



## The vicissitudes and educational impact of child teachers

Yang Wen

Changsha Normal College, Changsha, China

### ABSTRACT

People usually tend to think that the teachers have too much power which leads to the loss of students' autonomy in the teaching field study. In fact both the traditional teaching field or in the field of modern classroom, child teachers' power is not too much, but too small. Child teachers' power comes from authoritarian rule and knowledge in the traditional teaching field. Child teachers are in a passive position to use the power. In the field of modern education, the child teachers' power come from individual "choice knowledge" and the modern state system, they have become dancers wearing shackles. Virtual power of the teacher result the loss of the true state of human interaction in the teaching field, therefore, teachers must be empowered.

**Keywords:** child teacher, teacher's power, empower

### INTRODUCTION

Research in the field of teachers teaching authority is not uncommon. Revolve the central word "teacher's power", set the time in 201-2014 and the search on the internet to get 250 articles in total. Since 2001, the study on the teacher's power is on the rise and then has gradually entered into peak. (See table 1). Especially in the recent five years, the study on the teacher's power has been paid attention to.

**Tab.1 The annual distribution of research on teachers' power**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number	2	7	7	11	14	18	18	22	31	24	37	28	22

Analyze the articles, and obtain 86 in total except the articles which are not based on the "teacher's power". These articles mainly distribute in the following facets

**Tab.2 The distribution of the theme of "teacher's power"**

	The connotation of "teacher's power"	The teacher's power in teacher-student relationship	Class and teachers' power	Curriculum and teachers' power	Teacher's power in different stages
Number	12	18	16	26	14

From the Fig.2, it is easy to see that these researches almost focus on the study of teacher's power from theoretic perspective or the interpretation to the teacher's power in the teacher-student relationship, class or curriculum reform. In the study of the teacher's power in different stages, the study on the teacher's power in primary school, middle school and college consists of the majority. Moreover, the researches came into consistence that the central status of teachers' power, the flood of teachers' power or manipulation on classroom had led to "Differential pattern" in teaching field and the loss of the status of the student body.

However, the study on the source of power, application and operations of preschool teachers are rare. Regard

“preschool teacher” and “power” as the searching words, and define the relationship as “contain”, then the relevant articles were just 42 in total, including master's thesis and journal articles. From the researching years, the study on the preschool teacher's power has just emerged recently, especially in the past three years. The number has exceeded that of the previous year.

**Tab.3 The annual distribution of the preschool teacher's power**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
The number of documents	1	2	1	0	1	3	1	4	4	4	6	7	8

Exclude the articles which are obviously contradictory to the theme, then there is only 10 in total. So, it is obvious that the study on the preschool teacher's power is rare. Through the analysis of the study on the ten articles, previous studies harbor three characteristics: Firstly, the power of preschool teachers is not the theme, but is just involved in more or less, such as the illustration on the social status of preschool teachers by Zhang Xiaohui, the study on the situation of preschool teachers' credentials in Chong Qing by Tang Guiying. Besides, direct illustration has been made on preschool teachers' authority which only focuses on the given situation of power application, neglecting the emphasis on teachers' authority itself.

Exploration of these theories provides conditions for our understanding of the social status, power status of preschool teachers. However, these studies focus on the macro description and analysis of preschool teacher's powers, less concerning the sources, usage conditions and usage effects of preschool teacher powers in the microscopic field and lacking the analysis from the historical perspective, which will be included in this study. In addition to the theoretical studies, in practice, a considerable number of people think that because there is no unified teaching materials for preschool education, nor is there the exam selection pressure, preschool teachers can freely use their own powers, choose teaching materials by themselves, choose teaching methods and teach according to their own will. At the same time, because of the immaturity of education objects, teachers have to play the role of power center in teaching in order to promote the smooth development of teaching. Based on these considerations, the conclusion of early childhood teachers' having great powers has been drawn. But that is not the case, in the study we have found that the power of preschool teachers has not become bigger, rather, it has become more concealed; preschool teachers has become a node in the domain of power in the teaching field rather than the instigator of powers .

