

A Learner-Centered Teaching Model

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“Education is not the filling of a pot but the lighting of a fire.” –W.B. Yeats

A TEACHING model is a plan or pattern that can be used to shape curriculum, to design teaching materials, and to guide instruction in the classroom and other settings. It is often developed based on specific educational philosophies and teaching theories, providing stable structures and procedures for teaching activities. Teaching models can be illustrations of instructional theories or generalizations of teaching experiences, allowing educational researchers to apply their ideas and concepts to practice, and practitioners to generalize about their instructional experiments and experience (Joyce & Weil, 1996). With the help of teaching models, educators can optimize their teaching methods and promote better learning outcomes for their students.

In the 1970s, Bruce Joyce, an American scholar published *Models of Teaching* after extensive research. Over the years, the book has been revised and expanded, providing deeper insights into teaching model research and including a greater variety of instructional models. It has become a classic in pedagogical research and the entire educational field worldwide. In this book, teaching models are categorized into four families: the social family, information-processing family, personal family, and behavioral systems family. Each family includes a number of teaching models (Joyce et al., 2009). Initially, Joyce and his colleagues evaluated teaching models from the perspective of “teaching.” However, as their explorations deepened, they shifted their perspective to “learning.” They concluded that teaching models are really learning models, which marked a significant shift in the trend of theoretical research and practice in teaching models.

Since the 1980s, foreign research on teaching paradigms has been introduced to China and gained significant interest from the Chinese educational community. Based on the experiments with these paradigms in its primary and secondary schools, Chinese basic education has generated a series of teaching models of its own characteristics, including teacher-guided self-education, six-step module teaching, experiential learning, and structured module teaching. Subsequently, Chinese educational academia has conducted more theoretical research into teaching models, resulting in the production of relevant theories

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such as the theory of behavioral paradigms, methodological systems, categorical structure, system elements, and procedural methods (Jin, 2018). As a result, practical explorations of teaching paradigms have been strengthened by in-depth theoretical research. In recent decades, new teaching models have emerged with the assistance of educational technology. Nevertheless, existing teaching paradigms are still limited by being restricted to textbook contents and focusing on teaching rather than student learning. Despite being advocated for many years, the educational idea of “student-centered” instruction cannot be successfully implemented due to the lack of relevant teaching models.

Protocol-guided Teaching: An Experiment in Chinese Basic Education in this issue is a comprehensive review of the background, characteristics, and implementation strategies of the protocol-guided teaching model. This teaching model is derived from the instructional experience of Chinese educational practitioners. It places a strong emphasis on student learning as the primary focus. Under the protocol-guided teaching paradigm, the traditional teacher instructional plan is replaced by a student learning protocol. Course contents are reconstructed with meaningful questions, and students are encouraged to engage in active problem-solving rather than passive reception of knowledge. The classroom dynamic is shifted towards discussion and group study, rather than teachers’ unilateral transmission of knowledge (Wang & Zhu, 2023). The learning protocol is the central component of the protocol-guided teaching model, and it can effectively facilitate the implementation of the “student-centered” educational concept. Teachers create the learning protocols in advance and use them to guide students in their pre-class preparation, classroom activities, and post-class knowledge application. This approach represents a significant departure from traditional instructional methods in terms of teaching organization and procedure. We hope that this teaching model, which places learners at the center of the educational process, will benefit more students in the future.

References

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