

Transforming the Curriculum into the Classroom - An Inquiry into Classroom Instructional Change

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Abstract: Changing the "knowledge classroom" into a "competence classroom" and getting rid of the traditional "duck-filling" teaching is a top priority for the development of higher education in China. Classroom teaching reform not only needs to respect the traditional teaching methods on the basis of exploring the development of a new road, but also actively strive for public recognition, the formation of reform synergy. By correcting the possible shortcomings of the reform path, we can significantly stimulate students' usual learning initiatives, improve their daily learning efficiency, ensure that classroom teaching is student-centred and focused on students' own development, and effectively improve the scientific and rational nature of the classroom. It is imperative that classroom teaching reform should actively face the real-life problems faced by classroom teaching reform and find strategies and ways to reform classroom teaching. With reference to the development trends of education and teaching at home and abroad in the past two decades and relevant literature, this paper will analyse the scientificity, rationality and necessity of classroom teaching reform from three aspects: analysis of the current situation of university classroom teaching, the practical problems faced in implementing classroom teaching reform, and the strategies and ways to implement classroom teaching reform.

Keywords: classroom reform; higher education; teaching strategies; student assessment

1. Introduction

Classroom teaching reform does not mean that the real national conditions are detached to promote empty ideas, but should adhere to the national conditions of China, healthy promotion of China's higher education classroom reform, to avoid teachers and students passive coping, to achieve a win-win situation for both teachers and students. According to the learning characteristics of university students, we should fully mobilise students' enthusiasm in the classroom, increase their participation in the classroom, emphasise the learning process, pay attention to different learning needs, and improve two-way or multi-way communication behaviour between students, teachers and students. The traditional "summative" assessment is transformed into a new "process" assessment, and the most suitable reform method for the development of higher education in China is sought.

2. Analysis of the current state of university classroom teaching

(1) Current status and trends in university classroom teaching

Higher education is a form of education that has been developed in response to the current social trends, with the aim of cultivating the high-level specialists required by a certain society, so that the educated can become the builders and successors of the socialist cause with comprehensive development. In order to achieve the goal of all-round development, the educated person must be able to pursue the truth and create knowledge. The teacher plays a pivotal role in the process of education, not only by imparting knowledge but also by being a beacon of light for students to discover and explore uncharted territories. Teaching in the university classroom is supposed to be based on practical research, in which students are taught not only how to learn but also how to create.

(2) The nature and purpose of teaching in the university classroom

The university classroom is a classroom with depth and height, and is oriented towards the development of new areas of innovation and entrepreneurship. It should be student-centred, with independence, enquiry, communication and participation as its main features, and with comprehensive competence assessment as its core. The university classroom should be classified as a "competence"

classroom, and the core objective of the teaching process should be to achieve the comprehensive cultivation of knowledge, quality and competence for contemporary university students. Therefore, the reform of classroom teaching should reflect the contemporary characteristics of the university classroom, and reshape the university classroom with new ideas and methods in terms of specific educational content and training forms.

3. Realistic Problems Facing the Implementation of Classroom Teaching Reform

(1) The fact that classroom reform is over-optimistic

As far as the concept of classroom reform itself is concerned, it is ideal and ahead of its time, which means that in some respects it can be partial or biased. At this stage of higher education in China, classroom reform is far more desirable than we are able to implement. It requires teachers to be free to change their role in the classroom to that of facilitator, organiser, evaluator and researcher, which places high demands on the professionalism of teachers and exposes the fact that there is still a gap between the actual teaching standards of some of our educators and the teaching standards required by the new classroom reform. The conceptual reconstruction and conceptual innovation advocated by the classroom reform means that in practice there will be a lot of incompatibilities, such as the dichotomy between traditional and reformed teaching methods and the misuse of certain crystallised learning styles. However, some educators believe that the distance between goals and reality is a necessary part of classroom reform, otherwise it becomes a continuation of past work that has not been optimised. ^[1]Moreover, higher education classroom reform is not just a short-term goal and does not need to be rushed; long-term scientific planning of classroom reform should be the direction of education and teaching and development in line with our national conditions. A long-term scientific plan for classroom reform should be the only way to develop education in line with our national context. If we only cater for foreign progress, we will be doing damage to our own traditional education system and the new plan will be aborted.