### **THE SUPPRESSED CENTER: EXAMINATION OF PRESCHOOL TEACHERS' POWERS IN THE TRADITIONAL TEACHING FIELD**

As one of the main teaching subjects, preschool teacher plays the role of teaching organizer. In the traditional teaching field, preschool teachers are regarded as the organizer and sustainer of teaching order and thus as the power center in the teaching field. Therefore, in order to examine truth of preschool teachers' powers, the existence situation of preschool teachers in the teaching field can be inspected. Specifically, this includes usage conditions and sources of preschool teachers' powers.

#### **(A) Knowledge and system of the authoritarian group: sources of preschool teachers' powers**

From the primitive society where people lived the life of a savage to the formation of the slavery society, human beings had entered a civilized society in that various social activities had gradually entered into an organized state from the human disorganized state and had begun to transit from the act-by-oneself state to the self-conscious state. In this way, the progress of civilization had created various social institutions and authoritarian bodies were maturing, both in thought and practice in the field , the ruling powers began to infiltrate every aspect of daily life. This situation in the west was mainly reflected in the gradual development of religious thought. Christianity gradually became the authority in the social development, controlling the thought category in the Western long history by means of penetrating religious knowledge. Monopoly of this thought also constituted the medieval "dark" side. In China, in the late Warring States period , the development of productive forces gradually broke the balanced situation between princes and the era of segmentation gradually ended. Till 221 BC , Qin defeated Qi and Qin became the first multi-ethnic, unified and centralized country in China 's history. And China formally entered the history of feudal society. Subsequently with the great confucian purge in the Qin dynasty, unity and dominance in the ideological aspect became increasingly apparent. Despite there was not the shortage of wise monarch in the subsequent nearly one thousand, controlling the ideology was what rulers always adhered to. Therefore, under the domination of the Western religious thoughts and Eastern imperial thoughts, Western and Eastern histories have entered into the era of “grand unification”.

Under the banner of maintaining unity, whether it is the domination of imperial powers and Christianity, the control of ideology and thought have a reasonable necessity., thus gradually forming a traditional power network and power order of pyramid shape starting from the ruling class. In this power order, preschool teachers are both the

dominator of ruling powers and people who extend the tentacle of powers to preschool education field. Although this teaching is sometimes in a collective form, such as our preschool education and sometimes in the form of individual teaching for children, such as the tutor existing in Western society for a long time. Undoubtedly, these preschool teachers play the role of false power dominator, which is, specifically, acted by Western liberal intellectuals or by the monks, while in China this role is played by intellectuals who fail in the imperial competitive examination. Western medieval monasteries “because other forms of education did not exist basically, they not only assumed the basic functions of education, but became the most important educational institutions in Western Europe”, [ 10 ] “monks gained the monopoly of knowledge and education, therefore education itself was also penetrated with the nature of theology.” [ 11 ] In this case, most of the western group of preschool teachers were monks with sectarian background. Under the influence of Christian thought, they consciously or unconsciously acted as the spokesman of papal authority. While during the long-term feudal society In China, in addition to the family which played a role in early childhood education, the enlightenment teacher was the main bearer of preschool education. As the teacher who was in the lower teaching level, they were mainly composed of those intellectuals who failed in the exam. They also tended to act as “end nerve” ruling the teaching of knowledge and playing an important role in imparting to children the ruling will.

