

Relationship between Labor Education and Foreign Language Education

-- From Sukhomlinsky's Comprehensive and Harmonious Development of Personality

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Abstract

As the function and essence of education are explored more deeply, the critical role of labor education curriculum in the curriculum system has been widely acknowledged. However, due to the traditional concept, school tradition, and teachers' understanding, the concrete application of labor education curriculum in educational practice is still not deep and comprehensive. According to Sukhomlinsky's theory of comprehensive and harmonious personality development, labor education is a crucial fulcrum and way of individual comprehensive development, which is highly consistent with the educational concept of Educating Five Domains Simultaneously in China. The fulcrum function of labor education determines that it must be closely combined with disciplines or courses to play a maximum role in educating people. Labor education also plays an invisible but influential role in the process of foreign language education, and this combination is not only an essential guarantee for training high-quality talents but also an urgent requirement of current national construction. Only by deeply understanding the needs of the current combination of labor education and foreign language education and actively seeking countermeasures from the curriculum system, ideological understanding, and teaching practice can the foreign language education sector truly implement the national education policy and fulfill the critical mission of teaching and educating people.

Keywords

Labor education; Foreign language education; Sukhomlinsky.

1. Introduction

Through the new curriculum reform round, labor education's role in the classroom system has been strengthened and widely recognized, therefore, the integration of labor education and other courses has become a hot topic. However, many things could be improved in the teaching practice of the labor education curriculum. Many schools still pay too much attention to students' knowledge education, neglect the phenomenon of labor education or labor education is lack of systematic, superficial problems still exist, labor education curriculum and cultural curriculum disconnect is particularly prominent. For a long time, China attaches great importance to the joint development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, beauty and labor. Labor education is not only an essential part of China's education system, but it must also be organically integrated with cultural disciplines to play a full role in the mutual promotion of the two. The combination of labor education and cultural curriculum should include the combination of various basic disciplines. Foreign language education, as one of the main disciplines in China's education system, not only needs to consolidate students' skills in

listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating but also guide students to absorb the achievements of Chinese and foreign civilizations based on “learning from middle school and applying Western learning”, and help students to shape a correct outlook on life, values and world. Foreign language students who care about the motherland will also devote themselves to the country’s construction after they have completed their studies, they can play a unique role in communicating with the rest of the world in the mutual learning of civilizations. From the perspective of national development strategy, the modernization drive needs to absorb the experience and lessons of other countries based on making full use of its own excellent cultural traditions and advanced science and technology to develop its strong points and avoid its weaknesses or draw on its strong points to make up for its weaknesses. Foreign language is the key bridge in this process, so foreign language education is indispensable. From the point of view of the purpose of labor education and foreign language education, there is the possibility of organic integration of the two, and only by realizing the integration of the two can foreign language education and labor education complement each other and truly implement the glorious mission of educating people for the party and educating talents for the country. This article systematically grasps the necessity of our country’s labor education course becoming an independent course and the current situation of development through Sukhomlinsky’s theory of comprehensive and harmonious development of personality, taking the mutual promotion relationship between foreign language education and labor education as the main examination content, deeply explore its close relation with labor education.

In terms of the curriculum system, the combination of labor and foreign language education needs a high-quality curriculum system. From the perspective of ideological cognition, China still needs to explore the combination of labor education and foreign language education at a deeper level. Finally, from the perspective of teaching practice, foreign language teachers’ understanding of the characteristics of labor education will directly affect whether the education activities can be carried out smoothly and effectively. Therefore, the organic combination of labor education and foreign language education is the top priority of the curriculum system reform, which is helpful to help students achieve the double harvest of foreign language learning and labor skills improvement.

2. The Need of Building a High-quality Foreign Language Curriculum System

The results of foreign language education should not only rely on classroom theory teaching but also guide students to connect the content of foreign language learning with practice. Therefore, the mutual penetration of foreign language education and labor education is conducive to constructing an innovative foreign language curriculum system. To provide a systematic guarantee for promoting the development of education in China. In addition to the system, in order to truly implement education, teachers need to design expressive tasks in the foreign language classroom to stimulate students’ enthusiasm for learning. For example, when learning labor-related units, foreign language teachers can subtly design situations to enhance students’ interest in labor in daily exercises and stimulate their sense of self-achievement. To help students gradually form a correct view of labor and values. Sukhomlinsky pointed out that education other than labor is impossible to exist.[1] Because labor has a distinct ideological nature, he stressed that students should be guided to become workers, a kind of education in itself, so labor cannot exist independently of education. The ultimate goal of foreign language education is to educate students, and one of the crucial aspects of education is to let students form an excellent spiritual character. The combination of education and productive labor proposed by Sukhomlinsky is to improve students’ personal quality, reflecting the consistency of the goals of labor education and foreign language education. In the specific teaching practice,

