

Study on Improving the Learning Motivation of Business English Majored Students Based on Case Teaching Method

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to know about the status quo of learning motivation of business English majored students at the undergraduate level, investigate the differences of such students' learning motivations under case teaching method and traditional telling method, and find the correlation between the learning motivation of the students and the teaching method. By understanding the intrinsic dimensions of the learning motivation of such students, this paper constructs an index related to "learning motivation of business English majored students based on case teaching method" and finds out a research mode for improving the learning motivation. In order to achieve the research purpose, literatures on learning motivation and English teaching methods are sorted out and analyzed. A theoretical basis of this research is constructed based on the analysis and a "Business English Majored Students' Learning Motivation Scale" is prepared. The applicability of the Scale is investigated, analyzed and verified by semi-structure interview. Finally, the Scale is determined as the research tool of this study. Taking business English majored students in the City College of Dongguan University of Technology as the research object, this research made a questionnaire survey on student undergone experimental teaching and carried out descriptive analysis and difference analysis on the acquired data. In the end, the study got the following findings and conclusions: first, there are significant differences in the impacts of different teaching methods on the learning motivation of business English majored students; second, such students generally have good learning motivation; third, the case teaching method is highly feasible in business English related courses. Finally, based on the research results, suggestions are made for school administrators, full-time teachers, and business-English majored students: administrators should enhance the training on full-time teachers and provide a good teaching environment and conditions; teachers should enrich their teaching methods and actively guide students to continuously improve their learning motivation; students should improve their learning effectiveness as much as possible by maintaining a high level of learning motivation and familiarizing themselves with relevant teaching methods during professional courses.

Keywords: business English teaching, case teaching method, learning motivation

I. INTRODUCTION

Business English teaching in China began in the senior business cadre school in the 1950s, and has had more than 50 years of history so far. The school's early business English education was essentially based on English translation teaching with the purpose of cultivating translators for foreign trade. On this basis, the school (later known as the College of Foreign Trade

and the University of International Business and Economics) began to recruit English majored students oriented to international business. Starting from this school, business English education in colleges and universities began its way of development and transformation in China. The business English education in colleges and universities presented different characteristics in different periods, reflecting China's emphasis on business English education, and the understanding and attempt of business English teaching present a flourishing scene. In 2007, the Ministry of Education approved the University of International Business and Economics to establish the

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first undergraduate program of business English in China. Business English finally achieved its due subject status in the list of undergraduate programs in higher education in China. Subsequently, the business English education in colleges and universities showed a rapid development trend.

In recent years, teachers of business English in colleges and universities are facing the challenges brought by changes in the teaching content and professional curriculum system of the major in the selection and application of teaching strategies. In terms of teaching content, the National Standard emphasizes the cultivation of students' English application and business practice skills. This means that teachers cannot simply rely on written explanations to teach, but also should guide students to participate more in interactive teaching activities through appropriate teaching methods. In terms of teaching evaluation, business English major attaches great importance to the practical application skills, so that teachers can no longer simply use the test results to measure student's learning situation and the quality of class teaching. Facing a series of changes and challenges, whether the teaching methods currently adopted by teachers can still meet the needs of business English teaching becomes a hot issue concerned by scholars and teachers.

Chen Jianping (2010) believes that considering the strong practice and applicability of business English teaching content and the training objectives of business English major, case teaching method should become an indispensable teaching method in business English teaching. Zhang Zuocheng (2008) reckons that business English teaching has its specific teaching methods, namely case teaching and task teaching; wherein, case analysis and situation simulation are effective methods to experience the business world, gain awareness of the business discourse community, and master the written rules and hidden rules. From this perspective, case teaching method plays an important role in the teaching of business English in colleges and universities.