(B) Passivity and repression:the condition of preschool teachers’ powers

In the traditional society, under the impact of the ruling system and ideology, both groups of preschool teachers in Western and Eastern histories consciously or unconsciously have become the spokesman of dominating the knowledge. On the one hand, the identity spokesman gives them power in that they have become the absolute possessor of teaching powers in the power order formed in the traditional society, thus occupying the leading position in students’ lives outside the field of education and teaching, which makes them possess the teaching hegemony in the teaching activities. And teachers have become judges in the teaching field, who are the executor and supervisor of discipline. Meanwhile, preschool teachers have the absolute right to speak, and students have become executors of preschool teachers’ commands. Children must maintain a submissive attitude to preschool teachers all the time---they are required not to speak casually and not to argue with the teacher. The truth will always in the hand of teachers and teachers will never have wrong judge and errors belong only to students. The child are just like a container of knowledge, who is waiting for the infusion of knowledge from preschool teachers. Actually, just follow what Herbart advocates “Before teaching, if you do not try to press down students’ natural character of stubborn and inelegance, you can conduct neither teaching nor education” [ 12 ] According to this inhuman viewpoint of students, teaching activities inevitably are filled with “binding”, “limited”, “inhibit”, “sanction”, “condemn” and “admonishment”. In such viewpoints of teachers and teaching, preschool teachers often use some mechanical methods in teaching, forming the teaching mode of relying mainly on Q&A while taking exercises as secondary reliance, ignoring the development of students’ self-exploration capabilities; on the other hand, preschool teachers are also bound by the identity of spokesman, losing the space of self- reflection and self- teaching. In teaching they focus on the inheritance of the existing knowledge and experience and past culture, neglecting a new culture’s exploration and new knowledge and experience’s innovation, which have caused them to focus on the impartment of existing knowledge in teaching books, strictly follow the requirements of the rulers and keep within the bounds, thus losing the flexibility and the true purpose of teaching.

### **SHACKLED DANCERS: EXAMINATION OF PRESCHOOL TEACHERS’ POWERS IN THE MODERN TEACHING FIELD**

(A) Preschool teacher individual’s ‘choosing knowledge by themselves’ and the modern state system: Power Source

With the development of society and the progress of civilization, the external restrain of teacher autonomy has gradually transformed and passivity and suppression are more and more illegal. In this context, powers of preschool teachers have transformed from being endowed with to striving for them initiatively; in the intellectual form, powers of preschool teachers have transformed from the “knowledge of despotism group” to “choosing knowledge by themselves”.

The banner of human nature was held high during the enlightenment, which aimed to eliminate the air which buried human thought. Under the influence of enlightenment movement, various revolutions continuously out broke after the enlightenment in the Western history, with the feudal shackle being washed away in the wave of revolution. With the exploration of the new democracy, humanity was gradually liberated. Respect for people and giving freedom and equality are increasingly becoming the ultimate pursuit of human society. In this context, the authoritarian group’s knowledge exclusivity began to loosen, the modern state system began to form, and preschool teachers gained more freedom to select knowledge. Thus, on the one hand, the relaxed environment gave preschool teachers the freedom to explore and develop their own knowledge; on the other hand, national laws also gave preschool teachers more and more autonomy in teaching. At the same time , consciousness of their own sovereignty provided the foundation for teachers’ choosing knowledge by themselves.

However, the true sense of the self-choice knowledge is the behavior of preschool teachers' inheriting, developing, selecting and applying the legacy of knowledge in human's history in the basis of awakening of subjections' consciousness, including preschool teachers' free selection and free teaching of knowledge.. But in the modern society, preschool teachers' self-choice knowledge is a kind of false 'self-choice' and preschool teachers have freedom to learn, but it is difficult for them to freely impart and develop their own knowledge in the teaching process. Knowledge choice of preschool teachers in the teaching process is not like what some people advertise as "objective" , "value neutral", rather, it is always controlled by other power factors, such as expert guidance in teaching and research, teaching goals stipulated by the kindergarten itself and various technicalized teaching skills and techniques in the teaching activities. Thus, the preschool teachers' power which is based on the false "self-choice" is very limited. Preschool teachers can only choose materials and content of textbook by themselves. They cannot decide what kind of quality children should be developed and what kind of education and teaching purpose they should achieve. The essence is that preschool teachers' self-choice knowledge cannot be applied to teaching, and the knowledge applied to teaching is actually the one which is "chosed by others" and preschool teachers are just tools for this "chosed by others" and the power nodes of social ideology instillment. In the ubiquitous power network, preschool teachers become the shackled dancers, and they are also in a state of being disciplined.

