

Original Article

A Study on Junior English Teaching Based on Integrative Learning Strategies

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Received: 18 June 2023

Revised: 01 August 2023

Accepted: 13 August 2023

Published: 31 August 2023

Abstract - Integrative learning strategies originated from "Integrative Learning Time" in Japan and the "Integrative Learning Project" in the USA. Integrative learning is an integrated form that includes the integration of learning content and learning methods. As an innovative learning framework that points to learning and solving problems, the integrative learning of English courses in junior middle school is based on the problem orientation of knowledge segmentation and teaching fragmentation. Utilizing the four pedagogical approaches, namely the deductive-exploratory strategy, inductive-expository strategy, deductive-inquisitory strategy, and inductive-inquisitory strategy, as modes of integrated instructional practice within the context of English curriculum at the junior middle school level. This paper takes junior middle school English teaching design as an example, aiming to explore the English integrative learning practice design method and provide a feasible reference for front-line English teachers.

Keywords - Integrative learning, English course in junior middle school, Teaching design.

1. Introduction

In contemporary times, the partitioning of English knowledge and the fragmentation of teaching processes within the context of junior middle school have engendered challenges in the synthesis of acquired knowledge by students, consequently engendering an insufficiency in the holistic comprehension of the English language. Nevertheless, deploying Integrative learning strategies, characterized by a focus on knowledge transfer and the cultivation of problem-solving acumen, offers a viable avenue for both students and educators. This approach affords them the opportunity to explore novel methods for resolving these issues. The Integrative Learning strategies encompass a quartet of methodologies, namely, the deductive-exploratory strategy, the inductive-expository strategy, the deductive-inquisitory strategy, and the inductive-inquisitory strategy.

comprehensive learning methods. Limao Tian (2001) argues that an integrative learning strategy means respecting children's interests and needs, constantly deepening and developing the resulting subject consciousness, and carrying out educational practice through an interdisciplinary activity process.

M.T. Huber (2005) thinks integrative learning takes many forms, including linking skills and knowledge from multiple fields, applying theory to various settings for practice, speaking, using different means and even contradictory perspectives, and understanding specific issues and positions based on realistic context. At the same time, Qiquan Zhong (2022) believes integrative learning is to "visualize" the important indicators and achievements of children's learning and create educational practice from the perspective of children's needs.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Integrative Learning

Integrative learning originated from "Integrative Learning Time" in Japan and the "Integrative Learning Project" in the USA. Moreover, there are some authoritative conceptions of integrative teaching strategy. W.H. Newell (1999) holds that integrative learning is a concept that can help students create a more powerful learning environment and provides a powerful tool for connecting classroom and extracurricular learning. Multicultural learning, interdisciplinary learning, service learning, collaborative learning, learning community and cross-cultural learning can all be regarded as important

It points to comprehensive and multi-perspective investigation and interdisciplinary thinking, promoting the structure of knowledge and realize "deep learning". It is not only a simple experience but requires providing the facts, knowledge and practice methods behind this experience to carry out exploration. Of course, "Inquiry" is not limited to interdisciplinary, experiential learning but also needs to restore the knowledge of "inquiry" to each subject and carry out the "inquiry" of applying subject knowledge.

In short, an integrative learning strategy refers to a comprehensive and holistic approach to education that



seeks to connect and synthesize different disciplines, experiences, and skills to foster a deeper and more meaningful understanding of complex concepts (Youqing Chen, Yuanping He,2023).

It involves combining various learning activities, methods, and perspectives to promote a well-rounded and interconnected learning experience based on the reality of the theme and content, breaking through the limitations of disciplines and schools, emphasizing the integrity of knowledge structure and the correlation between individuals and others and society so that learners can comprehensively use what they have learned to solve problems in real life. Its ultimate goal is to cultivate people with overall development.

In integrative learning, students are encouraged to make connections between different subjects, apply knowledge and skills in real-world contexts, and engage in reflective thinking to enhance their overall comprehension. This approach aims to go beyond rote memorization and isolated learning by encouraging students to see the relationships and interdependencies between various areas of knowledge.

Integrative learning can take various forms, such as interdisciplinary projects, collaborative learning, problem-based learning, service-learning initiatives, and experiential learning opportunities. The goal is to equip students with the ability to think critically, solve complex problems, and effectively apply their learning in diverse situations.

2.2. Integrative Learning Sub-Strategies

In 2012, the integrative learning design included four ways. They are deductive-exploratory strategy, inductive-expository strategy, deductive-inquisitory strategy, and inductive-inquisitory strategy (Chen Jinhui, Sheng Qunli,2023).

