

Pedagogy of Desire: a postmodern appraisal of ‘teacher evaluation for professional development project’ in Taiwan

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Abstract

To desire is to be a particular state of mind (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). Desire is both present and invisible in students’ and teachers’ pedagogical relationship (Zembylas, 2007a: 331). In this paper, we want to discuss ‘pedagogy of desire’ from the postmodern perspective. Then we discuss ‘teacher evaluation for professional development’ project in Taiwan from 2006 till now. Finally, we will recommend that ‘pedagogy of desire’ is helpful for improving teacher evaluation for professional development.

Keyword: pedagogy of desire, teacher evaluation for professional development

Introduce

To desire is to be in a particular state of mind (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). In the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, the theories of desire are action-based, pleasure-based, good-based, attention-based, learning-based and holistic based. Desire, as Spinoza understands, is just striving together with consciousness of striving (IIIp9s; the human experience of desire is discussed in more detail in Section 2.1; of the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). From these words, we know that ‘desire’ is the mind status and the striving of consciousness. But how do we implement ‘desire’ in teaching and learning? How do we present ‘pedagogy of desire’ in a postmodern perspective?

In this paper, we want to discuss ‘pedagogy of desire’ from postmodern perspective. We will explore the ideas of pedagogy of desire. We will summarize these ideas and identify the important ideas in pedagogy desire.

Then we review the teacher evaluation for professional development project in Taiwan from 2006 till now. This project was held from 2006 by the Ministry of Education in Taiwan. There are two major methods for teachers to evaluate their teaching in this project, teaching observations and teaching portfolios. We will discuss those two methods.

Finally, we will talk about the pedagogy desire that teachers embrace in teaching observations and teaching profiles. We will recommend that 'pedagogy desire' is the most important thing in teacher evaluation for professional development.

Pedagogy desire

Pedagogy desire

Teaching and learning are basically acts of desire (Kelly, 1997; Todd, 1997; from Zembylas, 2007a: 333). Pedagogy desire includes teachers' desire, students' desire, social desire, culture desire and all desire in pedagogy. In other words, pedagogy desire is an affirmation of teachers'/ students' everyday practices and relationships (Zembylas, 2007a: 334).

Following Deleuze and Guattari's description of desire as being an immanent force that produces creativity, novelty and change, desire is understood as the plane of immanence for any pedagogy; without desire, there is no pedagogy. (Zembylas, 2007a: 338)

In Zembylas's words, pedagogy desire is the relation among subject and object and artefacts (Zembylas, 2007a). We can present pedagogy desire in teaching, learning and the interaction between teachers and students. But how do we present the desire? Such as postmodern opinion, desire concerns eccentric-off-centre, de-centred (Maclure, 2006: 223). We have to notice the eccentric and de-centred opinions in pedagogy. Then we have to talk about postmodernism in order to make clear of 'eccentric' and 'de-centred'.

Postmodernism

Lyotard defined the postmodern as "incredulity towards metanarrative"(Peters, 2006: 303). For Lyotard, metanarrative means "knowing how", "knowing how to

live” and “knowing how to listen” (Peters, 2006: 309). Habermas indicated that the pluralization of diverging universes of discourse belongs to “the unavoidable experience of modernity (Habermas, 1984; from Biesta, 1995: 162). Postmodern did not like universe, huge idea. It brings the marginal, the repressed, and the unvoiced into view and into hearing (Brooker, 1992; from Biesta, 1995: 163). Postmodern, in other words, is plural, multiple and deconstructed.

We can discuss postmodernism and education within four theories: critical pedagogy, feminist pedagogy, philosophy of education, and curriculum theory (Biesta, 1995: 164). In these theories convey an important message that postmodernism and education are both plural and critical. There are many surprises in plural areas and in critical views in education. How can we find surprises in teaching and learning? How can we embrace plural and critical phenomena in teaching and learning? ‘Surprise’ comes from ‘unknowing’, and plural phenomena and critical opinions come from unknowing, too. We have to witness unknowing and to find the adventures of unknowing.

Pedagogy of unknowing

There are two important points for educators to think about. First is to create spaces for teachers and students to embrace unknowing. Second is to inspire teachers and students having more responsibility and witnessing in their teaching and learning (Zembylas, 2005: 139). From Zembylas’s idea, the goal of education is not merely facing the other, it is more important to eager for the unknowing. (Zembylas, 2005: 150). But it is not so easy to embrace unknowing in teaching and learning. Levinas said that embracing unknowing in pedagogy offers us to become more sensible. We seek, desire, and question the unknowing that make teachers and students vigilance, humility and responsibility (Levinas, 1981; from Zembylas, 2005: 156-157).

