Advance Assignement

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1 Reflection on experiences

1.1 Describe one memorable experience from your educational path that you labelled as failure and one that you labelled as success.

Since I am a Teaching Assistant (TA) in a class as the University of Oulu, I have to run several problem-solving lectures. Although I had carefully checked the lecture (reading the book and following lectures), I had a mistake in the my problem-solving class. When I tried to distinguish two terms with students, I have a mistake (wrong explanation). In this case, after recognizing this issue, I tried to fix my mistake, but I think the students were confused and I saw the disappointing faces from them.

The successful experience in my view is when my students can answer my questions which I had taught before, especially in the exam. Particularly, in my problem-solving, it is very happy if the student can follow and interact my talk. In addition, it is very nice when they can repeat the main idea of my explanation again, so it makes me feel that they got the idea.

1.2 How did the chosen experiences of failure and success shape who you were and who you are today?

I choose those experiences since I always thinks about it. From those experiences, I tried to improve good points and reduce failures. Those experience support me to recognise what I did not think before. For example, I thought that I totally understand terms and definitions; however, I still cannot clearly distinguish the difference between them. I was stress on those thinking since the responsibility of a TA is a higher understanding the lecture and supporting students.

After all, I just try to adapt my feeling and stress which I have generated. I also recognize that I cannot answer all student' questions, so I should support and find a way to study with them to find a good solution or explanation. To reflect on previous experience, I carefully prepare my lectures from background, knowledge, related topics and also use cases. With the careful preparation, I expect to satisfy questions and support students as much as I can.

1.3 As a future teacher in university context, what would you consider as students' failure? How do you plan to deal with students' failure?

As a perspective of a future teacher in University context, the failure of a student is a bad result from the exam. In my opinion, the student who passes the final exam with a high score is not enough to show that he/she well understood the course. Hence, the students without a good score of the final exam cannot show a good understanding.

To deal with students' failure, an effective way is to give more exams to those students. Hence, they can have time to improve the knowledge for the course. Another solution is to organize office hours which expect to give more time for specific students. Since I do not have much knowledge on teaching skills, I just expect that if students really obtain the knowledge, they should be more active interaction with me as a TA.

1.4 As a future teacher in university context, what would you label as teacher's failure (your own failure)? How do you plan to deal with your own failure?

To label a failure experience, I consider that a failure is an issue when I get stuck from students' questions. In other words, I cannot satisfy the questions from the students (as this case, I think I need to read more and improve more on knowledge before teaching). Moreover, a failure teacher cannot give enthusiastic about teaching to attract students. At the end of the course, the students do not get any idea to extend the use of the course in their career path.

To deal with these issues, the main solution is a strong knowledge for the course from different sides (not only this course, but also related topic). In addition, the teacher or TA should give them a big picture on the course and how the knowledge of this course can be utilized in the realistic situation or outside of the academy.

1.5 Summarize, in a short definition what success / failure is. What does it mean to succeed or fail?

To sum up, the success label is when I can make happy and enhance the interest of the students in the course. As a result, the students can enjoy studying and improve much knowledge for their career path as their expectation from the course. In other words, at the end of the course, the students have a basic background on the topic and a link to their knowledge to extend for other uses.

On the other hand, the failed label is the case when the TA or teacher cannot satisfy student' questions. Moreover, I think the failure is when the teacher cannot attract or encourage their students to enjoy studying the course and obtaining the knowledge. For a result, after finishing the course, the students still do not any idea on the course and how to utilize in their career path.

2 Observe teaching at your department

During the last two weeks, I have participated several lectures related to my study (computer science). I have seen that the courses related to mathematics/model computations attract less number of students than other courses. However, I would like to mentions here since it is different from others. From my view, the course with strong theory is very traditional course where the lecturer uses the slide to show theoretical knowledge. Meanwhile, the students collect and follow the flow of the lecturer. The lecture is divided into two main parts. The first part is about new knowledge for the course whereas the second is to solve homework as exercise. Although the way to study is very traditional, it is suitable in this context. In other words, since the study contains as much new theoretical knowledge, the students cannot shallow them intermediately. Hence, with two parts of the lecture, the students can reduce an amount of new knowledge and have amount of time to discuss based on practice. To encourage the interaction, the lecture tried to ask solutions from the students that supports to let him know about the situation from the class. From this perspective, the lecture can well understand and adjust his next lecture to satisfy the students in a good way.