

English Learning Activity and Middle School Writing Teaching

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ABSTRACT

In the current development of middle school English teaching activities, a large number of instillation teaching based on knowledge teaching still exists, which is not conducive to improving students' autonomy and the quality of teaching. Under the guidance of the student-oriented education philosophy, teachers need to transform knowledge instillation into an activity-based learning form, give students the opportunity to exercise their autonomy, and enable students to develop multiple abilities in active participation. Writing is an important part of middle school English teaching. With learning activity, teachers could arouse students' interest in writing, guide students to generate opinions, and finally realize the promotion of writing and improve students' writing ability.

Keywords: *Teaching activities, Middle school English, Teaching of writing.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Activities are the basic form of English learning. It is the main way for learners to learn and try to use language to understand and express meaning, cultivate cultural awareness, develop multiple thinking, and form learning ability. The concept of activity has provided a strong guarantee for the integration of course content, the implementation of in-depth teaching and the overall goals of the course. It also provides a practicable way to change the way students learn and improve the effectiveness of English teaching and learning. Teachers should re-examine the rationality and effectiveness of classroom teaching design from the perspective of English learning activities, integrate curriculum content, optimize teaching methods, and design contextual, layered, and effective English learning activities for students. [1]

The design of English learning activities should aim to promote the development of students' core literacy of English subjects, centering on the subject context, based on multi-modal discourses such as oral and written discourse, and progress through layers of learning, comprehension, application practice, transfer innovation, etc. Activities that integrate language, thinking and culture guide students to deepen their

understanding of the meaning of the theme, help them acquire language knowledge, use language skills, interpret cultural connotations, compare cultural similarities and differences, and evaluate textual meanings. [2] Thus, students form correct values and positive emotional attitudes, and then try to use the language and cultural knowledge learned in a new context, analyze and solve problems, and creatively express personal views, emotions and attitudes.

Learning activities mainly include text-based learning activities such as perception and attention, acquisition and sorting, generalization, and integration. Applied practice activities mainly include in-depth discourse learning activities such as description and interpretation, analysis and judgment, internalization and application.

On the basis of learning and comprehension activities, teachers guide students to carry out description, interpretation, analysis, judgment and other communication activities around the theme and the new knowledge structure, gradually realize the internalization of language knowledge and cultural knowledge, and consolidate the new knowledge structure, so as to promote students' automation of language use and the ability to transform knowledge into competence.

Transfer innovation activities include reasoning and argumentation, criticism and evaluation, imagination and creation, and other learning activities that go beyond discourse. [3] That is, the teacher guides students to reason and demonstrate the value orientation or the author's attitude behind the text, appreciate the stylistic features and rhetoric techniques of the text, explore its connection with the theme meaning, criticize and evaluate the author's views, etc.

Compared with the traditional task-based teaching, the English learning activity view emphasizes the construction of knowledge and the development of thinking quality, guides correct values, emphasizes problem solving, and emphasizes the development of connotation while adhering to the education orientation, integrated development and improvement of language ability. Its goal is to improve the core literacy of students.

2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This topic is based on the language ability and thinking characteristics of middle school students, and it has important theoretical and practical significance to apply the concept of English learning activities to the teaching of middle school English writing.

English learning activities should build a bridge between English curriculum content and curriculum goals, focus on the integrated learning of curriculum content, reflect the cognitive and application dimensions of foreign language learning characteristics, namely learning and comprehension activities, application and practice activities, and transfer innovation activities. It can be seen that the view of learning activity is not a fixed activity mode, but a relatively macro approach to learning.

In terms of theory, through a series of teaching experiments, it has further verified the feasibility and effectiveness of the English learning activity view in middle school English writing teaching, providing theoretical guidance and new research perspectives for middle school English writing teaching. At the same time, in view of the relationship between English learning activities and the cultivation of middle school students' core competence, this study also provides a new research path for the cultivation of middle school students' core competence.

In terms of practice, the final results of this research can be directly applied to the teaching of

English writing in middle schools. Experimental design, teaching design and teaching strategies provide teaching practice reference for middle school English writing teaching based on the concept of English learning activities. The teacher helps students overcome their writing fears, improve their writing strategies, master a variety of writing skills, and improve their core qualities such as comprehensive language use, logical thinking, and innovative thinking.

Language learning should be based on texts. Different types of text writing provide opportunities for students to experience and interpret multiple texts. The choice of discourse integrates education, timeliness and applicability, and has positive significance in promoting students' language accumulation, discourse structure, thinking expression, and forming correct values. [4] It can also realize textbook and non-textbook discourse, continuity and discontinuity.

All language learning activities should be carried out in a certain theme context, and students' exploration of the theme is the most important part of students' language learning. By creating problem situations, the teacher mobilizes students' existing experience based on the theme, in order to solve problems, inspire them to think deeply, to perceive the essence of language in the situation, to explore cultural similarities and differences while constructing and improving the knowledge structure, and to enhance the "width" and "depth" of thinking and construct multiple perspectives.

