



Learner-centered Approach to Student Learning in Class Size Reduction : A Case in Shanghai

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I • BACKGROUND

I BACKGROUND

- ❖ Individualized Instruction in Chinese history **private school**(*Sishu*) and **academy of classical learning**(*shuyuan*) ;
- ❖ Establishment of western-style school in Chinese modern times: the founding of **Grand Capital School** (*Jingshi Tongwenguan*)in 1896;
- ❖ Big class size for half century in China (since 1949).

Shanghai took the Initiative in implementing Class Size Reduction in China

Primary School, 1996; Secondary school, 2003

- ❖ **Decreased School-aged Population**
- ❖ **The Challenge of the Social Economic Development of Shanghai in the 21st Century**
- ❖ **People's Urgent Need of Quality Education**
- ❖ **Reform of educational system calls for “class size reduction”**

Smaller Class Size

- ❖ “Smaller Class Size ” aims to promote students’ all-sided and individual development by reducing class size and changing class teaching activities including contents, approaches, process and strategies , organizational methods and patterns.

Smaller Class Size

- ❖ **“Class Size Reduction” has broken the traditional mode of teaching, where teaching was directed single-track from teachers to students. Smaller classes can improve learning conditions and enhance teacher-student interaction and understanding. Every student participates in teaching activities, explore initiatives and evaluates one another. This can not only cultivate students’ cooperative consciousness, self-exploration spirits, competitiveness and creativity but also help promote healthy, all-sided and sustainable development of students.**

II. STRATEGIES

AIMS:

students' development-oriented

II. STRATEGIES

1. Allocation of Resources

1.1 Class Size

the average class size : 24.49

the most : 28 ;

the least: 18

mostly : 20 - 26



II. STRATEGIES

1. 2 Allocation of Teachers

Each class: 2-2.5 teachers

One teacher: “Chinese” and “Maths”

Class advisor: “natural common knowledge” • “life and work”, “physical training”, “school meeting and class meeting activities”, “reading” , “society practice”, etc.

0.5 teacher: “physical and health care” , “singing and game-playing”, “arts”.

II. STRATEGIES

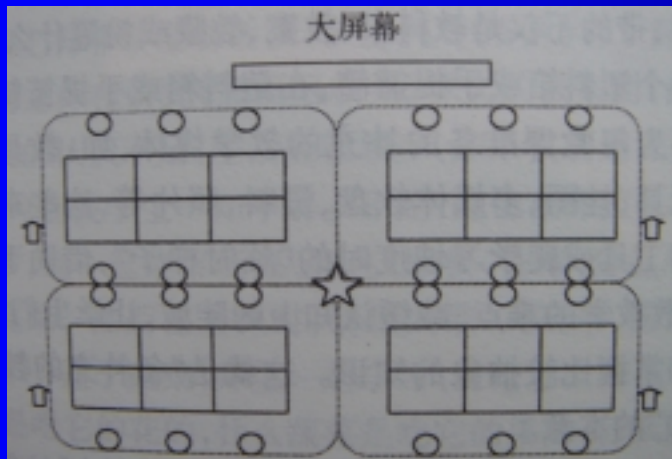
• 3 **Equipment of Classroom**

- **One class equipped with two classrooms or three classrooms every two classes ;**
- **Another room for preparation or activities ;**
- **Desks and chairs can be transformed at random upon different teaching needs ;**
- **Floors , carpets and closets designed for teaching and other activities;**

II. STRATEGIES

• 3 Equipment of Classroom

- Desks and chairs can be assembled according to different teaching needs ;



II. STRATEGIES

- **3 Equipment of Classroom**
- closets designed for students to put their living and learning utensils in.



II. STRATEGIES

1.4 Arrangement of Teaching Time and Teaching Contents

- Duration of every class was adjusted and shortened ;
- Introduce national curriculum, local curriculum and school curriculum.

II. STRATEGIES

- **Instructing and Teaching Pattern**
 - 1) **Flexible teaching form**
 - 2) **Change in the arrangement of teaching contents**
 - 3) **More opportunities for students to participate classroom activities.**
 - 4) **More complex teaching preparation.**

II. STRATEGIES

- **Instructing and Teaching Pattern**

More opportunities for students to participate classroom activities.



II. STRATEGIES

• Instructing and Teaching Pattern

2.1 Flexible teaching form

- The teacher is a learner, thinker and listener as well as an instructor, questioner, narrator, and director; also a captor, a judger and organizer of information in class.
- A student is one who will not only listen and answer; but also who will ask, talk, think and even teach.

