



An Exploration of English Classroom Teaching Reform Under the New Curriculum Ideology: Taking Vocabulary Teaching as an Example

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Abstract

Vocabulary is not only the foundation for students to learn the English language but also a tool for them to explore and appreciate the English language and culture deeply. It serves as a universal key, opening the door to the vast world of English for students and guiding them to roam in the ocean of knowledge freely. Meanwhile, it influences the balanced development of their listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities directly. Vocabulary is not only the cornerstone of the English discipline's edifice but also a solid support for students to build a complete English knowledge system. In light of this, this paper employs the method of literature analysis to dissect the current status of junior high school English vocabulary teaching under the new curriculum concepts deeply, revealing the existing problems meticulously and proposing practical reform measures accordingly. This paper aims to provide beneficial references and insights for junior high school English vocabulary teaching, with the hope of effectively enhancing students' efficiency in learning English vocabulary.

Keywords

New curriculum concept; junior English; vocabulary teaching

1. Introduction

In recent years, the disadvantages of traditional English teaching have led to vocabulary becoming the biggest obstacle in English learning. The study of vocabulary gradually turns to the vocabulary learning strategies used by learners and the teaching strategies used by teachers, making the research field of vocabulary teaching strategies extremely active. Although many scholars researched in this field and made some achievements, most of their research objects are English major students or graduate students in universities, and their research on practical problems and corresponding effective teaching strategies in junior high school English vocabulary teaching under the new curriculum concept is not enough and comprehensive. Under the new curriculum concept, English teachers in junior middle school face many practical difficulties in vocabulary teaching. During English teaching in Chinese junior high schools, exploring the application of advanced teaching methods and teaching ideas can promote the reform and innovation of English vocabulary teaching and be conducive to cultivating students' ability to learn English vocabulary (Zhou & Zhang, 2021, p. 34). At present, in *Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition* by James Coady Thomas Huckin (1997), he mainly discusses the problems of the language reading comprehension of vocabulary, vocabulary understanding and the ability to use vocabulary, individual differences of learners, and so on, elaborates the context acquisition, individual learning strategies, vocabulary scale. In the end, the basic principles of vocabulary teaching theory for the second language are obtained. The foreign scholars'

research results on vocabulary teaching provided a large amount of theoretical foundation and practical experience for vocabulary teaching, laying the foundation for vocabulary teaching research and guiding vocabulary teaching direction. He Daorui's *New Ideas for Junior High School Vocabulary Teaching* under the new curriculum concept studies various theories of current vocabulary teaching. This study analyzes the existing problems in junior high school English vocabulary teaching and puts forward teaching strategies to improve the effect of junior high school English vocabulary teaching, such as word formation teaching, discourse vocabulary teaching, vocabulary teaching with different cultural differences, listening and speaking vocabulary learning methods, the cultivation of memory strategies and other teaching strategies. Vocabulary is not only the basis for students to learn English but also a necessary tool for students to feel the English language and English culture. It directly affects the comprehensive development of students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities. Vocabulary is the basic knowledge of English subjects and the cornerstone of students' English knowledge system. Therefore, this paper discusses the new curriculum concept, analyzes the problems that existed in junior middle school English vocabulary teaching, and puts forward the corresponding reform measures. The aim is to provide some useful insights for junior middle school English vocabulary teaching and improve the efficiency of students' English vocabulary acquisition.

2. New Curriculum Concept

The new curriculum concept is an innovation aimed at transforming traditional education models. It emphasizes a student-centered approach, focusing on the comprehensive development of students, personalized learning, and the cultivation of their innovative abilities. The core goal is to nurture students with an innovative spirit, critical thinking, and practical skills, rather than merely preparing them for exams. The new curriculum advocates for quality education, stressing the balanced development of morality, intellect, physical health, aesthetics, and labor. It also promotes educational equity and diversified evaluation methods, aiming to equip students with the ability to adapt to future societies and provide a foundation for lifelong learning.