Deductive-exploratory strategy refers to the teaching method of presenting general knowledge and then providing specific examples. This method is good if the student has some specific example experience, can help them understand the general knowledge, and does not require a deep understanding. Generally speaking, it is the most economical teaching method.

Inductive-expository strategy refers to the teaching method that provides specific examples first and then presents the general knowledge. This method is conducive to students' deep understanding, which is difficult to achieve, but the depth of understanding is not as good as the inductive-inquisitory strategy.

This compromise method is more suitable for simple declarative knowledge, such as facts, simple concepts and models. Instructional design research tends to use this

strategy as the default or the preferred strategy because, for students, it is a relatively intuitive image and easy to accept.

Deductive- inquisitory strategy refers to the teaching method of presenting the general knowledge to the students first, then generating specific examples. This strategy is suitable for complex tasks with many different parts. That is, once students learn various parts of a task with the other three strategies, they can use this method to integrate the overall task. This approach best suits strategic knowledge, such as heuristics and systematic problem-solving approaches. Moreover, what should be mentioned here is that the difference between deductive-exploratory strategy and deductive-inquisitory strategy is that teachers give the former examples while students give the latter examples.

Inductive- inquisitory strategy refers to the teaching method that provides specific examples first, and then the students generate general knowledge. Therefore, students should not only accept content but also generate it. The appropriate type of knowledge for this method is a simple strategy or a simple model, which is best used when students have little or no specific example experience. While using this approach is more time-consuming, it may be the best way to achieve a deep understanding. To reduce time consumption, " guide questions can be used.

3. Applying Sub-Strategies in Practice

This article is structured into four distinct sections, each elucidating the application of teaching design within the context of integrative learning strategy. These sections encompass the following methodologies: deductive-exploratory, inductive-expository, deductive-inquisitory, and inductive-inquisitory. Each of these pedagogical approaches will be intricately woven together with the curriculum of junior middle school, providing instances to underscore their practical implementation in the teaching process.

The ensuing sections will delve into a comprehensive examination of each respective teaching approach, unveiling their unique attributes and strategies while highlighting their alignment with integrative learning principles. Within this discourse, particular emphasis will be placed on illustrating how these methodologies can be seamlessly integrated into the junior middle school curriculum, facilitating a harmonious coalescence of theoretical underpinnings with real-world educational scenarios (Xianlong Xu, Bofei Dang,2023)

Through the meticulous interplay of theoretical exposition and concrete exemplification, this paper aims to provide educators and educational researchers with a multifaceted understanding of the intricate relationship between integrative learning strategies and diverse teaching designs. By coupling academic discourse with

tangible instructional instances, this study seeks to foster a nuanced comprehension of the dynamic interplay between pedagogical theories and their practical manifestations in the realm of junior middle school education.

3.1. Deductive-Exploratory Strategy

The deductive-exploratory strategy, a pedagogical approach grounded in cognitive learning theories, involves presenting general concepts or principles before delving into specific examples to illustrate and reinforce the presented ideas. This method is particularly useful in situations where teaching time is constrained, and students possess foundational knowledge of the subject matter.

Introducing overarching concepts before providing concrete instances encourages students to explore and engage with the material more deeply. The deductive-exploratory strategy is well-suited for facilitating nuanced comprehension and critical thinking, making it a preferred choice when dealing with advanced learners or when building upon existing knowledge, as is the case in the grade 8 unit 2 lesson "How often do you exercise?"

In the context of this lesson, which falls under the theme of "man and self," the deductive-exploratory strategy aims to guide students towards developing a comprehensive understanding of the frequency of activities and its implications on a healthy lifestyle. As the students have already acquired a solid foundation in English language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, the deductive-exploratory approach capitalizes on their proficiency by building on their existing knowledge of basic daily activities and the simple present tense.

The lesson commences with the teacher's warm greeting, creating a conducive atmosphere for learning. Following this, the teacher introduces the concept of frequency words, essential terminology for discussing the regularity of activities.

By providing a clear explanation of the frequency of words and their significance, the teacher sets the stage for a coherent exploration of the topic. These frequency words, categorized as high-frequency (always, usually, often), medium-frequency (sometimes), and low-frequency (hardly ever, never), enable students to express the occurrence of activities with varying degrees of regularity.

