



# Research on Student-Centered English Reading Teaching in Junior High School

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**Abstract.** With the continuous advancement of the new curriculum reform, the student-centered teaching method has gradually entered people's vision. The theme of this paper is the student-centered research of junior high school English reading teaching. This paper first lists the specific problems in the current English reading teaching in junior high school, including two aspects of teachers' teaching and students' learning, and introduces the concept of student-centered teaching mode and the necessity of implementation. Finally, some suggestions and measures to implement the mode in junior high school English reading teaching are given. This paper is hoped to provide some references for teachers so as to give more consideration to students' centrality in teaching and give play to students' subjective initiative in English reading learning, in order to cultivate students' independent learning ability and lay a foundation for students to achieve the goal of lifelong learning.

**Keywords:** student-centered; English reading teaching; junior high school

## 1 Introduction

As a way to obtain information, reading plays an important role in human social life. Therefore, English reading is significant in junior high school students' understanding of English culture and acquisition of English knowledge. However, the traditional English reading teaching in junior high school is teacher-centered, paying much attention to the teachers' explanation but not to the students' autonomous learning. In class, students listen to the teachers' explanation of reading materials quietly, which belongs to passive knowledge acceptance. It is easy to cause problems such as lack of concentration and poor learning effect. With the deepening of curriculum reform, the traditional teacher-centered reading teaching mode does not meet the needs of students' development today. Therefore, the study of student-centered English reading teaching mode can provide some enlightenment for teachers' classroom reading teaching by paying attention to students' dominant position.

This paper is hoped to provide some references for teachers so as to give more consideration to students' centrality in teaching and give play to students' subjective initiative in English reading learning, in order to cultivate students' independent learning ability and lay a foundation for students to achieve the goal of lifelong learning.

## **2 The Present Situation of English Reading Teaching and Learning in Junior High School**

### **2.1 The Present Situation of English Reading Teaching in Junior High School**

#### **2.1.1 Teachers Have No Comprehensive Teaching Goals.**

In junior high school English reading teaching, teaching objectives, as a guide of teaching activities, play a role of direction guidance. Therefore, whether teachers can correctly and comprehensively understand teaching objectives is related to whether teaching activities can be carried out smoothly and whether teaching tasks can be completed successfully. Reading teaching not only requires students to master relevant vocabulary knowledge, but also requires students to master some prescribed English sentences and the ability to read English articles. However, in practical teaching, many teachers are often unable to fully understand the teaching objectives [1].

#### **2.1.2 Teachers Ignore Students' Subject Status.**

In any kind of teaching, the main body of learning is students. Only pay attention to the central position of students, make clear the actual needs and characteristics of students' learning, carry out targeted teaching, can truly complete the teaching task, receive the best teaching effect. Due to the adolescence, junior high school students' self-control is not strong enough, and during the teaching process which often requires teachers to give certain supervision and guidance. However, some teachers in the guidance and supervision of the process do not grasp the correct degree and forget that students are the master of learning. It is easy for teachers to pay attention to their own teaching progress while ignoring the principal status of students [2].

#### **2.1.3 Teachers Neglect the Effective Integration of Curriculum Resources.**

With the progress of society and education, richer curriculum resources appear during the teaching process and in the vision of teachers. Curriculum resources include on-campus curriculum resources and off-campus curriculum resources. On-campus course resources include textbooks and matching electronic resources. The off-campus curriculum resources mainly refer to network resources, library resources and so on. Relevant curriculum resources are very rich, but it is not so easy for teachers to choose and integrate curriculum resources suitable for their students.

#### **2.1.4 Teachers Lack Attention to Differentiated Teaching.**

Class teaching system is a collective teaching form. It puts a certain number of students according to age and ability development level of fixed classes, and in the light

of the weekly and daily schedule, arranges teachers to have a plan to the whole class. China has a large population; class teaching system can greatly improve the teaching efficiency and ensure the quality of teaching. However, teachers also tend to ignore the individuality and difference of students and let alone the implementation of differential teaching [3].

## **2.2 The Present Situation of English Reading Learning in Junior High School**

### **2.2.1 Students Have Low Interest in Reading.**

There are many differences between English and Chinese. English has very different grammatical rules and expressions from Chinese. In addition, English pays more attention to structure and has many long sentences and clauses in articles. Among them, the sentence composition is very rigorous and semantic is more abstract. Overall, it is difficult for students to understand, so students' interest in reading is low. Teachers only focus on the analysis of text composition, while the humanistic connotation and emotional factors contained in the text are often ignored [4].

### **2.2.2 Students Are Hard to Form English Thought.**

Our mother-tongue thinking has a firm grip on our brain[5]. The language environment since childhood has shaped students fixed thinking in Chinese. As we all know, there is transfer in learning. In language learning, mother tongue can positively affect English learning to some extent, but also negatively affect English learning. In English reading, students tend to start with words and follow sentences to understand the text in parts. In this way, it does not proceed from the context, nor is it based on the background knowledge to understand the text, let alone comprehensively and effectively understand the text.

