

Building the Cooperative Teaching Mode of “Team Teaching”

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Abstract: Considering the limitation of higher education teaching mode of “only the teacher’s words count”, we build the cooperative teaching mode of “team teaching” which is humanism-based, student-based and learning-centered. It emphasizes “challenge and cooperation” between teachers and students as well as promotes communication and interaction during the teaching process to ensure open teaching and students’ participation. Compared with the traditional teaching mode, the cooperative teaching mode of “team teaching” highlights its innovative value of teaching and provides a feasible framework during the process of pre-class preparation, teaching guidance, student-teacher debate and conclusion and further study.

Keywords: team teaching; teaching mode; teaching process; teaching value

Just as the old saying goes, “a teacher is one who could propagate the doctrine, impart professional knowledge, and resolve doubts”. The thoughts of higher education in our country have been emphasized on “teaching” while neglected “learning” long. In traditional learning, students are dependent and passive instead of active and independent. We must change the traditional learning style into an independent and exploratory one with which students can full play their initiative and creativity. (Hai, 2005) The pursuit of modern teaching is to make teaching suitable for students. It looks like a new expression of the old teaching idea of “teaching according to the students’ ability” at the first glance, but actually, it is the educators’ appeal with purposes and noumenon in an era that humanism has been widely accepted. We promote “this teaching mode that is suitable for students” because a human-based educational concept accords with the educational spirit of present times. The appeal, seeking and creation of “a teaching that is suitable for students” are, in essence, expressing a call for education development of these times. (Qing-chang, 2005, p. 10) The teaching that is suitable for students is one that respects the students’ personalities and achieves their all-round development. The cooperative teaching mode of “team teaching” proposed in this paper broke the

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traditional teaching style of “one classroom, one teacher”. The concept, features, process and values of “team teaching” are illuminated in the paper to promote the constant revolution of education.

1. Concept and Features of the Cooperative Teaching of “Team Teaching”

A) Concept of the cooperative teaching of “team teaching”

Team teaching (“TT” for short) refers to a teaching mode in which three or more teachers from different discipline backgrounds constituted a teaching team to perform a discuss- and-study style teaching. (Zi-tang, 2013) Such a teaching mode not only highlights the team work consciousness but also illustrates those innovative concepts of joint planning, team execution, real-time updating, collaborative reflection, shared feedback and evaluation etc during teaching process,. During the real teaching application, “TT” requires the cooperation and further study, advocating “cultural transmission between contemporaries”, and enforces the communication and study between teachers in order to promote their professional development. (Jia-li, 2004) It requires teachers to fully understand the needs and interests of students through professional thoughts of teaching and professional technique, only in which way can the understanding be clear and reliable. Teachers need to be equipped with broad educational feelings which at least shall consist of two elements: “love” and “wisdom”. “Love” means teacher are willing to devote everything to students to give them what they need; “wisdom” ensures that teachers can find the right way and suitable teaching methods to fully inspire the initiative and participation of students. Finally, a situation that “teaching benefits students and teachers alike” can be realized.

B) Features of the cooperative teaching of “team teaching”

The cooperative teaching mode of “team teaching” is based on the experience of “interactive teaching way of two teachers”. It requires that three or more professors teach in the same class, and challenge each other during teaching. It emphasizes students’ participation, a teacher-student’s communication and an open class. Certainly, “TT” has a higher demand for teachers’ professional development achieving a balance between “the individual” and “cooperation”. We should objectively understand the advantages and disadvantages of “the individual” and “cooperation between teachers”. Only by keeping a balance between “the individual” and “cooperation” can we eradicate people’s discrimination against “the individual” and effectively achieve “cooperation between teachers”. (Gui-lin, 2012) Then, the disadvantage of the traditional cooperation between teachers will be avoided. We can realize a student-centered and a study-centered teaching that develop everything for students’ overall development.

The process of “TT” is apparently different from other teaching mode. It has some features. 1) Openness .The learners of “TT” can be of all ages during higher education period. By effective teaching design, students will broad their eyesight and inspire their interest under the guidance of teachers with different discipline backgrounds. Their initiatives and participation will be also inspired.2) Accessibility. “TT” does not require any special learning materials and resources, either does it has any special demands for teachers, students and classrooms. By taking advantage of the present teaching resources, the traditional”one classroom, one teacher” teaching mode will be changed. A balance between “the individual” and “cooperation” will be achieved. 3) Integrity. “TT” enjoys a very good compatibility and integrity of “teacher-teacher cooperation”, “student-student cooperation” and “teacher-student cooperation” which can integrate knowledge of different disciplines into one class and one problem for discussion. Students may find what they are interested in, talk actively during the discussion and apply the relevant knowledge to solve some problem process. Such integrity improves the students’ ability of cooperation, communication, coordination and creation, and heats the atmosphere in the classroom so that a situation that “letting a hundred flowers bloom, a hundred schools contend” will appears and sentimental relations between teachers and students will be enhanced. 4) Challenge. In “TT”, teachers shall take roles as main designer, participator, organizer, coordinator, and leader. As for the teaching preparation task, teachers, teaching materials and students shall all be considered. The structure of teaching staff shall be optimized and the present resources shall be fully utilized. As for the whole teaching process, teachers are not work alone, but work within a group for teaching preparation, discussion, participation, evaluation and feedback.

