.

3. Reasons for Inappropriate Use of Questioning Strategies in English Classroom

3.1 *Over-emphasis on Language Teaching*

On the one hand, in the background of exam-oriented education, many teachers in the process of teaching the phenomenon of only talking about the content of the test, not the irrelevant test content, the knowledge of the test focuses on vocabulary, words, grammar of the content and the content of the test, and involves creative questions, critical questions and other questions to cultivate the students' creative thinking, critical thinking, logical thinking is less. According to the results of classroom observation and students' questionnaires, teachers ask a large proportion of demonstrative questions, accounting for 85 percent, and referential questions account for 15 percent. On the other hand, teachers want to instill enough knowledge into their students in the limited 45 minutes, so if they do not have the patience to guide their students, then the quality of students' thinking will not be developed.

3.2 *Underestimating Students' Ability to "Learn"*

In the process of lesson preparation, many teachers take themselves the leading role, students under the leadership of the teacher to review vocabulary, grammar and other basic knowledge, consolidate the foundation of the main teaching objectives, but do not go tap the students' inner learning energy to stimulate students to think, and did not focus on the promotion of the development of the quality of thinking of the students. The root of the problem is the underestimation of students' ability to "learn" and answer questions, and the failure to cultivate students' ability in this area at the beginning of the process has resulted in the development of students' quality of thinking lagging far behind the development of their language skills in the second and third years of high school.

3.3 *Teachers Lack Systematic Training in Professional Development and Quality of Thinking*

Teachers' professional development refers to the process by which teachers, under the guidance of the concept of lifelong learning and continuous development, achieve an all-round improvement of their professional concepts, professional knowledge and abilities by reasonably planning their own professional development goals and mastering the knowledge and skills of teachers' professional development with the help of diversified learning paths. Teachers spend a lot of time and energy on their teaching work, and their free time is only available during the summer and winter holidays, so they receive training during the summer and winter holidays. In this case, teachers' professional training is postponed, which ultimately hurts their development. Training on the implementation of thinking quality accounts for a low percentage of all training, and most of the training are given to young teachers, and the group of old teachers seldom receives training on the quality of thinking in English and efficient classroom questioning strategies. Teachers, in order to seek, have carried out self-study by themselves, taking into account their own teaching experiences. However, self-study is not systematic, and there is little high-quality online training on how to improve the effectiveness of the reading classroom. This is not conducive to improving the ability of teachers as a whole to use different questioning strategies based on core literacy. At the same time, many teachers are not in the habit of

considering questioning when designing lesson plans, which means that questioning is not taken seriously and many teachers do not pay attention to it.

4. Strategies for Improving the Efficiency of English Language Teaching

4.1 Encourage Students to Think Holistically

During the questioning process, the teacher can design questions that can stimulate students' ability to think comprehensively. These questions can guide students to connect the information in the article with their knowledge and experience to form a deeper understanding. For example, students can be asked to give their own or evaluate the ideas in the article based on the content of the article.

4.2 Ask Challenging Questions

To develop students' thinking skills, in the reading classroom, the teacher can ask challenging questions to stimulate students' thinking. These questions can involve more complex processes of reasoning and analysis and require students to think and discuss deeply in relation to the text.

4.3 Teaching Thinking Skills

Teachers can introduce students to thinking skills in the classroom that will help improve their reasoning and analytical skills. These skills may include logical reasoning, problem decomposition, comparison and contrast, and so on. At the same time, teachers can guide students to use these skills in the problem-solving process to help them reason and analyze more effectively.

4.4 Designing Appropriate Questioning Strategies

In the reading classroom, teachers should devise appropriate questioning strategies to encourage students to think and participate in discussions. For example, open-ended and contextual questions can be used to allow students to think and apply their knowledge on their own, while selective questions can also be provided to help students make choices and decisions.

To sum up, high school English reading questioning teaching strategies based on the quality of thinking can be achieved by guiding students to use their reasoning skills, encouraging integrated thinking, asking challenging questions, teaching thinking skills, and designing appropriate questioning strategies. These strategies will help enhance students' thinking skills and develop their reasoning and analytical abilities.

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