Teachers and students embrace unknowing means that they desire to teach and to learn in different and plural ways. In order to participate in the plural teaching/learning environments, they have to put away the normal rules, the generate ideas and the accountabilities in education. How to put away these golden rules in education? How do teachers/students/parents give up the ‘test nightmare’? We implement the significances of deconstruction in education in order to talk about the sensitivities of unknowing.

Deconstruction

In Derrida's opinion, deconstruction is not a method and cannot be transformed into one. Deconstruction is just a plural form in order to represent the plural ideas of one thing (Derrida & Edwald, 1995; from Biesta, 2009a: 22). Biesta also claimed that Derrida doesn't tell us how to emancipate or liberate education. Biesta thought that Derrida just encourages us to respond to the callings of education (Biesta, 2009a: 34).

Deconstruction is an idea which helps us to see the intrinsic and extrinsic worth in education. Teachers and students have to inquire the whole things in plural ways in education. When teachers can respond to the callings from all students, they achieve deconstruction in teaching. When students can reply to the callings from all things, they spread out deconstruction in learning. But the callings are so sparse in education because there are some misunderstandings in education.

Deconstruction and pedagogy desire

Derrida finds that there are some misunderstandings between teaching and learning. The first and most important misunderstanding is coming from the gap of teaching and learning (Biesta, 2009b: 106). The teachers teach, and the students have to learn. Derrida doesn't think so. He says that learning depends on the students, not comes from teachers. So Derrida wants to bring 'real life' into the classroom and to find the education's representation (Derrida, 1981; from Biesta, 2009b: 108).

In deconstruction pedagogy, teachers have to pay attention to each 'others' in classrooms. Teachers have to encourage students developing their potential. In order to bring out the learners' potential, teachers teach in plural methods. Teachers love to know more 'others'. They do more activities in teaching, and learners learn more about 'themselves'. Then teachers and students have to put more passions in education.

Passion and pedagogy desire

'Passion' derives from the Greek *pathos* and the Latin *passio*, which mean literally 'to suffer'. But there are many misunderstandings in 'passion' such as 'myth' and 'religion'. We have to reuse the word 'passion' into 'real life' in order to be distant from philosophy (Zembylas, 2007b: 136).

In school, passion is confining for a list of rules and ‘normal’ performances. With the rules and the normal standards, passion cannot be expressed in plural and critical way. If teachers and students want to show passion in schools, they have to concern ‘others’ and to see themselves in an aesthetic mode (Zembylas, 2007b: 145-146). In order to evoke passion in school, teachers and students have to seek multiple ways in teaching and learning.

Deleuze’s rhizome concept was a good way to help us make sense of how we live our lives and how we teach and use philosophy in a postmodern world. Deleuze and Guatarri insist to embrace ‘difference’ in education and to make pedagogy in multiple and simplest dimensions (Gregoriou, 2004: 242-247). In school we have to insist the presentation of passion in real learning/teaching, not for score, not for award, just for learning/ teaching passion and love.

Summary

In this section, we discuss pedagogy desire, postmodernism, deconstruction and passion. No matter how we interpret these words and ideas, we have to make teaching and learning more plural and more critical. Each student has chances to learn, real learning. In order to make each child learn, we have to encourage teachers to do the real teaching. How do teachers do real teaching? Teachers have to learn in postmodern way, deconstructive way, plural and critical way. Only when teachers reflex their teaching, the real pedagogy desire and the worthy pedagogy passion will be brought out.

Teacher evaluation for professional development project in Taiwan

Goal

In Taiwan, there is a project held from 2006 in order to promote teaching and learning in schools. The project is named ‘teacher evaluation for professional development’. It is held by the Ministry of Education in Taiwan. The goal of this project is ‘to promote teachers’ teaching quality and to improve students’ learning effects’ (提升教學品質、增進學習效果) (MOE, 2006).

Teaching and learning are the two important things in education. No matter how many strategies of teaching and learning have been brought up, teaching and learning

are still the main issue in education. Dewey's theory of education as communication accesses the interplay between children and teachers. Dewey suggested a crucial difference between training and education, real shares and real participates (Biesta, 2010: 713-714). The goal of teacher evaluation for professional development (TEPD) is just like Dewey's theory, communication and real participation. From this project, teachers will learn how to teach better, and students will make progress by teachers' better teaching.

