

# The Oppression and Breaking in Education

—Enlightenment from Reading "Pedagogy of the Oppressed"

Chunling Yin

School of Education

Tianjin University

Tianjin 300350, China

**Abstract**—Lecturing teaching and cramming education are the main forms of oppression education. Through analyzing "Pedagogy of the oppressed" and combining with the actual education situation, this article attempts to use oppression in education as the research object, take the break in oppression as the starting point, and explore the measures to break the oppression education. Conversational teaching and questioning education are breakthroughs in breaking the oppression in education. They are committed to cultivating students' critical awareness and innovative spirit, and building an equal teacher-student relationship.

**Keywords**—*Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Education, Oppressive behavior, Break*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The famous Brazilian educator Paul Freire, rooted in his personal experience, wrote the book "Pedagogy of the Oppressed", which fully embodies his liberation education ideas. Freire's liberation pedagogy has had an important influence on the education of many countries and on the development of social theory. So far, the light of wisdom flashed by its liberation education ideology is still of great significance for educational reform and development. After reading "Pedagogy of the Oppressed", we try to explore the oppressive behavior in education and how to break it.

## II. "LECTURING TEACHING" AND "CRAMMING EDUCATION" - THE OPPRESSION IN EDUCATION

In order to understand "Pedagogy of the Oppressed", you need to comprehend what oppression is, what is the oppressor and the oppressed. Paul Freire pointed out: "Any situation that

exploits or obstructs other people's pursuit of being responsible is oppression. Such a situation itself constitutes violence. "[1]When an act is to prevent others from developing a more perfect person, such behavior constitutes oppressive behavior. [1]In different environments, the understanding of oppressors and the oppressed is different. After reading "Pedagogy of the Oppressed", reducing the scope of compression to the level of teaching, in the traditional teaching process, teachers are the subject of knowledge and students are the objects of knowledge. Then, teachers to a certain extent play the role of "oppressor" or "secondary oppressor", and students play the role of "oppressed".

The "Lecturing teaching" is the education malpractice that Freire summed up in the long-term education practice. In the traditional lecture-style teaching mode, as always, teachers are instilling knowledge that is separate from reality. This kind of behavior is disgusted and it keeps students away from it. This kind of explanation lacks the transformative power. In the course of knowledge explanation, the content of teaching became boring and lifeless. In the process of teaching knowledge, the teacher, as a knowledge imparter, guides the students to mechanically memorize the content of the lecture. The cramming teaching method adopted by teachers gradually turns students into a kind of container, a container that can be instilled by teachers. Education became a kind of storage behavior described by Freire. Among them, teachers acted as savers, students acted as custodians, teachers instill knowledge of students, and students patiently accepted and remembered it. This is a typical "cramming education". After reading, the characteristics of "cramming education" are organized as follows:

TABLE I. CHARACTERISTICS OF CRAMMING EDUCATION

Teachers	Students
Teachers teach	Students are taught
Teachers are omniscient	Students know nothing
Teachers think	Students are considered
Teachers speak	Students listen
Teachers develop discipline	Students abide by discipline
Teachers impose choices on students	Student compliance
Teachers take action	Students act according to the teacher's actions
Teachers choose lecture content	Students passively accept learning content
Teachers are subjects	Students are objects

(Source: Paul Freire. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*[M]. Shanghai: East China Normal University Press, 2001. )

Cramming education is the oppression form that exists in education. In the cramming education, teachers believe that

students are ignorant, they will own vast knowledge, by explaining the form, passed to the students, the students can

only receive, input and store knowledge. The more students store knowledge, the worse their sense of creativeness and transformational awareness, and students lack the ability to think critically and reflect on knowledge. In the process of explaining the knowledge of teachers, the content taught is separated from the student's life experience and separated from reality. [2]Divorced from the reality of educational content, it broke the connection with the outside world, fragmented the connection with students' daily experiences, and made people's minds confined within the stable consciousness set by the ruling class. Freire pointed out that human activities are made up of reflections and actions. This is practice and a transformation of the world. [1]Paul Freire thought: "Imagining others as absolute ignorance is a feature of the consciousness of oppression. It denies education and knowledge as the process of inquiry." [1]Cramming education obliterates students' creativity, but this approach is in the interests of the oppressors. The oppressors maintain their profitable status in this way, and in order to stabilize their position, they oppose students' critique of reality. Against any educational experiment that can shake their favorable position.