foreign language teachers need to integrate the resources of the textbook content across disciplines according to their own teaching practice, which is conducive to the penetration of teaching content and the innovation of classroom mode and can expand students' ability and thinking. China is a developing country, educational resources in the central and western regions are scarce, short-term overseas exchanges, tourism, and study abroad cannot be realized in these regions. Therefore, the main field of training students' foreign language ability lies in foreign language teachers, whose understanding of foreign language teaching is very important for the cultivation of Chinese students' foreign language ability.[2] In the face of the country's growing demand for foreign language talents, foreign language teachers play an indispensable role in the process of training foreign language talents. However, talent training should not only stay at the knowledge level, but also enable them to have practical experience and practical operation ability. Therefore, foreign language teachers should guide students to participate in more creative practical activities, explore the way to create a high-quality foreign language curriculum system in the teaching process, and enable students to innovate their understanding of the Marxist view of labor to a larger extent, and finally achieve the purpose of enabling students to achieve all-round development.

The organic combination of foreign language teaching content and labor education can effectively build an innovative education model. Sukhomlinsky once said, without the combination of education and productive labor of the young generation, the ideal of the future society is inconceivable.[3] The young generation is the main force of the country's prosperity and development, and it is up to them to create the future of society. Labor education for the young generation is not only so simple as letting students complete physical labor but, more importantly, to help students form a careful thinking network in labor and gain a different perception of things from the labor experience. For Chinese students, the vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure of a foreign language are entirely different from those of their mother tongue, so learning a foreign language is a great challenge. In the face of such a daunting challenge, foreign language teachers should not be satisfied with teaching only in the traditional sense, but consider the connection between foreign language teaching and many concerns, if students can only learn passively through single channels, and the learning effect can be imagined. In this way, labor education curriculum can be the entry point for the connection between foreign language learning and life.

On the one hand, the labor course is rooted in the labor of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, beauty and labor, which requires students to perceive life by hand in order to help them establish a real connection with the outside world, and enhance their optimistic and life-loving tendency. This optimistic and positive attitude enables students to take the initiative to explore the world and also helps them actively explore foreign language grammar and syntax learning so as to establish a more apparent cognition of foreign language knowledge. On the other hand, the teaching and practice of labor courses contain the wisdom of Chinese civilization, which is deeply rooted in the teachers' way of thinking, most teaching contents and materials are also taken from our life or culture. For students of foreign language majors, the learning link of labor education courses is a precious opportunity for the integration of Chinese and foreign cultures. Some scholars have pointed out that "foreign language teaching should not only make good use of foreign language education resources, but also not forget the excellent traditional Chinese culture resources, and face the future while persisting in absorbing foreign languages".[4] Combining excellent Chinese and foreign civilization and culture should not rely on students' spontaneous feelings but should guide students to develop a sense of charm in labor education courses or feel the charm of Chinese culture in foreign language learning through reasonable teaching design. Therefore, teachers should pay attention to creating conditions to enrich students' spiritual lives, guide students to think seriously and use their brains, and arrange innovative and exploratory activities so that students can combine labor with study. In addition,

some scholars pointed out as early as before, In Sukhomlinsky's view, any labor is the unity of physical labor and mental labor.[3] Teachers guide students to keep thinking in the process of labor and connect theory with reality so that students have a more apparent cognition of foreign language learning.

Foreign language is an all-encompassing knowledge subject with a close combination of skill and practice. The state and schools need to work together to build a high-quality foreign language curriculum system. In the context of globalization, countries need to cultivate confident and well-rounded foreign language talents. Sukhomlinsky once said that if one wants to realize the comprehensive and harmonious development of human personality, it is necessary to make intellectual education, physical education, moral education, labor education, and aesthetic education deeply penetrate and intertwine with each other.[1] The mutual penetration of intellectual education and labor education mentioned in it is the key to realizing the combination of teaching and labor education, and also an essential part of school education. Labor education not only aims to improve students' ability to apply the foreign language knowledge learned in class in daily life so that students can communicate fluently in foreign languages but also promote the country's development, which is conducive to enabling students to fulfill their obligations as citizens of a country. Some scholars have pointed out in books that, students should be able to assume civic responsibility to carry out labor education, so as to adapt to the needs of labor mobility and social structure changes.[5] As citizens, students need to contribute their strength to the country, facing the current international situation, the country needs talents proficient in foreign languages and generalists with noble feelings, attitudes, and values. In order to train comprehensive talents more effectively, the country should integrate labor education into all aspects of foreign language education and build a great modern socialist country. Cultivating comprehensive talents requires teachers to guide students to apply what they have learned in practice and to combine theory with practice. Therefore, for foreign language education, the focus should be on students' active exploration of knowledge and construction of the meaning of what they have learned, which will help students understand new knowledge at a deeper level and actively combine theory with practice so as to develop into high-quality workers in the new era. Finally, to cultivate high-quality workers, we need to create new sparks. Marx and Engels attached great importance to the combination of labor education, and they emphasized in the Communist Manifesto that education should be combined with material production.[6] It is not difficult to see that the process of people participating in labor is itself a kind of education, labor can not only improve social productivity, but also promote the all-round development of people.