Strategies

In TEPD project, teachers will be evaluated by peers. Each teacher has to learn how to evaluate teachers' teaching. There are two major methods in this project, teaching observation and teaching portfolio. There are three levels of teaching observation evaluation and two levels of teaching portfolio evaluation. Primary school teachers, secondary school teachers and high school teachers have to learn how to evaluate class teaching and teaching profiles.

In teaching observation, there are some criteria of 'teaching design', 'teaching strategies', 'teaching skills', 'measure skills', 'classroom management' and 'Ss/T interaction'. In teaching portfolio evaluation, there are more criteria than teaching observation, such as 'teaching research', 'teacher learning communities', 'teaching ethics', etc. Teachers have to learn how to record teaching activities in impersonal way and to evaluate by objective instruments.

Although there are sixty-six criteria in this teacher evaluation for professional development project, the criteria are school-based. Teachers who join this project can choose the criteria used in their schools. And the evaluators are teacher peers, not the Principal or administrators. In this way, teacher colleagues can discuss what is the best in teaching. Teachers can share their teaching realities and their teaching portfolio. Teachers can communicate with each other about the teaching and learning before observe classes or evaluate portfolio.

Buber, Bakhtin and Freire all showed deeply concern over the relationship between the self and the other. In their opinions, I-THOU is relationship, communication, becoming and dialectic (Rule, 2011: 928). In TEPD, teacher colleagues discuss the criteria of teaching observation and teaching portfolio. The discussion is the communications and dialectics among teachers. Teachers' relationship will be connected through the discussion. And teachers become more

sensitive in teaching pragmatism.

Effects

When TEPD project was held, the primary and secondary school teachers could join the project willingly. From 2006 till 2012 there were about 140,000 teachers joined this project. Although there were less than 20% of the teachers in Taiwan who participated this project (TEPD, 2012/4/19), teachers still can choose to join the project or not. TEPD is an empowerment project for teachers in Taiwan, not an administrative order.

There was some negative opinions held by Taiwan Parents Association 2011. Parents did not agree with TEPD. They said the unqualified teachers can not be laid off by this evaluation. Parents want real teacher evaluation system. The gap between TEPD and evaluation is about 'dialogue'. In TEPD, teachers have to discuss the criteria of teaching. They have to discuss what to teach before teaching observation, and what they've observed after the teaching observation. In Deleuze's and Guatarri's opinion, the criterion on concepts is constructive by multiple movements of pragmatic activity (Semetsky, 2004: 444). The effect in TEPD project from 2006 till now is 'dialogue'. Teachers discuss and share their teaching willingly, teachers' learning communities are coming into being accordingly.

Experience

Chen has joined TEPD project from 2006. She got the basic, advanced and highest TEPD evaluator licenses between 2006 to 2011. She is the lecturer of TEPD system, too. She is the Dean of Research Office in a primary school in Chiayi, Taiwan. The primary school is one of the schools that has joined in TEPD project since 2006 till now. So Chen has many experiences about TEPD project.

In the first years, Chen and many teachers who have joined the project learned together to understand the goal of the project. Then they had to learn how to evaluate teaching and profile together. In the learning processes, teachers shared their experiences in teaching regardless how many years they've taught. Allan(2004: 424-425) arranged student teachers learned together in a project. She found that deterritorializations made teacher learning become a rhizome way. The rhizome way meant that plural activities were held and special needs were taken care of. In Chen's experience, TEPD learning processes promoted teachers' plural ideas about teaching

by discussing and dialoguing.

In the basic license learning schedule, Chen spent eighteen hours to know the project and the skills of observation and portfolio evaluation. In the advanced learning program, Chen spent eighteen hours as well to learn how to manage classrooms, how to plan a professional project and how to evaluate teaching practices and portfolio. In the highest level, she spent forty-two hours to be a teacher mentor. To be a mentor in a school, Chen has to accompany a junior teacher more than thirty-six hours annually. And she has to observe at least twelve periods of the junior teacher's classes. Chen is a mentor this year, too. In those two years as a mentor, Chen found that dialogue between mentors and junior teachers is the best way of TEPD. Mentors and junior teachers share their teaching and their educational belief together. 'Dialogue Together' makes mentors and junior teachers having more imaginaries in their teaching and learning.

