

10.18686/neet.v2i4.4365

Enhancing English Listening and Speaking Skills through High-Quality Education in the Age of “Internet Plus”

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Abstract: In the realm of basic education, junior high school English teaching plays a pivotal role. It not only consolidates and expands the English knowledge system for students but also lays a solid foundation for their future high school English learning. As we have entered the “Internet Plus” era, it is crucial to break away from the drawbacks of traditional English education and enhance the quality of junior high school English teaching. English teachers should leverage information technology to continuously improve students’ listening and speaking skills, ensuring they develop the ability to self-learn English and enhance their core English competencies. This paper aims to analyze the strategies for integrating “Internet Plus” to cultivate high-quality English listening and speaking skills of students during the basic education phase, hoping to provide effective suggestions for junior high school English teaching.

Keywords: Basic Education Phase; “Internet Plus”; Students; Core English Competencies; Listening and Speaking Skills

Introduction

With the accelerating global process, the importance of English as an international language is self-evident. Nowadays, the demand for English professionals in various social fields is increasing day by day, showing a trend towards diversification and high-end talent. Therefore, English talents with comprehensive listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities are more favored by modern enterprises. Based on this, junior high school English teachers should emphasize the cultivation of students’ English foundations to effectively improve their core English competencies. However, listening and speaking education has always been a challenge in junior high school English teaching. Hence, in the “Internet Plus” era, English teachers should harness the value of information technology to achieve high-quality junior high school English teaching.

1. Challenges in Cultivating Students’ Core English Competencies in Listening and Speaking in the “Internet Plus” Era

1.1 Dull Teaching Content Leading to Lack of Interest

In junior high school English teaching, teachers often use a “cramming” method, unilaterally imparting English knowledge to students. In this mode, teachers dominate the classroom, and students are usually passive recipients. Furthermore, the English knowledge taught is concentrated in textbooks, lacking a close connection with real life, making it difficult for students to appreciate the value of learning English. This situation often leads to students becoming disengaged and resistant to English learning, manifesting behaviors like whispering or sleeping in class. In the “Internet Plus” era, as English knowledge continues to evolve, a rigid teaching content and method will inevitably affect students’ future English learning, weakening their competitiveness in the market. Therefore, stimulating students’ interest in listening and speaking is crucial. Only by activating students’ initiative can they be encouraged to explore English knowledge proactively, enriching their personal knowledge systems.

1.2 Rigid Teaching Concepts Hindering Listening and Speaking Habits

Due to the deep-rooted influence of exam-oriented education, students often fail to realize the importance of cultivating listening and speaking abilities. Consequently, in their daily English studies, most students focus their time and energy on memorizing vocabulary, understanding English texts, and studying grammar, neglecting listening and speaking practice. This results in a lack of good listening and speaking habits. Moreover, some English teachers adhere to a “scores-only” mentality, prioritizing students’ performance in exams over their listening and speaking skills. Even when using information technology in teaching, the focus tends to be on rote learning, occupying students’ study time and diminishing their enthusiasm. Ultimately, this leads to a scenario where students achieve high scores but have poor listening and speaking skills. Thus, rigid educational concepts restrict students from acquiring deeper English knowledge, adversely affecting their future

high school studies.

1.3 Single Teaching Evaluation Diminishing Learning Motivation

Single-dimensional teaching evaluations are prevalent in junior high school English teaching. The primary reason is that teachers emphasize assessing students' grades while neglecting comprehensive evaluations of their overall qualities, abilities, interests, and core competencies. Under this evaluation system, students are inclined to spend their time and energy reviewing exam-related content rather than genuinely improving their listening and speaking skills. This not only increases their learning pressure and anxiety but also deprives them of the joy of learning English. Moreover, monotonous review activities hinder students' progress, leading to a vicious cycle in their studies. Therefore, in the "Internet Plus" era, junior high school English teachers should value diverse evaluations to avoid ignoring students' individual differences and preventing them from blindly chasing scores, thus affecting their active participation in English classes.

