

A Comparison of Chinese and English Classroom Management: A Case Study of “Are Our Kids Tough Enough?”

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In the documentary *Are Our Kids Tough Enough*, five Chinese teachers went to teach at a High School in Hampshire, England, and had a final assessment comparison of the quality of teaching with the English teachers. The collision of different cultures in the documentary has caused people to ponder over education both at home and abroad. This study explores effective classroom strategies and the positive role of cross-cultural factors in Chinese and English classroom management models to build an effective and dynamic classroom. Through a comparative study of Chinese and English classroom management models, this paper mainly finds out that English teachers tend to be more free-ranging in classroom management. Besides, the classroom atmosphere is relaxed, and students are active in thinking, but not concentrative. Chinese teachers, on the other hand, tend to have very serious management styles, and set strict discipline in the classroom. They concentrate under high pressure and, to a certain extent, suppress students' flexibility. In addition, this paper also elaborated three elements which are closely related to classroom management: (1). Teaching methods; (2). Teaching activity design; (3). Assessment. Through the comparative study, we find that Chinese classroom management model is more rigid, in which teachers can easily grasp the situation, but the classroom atmosphere is not very active. The British classroom management model is more flexible; students will not be too constrained, and classroom atmosphere is more active. But this has higher request to the teacher's classroom management ability: avoiding loss of control of the classroom discipline.

Keywords: Chinese-English comparison, cross-cultural communication, classroom management, *Are Our Kids Tough Enough?*

Introduction

In the context of globalization, the collision, communication and integration of different cultures are unstoppable. Cross-cultural communication naturally emerges, and many problems arising from cross-cultural communication need to be analyzed in combination with classroom management methods. With the intensification of international politics and economy, the governments of many countries pay more and more attention to education. When it comes to education, it must include classroom instruction. The essence of classroom teaching is that teachers organize students to complete specific teaching tasks of collective learning activities.

Kramsch & McConnell (1992) proposed that intercultural teaching mainly focuses on the teaching of target culture, including the comparison between learners' native culture and target culture, so as to help learners develop a reflective attitude towards the culture and civilization of the motherland. Gobel & Helmke (2010) conducted a DESI (student achievement assessment in German and English) study in Germany, which included teachers' cross-cultural experience and observable aspects of teaching. The results show that the precise external instruction for specific courses can help teachers to put cross-cultural themes into practice. According to the results of questionnaire survey and interview, the program has improved teachers' intercultural sensitivity and awareness in a structured intercultural environment, as well as their understanding of other cultures, and promoted their teaching skills and professional development.

In the context of globalization, the collision, communication and integration of different cultures are unstoppable. More and more Chinese volunteers go abroad to promote and spread Chinese civilization, and many foreign scholars come to China to teach. It is natural to have cross-cultural communication, in which many problems need to be analyzed in combination with classroom management methods. Therefore, I studied intercultural teaching by drawing on the experience of predecessors.

The paper is divided into five parts: The first part is an overview of the research significance of the application of cross-cultural communication factors in classroom management in the documentary "here comes the Chinese teacher". The second part summarizes the main characteristics and significant differences of the Chinese-English classroom management model in the documentary. In the third part, the definition and function of relevant cross-cultural communication factors and classroom management teaching methods are expounded. In the fourth part, a systematic comparison can be made between the relevant classroom management examples related to documentaries and students' performance data to analyze which method is more conducive to classroom management. The last part is the conclusion.

Literature Review

The literature review, from the perspective of the documentary *Are Our Kids Tough Enough* compares the implementation process and the results of a case study of Chinese teaching in the basic education, and introduce some studies on the classroom management, teaching method, teaching activity design and assessment.

Studies on Classroom Management

In this part, this thesis discusses the research on the classroom management from two perspectives, including time and task management in the classroom in China and other countries.

Wu (2014) analyzed the results of a questionnaire survey on classroom management of 100 middle school students and 15 Middle School English Teachers in eleven middle schools in Linyi and found that most Middle School English teachers still have problems in the management of problematic behaviors in the classroom.

