

Problems and countermeasures of using phonics in primary school English reading learning

Baike Jiang

Chongqing Institute of Foreign Studies, Chongqing 401120, China

Abstract: This study aims to explore the current application status and existing problems of phonics in primary school English reading learning, and propose corresponding countermeasures. Research has found that phonics has a significant effect in improving students' English reading ability, but there are still problems such as significant differences in students' phonics abilities, insufficient teacher training, and insufficient students' learning motivation and interest. In response to these problems, this study proposes solutions such as strengthening teacher training, stimulating students' interest in learning, and implementing personalized teaching. The research results show that these countermeasures can effectively improve the application effect of phonics in primary school English reading learning and promote the overall development of students' English reading ability and comprehensive quality.

Keywords: Phonics; Primary School English Reading; Solutions; Knowing the Words by Listening to the Sounds; Knowing the Sounds by Seeing the Words

1. Introduction

With the acceleration of globalization, English, as a global language, plays an increasingly important role in academic, occupational, cultural exchange and other fields. Especially at the primary school level, English learning is crucial to the cultivation of children's language thinking and expression skills. English education at the primary school level not only lays the foundation for students' future language learning, but also improves cross-cultural communication skills and logical thinking skills^[1]. Phonics, as an efficient English teaching method, can help students master the relationship between letters and phonemes, establish a solid pronunciation foundation, reduce memory burden, thereby improving spelling and spelling abilities and stimulating students' interest in learning. Increase self-confidence. It enables students to easily grasp the rules of spelling and pronunciation during the learning process by knowing the pronunciation of the word by seeing it and knowing the pronunciation by listening to the pronunciation, and provides an effective tool for language learning.

Since the phonics method entered China at the end of the 20th century, it has been especially used in Hong Kong, Taiwan and other regions, and has gradually received widespread attention and promotion in English teaching in mainland China. According to the "English Curriculum Standards", my country has put forward clear requirements for students' spelling ability. At present, many primary schools have begun to use the natural spelling method to teach^[2]. Research shows that phonics can not only significantly improve students' pronunciation, intonation, and spelling abilities, but also promote the development of students' reading interests and comprehensive language perception abilities, thereby comprehensively improving the effectiveness of English learning. At the same time, successful experiences in English learning can also improve students' self-identity and self-confidence, and provide support for the study of other subjects^[3].

Phonics is also widely used abroad, especially in countries such as Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Particularly in the UK, all primary school teachers are required by law to be trained in phonics. Research shows that this method has significant effects in improving students' spelling ability, literacy ability and reading level. It can help students break through obstacles in language learning and lay a solid foundation for the development of reading ability. In short, as a scientific and efficient teaching method, the importance of phonics in primary school English education is becoming more and more prominent.

2. Overview of related concepts

Phonics is a teaching method that helps students understand the relationship between letters, letter combinations and sounds, and then master the rules of pronunciation and spelling of English words. The basic principle is "seeing the pronunciation of words", that is, decomposing words into the most basic phonemes, and teaching students how to connect these phonemes with letters or letter combinations, thereby

helping students to “read words by seeing them and write by listening to them”. In this way, students can pronounce words naturally when they see them and spell them correctly when they hear the pronunciation, thereby improving their reading and spelling abilities and laying a solid foundation for independent reading ^[4].

In primary school English teaching, reading learning is a key way for students to master English words and improve their language ability. English reading not only helps students remember and understand words, but also promotes the mastery of words through contextual learning, avoids isolated memory, and makes words easier to recognize and understand. Through extensive reading, students can become familiar with different sentence patterns, expressions and chapter structures, and improve their perception, analysis and judgment abilities ^[5]. At the same time, reading can also help students overcome the differences in sentence structure between English and Chinese and avoid the emergence of Chinese English. In addition, reading stimulates students’ interest, cultivates their English thinking, and improves their language expression ability.

The application of phonics in primary school English reading can not only improve students’ phonics ability, but also stimulate their interest in learning and promote the development of language perception, thereby comprehensively improving the effectiveness of English reading teaching. Through phonics, students can better understand and remember words, improve reading speed and comprehension ability, and at the same time establish a solid pronunciation foundation, solve spelling difficulties, and improve English writing skills. Since phonics is less difficult to learn, through systematic teaching and training, students can master the relevant phonics rules at each stage, thereby improving the efficiency of English learning.

For primary school English teachers, mastering phonics and effectively integrating it into classroom teaching is an important way to improve students’ comprehensive English literacy. Therefore, teachers should summarize and summarize the rules of phonics and help students understand and apply these rules through practical demonstrations ^[6]. By using a variety of teaching resources such as videos, objects, pictures, and audios, teachers can stimulate students’ interest in learning and help students master English phonetic spelling methods, thereby improving students’ language skills while also enhancing their self-confidence and confidence. Motivation to learn.