The goal of English learning activities must point to the development of the core competence of students including four aspects: language ability, cultural awareness, thinking quality and learning ability. The English learning activity view writing teaching mode focuses on students' learning interest, learning motivation, learning methods and learning psychology. Focusing on the cultivation of students' core competence, the results are clearly directed, emphasizing the learning process and reflecting the learning results. From the goal of language knowledge based on the level of understanding to the goal of learning ability that reflects practical application, and to the goal of cultural thinking development of migration and innovation, the links are interlocked and progressive.

3. MAJOR VIEWPOINTS OF THE STUDY

3.1 The Teaching Under the Guidance of the English Activity Learning Concept Is Beneficial to Improve the Middle School Students' Interest in English Writing and Improve Writing Learning Strategies

The English learning activity view is based on the text, through a series of thematic exploration activities integrating language, culture and thinking, such as learning comprehension, application time, transfer innovation, etc., to stimulate students' interest in writing, and change the past learning habits that emphasize grammar and neglects strategy Model to cultivate students' autonomous learning ability.

3.2 The Concept of English Learning Activities Adheres to the Education Orientation and Integrated Development

Teaching based on the concept of English learning activities not only enhances students' language ability, but also highlights their development of knowledge construction and thinking quality, guides their correct values, integrates language, culture and thinking organically, focuses on real issues, and pays attention to connotative development.

3.3 Writing Teaching Under the Guidance of the English Activity Learning Concept Is Beneficial to Cultivate the Core Literacy of Middle School Students

Writing teaching based on the view of English learning activities is based on the theme of activating students' known and discovering their unknown knowledge. In the new context, comprehensive use of various resources to solve problems, realize transfer innovation, improve logical thinking, critical thinking and innovative thinking skills, and implement English academic literacy.

4. MAJOR PROBLEMS IN ENGLISH WRITING LEARNING AND TEACHING

4.1 Too Much Emphasis on Grammar

The lack of emphasis on writing teaching is related to the examination system. The assessment of grammar and vocabulary in middle school English tests in China accounts for about 60% to 80%. Therefore, teachers pay more attention to basic knowledge such as grammar and vocabulary in the teaching process. In addition, most of the assessment methods for grammar and vocabulary are multiple-choice questions and do not require students to write. Therefore, most students can only do questions and cannot accurately organize sentences according to the correct grammar.

4.2 The Writing Teaching Model Is Single and Boring, and It Is Difficult to Raise Students' Interest

The teaching model for English writing at middle school stage is relatively simple, that is, students write according to a fixed framework such as "Firstly... Secondly...." according to the topics assigned by the teacher, and then hand in the writing to the teacher for review, but most teachers only focus on grammar and vocabulary. This model actually turns writing into a means of checking grammar and vocabulary. However, since most students' assignments inevitably have grammatical or vocabulary errors, their compositions are often filled with red circles and red crosses after correction. If things go on like this, it will discourage students' enthusiasm for writing and make them resist.

4.3 The Lack of English Culture Education in English Teaching

The English teaching in middle schools seldom emphasizes the cultural differences between the East and the West, so that students do not have a deep understanding of English culture. They are susceptible to the influence of Chinese thinking in the writing process. They often use Chinese expressions to organize the language, resulting in the phenomenon of "Chinglish".

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Participants

The research subjects of this research are 100 middle school students and 2 English teachers. Two parallel classes are used as experimental class and control class respectively. There are 50 students in each of the two classes, and they have five English classes a week. Before the start of the research, the English proficiency of the students in the two classes was tested with the final exam papers of the second semester of the second year of, and the test results were analyzed.

5.2 Methods

Through the questionnaire survey, the current problems in the teaching of English writing in middle schools are summarized as well as the internal reasons behind these phenomena, and targeted solutions are proposed.

In order to maximize the authenticity of the teaching effect guided by the English learning activity view, before starting the experiment, the teacher tests the English writing ability of the students. After the teaching experiment, the writing level and writing strategy of the students are again tested to verify the actual effect of this new model.

In the research process, we emphasized the exploratory and operability of research, insisted on practice, exploration, research, and summary, insisted on writing classroom teaching reflections, and achieved a combination of theory and practice.

These methods are used to verify the feasibility of the English learning activity view in the teaching of English writing in middle schools, as well as its effect on cultivating middle school students' English writing interests, habits and strategies. The teacher helps students use a variety of writing strategies to acquire cultural knowledge, understand cultural connotations, and compare cultural similarities and differences. In this process, they can improve logical thinking, critical thinking, and innovative thinking, and implement English academic literacy.

