

On the Application of Case-Based Teaching Method to the Course “Workshop of Ceramic Translation”

HOU Xiaohua^{[a],*}; LIU Sainan^[b]

^[a] Associate Professor, School of International Studies, Jingdezhen Ceramic University, Jingdezhen, China.

^[b] Jingdezhen No. 1 High School, Jingdezhen, China.

*Corresponding author.

Supported by: 2022 Jingdezhen Ceramic University Postgraduate Teaching Reform Program “Study on the Application of Case-based Teaching Method to the Course Workshop of Ceramic Translation”

Received 21 August 2023; accepted 15 October 2023
Published online 26 December 2023

Abstract

Using the positivism research method, this paper discusses the application of case-based teaching method in the course of “Workshop of Ceramic Translation”. The study finds that the application of case-based teaching in this course includes four processes: case selection, pre-class preparation, classroom teaching and group discussion, and teaching reflection. At the same time, the application of case teaching method can greatly arouse students’ enthusiasm and interest in learning and translation practice.

Key words: Case-based teaching method; Workshop of ceramic translation; Application

Hou, X. H., & Liu, S. N. (2023). On the Application of Case-based teaching Method to the Course “Workshop of Ceramic Translation”. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 25(2), 16-19. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/hess/article/view/13257>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/13257>

1. INTRODUCTION

Case-based teaching originated in Harvard Business School. Since the 1920s, case-based teaching has been a common teaching mode for vocational training in some professional fields such as business, law and medicine. Case teaching takes cases as the basic teaching materials, introduces learners into the context of educational

practice, and improves learners’ decision-making ability and practical ability in the face of complex educational situations through multi-directional interaction between teachers and students, equal dialogue and active discussion. It not only emphasizes the teacher’s “teaching” (guidance), but also emphasizes the student’s learning (discussion), requiring a considerable degree of change in the roles of both teachers and students. In fact, the teaching method based on cases has existed since ancient times, which can be traced back to the Spring and Autumn Period at home and the ancient Greek and Roman times abroad. The modern “case method” derives from a teaching method developed by Christopher Columbus Langdell, former dean of Harvard Law School. The method was first used in legal education around 1870, and has since been widely used in other disciplines. The word “case” is rich in meaning and has a long history. “Etymology” records: “example” is the established practice, “case” is the established old case, and together it is called “case”. It can be seen that “cases” use things that have happened or been recorded to help explain or prove the meaning of a certain truth. *The Dictionary of Education* defines the case method as “a professional teaching method for certain disciplines of the social sciences in colleges and universities.” That is, by organizing students to discuss a series of cases and propose solutions to problems, students can master relevant professional skills, knowledge and theories.” It can be seen that case teaching method is a teaching process in which teachers and students interact with real or virtual situations written on the basis of typical events, so as to meet the requirements of learners’ learning knowledge and skills. The English Translation for Specific Purposes program aims to develop students’ ability to translate English-Chinese texts in a specific field such as ceramic art. English for specific purposes is especially professional, scientific and applied. The cultivation of translation ability is based on the teaching of theoretical knowledge and a lot of translation practice. On the other hand, the teaching of English for Specific

purposes translation courses pays more attention to the transfer of students' knowledge in a certain professional field and the targeted practical training of translation. The purpose of this kind of practical training coincides with the characteristics of the case teaching method, which emphasizes students' independent inquiry learning. Therefore, introducing the case teaching method into the teaching of special-purpose English translation courses is a teaching method worth exploring.

2. THE DEFINITION AND MEANING OF CASE-BASED TEACHING METHOD

Scholars at home and abroad have made different definitions about case teaching method. Foreign scholars such as Kowalski believes that the case teaching method is a teaching method based on case studies. In addition to imparting information, concepts, and theories, it can also train students in reasoning, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills^[1]. Shulman defines the case method as a teaching method that uses cases as a teaching medium. According to Merseth, case teaching can include large class and small group discussions, role playing in cases, or case writing. Domestic scholars such as Professor Zheng Jinzhou (2000) gave the definition of case teaching from two different perspectives: "Broadly speaking, case teaching method can be defined as a teaching method that guides students to discuss these special situations through the description of a specific educational situation."^[2] In a sense it is opposite to lecturing. Case teaching takes teaching cases as the carrier. It is a teaching method that selects certain teaching cases for teaching based on certain teaching objectives. It is characterized by the active participation of students, emphasizing that teachers and students discuss case material together and write case reports. Its relationship with the case-based curriculum is more of a relationship between content and form."

Xu Lixin (2004) argues that: Case teaching is the sum of a series of teaching methods in which the educator introduces learners into the context of educational practice based on certain educational purposes and takes cases as basic teaching materials. Through multi-directional interaction, equal dialogue and active discussion between teachers and students and students, the learners' ability to feel and act in the face of complex educational situations can be improved.^[3] The characteristic of case teaching is that it shows excellent, real and typical front-line case sources, allowing learners to actively explore and discuss the objective facts and problems provided in a relaxed and pleasant practice situation, and finally put forward their own opinions. In the discussion process of case teaching, learners not only exercise the ability of independent thinking, but also improve the ability of analysis and problem solving.

