

A Strategic Study on Improving the Professional Core Quality of Primary and Secondary School English teachers

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Abstract: This paper first introduces the system structure of English teachers' professional core literacy, and then analyzes the importance of improving professional core literacy. To meet the needs of improving the core literacy of English teachers, this paper puts forward a variety of strategies, including extensive reading of professional data, collective discussion by teachers, optimization of teaching methods according to the situation of students, construction of a multi-faceted English teaching evaluation system and integration of teaching and research on the core literacy of English teachers. It is hoped that these strategies can contribute to the reform and development of English education and help English teachers to continuously improve their professional core qualities.

Keywords: Primary and secondary schools, English teacher, Core quality.

1. Introduction

With the process of globalization and the need of national development, English has become an indispensable important course in our education system. However, the shortage of professional core literacy of English teachers in primary and secondary schools has become one of the important factors restricting the development of English education especially in ethnic areas of China. The core professional quality of English teachers is not only related to the quality of students' English learning, but also directly affects the development of national English education. In order to improve the professional core quality of primary and secondary school English teachers in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, corresponding studies on the strategies or methods are urgently needed especially in the context of the implementation of the new college entrance examination .

2. System Structure of Professional Core Literacy of English Teachers

The structure of English teachers' professional core literacy system can be divided into three aspects: knowledge level, ability level and value level. Knowledge level refers to the subject knowledge that English teachers need to master, including English language knowledge and language teaching knowledge. English language knowledge includes English phonetics, grammar, vocabulary and pragmatics while the knowledge of language teaching includes the knowledge of English pedagogy, language teaching skills and textbook design. And the competence refers to the teaching ability and educational accomplishment that English teachers need to have, including language application ability, teaching design ability, teaching implementation ability, student management ability, etc. In addition, English teachers also need to have professional self-development ability, teamwork ability and cross-cultural communication ability. What's more, the value level refers to the educational thoughts and professional ethics that English teachers need to possess. Educational thought involves teachers' idea and pursuit of education, including

educational objectives, educational methods and educational effects. Professional ethics refers to the code of ethics and professional ethics that English teachers should follow in their professional activities, including the requirements of the code of professional ethics, the code of teaching behavior as well as professional responsibility.

3. The Importance of Improving the Professional Core Quality of Primary and Secondary School English Teachers

It is of great significance to improve the professional core quality of primary and secondary school English teachers, which is closely related to social development and the requirement of educational reform. In this context, it has become an urgent need of the society to cultivate talents to master English and the teachers who play critical role to cultivate talents should have a solid knowledge of English language and teaching, be able to effectively impart English knowledge, help students master English language and culture, and meet the needs of the society for English talents. Secondly, education reform needs to pay more attention to the quality and effect of English education. With the deepening of education reform, the mode and method of education and teaching are constantly updated and adjusted. English education has changed from a simple language learning to a focus on the cultivation of language communication ability and the improvement of knowledge application ability, from the traditional teacher-centered to the student-centered. In order to adapt to such changes, English teachers in primary and secondary schools are required not only to master basic language knowledge and teaching skills, but also to have educational ideas, professional ethics, cross-cultural communication qualities and technological pedagogical and content knowledge put forward by Koehler and Mishra[1]. Only in this way can the teachers better adapt to the needs of education reform and improve the quality and effect of English education in the new era.

4. Strategies to Improve the Professional Core Quality of Primary and Secondary School English Teachers

The following strategies are proposed from three perspectives, namely, teachers' self-development strategies and external support strategies such as schools and society, in order to promote the development of English teacher professional core quality in primary and secondary schools.

4.1. Reading professional books extensively

Reading professional books is a very prominent step to increase the core quality of English teachers. Extensive reading can highly improve teachers' spiritual connotation and help them better understand the concept of professional core quality. At the same time, reading professional course books can help teachers point to the direction of improving their teaching level, improve their English professional ability and make them more proficient in using English. Furthermore, special attention should be paid to some parts that are often neglected, such as the creation of oral English teaching environment and the cultivation of students' values [2]. English knowledge is only a part of teaching and it is more crucial to pay attention to students' English application ability, thinking ability and values. In this regard, *An Introduction to Foreign Language Learning and Teaching*, which covers the basic theory and practice of foreign language teaching, provides abundant teaching ideas and methods for primary and secondary school English teachers. This valuable book introduces a series of English teaching methods and skills, such as communicative language teaching approach, task-based language teaching, classroom interaction and so on. These methods and skills are not only applicable to the teaching practice of primary and secondary school English teachers, but also can help teachers improve their teaching level and teaching effect. In addition, the classroom management, assessment and reflection in this book, which are essential for the professional growth and development of English teachers, are also introduced in simple terms. Besides, *Cultural Awareness in English Language Teaching* explores cultural factors in English teaching and is of great help for teachers to deepen their knowledge and understanding of cultural differences. Reading this book, teachers can understand the differences and similarities between different cultures, and understand the ways of communication and mutual understanding between different cultures, so as to better carry out their teaching practice.