### **2.2.3 Students Possess Little Extracurricular Reading Accumulation.**

In order to cultivate students' reading ability, teachers let students constantly consolidate knowledge points and train problem-solving skills by doing exercises, but ignore the effect of extracurricular reading on improving students' reading ability [6]. This results in the problems of narrow reading surface, shallow reading level and low reading motivation. Students are not willing to read because they have few types of reading, few forms and boring content. In addition, due to the high pressure of admission and the tight curriculum, students are tired in school and have to complete a certain amount of homework at home, leaving little leisure time.

### **2.2.4 Students Think Understanding Is Inferior to Problem Solving.**

Because the level of reading ability is most obviously reflected from the score, and the score is directly determined by the correct number of reading questions. Therefore, in order to constantly improve their reading scores within the limited time, students will complete a large number of reading questions. Inevitably, after finishing a reading comprehension test, students will only care about whether the question is correct, and will

not or seldom take the time to read the passage slowly, let alone develop a deeper understanding of the passage. Most of the in-depth content in the article is directly told by the teacher, and students can only passively remember the content taught by the teacher. Therefore, students do not learn how to deeply understand and not to mention further explore, apply, evaluate and create.

### **3 The Student-Centered Teaching Mode of English Reading in Junior High School**

#### **3.1 The Theoretical Basis of Student-Centered Mode**

##### **3.1.1 The Student-Centered Connotation.**

Generally, students have considerable control over what they learn and how they learn in student-centered teaching process. The student-centered teaching mode in junior high school English reading teaching refers to the starting from the students themselves, in the process of reading teaching based on students' actual level to design and carry out teaching activities. Try our best to mobilize every student to participate in this process, let the students become the master of the classroom and cultivate students the consciousness of lifelong learning. The student-centered teaching mode requires teachers to create a favorable teaching atmosphere, respect the differences of students. What's more, it not only updates their own teaching ideas, but provides maximum development space for students, and gives full play to students' subjective initiative. For selecting course content and teaching methodologies, students' needs and learning styles have to be analyzed and used [7].

##### **3.1.2 The Student-Centered Theoretical Sources.**

The concept of student-centered education comes from Dewey's child-centered education thought. Dewey's idea of child-centered education emphasizes the object of education -- children should be given full attention in the process of education, requires that the health and physiological and psychological conditions of children must be taken into account in education work, advocates the development of children's individual interests and talents, and strives to make education a lively process[8].The idea of taking children as the center is reflected in Dewey's discussion of the essence of education, the purpose of education, curriculum and teaching materials, thinking and teaching methods. Dewey's child-centered theory fully respects children's interests and needs, their physical and mental development rules and age characteristics, their individuality and freedom, their life and direct experience, as well as the differences and uniqueness among children.

#### **3.2 The Necessity of Student-Centered Mode**

##### **3.2.1 The Change of Modern English Education Concept.**

With the development of society and the improvement of talent requirements, English teaching concepts are constantly updated. It mainly includes the following aspects.

First, the role of teachers has gradually changed from imparting knowledge to promoting students' learning. Second, teachers no longer stick to textbooks, but explore and create based on textbooks and in combination with students' actual learning needs. Third, from the discipline-oriented to the student development-oriented, teachers should pay attention to the individuality and difference of students.

### **3.2.2 The Requirements for English Curriculum Standards.**

The latest curriculum standards for junior high school English point out that the curriculum should reflect the idea of taking students as the main body, and the development needs of all students should be considered in teaching objectives, teaching content, teaching process, teaching evaluation and the utilization and development of teaching resources.

### **3.2.3 The Demand for Educational Purposes.**

To implement quality-oriented education, we need to take quality-oriented development as the core and establish and embody the educational concept of all-round development. One thing that cannot be ignored is to respect the development of students' individuality. Individual development is not in conflict with overall development. Comprehensive development is not to ignore the development of people's personality. The comprehensive development here does not mean the average development nor the balanced development, but the comprehensive development of morality, intelligence, physique, beauty and labor in the specifications of talent training.

### **3.2.4 The Need for Further Improving the Quality of Teaching.**

As a bilateral interactive educational activity, teaching is composed of teachers' teaching and students' learning. Through teaching then under the guidance of teachers in a planned and step-by-step way, students will actively master systematic scientific and cultural knowledge and skills, develop intelligence and physical strength, and cultivate moral character and develop all-round personality. Therefore, teaching is not only responsible for guiding students to master basic knowledge and skills, but also for developing students' intelligence, physical strength, and creative ability. As a result, the quality of teaching is directly related to the quality of education.

