An Investigation on the Use of the ARCS Motivation Theory in the Instruction of Narrow Reading in Middle School English

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Abstract: Reading in English is the major way for students to obtain language input and is an important indicator of their proficiency in the language as well as their ability to apply it. However, due to poor reading habits and a lack of reading enthusiasm, kids today struggle with reading comprehension on a regular basis. Krashen once proposed narrow reading which begins with the selection and arrangement of reading materials so that readers can develop their reading skills by reading several texts that share a common theme, subject matter, or author. Although narrow reading helps to improve students' English reading skills, there are still problems with its implementation and application. The ARCS Motivation Model offers practical suggestions and effective methods for teachers to enhance students' learning status, compel them to read more, and do so in a timely manner. It also offers ideas and assistance for teachers on how to encourage students during the process of specialized reading teaching.

Keywords: ARCS motivation model, Narrow reading, Middle school students, English reading.

1. Introduction

Narrow reading is a strategy for learning a foreign language proposed by Krashen in the early 1980s in Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning. It is defined as a strategy in which students should improve their reading skills by reading texts on the same topic, in the same genre, or by the same author in the early stages of reading (Krashen, 1981). Krashen argues that texts on the same topic have consistent background information, similar keyword expressions and sentence structures, so learners can achieve language learning by reading texts in the same style or by the same author.

Researchers have recently undertaken theoretical and experimental investigations on narrow reading, and the results of these studies have shown that narrow reading is crucial for enhancing students' reading comprehension abilities and piquing their interest in literature. Other aspects of narrow reading's impact on language learning, such as how well it works to help students increase their vocabulary and develop their language skills, have also been researched. This is in addition to the effects of narrow reading on students' reading comprehension.

Because most students don't read English texts after class due to high academic demands or a lack of interest, there is an insufficient amount of reading. On the other hand, because narrow reading encourages students to read the same or similar topics or styles repeatedly, students may grow weary, resist, or experience other emotions that will decrease their interest in reading or even cause them to become afraid or averse to reading. The author concluded that the topic of how to increase students' interest in reading in the narrow reading style was not given enough consideration in the current study. It is important to remember that not all children enjoy the narrow reading strategy, and some students may first show a lot of enthusiasm before losing it over time. Understanding the positive benefits of limited reading on language learning is a requirement for learning how to boost pupils' interest in reading.

The ARCS motivation model is an instructional design framework built on motivation that has been shown to significantly boost students' motivation to learn to read and use new words. The idea behind narrow reading is to increase readers' engagement, but there isn't much research on how to combine the two, which offers a novel angle for this study to explore further. First, the narrow reading approach can further pique students' interest and motivation in the process. Second, using the ARCS motivation model to direct the reading instruction process can create a highly motivated reading environment for students and solve the problem of lack of motivation that may exist in narrow reading. This paper applies the ARCS motivation model to narrow reading in junior high school English and summarizes the educational insights through practice, which is anticipated to be useful for students' future English reading instruction.

2. Explanation of the ARCS Model of Learning Motivation

At the University of Florida, John M. Keller put forth the ARCS model of motivation in 1987. According to this model, students are motivated to learn when their attention is first drawn to a task or learning objective, they recognize how directly personal completing the task is to them, they have confidence in their ability to complete the task, and they feel satisfied when they have done so. According to the ARCS model of learning motivation, these four characteristics have a significant impact on student motivation.

Teachers should constantly keep the students in mind when teaching narrow reading, and they should create activities that will grab their attention and pique their curiosity so that they will look forward to class. Create contexts that are directly relevant to students' learning lives in order to make them feel like the reading lesson is directly tied to their own learning lives and to make them eager to actively participate in enhancing their cognitive experiences and structural development. Students perform graded tasks and build their confidence in the contextualized language activities while
working in small groups. Teachers set up multidimensional self-assessment and mutual assessment once the activities are finished so that students can express their happiness to peers or teachers.

3. Research Content

The four ARCS elements are used to analyze the content and learners' motivation status of narrow reading instruction in junior high school English, clarify the motivational focus, and incorporate the four ARCS elements into the design of reading teaching sessions. Using the experimental classroom English textbook, the first book of the seventh grade English of the Renminbi edition, as a guide, the author creates reading materials for eight relevant topics. Every two weeks, one theme's reading instruction is finished in accordance with the lesson plan. Among them, the first week is a new lesson teaching week, where one or two articles from a particular theme are used as examples to show students the writing characteristics of such articles and the relationships between them as well as to aid students in acquiring some pertinent background knowledge and linguistic proficiency about the articles from this theme. After the class, students will read a ton of readings on the same subject and genre that the author had already prepared, and they'll try to determine the relationship between the articles' contents and writing styles on their own. The lesson on presentations is in the second week. Students are obliged to present their reading findings, issues they ran into while reading, and reading scores to the class and have a group discussion about them. While interviews were used to record and summarize teachers' motivation in the process of teaching English reading, research tools were used to analyze the challenges junior high school students' motivation to learn physics faced. A questionnaire created based on the ARCS motivation model theory was used to understand the development of junior high school students' motivation to learn reading. The exam results are then utilized to confirm the ARCS motivation model's guiding influence on junior high school English narrow reading instruction.

4. Conclusion

The main goal of this study was to determine whether teaching middle school English students narrow reading in conjunction with the ARCS motivation model could effectively encourage students' interest in reading, assist them in forming positive reading habits, and ultimately improve their reading ability. The study's findings revealed that after a semester of experimental instruction, the pupils in the experimental class achieved modest reading progress.

Students were first inspired to study, and the ARCS motivation model's restricted reading model encouraged students' motivation, piqued their interest in learning, and gave them the opportunity to pick up new information in a laid-back and fun learning environment. It also factors in student subjectivity, which is the second. The subjectivity of the students is taken into consideration throughout the theme-based teaching, which incorporates a variety of classroom activities. The importance of students' cooperative inquiry is reflected in the rise in group work in the classroom. Thirdly, it illustrates how crucial motivational upkeep is. In order to keep kids motivated when teaching them to read, it is crucial to both encourage and retain their motivation. To do this, teachers must employ a variety of organizational strategies. It encourages the development of reading education, to finish. In addition to increasing students' willingness to study, narrow reading instruction combined with the ARCS motivation model can advance reading instruction, address some issues with conventional reading instruction, and open up new paths for reading instruction research. Another interesting finding is that the ARCS motivation model and restricted reading have a complementary relationship, and combining the two will have the greatest educational impact.

References

Author Profile

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