

Beyond Imparting Knowledge, Shaping Future Citizens

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Abstract: It is generally believed that the purpose of school education is to impart subject expertise. But the knowledge impartment only may not necessarily shape the citizens with future international competitiveness. To enlighten the current hotspots and trends in American education, this article discusses the education going beyond imparting knowledge and shaping the future citizens with international perspective and competitiveness.

Keywords: Knowledge Impartment; Future Citizens; Thinking Ability; International Vision

Confucius said, "Both learning without thinking and thinking without learning are bad". This was the warning he gave to those students who did not study, which is exactly what we need in school education today. Because the current status of school education is as Mr. Lin Yutang said in his *What Kind of People can be Called Educated?* the school is educating a large number of people like mass production in a factory, and everything in the factory must operate according to a rigid, mechanical system. In order to protect its reputation and standardize its production, the school must be certified by a diploma. Therefore, the diploma replaced the real purpose of education in the hearts of the students. In order to get a diploma, students had to memorize knowledge by heart, constantly participate in various mechanized exams and quizzes, replacing the cultivation of insight or judgment with factual memory, which caused today's seemingly completely reasonable antecedents. However, people are not products on the production line, they cannot be formulated uniformly, and they cannot be mass-produced in the same way. Therefore, how do we understand future education? How to grasp the trend of education and train future citizens with international competitiveness? This is something we should focus on today's school education.

1. Strengthening scientific research in learning and cultivating students' growth thinking

Not long ago, the "American Education Trends 2018" report released by Teach Thought gave us some inspirations. This report ranks the top 20 educational development trends that American educators are most concerned about from the vast amount of information and data, sorted from high to low, with a score of 0 to 10. The first place is growth thinking which got a full 10 points. This topic illustrates two issues: First, American educators attach great importance to the scientific research of learning, that is, to study how the human brain learns? How did thinking develop? How does cognition happen? Second, compared with the fixed thinking mode, American educators pay more attention to the cultivation of students' growth thinking. Because in the eyes of Americans, growth thinking is more helpful to cultivate children's positive attitude to face difficulties and challenges, and will also increase children's IQ by stimulating more active brain activities.

According to the theory of Carol Dweck, a psychology professor at Stanford University, there are two kinds of thinking: fixed thinking and growth thinking. The main difference between these two kinds of thinking is that: people with fixed thinking think that a person's IQ is basically fixed (as born), and the acquired efforts actually have little meaning. When they encounter setbacks, they always make excuses for themselves: "I am stupid by nature, and failure is also expected." They tend to pay close attention to their

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current performance and often give up because they are afraid of poor performance. And people with growth thinking believe that no matter what aspect, they can be improved through acquired efforts. Therefore, they pay more attention to future results and the process of current efforts, even the current poor performance does not prevent them from continuing to work hard. Two different modes of thinking lead to differences in learning methods: fixed thinking students like vacuum cleaners, trying to memorize everything, while growing thinking students focus on learning methods. They are good at finding learning rules and always learn lessons from mistakes. However, in our classroom teaching today, some teachers seem to prefer students with fixed thinking, because they are willing to cope with various exams, and get good grades. If we do not change this mind, we will not be able to shape future citizens with international competitiveness. Because in terms of knowledge memory and simple understanding today, artificial intelligence has surpassed humans in many aspects. In the future, work that relies mainly on memory and simple understanding will be completely replaced by artificial intelligence. Today's study is a preview of future life. The content of student learning is about life itself, using knowledge to solve problems in real scenes, not just the width of knowledge. It does not matter how much knowledge is mastered. What is important is the ability to acquire knowledge and creativity. Going beyond knowledge impartment, focusing on the cultivation of growth thinking, and shaping the future life and future citizens are the real purpose of our future school education.

2. Attaching importance to the combination of liberal arts knowledge and science and technology, and cultivating students' critical thinking

Mr. Lin Yutang said: "The so-called ideal of education is the development of knowledge appreciation. Knowledge is only stuffed with facts or knowledge, but appreciation is based on artistic judgment." Recently, Wan Weigang published an article on the Internet entitled *The Era of Comprehensive Counterattack for Liberal Arts Students*, he told people a very challenging fact—the forty years ago "science makes people not fear everywhere" has become history, which has been replaced by liberal arts. Now liberal arts students are more valuable in the talent market and do better at looking for jobs than science and engineering students. He listed a series of facts to illustrate this point, in which the United States created 10.1 million new jobs from 2012-2016, only 5%—that is, 541,000 jobs are in computer-related fields, and all of the technical positions add up to less than 10%. Most of the remaining 90% of the new jobs are related to the "Humanities", that is, jobs that need to deal with people, including market researchers, consulting, education, and entertainment. These are not purely technical jobs, but because the degree of automation is getting higher and higher now, like the computer field, it can eliminate old jobs and create new jobs almost rapidly. Therefore, as long as there is a difference between artificial intelligence and real people, the job market needs liberal arts students.

