

Application of Project-Based and Case-Based Learning Methods in Ceramic Art Translation Course

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Abstract

Project-based learning stimulates the initiative of the students and brings about two-way communication between the teacher and the students. Case-based learning makes the students active participants of the teaching process and facilitate the understanding of the project. By the application of project-based learning and case-based learning methods in ceramic art translation course, the students' learning efficiency can be significantly elevated.

Key words: Project-based learning; Case-based learning; Ceramic art translation

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1. INTRODUCTION

Translation serves as a significant means to spread one kind of culture to the world. The aim of ceramic art translation course is to disseminate ceramic art to the world through the translating activity. The requirements of the course for the teacher are not only grasping the teaching skills for translation, but also being familiar

with the ceramic art. Because the students should be equipped with both translation skills and ceramic art, the translating criteria of this course will not be confined to faithfulness and expensiveness, but be concentrated more on elegance, so as to make the ceramic art admired and accepted by target language readers. In order to make the course interesting and productive to the students, the teacher should adopt various means to make them actively participate in the course, because translation study needs not only the theories to make the translated version feasible, but also the practice to make the translation activity smooth. Among the frequently used and universally welcomed learning methods, the project-based learning method and case-based learning method are preferred by many translation teachers and it is proposed to combine the two methods in the ceramic art translation course, thus to harvest the best learning results for the students.

2. PROJECT-BASED LEARNING AND ITS ADVANTAGES

2.1 Project-Based Learning

The project-based learning method can be dated to the labour education in Europe in the 18th century; at that time, especially in Germany, some educators advocated nature-oriented education. In nature-oriented education, the educators emphasized the significance of labor, and thought that labor was not only an economic value but also an educational method. Later in 19th century, in the US, cooperation education appeared. In 1906, the University of Cincinnati in the United States first launched such an education program: students of some majors and some education programs must spend a quarter of the year to practice in companies or enterprises corresponding to their majors to obtain necessary practical knowledge. This kind of educational method combining classroom teaching

with work practice was called “cooperative education” (Liu, 2007).

In 1990s, teaching reform was popular around the world, and the change of learning style has become the main content of education in various countries.

In July 2003, the German Federal Institute of Vocational Education formulated the behavior-oriented project teaching method (Zheng, 2020), which was a teaching method for students to learn with their brain, hands and heart at the same time, and the project-based learning method became systematic.

The project-based learning method is based on the educational theories concerning constructivism, pragmatism, multi intelligence. Guided by the teacher, the students rather than the teacher act as the main body of the education, while he teacher is only the deviser or guider of the teaching, and the students actively accomplish the assigned project with the help of the teacher. In this atmosphere of learning, the students will encounter the real learning situations instead of the dull classroom environment, and the students can construct their own knowledge system in their own ways.

2.2 The Advantages of Project-Based Learning

Project-based learning method has changed the status of the teacher in education; the teacher is no longer the focus of teaching and the students have become the principal part of learning. Compared with the traditional classroom learning method, project-based learning method has many advantages.

Firstly, with project-based learning method, the teacher can stimulate the initiative of the students; therefore, they can actively find out the problems in the process of acquiring knowledge, and under the guidance of the problems they will willingly seek out the solutions to the problems. Initiative is the best teacher of learning and the learning initiative is the teaching focus in this learning method. Thus the students’ learning efficiency is higher than the traditional learning method.

Secondly, with project-based learning method, two-way communication is advocated, not only the communication among the students, but also the communication between the teacher and the students. This learning mode is totally different from the traditional teaching mode in which only the teacher’s role is emphasized and little communication happens during the learning process. In this learning method, each one may be the teacher to another, the students and the teacher learn from each other, and make progress together.

Thirdly, with project-based learning method, besides the knowledge acquired, the students can grasp other skills like how to carry out teamwork, how to search literature, how to analyze a problem, how to write academic report etc., and the students will finally grasp the overall ability to accomplish the whole project, which is essential for them to continue graduate study or doctoral study. After

completing the project, the students will have pride and satisfaction in learning, so they will march on to the next project energetically.