2. Building the Cooperative Teaching Mode of “Team Teaching”

The cooperative teaching mode of “team teaching”, which is from the parts of “learning” involving in initiative section, participative section, inclusive section, and thinking section, which can promote students' all-round development and make the students be equipped with the ability of rational choice, team cooperation and the construction of knowledge. From the parts of teaching in cooperation, breakthrough, analysis, complementation, it also can promote teachers' rapid growth obviously. In addition, it is helpful to expand teachers’ teaching experience and conduct to the improvement of teaching level. Based on the previous research, this paper proposes a cooperative teaching mode of “team teaching” which can be divided into five parts, as it is shown in Figure 1.

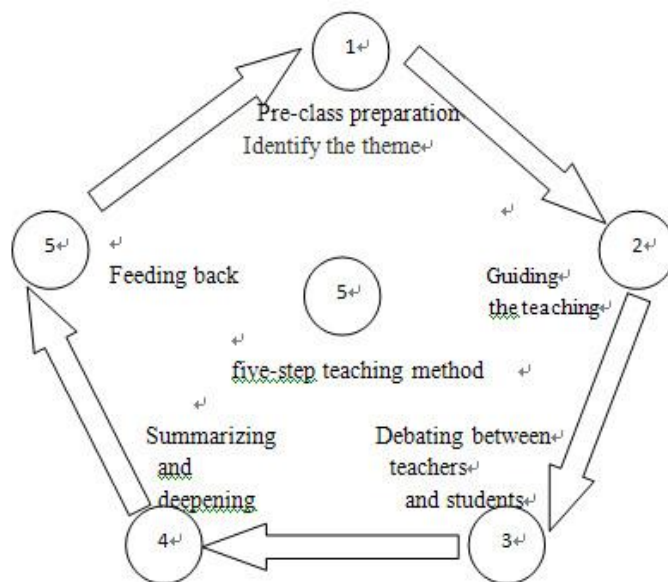


Figure 1.

As is described above, the first step is pre-class preparation. In this part, the most important thing is that teachers and students are divided into the different groups. First of all, we need to select excellent teachers from the different backgrounds of profession to form a teaching team, which is on the basis of co-figurative culture, laying down the teaching plans, teaching methods, teaching strategies and steps together. From the perspective of management, the general characteristics of the effective cooperation team is to have common goals, self-consciousness, sincere communication, mutual respect, mutual credits, mutual dependence, complementary and necessary plans in the administrative lead. Besides that, it has certain rules and regulations, etc. (Gui-lin, 2012) The cooperation between the teachers can meet the great requirements of this university courses the integration of course. Only the mutual cooperation between teachers, especially among the different disciplines teachers' cooperation, is comprehensive to complete the integrated curriculum and learning style. There are many significant differences between teachers in knowledge structure, intelligent level, the mode of thinking, cognitive style, etc. Even the teachers who teach at the same subject are different from dealing with the teaching content, the selection of teaching methods and the whole design of teaching obviously. It also inspires and complements each other to realize the collision of thinking and wisdom in order to generate new ideas. The mode makes original ideas more scientific and perfect, which is conducive to achieve the teaching goal. The second step is to divide the student into different groups due to their different abilities to create a learning community, giving expression to the subjectivity of people. A real person is the one who is engaged in

practical activities, the one is the subject of the activities. The positive practice of the individual should be the driving force that promotes social progress. The free and comprehensive development of the individual as the subject of activities is also the ultimate feeling of Marx. (Bai-lin, 2003) Each person's independence, affinity, and diversity are the premise. "Harmony without uniformity" is emphasized. Cooperative learning community is best to be made up of four people consist of both genders and there shall be no leaders so that we can establish an equal learning relation. In the practical application, we can select the appropriate teacher according to the connection degree of each course. (Ya-lin, 2011) Due to the connection degree of each course, we may select an appropriate teacher in the process of practice. At the same time, on the basis of the students' requirements, they can constitute small discussion groups. By studying the resources which teachers have prepared for carefully, it makes the passive learning turn into autonomous learning, using learning method of "autonomous, inquiry and cooperation" for students actively. The link puts forward the questions and lets students know "what to learn", the segment accounts for 30% of the proportion of teaching.