Therefore, even though preschool teachers are the most direct factors which influence children in the teaching activities, the national power and kindergarten power still exist, which mainly due to the absolute advantage of the country. Gramsci points out that one of the great roles of the education system is shaping people's ideology. He thinks that people are ruled by thoughts, rather than by force. In addition to "force" which is used to maintain the unequal power relation," persuasion" is more needed- instilling values and attitudes to people who are ruled and give guidance for them, thus changing the ruled's values into the one which is conducive to maintaining the existing power relations. Intellectuals are people who are engaged in organization, management, direction, education, and leading. They are organizers of ideology. In general, the ruling class does not directly exercise the powers, and in order to establish hegemony they must through intermediary-intellectuals. Specifically, due to the immaturity of preschool objects, they are not capable of thinking independently.

This situation has become the best opportunity for instilling predetermined values and giving guidance and indoctrination for their concepts. The performance of preschool teachers' duties lies in the implementation of children's development goals specifications and quality established by rulers. Meanwhile, the state has the power to make teacher qualification standards. Teachers, in essence, become a nation's 'employed vocational and technical workers'. At the same time, the kindergarten represents the nation to exercise the right to monitor, manage and dispose the teaching of young children. The role of preschool teachers' power network node needs to be intensified through the 'reasonable' stipulation of legal and school systems and shows subtle characteristics.

#### (B) Freedom and discipline: usage conditions of preschool teachers' powers

The protection of children's right to learn is emphasized in the modern society in the system and the law, but the state ideology and the desire to gain benefits inevitably have extended to the field of teachers' work. At the national level, the government stipulates teachers' behavior through a variety of education acts and regulations, as well as teacher qualification standards; at the kindergarten level, almost all of the kindergartens have Codes of Preschool Teacher s' Conduct and Evaluation Form of Teacher's Regular Work. In order to achieve the job requirements of kindergarten, teachers have to adjust their behavior subtly. In this way, they can not only allow the kindergarten to be satisfactory, but also allow themselves to get a sense of security. Under the condition of limited freedoms, preschool teachers only arrange the daily life of children in accordance with kindergarten's established procedures or programs through formulating a timetable which is in line with the mainstream ideology and impart those rules that have been affirmed to children through space allocation, a variety of activities and actions. As an individual who have life, teachers have had the possibility of sympathizing and understanding life. However, in the education system that denies life, teachers' personal emotions are often obscured. The "life force" in education is not from the nature of teachers' personal feeling, but from the indifference and rejection of the entire education system to human beings. Teachers are just tools of the institutional culture. Their education acts, in essence, can be seen as an extension of the "system will". In conflict between the system needs and personal feelings, the individual's teaching enthusiasm inevitably gives way to the pressure of cultural and social practices and parents' expectations and needs of further studies will inevitably become the fundamental driving force dominating teachers' individual behavior.[13] Thus, the infiltration of teacher's free will and ideological constitutes an irreconcilable contradiction. In this case, preschool teachers are given a false autonomy, namely a kind of external and superficial freedom. On one hand, they have to implement the task of teaching children and adults; on the other hand, they also act as the "teaching officer" of ideology. This sandwiched survival state determines the contradiction in the application of preschool teachers' powers. [14]

This has resulted in a high-profile advocate of freedom to learn in contemporary society, but in practice, with the help of research activities, teacher training, program documents' and other invisible means, learning has been disciplined. And preschool teachers are performers of those disciplines. Perhaps the implementation of such discipline is unconscious, but it reflects that preschool teachers are in a state of mere figurehead in the power, and freedom and disciplines have become the power use-pattern that preschool teachers' false self-choice knowledge's foundation.

