



Problems in Class Teaching in Chinese Universities and Countermeasures in Teaching Reform

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Abstract

Now according to the current conditions of Chinese talent market, Chinese higher education has not functioned enough in cultivating pragmatic talent with strong creativity, there is a necessity in reforming class teaching for Chinese universities. It depends on many factors when it comes to the point that how higher education cultivates creative spirit and ability of the students. It requires the educational ideas and educational concepts in the new century to guide the reform and practice; it has to start from reforming traditional teaching mode, creativity and choice will help cultivate students' logic and ability and develop the new class teaching mode that can promote the students comprehensively. As the core and key of educational reform, class teaching directly relates to the quality of talent cultivation. It shall fully develop the function of the orientation of the policies and stimulate activity and initiative of the teachers so as to promote class teaching reform and establish relevant management system guaranty.

Key words: Chinese universities; Class teaching; Learning concept; Teaching reform; Policy orientation; Teaching contents

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INTRODUCTION

There is great change for the requirement of talents in contemporary society. Fundamental mission of the universities is to cultivate creative applicable talents with creative consciousness, high qualities and strong ability. It is the working focus for Chinese higher education to completely enhance the quality of teaching while the class teaching is the core of the education in the universities (Li, 2013). Class teaching is the most important studying method for Chinese students. Comparing the students in universities with that in middle schools, their studying environment and purpose have significantly changed; students have more flexibility and freedom to study. This has higher requirements on class teaching of teachers in universities on subjects of how to improve effect of class teaching in universities so that the students can grasp more knowledge on the basis of maintaining great interest. Currently teaching problems existing in Chinese higher education are mainly because of the poor quality of class teaching. Class teaching in Chinese universities is mainly using the mode that the teacher teaches and the students passively accept. This mode is far from meeting the requirement of cultivating creative talents. Change current class teaching mode is pressing. Reform of the class teaching methods in universities is the important constitution of higher education reform. Reform of teaching methods is the necessary means of educational reform and the critical joint that decides whether the teaching reform is successful (Zhang, 2010). If we do not totally change traditional teaching methods, the goal for higher education to cultivate creative talents with comprehensive qualities can be hardly attained. This paper will discuss methods and strategies of reform in teaching methods in universities and put forward some solutions

on the basis of analyzing problems existing in teaching methods in class of Chinese universities at present.

1. PROBLEMS IN CLASS TEACHING OF UNIVERSITIES

1.1 Traditional Teaching Methods Are Too Unitary

In the traditional teaching process, the teacher is the main body, many teachers still inherit the traditional teaching method of taking teacher and textbook as the center in the class teaching, focusing on the leading role of the teacher only but neglecting the subject position of the students. In such teaching method with the unitary main body, teachers more consider how to properly teach to better finish their teaching assignment. For this kind of teaching method for centering on inculcation, it will be dull in the class and the atmosphere in class will be tedious, students will have little interest in studying, stiffening logic and mechanic and simply studying methods. This will not only influence the activity and initiative of the students to study, but also affect students' ability in independent thinking and creative logic. So many students do not actively participate in the studying in class; effect of the teaching is only in the charge of the teacher. If students do poorly in study, it is simply regarded that the teaching assignment of the teacher is not well done, but new knowledge produced in the interaction with students is ignored. The result follows is that the students can not actively have the creation in knowledge. Quality of thinking owned by the students is gradually weakening. Eventually, under such unitary teaching mode, enthusiasm for the students to study is greatly reduced. The teachers will be less passionate in class if they see students' cold response when they are teaching this knowledge.

1.2 Strong Randomness in Teaching Contents

Randomness of teaching contents is represented by some teachers. These teachers randomly teach according to the chapters in the textbook and it has much randomness in confirming the teaching key points and teaching verification points. Though teaching contents are subjective information operated by the teaching, teachers seem to know much what they are going to teach. However it is not so in fact. Teaching contents of some teachers in one entire class may be a bunch of information, but the information is a mess, which is short of confirmation on core contents. Many teachers do not truly understand teaching key points and teaching difficult points, which are the core contents of the teaching. Unclear understanding on the key points and difficult points leads to the randomness in confirming teaching contents. Those teachers will mostly teach the contents they are familiar with. For those contents that should be taught but they are not familiar or difficult, they will avoid talking about them. Therefore, it will inevitably

not cultivate the creative ability of the students. Also many teachers regard the contents in the textbook as the golden laws, they only teach contents in the textbook, for the contents missing in the textbook, they will not make any supplement, and for the contents to be updated in the textbook, they will not update. To sum up, they teach all according to the textbook. In such way, students will know little on the knowledge that does not appear in the textbook, and they can not know and explore the knowledge in academic frontier, and stimulation for the creative ability of the students will be fruitless.

