

Optimization Strategies for Literacy Teaching in the Lower Primary Language Segment under the Background of Core Literacy

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Abstract: Literacy and writing are the foundation of reading and writing, which is the teaching focus of the first school period and an important teaching content throughout the whole compulsory education stage. This paper mainly discusses the current situation of literacy teaching in elementary school language in the context of core literacy, identifies the problems in literacy teaching, and proposes strategies to optimize literacy teaching in combination with the Compulsory Education Language Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition), to stimulate students' interest in literacy, improve literacy skills, and develop students' core literacy.

Keywords: Core Literacy; Lower Grades; Literacy Instruction; Optimization Strategies.

1. Introduction

The Language Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2022 edition, hereinafter referred to as the new standards) clearly states that "based on the development of students' core literacy, give full play to the nurturing function of the language curriculum." [1] It is thus evident that the cultivation and development of students' core language literacy has become a requirement of the times. In addition, it also clearly stipulates the milestones for literacy and writing in each section, advocates that students should "recognize more and write less", and points out that in the first section, students should be able to recognize about 1,600 Chinese characters and be able to write 800 Chinese characters. Such clear and directional guidance further confirms the importance of literacy teaching. As the early grades of elementary school are the key period for students to become literate, taking positive and effective measures in literacy teaching can improve the efficiency of literacy and enhance the learning effect.

2. Status of Literacy Teaching

Literacy teaching, as an important part of language teaching in elementary school, especially in the first academic period, is a major challenge for students' learning and teachers' teaching. Teaching is an activity that consists of teachers' teaching and students' learning, so the current situation of literacy teaching can be elaborated from two perspectives. From the students' point of view, students in the lower grades lack initiative in the process of literacy, have a mechanical approach to literacy, and lack the awareness and habit of using Chinese characters in connection with life. [2] From the teachers' point of view, the students' main position is neglected, the teaching objectives are single, the teaching methods are too mechanical, and the teaching forms are fixed. [3] From the teachers' point of view, the students' subjective position is neglected, the teaching objectives are single, the teaching methods are too mechanical and the teaching forms are fixed. The boring teaching makes students

lose their enthusiasm and interest in literacy. With the implementation of the new round of education reform, focusing on the formation and development of students' core literacy, the traditional literacy teaching methods can not already meet the needs of the current stage of education development. In order to practice the education reform and implement the development of students' core literacy, it is urgent to change the traditional teacher-oriented single education model to the modern student-oriented education model.

3. Problems in the Teaching of Literacy

3.1. Teachers

3.1.1. Teachers do not have a Good Understanding of the New Standards

Curriculum standards are the reference and compass for teachers to indicate the general direction of teaching. The new curriculum standard proposes that literacy teaching should be more recognition and less writing, and that literacy and writing should be streamed. However, some teachers have a biased understanding of more recognition and less writing, focusing too much on "more recognition", and unilaterally pursuing the amount of literacy in the process of literacy teaching, which increases the burden of students' learning and ignores the learning effect of students. Guo Ruiqi observed the classroom found that teachers ignore the student's subjective position in teaching, instilling a large number of vocabulary words to students, and still use rote memorization methods for students to learn vocabulary words. [4] The teacher's observation reveals that This is not only a departure from the original intent of quality education, but also a blow to students' enthusiasm for literacy. In addition, the new standard also puts forward the requirements for students in the first stage: they like to learn Chinese characters, have the desire to take the initiative to read and write Chinese characters, and are able to read and write independently, and perceive the connection between Chinese characters and life. However, in literacy teaching, besides emphasizing the

mechanical memory of literacy, most teachers neglect the cultivation of students' independent literacy skills and interest in literacy.

3.1.2. Single Fixed Method of Teaching Literacy

Literacy teaching in the lower elementary school language is more difficult, the teaching object is elementary school students, and this stage of the students often have a lack of concentration, lack of long-term interest and other phenomena, easy to be influenced by other factors in the teaching process, too single or complex and abstract teaching content is difficult to attract the interest of students. Most teachers are not able to use various teaching methods flexibly in the actual teaching process, and most of them simply adopt the method of "add a plus, subtract a minus" or make up jingles for teaching.[5] The study was conducted by Yang Fengliu, who analyzed and integrated the data. Yang Fengliu analyzed the data and summarized the teaching methods as follows: teachers read aloud, students read in unison, teachers write in unison, students write in unison, and repeated reading and writing. Repeated reading and writing accounted for 72% of the total[6] The students were able to learn by reading aloud and writing in a short period of time. Some students are able to master basic knowledge through repeated reading and writing and practice in a short period of time, but in the long run, students' enthusiasm and interest in literacy will be diminished. Fixed and single teaching methods will ultimately lead to poor learning results and hinder the overall development of students.