4.2. Organizing teaching seminars

In order to improve the professional core quality of primary and secondary school English teachers, teachers' collective teaching seminars could be organized online or offline. In this process of collective discussion, firstly, teachers can share teaching experience with each other, clarify teaching problems, inspire each other, and constantly forge their own teaching level, which could help teachers better understand the teaching situation and students' needs, and clarify the teaching objectives and priorities and constantly improve their own teaching methods and concepts. Secondly, under the guidance of experienced professors, teachers can jointly analyze students' language level and learning characteristics, and discuss how to formulate scientific and reasonable teaching objectives and strategies according to different needs

of students [3]. Thirdly, teaching seminars can help teachers to solve teaching problems together and to further conduct teaching research.

English teachers from primary and secondary schools can follow the steps below to conduct teaching seminars collectively. First of all, teachers need to read the textbook carefully, understand the main content and learning objectives of this chapter, and mark the key points, difficulties and doubts in the reading process. Next, teachers can analyze the textbook, discuss whether this chapter conforms to students' cognitive rules and learning habits, and analyze the problems that may exist in the textbook. Then, teachers can work together according to their own professional areas and experience to discuss different aspects. For example, one teacher can study the design and use of textbooks, while another teacher can study the strategies and methods of classroom teaching, and other teachers can study how to help students use the sentence pattern for oral expression and so on. Subsequently, teachers can have a discussion on teaching objectives, teaching methods and resources, share their findings and experiences with each other, and discuss how to teach the unit better. During the discussion, teachers can learn from each other, complement and improve each other, and prepare for the next step of teaching. Finally, teachers had better try to use the results of these discussions and research in the classroom to teach students English more proficiently. In the teaching process, teachers need to constantly reflect and summarize, and improve their teaching methods and strategies to provide better learning experience for students. Through collective discussion and teaching practice, teachers can improve the quality and level of teaching, so that students can get better guidance and help in learning English.

4.3. Optimizing the teaching method according to the specific situation of students

In order to maximize the teaching effect, teachers should optimize the teaching method according to the specific situation of students. As Inner Mongolia is developing relatively slowly, more attention should be paid to the innovation and optimization of teaching methods in the recent reform of the new college entrance examination. In this case, English teachers should focus on how to teach English better from the perspective of students, so as to adopt suitable teaching method closer to students. For example, when teaching English listening, interesting English songs or videos can be played to students to increase their interest in learning and improve their learning effect[4]. In oral English teaching, the interactive teaching method can encourage students to speak freely in class, improve the teaching effect, and also adapt to the needs of the new college entrance examination reform. For example, when teaching *Life is full of the unexpected*, teachers are able to guide students to understand and explore the topic "unexpected" by reading related articles, videos, pictures and other teaching materials, allowing students to think deeply and express freely their opinions in an interactive communication. At the same time, students are encouraged to understand and explore this topic in various aspects and share their own unexpected things in life. Through this kind of inquiry-based learning, students could not only improve their English language ability, but also acquire the spirit of inquiry and practical ability, and promote the comprehensive quality, which can be beneficial to the development of students from middle schools and their adaptation to the the new college entrance examination in the

future.

