Identification, Comprehension and Adjustment of Student’s Psychological States in Class Teaching Environment

Jiang Pu¹, Hua Tang²

Education Research Center, Xuzhou Institute of Technology, China
¹pujiang@xzit.edu.cn; ²th@xzit.edu.cn

Abstract

In the classroom, students’ psychological states always behave in a certain external form; teachers can understand students’ psychological feelings and learning their psychology from students’ faces and body movements in class teaching environment. That is the identification and comprehension of student’s psychological states in class teaching environment. Students are able to enter the thirst for knowledge state in order to achieve the desired learning objectives and teaching effectiveness while appropriate regulatory approach, strategies and patterns are applied in class teaching. That is students’ psychological state adjustment in class teaching environment. The research of formation and migration mechanism of students’ psychological states is the basis of identification, comprehension and adjustment of students’ psychological states in class teaching.

Keywords

Class Teaching; Psychological State; Identification; Comprehension; Adjustment

Introduction

Educational psychology research shows that: if no student is in a good psychological state and cooperates with teacher, it is difficult to receive good education results. Suhomlinski once pointed out: "If the students do not have the psychological knowledge, then all our ideas, plans will be reduced to ashes." So the analysis and control of the student’s psychological state has an important significance to improve the effectiveness of class teaching.

The research of formation and migration mechanism of students’ psychological states is the basis in the class teaching environment. This paper describes the formation and migration of the psychological states, analyses the forms and characteristics of class teaching and learning environment from psychology aspect, focusing on the identification, understanding and adjustment of students’ psychological states in classroom teaching environment, including regulation process, methods and strategies to let students resonate with teachers even mental and spiritual resonance.

Psychology Foundation

Psychological State and Classification

The first psychological research on psychological state was carried out by psychologist Levi Tov from former Soviet Union. Psychology dictionary defines: "Psychological state, also known as state of consciousness, is a unique psychological category". Dictionary of Psychology (Shanghai Education Publishing Press, 2003) defines: "The psychological state is a psychological phenomenon, people in a specific period of time, relatively has stable characteristics of mental activity formed between psychological processes and psychological characteristics, the general performance of mood, passion, focus, etc., people’s mental activities are conducted in psychological state. Individual psychological state at a particular time is formed by the psychological process from current activity, and personality traits formed in the past and combination with previous psychological states.”

Psychological States Stream of Consciousness Theory

The cause of psychological state is very complicated. And students’ psychological states during class teaching can be analysed and detected. The Stream of Consciousness theory is used to analyse formation of psychological state.

Stream of Consciousness theory is a psychological term, it is created by psychologist William James - the founder of pragmatic philosophy during the 19th century from U.S., and it unveils the nature of human consciousness activity flows continuously. He thinks that human consciousness activity is a stream of water.
He says "Consciousness is not bitty connections, but nature of constant flow, like a river." we call it Stream of Consciousness. Later, he describes it in Chapter IX of *Principles of Psychology* (1890).

James puts forward "Stream of Consciousness" concept, emphasizes the continuity of consciousness. He also stresses its nature of multi-dimensional time and hyperspace, which is not subject to time and space constraints, because consciousness is a purely subjective reality without objective constraints. He also believes that the elements involved in the Stream of Consciousness are feel, thoughts and desires, etc., but not the substance and the specific process of Stream of Consciousness to do further research and discussion.

Stream of Consciousness is the basic form of mental activity, intellectual activity, and emotional activity. And mental activities of the human brain are conducted by Stream of Consciousness. Introspection psychology inherits Stream of Consciousness from James, and develops a complete doctrine of Stream of Consciousness. Definition of Stream of Consciousness from introspection psychology is: some information, emotions, desires from external or internal of brain flow into or out of the process of consciousness continuously. Psychology on Stream of Consciousness reflects a detailed classification: Depending on the contents of stream of consciousness, such as stream of information consciousness, stream of emotional consciousness, stream of desire (will) consciousness; Depending on different sources and forms, such as "suction flow from external", "break in flow from external", "suction flow from internal", "break in flow from internal", the four stream of consciousnesses. Information includes 4 flows, they are "suction flow from external", "break in flow from external", "suction flow from internal", "break in flow from internal". Emotional stream of consciousness and desire include two types of flows, they are "suction flow from internal", "break in flow from internal". Stream of Consciousness theory is the basis of psychological state, psychological process and personality psychology.