1.3 Phenomenon of Placing More Phases on Scientific Research Than Teaching Exists in Teaching Management and Fruits of Scientific Research Can Hardly Be Applied in Classes

Chinese universities are universally inclined to scientific research in making evaluation of professional titles and rewarding policies in order to enhance rankings of the universities. This on the other side will neglect the effect of teaching and educating students and teaching fruits. This will objectively lead to the fact that the result of the evaluation is inclined to those teachers who have advantages in scientific research, but the teachers who are passionate in reforming class teaching can hardly get recognition in their own benefits. Under the circumstance that there is no constraining system and matching motivation system, teachers can not actively put most energy on the class teaching, which in some extent cause that teachers do not invest much in class teaching and they do not have much responsibility in class. Some teachers would rather spend time doing scientific research than investing in teaching, they attend to the class teaching negligently, which leads to unsatisfactory class teaching quality. Under the orientation of such policy, scientific research fruits in universities are gradually having utilitarian tendency. They are either used to help for evaluation of professional title or proposing solutions for some policy or in some field. Fruits of scientific research can hardly be applied to knowledge teaching in class by the teachers. Scientific researches of many teachers are researching activities outside the teaching. The entire process from the application to the completion of the project is independent from the class teaching. For a long time, scientific research is independent from the class. In this context, teachers will naturally think the scientific research can not mix up with the class so they will lack the consciousness of combining fruits of scientific research with the class teaching and seldom focus on the relations between scientific research and class teaching. Separation of scientific research and teaching will do nothing good to formation of textbook and teaching methods corresponding to the major or discipline and genuine improvement of professional teaching quality from the perspective of the discipline.

1.4 Students Do Not Emphasize Much on Class Teaching

Class teaching can not stay away from the participation and cooperation of the students. Students are the main body of the class teaching. If students lose the position of main body in class teaching, quality of class teaching can be hardly guaranteed (Zhu, 2013). People are much more impetuous in modern society, under the misguidance of instant success, with the expansion of university enrollment and increasing pressure in employment, students also desire instant success. Most students go to universities for the aim of employment. They keep utilitarian in the study and mainly focus on the examination and requirement in employment, but neglect the importance of class teaching. Whether the knowledge can be useful soon after studying, whether the knowledge is useful for entrance exams for postgraduate schools or employment are the issues cared most by some students, who regard grasping knowledge as means to reach some certain purpose to obtain scores or diploma, rewards or certificates, work or profession. In order to conveniently and quickly attain purpose, they simply gain knowledge by memorizing mechanically instead of understanding and reflecting on the knowledge. Once the examination is over and the purpose is reached, the knowledge will get separate from them. And some students are not interested in the major they study, they lack of incentive to study and unclear striving goal, they will feel quite a loss as their future. They are unwilling to go into classes and they skip classes often. They have poor self control ability and they can not resist the temptation of high-tech products. Play games online, watch movies and listen to the music are the most common phenomenon in universities. These things have occupied much time of the students. They hold that they can handle all to read books to review or borrow notebook from classmate before examination, which leads to the fact that students can not follow up with the teaching ideas and they gradually lose confidence and interest and driving effect will be formed among students.

2. COUNTERMEASURES FOR THE UNIVERSITIES TO ENHANCE TEACHING EFFECT IN CLASS

If the universities want to realize sustainable development, it has to insist on scientific outlook of development, strive to carry out effective class teaching reform and enhance the quality of talent cultivation. Targeting on problems existing in class teaching of universities, below class teaching reform countermeasures are put forward.

2.1 Build Good Relationship Between Teachers and Students

Good relationship between students and teachers will have some influence on the students. Relationship between

students and teachers is the critical factor for the studying environment and growing up of the students. It directly influences activity of the teachers and students, class environment and teaching effect. Harmonious relationship between students and teachers will promote smooth implementation of class teaching so as to improve teaching efficiency. At present, relationship between teachers and students in Chinese universities is not intimate; they tend to be mechanical, cold, utilitarian, and vulgar. They are alienated and indifferent. Most teachers in universities only teach knowledge in class and leave after the class is over. They are not familiar with the students and can not know the names of the students. Such phenomenon is quite common in university. Harmonious relationship between teachers and students will enhance the activity of the students to study and give more driving force to the students. Main channel for the interaction and communication between students and teachers in universities are class teaching. If teachers are good at using humorous words, atmosphere in class will be brisk, and problems encountered in the class teaching will be addressed. Good atmosphere in class will bring much more efficiency in the class teaching. Teachers can have more communication with students after class and establish genuine friendship with students. Only when students love and trust teachers can they listen to the instruction of the teachers modestly and stay happy and active in study Therefore teachers shall actively communicate with students both in class and after class and develop new “friend-like” relationship between teachers and students.

2.2 Guide the Students to Set Up Correct Studying Concept

If college students have no correct studying ideas and correct goals, good studying attitude will be difficult to form and activity and initiative in the study required to improve college teaching quality will not be formed. After entering into university, students are bored with the study, it is one of the teachers’ important missions to cultivate students’ interest in study through class teaching so that the students can realize joy of study, value and importance of study so as to establish correct studying concept. Studying concept will not only be influenced by family, school and social culture, but also be influenced by experience and cognition degree of the student. Modern students shall develop good studying qualities conscientiously, resist influence of bad learning atmosphere, get rid of utilitarianism and pragmatism and set up great ambitions and studying goals. They shall keep reflecting on their own ambitions and studying goals and also reflecting on their own recognition and behaviors in the process of learning so as to improve their learning ability.

