

Students-Centered Practice and Design of Bilingual Teaching in International Business Law

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Abstract: In many universities, especially those in coastal cities, bilingual curriculum has become a key area of education reform. How to carry out bilingual courses is crucial in this study. With regard of students' language background in GCUT, maintaining bilingual education mode is adapted in International business law class. Obstacles encountered in bilingual teaching are concluded in this paper from the feedback of students. With the guidance of student-centered teaching theory, effective bilingual teaching process has been designed in International business law class.

1. Introduction

The communication between China and other countries increases rapidly nowadays. The need for those talents who are good at their own field and fluent in English is urgent. Bilingual curriculum planning has become a key area of education reform in many universities in China, especially those in coastal cities. Taking Guangzhou City University of Technology (In this paper, referred to as GCUT) as an example, as the first university acquiring IACBE certification, internationalization occupies an important position. With regard of students' language background in GCUT, maintaining bilingual education mode is adapted in most bilingual courses in Management School of GCUT. One core teaching outcome of Management School is that students can apply legal, ethical and economic standards of business within a global environment. To achieve that outcome, some relative professional courses are designed as bilingual courses. International business law is one of them. In the first semester, I noticed that students were very reluctant to speak in class. The teaching objectives of acquisition of new knowledge and improvement of language skills have not been achieved well. With the in-depth interview with students, I conclude the pain points causing this situation. After research relative papers, "student-centered" theory caught my attention. With the guidance of this theory, a new "student-centered" teaching process has been designed and practiced in International Business Law course, which received recognition from both students and colleagues.

2. Choosing Suitable Bilingual Teaching Mode

With research on bilingual teaching modes, immersive bilingual education, maintenance bilingual education and transitional bilingual education are the main modes in the world. Immersive bilingual education, originated in Canada, is mainly for students whose mother tongue is not an official language. These students have to master the second language as soon as possible, otherwise they will not be able to carry out learning activities. Therefore, this mode has high requirements for the language environment. Transitional bilingual education means the students use their mother tongue partially or completely after entering the school, and then gradually transfer to only use the second language for learning. The purpose of this bilingual teaching mode is to help students complete the transformation

and transition from the first language to the second language, so as to master the target language and its culture. The difference between it and immersion is that this mode pays more attention to the gradual acquisition process. At first, students could use their native language in all classes. And then, gradually, they are required to use a second language to learn some specific subjects. When learning other subjects, they could still use their mother tongue. This is called maintenance bilingual education. The characteristic of this mode is that its learning result does not completely exclude the first language from the bilingual teaching system, but develops students' second language ability under the premise of the first language, so that the two language systems develop in parallel. The Immersive bilingual education and Transitional bilingual education are not suitable for China's educational practice due to the country's special historical and language characteristics. Bilingual teaching in China refers to the use of a foreign language for specific subject teaching. Therefore, bilingual teaching in China only belongs to the above maintaining bilingual education. Most schools of China set English courses from elementary schools to middle school as one main subject to lay language foundation. When entering into universities, students' English proficiency has accumulated to a certain level. Thus, universities begin to set certain bilingual specialized courses. Taking GCUT as an example, several specialized courses are set as bilingual courses, while others still in Chinese. International business law, as one specialized courses, is set as a bilingual course in Management School of GCUT. With regard of students foreign language background, maintenance bilingual education mode has been adapted in the class. Therefore, the language of instrument, textbooks and course-ware are all English versions. The teaching objectives of this course are the acquisition of new knowledge and improvement of language skills. However, those objective have not been achieved well at the beginning of International business law course.

3. Main Problems

With a long time observation and practice in bilingual teaching of International business law course, the main challenge for me is the lack of active participation of students. Even though the teacher has encouraged students to speak though small quiz, the overall classroom atmosphere is still relatively dull. In response to this issue, I made in-depth interview with the 2017 and 2018 students who participated in the course to understand their demands and concerns. The interview centered on one major issue "what are the main reasons deferring you from speaking in class?" The interview results shows that the top three reasons of students' unwillingness to speak are as follows:

- A. Insufficient preparation before class
- B. Unfamiliar with legal professional terminology
- C. Easy to be distracted in a teacher-led class

With the understanding of pain points, I reexamined the design of International Business Law class. After research relative papers, "student-centered" theory caught my attention. In 1998, the convening of the World Higher Education Conference led to the formation of a consensus on the "student-centered" teaching theory in the world. The Declaration of the World Higher Education Conference pointed out that in today's rapidly changing world, higher education obviously needs a new perspective and new model of "student-centered", which means that from the teacher-centered traditional knowledge instillation teaching model to the training and improvement of students' independent learning, cooperative learning, problem-raising, and problem-solving abilities.

