

USE OF READING MATERIALS IN ENHANCING CRITICAL THINKING SKILL IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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Abstract: Cultivating compound talents with critical thinking consciousness and critical thinking competence is the direction and ultimate purpose of university education. Nonetheless, the majority of Uzbekistan colleges and universities continue to fall short in developing students' critical thinking skills when teaching English. The goal and duty of college English reading instruction is to improve students' critical thinking skills, which are crucial to their overall growth. Given the current state of college students' lack of critical thinking skills, classroom instruction is the primary arena for developing students' talents. In order to precisely cultivate students' critical thinking skills, this paper begins with the meaning and significance of critical thinking ability, sorts and summarizes the pertinent causal factors, explains the principles of developing students' critical thinking skills based on expandable reading materials, and offers strategic recommendations for choosing expandable reading materials.

Key words: reading materials, cultivating, ability, critical thinking, English, analysis, concentration

INTRODUCTION

The concentrated embodiment of the value of discipline instruction is the discipline's essential accomplishment, and thinking quality plays a significant role in this accomplishment. But the conventional. Students' speculative literacy stems from the English reading curriculum's excessive emphasis on the representation training of language abilities rather than the development of their critical thinking skills. the occurrence of unstable bases, a lack of ability to estimate the meaning of new words, a lack of judgment and reasoning skills, and passive acceptance in reading classes. The teaching needle is visible. Developing pupils' critical thinking skills is crucial. The societal norms for hiring fresh English talent have been progressively strengthened in the context of the current era. It places a high value on students' inventive consciousness and information technology practice skills and mandates that they possess them in addition to their professional quality and cross-cultural aptitude. Possess a significant capacity for individualized critical thought. The capacity for discrimination and thought is known as critical thinking ability. For pupils, reading is the primary source of information. In light of human education, college English should make good use of reading courses, fully utilize the benefits of the primary channel of instruction, and fully release the benefits of the subject itself. In order to effectively raise the standard of English talent training at colleges and universities during this time, classroom instruction focuses on developing students' critical literacy¹.

MAIN PART

1. The significance and meaning of critical thinking skills

1.1 The meaning of critical thinking skills

¹ Cai, J. (2024). Cultivation of students' critical thinking ability in college English teaching. The English Square, (34), 109-112.



Critical thinking is a type of thinking that falls under the intelligence program category. It refers to the ability to distinguish between different types of information and evaluate them, particularly when it comes to common sense, universal knowledge of reverse analysis or synthesis, or reviewing some facts or theories that appear to be evidence, deep reflection to judge the root, and ultimately forming the original view of the new view. The two components of critical thinking ability are emotional propensity and cognitive abilities. Cognition, analysis, evaluation, deduction, elaboration, and balance management are the six fundamental cognitive talents. In contrast, emotional orientation encompasses a wider range of traits, such as curiosity, confidence, brightness, inventiveness, fairness, trustworthiness, rigor, and affinity. The ability to think discriminatively is a good way for students to strive for brilliance, creativity, and practical advancement. It is also the basis for strengthening talent training's overall effectiveness².

1.2 The significance of developing critical thinking skills

Reading involves deep thought and perception in addition to logic and analysis. Without logic, reading is useless and worthless. Students who read more in English are able to solve issues and reason more logically because they have a wider range of knowledge, comprehension perspectives, and an open cognitive picture. The ability to think critically will be improved in accordance with scientific analysis and judgment. Critical thinking skills will also have an impact on reading and learning. High-level cognitive literacy increases reading efficiency both within and outside of the classroom, which fosters a profound comprehension of reading. In the past, the syllabus served as the foundation for college English instruction in Uzbekistan, and each training course's instruction and assessment were completed independently. For instance, when reading instruction focuses on reading skills, students are able to read or comprehend the author's intention; it places more emphasis on appreciation, memory, and imitation; it does not develop students' thinking skills, which results in students' thinking abilities being relatively weak, their inability to comprehend meaning-rich texts, or their inability to produce logical, rigorous words. The National Standard for Teaching Quality of Foreign Language and Literature's guiding requirements state that current English reading instruction should emphasize the development of students' language skills and concentrate on figuring out how to best enhance their capacity for critical thought. Teachers and students must collaborate to continuously investigate and practice how to blend the two organically in order to attain the objective of complementarity³.

2. The dilemma and attribution of developing critical thinking skills in undergraduate English reading instruction

2.1 Overview of the problem

The interwoven influence of numerous factors, particularly the unbreakable examination shackles, restricts critical thinking ability, which is a crucial component of the core quality of college English. This leads to the phenomenon of college students' lack of critical thinking ability, which is specifically manifested in their weak analysis and judgment thinking as well as their lack of reasoning, thinking, and innovation ability. First of all, pupils learn a lot of new vocabulary when they are taught to read in college English⁴. Students must be able to infer word meanings based on the particular context of the article without consulting a dictionary or online

² Lin, X. (2024). Analysis on the strategies of critical thinking ability in junior high school English reading teaching based on the integration of teaching evaluation. *Campus English*, (44), 140-142.

³ Gan, Y. (2024). The cultivation of students' critical thinking ability in college English teaching under the background of "new liberal arts". *Public Relations World*, (20), 61-63.

