

Critical Reading Teaching Mode: Connotation, Manipulation, and Case Analysis

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Abstract: Critical thinking skills have become essential in developing students' core literacies. However, in traditional English reading classes, teachers are mostly used to adopting the sponge method, which not only weakens students' dominant position, but also hinders their innovative thinking and creativity, resulting in their inability to think and ask questions, thus failing to really develop their core literacies. Therefore, in the actual reading teaching, how to cultivate students' critical thinking skills has become an urgent problem to be solved. This paper, based on critical thinking skills and their connotations, constructs a systematic critical reading teaching mode, which includes five progressive parts: discourse interpretation, discourse analysis, reasoning, evaluation, query and innovation, and proposes four strategies for developing critical thinking skills in English reading teaching in secondary school, namely, text language criticism, text detail criticism, text logic criticism and text structure criticism. Finally, this paper demonstrates how this critical reading teaching mode is practiced by using case analysis of the Unit 7 of the Eighth-grade English Textbook (Vol. 1) of the People's Educational Press Edition, which can all verify the feasibility of this mode. With putting forward this critical reading teaching mode, this paper aims at providing a mode guidance for front-line English teachers' reading teaching, so as to enrich the reading teaching mode, improve the effect of reading teaching, and exert positive impacts on the development of students' core literacies.

Keywords: Junior English, Critical Thinking, The Construction of Reading Teaching Mode, Reading Strategies, Case Analysis

1. Introduction

At present, developing students' thinking skills in English studies has become the focus of English teaching in primary and secondary schools. Beyer once pointed out that thinking is a kind of mental operation activity. Its specific activity process starts from sensory-based intervention, goes through multi-layer mechanisms which include the perception and recall of information, and then conception, reasoning or judgment making, and finally develops into people's rationality. [1] In essence, thinking is a developmental cognitive activity in which individuals analyze the essential characteristics through the appearance of things, and it is also a necessary ability for human beings to process perceptual materials and transform them into rational knowledge to solve problems. Therefore, it is of great benefit to cultivate students' thinking skills. Critical thinking skills are at the heart of thinking skills which are very important for students to

distinguish right from wrong and establish correct values and attitude towards life. Qian Yingyi pointed out that today, commemorating the 40th anniversary of reform and opening up, the new stage of development has new requirements and expectations for education, that is, education should focus more on students' thinking development rather than knowledge mastery. The core of it is the education of critical thinking and innovative thinking. [2] In China's English language environment, reading is the most ecological, convenient and effective way to cultivate the core literacies of English subject and the reading literacies as well as to achieve multiple curriculum objectives. [3] Effat Hosseini's research also confirmed this view. It used TOEFL reading comprehension test and critical thinking skills test as research tools to investigate the relationship between critical thinking skills and reading of 70 college English translation major and

English literature major students. [4] The result shows that reading teaching can greatly promote the critical thinking skills of readers of English as a foreign language. Therefore, teachers' cultivation of students' critical thinking in reading teaching is more conducive to the development of students' critical thinking skills, which can not only enhance students' independent thinking skills, awaken their subjective consciousness, but also attract their attention and make them devote themselves to their studies so as to continuously improve their English abilities.

However, in the actual reading teaching, how to cultivate students' critical thinking skills is an urgent problem to be solved. Critical thinking is the premise of creation, and creation is the inherent requirement of critical thinking. In addition, creation is also the highest level of educational objectives [5]. Therefore, teaching should aim at cultivating students' critical thinking, expanding their horizons and stimulating their creativity. However, in the process of actual English reading teaching in secondary school, the activities taken by teachers to promote the development of students' thinking skills mostly stay at the levels of understanding, memorizing and analyzing, while the levels of evaluation, application and creation are rarely involved, which leads to the better development of students' lower-order thinking skills and the lack of higher-order thinking skills. In this case, the teaching objectives can't be fundamentally realized, and students' comprehensive abilities also cannot be completely improved. At present, scholars have already carried out researches on how to cultivate students' critical thinking skills in English reading teaching, including researches on critical reading teaching mode theory. For example, Zhang Sanxiang and Xie Weiwei considered that the constructivism learning theory and critical discourse analysis provide strong theoretical support for critical reading and its research [6]; Besides that, there are also some specific practices related to the development of critical thinking skills in reading teaching, like Tang Guangjie, Wei Ran, Liu Hui, Hu Yangyang and other scholars have studied the strategies of developing students' critical thinking skills in reading. [7-9] But most of them are abstract or just cut into one point of reading teaching to explain, which do not concretize strategies into an operable reading teaching mode. Based on these, this study starts from the connotation of critical thinking to construct a critical reading teaching mode and proposes four strategies of critical reading, which can provide references for reading teaching of English teachers in primary and secondary schools.