(2) The reality that classroom teaching and learning reforms are difficult to put into practice

From an objective point of view, there are still many factors that are not conducive to the implementation of the concept of classroom teaching reform, the following two factors are more prominent: firstly, the drive of local interests hinders the process of implementing classroom teaching reform for teachers. Many teachers have already formed a system of education and teaching that is unique to their own habits through their long working experience, and the unknown risks of reform make some teachers reluctant to try new teaching methods. The rejection of classroom teaching reform can be seen as a self-protection mechanism for teachers, as a rule-based approach to teaching does not lead to mistakes, but the idea of no mistakes limits teachers' individuality, resulting in insufficient opportunities for new ideas to be applied and operationalised. Secondly, teachers' misjudgement of the relationship between concepts and behaviour affects the effectiveness of the implementation of classroom teaching reform ideas. Many teachers believe that classroom teaching reform only requires an emphasis on conceptual change without corresponding changes in measures. Such behaviour is tantamount to stagnating curriculum reform at the conceptual level, resulting in a defacto contradiction between conception and behaviour, and classroom teaching reform is thus reduced to a paper exercise, which directly affects the effectiveness of the implementation of the concept of classroom teaching reform.

4. Strategies for classroom teaching reform and ways of implementation

Classroom teaching reform is a systematic project. Teachers should establish a correct and scientific view of the classroom, education and teaching values, and develop implementation strategies around the key elements of classroom teaching reform to form a strong synergy to promote education reform. ^[2]

(1) Changing the view of teaching quality and enhancing classroom interactivity

The classroom reform motivates students to take the initiative to learn by building their own groups and initiating corresponding discussions, enhances students' motivation to learn, reduces communication situations that are not known to the teacher in class, and allows students to learn independently, bring their questions to class and collaborate with each other to answer them. ^[3]At the same time students exercise their expression skills in the discussion, know how to look at problems from the perspective of others, check for gaps, inspire and promote each other, and deepen their

understanding of the subject matter, thus achieving a multiplier effect.^[4] The role of students from passive to active, occupy the classroom learning "C-position", from the follower of learning to the initiative initiator, become the real protagonist of the classroom. The role of the teacher has also undergone a corresponding change, from the knowledge of the instigator "evolution" to the knowledge of the guide. At the same time, the classroom teaching reform has greatly improved the communication opportunities between students and teachers, and teachers can participate in classroom discussions at any time. It is easy to imagine that the implementation of classroom teaching reform will greatly enhance student-teacher interaction, transforming the one-way transmission of knowledge output from teacher-student to two-way or even multi-way communication between teachers and students, as is customary in traditional education in China. The specific model can be seen in Figure 1.

As the saying goes, "teaching grows on each other", the classroom reform has greatly deepened the cooperation between teachers and students, and in the process of teaching, teachers and students hone each other for mutual benefit.^[5]

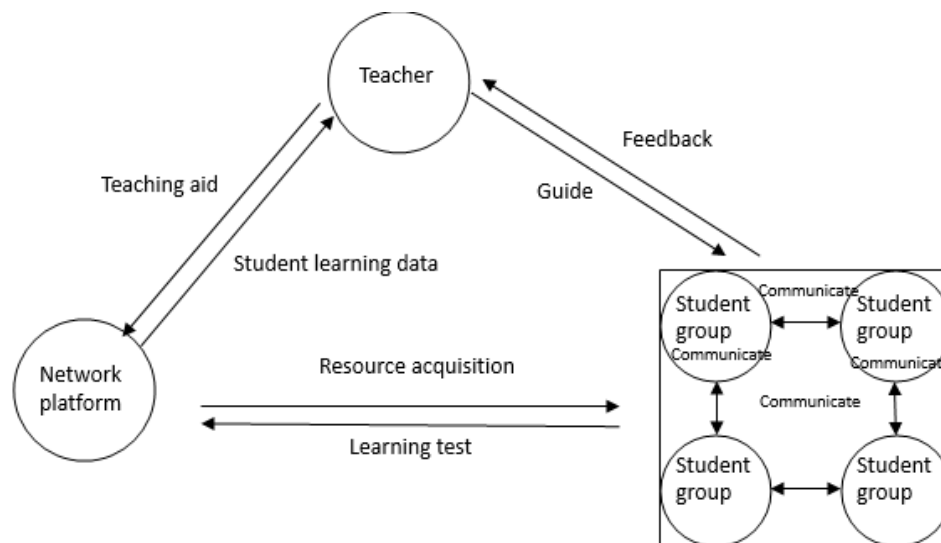


Figure 1 Classroom teaching reform model reference

(2) Change the way students assess teaching, from "teaching" to "learning"