3. Problems of phonics in primary school English reading learning

In the process of teaching phonics, problems on both sides of teachers and students affect its effectiveness. First of all, problems at the teacher level are mainly reflected in teachers’ insufficient understanding and application of phonics. Some teachers misunderstand the phonics method as simple phonetic symbols teaching and ignore the systematic nature of phonics rules. After some teachers briefly introduce the correspondence between phonemes and letters, they expect students to improve their spelling level through independent practice after class, but ignore the in-depth explanation and training of spelling rules ^[7]. This approach underestimates the difficulty for primary school students to master the rules, because the phonics method contains many spelling rules and continuous reading rules. For primary school students who are new to English, it takes a long time and systematic effort to understand and apply these rules. train. In addition, some teachers confuse students’ spelling fluency with word recognition fluency, believing that students can naturally improve their speed through continuous practice, while ignoring the important role of spelling in improving reading comprehension and language thinking abilities.

Another problem at the teacher level is the lack of effective teaching strategies. In many classrooms, teachers still rely on traditional teaching methods that lack interactivity and interest. This teaching method is difficult to stimulate students’ interest, resulting in low student participation and poor learning results. For example, although picture books and stories are very effective tools in teaching phonics, many teachers fail to make full use of these resources, and most of the teaching content is limited to teaching materials, missing the opportunity to enhance students’ interests through situational teaching. In addition, because phonics involves many knowledge points and the teaching cycle is long, if teachers adopt a single teaching model for a long time, the classroom may lack innovation and interest, thus affecting students’ enthusiasm for learning and classroom participation ^[8].

Lack of interaction between teachers and students is also a common problem in phonics teaching. In order to ensure that students master the knowledge points, many teachers usually explain difficult and difficult points repeatedly in class, which reduces students’ sense of participation and interaction opportunities. Due to lack of teaching experience, some new teachers often cannot effectively grasp the rhythm of

the class and increase the teaching content, thus reducing the interaction in the classroom. At the same time, some teachers have insufficient classroom management skills and may adopt a “full class” teaching method, which further weakens students’ participation and classroom interaction. The lack of classroom interaction not only limits the expansion of students’ thinking, but also affects students’ language expression and communication abilities.

At the student level, the problem is mainly manifested in the lack of clear learning goals and motivation. Primary school students often have insufficient understanding of the goals and meaning of learning. If there is no clear motivation for learning, students will easily feel confused during the learning process and lack the motivation to take the initiative to learn. Especially in the study of phonics, many students do not know how this method can help them improve their English skills, leading them to have a negative attitude towards learning. If teachers fail to clearly explain the meaning of phonics to students, students may lose interest in their learning, resulting in unsatisfactory learning results.

Another problem at the student level is a lack of understanding of phonics. Since primary school students have less learning experience, they often lack effective learning strategies. Many students learn spelling rules only by reading the words, but lack in-depth practice and application. At the same time, some students confuse natural phonics with pinyin and are unable to accurately understand the core rules of pinyin, resulting in poor learning results^[10]. Learning phonics requires a certain vocabulary and listening foundation. If students do not accumulate enough English vocabulary, it will be difficult for them to understand and remember the phonics rules, which will affect the improvement of their phonics and reading abilities.

Finally, some students rely on rote learning rather than understanding. Faced with the pressure of English learning, some students often resort to rote memorization to memorize words and spelling rules in order to cope with exams. Although this method can achieve some results in the short term, the lack of understanding of the learning method will prevent students from truly mastering the spelling rules and being unable to flexibly apply the knowledge they have learned to actual reading and writing. In addition, if teachers place too much emphasis on memory and neglect understanding, students will be more likely to develop rote learning habits, resulting in their lack of depth and practical application ability in English learning.

In short, teachers’ deficiencies in teaching methods, interaction, and understanding, as well as students’ lack of learning goals, learning strategies, motivation, etc., are all important reasons for the unsatisfactory results of phonics teaching. The existence of these problems requires teachers and students to work together to improve teaching strategies, increase interaction, and clarify learning goals, so as to better improve the teaching effect of phonics.

4. Countermeasures of phonics in primary school English reading learning

In order to improve the application effect of phonics in primary school English reading, teachers’ professional qualities and teaching methods need to be improved. First of all, it is crucial to improve the professional quality of teachers. Schools should pay more attention to phonics and provide systematic training to help teachers deeply understand its principles and teaching strategies. Teachers need to continue learning, update teaching methods, and combine picture books and multimedia resources to stimulate students’ interest. At the same time, teachers can consolidate knowledge through practical activities and increase classroom interaction.

