

A Way to Improve Students' Cultural Literacy

-- "Four-In-One" Model of Instruction

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Abstract

Helping Students improve their cultural awareness is becoming more and more important of English teacher in recent years. It is not only the NECS's emphasis, but also the demand of globalization. Nowadays, cultivating students' cultural literacy is becoming one of the key points in English classroom and one of the necessary factors that teachers hold in teaching. However, at present, students' cultural literacy is leaving much to the desire. There are many problems in involving the culture knowledge in classroom deeply, such as the teaching beliefs are out of date, the learning contents are not enough and the teaching and learning methods are simplex. This paper mainly studied how to improve students' cultural literacy and proposed the "four-in-one" model of instruction contains the administrator, the textbook, the teacher and the activities which aimed at cultivating students' cultural literacy, developing their cultural awareness, cultural ability and cross- cultural ability.

Keywords

Cultural literacy; Cultural awareness; Cross- cultural ability; "Four-in-one" model of instruction.

1. Introduction

General Senior High School Curriculum Standard (abbreviation it as Standard) emphasize to cultivate students' cultural awareness which consists of understanding of Chinese and foreign cultures, recognition of excellent cultures, and cross-cultural cognition , attitude, and behaviors which students demonstrate in the context of globalization [1]. The standard list cultural awareness into students' core competence which made the English education practitioners realize the importance of improving students cultural awareness. However, it is particularly important to develop students' cultural literacy through cultivating students' cultural confidence, improving their spirit to cultural heritage and output of our country and developing their ability to compare cultural similarities and differences in the context of globalization.

1.1. Current Research

After the curriculum standard emphasizes the importance of cultural awareness, many scholars committed to study the teaching of culture in English classroom. In their study, most of them aimed at finding the "key" to solve the existing difficulties through committing to study the problems and countermeasures in various stages of English Teaching in China. He Lifen (2018) studied the current situation of Chinese culture integration in high school textbook sand found that China's high school English textbooks ignore local culture by analyzing the textbooks [2]. Many researchers like Wen Qiufang (1999) also put forward the importance of paying attention to cultivating students' cross-cultural communicative competence [3]. In addition, Hu Yuan (2019) also proposed a cross-cultural classroom teaching design of "unity of knowledge and practice", which aims to develop students' cross-cultural communicative competence through

cultivating their knowledge and behavior [4]. Also, Yang Guihua (2018) studied how to cultivate students' cross-cultural ability based on reading and ESA teaching theory to promote the growth of students' cross-cultural ability through investment, learning and application [5]. Wang Jian (2020) analyzed problems of cultural response in English teaching by analyzing the distribution of Chinese culture in 2017-2019 college entrance examination English questions [6]. However, it has not analyzed the integration of culture into teaching in the whole system of education managers, teaching materials, teachers and activities.

1.2. The Importance of Cultivating Cultural Literacy

The aim of curriculum standard is to cultivate their subject core literacy. It puts forward that the English subject core literacy mainly includes four aspects: language ability, cultural awareness, thinking quality and learning ability [1]. The cultivation of cultural awareness is inseparable from the cultivation of other core competencies, which promote and support each other. Also, students' overall cultural literacy should be cultivated by improving students' cultural awareness, accumulating cultural knowledge, forming cultural skills (such as distinguishing cultural differences, absorbing cultural essence, cultivating cross-cultural communicative competence, etc). Promoting the development of students' cultural literacy can not only promote the development of students' language ability, but also cultivate students' thinking quality and learning ability, especially the ability to compare and analyze different cultures under the cultivation of cross-cultural awareness. In addition, it can also promote students to form a sense of autonomous learning, enhance their interest in learning and cultivate a sense of responsibility for learning and so on.