The teacher employs a deductive approach by presenting the frequency of words and their classifications, thereby providing students with a broader framework. Subsequently, the teacher skillfully guides the students in applying these frequency words through example sentences, enabling them to contextualize and internalize the concept. The teacher assesses and reinforces the students' understanding by incorporating interactive activities, such as sentence completion exercises.

To enhance comprehension, the teacher can encourage students to engage in discussions, sharing instances from their own lives that align with the frequency of words introduced. This collaborative exploration not only consolidates learning but also promotes meaningful interaction and the exchange of experiences among peers. Below are the details about this lesson design.

Teacher: Good morning, everyone! How was your weekend? This weekend I played badminton with my friends. People usually play badminton three or four times a week. How about you, my class?

Students: Some students could say go shopping with their parents while other students could say play basketball with their neighbour and so on.

Teacher: Sometimes, people repeat the same things in a lifetime. It may be in a day, a week, a month, a year and even longer. So learners could use frequency words. A frequency word, often referred to as a "frequency word list" or "word frequency list," is a compilation of words from a given language that are ranked based on how often they appear in written or spoken texts.

The teacher writes the frequency words: high-frequency words (always, usually, often), medium-frequency words (sometimes) and low-frequency words (hardly ever and never) and then gives some examples of these words. In this step, the teacher will introduce the meanings of these frequency words and then through applying some sentences to practice.

In conclusion, the deductive-exploratory strategy is an effective method for teaching complex topics to advanced learners who possess foundational knowledge. This approach fosters a deeper understanding of the subject matter by commencing with a conceptual overview and subsequently immersing students in relevant examples and discussions. In the case of the grade 8 unit 2 lesson, this strategy enables students to grasp the subtleties of frequency words and their application in discussing routine activities, contributing to their holistic development of language skills and health consciousness within the framework of "man and self."

3.2. Inductive-Expository Strategy

The inductive-expository strategy, a pedagogical approach rooted in cognitive learning theories, involves the presentation of specific examples followed by formulating general principles or rules. It is an effective method for promoting active student engagement and critical thinking in the process of knowledge acquisition. In the context of teaching the comparative degree, such as in the grade 8 unit 3 lesson "I am more outgoing than my sister," the utilization of the inductive-expository strategy can facilitate a deeper understanding of grammatical structures while fostering the development of good interpersonal

relationships and interpersonal communication skills within the broader theme of "man and society."

To implement this strategy, the teacher initiates the lesson with an engaging and relatable context, perhaps by drawing attention to personal changes. This is evident in the provided example of discussing the teacher's hair transformation.

The teacher encourages students to make observations and form hypotheses, prompting them to notice the patterns that emerge within the comparative structures being presented.

Subsequently, the teacher capitalizes on the student's observations by guiding them to identify commonalities, such as adjectives followed by the "-er" suffix, and then collaboratively formulates the rules of constructing comparative sentences. The process of guided discovery allows students to actively participate in the learning process, leading to a more profound comprehension of the grammatical concept.

It is important to allocate sufficient time for students to engage in discussions, share their insights, and collectively arrive at conclusions. Once the rules are deduced, the teacher reiterates and reinforces the formulated rules, clarifying and consolidating the newly acquired knowledge.

To assess and solidify understanding, the teacher then introduces a variety of exercises that encourage students to apply their knowledge of the comparative degree. These exercises can range from sentence completion tasks to more complex activities involving rewriting sentences or generating comparative constructions. These exercises not only serve as formative assessments but also enable students to practice and internalize the rules they have deduced.

In summary, the inductive-expository strategy offers a dynamic and student-centered approach to teaching the comparative degree. By starting with concrete examples, encouraging active participation, and guiding students toward the discovery of grammatical rules, this method not only enhances language proficiency but also fosters critical thinking skills and interpersonal competencies, aligning well with the broader educational goals of cultivating well-rounded individuals within the framework of "man and society." Below are some details about this teaching design.

Teacher: Good morning, class. Nice to see you again. Do you find the difference between now and last week? Please pay attention to my hair.

Students: They may notice the teacher's hair and guess the differences.

Teacher: Yes, I heard someone say that my hair is curly. But last week, my hair was straight. So my hair is curlier than before. The teacher wrote this sentence on the blackboard. Class, I have changed a lot. The teacher will write more sentences and ask students to find some common things among these sentences.

My hair is curly than before.

I am taller than before.

I am thinner than before.

Students: They could find some adjective words followed by -er.

The teacher will write and add more details about the rules of comparative degree. Then, some exercises will be provided for students to strengthen their understanding.