2. Connotation and Skills of Critical Thinking

2.1. Connotation

Etymologically speaking, critical means "appropriate judgment based on certain standards." In *Webster's New World Dictionary*, the related items obtained by entering "critical" include "characterized by close dissection, analysis and judgment", "To understand strictly, critical refers to trying to

objectively judge whether things are good or bad." [10, 11] Critical thinking is the combination of spiritual attitudes of being realistic and pragmatic and emancipating the mind as well as thinking skills such as analytic judgment and logical reasoning. While in philosophical concepts, critical thinking is mainly expressed as questioning, negation, introspection and criticism. [12] Among them, it is not difficult to find that, whether in etymology or philosophy, critical thinking is inseparable from analysis, questioning and judgment. Therefore, critical thinking can be defined as a way of thinking that understands and analyzes things strictly and carefully, and tries to judge objectively whether things are good or bad on the basis of certain standards.

The core concept of critical thinking is relatively abstract. Specifically in classroom teaching, "students with critical thinking usually show as follows: carefully analyzing and summarizing what they have learned, and independently judging the authenticity and academic value of knowledge; Critically evaluating the views or behaviors of others, and at the same time making independent answers to challenging questions." [12]. While specifically in English reading class of secondary school, students with critical thinking show the ability to predict the relevant information of the text according to the prompts and to analyze the content and details of the text accurately, and on these bases, to summarize the structure of the text, to independently judge and critically evaluate the relevant content of the text and the attitude of the author, and finally to reflect and correct the critical content based on their own views.

2.2. Critical Thinking Skills

Critical thinking includes cognitive skills and affective dispositions. And core critical thinking skills include: interpretation which involves categorization, significance clarification and meaning clarification; Analysis which involves ideas examination, discovery argument, analytical argument and their components; Evaluation which involves claims evaluation and arguments evaluation; Inference which involves evidence questioning, conjectures proposing and conclusions drawing; Explanation which involves results statement, procedural legitimacy proof and arguments expression; Self-regulation which involves self-examination and self-correction. [13]

Secondary school students' knowledge reserve and learning ability are limited, which make it difficult for them to master the above critical thinking skills independently. Therefore, teachers should consciously guide students to carry out critical thinking training during teaching process, which can be conducive to the development of students' critical thinking skills. Based on this, researchers systematically and comprehensively integrate the above critical thinking skills into reading teaching activities to build a systematic reading teaching mode, which is complementary to the embedded and fragmented critical reading researches proposed by some researchers. [14-16] The main feature of this reading teaching mode is that every teaching step is closely focused on critical thinking skills.

3. Critical Reading Teaching Mode and Strategies

3.1. Explanation of Critical Reading Teaching Mode

In *Thought and Language*, Vygotsky (1986) holds that children’s thinking development is the most prominent in the process of language development. Language and thinking are inseparable, and the connection between them emerges in the process of development and continues to evolve, forming two “cross and cross” curves.[17] Thinking relies on language, and language promotes thinking. Therefore, language and thinking coexist and facilitate each other. In addition, language contains

intelligent elements and has thinking values, which make English teaching and students’ thinking development inseparable. Therefore, cultivating students’ critical thinking in English reading teaching can greatly promote the formation and development of their thinking skills. Furthermore, secondary school students are in the critical period of cognitive development. They are open-minded and full of curiosity about everything. So, combined with their current psychological development characteristics, the secondary school stage is the “golden period” for cultivating their critical thinking skills. Only by developing critical thinking skills can we lay a solid foundation for students’ innovation skills, and ultimately improve their core literacies and realize their self-worth.