Chinese research on case teaching method began with 1980. Compared with the researches on case teaching methods for education of other disciplines, the researches on the application of case teaching method in business English education mostly focus on higher vocational education. Research on the effectiveness of case teaching method in business English education in colleges and universities is almost blank. Taking "business English students' learning motivation under case teaching method" as the theme, this research starts from the perspective of local applied universities, establishes a standard that can effectively judge the effect of case teaching method in college business English education practice, in order to finally improve the teaching quality of business English.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

From a macro perspective, as an educational experiment, teaching experiment refers to exploring the laws of educational activities in the form of experiments under the guidance of a certain hypothesis or educational theory. In most cases, it will be conducted orderly in some condition as per a topic or implementation plan. (Gu Mingyuan, Dictionary of Education) From a micro perspective, teaching experiment is also called: controlled teaching observation. It is a research method that observes teaching activities on the basis of conducting an artificial control on the objective objects in combination with the teaching research objectives. In this study, quasi-experimental method is used to conduct teaching experiment in order to verify that business English students may have different learning motivations, learning strategies, and learning effectiveness when they are taught in different teaching methods (case teaching method and traditional telling method are adopted in this research).

To sum up, combining the research needs, this research mainly adopts quantitative research, supplemented by qualitative research. The two research methods are combined. In the process of data collection, this research uses quasi-experimental methods as a means to treat the subjects experimentally.

As a method for practical testing of the hypothesis of causality, the experimental research method can solve educational problems at the theoretical and practical levels, and promote the evolution of education into an independent science. It is also the most effective way to promote education becoming a kind of science (Wang Wenke, Wang Zhihong, 2014). It should be noted that although the experimental research method can play the largest role only in the laboratory, this method has been able to be effectively applied to non-laboratory situations such as classrooms (Stanley, 1957). Wang Wenke (2014) pointed out that experimental research made in educational context has two major advantages: firstly, long-term experiment can be conducted in educational context; secondly, experimental research in educational practice can well help solve educational problems.

The direct goal of experimental research is to verify the hypotheses proposed in the experimental environment, explore the relationship between manipulated variables and observed variables, and finally highly generalize and conceptualize this relationship so that it can be applied outside the experimental environment and explain the sample.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

A. Plan for implementation of case teaching method

This research plan adopts quasi-experiment method for experimental teaching. According to the actual situation of the researcher, the business English majored students of Foreign Language School of D College are taken as the research objects. The school is the first independent college established in Dongguan as approved by the Ministry of Education in June 2004. It has a certain degree of research representativeness. Its foreign language school currently includes two majors: English and business English. There are totally 1286 students in the department. It can provide reliable sources of research data, which ensures the experimental credibility of this research.

In order to ensure the research scientific and objective, the author reviews the literature on the step design and implementation methods of the case teaching method in the implementation process. Lynn (1999) proposed four specific frameworks for the implementation of the case teaching method: the first is a CLCLCLC/L (C is for case, L is for lecture, and the same applies hereinafter) model that starts with actual cases, and then conducts theoretical explanations, carries out a number of theoretical analyses and case analyses, and ends with the teacher's oral explanations; the second is an LCLCLC/C model that starts with several times of theoretical explanations and case analyses and summarizes in form of case analytical practice; the third is an LLLCC model that divides the entire teaching practice of a course into two stages, explaining the systematic theory and principle, and training in form of case analysis all the time; the fourth is an LCLCCCL model that starts with explanation mainly, associated with case analysis, then case teaching and finally ends with explanation and analysis of the principle. After that, Zhang Minjie (2001) proposed two new methods, namely: (1) focusing on narration and supplemented by case teaching; (2) depending on the theme and nature of teaching, using case materials at the appropriate time to conduct case teaching.

Combining the needs and purposes of this research, and considering that the subjects receiving teaching experiments are all juniors, they have a certain foundation and understanding of the academic-level concepts and theories of the Business English Negotiation Course, but they still lack skills in practical negotiation, it is believed that the CLCLCL/L model proposed by Lynn is more in line with the actual needs of this research. On the basis of this model, the author proposes the CLCLCL/LC model. After completing the teaching procedure of the model proposed by Lynn, the model further provides practical cases related to

business English negotiation for students to continue learning and practice, and to improve their subsequent skills.

It is generally thought that the implementation process of case teaching can be divided into three major processes: (1) preparation before teaching; (2) teaching practice; (3) summary after teaching. By collation, the teaching design schemes proposed by several scholars and teachers provides a reference for the teaching program design in this research experiment.

B. Scale design

Combining the research purpose and research questions, the questionnaire designed by the researcher consists of two parts: background survey variables and business English majored students' learning motivation scale.