### **THE TRUTH OF TEACHER POWERS AND RESPONSES TO IT**

Grammaticalization: the truth of preschool teacher powers

Through the above analysis, we find that in the traditional teaching field, preschool teachers are centers of power, teachers make children achieve the intended purpose of educators through exerting the influence to them purposefully, systematically and organically. But teachers, who also become the object of repression, are firmly controlled by external power factors. In the modern teaching field, despite the obvious external control for the preschool teachers no longer exists, preschool teachers are in a kind of teaching mode that is dogmatic and routine because of a evaluation tool with fixed time, place and procedure. Therefore, repression is transformed into stipulation of discipline, which has negative influence on teacher's initiative autonomy likewise. Thus, the power center status of preschool teachers, or power usage is affected by external power factors. Preschool teachers, in fact, are just the node of extending the external power to classroom powers. However, their own powers are limited.

Therefore, the uneven distribution of power in the teaching field of children's education is fundamentally due to the intervention of external power factors, which make the teacher in a state of grammaticalization, thus becoming a tool for the implementation of external powers. The relationship between the two power parties in the teaching field have become the one of coordination and confrontation of students and external power factors in the power terminal. Because preschool teachers actually do not have the autonomy of teaching, they are in an extremely awkward position in the confrontation. The interference of external power factors has broken the ecological reality of preschool teachers' interacting with children in the authenticity state of human, and thus are alienated to the confrontation of weak children with the powerful system. Therefore, the power of preschool teachers are not bigger, but so small that preschool teachers' authenticity state in the teaching field has lost, becoming a vassal of the power system. But what is undeniable is that preschool education teachers still serve as the role of guider and regulator. But because the space of their powers have been squeezed, thus losing the ability to act. Therefore, the most direct factor for the change of preschool teachers' powers still lies in the preschool teacher. Empowering preschool teachers is the chief way to solve the distribution of power in the preschool education.

Endowment of preschool teacher' powers and exertion of preschool teacher' leading role

First, we must reduce the interference factors hindering the preschool teacher powers' exertion in order to empower preschool teachers. Such disturbances are mainly manifested in two aspects: First, the teaching evaluation way of skills as the dominance. The current preschool teaching mainly takes the form of case teaching, and there does exist a lot of advantages for this kind of teaching method. But at the same time, it is not easy to operate in terms of evaluation. Many kindergarten focus on the teaching rhythm in terms of teaching evaluation, response to urgent problems in the process of teaching and the technical operation of all aspects of teaching. Such evaluation can easily tie the teachers to the teaching operation, ignoring the issue of teaching activities' values. Second, the expert guidance mode in teaching and research activities. The teaching itself is the practice and implementation of individual teacher's educational philosophy and this is a kind of activity with individual differences. Although experts' condescending style may sound, it is not necessarily perfect. After all, diversity is the essence of teaching, while standardization or expectation does not necessarily fit the needs of the development of children. Instead, with the guidance mode, preschool teachers have lost their independent thinking, becoming the footnote for showing experts' teaching skills.

Secondly, the application of power is the way to the implementation of preschool teachers' leading role. Preschool teachers' application of power is fundamentally reflected in the teacher's teaching management. After the explicit suppression of the feudal society and the implicit discipline in the modern society, preschool teachers' powers of teaching control and teaching management are increasingly reduced. Emphasis on children's subjectivity is increasingly in the one-sided situation, and in this case, it seems that the use of preschool teacher powers are repression on children. But the fact is that no matter what kind of education form it is, authority in teaching is an objective fact. In the process of education and teaching, at the same time of stressing the main role of the child, the guiding role of teachers cannot be ignored. This guiding role does not depend on power' dominance and asymmetrical guidance but depend on the productivity of powers and positive significance. What this kind of productivity relies on improvement of the way of using teacher's powers. Specifically, the application of preschool teachers' powers, in a certain sense, can dispel the effects of external interference factors on teaching, which is conducive to preschool teachers' imparting the "original" knowledge to children in the most natural state, getting

along with children with the stance of equality, thus dispelling preschool teachers' instrumental role. Therefore, the implementation of application of preschool teachers' powers has a reasonable necessity, and it is also an inevitable way of implementing preschool teachers' self-development.

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