The researcher mainly used research tools such as pre-test and post-test, classroom observation and individual interviews to collect and analyze data. It is expected that through these research tools, the researcher could communicate and analyze

experimental results in a more intuitive and objective way.

Both the experimental class and the control class use textbooks as the main teaching content. The experimental class adopts the English learning activity writing teaching method, while the control class adopts the traditional task-based teaching method. This experiment lasted for one academic year. Both the experimental class and the control class adopted pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was mainly to understand the students' English foundation. The post-test was mainly to verify whether students' writing ability can be improved after adopting the English learning activity writing teaching method, and to test whether the traditional task-based teaching method and the English learning activity teaching method would produce different results. At the same time, another important purpose of the post-test was to test the effect of writing teaching on English learning activities.

The main method of classroom observation used by the researcher is attending the class. The author invited 4 teachers from the third grade as observers to enter the experimental class and the control class to complete a 45-minute classroom observation. The teachers mainly observed students' writing, discussion, expression and other classroom activities. The purpose was to verify the role of English learning activity writing teaching in cultivating middle school students' interest in English writing by observing students' performance in the classroom.

Individual interviews were helpful for the researcher to gain in-depth understanding of the issues that the research needs to understand. The researcher randomly selected students for individual interviews before and after the experiment. Interviews before the experiment were mainly to understand the students' writing foundation. After the experiment, the researcher conducted another interview with the interviewed students in order to verify the feasibility of the English learning activity in the teaching of English writing in middle schools.

5.3 Teaching Design

Under the guidance of the theme, students used a series of English learning activities that reflect the characteristics of comprehensiveness, relevance and practicality, such as learning understanding, application practice, and transfer innovation, so that

students could rely on different types of texts based on their existing knowledge. In the process of analyzing and solving problems, students are helped to promote the learning of language knowledge, the development of language skills, the understanding of cultural connotation, the development of multiple thinking, the judgment of value orientation and the application of learning strategies. This process was not only a process of integrated development of language knowledge and language skills, but also a process of continuous improvement of thinking quality, continuous enhancement of cultural awareness, and continuous improvement of learning ability.

Discourse reading teaching plays an important role in middle school English teaching. Following the concept of English learning activities proposed by the curriculum standard, teachers should study the text before creating a reasonable reading teaching activity, that is, make an in-depth interpretation of the topic, content, stylistic structure, language characteristics, and the author's views of the text. Based on the design, three levels of activities were designed, namely text-based, in-depth text and trans-text activities, to help students actively participate in learning activities that explore the meaning of the theme.

6. STAGES OF THE STUDY

6.1 Preparation Stage

The researcher collected data, formulated experimental plans for the subject, and did a good preparatory job at the early stage of the study, including document collection, task division and related research work.

6.2 Implementation Stage

The experiment was conducted in 2 semesters. The first semester was the first phase of the implementation. At this stage, both the experimental class and the control class used *English* published by Shandong Education Press as the main textbook. The experimental class adopted the English learning activity view for writing teaching, and tests the students' basic situation to determine the implementation of the second phase.

In the second semester, the teacher guided students to accumulate language knowledge and skills through reading, built a basic writing framework, and then used writing activities to encourage students to realize the internalization and

transfer of knowledge. [5] After the writing was completed, self-examination was used to solve the problem of whether the article was relevant to the topic, and group examination focused on the wording and sentence structure and the structure of the text, so as to broaden students' thinking, learn from each other's strengths, and share the writing experience in class. At the end of this stage, the teacher conducted the second writing ability test, questionnaire survey and interview, and completed the research report.

7. CONCLUSION

English learning activities are the basic organizational form of English classroom teaching. It is the main way to implement the curriculum goals. The implementation of English courses requires integration of course content and meticulous design of learning activities to achieve the integration and unity of objectives, content and methods.

In the classroom guided by the theme meaning, teachers should create a context closely related to the theme meaning, fully explore the cultural information carried by a specific theme and develop the key points of students' thinking quality, and solve the problem based on the exploration of the theme meaning. [6] Students are encouraged to integrate the learning and development of language knowledge and language skills, establish a close relationship between specific topics and their lives, and carry out inquiries into language, meaning and culture.

At the same time, through the comparison of Chinese and foreign cultures, students' logical thinking and critical thinking were cultivated, and they were guided to construct a multicultural perspective. In the design of theme exploration activities, attention should be paid to stimulating students' interest in participating in activities, mobilizing students' existing experience based on the theme, helping students construct and perfect a new knowledge structure, and deepen their understanding of the theme.

Through a series of comprehensive and relevant language learning and thinking activities, students could cultivate their language understanding and expression ability, promote their deep learning of themes, construct new concepts, experience different lives, and enrich their life experience. The way of thinking establishes a correct outlook on the

world, life and values, and realizes the unity of knowledge and action.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

This paper is independently completed by Xinhua Yuan.

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