1) *Questionnaire design for background variables of business English majored students:* This part is mainly used to determine which teaching method the tested students specifically accept during the experiment. It is prepared for the subsequent analysis of the differences between case teaching method and traditional telling method.

2) *Questionnaire design for learning motivation scale of business English majored students:* Learning Motivation Scale: This Scale aims to understand the specific situation of business English students' achievement motivation in learning professional courses. It is mainly based on Atkinson and Birch's achievement motivation theory, while referring to Weiner's (1980) attribution theory and Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory, summarizes the content of achievement motivation into four dimensions: pursuit of success, goal orientation, sense of control, and persistence. The Scale was modified on the basis of Wei Limin's (2000) achievement motivation scale and combined with the actual situation of business English majored students. This questionnaire has 7 questions under the item of "pursuit of success" in the Scale, 6 questions under the item of "goal orientation", 2 questions under the item of "sense of control" and 7 questions under the item of "persistence", totally 22 question ("Table I"). The scoring adopts Likert five-point scale, with options ranging from "disagree" to "completely agree", giving 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 points respectively. Those with high scores indicated that their motivation to obtain better results in business English learning is strong.

TABLE I. LEARNING MOTIVATION SCALE

pursuit of success	In class, I work very hard to win opportunities for success.
	In class, I work hard to achieve success, to get the respect of my classmates and teachers.
	I pay close attention to the unfinished homework and try to complete it as soon as possible.
	For me, both in-class success and after-class success are important.
	When I'm interested in a thing, I can get a sense of accomplishment from it even if I realize it's aimless.
	I always work hard to learn various talents and skills.
goal orientation	Study in this major is something I like very much.
	I always finish my homework before I do leisure activities.
	I spend more time and energy on courses with poor performances.
	I like to do challenging work better than everything.
	I think solving academically challenging problems is the most exciting thing.
	When encountering difficult problems in learning the major, I would like to ask others for help until I understood it.
sense of control	In class, I work hard to gain the favor of teachers and classmates.
	When things I care about cannot be done, I may have a sense of failure.
persistence	I would be unhappy if I could not rank top in the competition for professional study.
	As long as I keep working hard, even the hardest work can be done well.
	I think the intelligence level is innate and can hardly be broken through by acquisition.
	When my exam result is not that good, I may feel discouraged and don't want to work hard any more.
	I won't diligently learn the course that I am not interested in.
	Without exam, I would not want to learn the course seriously.
	I will not be unable to complete the homework set by teacher on time.
	I won't give up making effort in learning a course for reason that it is too difficult.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

As the research content is not a special case but a conventional social phenomenon, this research should

adopt investigation method. The population under the research is large, so scales and questionnaires will be applied to collect data and grasp the specific situation (Rong Taisheng, 2011). This research uses the learning motivation scale to collect data in order to specifically grasp the effectiveness of business English negotiation learning for students of the City College of Dongguan University of Technology under the case teaching method. Specifically, the following analysis methods are used.

- Descriptive statistics: Descriptive statistics are mainly used to analyze the background information of business English majored students in various colleges and universities, and the background of the teaching method that is accepted by students and directly related to this research, and make statistics on the average and standard deviation on each scale.
- T-test: The t-test is used to analyze the status and differences in learning motivation of business English majored students when implementing different teaching methods.

A. Analysis of the status of learning motivation of business English majored students

The status quo of learning motivation of business English majored students is shown in "Table II". The average score of students' learning motivation is 3.61 which is higher than the middle number. At the achievement motivation level, the average score is 3.75; at the goal orientation level, the average score is 3.53; at the persistence level, the average score is 3.56. From the perspective of concentration degree, the score of persistence is the highest, and that of goal orientation is the lowest. In terms of the dispersion degree, persistence has the largest dispersion (0.245) and learning motivation has the smallest dispersion (0.141). Judging from the peak skewness and kurtosis coefficient, the absolute values of the two coefficients of the learning motivation are lower than 3 and 8, indicating that the questions in each dimension basically conform to the normal distribution, and the next analysis can be carried out.