Valuable evaluation indicators should not be limited to teachers' preparation, attitude and content, but should be scientifically sound, and should not be limited to the dialectical relationship between teaching and learning, incorrectly assuming that "teachers teach well" is the same as "students learn well".^[6] This is not to be done in a scientific way. The assessment of students' teaching should not only evaluate the teacher's performance in the classroom, but also their own participation in the classroom and their ability to learn effectively, with a focus on the student as the main subject of learning, in line with their actual learning situation and cognitive ability. The corresponding assessment management department should take the students' point of view and not stand in opposition to them so that they become resistant to the assessment, but should actively promote and guide them to realize the importance of their own assessment results and to know that they are the biggest beneficiaries after the assessment, so that they can complete the transition from "I was asked to comment on the teacher's teaching" to "I take the initiative to evaluate my teacher's teaching". When designing evaluation indicators, universities should take as their basic focus how to improve students' learning effectiveness, stimulate their interest in learning and promote their growth and success, and clarify "who is the subject of learning" and "who serves whom".^[7]

The introduction of the assessment system is an inevitable act in the development of higher education in China, and there is still a long way to go to improve the student assessment system from "assessment of teaching" to "assessment of learning", but at least two principles should be followed in the fundamental assessment system: initiative and feedback.^[8] Only when students voluntarily and actively participate in the assessment, the results will be real and effective. Schools should change the forced assessment behaviour, not one-sidedly emphasise the rights and interests of one party and suppress the other, and maintain a balance between the interests of all parties, so that both teachers and students can achieve a win-win situation.^[9] Only timely feedback on the assessment results will enable teachers to identify possible problems in teaching and form a mechanism for mutual promotion

between teachers and students.^[10]

(3) Changing the way teachers score and reducing outcome-based behaviour

Determine the indicators for the assessment of the usual grades: attendance and completion of the usual assignments. In classroom teaching, attendance is a visual representation of the time and effort students put into their studies, a "quantitative" indicator, while the completion of the usual assignments is a reflection of the students' learning effect and their mastery of professional knowledge, a "qualitative" representation. The combination of "quality" and "quantity" allows teachers to have a clear understanding of students' learning in the classroom. Depending on the course of study, these two indicators are divided into more detailed categories, and different combinations of indicators are chosen according to the characteristics of the course, in order to reflect students' learning in a comprehensive and realistic way.^[11]The detailed division can be found in Figure 2.

The assessment of course grades should be changed from a "summative" assessment to a "process" assessment, avoiding the results-only assessment method as far as possible, motivating students to learn by adjusting the weight of their learning performance, improving their learning effect, guiding students to pay attention to the usual classroom. This will help students pay more attention to the learning process and increase their participation in the classroom, and reduce the number of cases in which they can score high marks by memorising more.^[12]