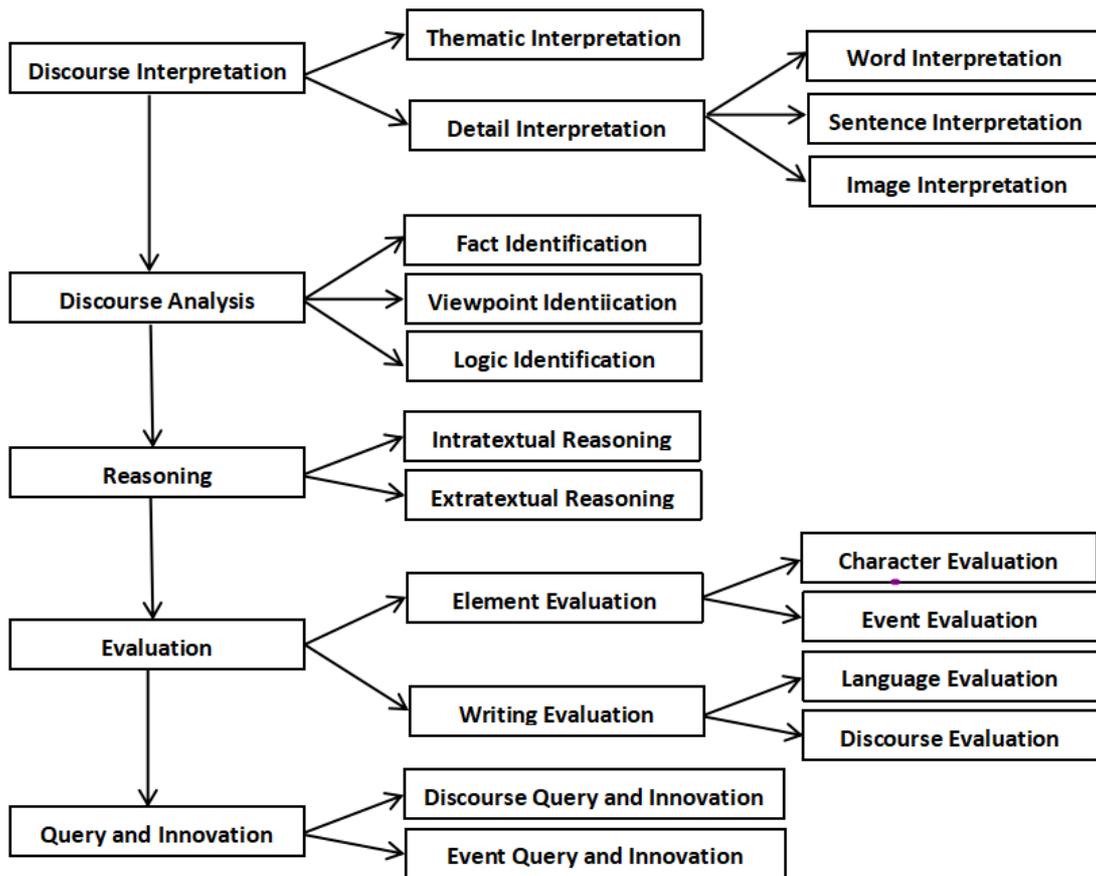


Figure 1. Flowchart of critical reading teaching mode.

The critical reading teaching mode aims to cultivate students’ critical thinking skills through reading teaching, and ultimately to promote the development of students’ core literacies. As shown in figure 1, critical reading mode includes five parts: discourse interpretation, discourse analysis, reasoning, evaluation, query and innovation. Among them, interpreting the theme and details of the text, analyzing the structure of the text and evaluating the author’s viewpoint, writing process, pragmatics and etc. can effectively help students understand the content of the text, straighten out the relationship among various parts of the text, and form a judgment and evaluation of the author’s attitude, viewpoint, writing techniques and many other aspects. All of these cover all kinds of skills requirements in reading tests so as to help

students get better grades.

Discourse interpretation mainly includes thematic interpretation and detail interpretation. Thematic interpretation refers to various teaching activities based on the theme of the reading text, including: topic prediction, main idea generalization, structure generalization, genre judgment, intention inference and position inference. The main types of activities of it involve: brainstorming, sorting according to the text, text structure division, genre, intention and position inference based on the given information; While detail interpretation refers to the interpretation of the details based on the content of the reading text, including: word interpretation, sentence interpretation and image interpretation. The main types of activities of it involve: reading and translating

underlined words, reading and finding synonymous sentences, reading and drawing, as well as reading and associating.

Discourse analysis refers to the analysis of the text on the basis of understanding it, mainly including: fact identification, such as the identifications of what, how, addition facts and etc.; Viewpoint identification, such as the identifications of reason-based view, attitude-based view and etc.; Logic identification, such as logical identifications based on paragraphs, fragments, chapters, and etc.. The main types of activities of it involve: form completion, information classification, mind mapping and etc..