Secondly, optimizing teaching models and methods is the key to improving teaching effectiveness. Teachers should flexibly use phonics according to students’ characteristics, innovate based on teaching material content, and use multimedia and network resources to make teaching lively and interesting. In teaching, teachers should pay attention to creating a classroom atmosphere, stimulate students’ initiative through group discussions, heuristic questions, etc., and provide personalized guidance according to students’ progress. The optimized teaching model should be improved in all aspects from clarifying goals before class, diversifying teaching during class to feedback after class.

Finally, strengthening the cultivation of students’ spelling ability is the core of improving reading efficiency. Teachers should focus on cultivating phoneme awareness and use children’s songs, card games and other methods to help students improve their spelling speed and accuracy. Through decomposition of spelling difficulty, repeated practice and multimedia assistance, students can gradually master spelling skills. In addition, teachers should provide timely encouragement and rewards to stimulate students’ interest and motivation in learning and

lay a solid foundation for their English learning.

5. Conclusion

The application of phonics in primary school English reading learning has achieved remarkable results, but there are still some problems and challenges. During the research process, it was found that there are large differences in the degree of mastery of phonics among different students, and it is difficult for some students to independently use the phonics rules for reading. Secondly, many primary school English teachers do not understand and apply phonics in depth enough, which affects the teaching effect. There are also some students who lack interest in English reading and are not very motivated to learn, which affects the application effect of natural phonics. Based on this current situation, schools and teachers can start to solve the problem from the following aspects, such as strengthening teacher training and organizing systematic phonics training, improving teachers' theoretical level and practical application ability, ensuring teaching quality, and also using various methods. We use personalized teaching methods and interesting teaching activities to stimulate students' interest and motivation in learning, cultivate the habit of independent reading, and develop personalized teaching plans based on students' spelling abilities and learning needs to provide targeted guidance and help. Finally, students' spelling and reading abilities are regularly assessed to identify problems in a timely manner and make adjustments and improvements to ensure continuous improvement in teaching effectiveness.

In summary, phonics, as an effective English teaching method, has important application value in primary school English reading learning. However, some problems and challenges existing in its implementation need to be solved through systematic teacher training and personalized teaching strategies. Only in this way can we give full play to the advantages of phonics, improve students' English reading ability and comprehensive quality, improve the effectiveness of phonics in primary school English reading learning, and promote students' all-round development.

References:

- [1]Yexuan, W. Picture Books Utilization, Phonics Integration and Digital Play Application in Teaching English to Primary Schools in China. *Sustainable Development*, 12(1), 86-100.
- [2]Zhang, X. (2023). The Applications of Phonics in Primary School English Teaching in China. *International Journal of Mathematics and Systems Science*, 6(1).
- [3]Chen, M. J., Yin, G. J., Goh, H. S., Soo, R. S., Nor, R., Harun, S. R., ... & Wong, W. L. (2022). Theoretical review of phonics instruction among EFL beginner-level readers in China. *Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 11(2), 449-466.
- [4]Chen, M., Yin, G., Wong, W. L., Shak, M. S. Y., Rahman, M. A., & Lee, M. C. (2024, February). The effectiveness of a school-based phonics instructional material. In *Forum for Linguistic Studies (Transferred)* (Vol. 6, No. 2, pp. 2130-2130).
- [5]Zhong, B., & Kang, Y. (2021). Chinese EFL teachers' perception and practice of phonics instruction. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 12(6), 990-999.
- [6]Chen, M., Goh, H. S., Soo, R. S., & Yin, G. (2022). The effectiveness of an instructional guide on Chinese pre-service EFL teachers' knowledge in teaching phonics. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 9(2), 554-573.
- [7]Yishake, C., Mayituohuo, M., Saleem, A., & Lili, X. (2020). Difficulties and Countermeasures of Han Nationality Students in Learning Kyrgyz Phonetics and Letters. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*, 3(10), 01-06.
- [8]Chen, M. J., Yin, G. J., Harun, R. N. S. R., Wong, W. L., & Singh, C. K. S. Theoretical Foundation for Developing Instructional Guide for China Pre-Service EFL Teachers to Teach Phonics.
- [9]Li, H. (2023). The Impact of Negative Transfer of Mother Tongue on Learning Chinese in Senior Primary Schools in Thailand and Teaching Strategies. *Journal of Education and Educational Research*, 3(2), 173-176.
- [10]Zhang, P. (2023). Problems Encountered by Chinese High School English Learners. *Journal of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 8, 2202-2207.