3. The Need of Building a High-Quality Labor Education System

The combination of foreign language education and labor education is helpful in effectively building a complete labor education system. On the one hand, combining the two can improve the lack of labor education in humanistic education so that labor education can fully cover all aspects of education. On the other hand, the organic integration of labor education and subject education can help produce a more high-quality labor education system. Some scholars have pointed out that "the development of labor education in the new era must be based on the premise of the conformal development of labor education".[7] The connotative development of labor education aims to show that education is an activity to train people, and it cannot be separated from the essential activity of people -- labor. If labor education wants to play its function of educating people, it must form a fixed system. Therefore, building a high-quality labor education system is the guarantee to maximize the function of labor education. Some scholars pointed out that labor education is considered a very important part of the education system, which aims to cultivate students' practical ability, labor consciousness and social

responsibility.[8] Students cultivate new thinking abilities in the process of labor, which virtually educates students intellectually. Sukhomlinsky's theory of comprehensive and harmonious development of personality holds that it is the ultimate task of education to train people with comprehensive and harmonious development of personality, aiming at making students develop in an all-round way in virtue, intelligence, physical fitness, beauty and labor. In addition, labor education is essential in increasing students' knowledge reserve. "Knowledge and people's material labor have the original consistency, and labor is the hotbed of knowledge incubation".[9] Knowledge is formed by people's continuous exploration, which comes from labor and serves labor better. Sukhomlinsky argues that the real connection between labor and knowledge, which is of great significance in determining the purpose of life, lies in the fact that the civilization of thought can foster the civilization of interaction between man and nature.[10] In his opinion, the organic combination of education and productive labor is not only for students to accept labor training unquestioningly but also for truly integrating labor into students' life. So in foreign language teaching, teachers should deeply study the labor-related content in foreign language textbooks according to the goal of labor education, find a reasonable relationship between the two, and guide students to use initiative and initiative to understand the significance of labor.

As an essential part of philosophy and social sciences, foreign language education can promote the high-quality development of the labor education system. To build a high-quality education system, we must first obtain institutional support. The state has promulgated relevant policies to clarify the status of labor education so that students can continuously and frequently receive labor education, which shows that the necessity of labor education is more sufficient. Mantsios Gregory discusses the construction model and value of labor education from a historical perspective.[11] He emphasizes the construction of a new and more comprehensive labor education framework based on the past labor education model and the requirements and characteristics of The Times. Integrating labor education into every link of cultural knowledge education can enable students to constantly be influenced by each other and accept the influence of culture imperceptibly. Integrating labor education into foreign language education is conducive to allowing students to receive labor education from the lower grades so as to give full play to the role of labor education earlier. Sukhomlinsky's theory of comprehensive and harmonious development of personality holds that to be a citizen who loves to learn -- which means to be a worker with thinking power.[12] The ability to work and the ability to think are inseparable, and the citizen who loves to learn must also become a high-quality worker. Promoting the spirit of work through foreign language education and guiding students to love and respect work can help cultivate students to achieve all-round development. The purpose of education is to realize the all-round development of human beings, which requires that students should not only learn the cultural knowledge stipulated in the syllabus but also enable students to obtain all-round development in intelligence, physical strength, and other aspects so that students can better apply what they have learned to social practice. Students can focus on exercise and improving their thinking while learning foreign languages, while labor education focuses on improving students' ability to solve practical problems. Therefore, the organic combination of labor and foreign language education is helpful to improve students' intelligence levels.

Finally, the combination of labor education and foreign language education is conducive to better achieving the education goal. "Moral education, intellectual education, physical education, aesthetic education and labor education are cross-related, and they complement each other and promote each other".[13] Therefore, to achieve the goal of education, it is necessary to maximize the value of labor education, which requires schools to explore the relationship between it and other four education and organically integrate the five education, so as to achieve "educating five domains simultaneously" and help students cultivate all-round

labor values. Education practice can be better carried out by dialectical integrating substantive education with an emphasis on objective and formal education with an emphasis on subjective education. In educational activities, foreign language teachers should strive to explore the characteristics of foreign language education and, based on ensuring its original characteristics, achieve organic integration with labor education and give full play to its unique role in educating students. Finally, foreign language and labor education should establish corresponding systems to enable students to learn professional knowledge more systematically. "The construction of a high-quality professional system is the guarantee of a high-level talent training system, the construction of a professional knowledge system is the core of the construction of the professional system, and the core knowledge in the professional knowledge system is the foundation of the establishment of undergraduate curriculum system".[14] The construction of a high-quality professional system can help cultivate high-level talents, which is also one of the purposes of the current construction of the professional system in China. At present, our country is deepening the educational reform, the full implementation of quality education, learning Sukhomlinsky's theory of comprehensive and harmonious development of personality of education thought, help us to carry out quality education for further thinking and exploration if our country can apply its theory in practice, the education reform will achieve more significant results.