II. STRATEGIES

- **2 Change in the arrangement of teaching contents**
- Much more time for self-study or group discussion for students;
- more time for students to practise and communicate in a smaller class .

II. STRATEGIES

- **3 More opportunities for students to participate classroom activities.**
- **4 More complex teaching preparation.**

In order to increase individual instruction and practise level teaching, prepare several teaching plans to adapt to students' learning conditions and adjust teaching contents.

II. STRATEGIES

3. Strategy of Teaching

Main Principles:

Subjectivity - cultivation of students' initiatives

Integrity - integrated forces to be mobilized

Activity - activities designed for participation for all

Interaction-teacher-student bidirectional communication

Plentitude- provision of abundant educational resources

II. STRATEGIES

3. Strategy of Teaching

- 1) Strategy of Interaction
- 2) Strategy of Cooperation
- 3) Strategy of Feedback
- 4) Different teaching for different students

II. STRATEGIES

3.1 Strategy of Interaction

- Comprehensive quality-oriented teaching objectives;
- Autonomous Learning and multi-directional communication;
- Initiative, full and authentic participation, collective and multidimensional learning.

II. STRATEGIES

3. 2 Strategy of Cooperation:

- Group learning: the basic teaching form;
- Discussion, grouping competition, games and experiments;
- Homogenous group and heterogeneous group

II. STRATEGIES

3.3 Strategy of Feedback

Teaching process focuses :

- not only on the outcomes, but also on the learning process of the individual student;
- on the quick, precise and overall feedback of information.

II. STRATEGIES

3. 4 Different teaching for different students

- Different teaching tactics, aims, instructions are designed according to different students;
- Teaching your student according to his aptitude: different demands, questions, instructions, tasks, tests and assessment.

III. THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

Smaller class size focuses on being students-centered, with environment, cooperation, and dialogue play an important role in classroom learning.

1. “Learner-centered” Approaches
2. Designing of Learning Setting and Environment
3. Cooperative Learning
4. Supportive Learning Resources

III. THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

- **“Learner-centered” Approaches**
- Give full play to the student’s initiative learning, and originative spirits;
- varieties of opportunities to externalize what they have learned in classroom in different contexts;
- Realization of self-feedback: have more knowledge of the world to work out the blueprint for problem-solving based on the feedback from their actions.

III. THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

2. Designing of Learning Setting and Environment

*combination of context, cooperation, communication
and meaning reconstruction*

- a variety of exterior knowledge representation , contexts or perspectives ;
- abundant cognitive tools to satisfy diversified needs;
- authentic task-context to integrate various knowledge and skills.

III. THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

3. Cooperative Learning

- Identified goal of meaning reconstruction to enable cooperative learning;
- Shared resources available to increase both collective and individual competence ;
- Proper illumination and interpretation by the teacher as a guider.

III. THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

4. Supportive Learning Resources

- media and materials at learners' option to support independent learning and cooperative learning ;
- multimedia to provide multi-sense stimulation, making the abstract concrete, the intangible tangible, the static dynamic;
- optimized multi-directional multimedia technology and evaluation systems of teaching feedback.

IV. PRELIMINARY RESULTS

- **Students' Development**
- **Teachers' Professional Development**
- **Smaller Size Class Culture**

IV. PRELIMINARY RESULTS

1. Students' Development

more cooperative and learning and exploring; more chances to learn ; quicker to be concentrated on the situation and better performance ; more recognizant of questions ; courageous in actions; better at asking right questions and expressing their ideas; more expressive and more self-confident etc.

IV. PRELIMINARY RESULTS

2. Teachers' Professional Development

- new instructional philosophy ;
- increased working competence ;
- integration of practice, research and training ;
- a harmonious and cooperative researching atmosphere .

IV. PRELIMINARY RESULTS

3. Smaller Class Size Culture

More attention to the life world of the students; space and time for students' active exploration; building equal democratic, and cooperative relationship between teachers and students; creation of challenging problem situation; concern for the students' unique culture and more effective multi-dimensional student-teacher and student-student interaction.

TRENDS & FURTHER RESEARCHES

Many other cities in China begin to explore the feasibilities of the local reform of “smaller class size”.

The ongoing “Class Size Reduction” in Shanghai :

(1) To create more powerful teaching approaches in smaller class size and different teaching approaches applicable to different contents so that students can play a central role in different learning approaches.

(2) Further researches on the diversity in physical and mental development of students in primary schools and secondary schools so that teaching in smaller class size can be more pertinent and practically effective.



THANKS.

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