TABLE II. STATUS QUO OF LEARNING MOTIVATION OF BUSINESS ENGLISH MAJORED STUDENTS

	Average	Standard deviation	Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistics	Statistics	Statistics	Statistics	Standard error	Statistics	Standard error
Learning motivation	3.6150	.37552	.141	-.354	.149	1.271	.297
Achievement motivation	3.7464	.48867	.239	-.553	.149	1.893	.297
Goal orientation	3.5331	.48757	.238	-.454	.149	1.118	.297
Persistence	3.5655	.49510	.245	-.610	.149	4.776	.297

B. Reliability analysis

Reliability refers to the credibility of the measurement questionnaire or test. Reliability analysis can test the stability, consistency, and reproducibility of the results of the questionnaire (Lu Wendai, 2012). In order to further ensure the reliability of the questionnaire results of this research, after passing the reliability test on the pre-test scale, the author made a second measurement on the reliability of the large-scale formal questionnaire based on the use of Cronbach's α coefficient. As can be seen from "Table III", the α coefficients of the three subscales are 0.838, 0.924, and 0.88 respectively, which are all in ideal conditions. Secondly, the α coefficients of the three dimensions under the learning motivation scale are between 0.75 and 0.79; the α coefficients of the six dimensions under the learning strategy scale are between 0.74 and 0.88; the α coefficients of the two dimensions under the learning effectiveness scale are respectively 0.82 and 0.839. This shows that each part under the three subscales has good reliability.

TABLE III. ANALYSIS OF THE DIFFERENCES IN LEARNING MOTIVATION, LEARNING STRATEGIES AND LEARNING EFFECTIVENESS OF BUSINESS ENGLISH STUDENTS UNDER DIFFERENT BACKGROUND VARIABLES

Questionnaire reliability analysis results	
Questionnaire scales and internal dimensions	Cronbach's α coefficient
Learning motivation	0.838
Achievement motivation	0.794
goal orientation	0.770
persistence	0.754

TABLE V. ANALYSIS ON THE DIFFERENCES IN LEARNING MOTIVATIONS OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP AND THE CONTROL GROUP

	Grouping	Number of cases	Average (adjusted)	Average (before adjusting)
Pursuit of success	Experimental group	134	3.7740	3.7335
	Control group	133	3.6648	3.5594
	Total	267	3.7194	3.6464
Goal orientation	Experimental group	134	3.6119	3.5398
	Control group	133	3.4348	3.4263
	Total	267	3.5233	3.4831
Persistence	Experimental group	134	3.4672	3.4642
	Control group	133	3.2677	3.3669
	Total	267	3.3674	3.4155
Total of the subscale	Experimental group	134	3.6177	3.6125
	Control group	133	3.3558	3.4175
	Total	267	3.4868	3.5150

C. Analysis of the differences in learning motivation of business English students under different background variables

The regression line slope homogeneity test results ("Table IV") show that $F = 1.059$ and $P = 0.304$ ($p > 0.05$), which indicates that the slopes of the two sets of regression lines are homogeneous, and covariate analysis can be performed.

TABLE IV. SLOPE HOMOGENEITY TEST DATA OF LEARNING MOTIVATION REGRESSION LINE IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP AND THE CONTROL GROUP

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
Intercept	710.489	1	710.489	5023.567	.000
Grouping	.108	1	.108	.763	.383
Pre-test	.106	1	.106	.749	.387
Pre-test*grouping	.150	1	.150	1.059	.304
Error	75.100	531	.141		
Total	6999.509	534			

After the experimental group and the control group respectively receive case teaching method and telling method, the averages of the two groups adjusted are as shown in "Table V":

TABLE VI. AVERAGE ABSTRACT AFTER ADJUSTING THE POST-TEST PERFORMANCE OF LEARNING MOTIVATIONS OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP AND THE CONTROL GROUP

Subscale	Source of variation	SS	Df	MS	F	p
pursuit of success	Intercept	750.764	1	750.764	2996.344	.000
	Inter-group	.009	1	.009	.037	.047
	TIB	.071	1	.071	.282	.596
	Intra-group	133.047	531	.251		
	Total	7674.143	534			
Goal orientation	Intercept	721.307	1	721.307	2800.589	.000
	Inter-group	1.212	1	1.212	4.707	.030
	TIB	.012	1	.012	.045	.831
	Intra-group	133.047	531	133.047		
	Total	6786.083	534			
Persistence	Intercept	660.888	1	660.888	2568.498	.000
	Inter-group	.000	1	.000	.001	.001
	TIB	1.285	1	1.285	4.996	.026
	Intra-group	136.629	531	.257		
	Total	6741.160	534			
Total of the subscale	Intercept	710.489	1	710.489	5023.567	.000
	Inter-group	.108	1	.108	.763	.003
	TIB	.106	1	.106	.749	.387
	Intra-group	75.100	531	.141		
	Total	6999.509	534			