3.1.3. Teachers Ignore the Status of the Student Body

Teaching is to promote the development of students, students are the center of the classroom, the master of learning. Influenced by the traditional concept of teaching, some teachers in the classroom are self-centered, simple to impart knowledge to students, students can only passively accept. Teachers mislocalize themselves and misperceive the main body of classroom teaching. The classroom should be a stage for students to develop themselves, and the teacher is only a guide, but many teachers mistakenly think that they are the ones who give lectures in the classroom, and the ones who listen to the lectures are the students, so they mistakenly take themselves as the main body of the classroom, thus ignoring the students' main status. When teaching literacy, they stay at the level of the textbook, do not pay attention to the students' literacy experience and motivation, and ignore the connection between the classroom content and the students' lives.[7] The students are not aware of the content of the classroom and the students' lives. However, the focus of the teaching design is to be able to highlight the student's main position in teaching activities, teachers must change the traditional concept of teaching, mainly reflected in the original "lesson plan" into the current "learning plan". Thus, in the process of teaching activities, efforts to mobilize students' enthusiasm, give full play to the main role of students.

3.2. For Students

3.2.1. Students are Less Interested in Literacy

The number of Chinese characters is huge, and the character structure is abstract and complex, involving sound, shape and meaning. Students in the lower grades need to know 1,600-1,800 commonly used Chinese characters, which is not an easy task for students in the developmental stage, where the pressure of literacy is higher. However, students at this stage are characterized by a lack of learning ability, a lack of concentration, and a low cognitive level. A common

phenomenon in literacy teaching is that the greater the amount of literacy, the more difficult it becomes, and the less interest students have in literacy. A survey report on the literacy interest of students in the lower grades shows that less than one-fourth of the surveyed students are interested in literacy.[8] A survey of students' interest in literacy in the early grades showed that less than one-fourth of them were interested in literacy. Traditional literacy teaching focuses on the teacher's "teaching" and de-emphasizes student participation in the classroom. In classroom teaching, there is a lack of teacher-student interaction, students' participation in the classroom is not strong, their motivation to learn is not high, and their subjective status is neglected. In addition, according to observations and interviews, in terms of emotions toward Chinese characters, children are not enthusiastic about learning Chinese characters, and the percentage of those who say they like learning Chinese characters is very low.[9].

3.2.2. Students have Poor Literacy Habits

Good study habits are beneficial to the development of student learning. Literacy habits lay a solid foundation for future reading and writing. However, many students do not have the awareness and habit of independent literacy, and due to poor self-control, they need to complete the assigned literacy tasks under the supervision of teachers or parents. Students in the lower grades show poor learning initiative and lack of motivation. It is difficult for them to master complex and abstract Chinese character knowledge by themselves, and they are passive in accepting new knowledge. The lack of students' independent literacy awareness also hinders the improvement of their literacy skills. In the classroom, students' attention is easily attracted by new things and they cannot concentrate for a long time, which leads to low learning efficiency. There is no pre-study of the text before class and no timely review and recapitulation after class, and literacy learning is just to complete the task. Bad literacy habits can lead to irregular handwriting, writing errors, loopholes, and little literacy effect.

3.2.3. Literacy Overload in Lower Grades

The focus of language teaching in the lower primary grades is on literacy and writing. The new standard requires students to know 1,600-1,800 commonly used Chinese characters within two years, which is already one-half of the amount of literacy required for the entire elementary school level, and the pressure on literacy is undoubtedly very great for students in the lower grades. On the one hand, the time for literacy teaching in the classroom is limited, and students in the lower grades do not have enough concentration power, and the time they have to concentrate in teaching is even more limited, which suggests that teachers need to make effective use of the students' limited concentration time to complete the teaching task. Due to the individual variability of students, not every student can fully master them. On the other hand, according to the vocabulary list at the end of the language class, it can be seen that students need to master two types of vocabulary words: Class I vocabulary words that need to be able to recognize and write in the Tianzigraph and Class II vocabulary words in the double cross-hairs that only require them to be able to read. The requirements for Class I characters are higher than those for Class II characters. In order to make students master these characters, teachers will assign many mechanical and rigid copying and writing exercises to achieve the teaching objectives by rote memorization. In addition to in-class literacy tasks, teachers

also assign extra work outside the classroom, such as reading, to expand students' literacy through extensive reading.

4. Strategies for Optimizing Literacy Teaching

4.1. Deeply Comprehend the New Standard and Focus on Cultivating Students' Language Literacy

The new standard points out that the learning of language courses should be committed to the formation and development of the core qualities of all students, the language is a comprehensive and practical course, its rich value connotation can profoundly affect the development of students' thinking and the shaping of values. Therefore, teachers should pay attention to the value orientation of the language subject, dig deep into the connotation of the teaching content, and give full play to the nurturing function of the language curriculum. In literacy teaching, consideration should be given to the structure and characteristics of Chinese characters and their influence on writing, reading and oral communication, and the acquisition of a good sense of language and the ability to grasp the whole. Nowadays, the goal of most literacy teaching is to be able to recognize the characters in the text and to write some of them, and after students master the pronunciation, the teacher will remind them of some key complex shapes and then start practicing writing.[10] After students master the pronunciation, the teacher reminds them of some key complex shapes and starts practicing writing. These single-minded and boring literacy methods are detached from the humanistic nature of Chinese characters. In the lower grades, the more literate the student is, the better, and the increased pressure on students to become literate makes it easier for them to resist and become bored with literacy. In addition, in the literacy classroom, teachers should let students observe the shape of the characters and realize the relationship between the parts of the characters. At the same time, they should pay attention to letting the students realize the connotation of the Chinese characters and the pronunciation of the characters, so as to feel the beauty of the language and enrich their emotional experience and spiritual world.

