Ideas on the Revolution of Teaching Methods in Universities

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Abstract. Modern teaching modes should realize the revolution of the traditional class teaching to have more students’ engagement and pay more attention to cultivate students’ characteristics and improve their independent learning ability. With respect to the teaching methods in universities, the paper proposes some revolution ideas to make more students learn actively instead of passively, so as to enhance students’ learning interest.

Turn “Imparting” Teaching to “Research” Teaching

Class teaching is the main form of teaching in universities. To a large extent, the traditional class teaching is “imparting” which pays too much attention to the instilling of knowledge and instruction, while the cultivation of students’ subjectivity and creativity is obviously not enough, which is contrary to the education for all-around development. How to solve the contradiction? The answer is to transit the class teaching from “unidirectional output” to “bilateral communication” and turn the teaching method centered around “research” education, which could not only impart the fundamental knowledge, concepts and principles to students but also the exclusive experience and methods of predecessors. The teaching process is the prototype of scientific research, or it successfully stimulates the scientific research process. Hence, it could guide students to explore independently and develop students’ ability to think and research by themselves. Research teaching is a kind of teaching activity to lead students to explore originally and look for truth. It does not uphold the traditional ideas of “class should be deep and clear” but allow for unforeseen circumstances or set questions to increase the learning difficulty and make students explore themselves. In the class, teachers should advocate general not fine, brief not particular, winding not flat, and not quote copiously from many sources but do well in the “make one example” and render students room to think by themselves. In this way, the teaching process could go upward in a spiral way as “doubts-no doubts-doubts”.

Turn “Stereotype” Teaching to “Point” Teaching

Most traditional class teaching is “stereotype” that students are deemed as the passive receivers and bounded by numerous regulations. Students are instilled with knowledge and hardly engage in the teaching process, so without the ability of thinking independently, they always listen and do as others say and behave according to the stipulated regulations. Stereotype teaching highlights the system of teaching contents, complete procedure of teaching and the standardization of teaching methods, so teachers always focus on text books and teach fully loaded according to the chapter sequence, even put the refined and quantized teaching procedures as a formal judging standard. It will surely result in teachers’ mechanic teaching, not only limiting teachings’ teaching styles but even limiting students’ individual development. Therefore, class teaching should turn “passive receiving” to “active acquiring”, and turn “stereotype teaching” to “point teaching”. The point teaching means to break the regular limits and conduct the “leaping” or “focused” teaching according to the fundamental points, key points, difficult points and students’ interest. As for the easy parts, teachers skip it without mentioning too much, so as to leave students to learn by themselves; as for the difficult parts, especially the controversial ones, teachers could point out the maze by enlightening, solve the problem by giving directions, inspire students with different instructions, lead students out of the errors by guiding, as well as convene discussions by group presentations.
Turn Closed Teaching to Open Teaching

The society today is open with booming knowledge. Under this kind of circumstances, a closed class is deviated from the reality. In order to keep up with the pace of the times, cultivate the high-end talents of the era, the class teaching has to face the future, the world and society, opening comprehensively to the public. Therefore, horizontally, the class teaching should develop social survey fronts. Go out from the classroom to society to give students chance to acquire new knowledge, new information, feel the new times sense and enhance the modern notion; vertically, the education should set foot on the reality and look forward to the future, explore the future research fields, discuss the development trend of the future of the subject, as well as the hot points, difficult points and doubts. Cultivate students’ ability to develop sustainably, so that students could get used to the dynamic today and even the uncertain future, thus realizing the best combination of reality education and future education.

Turn Common Education to Common Plus Individuality Education

University education has both social functions and individual functions. Social functions mean the education meets the society’s demand on talents and fosters the development of the society. The individual functions mean to foster the comprehensive development of students’ personal quality. For a long term, the class teaching in universities highlights the common features (social functions) while neglects the individuality (individual functions), which influences the development of students’ characteristics. Therefore, we should strengthen the concept of fostering students’ personal development and realizing the equal emphasis on common features (social functions) and individuality (individual functions). While we conduct the common education, we should pay attention to foster students’ personalized development. In the teaching, it mainly means to promote students’ subjectivity, develop students’ motivation and cultivate students’ creativity. Therefore, we should turn the traditional focus on teaching to learning. Teachers could adopt the approaches of guiding directions, interests, doubts and learning to stimulate students’ learning passion; we should also cultivate students’ main body notion, exert their functions fully and encourage them to learn by themselves; we should pay attention to cultivate students’ innovation concept, spirit and minds, encourage students to dare to question while not only hearing to the books and teachers, dare to think abnormally, break the rules, think reversely, differently, solidly and openly, dare to break the routine and create something new and original; in the class, teachers could use new, strange and lively teaching ways to give students opportunities to show their own personality, such as debates, open discussion, focus discussion, social perspectives and scientific views, so as to realize the diversified teaching methods; teachers should pay attention to upgrade and reform the teaching ways that bound students’ personalized development, enhance the analysis in the teaching; the answers to questions and examinations should be mainly analytical, instead of merely memorable ones. Meanwhile, in the questions and examinations, we should propose to seek the difference instead of the common to foster the personalized development of students.

Turn Solo Teaching to Symphony Teaching

Class teaching is an activity participated by teachers and students, so the effect is also achieved by the performance of both teachers and students. In order to realize the real quality education, the old teaching mode of “one word class” and “solo” should be broken and students should be motivated to participate in the teaching to strengthen the class effect. As the old saying goes “if one says in front of a crowd, the words could be neglected; while a crowd speaks in front of one, the minds will be open with lots of fun”. Now some class teaching kills students’ engagement notion and sets a sentimental wall between teachers and students, not only limiting students’ independent thinking and creative minds, but also hinders the interaction and exchanges among students, which limits students’ minds and views. On the contrary, students participating in teaching, teaching and learning, enlightening
each other could not only motivate students’ enthusiasm to think but also benefit each other and learn from each other. The engagement should settle three problems: with regard to the concepts, students should be put in the main position and the relationship between guiding and subjectivity should be handled well; with regard to the organization form, the form of “teachers set up the stage on which students play roles” should be insisted, such as discussion, debates, dialogues, simulated fights, role playing or AB play; with regard to the teaching practice, teachers should do well in the class design and seducing. Teachers should make careful arrangement and preparation on the teaching contents, teaching breaking points, teaching forms, design of the opening and ending and selection of key presenters, so as to be systematic.

Transit from Blackboard Teaching to Multimedia Online Teaching

With the development of internet technology, the teaching mode based on the traditional blackboard teaching is gradually replaced by teaching based on PPT and campus network, because the multimedia teaching could present the knowledge on books vividly in front of students through voices, pictures, images and animations, which can be hardly realized by the traditional way of teaching on blackboards. In terms of the teaching effect, it could attract students’ attention more and the multimedia teaching materials on line could be downloaded by students for self-learning, as well as for other teachers’ review thus alleviating their burden to prepare the same classes repeatedly.

This paper contains the ideas on the reform of class teaching in universities. In a word, under the current education system, it is the top priority for all the teachers in universities to reform the teaching ways and contents and determine the new teaching modes in classes.

References

