

# “No one should be left behind”: The dilemma and breakthrough of "marginal people" in classroom teaching

Xiaoyu Li<sup>1,\*</sup>, Guangwen Wei<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Curriculum and Instruction, Nanjing Normal University, Nanjing 210097, China

<sup>2</sup> Institute of Curriculum and Instruction, Nanjing Normal University, Nanjing 210097, China

**ABSTRACT.** *"Marginal people" have always existed in classroom teaching, with the characteristics of high desire, low performance, low participation and low communication. Due to these characteristics, the marginal people in the classroom learning process have the following practical dilemmas: low quality and inefficient classroom learning, negative emotional experience, "Matthew effect" dilemma, fuzzy self-worth and lack of sense of belonging. In view of the above difficulties, this paper mainly makes a breakthrough from four aspects: student-oriented, teaching in emotion, collective construction and relationship cultivation, so as to help the "marginal people" in classroom teaching return to the classroom.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Classroom teaching, Marginal person, Dilemma, Breakthrough*

## 1. Introduction

"Marginal person" is a concept in sociology. It was originally developed from "stranger" and "outsider" in western society. In 1980s, it was used in the field of pedagogy to study marginal students in classroom teaching. The "marginal people" in the classroom are not completely equivalent to the students with learning difficulties, backward students and disadvantaged students. The division between them is not entirely clear, but there are certain overlapping and overlapping. However, the "marginal people" is a more "invisible" and more "hidden" complex group, and any student in the class may be the "marginal person" in classroom teaching [1].

## 2. The connotation and characteristics of marginal people in classroom

### 2.1 Connotation

The so-called "marginal person" in classroom teaching refers to the individual or

group of students who are passively forgotten or isolated by teachers and other students in the daily classroom teaching situation, or spontaneously refuse to participate in teaching and actively drift to the edge of teaching activities due to their own reasons (Psychology, personality, physical condition, etc.) [2]. The author thinks: the "marginal person" in classroom teaching refers to the individual student who does not take the initiative to participate in teaching activities, whose attention has always been in a state of inattention, free from the edge of teaching activities, and whose basic knowledge and skills have not been well developed.

### ***2.2 Characteristics (one high and three low)***

High desire (developmental): according to the research by Levin of Stanford University in the United States, "the students in the edge state actually have the edge characteristics of curiosity, desire to learn, imagination and creativity, and they all want to be cared for, supported and affirmed." [2] Therefore, the "marginal people" in the classroom are eager to get the attention of teachers or students.

Low performance: marginal people in classroom teaching are not good at or unwilling to actively express themselves, and often conceal their emotions, cognition and behavior in the classroom [3]. They are often afraid of communicating with others, so they always keep themselves in a silent state in class, and seldom speak in class.

Low participation: the self-efficacy of "marginal people" in the classroom is low, and they doubt and negate their learning ability [4]. Therefore, their participation in classroom teaching activities is extremely low, and their interaction with teachers and students is very low, and they are always in a passive and shrinking state.

Low communication: in the classroom teaching activities are more silent, less verbal expression, almost not willing to actively express their views and ideas. Once in a while, teachers will remind them to participate in learning activities and communicate with students occasionally.

### **3. Dilemma: the dilemma of "marginal people"**

The "marginal people" in classroom teaching have some practical difficulties, which will make them at a loss. The main difficulties are: low quality and low efficiency of classroom learning; negative learning emotional experience; the dilemma of Matthew effect [5]; fuzzy self-worth; lack of sense of belonging.

#### ***3.1 Low efficiency and low quality classroom learning***

Teaching is a bilateral activity of teaching and learning, and both teachers and students are the main body of teaching. Therefore, teaching needs both teachers and students to participate and interact. However, the "marginal people" in the classroom do not participate in teaching activities. Their daily learning behavior not only

affects the realization of teaching objectives, but also makes students' learning efficiency and learning quality low, which is not conducive to the long-term development of students.