3.3. Deductive- Inquisitory Strategy

The deductive-inquisitory strategy entails an initial presentation of overarching concepts followed by students' collaborative generation of specific instances. This pedagogical method bears similarities to the Deductive-Exploratory strategy.

Yet, it distinguishes itself by emphasizing the active involvement of students in generating examples based on their own ideas, diverging from the pre-prepared examples characteristic of the former.

In the context of the grade 8 unit 3 lesson "I am more outgoing than my sister," the deductive-inquisitory strategy involves a two-fold process. Commencing similarly to the Deductive-Exploratory strategy, the teacher imparts foundational knowledge, establishing the framework for understanding comparative concepts. This stage is pivotal in providing students with a conceptual foundation, enabling them to grasp the lesson's core principles.

However, the subsequent phase of the deductive-inquisitory strategy diverges. Rather than presenting pre-constructed examples, the strategy involves a participatory approach where the teacher guides students in formulating their own comparative sentences. This shift places students as active contributors to the learning process, fostering a sense of ownership and autonomy in their educational journey.

In practical terms, after the initial exposition, the teacher elicits students' engagement by encouraging them to create original comparative sentences. This stage necessitates the teacher's skillful facilitation in guiding students through the process of constructing sentences that adhere to the rules introduced. This participatory endeavor hones linguistic skills and nurtures critical thinking as students navigate the application of concepts to real-life scenarios.

The Deductive-Inquisitory strategy enriches the educational experience by empowering students to become co-creators of knowledge, fostering a deeper and more personalized understanding of the subject matter. This approach promotes intrinsic motivation and active engagement, essential components of effective learning.

In conclusion, while sharing some commonalities with the Deductive-Exploratory approach, the Deductive-Inquisitory strategy diverges in its emphasis on student-generated examples. Integrating students' unique perspectives and encouraging active participation facilitates a deeper grasp of concepts and cultivates valuable critical thinking skills. Its application in the grade 8 unit 3 lesson context demonstrates its potential to elevate pedagogical experiences, promoting a more dynamic and learner-centered approach to education.

3.4. Inductive-Inquisitory Strategy

The Inductive-inquisitory strategy, a pedagogical framework deeply rooted in cognitive learning theories, orchestrates an initial presentation of specific instances followed by a collaborative process that culminates in students deriving overarching principles or comprehensive knowledge. This distinctive strategy engenders an inquiry-driven exploration, starkly contrasting the conventional paradigm of deductive instruction. It is conceptually akin to the inductive-expository strategy; however, it assumes a more pronounced emphasis on honing students' cognitive aptitude as opposed to direct teacher facilitation.

To exemplify, consider the grade 8 unit 2 lesson "How often do you exercise?" The initial phase mirrors the inductive-expository approach, introducing frequency adverbs and their usage. Yet, what truly sets the Inductive-inquisitory approach apart is its subsequent phase. Rather than relying on teacher-guided deductions, students collectively discern patterns in language usage and independently arrive at the rules governing the construction of frequency-based sentences.

Central to the Inductive-inquisitory strategy is the elevation of students' cognitive autonomy. Unlike traditional modes of instruction, which often involve substantial teacher intervention, this approach champions students' independent thinking. As students collaboratively strive to extract fundamental principles from their empirical observations, they are prompted to decipher the intricate principles, ultimately arriving at insightful conclusions.

In summation, while aligned with the inductive-expository paradigm, the Inductive-inquisitory strategy embraces a distinctive ethos of cultivating student-driven inquiry, critical thinking, and conceptual exploration. Its impact extends beyond content comprehension, nurturing essential skills such as analytical reasoning, collaborative problem-solving, and the ability to derive principles from empirical observations. By heralding a paradigm shift in pedagogical methodology, the Inductive-inquisitory strategy empowers learners as active participants, ushering forth an era of empowered science education.

4. Conclusion

In summary, the integrative learning strategy encompasses four distinct strategies that dynamically shape the process of knowledge dissemination and skill development. Grounded in cognitive learning theories, these strategies navigate the intricate terrain of education, each offering a unique lens through which learning unfolds.

In essence, these strategies, while distinct in their execution, collectively contribute to the evolution of modern education. Each strategy serves as a compass guiding both educators and learners through the multifaceted landscape of knowledge acquisition. By embracing these pedagogical approaches, learners empower learners to grasp content and cultivate essential skills, transforming them into active and empowered participants in their educational journey.

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