Cramming education is the means by which rulers take education in order to maintain their stability. The ruler tries to break through people's enthusiasm for exploration and oppression by indoctrination and oppression. These are not only vividly reflected in the cramming education, but also reflected in the imperial examination system adopted in ancient China for selecting talents. The ruler, as an oppressor, has found a way to "pick up" candidates by maintaining their stability. They are delineating the content of examinations, taking the "pseudo-knowledge" out of practice as a necessary chapter of the examination, and passing the examination form of the imperial examination, using "Pseudo-knowledge" instills candidates, so that candidates who could otherwise become geniuses enter the seizure trap of the oppressor. This form has caused more and more candidates to lose their desire for exploration and creativity, their obedience and obedience.

Without his own opinions and opinions, he will not be able to think critically and passively adapt to the Social Status.

### III. "CONVERSATIONAL TEACHING" AND "QUESTIONING EDUCATION" - THE KEY TO BREAKING THE OPPRESSION IN EDUCATION

In order to solve the problems caused by lecture-style teaching and cramming education in the teaching process, Paul Freire explored conversational teaching and questioning education in the long-term education practice and reflection process.

The essence of dialogue itself is the word, and the real word is practice. The word has two basic elements of reflection and action, and it is an indispensable tool for realizing dialogue. The two basic elements of a word interact with each other and are related to each other. Without one of these elements, it is not a true word. When a word leaves the action, it will lose its transformation, and if it leaves the transformation, it will not be achieved. When words leave reflection, they only become more emphasis on action, and the word becomes activism. Freire emphasized that only by combining action and reflection can real thinking be formed.

Freire pointed out that people should not be silent. Speaking is the right that everyone should have. Therefore, no one can deprive other people of the power to speak. And, speaking is an act of people's transformation of the world. Speaking is expressing their opinions and opinions to the world. "Humanity is created in words, at work, in action and reflection, but not in silence."

Dialogue is a creative act. Through dialogue, people in the world engage in contact with other people, and obtain information, and gain meaning as human development. Dialogue is the act of transforming the world, but the creation of dialogue requires certain conditions. After reading the "Pedagogues of the Oppressed", the necessary conditions for dialogue are summarized as follows:

TABLE II. REQUIREMENTS FOR DIALOGUE

Love is the foundation of dialogue and dialogue itself
Dialogue must be conducted on the basis of equality
Dialogue requires mutual trust among interlocutors
Interlocutors should maintain a humble attitude
Dialogue needs communication
Dialogue requires critical thinking
Dialogue is the task that the responsible subject should undertake
Dialogue is a parallel exchange
Dialogue needs cooperation

(Source: Paul Freire. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* [M]. Shanghai: East China Normal University Press, 2001. )

Dialogue is an important way to carry out education. However, the key to effective dialogue is to ask questions. Therefore, in order to solve the disadvantages of lecture-style teaching and indoctrination education, Freire explored questioning education to promote the conversational teaching better.

Dialogue education focusing on questioning forms, which breaks the characteristics of cramming education, embodies the communication during the dialogue. Freire emphasized the dialogue between teachers and students in questioning

education, and pointed out that the dialogue between teachers and students is particularly important in the education process, and advocates the establishment of an equal dialogue between teachers and students. The dialogue here refers on the one hand to the conversation between people, on the other hand to the person-to-person contact with the world as an intermediary. In the process of equal contact between the two parties, people will reflect on the world and produce actions to transform the world. True dialogue is the combination of reflection and action. Real dialogue is realized in the process of practice. In

questioning education, teachers are more than just "preaching, teaching, and dispelling". They are both teachers and students. In the process of dialogues and exchanges with students, teachers and students make common progress and grow together. In the questioning education, educators from the student's performance, action, reflection, and constantly update their reflection. Students are no longer the obedient listeners in lecture-based teaching. They turn into critical collaborators for dialogue with teachers. Question-type education breaks the "storage behavior" of cramming education. Teachers no longer simply instill knowledge into students. Instead, they provide knowledge materials to students, encourage them to think, respect, and listen to their opinions, and constantly reflect on their own educational perspectives and education. Teachers and students create together. In contrast to indoctrinating education paralysis and inhibiting student creativity, questioning education encourages students to explore, reveal reality, think continuously, and critically intervene in reality.