⁴ Liu, S. (2024). The cultivation path of middle students' critical thinking ability in senior high school English reading teaching. *Class 2(D)*, (10), 68.



resources. However, a lot of students exhibit a fear of learning or challenges, are unable to think critically in context, speculate in a somewhat superficial manner, and lack awareness of growth and creativity, all of which lead to varying degrees of difficulties while reading articles later. Students will eventually form the habit of stumbling along, making it impossible to successfully break through the buildup of new words. Second, there will be reasoning and judgment questions in college English reading instruction that are meant to assess students' capacity for critical thought. In addition to having a foundational understanding of critical literacy, students must be able to conduct corresponding analyses, integrate judgment and reasoning based on many articles, and come to meaningful conclusions. Nonetheless, some children continue to read and think in a literal manner and lack coherence, logic, and organization, which hinders the development of their own judgment and reasoning skills. Last but not least, some college English reading instructors continue to use the traditional teaching approach, which makes it difficult for students to actively and critically think in a passive learning environment. The teachers' explanations take center stage in the classroom, and the knowledge output is still primarily based on indoctrination and cramming⁵.

2.2 Attribution analysis

The phenomena of college students' lack of critical thinking skills is thought-provoking, and it is directly linked to professors' conservative ideals, conservative techniques, and students' innate style of thinking in addition to being influenced by the social environment and exam-oriented education. First of all, professors still teach the majority of English reading in colleges and universities nowadays, with students' main body status being absent. In addition to the slow pace of English reading textbooks, a dearth of new articles, and a lack of contemporaneity and freshness, teachers' reading teaching objectives and methods are conservative. These factors make the reading classroom dull and do not support the development of students' critical thinking skills. Second, before teaching reading, the current English teachers ought to allow the students to read ahead of time and complete the pre-class preview. Following the start of the course, the instructor concentrates on summarizing the discourse structure and introducing new terms or phrases. For a single English article, this technique works well. However, from the standpoint of developing critical thinking skills, the conservative reading teaching approaches and the lack of classroom discussion between teachers and students don't significantly aid in the development of subsequent reading learning thinking⁶. Thirdly, there are clear cognitive distinctions between Western and Uzbek civilizations. For instance, Western thinking is typified by individuation, rationality, openness, linearity, and objectivity, whereas Uzbek thinking is characterized by integrity, intuition, conservatism, curve, and subject introversion. In contrast to traditional Chinese culture, English is a vehicle for communication and expression, but it also has deep cultural traditions and distinctive ways of thinking. Therefore, in order to fully understand the underlying meaning of English articles, college students should focus on starting with themselves, understanding the similarities and contrasts between Chinese and Western thinking cultures, and actively seeking adaptation. Lastly, many students in Uzbekistan's exam-oriented educational system learn English with the intention of passing the test. They still have a

⁵ Cui, Y. (2023). The construction strategy of cultivating students' critical thinking ability in college English teaching. *Journal of Hanjiang Normal University*, 43(6), 108-112.

⁶ White Pen. (2023). The cultivation of students' critical thinking ability in college English teaching under the background of new liberal arts. *Journal of Henan Finance and Taxation College*, 37(3), 76-77, 92.



long way to go in developing their critical thinking skills due to the impact of such excessive and biased exam-related thinking.

3. The idea of using more reading resources to develop pupils' critical thinking skills

3.1 Boost the reading materials' authenticity

Extended reading resources should be chosen based on real-world experiences, steer clear of introductions for educational goals, or be created especially for students. Numerous resources, such as audio, video, and newspaper articles, can be used in the classroom without any processing. Students' interest and cognitive motivation can be enhanced by the authenticity of the reading materials used in the classroom. This can also help students think in real-world situations, develop communication skills in English, and improve their reading and thinking abilities⁷.

3.2 Emphasize the variety of reading materials

Some educators believe that American and British articles should be the primary ones when choosing lengthy materials for reading instruction. Students are better equipped to understand British and American culture since this type of article has the benefit of authentic language, a rather reasonable structure, and extremely obvious viewpoint elaboration and arrangement. Utilizing the previously acquired reading abilities to encourage the simultaneous improvement of the pupils' reading proficiency and critical thinking. However, as the era of global integration approaches, it is crucial for native English-speaking nations to learn from and absorb the cultures and ideas of non-English-speaking nations in order to broaden students' capacity for comprehensive, all-encompassing thought. In order to assist students stay competitive in the age of multi-cultural integration and coexistence, enlarged literature resources should be chosen with a variety of viewpoints in mind.

3.3 Direct interaction with students' real-world lives

Despite having studied a lot of books and other materials, the majority of pupils' critical thinking skills cannot be significantly enhanced. The reason is that pupils' critical thinking skills cannot be successfully developed and readers must be distanced from the text presentation due to its lack of relevance to their own lives. In order to do this, college English reading instruction should make the main points clear, finish the organic balance, strive to choose texts that are directly related to students' learning and life-changing experiences, pique students' intense interest in reading, and assist students in creating their own autonomous thought, present unique viewpoints, and eventually encourage the long-term growth of pupils' critical thinking skills.

CONCLUSION

Reading is a direct and essential way for people to get information. It also has a significant impact on students' language acquisition and professional vision and is even directly linked to their future career growth. The ability to think and discriminate is known as differential thinking, and it requires temporal experience, content coaching, and linguistic support. Therefore, it is the goal and obligation of college students to enhance their reading and thinking skills in English. College English professors must prioritize creativity, identify the fundamental abilities of thinking, and actively design English reading and thinking programs in response to the lack of students' critical thinking. Students are encouraged to imagine, pay attention to the thinking level, effectively cultivate students' logical, critical, and creative thinking, create a learning community between teachers and students, and steadily promote the entire process and all-around cultivation of students' critical thinking ability by organizing the text content and focusing on the text theme.

⁷ He, J. (2023). Analysis on the strategies of critical thinking ability in junior high school English reading teaching based on the integration of teaching evaluation. *English Teacher*, 23(16), 106-109.



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