Chen (2019) conducted this research is to find a good model for English classroom management. She believes that classroom management consists of four main components, namely, the physical environment, learning, classroom rules, rules and disciplines. The study was based on a theory and was conducted in two classic cases.

Studies on Teaching Methods

Three aspects, the comprehensive methods, the improvement of teaching concepts, the social constructivism are discussed in this part to show the significance of teaching methods in the classroom management.

Maijala (2020) advocated that more emphasis should be placed on cultural teaching methods in foreign language education, so as to transform from the traditional teacher-centered teaching method to a new student-centered dynamic method.

Voskoglou (2019) emphasizes social constructivism, and he believes that learning occurs when individuals engage in society to discuss common issues or interests and take action. The results of the experiment were evaluated and compared with the help of the “Average Grade Point” index to assess the quality performance of the students, and their average performance was evaluated using grey numbers.

Studies on Teaching Activity Design

Teaching activity design is significant in the process of classroom management and in this field, some studies, including some critical behaviors, the application of task-based language model as well as learning environment are conducted by.

Bahattin (2019) attempts to teach new terms and phrases to C1-level learners whose second language is Turkish, and conduct task-oriented activities in accordance with the principles of task-based language teaching. In the latter, seven sample activities were formed for the instructional design of task-based language teaching methods.

Kaune (2011) conducted this research to significantly improve the mathematical skills of middle school students. As the results of international comparative studies indicate that there is a link between metacognition and learning success, in order to fundamentally enhance the metacognition and discourse activities of students and teachers, a learning environment starting from the seventh grade of middle school mathematics has been developed.

Studies on Assessment

Assessment is indispensable in the successful teaching, in this part, this thesis tries to present some assessment ways including using some encouraging words, written assessment, the application of algorithm in the classroom and self-assessment.

Vehkakoski (2020) conducted a careful observational analysis to analyze the teacher's response to student failure in optimistic ways such as encouragement in the classroom. The results show that the teacher enhanced the optimism by reversing the negative utterances of the students, exemplifying the successful experience of the peers, praising the students' early performance or paying attention to the problems through teaching support.

Tseng (2018) proposed using an electroencephalograph to assess students' levels of attention and identify possible problems and solutions.

Comparisons of Chinese and English Classroom Management Models in *Are Our Kids Tough Enough?*

Through the analysis of the documentary, four aspects in the Sino-British comparison will be analyzed: classroom environments, whole class and individual teaching, teaching activities design and management of classroom problem behavior.

Classroom Environments

According to Chen (2019), Classroom management refers to teachers' action which leads to the creation of a learning environment where positive interpersonal interaction is promoted and effective learning is facilitated. So it is important to create a suitable classroom environment. The classroom environment in China and the UK has a very different experience. China's overall classroom environment is relatively simple and orderly. The bookshelves in the classroom were covered with textbooks, and the walls were hardly decorated. In the classroom environment in the United Kingdom, there are a lot of teaching-related teaching AIDS with characteristics and excellent works of students. The classroom environment in the UK is not static, and they frequently change the layout of the classroom environment according to the topic of the recent teaching content. For example: If you are learning geometry recently, their classroom will be full of all kinds of colored geometric patterns.

Teaching Activities Design

In the relatively loose and modern teaching environment in Britain, most teachers use vivid teaching aids to fully arouse students' enthusiasm and initiative. Chinese classroom teaching, although the actual situation is not rich, highlights the "want to learn", but in the classroom teaching the teacher designs the practice level to be stronger. The teacher is responsible for answering the relevant questions and guiding the students to think deeply and summarize the difficulties. The results of the end-of-term activities are presented as a group or individual rather than as a separate summary by the teacher. The Bogart science lab has a very British tradition of encouraging self-discovery. In science class, students do their own experiments, the British Science Teacher said: "We don't usually tell our students the solution, because the most important thing for a scientist is to figure it out for himself. Even if we give them some guidance, they still make mistakes. That's what science is all about. Make mistakes, correct them, and figure out the right way." The process of discovery takes time, it may not directly tell us what we know, but it certainly increases our interest in science and fosters a scientific spirit that seeks its roots. Hilary (2018) took it that China classrooms adopt "goal-oriented" approach to discussion, which is at odds with the more collaborative and exploratory Western discussion strategies.

