Comenius’ Thought on Learning Efficiency*

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Comenius clarified the requirements of teaching and learning and its effect on learning efficiency in the book *The Great Didactic*. Students’ learning efficiency is mainly affected by the following four factors: the appropriate timing; carefully preparing classroom teaching; choosing the appropriate teaching environment; and taking care of the special needs of students, which provides reference for today’s student learning and teacher teaching.

*Keywords:* Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, teaching, teacher

**Introduction**

Learning efficiency is something that teachers and parents are very concerned about nowadays. With high learning efficiency, learning becomes a very easy task, and low learning efficiency makes learning a burden. “In the learning process of students, there are often some factors that affect their learning efficiency including subjective factors and objective factors” (Huang, 2015. p. 78). Comenius talked about the requirements of teaching and learning as well as its effect on learning efficiency in *The Great Didactic*.

**Following the Appropriate Timing**

Learning the appropriate materials at the appropriate time is more efficient than “stupid bird flying first” and “remedy.” Comenius (2014) said in *The Great Didactic*, “All subjects should be arranged, so that they are suitable for the age of the students, and anything beyond their understanding should not be taught to them.” Therefore, “appropriate” is an extremely important word for teachers. They need to understand their students’ knowledge reserves, knowledge acceptance ability, psychological acceptance, and repulsion at that age, so as to teach them what they can accept, so that they can achieve perfection absorb. For example, we take students’ literary work as an example. Based on the analysis of students’ physical, psychological, and cultural levels, we finally come to the following conclusion: Early childhood (3-6 years old) is suitable early childhood literature, childhood (7-12 years old) is suitable for children’s literature, and adolescence (13-15 years old) is suitable for juvenile literature. What teachers have to do is to encourage students to learn these literatures at an appropriate age.

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In teaching, using appropriate teaching methods or teaching language is also an appropriate material. Take elementary education as an example. When we teach lower grades, we should use more cordial language. For example, “My babies, I want to ask you, how did Uncle Elephant cross the river?” “My babies,” “Uncle Elephant” and some onomatopoeia can all highlight the cordial meaning. So that students can migrate from the lifestyle in kindergarten to form a faster learning adaptation, and “lower grade students have obvious randomness and emotionality due to weaker perception of purpose” (Yan, 2012). As far as teachers are concerned, it is necessary to use the status of elders to carry out appropriate education; while teaching senior students, they can no longer do so. The students in the upper grades of elementary school “began to doubt the words of their parents, especially teachers, when they are treated unfairly, they dare to openly contradict themselves, express their dissatisfaction, and sometimes do things regardless of the consequences.” For the students, the equality of dialogue is what they urgently need. Teachers must first deal with matters with fairness to meet their urgent needs at this age. When talking to them, try to use a tone of gentle discussion. In class, use questioning methods, inducement methods, etc. to enable students to learn independently.

Preparing Classroom Teaching Carefully

Comenius emphasized the importance of preparing materials. “Before the gardener starts to work, he prepares the garden, the branches, the scion and the tools, so as not to find the necessary tools while working, otherwise it will ruin the whole work” (Comenius, 2014). It can also be said that before the teacher starts a class, he must prepare everything needed for the class, including preparation of teaching plans, teaching aids, the preparation of the teacher’s complete familiarity with the content of the class, and the psychological preparation of the teacher. “Everything stands beforehand, do not abandon beforehand.” From this old saying, we can also see how important it is for teachers to prepare before class. Let us take a simple mathematics class of “understanding triangles” as an example. If in the course of the class, you need to draw a triangle on the blackboard with a ruler to verify that the sum of the two sides is greater than the third side. Due to the teacher’s insufficient preparation of the materials before the class, the verification cannot be carried out, and the whole class will be deadlocked. The atmosphere in the classroom will become awkward. At this time, if you take it, the atmosphere just created in the classroom will be destroyed; if you do not, the experiment will not be randomly verified on site. But of course, there may be two-handed preparation. It is clearer to use the animation effects on the PPT to verify it. This does not belong to the category of not having prepared materials. “Classroom is the most important field for every teacher. Pre-class preparation is the preliminary work of cultivating the land. The success of a class is closely related to whether the teacher fully prepares for class” (Dai, 2015, p. 192). Only with complete and sufficient preparation, teachers can use smooth thinking to sort out the original in the classroom teaching process, and students can follow the smooth thinking of teachers to get step-by-step inspiration and understand new knowledge.