Reasoning refers to inferring according to the text, mainly including: Intratextual reasoning, such as determining opinions and details, determining claims and evidences and etc.; Extratextual reasoning, such as contextual reasoning which involves character's personality reasoning, behavioral reasoning, mood reasoning and etc. The main types of activities of it include: mind mapping, group cooperation, role description, role-playing, situational interaction and etc..

Evaluation includes element evaluation and writing evaluation. Element evaluation refers to the evaluation based on characters and events in the text, mainly including: character evaluation which involves character's personality evaluation, behavioral evaluation, attitudinal evaluation and etc.; Event evaluation which involves event's cause evaluation, process evaluation, result evaluation and etc.. The main types of activities of it include: keynote speech, classroom debate, thematic essay, form completion and etc.. While writing evaluation refers to the evaluation based on text language and discourse, mainly including: language evaluation which involves language appropriateness evaluation, coherence evaluation and etc.; Discourse evaluation which involves logic evaluation, structure evaluation and etc.. The main types of activities of it include: recitation and appreciation, language comparison, mind mapping, structure analysis, etc.

Query and innovation refer to questioning and innovating texts and events on the basis of fully understanding the language, details, structure and logic of the text, mainly including discourse query and innovation, event query and innovation and etc.. The main types of activities of it include: continuous writing after reading, rewriting and many other activities.

3.2. Critical Reading Strategies

3.2.1. Text Language Criticism

Language criticism means that teachers guide students to criticize the accuracy and rationality of the language in the text according to the theme and situational meaning of it. Among them, language accuracy criticism refers to students' thinking about the correctness of the use of some words, phrases and sentence patterns in the text, while language rationality criticism refers to students' thinking about the rationality of language use in the text according to the context when the text conforms to grammatical rules.

3.2.2. Text Detail Criticism

Detail criticism means that teachers guide students to identify and question whether there are inaccuracies and

irrationalities in the narration of events and the argument of viewpoints in the text, and these inaccuracies and irrationalities involve conflicts in time, conflicts between words and deeds, and narratives that are obviously inconsistent with the facts in the text.

3.2.3. Text Logic Criticism

Logic criticism means that teachers guide students to summarize the author's writing logic, to analyze the possible problems of writing logic or to confirm the rationality of it by taking the whole text and paragraphs as a unit, which involves judging the consistency between the beginning-middle-ending of the text or main idea-supporting details-summary of the text or title-paragraph ideas of the text.

3.2.4. Text Structure Criticism

Structure criticism means that teachers guide students to summarize the structure between the whole text and paragraphs and between paragraphs, to think and question the unity of text's external forms and internal connections, at the same time, to judge its rationality and give criticism.

4. Case Presentation and Analysis

4.1. Case Source Details

This case is the reading instructional design of "Will People Have Robots?", the Unit 7 of the Eighth-grade English (Vol. 1) of the People's Educational Press Edition, which mainly focuses on the topic of "talking about the future". And this case is part 2a-2e of this unit. The title of this text is "Do You Think You Will Have Your Own Robot?" which contains 4 paragraphs, there are "What are robots like in movies?", "What can robots do today?", "Will robots think like humans in the future?", "What will robots be like in the future?" respectively. The text can be seen in Appendix.

4.2. Display and Analysis of Instructional Design Cases

4.2.1. Teaching Objectives

Learners are able to:

- 1) Summarize the main ideas for each paragraph based on the key words;
- 2) Comprehend the details of the text through scanning;
- 3) Draw the outline of the text and analyze its Theme-Contents agreement;
- 4) Rewrite and improve paragraph 4 aided by teacher.

[Analysis]

In teaching objectives 1) and 2), under the guidance of the teacher, students comprehend, analyze and summarize the reading text, specifically by summarizing the main idea of each paragraph according to key words, and then understanding the details in the text through scanning. On the basis of fully understanding the text, teaching objectives 3) and 4) are to summarize the structure of the text, and to analyze whether its theme and content are consistent. In case of finding problems, students will be asked to rewrite the fourth paragraph of the text according to teacher's guidance. Among them, the teaching focus lies in the teaching objective 4), and the teaching

difficulties lies in the teaching objective 3).

From the teaching objectives, it is not difficult to find that, different from the traditional objectives of “knowledge-skills-attitude”, these teaching objectives are oriented by critical thinking, and set each teaching activity closely around critical thinking skills. If students can complete their tasks according to these teaching objectives, their critical thinking skills will also be improved.

4.2.2. Lead-in

[Teaching activity 1]

Step 1. Lead-in (1min)

T: Good morning, everybody!