#### IV. HOW TO BREAK THE OPPRESSION IN EDUCATION

Paul Freire believes that education should motivate students to critically analyze reality, find ways to change reality, and strive to become the power of change. [3] Therefore, Freire stressed that if education is to break the oppression in traditional education, it should use question-oriented education that focuses on dialogue to replace cramming education that permeates the consciousness of oppression.

First of all, teaching should be taught through questioning to cultivate students' critical awareness and creative spirit. Teachers should encourage students to reflect on the actual education situation or the real world during the teaching process, and commit themselves to develop students' critical thinking with problem consciousness. Only those who have the critical thinking ability will continuously reform the reality and continue to realize their own humanity. Teachers should combine the students' experience, select educational content from real educational situations, create teaching situations, provide students with challenging questions, and encourage students to think. In the learning process, students should take a critical attitude towards what they have learned, rather than blaming it as truth. Students should dare to question, in while dare to ask questions, have problem awareness, and constantly develop their own critical awareness and creative spirit. Only through question-oriented education focusing on dialogue can students continue to cultivate critical consciousness and innovative consciousness. Only through question-oriented education can change the ills of the past and radiate new charm and vitality.

Secondly, it is necessary to establish a democratic and equal teacher-student relationship through questioning education. To break the oppressive behavior that exists in education, teachers and students should work together. Education should begin by solving the contradictions between teachers and students, and regard the teaching process as the process of inquiry. Through the establishment of a democratic

and equal teacher-student relationship, both teachers and students work together to achieve common progress and continuously enrich and improve themselves. In the specific teaching practice, teachers should stimulate students' initiative in learning, and students should focus on the teaching objectives and conduct teaching and learning of inquiry cooperation. On the one hand, teachers should establish a correct view of students. They should treat students with a dynamic and developmental perspective, give students the right to speak, guide students to face and guide students to fully play their main role, and strive to create a good learning atmosphere for students. Also, they should encourage students to learn and grow in an equal and free environment. On the other hand, students should establish a correct view of teachers, and break the traditional understanding that teachers are authoritative, give full play to their initiative, and communicate with them. In a while, students should think of teachers as individuals that can be trusted and can grow together to form a healthy teacher-student outlook. [4]

#### V. SUMMARY

Since its publication, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was translated into more than 20 languages, which has had a great impact on the development of education in many countries. The oppression in education described by Paul Freire in his works is still widely present in the reality and practice of education in China. At present, students' critical thinking ability and their sense of innovation is weak. The reason behind this is thought-provoking. Paul Freire's "conversational teaching" and "questioning education" have profound implications for China's education, which is conducive to educating students to cultivate critical consciousness and innovative spirit, and is conducive to the establishment of an equal teacher-student relationship. Paul Freire's conversational teaching and questioning education, as well as the educator's "love," has provided a new impetus for the transformation of the world and will bring useful inspiration and reflection to the education of the world.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Paul Freire. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*[M]. Shanghai: East China Normal University Press, 2001. 11. 12. 68. 25.
- [2] Huang Zhicheng. *Pedagogy of the oppressed - Theory and Practice of Freire Liberation Education* [M]. Beijing: People's Education Press, 2003. 91.
- [3] Jiang Fawen. The liberation of the oppressed bottom and the bottom--Read Paul Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" [J]. *Sociological Research*, 2009, 24(06): 226-238.
- [4] Du Yanlin. Feelings of Reading "Pedagogy of the Oppressed"[J]. *China Vocational and Technical Education*, 2011(06):88-95.
- [5] Boal, A. *Theatre of the Oppressed* [M]. New York: Theatre Communications Group. 1985.
- [6] Feagin, J. & H. Vera, *Liberation Sociology* [M]. New York: Westview Press. 2001.