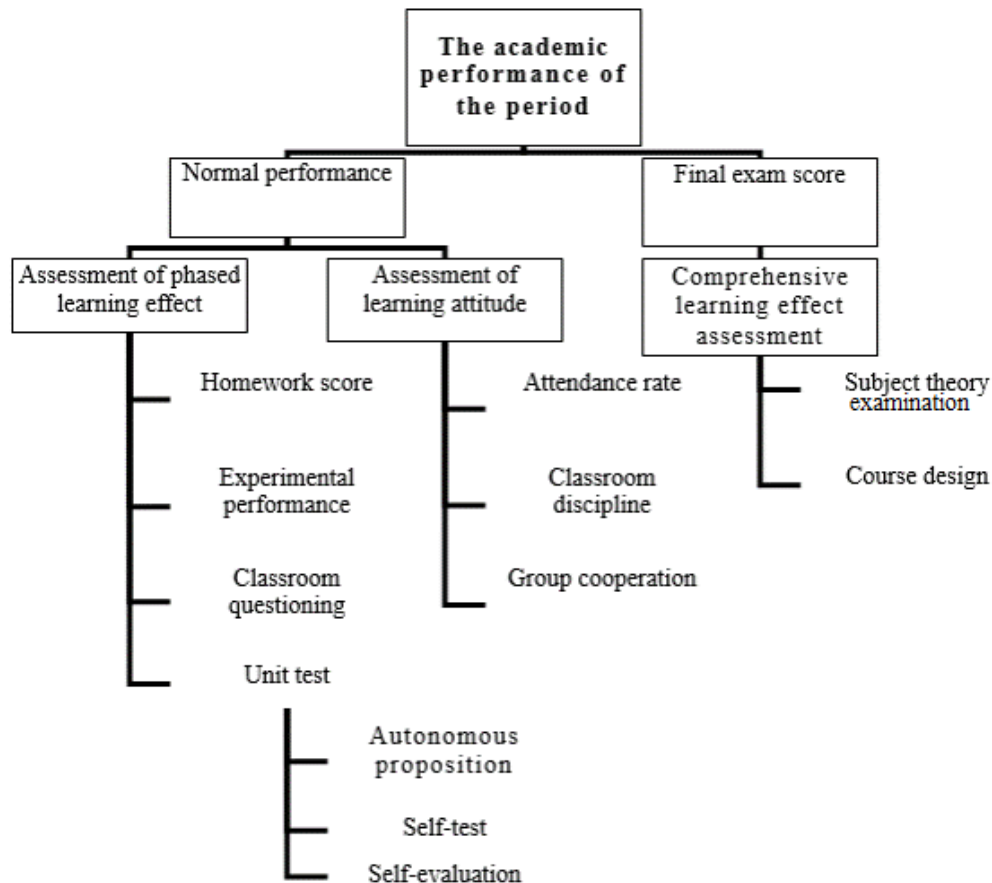


Figure 2 Course assessment composition table

5. Analysis of classroom teaching reform examples

In June 2022, a university published an article on the exploration and practice of "learning-centred" classroom teaching reform, proposing the route of competence development, outcome output as the guide, and continuous improvement as the path, and arguing the effectiveness, necessity and feasibility of classroom teaching reform in various aspects.

In order to change the concept of teaching quality and enhance classroom interaction, the university, in the context of classroom teaching reform, clearly takes students as the centre of education and

teaching, uses process-based assessment as a necessary means to achieve breaking the silent classroom to increase students' classroom participation, combines the traditional teaching classroom with modern information technology, and issues a number of scientific, reasonable and feasible documents and activities to fully mobilise the enthusiasm of teachers and students in an effort to fundamentally change the concept of education and teaching, truly establish the concept of talent training as the centre and students as the main body, to form a consensus and cohesion.

The university is deeply promoting learning-centredness by shifting the centre of classroom teaching from the teacher to the student and making the student the main subject of the classroom. By transforming the traditional silent classroom into a classroom with high inspiration, high discussion and high participation, the university has made the students' learning attitude and classroom interaction an important part of their overall final grade, and transformed the traditional silent classroom into a classroom with high inspiration, high discussion and high participation by means of rewarding incentives, small-class teaching and blended teaching. The university's project to transform the classroom from a traditional silent classroom into a highly stimulating and participatory classroom with the aim of achieving two-way or multiple communication between teachers and students, increasing students' interest in learning, and guiding students to change their mindset from "I want to learn" to "I want to learn". To this end, the university has set up more than 500 classroom teaching reform projects, strengthened and improved the construction of basic teaching organisations, approved 13 national courses and 123 provincial courses, and achieved remarkable results in classroom teaching reform. For the implementation of the above-mentioned concept, the university, through the evaluation system, respects the subjectivity of students from their point of view and puts the focus of the evaluation on examining the real classroom learning situation of students rather than the teaching situation of teachers, so as to urge teachers to change their educational and teaching concepts and form a positive feedback mechanism between teachers and students.

In the context of the classroom teaching reform, the university's undergraduates have been awarded 631 national and provincial major innovation projects in the past four years, the top 20 university student competitions in the country's comprehensive institutions, 2,300 papers published by undergraduates, including 226 high-level papers published by the first author, the further study rate increased from 22.60% to 37.97%, and the employment rate increased from 90.79% to 92.74%. This shows that by changing the teachers' view of teaching quality, students' assessment and teachers' marking methods can effectively enhance teacher-student classroom interaction, improve students' subjective initiative and enable students to become truly individual and creative pillars of talent.

6. Conclusion

The reform of classroom teaching is a necessary path for the development of higher education in China, but reform does not mean completely overturning the current education system in China, but rather finding a new path that is more in line with the national conditions of education in China on the old road.

Wise and unscientific. The reform of classroom teaching is a long and difficult road, requiring a change in the inherent attitudes of teachers and students, the acceptance of the masses, and a change from passive reform to active, spontaneous reform that brings together all parties and creates synergy in order to maintain the momentum for reform in the long term. From the curriculum to the classroom, it is not only a change of terminology, but also a change in teachers' attitude towards teaching and students' learning, not adhering to stereotypes, from "duck-filling" teaching to active learning by students, and creating a highly participatory and efficient classroom is the essence of classroom teaching reform.

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