As can be seen from "Table IV", by making single-factor heterogeneity analysis ($F = .763$, $p = .003 < .05$) on the learning motivation subscale, the result shows that this subscale reaches a significant difference level of .05, and the results shown in the data support the hypothesis 1 of this research: under different teaching method, the learning motivation of business English majored students is significantly different. At the same time, by comparing the averages of the adjusted subscales in "Table V", it can be found that the average of experimental group is 3.361 and that of the control group is 3.355, indicating that the learning motivation of students subjecting to the case teaching method is higher than the students in the control group.

By further analysis of the subscales of the learning motivation scale, it can be found that the pursuit of success ($F = 0.37$, $p = .047 < .05$), goal orientation ($F = .4707$, $p = .03 < .05$) and persistence present significant differences. This shows that after receiving quasi-experimental teaching research, the two groups of students have shown great differences in the above three aspects. By further analysis of the adjusted averages of the two groups on each subscale, it is found that in terms of pursuit of success, the average of experimental group is 3.7740 and that of the control group is 3.6648; in terms of goal orientation, that of experimental group is 3.6119 and the control group is 3.4348; in terms of persistence, the experimental group is 3.6177, and the control group is 3.3558. This indicates that after comparing the two groups of students subjecting to quasi-experimental teaching, the students subjecting to case teaching perform better than those subjecting to traditional telling method in the three dimensions of learning motivation. It shows that

compared with the traditional telling method, case teaching method can more effectively promote the development and reinforcement of students' learning motivation in the course of business English negotiation. This result is roughly consistent with some ideas obtained during the literature collection process (Wang Shuling, 2000).

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

There are significant differences in learning motivation of business English majored students who are taught in different teaching method. In terms of overall learning motivation, students subjecting to case teaching are better than those in the control group subjecting to traditional teaching method. From the detailed discussion of each dimension, in terms of pursuit of success, students receiving subjecting to case teaching is slightly better than those subjecting to traditional teaching method, indicating that the former present stronger motivation to achieve academic success and better academic performance than the latter; in terms of goal orientation, the former is significantly better than the latter, indicating that compared with the latter, the former has more specific learning goals in the course of learning; in terms of persistence, the former is significantly better than the latter, indicating that compared with the latter, the former is more persistent in daily learning and training in order to obtain good academic performance.

Studies have shown that business English majored students subjecting to different teaching methods present significant difference in both the entire and dimensions of learning motivation.

A. Suggestions for business English teachers

With the promulgation and implementation of the National Standard for Teaching Quality of Business English in Colleges and Universities in China, teachers should be aware of the limitations of traditional teaching methods in the new era of business English teaching, and by continuously enriching their teaching methods and skills, use a series of new methods represented by case teaching method to get the past spoon-feeding classroom teaching model transformed into a student-centered and teacher-led ability improvement classroom teaching. In the form of teaching organization, teachers should also change the past model of teaching by teacher, listening by students, doing homework after class by students and correcting by teacher. Teacher should select case materials that meet the teaching purpose in the classroom so that students can learn linguistic knowledge in real-life situations in the real world, while improving relevant business communication and operational abilities. The classroom teaching should be no longer a unilateral output by the teacher, and passive receiving by the students, but be transformed into model that teacher provides the basic concept and cases, students analyze the case till they understand the information, process the information and finally initiatively construct their own knowledge and ability system. Teachers should make an effective use of case teaching methods in class hour, to make the learning materials deeper and richer, and provide students with situations and context in which they acquire and use knowledge, motivate students to use the knowledge they have learned to solve practical problems, thereby improving the final learning effect.