### ***3.2 Negative emotional experience of learning***

Most teaching activities cannot be carried out without the joint efforts of teachers and students, especially the active participation of students. The "marginal people" in the classroom will often keep silent, and they are not willing to express their doubts. Therefore, students' learning effect is greatly reduced and their learning enthusiasm is low, which also makes their learning emotional experience more negative. I can't feel the pleasure of learning and the confidence and happiness brought by success.

### ***3.3 The dilemma of "Matthew effect"***

Matthew effect means that in the process of classroom learning, students who are active in the classroom will be more active, and those who are confident in learning will be more confident. On the contrary, marginal people will be more silent in the classroom. If there is no teacher's attention or help, they will be more silent and deviate from the classroom.

### ***3.4 Fuzzy self-worth***

Most of the "marginal people" are relatively backward in performance, lack of self-confidence in learning, and cannot feel their own value of existence. Over time, they will blur their own learning and existence value, and more and more deviate from the classroom and become a fixed "marginal person" in classroom teaching.

### ***3.5 Lack of sense of belonging***

Class is the main unit of students' activities and the main place to meet the needs of students' sense of belonging. However, the active or passive learning activities of "marginal people" in the classroom make them unable to find their own sense of belonging to the class and identity while not being accepted by teachers and students. At the same time, their learning emotional experience is poor, the lack of emotional belonging; learning motivation is low, the lack of their own spiritual sense of belonging, are not conducive to the construction of class collective and the return of "marginal people" to the classroom.

## **4. Breakthrough: the return of marginal people to classroom**

How to help the "marginal people" get rid of the practical difficulties and return

to the classroom is a topic that we should pay attention to. The following four aspects are mainly to help "marginal people" return to the classroom from four aspects: student-oriented, build student-based course; combine teaching with emotion, strengthen emotional interaction with "marginal people"; collective construction, cultivate a group of excellent class collective cadres, create a friendly and united class collective, create a democratic caring class cultural atmosphere; care for the cultivation, development of caring teachers, cultivate care to establish a caring relationship between teachers and students.

#### ***4.1 Student-oriented***

We should reject the label, respect the differences between students, and build a student-based classroom. First of all, each student is a unique individual. Teachers should look at each student with a different perspective and be good at discovering the "shining point" of each student. For "marginal students", teachers should change their perspective on the problem, regard "marginal students" as a breakthrough point to improve their classroom teaching quality, and change the focus of teaching reflection from the completion of teaching objectives to whether "marginal students" actively participate in the classroom and whether they have completed the planned learning tasks. Secondly, students are the main body of the classroom, and teachers play a guiding role in the development of students. Therefore, teachers should make every effort to select appropriate teaching contents, flexible teaching methods and rich teaching methods on the basis of grasping each student's individual needs, personality characteristics and knowledge acceptance ability, so as to stimulate each student's desire for learning and knowledge at a higher level and gradually satisfy them, so as to construct a student-based classroom, help "marginal students" return to the classroom and cultivate the society Students who are harmonious and unified with individualization.

#### ***4.2 Teaching in love***

The support from teachers' positive emotions is an important factor to improve students' teaching participation [6]. Teachers should carry out education in accordance with the concept of love, love everyone, pay attention to everyone, walk into every child, strengthen the emotional interaction with "marginal people" in the classroom [7], so that they can feel from their hearts that they are an important part of the class, and re-experience their own class level belonging. First of all, teachers should provide them with emotional experience scenarios, arouse students' resonance, promote students' positive learning emotional experience, so that students can feel fun, feel self-confidence and feel love in learning. Secondly, we should give full play to the role of classroom dialogue, enhance classroom interaction, improve students' learning enthusiasm, stimulate students' participation, and establish positive emotional ties. We should make full use of modern teaching means and high-quality teaching resources to make students keep up with the characteristics of the times and stimulate their participation in class. In terms of teaching philosophy,

it pays attention to the enhancement of students' emotional learning experience; in terms of teaching means, it pays attention to students' sensory experience, enhances students' learning flexibility and interest by using developed information technology, simplifies, concretizes and clarifies abstract knowledge, makes classroom "marginal people" easy to perceive and understand, stimulates their interest in learning, and enhances their self-confidence in learning.