The second step is to guide teaching link. According to the actual situation, we can divide each course into a number of projects. Combined with the course's requirements and the professional background of team members, each project is dominated by a teacher, who should carry on the overall summary and grasp for the background of the research, the research's hot spot, references, research's methods, others important theory, development trend, expert opinion and so on. The teacher must mainly play a part in establishing situation and pay attention to guide them, inspiring students to think deeply and answering what any student asks. There are mainly five kinds of teaching modes in this part: 1) By using the professional qualification system of teacher, it can realize the division of architecture. According to the different grade, the teachers may be put together, choosing a teacher who has the highest professional titles to be responsible for leading the general teachers and support staff, etc. They can make a plan, do a research and carry out a teaching all at once. What we do is for the purpose that is to improve the school's teaching work, promote more harmonious classroom, import more trenchant content and make students more devoted in. 2) Developing network teaching. It is based on CSCL to realize teaching team, teaching division under one roof. This is conducive to make full use of network teaching materials and resources, conducive to make full use of the teachers in the same school or not to exchange and learn the resource between the different professions, conducive to promote the rational allocation of the staff, conducive to the several teachers in the same subject with assistant personnel consisting of teaching team, which is helpful to play expertise for teachers, above all be complementary. 3) Compositing of mutual aid group and breaking the limit of subject is to carry out the cooperative teaching mode of "team teaching". Based on the contact teaching, in addition to the

same subject in the form of teaching team, they may carry out exchanging the resource and making a cooperation. They also can carry out crossing subject curriculum teaching. 4) Carrying out the cycle of teaching and making teaching rounds, developing the cooperative teaching mode of “team teaching”. For example, we can try our best to make use of teachers in different specialty composing teaching group. Each teacher is ready to teach the unit which is can be taught by himself or herself in the line with their own expertise, teaching in turn. This can save much time so that they needn't to prepare for other materials. In addition, it also allows teachers to have the opportunity to improve every times of teaching. Clarifying the question, it lets students know “what to do”, the segment accounts for 10% of the proportion of teaching.

The third step is the debate between teachers and students. The effective debate between them should be inclusive. Besides that, it is also under the premise of reasonable absorption naturally and the differences between artificial and factions, both manifesting the characteristics of autonomy and having a human feelings. Beyond that, it also reflects factions and pays attention to the emotion of harmony. The other members of the team make point, discuss methods and deepen the theme of the guiding content. In addition, according to their different characteristics, they guide the student to widen their sight, cultivate divergent thinking, and be brave to innovate. Relying on the small discussion groups, students can participate in discussions. Based on his or her interest, he may be positive to think about problems. At the end of the guiding- teaching link, the teacher can clarify a point in the line with the problems which has been put forward and the understanding and awareness of each seminar group's view. Let students accept the view and understand the teacher who has different discipline background on the same issue in class, which is good at cultivating students' divergent thinking, is good at guiding students to think about problems into the multi-disciplinary perspective, correcting viewing of authority. It is good at improving the learning ability of inquiry and giving full play to the subjective initiative of students, which makes the class active. Let the students know “how to do”, the segment accounts for 30% of the proportion of teaching.

The fourth step is the summary part. The main purpose is “seeking common ground while putting aside differences”, Instead of “seeking the same with the exception of different “. According to their own collection of resources, materials of the study, the interpretation of teachers, and the debate between teachers and students, each seminar group can state their views and opinions. For other members of teaching team, they can also put forward relevant suggestions and deepen the content on the basis of their own understanding, summarizing. Finally the teacher who guides the students to summarize the opinions of the team members carries on the summary and puts forward further research suggestions for their reference on relevant issues

and points of view. Let the students know “the principle of to do”, the segment accounts for 10% of the proportion of teaching.