4. Application of Student-Centered Bilingual Teaching Mode

After analyzing the "student-centered" bilingual teaching method, the author seriously thought about how to cultivate students' ability of independent learning, cooperative learning, thinking, inquiry, and

problem-solving under the effective guidance of teachers. Based on the consideration of the above issues, the author began to redesign the teaching mode in international business law course.

In the design of learning process, the author put emphasis on three elements:

4.1 Professional Terminology

One purpose of bilingual courses is to learn professional English expression in related subjects. Terminology of Law is vital in understanding the context. To make it easy for students to read and learn, it's necessary to summarize the professional terminology of the chapter before class.

4.2 Diverse Forms

With comprehensive consideration of the curriculum syllabus and the ability of students, diverse forms of group task has been designed, like Venn diagram for similar concepts, easy-to-understand life cases to connect unfamiliar knowledge with familiar daily life, pyramid ranking game to conclude core points etc.

4.3 Ideological and Political Education

The general offices of the Communist Party of China Center Committee and the State Council have issued a guideline of strengthening reform and innovation of ideological and political theory courses. Thus, Ideological and political education holds a vital position in undergraduate education. In International business law course, I incorporate ideological and political elements in the curriculum and proposing thematic activities such as introduction to the economic and legal systems of countries along the Belt and Road.

Table 1 Learning Process Design

Learning process design	Table Column Head		
	<i>Time</i>	<i>Task</i>	<i>Process</i>
	Before class	Teacher	1.Sort out professional terminology 2. Collect cases 3. Discuss the topics to be covered in class with students group in advance
		Student	For the whole class: Preview the textbook and courseware, get familiar with the professional terminology, outline the key points and difficult points, and prepare the questions in class. For the task group: 1.Students who are responsible for the explanation of international conventions should do research in advance and practice the content in English by themselves. 2. Make Venn Diagrams for several similar concepts and compare the similarities and differences of international conventions (such as Hague Rules, Hamburg Rules, Rotterdam Rules, etc.)
	In class	Teacher	1.Instruct students in class, record the performance of students presented in class and other students in detail, and evaluates them simultaneously. 2. Teacher-student interaction: Intersperse the presentation with questions. This link is very important to deepen the understanding of the key and difficult knowledge.
		Student	1.The presenters will explain in English, with blackboard writing and illustrations if necessary. 2. Student interaction: Other students ask questions about the topic.
	After class	Teacher	1.Summarize students' classroom performance, find out the deficiencies of the class, and think about improvement methods. 2. Homework correcting. 3. Office hour.
		Student	1. Review the content. 2. Finish homework carefully and on time.

5. Summary of Learning Results

Through the one-semester “student-centered” curriculum reform, the author summarized the students’ learning results reflecting the reform’s effectiveness from the following aspects:

peer evaluation;
the feedback of students.

Peer evaluation: the bilingual teaching courses of our school have to be evaluated by teachers from the school’s academic affairs office and other college leaders. The teachers from the academic affairs office give a very positive evaluation after listening to the International business law class. The score of peer evaluation has shifted from 1.4 to 1.6(full credit 2.0).

The feedback from students can be seen from teaching evaluation system. After the application of student-centered approach, the credit of teaching performance evaluation has been lifted from 4.739 to 4.855(full credit is 5.0).

6. Conclusion

The above feedback from two sources have showed that the new practice of “student-centered” bilingual teaching of International business law is suitable for students with maintaining bilingual education.

Students who have both professional knowledge and skilled English are popular in talents market. Therefore, bilingual course teaching is getting more and more attention in our country. To upgrade bilingual teaching effect, teachers needs to continue to observe and summarize in teaching practice. Therefore, the author will continue to explore in future teaching and strive to constantly upgrade the teaching level of bilingual courses.

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