2. Restrictions on Promoting the Development of Students' Cultural Literacy

With the development of the times, English teaching has long been no longer the era of just imparting English knowledge to students. There is no doubt that what student actually need is the development of comprehensive ability, however, English education in most parts of China is carried out in an examination oriented environment, which leads to the teaching objectives and requirements put forward in the curriculum standard can't correspond to teachers' teaching. Although many teachers are also actively responding to the requirements of the curriculum standards, there are still various obstacles. In this case, there are some problems in the cultivation of students' cultural literacy in thought, teaching materials and teaching methods.

2.1. Restrictions in Thought

Cultivating students' cultural literacy is a positive response to the call of the party. On the one hand, many teachers lack cultural literacy themselves, so, they only focus on the cultivation of language knowledge in teaching, and even think that cultivate students' cultural awareness will not improve students' score, but make teachers very tired. Although some teachers believe that cultivate students' cultural literacy is particularly important in English teaching, some teachers put the cart before the horse in the teaching process, they overemphasize the teaching of foreign culture and ignore the introduction of Chinese local culture.

On the other hand, senior high school students also have some limitations in thought. First of all, high school students are very interested in the novel world as an adolescent. If teachers pay too much attention to foreign culture but ignore local culture in teaching, it may lead to the formation of bad values. Secondly, in the process of teaching, too much emphasis on the teaching of language knowledge will lead students to loss interest in learning English.

These limitations in thought will affect the formation of students' cultural literacy, and the lower cultural literacy will in turn affect the thoughts of teachers and students, even make the

whole English teaching lack vitality, making English teaching develop in a negative feedback mode.

2.2. Restrictions in Teaching Materials

Teaching materials are one of the important tools to cultivate students' cultural literacy and the guide of teachers' teaching. We found that whether it is the PEP senior high school English textbook or the FLTRP textbook, there are certain limitations. For example, the degree of cultural integration into the textbook is not in-depth, which leads to the fact that teachers' cultural integration is just a pass, a taste, or even just as the introduction of new knowledge, but can't really run the cultivation of cultural literacy through the classroom. On the other hand, students can't realize the importance of cultural education and don't study culture deeply enough. In addition, the types of cultural integration in textbooks are unbalanced, the proportion of objective material culture and subjective consciousness culture is unbalanced, and there is a lack of context in culture teaching, which will limit the all-round development of students.

2.3. Restrictions in Teaching Methods

Cultivating students' cultural literacy is also a suitable method in different situations. From the current situation of cultural integration into teaching in English classroom in China, there are still various problems in teaching methods. Firstly, for culture teaching, there is a lack of multiple evaluation methods for students' cultural ability. In most cases, the evaluation of students' cultural literacy is only a single summative evaluation, which not only can't promote the overall development of students' cultural literacy, but also lead to students' fear of cultural integration in English classes that will reduce their interest and motivation in learning. Secondly, teachers have not undergone systematic cultural integration into classroom teaching training. Many teachers show weakness in cultivating students' cultural literacy. Even if they know that the comprehensive cultivation of students' cultural literacy is the requirement of the curriculum standard and the times, they are distressed that they can't find an appropriate way. In addition, in the era of methods, some teachers rely too much on methods. Teachers are only the carrier of methods and seriously lack initiative, which solidifies the teaching rigidity. Teachers only teach passively in methodology, and students only accept it mechanically [7].

3. The "Four in One" Improvement Model of the Path Exploration of Cultivating Senior High School Students' Cultural Literacy

In the context of globalization, cultivating students' cultural literacy is the call of the times. At present, the problems of cultural integration and teaching in English teaching have always existed and need to be solved urgently. At present, the reason for the lack or even lack of cultural literacy of senior high school students is not only unilateral, but the joint action of multiple factors. To change this situation, only changing teachers' teaching or one aspect can't affect the whole body. The author puts forward the "four in one" Teaching Improvement model on this issue, in order to improve the current situation of the lack of cultural literacy of senior high school students.

