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Chinese Education

The system of Chinese education is envied by numerous Western governments who are mainly keen for replicating high levels of discipline and high test scores. Schooling in China goes beyond the exam results that the student gets. American education focuses more on tuning the students to become unique individuals in the future. The American culture of individualism is highly reflected in their education system. However, Chinese culture of collectivism is reflected in their education system. According to the Programme for the International Student Assessment (PISA), the scores for the global education on 4th August 2015, portrays that the Chinese students especially those from Shanghai ranked at the top (Richardson 1). When the students enter the classroom, they must be reminded that they ought to learn something. They are told that it is their duty to their families and their country to give out something to show they are in school. The Chinese teachers are more respected than their counterparts in the United States. For instance, teachers are not taxed on their salaries, and there is a day for teachers known as “Teachers Day” on every 29th September of every year. The schools in Chinese have an ethic of hard work, which result to success for many students. This paper will focus on the Chinese education aspect of rote learning as discussed by Anyon Jean and Earl Shorris.

Rote learning involves the technique of learning that solely depends on memorization, which is achieved by repetition. The Chinese education uses the idea that for one to recall

quickly something they must stay repeating the material frequently. These make the Chinese students use more time in their classes with less physical work. Contrary, the aspect of learning practiced in the American education are associative learning. That provide the reason the Chinese schools does not separate the lower achieving students from the high achieving students via tracking levels as is being done in the United States. The Chinese belief that every student can perform well and succeed since it depends on the effort that they put in their studies.

According to Earl is that for the students to learn moral life in their education they have to be exposed (Shorris 54). She says that taking the children to concerts, plays, museums, and lectures help them a lot in learning the moral life. The moral life affects the manner in which people live in the society with others. The first lesson that Earl had with her students she talked about how rich people acquire the political life. She said that rich people know how to negotiate in order to get what they want rather than using force. That is why the rich people are the one who rule the country. They spend money in expensive universities and private schools to learn about humanities. This concept of not stopping until you come up with something or achieve something is the same applied in Chinese education. After being exposed to rote learning in their classroom, they must produce something to the society or their nation to prove they have learned. Through collectivism, the Chinese students manage to come with more inventions since among all they are highly disciplined students.

Chinese education is not affordable for the poor people who cannot afford to pay the fees required. According to Earl Shorris, he put it very clear that the public schools in the complex industrial societies offer various types of educational curriculum knowledge and experience to the students coming from different social classes. The Chinese education in private schools are slightly higher in the fees that they offer than their counterparts in the United States. Earl argued

that the skills and knowledge that leads to the social power such as managerial, legal and medical are only available for the advantaged social group. These skills are withheld from working classes who are offered a more “practical” curriculum such as clerical knowledge and manual skills. The education in China also favors the rich and keep away the poor. Both Anyon and Earl have made it clear that most education system usually favors the rich who get social power since they can afford to pay for it. The poor are left searching for the lower skills. These show the condition in both Chinese and American education system. Those students who undergo in the Chinese education system, when they go for higher quality studies in America they are the best. These are mainly because the students are highly disciplined and respect their professors so much where they finish their assignments and other tasks given.

The Chinese education focuses more in passing the tests provided by the teacher and, thus, embracing rote learning to recall quickly the concepts learned in the classroom. Jean uses the concept of rote learning where he says that it is mostly used in the working classes schools. These were classified as the schools where more parents had blue-collar jobs. Jean further says that rote learning does not involve the student well to whatever they are learning (Anyon 9). They just learn to pass their exams without being exactly taught how to apply the knowledge learned in the classroom. The teachers who practice rote learning mainly rarely explain the reason for assigning work to the students. They do not show how the work connects with other assignments or even give the idea behind the procedure’s coherence, to show its significance or meaning. The teachers just provide the students with whatever is in the curriculum. The rote behavior usually makes teachers provide rules for the students, which should be strictly followed without questioning them. The students are commanded by their teachers to copy notes to be studied later after their classes. These give the students less time for playing, which resembles

the Chinese education. The evaluation of the work is not done according to whether it is wrong or right, but according to whether the right steps were followed. Therefore, from Jean's argument the Chinese education system is likely similar to the working class schools, which focus more on how the students performs in their tests rather than its applicability in real life. The associative learning practiced in the American education provide skills and knowledge that students should apply in their real life. The American education can be similar to the Executive Elite School according to the classification provided by Jean (Anyon 15). The students are given time to reason out for them to get a solution to a particular problem. The students are expected to give solutions that show top academic quality and those that produce intellectual products. That is why students are divided and separated from each other according to their abilities.

Earl believes that rote learning is not sufficient for the student since they learn to apply it in their future lives. She believes that students should be challenged for them to produce the best not just being monitored to write notes and repeat reading them severally to memorize the concept. Memorizing the concept cannot help the student to go beyond classroom since they just memorize without challenging whether the theories they are provided are valid, not valid, correct or incorrect. Earl gives an example of one time she introduced a problem that was supposed to be solved by reducing symbols and phrases (Shorris 57). She wrote the key phrases on the blackboard for the students to attempt, followed by handouts with the entire problem. By the time she was finishing writing the phrases, one student by the name David Iskhakov had decided to volunteer and try solving the problem. After attempting, the student did not get the right answer. In fact, Earl said she was not giving that question for the students to know the answer at that time, but to try and solve it so that she can evaluate their abilities. Later she just gave hints to the students and required them to take the question home and go and try to solve it. The

following day about half of the students managed to get the right answer. If Earl did not let the student's attempt, she would not have known where the big problem will emanate while solving the problem. The rote behavior that is used in the Chinese education does not exercise the student's ability to solve different problems. It just requires them to keep repeating the same thing until they master it for them to be able to pass their tests.

Work Cited

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