In summary, case teaching method can be defined as that teachers create problem situations for students with distinctive representative cases, guide students to master the rules of theoretical knowledge summary in the situation through case analysis and discussion, and creatively combine knowledge with practice to find more examples of real life or put forward ideas and methods to solve practical problems. Case teaching method is a teaching process in which teachers and students interact with real or virtual situations written on the basis of typical events, so as to meet the requirements of learners' learning cognition and skills^[4]. In short, case teaching method is to use cases as teaching media to improve students' comprehensive ability as teaching goal.

3. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE "WORKSHOP OF CERAMIC TRANSLATION"

The syllabus of "Workshop of Ceramic Translation" describes the teaching objectives and contents of the course as follows: "The course focuses on translation practice training through the combination of learning professional knowledge of ceramic science and technology, culture, art, archaeology and other professional skills training, aiming to guide students to master the basic characteristics of English and Chinese ceramic texts, professional knowledge related to ceramic science and technology, culture, art, archaeology and other fields as well as English-Chinese translation skills, and cultivate students' practical ability of translation of ceramic documents. Better serve and spread the practice of Chinese ceramic culture."^[5]

It can be seen from the description of this course in the course syllabus that the main content of the course involves the teaching of professional knowledge in ceramic technology, ceramic culture, ceramic art and ceramic archaeology. On the other hand is the training of translation skills. Translation practice training is the focus of this course, so how to effectively cultivate students' translation ability through translation practice training is the key goal and task of this course. The cultivation of translation ability mainly includes two aspects, namely, the introduction and explanation of translation theories. Although translation activities are practical activities, efficient translation activities and high-quality translations need the guidance of certain translation theories. Therefore, the introduction of translation theory is one of the teaching focuses of the course of "Ceramic Translation Workshop". The most important teaching focus is to guide students' translation practice through case teaching method, and use real cases to allow students to apply the translation theories they have learned and polish their translation skills and methods. Therefore, on the basis of

translation theory teaching, the case teaching method is the main teaching method to guide the course teaching [6].

This course is designed for undergraduates majoring in English education to prepare them theoretically and technically for their careers as English teachers or translators, interpreters in the ceramic field after graduation. The purpose of this course is to provide students with a good opportunity to learn the history of ceramic art, as well as making processes of ceramics. Through the analysis of the making process and different ceramic products and the basic terminologies related to ceramic art, the course aims to cultivate the students with good command of translation skills. For this purpose, and to enhance the practical ability of students, this course chooses the case-based teaching methods suitable for teaching objects and teaching objectives scientifically and reasonably. At the same time, combined with the cutting-edge information of English teaching reform, in teaching as many practical teaching cases as possible, with students as the center, with small groups as cooperation units, simulation practice, discussion and inquiry teaching. In the course of teaching, students are encouraged to reflect on their own English learning experience, combine the observation and analysis of various high-quality English classroom records, and gradually form and enrich their own teaching theory through the investigation and discussion of small groups. In addition, various kinds of teaching and research resources such as reference books, periodicals, teaching websites and other course resources are provided for students to deepen their understanding, thinking and theory of English subject education. At the same time, a platform for teacher-student communication and feedback is built through case teaching.

4. A CASE-BASED TEACHING DESIGN IN “WORKSHOP OF CERAMIC TRANSLATION”

4.1 Pre-class preparation and case selection

For teachers, pre-class preparation is mainly case preparation, that is, choosing appropriate teaching cases according to the teaching content. The author considers the selection of teaching cases from the following three aspects according to the course characteristics, teaching content and teaching syllabus requirements of “Ceramic Special Translation Workshop”. First of all, the choice of teaching case translation. According to the development history of Chinese ceramic art and the characteristics of the main kiln, the teaching content is classified according to the kiln or the representative ware of different porcelain producing areas, namely, Cizhou kiln, Jun kiln, Ru kiln, celadon, Ge kiln, Jingdezhen blue and white porcelain, Ding kiln and Jian kiln, which are eight famous kilns and

representative ware. The corresponding translation cases are selected based on different kilns.

Secondly, the specific translation of the original text is preferred to the British and American ceramic artists or researchers in the field of ceramic art, culture, archaeology and other relevant content; In addition, considering the publication age of English ceramic literature, try to choose the works of representative figures in different periods. The distribution ratio of the publication age of the eight English texts is one text in the early 20th century, two texts in the middle period, two texts in the late period, and four texts from ceramic English texts in the 21st century.

Finally, cases are selected from the perspective of the quality and academic value of the Chinese version of the English text. Western countries have long been familiar with China’s splendid ceramic culture and porcelain making skills, and some classic ceramic art documents have been translated into English or French. However, in modern Western countries, there are not many English ceramic documents translated into Chinese. Since the middle of the 20th century, more and more English ceramic documents have been translated into Chinese. It has become a channel for Chinese ceramic art researchers to understand the development of Western ceramic art and to communicate with Western ceramic art circles. The quality of Chinese translations of these ceramic English texts varies greatly. Therefore, the last criterion for the selection of translation cases for this course is the high quality and professionalism of Chinese translations.

