

Research on “Student-centered” Teaching Method for Secondary Vocational Education

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Keywords: Secondary vocational education; “student-centered” method; teaching method

Abstract: According to the questionnaire survey, classroom teaching weariness and unwilling to learn students accounted for 50-68% in secondary vocational education. The situation is really worrying. Nowadays, teaching reform of secondary vocational education is becoming more and more serious. This paper discusses the implementation of “student-centered” teaching method in classroom teaching of secondary vocational education. This paper introduces and analyzes the basic principles and teaching methods of “student-centered” teaching method, as well as analyzes the feasibility of implementing this teaching method in classroom teaching of secondary vocational education, and also shows the difficulties that may be encountered in the actual implementation.

1. Introduction

During my 22 years of teaching and researching in the middle and higher vocational education, I have conducted nearly 5,500 questionnaire surveys year by year. The survey objects are teachers and students in vocational colleges about the situation of classroom teaching in secondary vocational education. No matter what major, many secondary vocational teachers will have no choice, but to shake their heads and sigh, look sad, blame the students' poor quality. It's difficult to let the students interested in teachers' lectures and pay attention to the class. Control the chaos of the classroom is simply painful. This makes many teachers get into job burnout ahead of time and begin to doubt their teaching organization ability and classroom management ability. As a result, some teachers begin to lose the confidence of being teachers, the enthusiasm of working and the sense of responsibility they should have. Therefore, it is difficult to find the sense of achievement of being a teacher in secondary vocational school. They get frustrated in their teaching.

As shown in the figure, it is the survey chart of the number of students who are bored with learning from 2014 to 2018. The number of secondary vocational students who are tired of studying has been increasing year by year according to the response of secondary vocational teachers, students and parents.

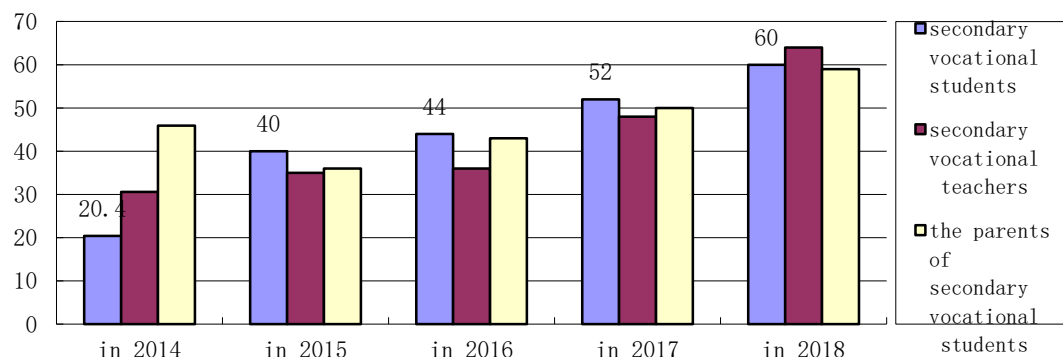


Fig.1 the data chart of the number of the weary students

Statistics on reasons why students are tired of studying: We are bored with some of the traditional and rigid class. If we love learning, we will not go to vocational school. Boring classes always make us scan the mobile phones, play games, update the moments of friends, chat WeChat, watch video or even sleep in class. But some of the skills and abilities that get us moving in class

are things that we students are interested in. It depends on how the teacher is doing in the class. This is the real reaction of secondary vocational students.

Of course, the above situation has a lot to do with education system itself. As a teacher, you may not be able to change education system, but you can change your teaching mentality, change your classroom teaching forms and improve your teaching methods. There may be unexpected results. The reform of classroom teaching in secondary vocational education has been put forward, and some foreign advanced teaching methods have been implemented, such as Germany's "action-oriented" teaching method, Britain's "student-centered" teaching method, "project teaching method" and so on. The introduction of advanced teaching methods into the classroom is strongly advocated to change the current situation of professional education. I have learned advanced teaching concepts and methods through nearly four months of national training, and I am deeply impressed by them. Since 2014, I have tried to introduce the "student-centered" teaching method into the classroom, meanwhile, communicate with colleagues. The teaching result is still effective. Students begin to really participate in learning and can be curious about what they have learned, which enables them to think about how to learn and develop the ability to solve real problems and their own problems in the process of learning. Here are some opinions on the feasibility of "student-centered teaching method" in the classroom teaching of secondary vocational education.

2. Basic principles and teaching methods of "student-centered" teaching method①

(1) Basic principles

The "student-centered" teaching method has the following nine basic principles:

Teachers act as promoters of learning, not as presenters of knowledge.

A. Make full use of students' existing knowledge and experience.

B. Consider students' needs and study interests.

C. Forming evaluation, student evaluation and self-evaluation have a strong promoting effect on learning motivation.

D. Cultivate students' core employment skills.

E. Students actively participate in the learning process.

F. Encourage students to study independently.

G. Encourage students to put forward their own ideas and develop the ability to solve problems.

H. Use activities or materials to motivate, help and challenge students.

In principle, the teaching concept of "student-centered teaching method" is that teaching is participation, and teaching is student-centered rather than teacher-centered, let alone indoctrination, which is fundamentally different from traditional teaching method.