T: We usually have a lot of difficulties in our life, right? Do you have difficulties in studying?

T: If you get into difficulties, what will you do?

T: Yes, have a robot. It’s OK!

T: Today let’s read a text about robot.

[Analysis]

Teacher greets students first, and then uses the question “if you get into difficulties, what will you do?” to lead to the theme of this text—“Robots”, which take about 1 minute. In this part, teacher asks questions to stimulate students’ divergent thinking and students’ answers should be diverse, they may not be able to think of “Robots” directly which requires teacher’s guidance. In the step-by-step guidance, students’ interests in learning can be quickly stimulated so that their attention can be quickly focused on the classroom, and at the same time, students’ curiosity can be aroused to prepare for learning the text. *The Delphi Report* pointed out that the main personalities of critical thinkers include: (1) truth-seeking; (2) Open-mindedness; (3) Analyticity; (4) Systematic; (5) Confidence; (6) Inquisitiveness. [13, 18] Therefore, the lead-in part should stimulate students’ curiosity and broaden their thinking, which are all the qualities that critical thinkers should possess.

4.2.3. Theme Prediction

[Teaching activity 2]

Step 2. Predicting. (3mins)

i). Task

T: Let’s read the title together. ”Do you think you will have your robots?”

Can you guess what the text will tell us?

Write your guesses in your handout. You will have 1 min.

Handout:
 Task 1. Please guess what this text will tell us? (Chinese is available)
 Eg: The text will tell us about the reasons to have robots.

Figure 2. Task 1 of Students’ Handout.

- ii). Students’ work
- iii). Check-up

(Teacher asks 1 to 3 students to share his/her answers with us, others can add up to their own handout the guesses.)

[Analysis]

First, teacher leads students to read the title once. On the premise that students understand the topic, they are required to predict the content of the text and write the predicted content in the handout. After that, teacher selects one to three students to share their guesses and at the same time, other students write the answers of the respondents in their own handouts, which take about 3 minutes. In this part, students have a rough speculation about the content of the text which can pave the way for later criticism of the consistency between the title and content, that is, comparing their predicted content with actual content of the text and questioning whether the content is reasonable. In addition, letting students write what they think can effectively find their grammatical errors and correct them.

4.2.4. Discourse Interpretation

[Teaching activity 3]

Step 3. Reading comprehension. (10mins)

1) Reading for the words’ meaning. (5mins)

i). Task

T: First let’s read the text and finish Task 2 on your handout. Please put these English words into Chinese. In all, you will have 2 minutes.

Handout:
 Task 2. Please translate the underlined word/phrases below.
 (1) They are usually like human servants. They help with the housework and do jobs like working in dirty or dangerous places.(paragraph 1)

 (2), and they do simple jobs over and over again.(Paragraph 2)

 What kinds of “simple” jobs do you know? Please give an example:

 (3) They are fun to watch.

 The reason of “fun to watch” is _____
 (4), scientist James White thinks that robots will never be able to wake up and know where they are.

 (5) However, they agree it may take hundreds of years. (paragraph 4)

 (6) If buildings fall down with people inside,.....

Figure 3. Task 2 of Students’ Handout.

- ii). Students’ work
 - iii). Check-up
- (Teacher asks 6 or more students to show their answers;

especially asks for further information)

[Analysis]

In this part, teacher gives students about 2 minutes to read the text and complete Task 2 in the handout—translating phrases or sentences, and answering the corresponding questions. After that, teacher selects about 6 students to show their answers, and the key point in it is that the teacher must continuously ask for their answers. In this way, students can not only understand the detailed knowledge points in the text, but also have a deep understanding of it, not just on surface level knowledge. Take a question as an example, “What ‘simple’ job do you know? Please give an example.” Most students know that the word “simple” means “easy to understand or do; not difficult”, but what kind of work is simple in their cognition? This requires their in-depth thinking and judgment, which can promote the development of students’ critical thinking. The critical strategy used in this part is language criticism.

[Teaching activity 4]

2) Reading for judgement. (5mins)

i). Task

T: You know about the words in the text. Now let’s read the text again and finish Task 3 on the handout. You need to correct the mistakes if there are.

Handout:

Task 3. True or False Quiz Questions (Please correct any mistakes).

- (1) There are robots in the movies about the future. ()
- (2) People don’t like to do boring jobs. ()
- (3) All scientists agree that robots are able to talk like humans. ()
- (4) Snake can help look for people in the buildings. ()

Figure 4. Task 3 of Students’ Handout.

ii). Students’ work

iii). Check-up

(Teacher ask 4 or more students to share their answers together, in particular, the correct answers should be shown in public.)