2.1 Facing All Students

At present, English courses in compulsory education should be open to all students, and all aspects of teaching activities should consider the developmental needs of all students. Because different students are different in age, character, cognitive style, and living environment, they have different learning needs and characteristics. Only by meeting individual learning needs can teachers improve the overall learning efficiency of students. In the course of preparing lessons, the design of questions and the class practice should not only consider the top students but also consider the average students. In vocabulary teaching, attention should be paid to all students, teachers should ask questions in class for all students. However, in actual teaching, many teachers are willing to ask the students who are good at learning so that they can complete classroom teaching tasks smoothly, according to the new curriculum concept, class questions should focus on all students. For intermediate students, teachers can set some easy questions that are suitable for them, so when teachers set the task, it is necessary to have both basic knowledge training and thinking ability training.

2.2 Highlighting the Student-centered

Students are the main body in teaching activities, and teachers should serve as the organizers, mentors, and participators in teaching activities, this is the requirement of the new curriculum concept and the quality education, only in this way can we cultivate students' innovative talents. Teachers should properly deal with the relationship between teachers and students, highlight the dominant role of students, give care to all students, focus on the developmental needs of students, and create an environment that is suitable for the development of all students so that they can have sufficient learning time to think, only by this way can teachers give full play to the main role of students. English vocabulary teaching is a process in which students actively participate and cooperate under the arrangement and guidance of teachers, student-centered is the main point of this process and students' enthusiasm is the key point to the quality of teaching. Therefore, English vocabulary teaching should not only give full play to the leading role of teachers but also stress the dominant role of students. According to the requirements of the new curriculum concept, English teachers should fully understand students' psychology, only in this way can teachers meet students' developmental needs.

2.3 Stressing All-round Development of Students

The implementation of junior high school English vocabulary teaching should not only allow students to master the knowledge but also actively arouse students' empathy, guide students to form a correct outlook on life and values, as well

as give play to the comprehensive education value of English. In the process of teaching, homework evaluation, and test assessment, teachers should pay attention to the emotional changes of students. Affective factors are becoming more and more important factors affecting learners. Therefore, English educators need to make good use of affective factors during the teaching process. Teachers should fully respect students' subjective values, arouse their positive emotions, and guide them to devote themselves to English vocabulary learning so that students can have a correct understanding of right and wrong, which can help students form a correct outlook on life and value. Teachers should teach students to have a good sense of responsibility for learning and take learning as a lifelong career. Teachers should not only give students care and encouragement, but also guide students to make progress. Studying English vocabulary lays a solid foundation for students to develop their language ability and creates suitable conditions for them to develop in the future. Learning a foreign language can enhance students' international understanding, promote patriotism, and form a sense of social responsibility. According to the requirements of the new curriculum concept, English teachers should take basic language knowledge as the main point, improve the quality of education of students, and promote the development of students.

3. Problems of English Vocabulary Teaching in Junior Middle School

3.1 Outmoded Teaching Method

Most teachers adopt the traditional teaching mode and teach English vocabulary step by step, which makes the correlation between English vocabulary, grammar, and sentence patterns weak. It is difficult to help students strengthen English vocabulary memory, which leads to difficulties in vocabulary understanding, memory, and review. In traditional English vocabulary teaching, teachers only explain the meaning of vocabulary, which makes the vocabulary divorced from the sentences and disconnected from the content of the text. As a result, students lack learning enthusiasm and are forced to accept knowledge passively. In traditional English vocabulary teaching, English teachers only teach the words in the textbook, do not positively expand the relevant knowledge of vocabulary, and do not consider the actual situation of students, the single knowledge teaching will make students feel bored and lose interest in English learning. In vocabulary teaching, teachers seldom use information technology, it is difficult to provide students the better guidance in teaching, which will lead to the decline of the vocabulary teaching effect. At present, in middle school English vocabulary teaching, although teachers use multimedia, PPT courseware, and other teaching methods, they seldom use MOOC, micro class, flipped classrooms, and other new teaching methods and rarely provide students the interactive communication opportunities, which makes difficult to improve their oral ability. Vocabulary teaching is not closely related to students' real life, the application of teaching materials is relatively few and lacks an effective language environment as support, it is difficult for students to memorize the meaning of vocabulary and relevant knowledge of English vocabulary, which will affect students' learning effect. Vocabulary teaching is not interesting enough to attract students to study vocabulary knowledge. In English vocabulary teaching, the disconnection between learning and using is one of the reasons that teaching efficiency is difficult to improve. In this case, some students don't really understand the meaning of English vocabulary and ignore the use of vocabulary. As a result, students can only memorize vocabulary, but cannot use vocabulary flexibly. Students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing are all based on vocabulary with corresponding context, once the context is missing, it is difficult to improve the efficiency of vocabulary teaching.