### **3.2.5 The Condition of Lifelong Development of Students.**

Lifelong development is inseparable from lifelong learning. Therefore, in the teaching process, it is necessary to take students as the center and cultivate students' self-learning ability, so that they can still learn by themselves after leaving school, and make continuous progress. In short, student-centered learning is about helping students to discover their own learning styles, to understand their motivation and to acquire effective study skills that will be valuable throughout their lives [9].

## **4 The Implementation of the Student-Centered Teaching Mode of English Reading in Junior High School**

### **4.1 Respect the Central Position of Students**

#### **4.1.1 Enrich Students' Reading Material.**

Single reading materials which are mainly based on textbooks, due to their limited content and outdated themes, cannot keep up with the changes of the current era, and will gradually become boring for students, thus affecting their enthusiasm and initiative in English reading learning. Students' lack of reading enthusiasm has become a major obstacle in English reading teaching. At this time, teachers should make more efforts in lesson preparation, and choose more English reading materials that are close to junior high school students' lives and their interest, according to their learning needs and physical and mental development characteristics. Novel and diverse reading teaching materials can help students to maintain their interest in reading and stimulate their enthusiasm for reading [10]. For example, when study the lesson "Where are you from?", in addition to the preexisting reading teaching materials, teachers can also expand the regional differences by reading newspapers or watching relevant videos that discuss the differences in eating habits and customs of different regions. This will not only narrow the distance between students and English reading materials, but also broaden students' horizons of English reading and increase their knowledge. At the same time, it can also create a good English learning atmosphere and enhance the interest of English reading teaching process.

#### **4.1.2 Respect Students' Personality Differences.**

Due to the difference of growing background and family education, each student's personality is also dissimilar, and then in the face of specific English reading learning activities, different students will have unlike performance. Some students are afraid of unknown words which leads to being unable to guess passage meaning. Some students have low reading speed, making them difficult to answer the question within the prescribed time. Some students do not develop good reading habits which leads to improving reading skills slowly. All the above will affect the students' English reading learning self-confidence. Students who have no confidence in reading are even less interested in reading. Therefore, the "student-centered" perspective of junior high school English reading teaching requires teachers to fully consider the personalized differences of students at different levels in English reading learning. From the actual situation of students, carefully select gradient reading teaching materials, so as to meet the needs of students at different levels of reading learning. At the same time, teachers should also teach students to master extensive reading, intensive reading, skip and a variety of reading methods, encourage students to carry on the bold speculation in encountering the new words, and then master the skill of guessing the word. Those methods can constantly play to each student's initiative and let every student get exercise in reading learning. At the same time, they not only can help students to achieve progress and

improve reading ability but also help experience the feeling of success and improve their confidence in English reading.

#### **4.1.3 Enable Students to Gain More English Cultural Background.**

Language is a manifestation of culture which embodies the national thought, culture and emotion of a certain country. If you want to learn a language well, you must accumulate relevant cultural background knowledge. The study of English reading requires a stronger emphasis on the accumulation of relevant English culture. There are huge differences between Chinese and Western cultures. For example, in Chinese culture, dragon is a symbol of auspiciousness and nobility; while in western culture, dragon is regarded as an evil monster. If students do not have relevant knowledge background, they may feel confused when reading and learning. Therefore, teachers should pay attention to the introduction of English cultural background. In English reading classroom teaching, teachers should consciously collect the relevant English cultural background materials, and appropriately extend the relevant cultural knowledge to explain based on teaching materials. In addition, English teachers can also organize colorful extra-curricular activities, such as special cultural lectures, foreign movies and music, and cultural festivals, to help students better understand western culture, cultivate cultural awareness, and feel the people and customs of different countries. In fact, it should be noted that the introduction of English culture needs to be based on the needs of students, which means that teachers should grasp an appropriate degree, not making it become a burden of students. By the way, the introduction of English culture knowledge should be lively, interesting and practical.

#### **4.1.4 Increase Students' Thinking in Reading.**

In traditional English reading classroom teaching, teachers mainly explain words, sentences and knowledge points while students always passively participate in the learning process of knowledge. This method is not only bad for stimulating students' interest in reading, but also bad for improving students' reading ability. As we all know, reading is a personalized behavior of students, students' reading ability must be improved through their own continuous training, and teachers cannot replace students to carry out this process. Therefore, teachers need to find their own role positioning, not replacing students too much or play the role of students. Teachers need to find ways to free themselves from the traditional teaching methods and become the organizers and guiders of the classroom. In the new era, foreign language teachers are no longer the teachers and possessors of knowledge, but the guides and facilitators to promote the development of student's language communication ability[11]. In English reading teaching, teachers should pay attention to organizing students to have a deep understanding of the text and lead students to think deeply about the reading materials. In other words, the teacher cannot blindly explain in order to catch the teaching progress, but be appropriate to slow down for some places worth discussing and thinking.