[Analysis]

In this part, on the basis of students completing the previous part, they read the text again and complete Task 3 in the handout—True or False Quiz Questions. After that, teacher selects about 4 students to share the answers and correct the false statements. True or False Quiz Questions (1) and (2), mentioned in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the text, are correct statements. The expression of question (2) in the original text is “Fewer people will do such jobs in the future because they are boring, but robots will never get bored.” from which we cannot directly conclude that people do not like boring jobs. Therefore it requires students to convert information, think, judge, and finally get the answer; Question (3), “All scientists agree that robots are able to talk like humans.”, comes from the third paragraph of the text where we can judge that “All” in this sentence is wrong since not all scientists think that robots can talk like humans. So, this statement should be changed to “Many scientists think that robots will even be able

to talk like human in 25 to 50 years.”; While the relevant information of the statement in question (4), “Snake can help look for people in the buildings.” appears in the fourth paragraph, which states “..., these snake robots can help look for people under the building.”, from this, it can be concluded that question (4) is incorrect, which should be “snake robots” instead of “snake”.

The critical strategy mainly used in this part is detail criticism. In the form of True or False Quiz Questions, students can have an in-depth understanding of the text again. The questions in this part are set from easy to difficult in which students can be gradually guided to criticize the reading text at the detail level. This is an extension of the language criticism in the previous part, and also lays a foundation for the subsequent logic criticism.

4.2.5. Discourse Analysis

[Teaching activity 5]

Step 4. Matching (2mins)

i). Task

T: After reading the text again, let’s find main ideas for each paragraph. Now look at Task 4. You have 2 minutes to finish it.

Handout:

Task 4. Matching Paragraph Headings.

Paragraph 1 Will robots think like humans in the future?

Paragraph 2 What will robots be like in the future?

Paragraph 3 What can robots do today?

Paragraph 4 What are robots like in movies?

Figure 5. Task 4 of Students’ Handout.

ii). Students’ work

iii). Check-up

(Teacher asks one student to show his/her answer)

[Analysis]

In this part, teacher asks students to summarize the general idea of the text by matching the main idea of each paragraph, and students have 2 minutes to complete this. Finally, teacher selects 1 student to check the answer. There are four paragraphs in the text, the main ideas of which are “What are robots like in movies?”, “What can robots do today?”, “Will robots think like humans in the future?”, “What will robots be like in the future?” According to these, the text can be divided into three parts. The first part is the first paragraph which can be summarized as robots in movies, the second part is the second paragraph that can be concluded as today’s robots, and the third part is the third and fourth paragraphs, which can be summarized as robots in the future.

This activity is not difficult, but students can analyze the main idea of each paragraph of the text through it so that they can have a specific grasp of each part of the text. All of these can help teachers prepare to guide students to analyze and question the consistency between topic and content as well as the relationship between paragraphs.

4.2.6. Reasoning and Evaluation

[Teaching activity 6]

Step 5. Analyzing (4mins)

i). Task

T: Let's look at this text, you can see, the title is "Do you think you will have your own robot?" And the main ideas for each Paragraph are here. Please finish Task 5 in your handout. You will have 4 minutes. Now think about these questions on your handout.

Handout:
 Task 5: Please think about the following questions, do you think the title of this text matches the content?
 Who is the reader of this text?

 If readers of this text are students, what should be written in the text if the title remains Unchanged:

 If the content of this text remains the same, how should the title change?

Figure 6. Task 5 of Students' Handout.

ii). Students' work / discussion

iii). Check-up

(Teacher asks 2 students or 2 groups to share their ideas on BL)
 [Analysis]

In this part, teacher guides students to consider whether the title of the text matches the content. There are 3 questions in the handout. Students can work together in groups and take 4 minutes to complete it. After that, teacher selects two groups of students to share their answers. This activity is based on the previous activity, that is, on the premise of understanding the main idea of each paragraph, teacher guides students to question whether the title matches the content of the text. From the handout, we can see that the three questions are progressive from easy to difficult, and guide students to think deeply step by step. Meanwhile, these three questions also provide students with a thinking direction. For example, after students answer the first question, teacher sets the following two questions respectively, which not only contain "let students think about how to modify the title without changing the content", but also put forward "how to modify the content without changing the title". Due to the limited thinking skills of secondary school students, the questions set by teachers in this way can facilitate the thinking process of students, but not limit or imply the perspective of their thinking, which can not only be conducive to guiding students to think dialectically, but also lay a foundation for the later activities of cultivating their innovative thinking. The critical strategy used in this part is logic criticism.