Choosing the Right Teaching Environment

“Naturally choose a suitable object to act, or first handle it appropriately to make it suitable” (Comenius, 2014). This is also what Comenius mentioned, which contains two aspects. First, the school should choose the student that suits him, and the student should choose the school that suits him. A blind person should go to a school for the blind, because there is no match between them. When a blind person enters an ordinary school, it is difficult for him to learn anything due to the lack of sense organs. Only in the right school, there is a suitable
one for him. A series of teaching methods can enable the blind to get the sublimation of knowledge. On the other hand, when students enter school, they are not always 100% integrated with the school, but only match to a large extent. When entering a school, there will often be a series of “incompatibility,” for example, cannot understand the school rules; cannot accept the teacher’s way of teaching; do not like the course; the students’ psychology is inconsistent with the psychological development of the curriculum taught by the school, etc. However, in school, students need to continuously improve themselves, constantly sublimate themselves, and constantly run in with all the “disagreements,” so that they can get in harmony with the learning environment to a greater extent and fully adapt to this big under the learning environment. “All obstacles should be cleared for the school” (Comenius, 2014). The development of the school is for the formation of students’ intelligence and the improvement of their psychological qualities. In addition, all obstacles that prevent the school from developing towards these two main purposes should be removed. For example, the games that now entangle the majority of young people, as well as pornographic websites on the Internet, are all stumbling blocks on the road that affects students and the school. “Anyone who enters the school must insist on studying” (Comenius, 2014). This is also the request made by Comenius. Then, entering the school to fall in love, or forming a gang, etc. did not complete the basic requirements, so that oneself Harmony with the school.

Taking Care of the Special Needs of Students

“Nature is from universal to special in the process of its formation” (Comenius, 2014). In the teaching process of a school, it is impossible for a teacher to teach a student in a public school, and it is impossible for a teacher to teach in a public school. All the students have the same effect. After a course, there will be a few students who do not understand, so the teacher’s teaching is to pursue the complete understanding of most people, and then provide “special” tutoring to individual students. For example, in the text “Understanding Triangles” in teaching students mathematics, a classmate asked, “Teacher, you just gave three special examples, right-angled triangles, acute-angled triangles, and obtuse-angled triangles. Enumerate it again, how can you be sure of the conclusion that the sum of the two sides of a triangle is greater than the third side?” At this time, as a teacher, you must patiently answer this “special” question. First, explain to her that the triangle is including these three types, the examples in class are not partial generalizations, but examples based on the general characteristics of the three types of triangles. Of course, students may still not understand, at this time you have to rely on computer technology to operate. The above is an example of teaching from universal to specific.

From the perspective of learning, there are principles from universality to particularity. In the teaching process, teachers first talk about the commonalities of knowledge points, and then explain the particularities among them. Also, take “understanding triangles” as an example. Before teaching right-angled triangles, acute-angled triangles, and obtuse-angled triangles, the teacher must first define the triangle, and first engrave the knowledge of triangles in the students’ minds, and then come to the basic properties of triangles. Do a more detailed investigation. In terms of learning, universal to specific learning methods can also make students’ learning significantly improve.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the requirements of Comenius that affect the efficiency of teaching and learning are further explained after the introduction of elementary school language and math. All in all, the growth of a teacher requires continuous learning and continuous discovery to achieve. The requirements put forward in Comenius’
The Great Didactic provide pertinent suggestions for becoming a qualified teacher of the people. Mastering the requirements in teaching and learning is also more conducive to students’ learning and enables students to have a higher level of learning efficiency.

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