

# A Practical Study on Cultivating Students'Critical Thinking Ability in College English Teaching

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**Abstract:** With the continuous reform of English teaching in higher education in our country,colleges have gradually realized the importance of training critical thinking ability.Nowadays,the cultivation of critical thinking ability has become an important part of college English teaching,and it is an important measure to promote the improvement of English teaching efficiency through the cultivation of critical thinking ability.However,in the current situation of English teaching,there are many problems in colleges and universities,such as the superficial cultivation of critical thinking ability,the insufficient ability of professional teachers,the lagging content of textbooks,and the single solidification of evaluation methods,which restrict the improvement of students'critical thinking ability.In order to change this situation,colleges and universities should make clear the importance of critical thinking ability training,and effectively improve students'critical thinking ability by reforming teaching mode,promoting teachers'development,updating textbook contents,reforming teaching evaluation methods and other means.

**Keywords:** Universities;English teaching;Critical thinking ability;Training strategy

## Introduction

Critical thinking ability refers to the ability to actively reflect on the use of appropriate evaluation criteria and finally reach a reasonable judgment.From the meaning of critical thinking ability,it can be seen that critical thinking ability has a critical spirit. Therefore,by cultivating students'critical thinking ability,teachers can make students actively criticize and question themselves in the process of learning,and then help them constantly improve.English critical thinking ability is a core skill in English learning. By cultivating students'critical thinking ability,teachers can help students improve their abilities in logical reasoning,analysis and judgment,so as to improve their English learning efficiency.

## 1. The Main Problems in Cultivating Students'Critical Thinking Ability in College English Teaching

### 1.1 Unclear target positioning

Although various sectors of society attach great importance to the cultivation of students'English critical thinking ability in the process of English teaching in universities,universities lack a comprehensive understanding of the cultivation of students'English critical thinking ability.Some universities tend to overlook the cultivation of students'cognitive ability and innovative thinking when cultivating their English critical thinking ability in English teaching.Although English teaching in universities emphasizes the cultivation of students'basic English language skills,it neglects the cultivation of students'English critical thinking ability.Some English teachers only focus on whether students can pass the corresponding English exams when carrying out English teaching activities,and do not attach importance to cultivating students'English communication skills,resulting in students often being unable to express their opinions fluently when communicating with others in English.

### 1.2 Lack of training in students'English critical thinking ability

To improve their comprehensive English proficiency,students must actively strengthen their abstract thinking and logical reasoning abilities to scientifically analyze,reason,and integrate various effective information.Due to the lack of professional English critical thinking training in current English teaching in universities,students'English listening,speaking,reading,writing and other

abilities are only blindly cultivated. These mechanical memories are difficult to synchronize the development of students' perceptual and rational cognition. At the same time, some universities overlook the applicability of English in their English teaching process, and teachers often overlook the stimulation of students' interest in English learning when cultivating their English critical thinking ability. In addition, cultivating students' English critical thinking ability depends on time and space to a certain extent, and it does not have a certain degree of extensibility. Therefore, cultivating students' English critical thinking ability is mostly carried out during the English teaching process, and the cultivation of students' English critical thinking ability is rarely integrated into students' extracurricular activities.