B. Suggestions for school administrators

School administrators should create a systematic and comprehensive case library of business English negotiation teaching based on the subject of business English. A library of teaching cases with comprehensive themes and rich content can provide teachers with rich teaching materials, and also effectively stimulate students' learning interest and learning motivation. The research conclusion reflects that case teaching method can effectively stimulate students' learning motivation in the teaching process. And sufficient case materials will further enhance the effect of case teaching method for improving student's learning motivation. On the one hand, a complete library of teaching cases provides rich materials for teachers' teaching, so that teachers can choose appropriate cases for teaching in the classroom according to different teaching topics and purposes; on the other hand, the library can also attract the learning interest of students, becoming an effective platform for students to complete self-improvement by self-learning and improve learning effectiveness outside the

classroom. The feedback from teachers and students can also guide the library to collect suitable materials, further improving its positive impact on students. Therefore, colleges and universities should provide resource investment to support the construction of a teaching library suitable for Business English negotiation in the school to form a virtuous cycle of improving the learning effectiveness of business English students.

VI. CONCLUSION

Through the quantitative research method, combined with the learning effect of business English majored students subjecting to quasi-experimental case teaching, the following conclusions are obtained:

First, the business English majored students interviewed generally have high learning motivation. Most of the students who accept different teaching methods for business English negotiation courses show a better learning motivation. They maintain a high degree of enthusiasm and positivity for the pursuit of success and progress in learning. At the same time, some students hold that the pursuit of success can improve the learning effect. In terms of goal orientation, students generally acknowledge that the establishment of clear learning goal has a positive significance and plays an important role in improving learning effectiveness. At the same time, they also acknowledge that there are weak links in time planning due to their poor self-control ability and other reasons. Student reckon that to a certain extent, the teaching methods used by teachers in the classroom can explain that they have completed their learning goals and achieved better learning results. In terms of persistence, students generally review and consolidate the knowledge they learn daily, and firmly believe that they can achieve good learning results by persisting in practice. In addition, students generally report that both the case teaching method and the traditional telling method have played a role of supervising and promoting their own learning and are conducive to achieving better learning results.

Next, this research uses quasi-experimental method to respectively teach two groups of students in case teaching method and traditional teaching method and analyzes the differences in their learning motivations. The results show that the students subjecting to case teaching present better learning motivation in business English negotiation class than those subjecting to traditional teaching method. Therefore, it is believed that case teaching method is suitable for teaching of business English major-related courses, and can better improve students' learning motivation.

Finally, this research builds a research model of "Improving Business English Majored Students' Motivation Based on Case Teaching Method", namely

relying on case teaching, it constructs an effective method that can assess the learning motivations of business English majored students, rationally uses case teaching method implementation procedure to enhance student's learning motivation so as to improve the students' learning effectiveness.

The whole model uses "case teaching method" as the basic means of implementation, namely a teaching strategy that organizes students to discuss many cases and proposes solutions to problems so that students can master relevant professional skills, knowledge and theories. The cases are usually actual problems (such as the negotiation on the transaction price in business transactions), but can also be changed or virtual problems. In the process of teaching, teacher organizes students to interpret, analyze and demonstrate the problems presented in the case, and guides students to put forward their opinions and ideas and integrate the opinions of others. Through a series of activities in and out of class, students are guided to master and improve the relevant knowledge, theory and skills of business English.

In fact, there is actually a complementary relationship between the "case teaching method" used by teachers and students' learning motivations. In class, teachers use case teaching methods to continuously stimulate students' learning interest and motivation. On the contrary, by observing the dimensions of students' learning motivation in the class, teacher can grasp the strength of student learning motivation in a timely manner, and combine staged tests and questionnaires to objectively evaluate and analyze the actual teaching effect of the case teaching method adopted at this stage. Based on the feedback of this information, teacher can make a series of targeted improvements to the implementation of the case teaching method, such as adjusting the time length of the discussion session, reducing the difficulty in reading the discussion case, or limiting the number of students in a group to achieve the best teaching effect. As a whole, the relationship between the two can be understood as the case teaching method helps students effectively improve their learning motivation, and the students' learning motivation materials provide case teaching methods with feedback on teaching results for their improvement and further enhance students' learning motivation. Case teaching and learning motivation can form a virtuous cycle in teaching context.

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