4.2 Pre-class reading and introduction of ceramic expertise

After the teacher has prepared the teaching case, then the class preparation is another aspect of ceramic professional knowledge preparation. The teacher will summarize the professional knowledge of ceramic art related to the selected teaching cases, make a presentation, and give lectures in the form of illustrations or videos. The main purpose of the introduction of ceramic professional knowledge is to enable students to have a more intuitive understanding of the meaning of ceramic making process engineering and related ceramic terms, so as to prepare students for reading and understanding the ceramic English text to be translated.

After introducing relevant professional knowledge of ceramics, teachers introduce teaching cases. The teacher will send the prepared ceramic English text to the students, and then the preparation work before class is the preparation at the student level. After receiving the case text, the text to be translated, the students read the text carefully, review and understand the relevant ceramic technology expertise, then understand the text content, and finally the students start to translate the text. After checking their translation script, students submit homework.

4.3 The teaching process and group discussion

The teacher will make the controversial points in the translation submitted by the students into parallel texts, and in class teaching, the teacher and students will divide into groups and start to discuss the translation of the controversial sentences. When students work in groups, the teacher patrols the classroom and listens to the students' discussions or participates in certain discussions. After the group discussion, the discussion draft of the group is drawn, and then the teacher makes the group opinion draft and the reference translation into parallel text, presents it with a presentation, compares and analyzes the group translation and the reference translation, and gives the teacher's own judgment and opinions. The main aim of group discussion is to arouse the students' creativity and interest in doing translation.

4.4 Reflection on teaching and summary of translation skills

After case selection, introduction of ceramic professional knowledge background, student translation practice, group discussion and comparative analysis of parallel texts, the teacher summarized the classroom teaching effect and wrote a teaching summary and reflection. Teaching reflection mainly analyzes the mistakes of students' translation, and analyzes the reasons, which should be paid attention to in the next classroom teaching. In addition, the teaching reflects on the effect of group discussion and how to improve the enthusiasm of students to participate in discussion and improve the effect of group discussion. Students are asked to write a translation case report based on their own translation, group discussion experience and understanding of the reference text. The report mainly summarizes the translation skills or strategies learned or applied in class, compares and analyzes the different processing methods between my own translation and the reference translation, and summarizes effective translation skills.

5. CONCLUSION

Case-based teaching method can cultivate students' innovative spirit and problem-solving ability. At the same time, the knowledge students acquire through case teaching is internalized knowledge, which is the knowledge after thinking and integration. Therefore, case teaching method can better promote students' mastery of knowledge and their interest and ability to independently explore, research, discover and solve problems^[7]. Compared with the traditional teacher-centered teaching method, the case teaching method is student-centered and assisted and guided by teachers, which is more conducive

to stimulating students' drive and passion for independent exploration, so as to better realize the goal of cultivating students' independent learning ability and innovative spirit in university education. The application of case teaching method in English translation classroom has certain practical value and significance.

The application of case teaching method in the teaching of "Workshop of Ceramic Translation" can promote students to explore their professional knowledge of ceramics, understand the differences between their own translation and expert translation, and then understand the direction of efforts and improve translation skills. Of course, the implementation of case teaching method is also limited due to many factors such as disciplinary characteristics and objective environment. At the same time, not all courses or disciplines are suitable for using case teaching method. Therefore, the application scope and specific application methods of case teaching method need to be further explored by scholars or educators. However, there is no method of teaching which can achieve the desired steps and practical effects equally. The difficulties encountered in the implementation of case teaching in the classroom teaching of Workshop of Ceramic Translation also fully exposed its own problems when it presented us with new opportunities and challenges. It mainly includes the following aspects: first, obtaining good examples is extremely difficult. Second, teachers are expected to do very well in case teaching and so it's a challenge for teachers. Last, case teaching requires learners to accumulate certain knowledge, so it's also a challenge for the students.

REFERENCES

- Jiang, G. M. (2013). The Application and Research of Case Method in the Teaching of English Curriculum and Teaching Methodology, 5-6.
- Kowalski, T. J. (1991). *Case studies of educational administration*. New York: Longman.
- Wang, L. N., & Duan, J. (2010). Application of case teaching method in business English teaching. *Foreign Languages*, (04), 96-97.
- Wang, Q. M., & Zhao, G. (2009). A review of case teaching methods at home and abroad. *Journal of Ningbo University*, (03), 8-9.
- Xü, L. X. (2004). *Case Study in Teacher Education*. East China Normal University, 6-7.
- Zheng, J. Z. (2000). *A Guide to Case-based Teaching*. Shanghai: East China Normal University Press.
- Zhu, W. (2003). A Study on case teaching methods. *Journal of Southwest University for Nationalities (Humanities and Social Sciences Edition)*, (05), 40-41.