However, the liberal arts students mentioned here are not those who only know the knowledge of rote memorization exams, but a high-end liberal arts student who can possess the ability of "critical thinking" and can combine liberal arts and new technology. There are about five types of the most valuable critical thinking skills: one is to explore new things, which refers to the research ability, to not only accept what the teacher says in the class, but to put forward his own point of view and find new materials to prove his point of view; the second is the insight, which refers to the ability to gain insight from a lot of various and messy information; the third is choice and determination, that is, the ability to make rules by yourself and lead others to complete tasks when there are no rules at all; the fourth is understanding, which refers to the ability to know what everyone in the team wants and to identify the focus of conflicts of interest; Fifth is influence, the ability to persuade others to accept their own opinions. The establishment of the above five "critical thinking" abilities is closely related to pure liberal arts professional knowledge such as anthropology, philosophy, archaeology, art history, and literature. However, if these pure liberal arts professional knowledge exists independently, they will not be able to play a major role, and the mastery of critical thinking skills will have immeasurable stamina. The key skill is not specific professional knowledge, but the establishment of the abilities of "critical thinking", the ability to combine liberal arts and new technology. For example:

Curiosity +Big Data = Market Research

Empathy +Gene Sequencing = Gene Consultation Service

Literary Creativity +Internet = Social Network Manager...

You can be a liberal arts student who knows a little bit about technology, or you can be an engineering student studying arts at the same time. This generalist is most needed today.

3. Attaching importance to quality education and cultivating students' international vision

Economic globalization not only promotes the internationalization of world politics, culture, science and technology, but also makes education internationalization inevitable. In today's world, country-to-state exchanges are getting closer and closer.

Communication and cooperation between people of different cultural backgrounds, races, religions, and countries and regions need respect and tolerance. It is particularly important to develop quality education and cultivate talents with global awareness and intercultural communication skills. The role that a country plays in the future international world, the right to speak, and the energy it can exert ultimately depend on the overall civic literacy of the country, and the students who are educated in school today are the core constituents of future social citizens. That is to say, how to position students' training goals and how to train them today may directly affect the degree of their value in the future international society. The enlightenment of this kind of realistic logic is embodied in two levels: one is how the school education reviews the situation and re-determines the training goals; the second is how to use better methods and carriers to play a role in the realization of the training goals.

The international community, especially the developed countries in Europe and America, has generally adopted the cultivation of students' literacy as an important dimension of their training goals since the mid-to-late 1990s. This literacy reflects the international vision, world sentiment, and social responsibility of students on a macro level, including the universality and openness, communicative ability, reflective consciousness, critical spirit, etc.; the micro-level requirements consist students' learning ability, inquiry experience, independent cooperation, etc. In recent years, UNESCO, the European Union, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development have focused on quality education and the specific and practical requirements. Through multi-disciplinary integration, they have concluded requirements including "Tools can be used interactively", "Abilities to interact among heterogeneous social groups" and " Ability to act autonomously". Among them, the EU has proposed core literacy in eight areas including information literacy, citizenship and social literacy, namely mother tongue communication, foreign language communication, mathematics ability, learning how to learn, interpersonal, cross-cultural and social abilities and citizenship, entrepreneurship, spiritual and cultural expression, etc. These all creatively answer the question of how to cultivate future citizens. Therefore, while our school is actively carrying out quality education, it must also carry out cross-cultural and international understanding education. It must be publicized from multiple angles, communicated through multiple channels, and be conducted in various forms to look at the world, and cultivate citizens who have the feelings of their homeland and an international perspective.

In short, in today's changing times, education has never been more dazzling and confusing than it is today. However, in the era of big data with the explosion of information, all this has become very simple. Big data is the answer. People's behavior tells us clearly what they want and what will happen in the future? Today's footprint is clearly the path of tomorrow." Today's education is a preview of future life. The content of students' learning focuses on life itself, using knowledge to solve problems in real scenarios, not just a single dimension of knowledge. The process is driven by problems, emphasizing the cultivation of students' thinking ability, teamwork, integration of social responsibility, communication and cooperation ability and creativity. Therefore, beyond imparting knowledge, shaping future citizens with international vision and competitiveness is the aim of school education today, and it is also an inevitable trend in the future.

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