4.2. Creating Diversified Learning Situations to Stimulate Students' Enthusiasm for Literacy

Traditional literacy teaching methods in the classroom are characterized by mechanical single, boring and abstract, and it is difficult to attract students' attention and stimulate their interest in literacy. The new standard clearly states: "Enhance the contextual and practical implementation of the curriculum and improve the traditional teaching methods. Teaching should start from the actual life of students' language, create a rich variety of learning situations, stimulate students' desire for knowledge and curiosity." Therefore, teachers need to change the teaching mode, student-oriented, from the student's life and the actual starting point, to create a real and effective rich and interesting learning situation. For example, when learning the character "旦", they can show the picture or video of the sun rising from the sea level, so that they can recognize and understand the meaning of the character through visual association. In addition, teachers can create puzzles or riddles to attract students' interest and stimulate

their thinking and discussion, so that they can participate in literacy teaching. Diversified learning contexts can provide students with rich and interesting learning experiences and promote the development of students' thinking ability and language communication skills. At the same time, to a certain extent, it improves teachers' disciplinary literacy and teaching ability, so that teachers can teach for fun and students can learn for fun.

4.3. Use a Variety of Literacy Methods to Create a Fun Classroom

Teachers should innovate the way of teaching literacy, according to the characteristics of students' lives, teaching content as close as possible to the actual life of students, and maximize the motivation of students. A single literacy approach is not conducive to the improvement of literacy efficiency. Therefore, the following methods can be used: (1) Character literacy, that is, according to the ideographic characteristics of Chinese characters, the connection between the sound, shape and meaning of the characters is analyzed from the principle of Chinese character construction. For example, to learn the character "竹", you can show students the evolution of the character "竹", and intersperse it with ancient poems describing bamboo; (2) Literacy in Context, which is to construct specific contexts based on the meanings of the characters in order to learn the characters; for example, to learn the character "小书包", you can turn the short text into a catchy song, which makes it easier for students to memorize and understand the characters; (3) Literacy in Context, which is to construct specific contexts based on the meanings of the characters. (3) Literacy in life. Teachers use materials from life in the classroom to strengthen the practice of classroom and students' life and enhance students' ability to perceive Chinese characters. (4) Literacy in practice. Language is a comprehensive course which not only contains theoretical knowledge of the subject but also covers practical life application. In literacy teaching, students can perceive and understand the meaning of Chinese characters through practice. For example, when learning the character "穿", students can simply do an action of walking into the classroom through the door to understand the meaning of the character "穿". Diversified literacy methods can attract students' attention and create an interesting classroom, in which students will naturally participate in the classroom and the effect of literacy will be improved.

4.4. Focusing on the Collaborative Cultivation of Home and School to Cultivate Students' Good Learning Habits

Each student is an individual with significant differences. Individual character also affects the development of study habits. Students in the lower grades have low self-control and need to be supervised by others to develop good habits. In teaching, teachers need to tailor their teaching to the characteristics of each student; in life, teachers and parents also need to guide them correctly. For students with strong self-control, teachers should pay attention to the guidance of their learning process, and can provide some effective learning methods for students to complete on their own; for some students with poor self-control, set up learning tasks suitable for them to motivate students to complete their efforts. In learning, you can set up one-to-one or one-to-few help groups, use the role model to stimulate students' learning

enthusiasm, promote cooperation and communication among students, and cultivate good learning habits. However, it is not enough to rely solely on the power of teachers for the development of students, and the active cooperation of parents is also needed in life. Family is the first classroom of life and parents are the first teachers of children. Family education is crucial to children's development. Parents also need to correct themselves and set an example for their students. For example, parents can use their free time to accompany their children, read books with their children, communicate verbally and exchange ideas through reading, correct students' reading posture, and cultivate children's study habits. Pay attention to the way the child holds the pen when he/she is writing homework, check the exercise work, and urge the child to review what he/she has learned in time and to study new knowledge in advance. The cooperation between home education and school education can promote the healthy development of students.

5. General Remarks

In a word, the comprehensive development of students cannot be separated from the influence of family, school and self. In order to implement the requirements of the new curriculum and cultivate students' core literacy, teachers need to change the traditional education model, update their education concepts, deeply study the new curriculum and understand the practical significance of the new curriculum. At the same time, teachers should enrich the form of teaching in the classroom, and stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning and literacy in an interest-oriented way. In addition, students should improve their learning habits and enhance their independent learning ability, so as to promote the cultivation of students' core literacy and the comprehensive development of their own qualities with the cooperation of teachers and parents.

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