3. CASE-BASED LEARNING AND ITS ADVANTAGES

3.1 Case-Based Learning

Case-based learning method can be said to originate from the ancient Greek; at that time, the famous discussion teaching method by Socrates could be regarded as the original form of case-based learning. In 1870, Christopher Columbus Langdell, dean of Law School in Harvard University, first advocated to use case-based learning method in law teaching, which made success in enhancing the teaching efficiency. Afterwards Harvard University rapidly spread this learning method to other domains of teaching. In 1920s, this learning method was officially set as a teaching method by Harvard Business School, for which Harvard University has accumulated tens of thousands of cases (Sun, 2021).

Case-based learning method is to teach by cases in the classroom. This teaching method changes the traditional classroom teaching which is mainly carried out around the teacher and the textbook. In case-based learning, the students are the active participants of the teaching process and case discussion becomes the indispensable part of learning. Case-based learning is a kind of reformative learning method and the students can actively not passively acquire knowledge in class, so the learning efficiency can be greatly enhanced.

3.2 The Advantages of Case-Based Learning

Case-based learning method is welcomed by many teachers in various subjects. Because unlike the knowledge in the textbook, most cases are vivid and concrete, the teacher can use cases to grasp the students’ interest; therefore, many schools are vigorously employing case-based learning method in education and the teacher is required to build up the bank of cases to facilitate the classroom teaching. Generally speaking, case-based learning method has the following advantages.

Firstly, case-based learning regards the students instead of the teacher as the focus of education. Through cases, not theoretical knowledge, it is much easier for the students to participate in the learning process. The students are the actors of the class and they are zealously involved into the discussion, knowledge acquisition, practice which are triggered by the cases. Actually they are learning through interest, not passively, and the learning efficiency is considerable.

Secondly, the purpose of case-based learning is not only to grasp some knowledge but also to cultivate the students’ ability to use the knowledge in practice. In traditional teaching, the teacher imparts the knowledge to

the students and the students will automatically memorize the knowledge. The traditional criterion for testing whether the students have kept the knowledge in mind is through examinations. The result of traditional teaching is that the students can hardly do practical work after graduation and the classroom study is separated from the real work. Through the real cases in learning, the students can encounter the real environments after graduation and they can put the knowledge into practice in school which lays a solid foundation for their future career.

Thirdly, with case-based learning, the students can obtain the ability of critical thinking. By the cases, the teacher can ask the students to have some discussion in group and more ideas will be triggered in discussion, because two heads are better than one. The students can even have some debate within the group, which is beneficial to their mind and thinking. Through case discussion, the students may have their own ideas to the case problems. Their ideas may vary, but the students should be encouraged to justify their ideas. After the discussion, the students should be made to exhibit their ideas in class, so the students will come into contact with various thoughts, which is a very useful way of broadening their horizons. As a result, the students' capability of critical thinking will gradually improve (Liu & Lü, 2020).

4. APPLICATION OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING AND CASE-BASED LEARNING IN CERAMIC ART TRANSLATION COURSE

4.1 Ceramic Art Translation Course

Ceramic art translation course involves the translation of not only ceramic art but also ceramic culture and technology; accordingly, the course can be generally divided into three sections. For the first section involving ceramic art, it includes the translation of ceramic paintings, ceramic shapes, ceramic design, ceramic exhibition, etc. For the second section involving ceramic culture, it includes the translation of ceramic history, ceramic stories, ceramic practice, ceramic landscape, ceramic thoughts and spirits, etc. For the third section involving ceramic technology, it includes the translation of ceramic material, ceramic making procedure, ceramic techniques, etc.

As for the teaching of ceramic art translation course, the teacher can divide the teaching work into three stages, and he may arrange the teaching procedure like this: the beginning stage is to teach the translation of ceramic culture, then the ceramic technology, and lastly the ceramic art. Generally speaking, for the teaching of courses like the structure of ceramic art translation course, project-based learning and case-based learning methods

are most appropriate for motivating the students to participate in the learning process and for enhancing the students' learning efficiency.

4.2 Application of Project-Based Learning and Case-Based Learning in the Course

To apply the project-based and case-based learning methods in ceramic art translation course, the teacher is expected to follow some procedures, so that the application effect and learning efficiency can be guaranteed.

4.2.1 To Apply Project-Based Learning

To apply project-based learning method in ceramic art translation course, the learning process should begin with the pre-class time. That is to say, before the class, the teacher should divide the course into several translation projects, for example, ceramic history, ceramic stories, ceramic practice, ceramic landscape, ceramic thoughts and spirits; ceramic paintings, ceramic shapes, ceramic design, ceramic exhibition; ceramic material, ceramic making procedure, ceramic technique. Then the students are classified into several groups, each group in charge of one project.