4. The Need of Building a Good National Image

China needs to realize ethnic diplomacy, and the combination of foreign language education and labor education is beneficial in displaying Chinese wisdom better and contributing its strength to the construction of public relations. Cockerill elaborated on the role of Sukhomlinsky labor education in the all-round development of individuals and revealed the critical role of Sukhomlinsky labor education in the improvement of personal morality, such as labor education can make students develop the quality of diligence and willingness to help.[15] Therefore, in teaching foreign language education, foreign language teachers should constantly use the advantages of foreign languages to train more foreign language talents to serve the country. For example, labor education is committed to cultivating students into talents with the joint development of "morality, intelligence, physical fitness, beauty and labor", which fully reflects the national consciousness and, therefore, has become an important means of personnel training in our country. Some scholars emphasizes the role of labor in the moral and spiritual development of individuals, labor can promote students' moral and intellectual development and the all-around development of individual character.[16] If China wants to realize the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, every worker must hold an honest labor consciousness. According to Sukhomlinsky's view on laborers, only by working constantly can we enrich our spiritual life.[17] From this point of view, he attaches great importance to the regularity and continuity of labor teaching, which requires the national education department to pay attention to the corresponding teaching time and mode when formulating the labor teaching syllabus, so that students' love for labor can be deepened continuously, to improve the quality of national labor education.

The organic combination of foreign language education and labor education can enhance students' hands-on ability and improve the effect of foreign language learning, help students to acquire a perceptual understanding of the surrounding environment through hands-on labor, cultivate their love for the living environment and beautiful homeland, thus stimulating their learning motivation and enhancing their sense of responsibility for national construction. To enable them to devote themselves to foreign language learning with a positive attitude and strive to be ambassadors of mutual learning among civilizations to make greater contributions to national construction. It emphasizes that education is a major plan of the country and the

party, and improving the comprehensive quality of the people is conducive to the country's diplomatic achievements. Only by speeding up the construction of education power can we provide strong support for the construction of science and technology power. Under the background of "bringing in" and "going out" of Chinese culture, students learn foreign languages to understand the local customs and culture of foreign countries, constantly improve their cross-cultural communication ability, communicate with foreign people through foreign languages, and constantly export excellent traditional Chinese culture to expand China's influence. Timoshenko discusses the development of labor education and its role in the development of the nation and the country.[18] In the context of the continuous development of global integration, China must adhere to its "Chinese characteristics" if it wants the world to pay more attention to China. As one of the excellent traditional Chinese cultures, the spirit of labor should first use foreign language as the medium to achieve the goal of going global. As a medium of communication between the country and the world, foreign languages can promote the deeper integration of foreign language education and labor education. Therefore, the scholars have concluded that the integration of education and productive labor is the main means to raise productivity and improve society and it will help China enter the world stage better and faster and realize the strategic goal of becoming a powerful country in education.[19] Doing a good job in school foreign language education and improving the national language strategic ability have become necessary language education plans related to national strategic development.

5. Conclusion

In the new era, combining labor with foreign language education is still a long way to go. Universities and primary schools should accurately grasp the educational orientation of labor education, follow the laws of education, maximize the role of labor education, and truly realize the organic integration of labor education and foreign language education. When labor education returns to the classroom, and foreign language teachers consciously infiltrate it into the classroom, it can not only enrich the content of foreign language teaching but also cultivate students' tenacious and labor-loving character and implement a comprehensive education for students. At the same time, foreign language teachers can also improve their teaching quality with the times and innovate their own labor education methods based on the rich theoretical and practical achievements of foreign countries in combination with China's national conditions so that students can experience the joy of labor in a new social environment. In essence, the organic combination of labor education and foreign language education curriculum needs all parties' joint efforts. The foreign language field should strive to explore the implementation path of the combination with labor education and further explore the integration path. Based on improving students' foreign language learning ability, students should strengthen their labor consciousness and help students develop the habit of loving learning and enduring hardships. Strive to train students to become builders and successors of socialism in the new era with harmonious development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, beauty and labor.

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