The fifth step is feedback link. The function of the teaching evaluation is to serve teaching rather than direct teaching. In pursuit of the effectiveness of classroom teaching, evaluation is not the focus of the “teaching” but a review of the “learning”. We should pay attention to how much they agree with the teaching, realize the teaching and harvest the teaching. Not only does the advantage group learn more effectively, also the disadvantaged has learnt more effectively. From the three dimensions of teacher-teacher cooperation, teacher-student cooperation and student-student cooperation, we will be to evaluate teaching. Firstly, from the view of the interaction of teachers, whether it has the following five characteristics: 1) The complex target is needed to be completed cooperatively. 2) Idea, curriculum, teaching strategy and organization structure all must be changed which emphasizes on plan, measurement and adjustment of the continuity in the practical process. 3) Generating ideas in collaborative process, it also combined with the teaching force in order to meet the students' needs. 4) The teachers in collaborative group who are willing to participate and identify the value of professional development. 5) Self-expectations can continue to seek more efficient teaching methods for promoting the progress of students and colleagues. In the interactive dimension between teachers and students, it is the most important to arouse the students' enthusiasm. That is to say let the students' positivity from passive participation into active participation, from being questioned to ask questions, from being accepted to take the initiative to look for problems. Let students really be involved in the group, enjoy them and learn content together. In the interactive dimension of the students, firstly, what we should do is to divide students into heterogeneous groups collaboratively. Let the students who have the different abilities and expectations stay in the same group. The purpose is to meet each student's individual difference and put each student's ability and personality in activation. In addition, we can improve the ability of active learning for students, stimulating their motivation to learn. There are many Collisions within the group to generate ideas. Through the advanced to spur the backward, the mode can enable students from keeping silence to communicating each other, from the start to practice by themselves. Within the learning group, there are active communications, clubbing ideas and exertions. Everyone can put forward the distinctive point of view of his own. In the factors of effective teaching, willingness to learn is the most important. There is no doubt that students' learning outcome and learning intention is proportional to the relationship. High willingness to learn results in high learning effect, low willingness to learn can't. (Shu-ping, 2012, p. 2) Let students know “the purpose to do”, the segment accounts for 20% of the proportion of teaching.

3. The Value of the Cooperative Teaching Mode of “Team Teaching”

The higher education taking teaching as the center, classroom-teaching is the main channel of teaching. We need to explore the effective of classroom-teaching to improve the quality of education. The pursuit of the effectiveness of classroom-teaching, it is not just a problem of how much a number of tasks or the length of the class time. The key issue here is whether the teaching is useful or not from the perspective of intellectual improvement. It is also a question of whether teaching is loved by students from the angle of sensibility. (Yang Qi-liang, 2012) Building the cooperative teaching mode of “team teaching”, we pursuit for useful teaching, being fond of teaching; we pursuit for the communication between teachers and students, advocating open teaching; we pursuit for a situation that “teaching benefits students and teachers alike” can be realized.

A) Optimizing the teachers’ cooperation

From the thought of the social constructivist, above all as the representative, Lev Vygotsky, “the construction of knowledge is in communication with other people in the environment, is the result of social cooperation and social interaction. In terms of its actual situation, the teachers’ biggest assistance comes from the other teachers”. (Guang-ping, 2005) There are significant differences between teachers in the knowledge structure, level of intelligence, mode of thinking, cognitive style. Even the teacher teaching the same subject, the difference of dealing with the teaching content, selecting teaching methods and designing the teaching overall is obvious. (Hong, 2011) Teachers who are in different disciplines can put diverse perspectives, knowledge structure, and analysis together. They can inspire and complement each other so that thinking and wisdom can be collided together in collaborative lesson planning and class. For generating some new ideas, it can make original concept more scientific and perfect. Besides that, it also makes the entire teaching not adhere to talk rigidly. In teamwork, team teaching can enhance the overall strength of the team of teachers. At the same time, students may gain psychological support and burst out of the spark of inspiration through guided in teaching interaction. It improves the students’ ability to analyze and solve problems greatly.

B) Improving the students’ classroom participation

Under the close collaboration with many teachers, the cooperative teaching mode of “team teaching” can build an open and interactive teaching environment. Living a positive argument between teachers or between teachers and students in the discussion, debate and criticism, it can implement a dynamic and situational teaching. It may let students be involved in class fully, establish the Subject consciousness and take the initiative to acquire and apply knowledge. Let the students to be equipped with “four masters”, that is to master knowledge and skills,

to master the use of both hands and brain, to master the way to live, to master how to get along with people and handle various affairs.

C) Conducive to the realization of teaching which benefits teachers as well as students

The mode, which is the cooperative teaching mode of “team teaching”, not only gives a play to the teachers from the different areas of expertise, but also inspires the teachers’ creative spirit and ability with the effective integration of teacher-resources greatly. In the interactive process, it also can promote the development of teaching, improve the teaching level and broaden the academic research field. At the same time, the interaction between teachers and students may mobilize the enthusiasm of both teachers and students, and change the view of teaching material, class view and teaching view effectively. It can realize the integral benefits of the teaching’s effect fully.

4. Conclusion

To make a long story short , the cooperative teaching mode of “team teaching”, a new teaching mode, is to adapt to the development of the times and students. It could take various teaching resources effectively together, which mobilizes the enthusiasm of both teachers and students. This mode also can break through the profession in major barriers and release the teaching space which we needs fully. About all, it could optimize the teachers' effective cooperation, encourage the active participation of students, and deepen the positive argument between teachers and students. The purpose of building the cooperative teaching mode of “team teaching” is that we focus on improving the students' learning ability, practical ability, innovation ability and thinking ability.

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