

The Countermeasures of Training Interest of Chinese Normal University Students in Learning Public Pedagogy

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Abstract

For a long time, the phenomenon like “take notes in class, recite the notes before the exam and forgets all of it after the exam” has been the reality of studying public pedagogy in Chinese normal university. So how to stimulate the students’ learning interest is one of the urgent issues. The constructivism learning theory considers that the students should be proactive constructor of the meaningful information when they are learning. So this article considers that the teacher could stimulate the normal university students’ learning motivation of public pedagogy by following aspects: First, develop case teaching to stimulate the reconstruction of students’ cognitive structures; second, organize group rehearsal to accumulate the students’ practical knowledge of education; third, carry out survey to strengthen the students’ perception about the worth of education; fourth, watch education video to motivate the students’ educational emotion; fifth, build dynamic learning contents to strength students’ learning passion.

Key words: Normal university students; Public pedagogy learning interest

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INTRODUCTION

The public pedagogy is the compulsory course to Chinese normal university students. It is a very important educational course for the normal students that play a critical role in setting up accurate educational ideas, mastering proper educational methods, and training teachers’ work ability. However, since long ago, the students’ attitude to public pedagogy has been behaved as “take notes in class, recite the notes before the exam and forget all of it after the exam”. The students’ ultimate goal is to meet the exam and they are lack of interest in learning public pedagogy in general. That is not only contrary to the premise of public pedagogy, but also against the expectation of teacher’s professional qualities under the new curriculum reform in China. The constructivism learning theory considers that the students should be proactive constructor of the meaningful information when they are learning. The essence of constructivism teaching process is that learners construct their understanding on the objective world and meaning from interaction with the teachers’ help. The teaching of public pedagogy should make the students themselves form positive learning motivation during their subjective experience.

1. DEVELOP CASE TEACHING TO STIMULATE THE RECONSTRUCTION OF STUDENTS’ COGNITIVE STRUCTURE

In the long-term of study, the normal students have formed customary thinking about education issues. This customary thinking tends to show some characteristics like experiential, subjective and one-sided, which needs further explanation, discrimination, refining and improvement to make the student form scientific cognition about education phenomenon and issues. Case teaching is an effective way to help the normal student change the cognition on

education issues from customary level to scientific level. The case teaching is a method that the teacher organizes the students to learn, research and improve their abilities by applying case according to the need of teaching aims and contents. Confronted with real education situation, the students become the subject of meaningful study and their proactivity, self-awareness and creativity can be brought into full play by the way of individual analysis and group discussion. For instance, when speaking of “Classroom teaching assessment”, I showed the students a video about the class of special-grade teacher in secondary school. After that the students discussed in group with the topic named “a good lesson”. Then I summarized the basic requirements, the principles and the contents of the classroom teaching assessment. Being in real education circumstances, the students raised questions constantly and showed the craving of exploration through the collision of collective wisdom. They behaved positively and tried to analyze and solve problems with the support of the group learning community. Certainly, the effective case teaching hangs on more comprehensive design and implementation.

Firstly, we must choose education cases based on authenticity, typicality, conflict and enlightening. Then, the students are willing to treat the teaching seriously because of a truly immersive experience. They will analyze the intricate information of the case seriously and express opinions sufficiently. Thus, the thought collision will be formed among the students and the students’ studying passion will be encouraged to get the most out of it. Secondly, the exhibition of education cases must be objective and vivid. In order to attract students’ attention, the teacher has to get rid of the rigid way of teaching and can try some different ways to draw forth the cases like role play, video broadcast, showing pictures or demonstration and so on. Thirdly, the discussion around the cases should be systematically, problematic and democratic. Systematical discussion emphasizes that the teacher divides the students into some learning communities effectively by the way of “heterogeneous in group and homogeneous between groups” and then guides the students make regulations for the case discussion by themselves. Problematic discussion means the teacher should design a series of specific problems around the cases based on the expected teaching goals, enhance the students’ thinking abilities from the shallower to the deeper and from the easy to the complicated. Democratic discussion emphasizes that the teacher must respect the students’ views and perspectives, and doesn’t pursuit of uniform and consistent conclusion and provides sufficient time and opportunities for every student to join discussion as far as possible. Finally, the evaluation of the education cases must be incentive, autonomic and multivariate. Incentive evaluation means the evaluation should be encouragement-oriented. Students’ subjectivity will be stimulated with the teacher’s genuine encouragement.