Migration of Psychological State

Student's psychological state during class learning (including cognitive state, emotional state and will state) changes by further study progress, from incomprehension to comprehension, from doubt, uncertainty to consent and interest, such changes of emotions and experiences tell the student to realize that only in-depth study of the issues and knowledge can grasp the essence and wisdom that contain in knowledge. But why does people's psychological states migrate from this to another, and how do we adjust and regulate? Migration has two directions, migrate to a positive way, and migrate to a negative way. Student produces changes in his/her psychological state, if he/she obtained new information, new impetus or motive.

**Student's Psychological States and Its Expression during Class**

**Student’s Expression of Psychological States during Class**

During class teaching, based on students' emotional expression, their physiological states includes: excited state, cold state, anxiety state, boredom state.

1) **Excited State**

Main expression: high concentration of students' attention improves strong desires to learn knowledge; students are stimulated to talk and discuss with teacher and generate active classroom atmosphere. Excited state represents that the teacher has high level of emotional ability and teaching art; emotional interaction between teacher and student in the classroom is in harmony.

2) **Anxiety State**

Main expression: student is not proactive to speak loudly and answer questions; there are fewer emotional interactions between teachers and students, and the classroom atmosphere is depressing. Anxiety state represents that teachers have less emotional abilities, they are testy, and always uses physical punishment on student. Students are teenagers, strong self-esteem, sensitive, and they worry about being punished by teacher if they answer question wrongly.

3) **Cold State**

Main expression: students are in low spirit, bad mood, and scatterbrained; their eyes downcast, showing unconcern about class. The cold state represents that the students don't like the content of textbook and lecture, lack of desires for knowledge; students don't like teacher's teaching methods. Teacher’s teaching level is not high, and can’t arouse students' learning interest.
4) Tired State

Main expression: Students resist against teacher, are unwilling to cooperate, and hope class dismissed. Tired state represents that teacher has rude style of conversation, ignore students’ self-esteem, satirize students, publicly punish students; teacher’s teaching level is not high, students don’t listen, can’t understand. And teacher-student relationship is poor.

Features of Students Psychological States during Class Teaching

1) Direct Expression

Students learning psychological processes are fluctuating in class, and individual psychological personality characteristics are long-established, thus their learning psychological states are relatively stable and expressed in external form.

2) Relative Stability, Continuity and Mobility

When a student enters one learning psychological state, if nothing break the threshold of existing state, and in a sustained period of time, various factors of existing state maintain stability.

Student’s learning psychological state is not static, it is triggered by changes from internal or external factors, and then it converts to a new learning psychological state. Student’s mental activities are always expressed as a series conversions and connections of different learning psychological states.

3) Situation

In large part, student’s learning psychological state is affected by environment. Objective things are likely to affect student’s learning psychological state whether people realize it or not.

Recognition and Understanding of Student’s Learning Psychological State

Recognition of Student’s Learning Psychological State during Class

During class lecture, teacher’s emotional ability is the ability to recognize student’s learning psychological state by verbal and non-verbal behaviors of student. In class, teachers can capture student’s subtle facial expression and motion to judge and analyze psychological state of the student. If the student looks dull, he/she is distracted; If brow locks, he/she is confused; if nod and smile, he/she comprehends; If student is excited, keep itching to answer questions, he/she wants to express their own unique insights.

Students’ psychological states are: attention, curiosities, interest, consent, these are positive psychological states; distraction, uncertainty, fatigue and boredom, these are negative psychological states.

Understanding of Students Psychological States in Class

Students have to express their true psychological states in order to let teacher know their status, because only true expression of emotion or cognition can construct harmonious emotional interaction between teacher and students.

Understanding psychological states (Mind-Reading), also known as psychological states analysis or mental states analysis, is the ability to infer the psychological states of others. Human’s ability to understand the mental states begin to emerge and develop from childhood, starting from 5 years old, many children can perceive and understand the psychological states of others, and speculate their behaviors and actions. In the daily life, understanding of psychological states gives a subtle and elusive feeling, but it is the basis of human social function.