#### ***4.3 Collective construction***

Teachers should make full use of the Group Dynamic Effect [8] to guide the formal and informal organizations to play a positive role. First of all, we should cultivate a group of excellent class collective cadres with part of the group, create a friendly and united class collective, create a democratic and caring class cultural atmosphere, enhance the sense of belonging of "marginal people" and improve their self-confidence in learning, so as to effectively realize the return of "marginal people" to the classroom. Secondly, we should build a united and good peer relationship and form a united learning community. Teachers should guide the students correctly, let the students realize the importance of the class, guide the students to help each other and encourage each other, let the "marginal people" bravely open up, participate in communication, express their confusion and understanding of learning, and share their learning experience To promote their "physical" return to the classroom, but also to promote "marginal people" to return to the classroom "emotionally" [9].

#### ***4.4 Caring and nurturing***

Ethical care is the basis of harmonious relationship between teachers and "marginal people"[10]. Based on Noddings' caring education theory, we should strengthen the communication with the marginal people, develop caring teachers, cultivate caring students, and establish a harmonious and good teacher-student relationship. In the traditional teacher-student relationship, the teacher has always been a role of authority that cannot be challenged. Students dare not speak in front of the teacher, and finally do not want to speak, which makes the communication between teachers and students not thorough, and makes some students gradually degenerate into "marginal students" in classroom teaching. However, students are the main body of learning with subjective initiative, and they also have their own views or ideas. Therefore, teachers must pay attention to students' care and practice, communicate with students with students in an equal attitude and attitude of concern, encourage students to have equal dialogue with teachers, encourage "marginal students" to express their own ideas, and guide them to study independently and think independently, gradually integrated into the classroom.

### **5. Conclusion**

Teaching education is the core concept of education. Therefore, "educating"

marginal people also points to our educational purpose. However, it is a long-term and complicated educational process to help the "marginal people" in classroom teaching to break through the practical difficulties and return to the classroom. Only by digging into the causes of the formation of the "marginal people" and fully grasping the transformation strategies of the "marginal people", can we gradually eliminate the "marginal people" and make them become "classroom people" as soon as possible.

### References

- [1] Zhang Miao, Zheng Youxun(2016). Transformation of "marginal people" in classroom teaching from the perspective of ecological classroom. *Contemporary education science*, vol.18, p.61-64.
- [2] Qi Yuhui, Zhou Shuhua(2015). The concept of "marginal person" in classroom teaching and related analysis [J]. *Education academic monthly*, vol.12, p. 86-91.
- [3] Qi Yuhui, Li Sen(2014). on the formation process and coping strategies of marginal people in Classroom Teaching . *Education science*, vol.30,no. 2,p. 32-37.
- [4] Wang Xiao, Wang Naiyi(2020). One is indispensable: educational drama promotes "marginal people" back to the center of classroom. *Mental health education in primary and secondary schools*, no.1, p.58-61.
- [5] Yuan Shuyun(2016). Dilemma and breakthrough of marginal person phenomenon in University Classroom Teaching. *Journal of Kaifeng Institute of education*, vol.36,no. 12,p. 83-84.
- [6] Chen Yuan, Ma Yandong, Liu Xu(2019). New understanding of classroom marginal people and its teaching application. *Contemporary education theory and practice*, vol. 11,no. 4,p. 1-6.
- [7] Chen Xinyi(2020). Research on "marginal people" in Classroom Teaching -- Based on Bandura's ternary interaction theory. *Heilongjiang science*, vol.11,no.7, p.152-153.
- [8] Yuan Shuyun(2016). Dilemma and breakthrough of marginal person phenomenon in University Classroom Teaching. *Journal of Kaifeng Institute of education*, vol.36,no. 12,p. 83-84.
- [9] Ma Xianglian, Yang Hui(2019). Elimination of marginal people in classroom teaching: Based on Noddings' educational care theory. *Journal of Xinyang Normal University (PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EDITION)*, vol.39, no.4,p. 81-85.
- [10] Zhang Rong(2020). Analysis on the transformation strategy of "marginal people" in classroom learning. *Shanghai Education Research*, no.1,p. 79-84.