Firstly, there are the role differences: in the traditional teaching methods, teachers are both dominant and main body, and the "student-centered" teaching method is based on students as the center. Students are involved in the main body, the teacher can play directors, advisors, mentors, promoters and managers, team leader, evaluators and coordinator role, but whether it is what kind of role does not affect the principle of students as the center.

Secondly, there are differences in learning patterns: The traditional teaching method is only a simple input, and the key point is to impart knowledge and skills. The teacher is just filling the vacancy of students, and students are passive acceptance, only through external stimulation to promote their learning. As time passes, they form dependence on the teacher. The "student-centered" teaching method attaches importance to the participation of students and is oriented by their behaviors. The key point lies in the creation and discovery of students, so that students can explore independently, learn independently and solve problems by themselves. Therefore, demand satisfaction has become the internal driving force of students' learning and greatly reduces their dependence on teachers.

Table 1 Data results

Data source: Dale, 1969^②

Learning Method	recall	
	After 3 hours	After 3 days
One-way lecture (teacher says, students listen)	25%	10%-20%
Reading form (including writing form, but passive writing)	72%	10%
A list of descriptive forms used by both the visual and auditory senses	80%	65%
Forms of participation (role playing, case studies, practical links)	90%	70%

The above groups are some data on the learning effect obtained by studying the teaching form. “Forty percent of what you hear is forgotten 20 minutes later. 77% forgot after 6 days. Ninety percent forget after a month. (Thalheimer, 2010) ^②

Joyce 7 and Showers (1981) ^② also came to the following conclusions:

By listening, we can master 20% of the content.

We know 30% of the content by looking at it.

We can grasp 50% of the content by watching and listening.

We know 70% by ourselves.

We know 90 percent by what we say and what we do.

So why do many people use traditional teaching methods? The reasons are:

- a. Education system restrictions.
- b. Long-term habits.
- c. Preparing lessons is relatively easy.
- d. There are few requirements for the teaching environment.
- e. High economic benefits (Only one salary is paid to the teacher, and the teacher can target 10 or 100 students).
- f. Class is easy to control.
- g. The assessment method of learning effect is simple and unified.

(2) Teaching methods

According to the basic principle of “student-centered” teaching method, the following ten teaching methods can be tried:

- a. Group activities b. Games c. Movie or video d. Class speech or presentation
- e. Homework f. Discussing g. Role playing h. Drama i. Poster production
- j. Field investigation of usability of the major

Studies have shown that the types of learning are: literacy, auditory, visual, tactile or motor. There are all kinds of learning types among dozens of students in a class, which means that a single teaching method cannot meet all students' learning habits and will make some students' learning effect worse.^① The traditional teaching method is teaching, and this method ranks first in the survey of teachers' teaching methods. It is reasonable to believe that many teachers have been using this method. If this method is used only, it can only meet the learning requirements of auditory students. Long-term use will lead to teachers speak too much, students will feel sleepy, not to mention how much teaching effect. “Student-centered” teaching method emphasizes the comprehensive application of the above ten methods in a class according to the actual situation, and tries to avoid repetition, so as to meet the learning needs of students of various learning types.

3. The feasibility of implementing “student-centered” teaching method in classroom teaching in secondary vocational education

Traditional teaching methods can no longer meet the needs of classroom teaching in modern

vocational schools, which undoubtedly increases the feasibility of “student-centered” teaching method in the process of vocational teaching. Especially in the teaching process of pre-school education major, I have tried to implement it year by year and recommended it to peers, which has high feasibility and obvious teaching effect. The education requirement of the secondary occupation also determines the need of “student-centered” teaching method. Secondary vocational education is different from ordinary education. It requires the cultivation of students' professional skills, as well as other abilities related to their majors. It pays attention to students' ability to create and discover, so as to cultivate students' ability to adapt to the development of the industry corresponding to their majors and the development of the society. This requires the students to move up, and to grasp the technology and skills in the teaching process. Obviously, the traditional teaching-oriented methods have failed to mobilize students' learning enthusiasm and cultivate their ability of discovery and creation. From the perspective of the basic principles and teaching methods of “student-centered” teaching method, it can adapt to the requirements of secondary vocational education. Take “cultivating students' core employment skills” for example, this principle stipulates that teachers must set the form and method of class with this as the goal in the course of class, and teachers can use “group activities”, “poster making” and other methods to achieve this goal. Now many industries need a sense of cooperation. The major of pre-school education requires three teachers in a class to cooperate with each other, so as to effectively take care and educate children. Such a sense of cooperation and ability can be realized in class with the method of “group activity”, so the teaching of secondary vocational class needs the “student-centered” teaching method to achieve its education needs.

(1) The quality and learning types of secondary vocational students reflect the necessity of “student-centered” teaching method.