2. Strategies for Enhancing Students' Core English Competencies in Listening and Speaking in the "Internet Plus" Era

2.1 Introducing Micro-Lessons to Spark Interest

Interest is key to motivating students to learn English diligently. In the "Internet Plus" era, the teaching modes available to English teachers are more diverse. Micro-lesson videos, as a new teaching mode, have gradually gained popularity in junior high schools. They not only enrich the teaching content but also enhance students' motivation to learn listening and speaking. Therefore, teachers should focus on nurturing students' interests by analyzing their psychological, physical, and learning states to identify their interests. This way, they can use online platforms to collect and organize teaching resources, increasing the appeal of English lessons. When creating micro-lesson videos, teachers should ensure they are concise and engaging. For example, while teaching "When is your birthday?" teachers can design an 8-minute micro-lesson video based on a class birthday party theme to capture students' attention and enhance their engagement, thus improving the quality of English teaching.

2.2 Utilizing Multimedia to Build Listening and Speaking Contexts

To effectively improve students' listening and speaking skills during the basic education phase, English teachers should fully motivate students, ensuring they are subtly influenced by a rich learning atmosphere to develop good listening habits and build a solid foundation. Especially in the "Internet Plus" era, teachers can use multimedia teaching equipment to its fullest. For instance, before teaching "What's the highest mountain in the world?", teachers can have students research and create micro-lesson videos about Mount Everest, fostering competition and collaboration. This approach not only enhances students' understanding but also broadens their knowledge and encourages active learning. Additionally, teachers can invite students to describe their mountaineering experiences in English, stimulating their desire to express themselves and rapidly improving their speaking skills.

2.3 Organizing English Discussion Activities to Enhance Expression

Considering students' young age and lively nature, classroom discussions are an effective method to encourage active participation and expression of thoughts. Teachers can use questioning or group discussion methods to foster students' willingness to share their ideas. For instance, during a lesson on "Famous People", teachers can ask students to discuss the people they admire the most, facilitating group discussions and presentations. This not only reduces anxiety but also highlights individual strengths and areas for improvement, laying the groundwork for future English learning improvements.

2.4 Incorporating Classroom Games to Build Strong Knowledge Systems

Games are a crucial method for efficient English learning, helping to relieve learning pressure. To make English classes engaging and motivate students, teachers can integrate multimedia teaching tools to enhance lesson appeal. For example, during a lesson on "I am watching TV", teachers can organize guessing games where some students act out watching TV, and others guess, fostering engagement and reinforcing learning. This approach brings English closer to students' daily lives, making them appreciate the value of learning and strengthening their core competencies in listening and speaking.

2.5 Integrating Ideological and Political Elements to Foster Positive Learning Attitudes

With the advancement of information technology, many schools recognize the importance of online teaching platforms. Technologies like virtual teaching, micro-lesson videos, and smart classrooms offer new channels for English teachers to train students' oral skills. Teachers can design targeted teaching content that incorporates ideological and political elements, guiding students to adopt correct learning attitudes and encouraging active participation in English speaking practice. For example, in a lesson on "Unit 10 I'd like some noodles", teachers can create dialogue scenarios using online resources, emphasizing accurate pronunciation and motivating students to practice speaking.

2.6 Optimizing Classroom Discussions to Create Speaking Environments

As a practical subject, junior high school English demands strong information extraction and oral expression skills from students. Teachers should focus on optimizing classroom discussions to enhance learning outcomes. For instance, during a lesson on "Unit 13 We're trying to save the earth!", teachers can include discussion sessions on environmental protection, encouraging students to engage actively in "speaking" and "thinking" activities. This approach not only enhances students' awareness of environmental issues but also improves their cognitive abilities and overall development.

2.7 Establishing Diversified Teaching Evaluation Mechanisms

Under the core competencies education framework, English teachers should awaken students' interest in learning and use diversified evaluation mechanisms to stimulate their potential, improving language skills, thinking qualities, and cultural awareness. Teachers can use mutual evaluations between teachers and students, peer evaluations, and self-evaluations to promote comprehensive progress. For instance, during listening and speaking video lessons, teachers should observe students' fluency and accuracy, guiding them to recognize their shortcomings and encouraging mutual evaluations to foster a spirit of innovation. Self-evaluation through surveys or online platforms can help students set clear learning goals and enhance their core English competencies.

3. Conclusion

Junior high school, as a crucial stage of basic English education, requires teachers to prioritize the cultivation of students' listening and speaking skills. By leveraging information technology in the "Internet Plus" era, teachers can adopt diverse teaching resources and methods to stimulate students' interest, ultimately enhancing the quality of junior high school English teaching.

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