3.1. Construction of Four in One Teaching Improvement Model

Since the lack of students' cultural literacy is not caused by one aspect, we should consider the problem from many aspects. Through the comprehensive analysis of all aspects of English education, the author constructs a "four in one" improvement model of integrating culture into teaching from the four aspects of education managers, teaching materials, teachers and activities. As shown in Figure 1:

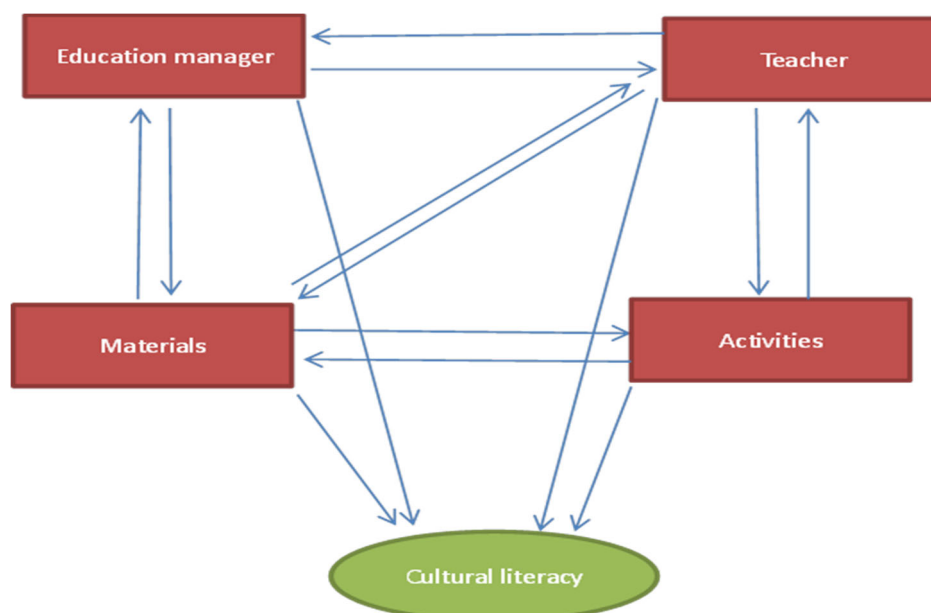


Figure 1. Four in one teaching improvement model

From Figure 1, we can also know that the factors affecting students' cultural literacy are comprehensive. Education managers, teaching materials, teachers and activities can not only have a direct impact on students' cultural literacy alone, but also indirectly affect the cultivation of students' cultural literacy through other aspects. For example, education administrators can promote the cultivation of students' cultural literacy by adjusting teaching materials, requiring and supervising teachers and controlling activities; Teachers and textbooks can promote the formation of students' cultural literacy through improvement activities. In addition, all aspects can be readjusted through feedback, so as to finally promote students' cultural awareness and cultural ability and obtain comprehensive cultural literacy. Therefore, the construction of "four in one" teaching improvement model can clarify the direct, indirect or mutual influence of various factors on students' comprehensive cultural literacy.

3.2. How to Improve the Effect of Cultivating Students' Cultural Literacy?

The lack of students' cultural literacy is not the result of the influence of a single variable, but the comprehensive effect of multiple variables. Educational managers, teaching materials, teachers and activities directly or indirectly affect students' cultural literacy. Then, in order to improve students' cultural literacy, how should each part of the "four in one" be improved? Let's discuss these four aspects separately.

3.2.1. Some Suggestions to Educational Manager

In general, education managers are the theoretical makers of students' curriculum content, objectives and standards. However, teaching practice should be combined with theory, and front-line teachers should be included in the formulation of curriculum content. Front line teachers have direct contact with students and have a clearer understanding of students' needs, level, attitude and so on. Therefore, the inclusion of front-line teachers in the formulation of curriculum will make the plans in curriculum and other aspects more suitable for students' reality and promote the combination of teaching theory and practice. In terms of culture, managers should pay more attention to the evaluation and investigation of teachers' culture teaching, give more opportunities to teachers for training their abilities to integration of culture into teaching, and strengthen teachers' ability to naturally integrate culture into the classroom. In addition, on the issue of teachers' lack of cultural knowledge and do not understand how to integrate culture into the classroom on the basis of discourse, managers can organize excellent

teachers to establish a cultural resource bank, or encourage the establishment of mini lessons to provide teachers with methods and materials to integrate culture into the classroom to cultivate students' cultural quality.