Students can achieve the joy of the success from the evaluation more easily, and then increase their interest of the pedagogy course. Autonomic evaluation emphasizes that the teacher should offer opportunities to the students for doing self-assessment, encourage student to carry out self-assessment, peer assessment, assessment in and between the groups. Thus the students’ learning enthusiasm will be enhanced by having a say in learning assessment. Multivariate assessment means that the evaluation of the education cases should take the student’s understanding about the cases, achievement of the teaching goal, the students’ behavior and gain during the evaluation and the circumstance of the teamwork into account.

2. ORGANIZE GROUP REHEARSAL TO ACCUMULATE THE STUDENTS’ PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE OF EDUCATION

At present, the normal university students regard the learning of pedagogy as “take notes in class and recite the notes before the exam”. Some students even don’t take notes and they usually copy other students’ notes to recite before the exam. Public Pedagogy teaching should not be the monodrama of the teacher; student is the authentic subject in the learning. The teacher can organize students work as a team, and then do collective preparation for lesson and trial lecture in turn. The students can realize the relationship between the ego and the education during the cooperative learning; they also can experience the joy of success during the communication.

Generally, group trial lecture has following steps: The first is to form a group. Students can combine others freely, about 8 people can form a group and then choose a leader through consultation; the second is to determine the theme. The trial lecture topic must be related to student s’ experience and can expand students’ ideas. For example, “The individual functions of education” is a suitable topic for trial lecture. Because of the students’ learning experience in primary and middle school and their strong comprehension and judging abilities, the students will achieve more by learning themselves; the third is to prepare lessons collectively. The teacher may give the students a week to search for information and prepare for teaching scheme, meanwhile the teacher should afford appropriate guidance and help; the forth is to give a lesson formally. Every group selects a representative to do the trial lecture and the time is about 20 minutes; the fifth is to discuss the lesson. It is useful for students to find the merits and demerits in the lecture, thus, to improve the teaching ability further by the way of self-assessment and peer assessment. In order to teach well, the students must consult large quantities of data and information before the class and the group members should discuss the content

and the method of the class. So in this process students cooperation ability will be enhanced and their range of knowledge will be widened; their practical ability will be raised and their perceptions about the teacher profession will be strengthened; their self-efficacy and achievement motivation will be enhanced and their subjectivity will be mobilized. Certainly, given the limited teaching time, it is better to make every group take charge of one topic and the teacher should provide adequate preparation time and proper guidance for their students.

3. CARRY OUT SURVEY TO STRENGTHEN THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ABOUT THE WORTH OF EDUCATION

When I talked with the normal university students, I found that quite a few of them were skeptical or even negative to the knowledge and theories in books. They thought it was no social value to study educational theories. Why did the students think so? On one hand, the teacher only paid attention to teaching the knowledge in books; on the other hand, it was connected with the utilitarianism and pragmatism. So in order to help the students realize the value of the education, the teacher should instruct the students from their thoughts. What's more the teacher can not rely on stereotyped teaching any more while they should combine class teaching with research practice. Just as Tao Xingzhi said that education existed everywhere in life and life was education. In the teaching of the public pedagogy, textbook just can be reference book or learning material. The teaching contents should include actual education phenomenon and issues. Teachers may arrange students go deep into the actual basic education circumstance to carry out research. In the process of finding, studying and solving the problems of the students can understand the educational theories deeply by means of the experience of the research, they also can use the knowledge into the practice which they learn in class. When the students realize the actual value of the education knowledge and the relationship between pedagogy and their majors, their motivation of learning pedagogy will be improved greatly.

For instance, when I taught "the qualities of modern teachers", I divided the students into different groups to carry out investigation around the theme "The X subject teacher in my heart" in nearby primary or middle schools. They must write the research reports and then give an account of the research. The enthusiasm of the students was very high, so they prepared well for the personnel division, preparation for questionnaire, selection of the investigation object, choice of research method, formal investigation, statistical analyzing, making PPT and formal report. Especially when they reported their survey

results, almost every group made a beautiful PPT, some even with the pictures and recording of their research. The students regarded this report as a competition and they were all ambitious. In this survey the students gained a lot in many aspects. They not only learned about primary and middle school students' expectation and requirement about the teachers of different subjects, but also realized the gap between themselves and ideal teachers in the pupils' hearts. At the same time, the students found that their research results had a lot of similarities with the theories in the textbook, so they changed the misunderstanding that theory knowledge in textbooks was inane and useless. A lot of students began to realize that learning of indirect experience had important effect on their progress, so they changed their attitude toward the study and their initiative and motivation of the study have also improved. The public pedagogy is a strong practicing course, so teachers should afford more space and freedom to students to do exploration. By building an open and diverse teaching environment, teachers may make students understand the relationship between education and life, between the pedagogy and themselves through class teaching and extracurricular practice, and then their motivation of studying pedagogy will be formed autonomic.