3.2 Tedious Classroom Atmosphere

Whether students are attentively involved in class, actively participate in teaching activities, and enjoy the learning process is the standard to measure the efficiency of English class. A good classroom atmosphere is one of the criteria to measure the success of an English class. However, due to various reasons, the middle school English classroom atmosphere is boring, and students are reluctant to learn. According to the survey, the efficiency of junior high school English class is not high and the classroom atmosphere is an important point to improve the quality of teaching. Junior high school students are in the stage of adolescence, the independence and dependence coexist, at the same time, along with the enhancement of self-esteem, they are not only eager to get the teacher's praise and respect but also afraid of making mistakes so that they often keep silence to avoid making mistakes. English vocabulary learning is a process of accumulation, junior high school students are eager to prove themselves, while some students have a poor foundation and can't settle down to make progress gradually. If they do not get good grades in an exam, they will be tired of learning English. The reason for the dull atmosphere in junior middle school English vocabulary class is that students lose interest in English class. The teacher-centered teaching method and unchanging teaching mode give students few opportunities to participate in class activities and make them feel bored, so which leads them to lose interest in English learning. Teachers' personality charm, careful classroom design, and classroom control ability play a decisive role in creating a good classroom

atmosphere. If teachers lack excellent teaching methods in the course of the class, do not prepare lessons carefully or do not consider students' interests and needs in preparing classes, but just conduct teaching according to the textbook, constantly require students to recite, take notes and so on, students have no time to think about the test, students' participation in English class is relatively low. There are also many students who dislike a particular teacher and become bored with the particular course. Students' poor English foundation and wrong learning habits will also lead to a lack of interest in English classes.

4. New Strategies for English Vocabulary Teaching

According to the requirements of the new curriculum concept and the relevant problems that exist in junior high school English vocabulary teaching, the author believes that the following methods can play a very important role in future English vocabulary teaching so as to make obvious results in vocabulary teaching.