The cultural quality of secondary vocational students is generally low, and the long-term examination education, which takes the exam score as the evaluation means, has seriously discouraged their enthusiasm for learning and learning various skills. Therefore, as shown in the questionnaire survey, it is difficult to mobilize the enthusiasm of students in class, and it is not only difficult to manage classroom discipline, but also difficult to carry out classroom activities. The low cultural quality of secondary vocational students indicates that their learning styles are not only auditory or read-write. Thus the traditional teaching methods lead to a vicious circle in classroom teaching. This undoubtedly increases the necessity of implementing the “student-centered” teaching method. “Student-centered” teaching method will take into account students' existing knowledge and experience in the design of teaching. According to their learning needs and learning interests, a variety of teaching methods can find ways to let students actively participate in the whole learning process, to meet the needs of different types of learning students. No matter the teaching principle or teaching method, “student-centered” teaching method can achieve student-oriented, so this teaching method is very necessary to implement to change the current situation of vocational classroom teaching.

(2) The feasibility of “student-centered” teaching method in secondary vocational education

Many secondary vocational teachers try to change their classroom teaching methods without understanding the “student-centered” method, such as grouping activities, games, role-playing, field trips and other methods, which fully mobilize the enthusiasm of students and achieve good teaching results. This teaching method is only piecemeal, not systematic. I also tried to use the method of allowing students to preside over the class in the course of ‘preschool children's artistic activities and guidance’, which I taught in secondary and vocational courses. Games were arranged in the class for students to complete in groups and evaluate by ranking. Students were allowed to discuss and evaluate the performance and harvest of their own group. I only made the final class summary. Each class got unexpected effect and good evaluation. The attempt of “student-centered” teaching method in this course also shows that it is feasible to implement “student-centered” teaching method in secondary vocational classroom teaching. In many secondary vocational backbone teachers training, there are also teachers who try to use this method to attend demonstration classes and achieve success, which also proves the feasibility of this method.

4. Difficulties in implementing the “student-centered” teaching method in the classroom teaching in secondary vocational education.

Every reform will encounter difficulties in all aspects at the beginning, and the reform of teaching methods is no exception. The survey found that in order to implement the student-centered teaching method in secondary vocational classes, there are mainly three difficulties: traditional teaching concepts and habits, teachers' quality and ability, and students' quality and ability.

The first is the difficulty in traditional teaching concepts and habits. Traditional teaching concept has been deeply rooted in many school leaders, teachers and students, and it is difficult to change for a while. Some school leaders and teachers are used to quiet, orderly classroom, never allow a little chaos, even if the students stand to listen to lectures, whispering and other chaotic performance. Moreover, the school is now stressed on safety first, which makes the teaching reform more difficult. Many students also believe that teachers should give priority to teaching in class, so that students can continue to work and learn independently. “Student-centered” teaching method may lead students to think that teachers are lazy and irresponsible. The field investigation shows that it is easy for students to mistakenly believe that such a class can be played or even skip class, and at the same time increasing safety problems, which increase the difficulty and resistance of implementation.

Secondly, there are difficulties in the quality and ability of teachers. In fact, the quality and ability of secondary vocational teachers vary. Firstly, some teachers are conservative and unwilling to change. Maybe they think that a change will bring them annoyance, pain and heavy work. Secondly, some teachers are unable to make reasonable teaching design according to their students' characteristics, and unable to control the “chaotic” classroom due to their poor ability. Thirdly, in the process of implementing the “student-centered” teaching method, teachers seem to be very relaxed in the class, but they have to spend a lot of time in the lesson preparation, which is more workload than traditional lesson preparation and more thinking. Therefore, some teachers cannot persist for a long time, and finally give up because they are afraid of hard work. In addition, many teachers have not been trained in the “student-centered” teaching method system, which makes it difficult for them to operate and achieve the expected results.

Finally, it comes from the difficulty of students' quality and ability. In the “student-centered” teaching method, teacher design and guidance is of course very important, but the key factor is still in the students, so the quality and ability of students has become an important factor affecting the implementation.[®]

At present, the quality and ability of secondary vocational students are generally low, which causes great difficulties to the progress of many links in class. For example, in group activities, it is likely that some students cannot actively participate in the activities, leading to the group's inability to complete the tasks, thus failing to achieve good teaching results. For another example, in the application of methods such as discussion and poster making, students may give up the task due to their ability defects. At present, the discipline, consciousness and persistence of secondary vocational students are weak, and it is difficult to effectively cooperate with the teacher's teaching. Students' non-cooperation will also cause the teacher to retreat from difficulties, which undoubtedly increases the difficulty of implementation of teaching method, especially in the long-term implementation.

Reform will never be plain sailing. In order to truly implement the reform of “student-centered” teaching method in the classroom of secondary vocational education, there will indeed be many difficulties and obstacles. However, from the above discussion, we know its necessity and feasibility, so I think, we should insist on the implementation of this scientific teaching method in secondary vocational classes. And as long as we completely change the traditional teaching concept, boldly abandon the original old teaching methods, actively guide students, and persist in learning and trying in line with the attitude of responsibility for students and responsibility for secondary vocational education, we believe that “student-centered” teaching method will be truly implemented in the secondary vocational class. At the same time, through the research of this paper, it can also help to solve the “how to teach” and “how to learn” problems of teachers and students. I hope it will

have great inspiration and help for secondary vocational teachers to teach, give guidance to secondary vocational students in their study as well.

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