4. WATCH EDUCATION VIDEO TO MOTIVATE THE STUDENTS' EDUCATIONAL EMOTION

Emotion is people's psychological reaction to the stimulation of objective target. Things that meet people's needs or desires will cause positive attitude and create a positive emotion. Bloom, British educator, said that compared with those who were lack of emotion or those who was afraid of learning material, the students who were learning with positive emotion studied more easily and rapidly. The traditional teaching of public pedagogy paid more attention to knowledge and skills by the way of PPT and blackboard writing, which led to students' visual fatigue easily. On the contrary, educational video with dynamic and plot may largely mobilize the students' interest and add energy to the boring class. In order to help the students understand and internalize education knowledge, the teachers may select some appropriate educational videos according to teaching contents.

For example, when learning "the relationship between teacher and student", I let the students watch the film *Blooming Flowers* and then discuss some clips. After communication and reflection, the students not only understood deeply the value and countermeasures of the relationship between teacher and student but also were inspired in educational emotion so that many students expressed clearly their professional desires for being a teacher. Another example was "the class management

of the head teacher”, I played the video about Wei Shusheng. The students were impressed by the teacher’s legendary experience and educational wisdom. On one hand, the students admired the teacher for his educational attainment; on the other hand, the students had an intuitive understanding on the class management. The third example is about the new curriculum reform of elementary education in China. I provided the students with vide news about curriculum reform in different areas. The students knew how the reform did and then sum up the basic idea of the reform. Moreover, the teacher may play videos about educational news and prominent teachers or play songs about teacher and education during break time so as to help the students generate inner motive on being a teacher which may stimulate the students’ learning desire and persistent learning motive power.

5. BUILD DYNAMIC LEARNING CONTENTS TO STRENGTH STUDENTS’ LEARNING PASSION

Some investigations found that there were such problems as knowledge narrow, content empty, knowledge updating slowly and being separated from practice in the teaching contents of public pedagogy, which made normal university students lack interest in pedagogy. In order to help the students put their knowledge into practical use, the teacher should select teaching contents according to educational practice and the students’ needs. Thus the students may understand the value of study and then satisfy their needs, so the students become interested in pedagogy little by little. At the same time, the teacher should update education contents and build the relationship between teaching contents and the actual teaching in primary and secondary schools so that the students feel that the contents are full of contemporaneity and lifestyle. For example, when teaching “the primary and middle school students’ mind and body development”, I provided the students with some real cases and video data. By analyzing and discussing, the students formed their own opinion of the development characteristic of contemporary primary and middle school students. Another example is about “course teaching”. In order to help the students of different majors know how on earth the primary and middle school students learn, I provided them the model lessons according to their majors. Thus the normal university students knew figuratively the real teaching idea of their own subjects under the curriculum reform and made a summing up of the traits and operating procedure of effective course teaching. As the learning contents are connected with the educational practice and meet the

students’ real needs, the students can concentrate their energies on the study of public pedagogy.

Besides that, the teacher should change the monotonous traditional evaluation method. The test paper examination method puts great emphasis on reciting which not only represses the students’ personality and creativity but also thwart their enthusiasm. The assessment standards should be from focusing on students’ academic performance to emphasizing students’ development. In addition, the teacher should widen the sphere of comment main body and realize the variety of main body. Generally the evaluators are divided into four parts: students, peer, self-evaluation and parents.

CONCLUSION

Public pedagogy aims at developing the normal university students’ abilities of teaching. So it should be practical and independent, that is, it is an applied subject in nature and has an independent position in the system of educational subject. However, because of cognitive bias, the errors in the shortage of teaching, management and so on, the teaching of public pedagogy has faced an awkward situation of “The teacher is difficult to teach and the students learn passively”. There are some questions in present public pedagogy teaching, such as outmoded and behind course content, insufficient teaching terms, single teaching mode, and inflexible teaching methods. The teachers pay more attention to theories than practical knowledge which largely made the normal university students dislike public pedagogy. In fact, in course teaching of public pedagogy, the teacher plays a major part to help and guide the students to learn. Facing the learning situation that the students are lack of interest and motives generally, the teacher is responsible for adjusting his/her own teaching method and trying to look for kinds of valid teaching tactics. Above all, during the learning, the students should be active and they may gain a subjective experience.

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