## 4.2 Optimize Teaching Method and Means

### 4.2.1 Create a Harmonious Teacher-Student Relationship.

The teacher-student relationship is a special social relationship formed by teachers and students through the intermediary of teaching and learning. The relationship between teachers and students is directly related to the smooth progress of classroom teaching activities. Democratic teacher-student relationship affects students' intellectual development and learning quantity, as well as teachers' teaching quality. Teachers should update old ideas. First of all, for the sake of a correct view of students, teachers should pay special attention to and understand the differences of students' intelligence, emotion, interest, physiology, cultural background and other aspects, in order to create suitable development space for different students. For example, in the reading teaching, questions of different difficulty are set to maximize the participation of all students in answering questions, so that students at all levels can feel the sense of accomplishment of answering questions correctly. Secondly, teachers should have a correct view of talent. Although each student is different, there must be a use for my talent. As long as the strengths circumvent weaknesses, it is possible to become successful. As students have great plasticity, teachers should treat students from the perspective of development. When students cannot answer the question, teachers should give more patience and encouragement, inspiration and induction. Finally, teachers should establish an equal view of teachers and students, and should not favor students because of their grades. At the same time, teachers and students are equal in personality. They should not feel superior to students because of teacher status.

### 4.2.2 Set Reading Goals in Layers.

In view of the individual differences of students and in order to promote the development of each student, it is a good method to set hierarchical goals in junior high school English reading teaching [12]. On the one hand, hierarchical reading objectives can make students clearly understand what requirements they need to achieve and what knowledge they need to master when reading and learning, which is helpful for students to plan their learning process. On the other hand, students with different abilities can find their own level of goals to meet their learning needs and maximize the experience of accomplishment for each student to complete the reading task. However, when setting the hierarchical reading target, attention should be paid to combining the students' recent development area. Zone of proximal development refers to the gap between actual and potential levels of development. Actual level of development refers to the students' existing ability to solve problems independently, while potential level of development refers to the new ability to solve problems that can be acquired under the guidance of an adult or in collaboration with a more capable peer. Therefore, English reading teaching should consider the current level of students' development, and go ahead of them, fall in the latest development area, then to promote the development of students.



### **4.2.3 Optimize the Evaluation Method.**

With the development of the new curriculum reform, teaching evaluation methods are constantly improved, one of which is to pay attention to formative evaluation and emphasize students' self-evaluation. Formative evaluation is a timely evaluation of students' knowledge mastery and ability development in the teaching process. It includes oral questions, classroom assignments, and written tests for students, so that both teachers and students can give timely feedback. It can better promote students' learning and development, and improve the process and quality of teaching rather than emphasis on the assessment of achievement. Today's teaching should be focused on student-centered mode, and strive to help every student, especially their lifelong development. Therefore, the single evaluation is no longer suitable for the needs of current English reading teaching. We need to emphasize the evaluation of students' reading learning process from its preview, review and other aspects. In addition, attention should be paid to students' self-evaluation and reflection, letting students try to think for themselves. For example, why do I make a mistake in this reading question? Is it because I do not understand the question clearly, or because I could not understand the meaning of the passage, or because I am confused with the choices? Teachers should train students to test their learning results consciously, analyze and evaluate the right and wrong, affirm their advantages and correct thinking, find out mistakes and deficiencies [13].

### **4.2.4 Pay Attention to Teaching Creativity.**

Creativity refers to the quality that people can use all known information to carry out active thinking activities according to certain goals and tasks, and produce some new, unique products with social or personal value. Creative thinking is characterized by fluency, flexibility and originality. In order to foster creativity in students, in the first place, it is necessary for teachers to create an environment to encourage creation [14]. They should carry out targeted reading curriculum design and take students' knowledge background and acceptance ability into account. Secondly, it is important to establish a team of creative teachers. Since teachers play a leading role in the process of reading teaching, their teaching concepts affect students in their initiative and creativity. Teachers should change teaching concepts and be able to understand and encourage students to create. Thirdly, during the process of reading teaching, students should be taught creative skills and methods, such as brainstorming, associative analogy, opposite thinking, conversion thinking and so on. Finally, we should cultivate students' creative personality and protect their curiosity. In reading training, teachers should allow students to make mistakes, eliminate students' fear of mistakes and encourage them to produce originality and variety of answers.

## **5 Conclusion**

There are no perfect teaching modes, and the student-centered junior high School English reading mode is no exception. For the problems mentioned above, it is necessary to make a case-by-case analysis, continue to explore and innovate. Teachers should improve their own quality and optimize teaching methods. Students should strive to

improve their self-discipline. The examination should also emphasize students' independent thinking ability. All in all, the implementation of student-centered English reading teaching mode still needs the supplement of other methods, which should be handled flexibly according to the actual situation, so as to achieve satisfactory teaching effects.

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