2.3 Change Traditional Teaching Method and Use Many Teaching Methods to Have Classes

(a) Case-based teaching method: Case-based teaching method can better attract the interests of the students.

Teachers shall comprehensively consider contents, key points and relevancy and continuity of contents in different chapters for the class when choosing the case. The teachers give tasks before class so that students can have discussion in groups after class; team leader will report in class and the teacher will give comments; finally, based on performance of different groups, the teacher will give scores. In this way, some dull environmental basic knowledge and technology can be integrated into specific and vivid case discussion, students can easily grasp them and teamwork and activity of students in studying is enhanced simultaneously.

(b) Finding teaching method: according to teaching requirements, offer some interesting questions to the students; then teachers lead the students to dissolve these questions into some specific small questions and let the students put forward solutions; assist the students to collect relevant information and lead the students to check these information so as to obtain relevant conclusion; finally teachers will guide the students to have complete analysis and verification conclusion on the information to get questions addressed. Students will submit relevant academic papers, and their performances will be calculated into the practice and creative ability.

(c) Participation teaching method: Let the students participate in the teaching, which will change the current condition of memorizing mechanically fundamentally, this will stimulate students' interest in specialty courses and lead the students to actively study, turn mechanical memory into conscientious thinking. This will emphasize students' role of the main body of teaching process.

(d) Internet resources method: Internet teaching resources means total teaching information resources to be store teaching information in various forms such as digitalized words, pictures, animations and sounds in non-printing carriers of CD and disks, which will be conveyed by internet and presented by internet communication, computer and terminals and will provide advantageous conditions for the effective implementation of teaching. Teachers can upload lesson plan, teaching outline, courseware, exercises, videos and other relevant learning documents to bring convenience to self study of the students. Besides some forums and discussion groups can be established through modern internet, students can freely talk and discuss. This will be helpful for the timely interaction between teachers and students.

2.4 Place Emphasis on Policy Orientation and Present Treatment Orientation

Universities shall make relevant policy documents to reward excellence and punish odious and lead the teachers to focus on improving teaching effect in class. On one hand, university shall adopt elimination system for the post, for teachers who can not be equal to teaching, university shall request them to rectify and reform in limited period. If they behave poorly in the rectification

and reform, they shall be transferred away from the teaching post. Meanwhile, university can adopt effective measures to enhance the proportion of teaching quality in class in promotion of teachers. On the other hand, university shall increase the rewards for excellent teachers in class. The school shall not only give one time reward but also promote one level or sever levels of salary in consecutive years. This will make teachers think teaching is equally important as scientific research. Same efforts can even obtain better gains and payback, and teachers will not only be glad to study and research, but also be glad to teach. In addition, as the young teachers of the university, they shall conscientiously regard "teaching and educating" as their own responsibility, actively study textbook and teaching methods, actively participate in teach research and teaching reform activities, transfer teaching concepts in class, emphasize interaction of teaching and learning, and motivate students' interests in learning. In the meantime, teachers shall make full use of teaching mode and go out of the school to launch docking of fruits and technical service activities so as to get deep into the society to know scientific requirements. In this way, they can better combine the reality and development of the subject to teach newest and most useful knowledge to the students (Li, 2010).

2.5 Establish Complete Teaching Evaluation System

The so called teaching evaluation mainly refers to the systematic process that scientifically judges teaching activities and teaching effects through various measurements and collection of relevant information according to some objective standards. Teaching evaluation system includes teaching quality evaluation system and students' comprehensive development evaluation indicator system. Teaching quality system of the teachers includes quality evaluation and performance evaluation. It is the important constitution for evaluation of the work of teachers and also the core content for the evaluation system of the university. Quality evaluation includes ethical level, legal consciousness, knowledge structure and level of the teacher. Performance evaluation includes working ability and level and working performance of the teacher. The aim of launching class teaching quality evaluation is to establish objective standard for overall evaluation of the work of teachers, which can be used to have qualitative and quantitative grade cognition on the working quality of the teachers and to guide the teacher to constantly improve their work and motivate teachers to strive for higher goal with continuous efforts so as to attain constant improvement of qualities of the teacher and enhancement of overall educational level of the university. At the same time, result of the evaluation will be the main basis for the educational administration department and university to employ teachers, reward or punish teachers, promote ranks and release bonus.

Guiding function, motivating function, checking function and discerning function of the evaluation system can be developed.

The practice proves that current class teaching in universities will not help cultivate students' creative ability. Henceforth, seeing from cultivating the ability of the students, it is really imminent to have deep reform on current class teaching mode, which is the problem that each higher education worker shall directly face and emphasize. If the university wants to improve teaching quality, teachers shall make themselves an example, constantly improve professional knowledge level and comprehensive qualities, enhance charms, build good relationship between teaches and students, lead the students to set up correct studying concept, change

traditional teaching methods and adopt many effective teaching methods in class.

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