

SOME MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING CLASSROOM TEACHING SKILLS FOR GENERAL-EDUCATION TEACHERS

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Abstract. Teaching skill is one of the three factors that make up the teaching capacity of teachers. During the implementation of classroom activities, teachers can apply a lot of teaching skills to improve the quality of their lessons. The skill of making questions and presentation are used with great frequency by teachers. Based on understanding the nature of these teaching skills, the paper focuses on proposing a number of measures to promote the advantages and overcome the shortcomings in using these skills. Thus, the author pays attention to suggesting *strategic measures* (awareness of the importance of using teaching skills; identify methods and forms of organization of teaching in order to maximize the effectiveness) and *procedural measures* (techniques to help learners ask questions, techniques using verbal and nonverbal elements, techniques to guide students to take notes, to listen in presentation lectures,...). Knowing a harmonious and rational combination of skills during classtime, the teacher will achieve the best results in the process of imparting knowledge to the learners.

Keywords: Methods, questioning skills, presentation skills, classroom teaching.

1. Introduction

“The capacity of each individual is made up of three basic components: Knowledge of the field of activity (Capacity to know); Skills to conduct activities (Capacity to do); and Psychological conditions for organizing and implementing such knowledge and skills in a unified and clearly oriented structure (Expressive capacity)” [1]. According to this interpretation, teaching skills are one of the three factors that make up the teaching capacity of teachers. In an education university environment, the system of teaching skills of teachers is particularly important. Because on the one hand, teachers themselves need the skills to “transfer” knowledge most effectively to learners. On the other hand, learners - prospective teachers also need to be equipped with teaching skills for later career development and acquiring knowledge from experienced teachers as a “channel” for learners to receive and learn pedagogical skills in addition to perfecting professional knowledge and positive attitude to teaching. In recent years, many scholars in the world as well as in Vietnam have done in-depth studies on this issue at tertiary education. Robert Marzano, Debra j.Pickering, Jane E. Pollock [2]. SD. Brookfield [3], B.G. Erickson and D.W. Strommer [4], F.Marton, D. Hounsell and N. Entwistle [5], P. Ramsden [6]brought readers the message: to become an excellent teacher, first of all, teachers have to understand the learning experiences of students; teachers has been and

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practice. In Vietnam, authors Kieu The Hung [7], Phan Trong Ngo [8] and Dang Thanh Hung [9] presented the rich and valuable theoretical concepts, teaching methods and techniques in educational science and school practices. Based on the above theoretical foundation, the article initially proposed some measures to improve the effectiveness of classroom teaching skills of teachers: Skill of asking and using questions, presentation teaching skills.

2. Content

2.1. Orientation for proposing measures to improve the effectiveness of using questions in teachers' classroom teaching skills

2.1.1. Developing strategies for asking and using questions in fostering awareness and teaching skills for teachers

From the theoretical foundation and from the teachers' situation of using questions in classroom teaching, it can be seen: The questions teachers ask during teaching hours are few about the frequency of occurrence, and not effective and high quality (or small, out-of-focus questions, puzzling questions, too easy or too difficult questions, or questions used at the wrong time, questions are not good, questions do not stimulate the learners' positive responses). One reason for this is that teachers have not been adequately trained in an effective question-and-answer strategy. Most teachers use questions intuitively with personal experience. The school can organize seminars on teachers' questioning and question using skills. Accordingly, they should order and invite the excellent experienced classroom teachers in general, and teachers with experience of using the questions in teaching in particular to talk about how to ask and use questions effectively. This can be built into an annual seminar for young teachers.

2.1.2. Teachers should have tips on asking and using questions

- Use questions with the right object
- Use questions at the right time
- Diversify questions
- Raise questions clearly and concisely so that learners know the purpose of the questions
- Match questions to the learning goals
- Ask all students, not just focus on some students
- Give enough time to prepare an answer
- Appropriately handle with students' answer
- Avoid questions with *yes* or *no* answers
- Explore the first answers as needed
- Avoid tackling, guessing and cornering questions
- Avoid asking students what they already know
- Ask questions in a logical process

2.1.3. Raise and emphasize the goal of forming, using and improving the effectiveness of questions in teaching

The question system is the “core” of the lecture, it has a role to help the teachers be more active in class, perform the role of “scientific advisor”, promote creative thinking of learners. Teachers should be acutely aware that the issue of pedagogical training in general and the practice of questioning skills in teaching hours in particular is a regular job, the experience accumulated after each class hour, the construction and use of questions must be considered one of the specific criteria to evaluate the teaching hours of teachers.