4.2.7. Query and Innovation

[Teaching activity 7]

Step 6. Improving and rewriting. (18mins)

1) Chart filling. (5mins)

i). Task

T: Let's read paragraph 4 carefully and fill the chart. You will have 3 minutes. Look at Task 6 on your handout.

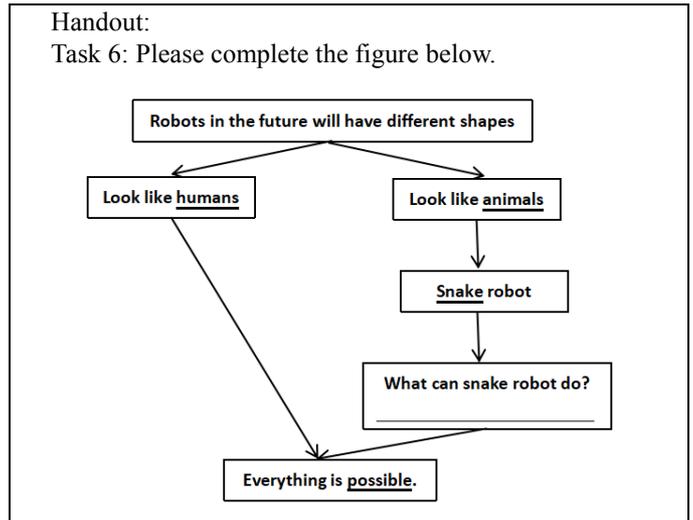


Figure 7. Task 6 of Students' Handout.

ii). Students' work

iii). Check-up

(Teacher asks one student to his/her chart)

[Analysis]

This part can be divided into two teaching steps. The first step is to supplement information according to the fourth paragraph of the text, which is the main content of this activity. The fourth paragraph mainly discusses the shape of robots in the future. As we can see from the handout, this paragraph describes shape from two angles, one is "look like humans" and the other is "look like animals". When demonstrating the second angle, the text gives an example of snake robots and expounds their functions, while the first angle has no example. From the perspective of structural rationality, the structure of this paragraph is not parallel. By sorting out the structure of it, students can clearly find this problem, which provides a reference direction for the following Rewriting activity. The critical strategy used in this part is mainly structure criticism.

[Teaching activity 8]

2) Rewriting. (6mins)

i). Task

T: Now let's look at the chart in Task 6. Do you think this chart is logical in writing?

T: This Para is telling us the robots in the future, right? The first part is talking about future, and the example (In India, scientists made snake robot) is in the past. Do you think it is OK? If not, how can we make it better? Now work in pairs, and write down your sentences in your handout. You will have 6 minutes to talk about it and write your sentences.

Handout:
 Task 7. Please modify a sentence in the fourth paragraph to make this paragraph reasonable. Please give two answers.
 Model: In India, scientists are trying to create/make a snake robot.
 (1) _____
 (2) _____

Figure 8. Task 7 of Students' Handout.

ii). Students' discussion

iii). Check-up (Teacher asks 4 Ss to improve the writing)
[Analysis]

In this part, students rewrite the fourth paragraph of the text under the guidance of the teacher. Students can cooperate with classmates and complete it within 6 minutes according to teacher's prompts. The example given in the fourth paragraph about future robots is the snake robots in India and the tense used in it is the simple past tense, while the model given by teacher in the handout changes "made" to "are trying to", that is, changes the simple past tense to the present continuous tense. Similarly, students can also revise the content according to the example sentence and their own ideas. The critical strategy used in this activity is detail criticism—guiding students to question a certain detail and proposing their own modification methods, which is not only conducive to the cultivation of critical thinking skills, but also to the development of innovative thinking skills so as to lay a solid foundation for the development of students' core literacies.

4.2.8. Summary and Homework

[Teaching activity 9]

Step 7. Summary and homework. (1 min)

1) Summary.

Teacher gets the students to look through what they have written in their handout, note what they have learned in this lesson.

2) Homework.

After studying this text, students all think that the author believes that we will all have our own robots in the future. So, which sentences or paragraphs in the text can prove author's positive attitude? Please complete the following short passage after class:

The author believes that people in the future will surely have their own robots. In the text, there are four points to show such a truth.