Summary

In this section, we talk about the goal, the strategies and the effects of TEPD project. And we shared one of the researcher's experiences in TEPD project from 2006 till now. The most important idea in this project is teachers' dialogue. Teacher colleagues dialogue about teaching observation and teaching portfolio. Teachers affiliate with each other. Then teachers group willingly into professional learning communities for promoting teaching and learning.

Pedagogy desire and Teacher Evaluation for Professional Development

Desire of differences

Derrida's pedagogy is political in the sense that it teaches us to read and write differently. In this idea, pedagogy's hard core is not just reading and writing, but is speaking and acting (Peters & Biesta, 2009: 8). In TEPD project, teachers talk about teaching criteria. That is speaking. Teachers observe another teachers' classroom and evaluate teachers' portfolio. That is acting.

Derrida has talked about forgiveness and pardon since 2001. In his theory, pardon is no limit, no measure, no moderation, no 'how much' (Peters, 2009a: 45). In TEPD, although there are criteria in teaching observation and teaching portfolio evaluation, there is no 'measurement', no "how much" for TEPD. Chen said that since

2006 till today, teachers have all passed the evaluation of this project in her school. They implemented TEPD in school in order to promote teachers dialoguing and teachers' affiliations. In this project, teachers discuss together about teaching and learning more often. Those are the gifts from this project. And teachers understand how to talk and discuss about teaching by the criteria. The criteria are just the reference materials. They are not the 'Teaching Bible' or 'Teaching Standards'.

Thus, TEPD in Taiwan has encouraged teachers to share their differences in teaching and to affiliate the differences in teaching. Chen observed junior teachers' classrooms and found that the same teachers used Youtube movies to inspire students' learning. Then the junior teacher taught Chen how to download Youtube movies. In TEPD, there are no scales between teachers. Teachers are all cooperators in schools. Teachers share the differences and love the differences. Teachers will have more magic tools for teaching and learning. Then pedagogy desire sprang up in the differences.

Desire of pluralities

Derrida reconsiders the thought of Hegel, Husserl and Heidegger. Then Derrida said what we need is a change of style such as Nietzsche reminded us to be plural (Peters, 2009b: 62). In TEPD, plural phenomena includes school based criteria, willing participation, teachers dialogue and teachers' learning communities. Teachers can see another teachers' teaching naturally. Teachers can share about teaching strategies cooperatively. No measurement and no competition, TEPD is a formulation that helps teachers to achieve their teaching effectiveness.

In postmodernism educational research, we have to destroy the traditional style of research. And we have to notice the entanglement of events. We have to forget the object and to return to a baroque attitude (MacLure, 2006: 229-231). In TEPD, we find that teachers have to re-research the meanings of teaching criteria. And in teaching observation, teachers have to pay attention to the narrative of a class both before teaching and after teaching. We have to sense TEPD plural way then we will find more possibilities in class. All these ideas come from pedagogy pluralities and pedagogy desires. Teachers desire to observe teaching of other teachers and learn new teaching methods from other teachers. TEPD encourages teachers to sense desire, to sense plural, and to sense rationalization.

Desire of deconstruction

In Derrida's idea, deconstruction is different from critic. Critic assumes a judgment or a choice between two terms. Deconstruction is to think its possibility from another point (Derrida & Edwald, 1995: 286-287). In Taiwan, TEPD is a deconstructive project that encourages the new ideas coming from teachers. Not being critical, but enrich teacher peers' cooperation.

In teaching observation, teachers observe another teachers' teaching. They discuss what can be observed before the class. Then teachers observe and give feedback for the class. In the TEPD project, teachers do not criticize but share their teaching practices for teaching effectiveness. In teaching profiles evaluation, teachers recognize that other teachers' good ideas for the organization of teaching portfolio. Then teachers share their teaching practices in profiles and learn from other teachers. No critics, just deconstruction.

Summary

The last section discusses pedagogy desire in different, plural, and deconstructive ways in order to understand teacher evaluation for professional development in Taiwan. Teacher peers observe other teachers' teaching or evaluate others' teaching portfolio. Teachers learn how to teach well in different, plural and deconstructive way. TEPD is not just criterions or standards, it is a project for teachers to learn differences, pluralism, and deconstruction. In TEPD project, we hope teachers can do 'Nomad' in their teaching: describe teaching between here and there, between now and then, between the day before and the day after (Semetsky, 2004: 447). Then we hope teachers embrace their pedagogy desire in postmodern way, different, plural and deconstructive.

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