4.4. Helping students find their own learning methods

English learning is a complex process, so primary and secondary school English teachers need to improve their professional core qualities to reach the unique learning characteristics and requirement of each student. Therefore, teachers need to master a variety of knowledge of cognitive strategies and meta-cognitive strategies when students acquire a second language to help students find their own learning methods, which will help teachers better meet the needs of students [5]. When teaching the English text *Can you play the guitar*, teachers could find many ways to help students find their own English learning methods. First of all, students can be encouraged to try to understand the general idea of the text by themselves when reading the text, and have them retell the main content of the text in their own words to make sure they understand what they read. Secondly, students can understand the text by playing the recording or video, or practice the dialogue in the way of oral expression, so that they can imitate the pronunciation, intonation, rhythm, etc., in order to better express and understand the text. In addition, students can try to find out the meaning of the words and phrases in the text and use them in context to expand their vocabulary and reading comprehension. Students are encouraged to mimic related sentences by using sentences and dialogues from the text, to communicate with their classmates to practice their speaking and listening skills and to expand their ability to express themselves in English. Finally, in order to expand students' reading ability, other relevant English articles or reading materials can be provided to allow students to further explore the topics they are interested in and expand their vocabulary and comprehension. Through these methods, students can find their own learning methods according to their own learning style and needs, and gradually improve their English language ability in practice.

4.5. Constructing multi-faceted English teaching evaluation system

Evaluation, an essential part in the teaching process, helps teachers to adjust teaching strategies in time, improve teaching quality, stimulate students' learning interest and initiative, and promote their all-round development. A multi-faceted English teaching evaluation system should include multiple aspects, such as teacher evaluation, student self-evaluation, peer evaluation, parent evaluation, etc.. Each aspect has its unique role and advantages [6]. Teacher evaluation can help teachers know their own teaching effect and adjust teaching strategies timely. At the same time, teacher evaluation can motivate teachers to continuously improve teaching methods and create a better environment for students' English learning. Student self-assessment can help students better find their strengths and weaknesses, self-reflection and improvement. Peer evaluation can help students learn to cooperate and help each other and improve their learning effect. Parent evaluation can make parents understand the learning situation of children and actively cooperate with the school and teachers in education. According to the evaluation results, parents can create a better family education environment and jointly promote their children academic development. Constructing a multi-faceted English teaching evaluation system can help teachers find and solve problems better, and make English teaching more

scientific, standardized and effective.

4.6. The integration of teaching and research of English teacher core accomplishment

Strengthening the research and discussion on the core quality of English teaching is one of the effective ways for teachers to improve teaching quality, especially through teaching and research activities, which could be beneficial to promoting the continuous improvement of teaching effects [7]. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the training of English teachers' teaching and research ability. At the same time, it is also prominent that the schools or higher institutions in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region arrange training course to establish a sound English teaching and research mechanism online or offline, encourage teachers to participate in teaching and research activities, promote the transformation and application of teaching and research results. The integration construction of teaching and research of English teachers' core literacy needs to start from the three aspects of teaching and research content, teaching and research methods and the transformation of teaching and research results to ensure that teachers' teaching and research results are closely combined with actual teaching [8]. Firstly, in the aspect of establishing and improving the system of teacher training and professional development, schools can set up various forms of training courses, including regular teaching seminars, subject group meetings, special seminars inside and outside the school, teaching skills training and so on. Simultaneously, the school can introduce some experts or foreign teachers with rich teaching experience to conduct teaching guidance and teaching research, so as to improve teachers' teaching ability and quality. Secondly, teaching and research platforms and organizations should be established to provide a platform for teachers to communicate. English teachers should be encouraged to participate in teaching and research activities, to carry out subject research and to improve teaching quality. These teaching and research activities should be based on actual teaching, such as finding problems in class and solving them through teaching and research, so that teachers can better cope with various teaching challenges. Thirdly, primary and secondary school could establish a teacher evaluation and incentive mechanism, encouraging teachers to innovate and practice in teaching. It is also critical to make a fair evaluation of teaching achievements and contributions, and give corresponding rewards and incentives to enhance teachers' work enthusiasm and sense of responsibility. Finally, strengthening the communication and cooperation among teachers from different school in different regions can also form a good teaching atmosphere and teamwork spirit, which will be essential to improve the level and development of the whole subject. In this process, leaders and school administrators should also play an active role in providing support and encouragement to ensure the smooth implementation of the integrated construction of teaching and research on teachers' core literacy.

5. Conclusion

It is of great significance to improve the professional core quality of English teachers for their career development and students' English learning. Through extensive reading of professional data, teachers' collective discussion, optimizing teaching methods, helping students find their own learning

methods, constructing a multi-faceted English teaching evaluation system and integrating teaching and research of English teachers' core qualities, teachers can constantly improve and practice these strategies, which will promote the continuous improvement of the quality and effect of English teaching. It is hoped that this paper can play a certain role in the professional growth and promotion of primary and secondary school English teachers.

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