Management of classroom Problem Behavior

English teachers generally encourage their students rather than criticize them severely. In the second episode of the 800 meter test, the least athletic students in the class didn't finish the race, and their former gym teacher didn't criticize him, instead reassuring him that he had more potential elsewhere. The Gym Teacher was sure that he would do very well in a certain field. But Chinese teachers do hold stopwatches and urge backward students to run faster, which inevitably leads to students' reverse psychology. In the documentary, when the students were talking to each other, teacher Li Aiyun walked into the classroom and stood in front of the students, looking at them long and solemnly. Evidently the students didn't notice that. One of the girls in the class was so naughty that the teacher angrily asked Sophie to stand next to her while she was munching on

bubble gum. Sophie thought it was funny at first, but later in the interview she mentioned that the teacher said they were dumber than the Chinese students. Sophie said the English teacher would never say that because it would be insulting. China has always been a country that respects its teachers, and in the Chinese language lesson shown in the video, students clearly don't respect their teachers enough. But apparently, teachers don't show enough respect for their students, such as publicly asking them to stand in the penalty box, not listening to their explanations, and publicly reprimanding them for being the worst student they've ever taught. Respect is reciprocal, so from this point alone one cannot point the finger at British education.

Implication

Implications for the Chinese Classroom Management

First, improve the classroom teaching process. First of all, our classroom teaching should focus on helping students to use teaching activities for research-based learning. We can find that research-based learning is very important in the English classroom. There are many kinds of research-based learning models. If it is an open-ended question, the student must observe carefully, ask questions according to the observation, then explore the question according to the question, and finally verify the original idea through practice.

Second, design a variety of meaningful classroom activities. In this documentary, we can find that English teaching not only has a wealth of teaching AIDS, but also a wealth of classroom activities. Designing more meaningful teaching activities in the classroom is also an area for improvement in Chinese classrooms. In order to implement effective teaching activities, it is necessary to design teaching activities according to students' physical and mental characteristics. According to Wang (2008), only the diversification of teaching styles and the diversification of classroom activities can achieve the best teaching effect.

Implications for the English Classroom Management

In order to implement stricter management measures in English classrooms, teachers should establish higher prestige among students. If the classroom discipline is too loose, often can not achieve good teaching results. The Middle School is a critical stage for students to learn knowledge and skills. In the future, more complex knowledge will be based on the knowledge and skills that middle school has learned. Zhang (2017) advocated that interactive teaching management mode requires high professional quality of teachers. If teachers do not have enough ability to control the teaching progress and classroom atmosphere, it may have a negative effect on the whole teaching effect.

Conclusion

No matter in the United Kingdom or in China, the coexistence of multicultural school classroom management assert higher requirements and challenges. We should renew our educational concepts, objectively compare the advantages and disadvantages of education in China and the United States, think deeply about the current situation of cross-cultural classroom management, and keep on studying, in theory and practice. Chinese education should acquire the advantages of attaching importance to students' practical ability and grouping by ability in British education, in particular, changing the too rigid teaching method, actively interacting with students and teaching according to their different learning ability levels, meeting the learning needs of different students. Teachers in China are supposed to apply new ideas and methods into the classroom and give students

more opportunities to participate in the activities and get some feedbacks. Through the research, we identified the differences between Chinese and western classroom management models in three aspects: classroom environment, teaching activity design and classroom problem behavior management. The teacher acts as a push hand to guide the students to think deeply and summarize the difficult points. However, British teaching activity design is more inclined to let students discover their own shortcomings. In terms of classroom problem behavior management, we can find through comparative studies that students in the UK and China have different feelings about classroom tension. Different cultures have different impacts on the classroom behavior management, which requires us to discard the dross and take the essence.

It is hoped that this study on the education situation in China and Britain can bring the enlightenment to other scholars. However, there are still some shortcomings in the research process. For example, only descriptive research was conducted, no in-depth research was conducted, the sample size was too small, and the data were insufficient.

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