First, in Para 1, the author says“”.

...

To sum up, ...

[Analysis]

This is the last part of the class, summary and homework. In this part, teacher takes students to review the handout again, and emphasizes the key points again, so that students can have an overall grasp of the knowledge learned in this lesson. Afterwards, the homework is arranged and the homework in this class is a sublimation of this critical reading course, which is no longer limited to the specific content in the text, but requires students to judge the author's attitude towards whether people will have their own robots or not in the future through the language used in the text. For example, in the last paragraph of the text, it is mentioned that "..., computers and rockets seemed impossible 100 years ago." which shows that the author holds a positive attitude towards the viewpoint whether people will have their own robots or not in the future. There is more than one sentence in the text that can express the author's attitude and viewpoint, which requires students to

fully mobilize their own mind and carefully consider every sentence written by the author in order to complete their homework well. Therefore, this assignment not only tests students' thinking skills, but also their language organization skills and writing skills. This is a comprehensive exercise and is conducive to the development of students' language level and thinking skills.

5. Conclusion

Cheng Xiaotang, Zhao Siqu [19] pointed out that the connotation of the core literacies of English subject includes language competence, cultural awareness, thinking quality and learning capacity. Among them, critical thinking skills are the core of the thinking quality. Starting from the connotation of critical thinking, this paper builds a critical reading teaching mode based on critical thinking skills, and proposes four critical reading strategies according to the characteristics of secondary school English teaching, namely text language criticism, detail criticism, logic criticism and structure criticism. At the same time, combined with the Unit 7 of the Eighth-grade English (Vol. 1) of the People's Educational Press Edition, this paper also explains the critical reading teaching mode and its strategies in detail, hoping that it can provide some references for primary and secondary education English teachers.

Meanwhile, the construction of the critical reading teaching mode in this paper has some implications for students' language testing practice. Some questions in the reading test should not only be limited to objective multiple-choice questions for detailed understanding of the text, but should be appropriately affiliated with some subjective questions such as continuous writing, rewriting, and rationality evaluation of the text, since on the one hand, it can increase the reliability of the test paper, on the other hand, it can stimulate students' thinking and improve their critical thinking skills.

Although the academic circles attach great importance to critical thinking, yet how to implement it in the actual classroom is still worthy of our consideration. The construction of this critical reading teaching mode in this paper provides us with a method of integrating critical thinking cultivation with certain texts in the reading teaching process. Nevertheless, there still remain several problems needing to be further explored. Firstly, how can teachers enhance the effectiveness of this reading teaching mode even though the procedures and strategies are illustrated? Secondly, concerning reading teaching, what other strategies can teachers create and use to develop students' in-depth thinking? Thirdly, to improve the students' thinking skills, what specific measures can teachers take when they are having different text genres? Fourthly, as to the students with great individual differences, what can teachers do to develop the students' thinking? Regarding these problems above, further researches are in need to help form a systemic discipline about learners' thinking.

Fund Project

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Appendix

The source text of the case.

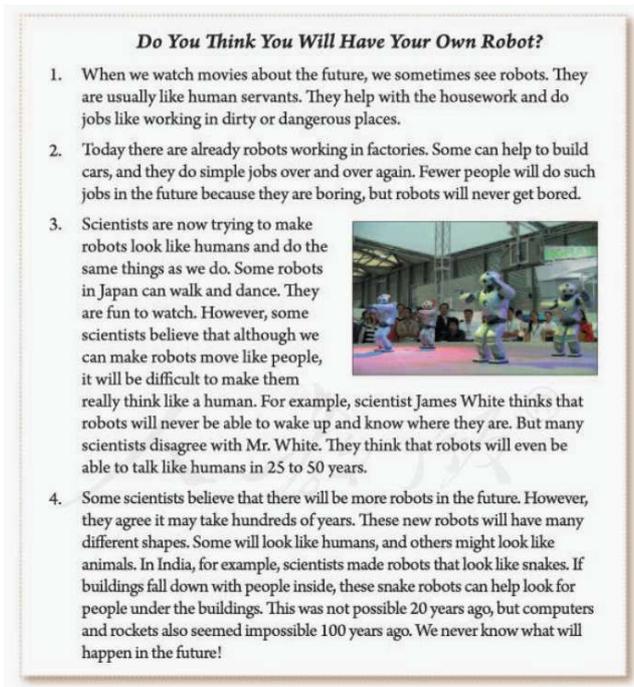


Figure A1. The source text of the case.

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