4.1 Association Method

English vocabulary learning is a process of associative memory and associative use. Psychology has shown that linking learning content can improve students' memory, the association method should be applied to vocabulary teaching in order to change the low efficiency of vocabulary learning. By taking association as the carrier, the words are started from different levels and effectively associated, so as to form a vocabulary chain of relevant words. Similar associative memory refers to the memory method of associating similar words according to the characteristics of word formation in word learning, using transformation, synthesis, and other quick memories. Taking luck as an example, teachers guide students to form the word-formation of adjectives by adding "y" to the end of nouns. It is not hard to know that lucky is an adjective and the root word is luck, which leads to its adverb form luckily. Then instruct students to learn the negative prefix un-, students can think of unlucky as the antonym of lucky and luckily. In this way, students can not only learn the word lucky according to the suffix and prefix but also form a vocabulary chain, which connects relevant words together to improve their learning efficiency. A similar association is to link together similar and identical words according to the characteristics of word formation, such as unluckily, unlucky, unhappy, unhealthy, unpleasant, unkind, unpopular, unusual, and so on have formed a system by associating words with a negative prefix "un-". In this way, it can not only help students master word formation and improve the recurrence rate of words but also develop students' thinking ability. According to the requirements of the new curriculum concept, teachers should consider the basic knowledge reserve of all students in the whole class when using this method to carry out English vocabulary teaching and formulate different developmental plans for different students to implement vocabulary teaching for all students. Proximity association refers to the thinking mode of association based on the proximity of things in space and time. According to the similar sound, shape, and meaning of vocabulary, the association is made from synonyms and homonyms, so that these words can be linked together skillfully. While practicing students' thinking ability, the word teaching is no longer limited to the traditional mode of memorizing every word in isolation, so the vocabulary teaching is flexible because of association and the class is full of vitality. From the same shape, different sounds, and different senses of the angle of association, through this association teachers can not only help students to expand their vocabulary, but also help students to use the vocabulary flexibly and correctly. By contrast association, words are associated from the perspective of near and antonymous meaning, the antonymous words are arranged in associative memory, which can achieve the effect of expanding vocabulary and keeping long-term memory. Firstly, the association is carried out according to the characteristics of the same and similar words, which means that the association is carried out by the method of synonymous words. For example, when teaching health, the synonym fit can be associated. Secondly, the use of the antonym method for the association is also an effective method, for example, when teaching dry, students perceive that the word means dry and are instructed to speak the antonymous word wet, so that dry and wet are connected together. In teaching, it lays a foundation for students to construct words and sentences by comparing and thinking together, so as to realize the continuous expansion of teaching.

4.2 Situational Teaching Method

Under the new curriculum concept, junior high school English teaching should not only attach importance to listening, speaking, reading, and writing but also emphasize the cultivation of junior high school students' practical application ability. The situational teaching method can assist English teachers in transforming the rigid and abstract knowledge content in textbooks into more vivid life situations, which can not only help students develop their own potential but also enable students to master the correct learning habits while improving their learning ability in all aspects. Situational teaching emphasizes the combination of knowledge and application. The application of this teaching method makes

English knowledge no longer exist in the form of symbols but emphasizes its practicability. It is helpful for English teachers to create a classroom atmosphere and improve the efficiency of teaching. Through situational teaching, students are introduced to real-life situations around the textbook knowledge, so as to stimulate the driving force of learning English and constantly strengthen their learning awareness. Effectively changing junior high school students' learning attitude towards English courses, and encouraging them to take the initiative to participate in various English learning activities. Once students have a strong interest in English knowledge, they will fully demonstrate their learning initiative. When choosing a situation, teachers should ensure that the situation is closely related to the actual life of students, teachers should emphasize the relevance of knowledge to materials. Whether the teaching situation is interesting should not be the only criterion for English class quality evaluation, it should fully attract students' attention in class. With the support of learning interest, students can take the initiative action to explore and think despite the complicated problems they encounter. English teachers need to mobilize junior middle school students' thinking ability, highlight their dominant position in class, and improve their understanding and application ability of English. In the selection of situational teaching resources, teachers need to obviously understand the interests and cognitive characteristics of junior middle school students and reasonably choose teaching resources.

English teachers should pay attention to strengthening communication with junior high school students, so as to ensure that they can fully grasp students' learning situation. Teachers should make targeted English scenario creation plans according to students' different abilities, so as to fully ensure that the teaching situation is consistent with students' learning and developmental needs. At the same time, teachers should give full play to the dominant role of junior high school students and gradually serve as a mentor in English vocabulary teaching, so as to promote the independent learning of students effectively. English teachers should fully integrate the knowledge content of textbooks with students' lives, fully mobilize junior middle school students' initiative in learning English knowledge, and promote teaching methods in the classroom. In the practical process, teachers should change their own roles, narrow the distance between students, and create English scenes from the perspective of students. Role-playing in junior high school English curriculum is a basic form of teaching scene creation, this teaching method can make junior high school students obtain better learning effects.