Within each group the students should work in cooperation to finish the whole task of the project. For example, student A may be responsible for searching and collecting the ceramic information and translation literature related to the project; student B is responsible for the analysis of the information and literature; student C is in charge of seeking for translation skills for this kind of ceramics; student D is in charge of summarizing the project and making the courseware; student E is in charge of presenting the fruits of project study in the class.

In the class, each group should exhibit their project before the teacher and students. After the presentation of each group, the teacher should ask the students to have a discussion about the project, focusing on the translation skills and translation theories appropriate for this aspect of ceramics. For example, if one group is assigned the project of ceramic exhibition translation, the group should expose their ideas on the translation purpose, translation methods, translation process, translation effects. More often than not, the students may put forward their problems about the translation of project. For example, how to achieve the equivalent effect in the ceramic exhibition between the native viewers and foreign viewers? whether to translate all the information in the exhibition or to make a general introduction of the exhibition? Which is more effective for the translation of the difficult native culture in the ceramic exhibition, to translate it in detail or to omit it? The teacher should take down the problems and then it is the teacher's mission to clarify the project and solve the students' problems in class, till all of the students have no further problems on the project. Then the project is finally accomplished with collaboration work of the teacher and the students.

4.2.2 To Apply Case-Based Learning

To apply case-based learning, it is mostly the teacher's task to firstly select cases for the project to be learned. Before the class, the teacher makes efforts to collect as many as possible the suitable cases for the classroom teaching. For each project, there may be some points which are rather hard for the students to understand. As to these difficult points the teacher should clarify the difficult points with suitable cases. The advantage of case-based learning method is that the difficult theoretical learning can be made simple with case analysis. For example, in ceramic shape translation, it is difficult for students to understand the target-language description of the shapes; therefore, the teacher may take a real porcelain to the class and make it a case to illustrate how to translate its shape and then the target-language version will be smoothly understood by the students.

After the illustration of the case, the teacher is expected to ask the students to have a discussion about the case, to see whether the students have grasped the theoretical knowledge with the help of the case. He can join in the discussion of the students, and he may raise some questions about the case. If the students have all mastered the information given by the case, the teacher can provide more cases or ask the students to find more cases about the project.

4.3.3 To Combine Project-Based Learning and Case-Based Learning

Project-based learning and case-based learning are connected in teaching cheek by jowl. For courses like ceramic art translation, which can be divided into some independent parts, it is strongly recommended to combine the two learning methods in teaching.

Before the class, the students first study the project in group, having an overview of the knowledge on the project (e.g. ceramic design translation). During this phase, the students should first acquire the general knowledge of ceramic design, and then search for the translation literature on it and make analysis of the literature. As a result, the students can enhance their abilities like self-learning, team work, and academic research.

During the class, with the presentation of the project (e.g. ceramic design translation), the students can deepen their understanding about the project. The teacher then makes further explanation on it and uses case-based learning method to provide suitable cases on ceramic design translation to facilitate the study of the project. During this stage, discussion may emerge for both the project and the cases. The teacher should instruct the discussions and raise critical thinking question to be discussed and then ask the students to make public their ideas, in order to cultivate the students' abilities of critical thinking, public speech, and debate. After the discussion, the teacher should make further illustration of the project, summarize the project, and give the students translation assignments on the project.

After the class, the students should write reflection reports on both the project and the cases related to it. Besides the translation assignments to be accomplished, the students should try to find more cases to deepen their understanding of the project. Lastly the teacher should evaluate the students by their project study, class performance, project report, case report, assignments, etc., so that he can make an all-around evaluation of the students.

5. CONCLUSION

For courses like ceramic art translation, the teacher can make use of the combination of project-based learning and case-based learning. On the one hand, project-based learning can improve the students' theoretical knowledge of ceramic art translation and their ability to accomplish a translation task with teamwork; on the other hand, case-based learning can facilitate the understanding of the students' theoretical knowledge of ceramic art translation, and increase the students' interest on the course. With the combining application of project-based learning and case-based learning, the students' learning efficiency can be enhanced significantly.

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