Setting the goal of forming, using and improving the effectiveness of questions in teaching not only requires a lot of determined efforts of teachers but also requires teachers to have extensive knowledge, good career skills, requires the consent of members of the professional team.

2.1.4. Increase the use of teaching methods that are more likely to formulate questioning skills

Teaching methods are an important component of the teaching process. It is of great significance to convey the content and fulfill the lesson objectives. Diverse teaching methods, each method has its own strengths in accordance with certain goals. Teachers need to choose an appropriate method to practice their skills.

Methods of problem-raising teaching, case-based teaching, do not force learners to follow the teachers' will but they feel the learning to gain knowledge.

Methods of dialogue, dialogue combined with presentation to provide suggestive stimulation of cognitive needs of learners.

“Dialogue is the way to overcome all domineering... Dialogue is the only way to discover new realities for science and art”.

2.1.5. Increase the use of teaching forms capable of effectively implementing and forming questioning skills

In one hour of teaching, teachers should diversify the activities of learners. It is not a good idea to diversify learners' activities by launching a series of questions that make students stand and sit constantly to answer questions that teachers ask. The notion of a successful lesson time is that a lesson has many questions, but that the teacher's questions stimulate learners' thinking. One of the ways is to organize learning methods to stimulate students to compete more vigorously.

2.1.6. Skills to help learners ask questions

One of the difficulties teachers have when approaching students with active teaching methods is to create a favorable environment for them to be more active in learning, to ask questions, not just listen and answer the questions. Teacher's success in class is assessed through the questions and positive criticism that students give to the teacher, rather than the answers or scores on exams.

Teachers are often afraid to encourage students to ask questions during class hours because:

- They think students' questions will make them spend a lot of time teaching.
- They are not really confident to face unexpected questions, conundrums or even a few small questions of students.
- They are afraid of the crowd effect, worried that a question will generate many other questions and easily put themselves in the passive position.
- They want to ensure safety for teaching hours.

On the contrary, students are also very afraid to ask teachers questions, because:

- They are afraid of teachers, afraid of being judged by friends, being made fun of.
- They are shy and do not want to accept the unfriendly attitude of the teachers.
- They have the habit of being afraid to speak in public.

An active teacher must overcome his/her problems and difficulties and help learners overcome mental barriers. Specifically:

- Prepare well the main content and knowledge related to the lecture. Through this, prepare yourself for a good teaching mentality, only when there is good preparation, a teacher can actively handle questions the learners pose. This will help learners feel safe and want to ask.

- No empty knowledge or one-sided teaching. Please convey multidimensional, thorny and contradictory knowledge to learners to wonder and to need the knowledge clearance.
- Create a knowledge gap for learners to feel inadequate and wish to find the fullness and perfection of the knowledge.
- Organize many exciting teaching activities through active teaching methods to create a basis to encourage learners to bravely ask and criticize.
- Teachers have a close and friendly attitude and style, know to accept, share and accept the differences.

2.2. The orientation to propose to improve the effectiveness of teachers' presentation skills in classroom teaching

2.2.1. Teachers need to combine presentation skills with other skills in classroom teaching

** Combined with teamwork skills*

In this combination, teachers provide the basis of theoretical foundation. Students are divided into groups of 5 to 6 students per group. Each group will choose (or be assigned) a topic related to the content of the subject and then divide the task within the group for members to conduct the study of theoretical content related to the topic through books, textbooks, scientific research publications. The group will consult to compare, analyze the topic content in theory and topic content in practice. The groups will then write down the subject report with comments, assessments or give their opinions on this topic. Finally, the groups will take turns to present the content of the course report that the group has made to receive comments or questions from other groups and teachers. The groups will discuss and answer the questions that are posed. If a group's answer content is not really satisfactory or there is a misunderstanding of the problem... then the teacher will provide additional support. The combination of presentation skills and teamwork skills will stimulate the active role of learners. Students are the ones who actively explore, think, identify, analyze, synthesize, evaluate... topic of their groups and topics of other groups.