In practice, teachers should complete the explanation of basic English vocabulary and sentence patterns, create English scenes around the teaching theme, and guide students to participate in the performance, interaction, and experience by themselves. Taking actor, actress, director, performance, and other words as an example. After the teacher finishes the word teaching in class, in order to assist students in consolidating the words again, the teacher can ask students to assign various roles, arrange related stories and short plays, and ask them to perform in practice. This way of teaching can make the whole class more vivid, and at the same time, students' oral communication ability has been exercised. Secondly, in the game scene, junior high school students have a strong sense of exploration and will show a strong desire to participate in the game and other interesting teaching activities. At the same time, when students are involved in the game scene, they can also fully show their own characteristics, which is very beneficial for students to stimulate their personal potential. Through the game, practice can further deepen the junior high school students on English sentence patterns and words. For example, in daily English vocabulary teaching, teachers can choose English words of multiple professions, such as actor, medical student, firefighter, and so on, as well as various sports English words. Before the game starts, students are required to choose one English word and different students can choose the same word, at the same time, teachers will set a specific action for the word. In the game, the teacher will say a word selectively and the students who choose the word will do the same action, if the students make mistakes, they will be eliminated and they will point out the next word. The game scenario can help students relieve the pressure of vocabulary memory effectively, which has an important role in enriching students' English knowledge. Thirdly, teachers can create a competitive situation. Junior middle school students have obvious characteristics of adolescence and competitive psychology is particularly prominent at this time, English vocabulary teaching competition can help teachers mobilize junior middle school students' enthusiasm to participate in class and it is effective in stimulating students' potential.

Therefore, in view of psychological characteristics, English teachers can skillfully design competition in classroom teaching and all students are fully engaged in learning activities. Taking group competition as an example, teachers can take the lead in setting the title, awards, and rules of the competition. After the activity starts, all team members will actively participate in the competition in order to win the honor, if some team members do not take the initiative at this time, other members will remind them. The application of this teaching situation can change the relationship between teachers and students, reduce the learning pressure, and enhance their sense of cooperation. In addition, English teachers can also design various forms of competition, such as quick question and answer, word relay, and so on, so that junior high school students can improve their learning efficiency to the maximum in a short time. It effectively combines after-class teaching with in-class teaching, pays attention to students' individuality, improves teachers' teaching quality, and reduces teaching pressure (Wang, 2019, p. 45). If the teacher just explains the conceptual difference, it is easy for students

to get confused and unclear, so the teacher can use teaching aids to assist in teaching. First of all, teachers can hold a pen and express that this is a pen, then, they can put the pen on the platform and point to the pen and say that is a pen. Through the full combination of tools and action, English teachers can effectively help students understand the difference between the two words and have a clearer cognition of the words.

4.3 Classification Memory Method

For junior high school students, they need to review what they have learned before, but it is difficult to review all the vocabulary that they have learned at once. At this time, teachers can use the classification memory method to classify English words in a certain way, such as by the initial letter A, B, C, D or by ranking, part of speech or by color, occupation, greeting word, meaning, and so on. The classification memory method can not only enable students to manage vocabulary and establish a vocabulary knowledge framework but also improve students' learning efficiency, help students develop good habits, and promote their interest in learning. Such classification can not only help students remember a large English vocabulary but also be convenient for students to sort out words, virtually improving the efficiency of students' revision. Teachers pay attention to students' mastery of classified memorization in teaching, which can not only help students gain knowledge in their own learning methods but also help them develop good learning habits so that students will naturally classify and summarize what they have learned in learning, build a systematic knowledge framework and finally form classification learning. Classification memory method is to classify the words according to their own characteristic, meaning, or type according to different vocabulary memory methods, so that can help students build the connection between different words, memorize the words more effectively, and expand students' vocabulary. By categorizing and memorizing words with common or similar characteristics from different angles, students can establish related knowledge structures, so that they can not only remember more vocabularies but also overcome forgetting and strengthen memory. The classification memory method can fully exert the latent power of the brain to memorize words in a systematic and comprehensive way. Most words in the English language can be grouped in some way and are more likely to appear in the same category in a text. Through the classification memory, a large number of different words can be grouped together, which is conducive to strengthening the memory.

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