3.2.2. Some Suggestions to Teaching Materials

English textbooks refer to the textbooks used in teaching and the supporting exercise books, activity books, story books, self-study manuals, tapes, wall charts, cards, teaching objects, computer software [8]. Teaching materials are the keys to improve students' comprehensive cultural literacy, it should pay more attention to the integration of native culture and refuse to pay too much attention to foreign culture. The teaching of native culture in textbooks can help students strengthen their cultural confidence and pay attention to the output of native culture. In addition, the imbalance in the proportion of cultural types in teaching materials should also be paid attention to. The curriculum standard divides culture into material culture and spiritual culture [1]. Professor Liu Jingquan also divides culture into four categories: modeling culture, performance and reproduction culture, standardized behavior culture, exploration and inheritance Culture [9]. Teaching materials should pay attention to the balance of various cultures, We should not only integrate spiritual culture, but also pay attention to material culture. We should not only train students' cultural input, but also pay attention to students' cultural output. At the same time, in the context of globalization, the cultivation of students' cross-cultural awareness is particularly important. Cross-cultural awareness includes not only American and English culture, but also other foreign cultures.

3.2.3. Some Suggestions to Teacher

Teachers, the same as students, are the core of classroom teaching. As the promoter of students' learning and the provider of resources, teachers should maintain the concept of lifelong learning, keep reading and strive to enhance their own cultural literacy outside the classroom. In teaching, they should pay attention to discourse study and the goal of unit theme, naturally and deeply integrate culture into the classroom on the basis of discourse and unit theme. At the same time, we should pay attention to cultivate students' language ability as students' language ability, cultural awareness and other core qualities promote each other. In cultural integration teaching, teachers should pay attention to the combination of implicit and explicit teaching, and set up various student-centered activities in and out of class, such as debate, role play, drama, etc., so that students can truly experience culture in the real situation and guide the growth of students' cultural quality. In the evaluation, teachers should also pay attention to the use of formative evaluation to evaluate students' overall cultural ability, such as multiple evaluation, students' mutual evaluation, portfolio evaluation and so on.

3.2.4. Some Suggestions to Activities

Language learning is different from other learning. The use of various forms of activities in teaching can promote the interaction between teachers and students and students. In student-centered activities, students can play a leading role in learning, and cultivate the ability of autonomous learning and discovery learning. In the process of integrating culture into teaching, the design of activities is also one of the key points. The design of activities should be changeable, operable and situational. Variability means that the types of activities should be varied to attract students' interest; Operability means that the setting of activities should be within the scope of students' existing language ability and cultural literacy, which can be operated by students. In addition, the content, steps and purpose of activities should be operable by teachers; Situational means that the setting of activities must have appropriate situations and be close to students' life and experience as much as possible. Teachers and schools can also hold English campus culture festivals regularly to promote students' interest in English learning and cultural learning and promote the comprehensive improvement of students' cultural literacy.

4. Conclusion

With the development of globalization, students' cultural literacy is becoming more and more important. At present, there are some problems in the cultivation of students' cultural literacy in English curriculum. This paper puts forward the "four in one" culture integration into classroom teaching improvement mode of educational managers, teaching materials, teachers and activities, in order to promote the cultivation of students' comprehensive cultural literacy. However, in teaching, we must pay attention to the teaching of culture naturally, not to teach students culture, but to deeply tap the cultural knowledge of the text on the basis of the text, and integrate the culture into the teaching materials and classroom teaching naturally and deeply. We have been on the way to improve students' cultural literacy.

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