** Combined with case use skills*

Case is a real situation in which the subjects need to make a decision. The cases summarize the different pressures and aspects that the subjects must consider when making decisions with information that is often incomplete or contradictory at the time. Some information in the cases may be intentionally omitted, allowing the cases to have many possible options. The cases often present a contradiction/ conflict, especially the tension between the different action plans that can create different perspectives, interests and values in the conflict and it requires to be resolved by a decision. The cases require students to play the role of the protagonist and make one or more important decisions. The cases help students develop confidence, the ability to think independently and work collaboratively with friends. In addition, case method is also an excellent tool for teachers to test the theoretical knowledge and deeper understanding of students.

2.2.2. Prepare presentations for lectures

One of the characteristics to ensure consistency of a presentation is that while preparing it needs to control the content and organize the time of the lesson. In presentations, teachers must be in control. And a clear management plan helps teachers feel confident in the classroom. In presentations, it is inevitable that no teacher will use verbatim of the whole presentation to teach, every teacher must rely on the outline of the lecture. That is, the teachers must prepare a list of main content or a series of words or sentences to suggest. The outline should not be too detailed because the teachers will no longer be able to keep eye contact with the student, of

course, it is not too sketchy because the teacher may “forget” the main content of the presentations.

2.2.3. Use of words and non-verbal elements

With presentation skills, in addition to mastering the content, mastering the skills, teachers also need the art of using words and nonverbal words in a logical and effective manner.

* *Using words:*

Must be accurate and clear for the learners to understand the right content.

Must be understandable and persuasive to learners believe and act properly.

Must be objective, polite to show respect for learners.

Words are rich in images but must be in line with the content, avoiding cliché and exaggeration.

* *Using nonverbal elements:*

Nonverbalness is the factors that accompany speech during presentations such as voice, walking, eyes, gestures, face, posture, outfit, distance, location... The characteristics of these factors are always present during the teachers' class hours and have high information value. It has the function of replacing, modifying, emphasizing the speech. For example, the *voice* needs to be warm, gentle, inspiring; *Eye contact* creates a close relationship with the learners. Eye contact is one of the most important, direct and effective means of establishing a relationship between teachers and students; *Facial expressions* show attitudes and emotions of people so that when presenting, they can also express emotions and express the content of lectures; *gestures* support and illustrate words to increase the effectiveness of information transmission. It includes head gestures (nodding, head shaking), hand gestures (hand waving...). These gestures make the teacher's presentation more lively and attractive; encourage and motivate learners to participate in lectures more effectively. When using gestures, you need to be natural, sincere and respectful.

2.2.4. Guide students to be listeners who listen

The biggest drawback of presentation skills is that the learners are tired of listening too much, being in a static state for too long; The teachers do not receive feedback from the learners. That's why teachers need tricks to get students' attention, they need to teach students to be good listeners. Teachers may have the following tips in teaching by presentations to attract students' attention:

- Inform students in advance that today's knowledge will be included in the tests.
- Inform students that at the end of lesson, within 5 minutes, they must sum up the main points of the lesson.
- Change the pitch, intensity and speed or gestures, facial expressions, moving, using visual aids.
- Create images that attract learners' attention.
- Connect lectures to the rights and interests of students, giving vivid examples and stimulate the curiosity of students, delay to give the solution of controversial issues.

2.2.5. Instruct students to take notes in presentation lectures

Taking notes is one of the activities that can make students try to concentrate and also be a memory aid. The benefits of note taking are acknowledged: first, the note taking process itself helps students remember more easily; second, what they take notes will be a source of concepts for later saving if needed. However, notes also have their own difficulties. Teachers need to give directions to help students take notes more effectively in presentation lessons. Specifically:

- In teaching period, there are new and difficult knowledge, so teachers encourage students to take notes and listen carefully.

- Teachers can pause at times to introduce new words or concepts or build broader concepts so students can keep up and take notes properly.
- Hand out the lesson outline first to the students.
- Collect what students have taken notes, evaluate the extent to which students have taken notes, synthesized, and suggest how to take notes more effectively. Note that students should not take notes verbatim words of teachers but must know how to handle information provided by teachers, presenting the relationship between blocks of knowledge.

3. Conclusion

In the course of implementing classroom lessons, teachers can apply a variety of teaching skills to improve the quality of their lessons. The skill of asking and using questions and presentation skills are the skills used by teachers with great frequency during teaching hours. Each skill has certain advantages and disadvantages. Understand the true nature of each teaching skill, adhere to the principle of not promoting or ignoring any teaching skills; know to exploit the advantages and limit the disadvantages of each type of teaching skills; know how to combine harmoniously and reasonably skills in teaching hours, teachers will achieve the best results in the process of imparting knowledge to learners.

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