During class lecture, teachers and students can understand each others’ psychological state by cognitive and emotional interactions, and create a good learning environment and atmosphere. Teachers feel the students’ learning status (including emotional, cognitive, and will state), so as to continuously adjust teaching methods and strategies to achieve the desired effect of education.

Understanding psychological state is to reason and judge people’s intentions, interest, attention and thinking by integrated human emotion and other non-linguistic factors. And the information it obtains, will be re-encoded, stored, extracted, and re-installed in a combination of certain rules and it can infer different psychological states depending on different combination significance and duration.

Regulation of Students’ Psychological State

In a class, we see the expression of the students’ emotion which reacts student’s cognitive state, when students do not understand, it reacts with puzzled expression. Regulation and adjustment is sought to change this cognitive state. Regulation in class, in fact,
is to guide whole learning community and adjust psychological states of minority students, so as to achieve the whole class emotional regulation. Therefore, the regulation discussed here refers to understanding of students' psychological states, based on the current psychological states of students, teachers change their teaching attitudes and teaching methods to meet psychological needs of students, and take appropriate regulatory methods, strategies to achieve the desired education effect.

Regulation Process of Psychological State

Trying to find out the relationship between formation mechanism and evolution characteristics (student’s psychological changes) of student’s psychological state in the class and learning environment and external manifestations (facial expressions, behaviors). Firstly teacher has to understand student’s learning expectation from their psychology analysis, then adjust teaching strategies (method, pace) to match educational expectation with students' learning expectation, so that to achieve teaching resonance effect in class.

Psychological State Regulation Method

Based on formation and migration theory of psychological state, regulation method includes direct regulation, indirect regulation and comprehensive regulation.

1) Direct Regulation

Direct regulation is to regulate student’s psychological state directly based on formation and migration theory of psychological state. Such as: attention regulation, distraction regulation, cognitive fatigue regulation, boredom regulation and so on.

2) Indirect Regulation

Indirect regulation is to regulate student’s emotion, will and demand to adjust their psychological state.

3) Comprehensive Regulation

Comprehensive regulation combines direct regulation with indirect regulation together; it regulates different levels and different groups of students. This approach requires high level of emotional ability to make student's emotional changes consistent with cognition demand, so teaching resonance effect is applicable.

Regulation Strategy of Psychological State

1) Regulate Psychological Atmosphere and Optimize Psychological Environment in Class

1) Psychological Atmosphere is a Dominant

According to the research of psychology in China, psychological atmosphere in class depends on students’ mental state, emotional state, will state, and emotional expression in class.

2) Types of Psychological Atmosphere in Class

According to mental state, emotional state, will state of students in class, psychological atmosphere includes positive type, negative type and opposed type. And the positive type psychological atmosphere is favorable during class teaching.

2) Seize Student’s “Heart”, Adjust Learning Psychological State

Seizing the student's "heart" refers to the teacher has to recognize student’s current psychological state and optimize teaching strategies so as to let students enter positive type psychological atmosphere during class teaching.

Conclusion

During regulation process of student’s psychological state, the teacher’s emotional ability improves gradually by more communications with student. Teacher continuously and flexibly adjusts teaching strategies based on physical truth of students to achieve target educational goal by emotional interactions and cognitive interactions with students. And the target of regulation is the consensus of value and spirit and psychological resonance between teacher and students. Teacher’s emotion, mood, cognition synchronize with student’s emotion, mood, cognition in class.

Teaching resonance is a new phenomenon presented by entirety or locality interactions within education system elements (including teacher, student, content, media, etc.), teacher and student cooperate with each other. Coordinated, synchronous development shows the ideal teaching harmony. Teaching resonance puts forward higher requirement for teachers who have to recognize student’s psychological states and adjust teaching strategies to achieve teaching resonance.

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Prof. Jiang Pu, Director of Education Research Center, Xuzhou, Institute of Technology, Jiangsu province, China. He received B.S degree in science from Shanghai University. His main research interests concern cognitive computing and education.