## **2. A Practical Study on Cultivating Students' Critical Thinking Ability in College English Teaching**

### **2.1 Pay attention to course guidance to enhance students' autonomous learning ability**

For the teaching of any stage and subject, students are always the core and subject of learning activities. As the organizer and planner of the whole teaching activities, teachers give students scientific and professional guidance, inspire them to gradually develop the habit of independent thinking and independent learning, and cultivate and enhance their critical thinking ability. Therefore, in the process of actual English classroom teaching, teachers should pay attention to the scientific design of curriculum model, especially the introduction of relevant curriculum content is crucial. College teaching should leave more time and space for students. On the one hand, students can think more independently. On the other hand, it can break the shackles of traditional classroom teaching mode and give students a richer English learning experience. For example, when it comes to the content of "culture", teachers can adopt the mode of "context creation" to introduce the curriculum when they design the teaching plan. In the whole process, teachers can use multimedia equipment to play relevant clips of the classic British film and television drama *Downton Abbey* for students, focusing on the life of the upper aristocracy and their servants in the era and hierarchical social system described in the film, which include the classic heir selection scenario, the aristocratic lady Crowley's pursuit of love despite the hierarchy and other scenes. By creating vivid multimedia film and television situations for students to fully mobilize students' multiple senses such as hearing and vision, teachers can guide students to think about what kind of social and cultural form was China in 1910 under the same background of the same era. Inspired by the film, the students could not help thinking positively. At that time, China was in a period of drastic changes in politics, economy and social culture and experienced the end of the dynastic feudal system and the invasion of various Western cultures. More and more students begin to compare Chinese and Western cultures, and then extend to compare Chinese and Western language, which make students further deepen their knowledge and understanding of the subject of English or this language. The introduction of courses through the creation of situations has greatly aroused the enthusiasm and initiative of students in independent thinking and independent learning, which not only helps to improve students' ability in English subjects, but also improves their comprehensive level.

### **2.2 Innovative teaching mode to arouse students' learning enthusiasm**

In order to improve students' English level, teachers in colleges and universities should further cultivate and enhance students' logical thinking ability, innovative thinking ability and ability to distinguish right from wrong and other comprehensive qualities, but also should change the teaching concept and innovate the teaching mode. Adopting diversified teaching forms and contents in English classroom teaching, on the one hand, can effectively expand the richness of English teaching content and help students broaden their thinking and vision. On the other hand, it can effectively enhance the interest of college English classroom teaching, so as to mobilize and stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm in participating in English learning activities and independent thinking, which is of great benefit to both the improvement of teaching quality and the improvement of students' ability. For example, when a college teacher talks about "Information network technology", he or she can ask "What do you think of Internet information technology?" Then, in the course of classroom teaching, students are organized to carry out a debate contest with the theme of "The advantages and disadvantages of network information technology". In the whole process, students can freely choose their own views based on their own knowledge reserve and understanding of the content of relevant English articles. Students who hold the same argument are automatically divided into one camp, and students who hold different views are automatically divided into hostile camp. Among them, some students insist on "Network information technology has brought great convenience to our study and life". At the same time, another group of students insisted that "The development of network information technology has seriously affected our thinking mode." English debate can not only exercise students' critical thinking ability, but also help improve students' oral English level, which can be said to kill two birds with one stone.

### 2.3 Reform evaluation system to cultivate students' good thinking ability

In the actual teaching process, teachers should innovate the content and forms of English subject assessment, formulate more diversified subject assessment approaches and plans in combination with specific teaching objectives and teaching plans, effectively achieve comprehensive assessment of students, and bring students more clear learning motivation and direction. For example, relevant universities can combine the actual English level of students and the actual teaching progress of English subjects to carry out two to three time "group demonstration assessment" activities every semester. The "group demonstration assessment" activity is that students summarize, sort out and report on the English subject content learned in the previous stage within the scope of the group. Throughout the process, teachers need to group students based on their actual situations in different classes. In general, it is necessary to make sure that each group has students at each English proficiency level, so as to promote communication and learning between each other. When making the presentation, the students in the group should make a clear division of labor plan. Some are responsible for sorting out the knowledge points in the textbook, some are responsible for sorting out the expansion of the knowledge points in the group's internal thinking and discussion, and some are responsible for summarizing and integrating all the knowledge points to present a complete presentation. Finally, a student is required to report and show. Teachers should give grades to each student according to the contribution rate of different students based on the quality of the reported results of each group and the division of labor schedule submitted. Through this assessment method, the comprehensive English level of students can be tested and investigated, the communication and cooperation between students can be promoted to realize the collision between thinking and ideas.

#### Conclusion:

In short, English teachers in colleges and universities should pay attention to strengthening different thinking training and cultivating students' critical thinking ability. It is an important way for teachers to cultivate innovative English talents, which can enable students to improve their language expression level in an active state of thinking. At present, the proportion of speculative teaching activities in college English classes is not large, which means that the development space of students' critical thinking ability is still relatively large. Teachers can grasp the teaching characteristic and promote the innovation of thinking training in English classroom.

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