

# Analysis on the Bilingual Teaching of Art Design in Sino-foreign Cooperative Education

Take China-New Zealand Cooperative Training Project of Chengdu University as Example

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**Abstract**—Besides public and private education, Sino-foreign cooperative education has become the third form of higher education in China. However, the Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design in China is still in the exploratory stage. By combining with nine-year practical experiences of Chengdu University's China-New Zealand cooperative education, this paper has systematically analyzed the current existing problems and argues of bilingual teaching of the Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design and put forward corresponding methods for alleviating the contradiction between English learning and professional learning as well as introduced such ways as appropriate localization of the introduced curriculum and enhancing teaching staff by taking from outside with training inside.

**Keywords**—Sino-foreign cooperative education; bilingual teaching; art design

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the sixth press conference – The Three-year Development of Sino-foreign Cooperative Education Since the Implementation of National Education Plan (Year 2010 -- Year 2020), Ministry of Education expressed that, “as a significant form of international cooperation and exchanges in education, Sino-foreign cooperative education has played a positive role in promoting school-running system reform, broadening the way to cultivate talents and expediting the opening up of education. Meanwhile, it has met people's diverse educational needs and aroused widespread concern in society.” The sixteenth article – Further Open Education of Guidelines of the National Program for Medium-and Long-Term Educational Reform and Development (Year 2010 – Year 2020) has clearly put forward that “encourage all types of schools at different levels to carry out various international communication and cooperation, to establish some Sino-foreign cooperative demonstration schools and a group of Sino-foreign cooperative projects.” After thirty-year development, Sino-foreign cooperative schools have become the third form of higher education in China besides public and private education. Currently, nearly two thousand Sino-foreign operative educational institutions and projects in China indicate that Sino-foreign cooperative education has a sound development momentum and has gradually embarked on a rapid developing channel with high level and demonstration characteristics.

## II. THE OVERVIEW OF THE SINO-FOREIGN COOPERATIVE EDUCATION OF ART DESIGN

Although Sino-foreign cooperative education can date back to reform and opening up, the Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design starts relatively late and has little cases in Sino-foreign cooperative education. At present, the over-ten colleges and universities in China which have opened up the Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design are Chengdu University, Guangxi Arts University, Shandong University of Arts, Communication University of China, Zhejiang Sci-Tech University, Wuhan Textile University, Pingdingshan University, Hunan University of Technology, Zhongyuan University of Technology, etc. According to the authoritative website in China – China Knowledge Resource Integrated Database, the related research papers named as Sino-foreign cooperative education are over 2,900 pieces in twenty years from 1996 to 2016. However only seven papers research on the Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design and the first one is written in 2011 which lags behind the Sino-foreign cooperative education of other profession. Learned from relevant researches, the current Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design has a serial of problems in curriculum system docking, student quality, teaching staff force, training aim and so on to be solved. Therefore, the Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design in China is still in the exploration stage and a long way ahead has to go before the internationalization of art education.

In order to realize the sharing and complementation of superior resources, and to cultivate a number of applied talents in art design with high quality and level for contributing to the economic development of Chengdu, Chengdu University has carried out communication and cooperation with Waikato Institute of Technology (Wintec for short) in Hamilton, New Zealand from 2008 and began to enroll joint-training students. Wintec is one of the biggest and the most prestigious national technology institutes, being assessed as first-grade school by NZQA (New Zealand Qualification Authority). Meanwhile, Wintec is one of the schools with highest employment rate and its graphic and digital design profession ranks top three in New Zealand. In accordance with Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools and Enforcement Measures of Regulations of

the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools and approved by Ministry of Education and Education Department of Sichuan Province, Chengdu University and Waikato Institute of Technology in New Zealand have jointly run master education project of media & art (dividing into three research directions such as visual art, radio & film and commercial music), undergraduate education project of art design, and specialty education project of art design and broadcasting & hosting. In nine years, the two universities have closely cooperated with each other to continuously enhance the teaching staff force in joint training projects and improve & perfect cooperative training mechanism. Its training quality gets the affirmation of parents and a good social reputation has been gained. The enrollment has been yearly increased and reached nearly 500 students in the overall training projects in 2016. The frequent contacts and exchange study between two universities have promoted the friendly communication of Chengdu and Hamilton, which leading to the establishment of city friendship between two cities with officially signing agreement between Chengdu of the People's Republic of China and Hamilton of New Zealand in May 2015.

### III. THE ROLE OF BILINGUAL TEACHING IN THE SINO-FOREIGN COOPERATIVE EDUCATION OF ART DESIGN

Bilingual teaching has two major functions: firstly, let Chinese students go abroad and cultivate international high-quality talents; secondly, let foreign students go inside and learn science & technology and cultural knowledge in China. The Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design in Chengdu University has focused on the first function of bilingual teaching, which wishes to send outstanding design talents go abroad. Aiming at directly studying the professional curriculums of Waikato Institute of Technology in New Zealand, this joint training project has introduced some foreign professional courses, adopted bilingual teaching, and used foreign original courses, materials and guidelines. At the foundation of saving the time cost of studying and instruction expense, it has provided a process of adapting to the foreign environment in advance by laying good profession and language foundation for students. Therefore, after clearing the purpose of bilingual courses for Sino-foreign cooperative education, the design of curriculum content, the selection of materials, the guiding for students and the assessment system for teachers all shall be done around this purpose and could not confuse bilingual courses in Sino-foreign cooperative education with other ordinary bilingual courses by rote.

As the precondition and important means of the Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design, bilingual teaching has buffered learning and functioned as lubricant for students who go abroad for further learning, thus being welcomed by these students. However, the fact that the number of students "going abroad" is limited has been faced and a large number of students still choose to "stay at home" to get a job and develop in China. The question that "how bilingual teaching to balance the two kinds of students and achieve a good development" has become a problem which must be addressed in the Sino-foreign cooperative education of Chengdu University. Hence, it is necessary to theoretically and practically discuss the

bilingual teaching problems in Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design, so as to promote a good development of Sino-foreign cooperative education in Chengdu university and meanwhile to give reference for the Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design in other universities.

### IV. PRACTICAL METHODS OF BILINGUAL TEACHING IN THE SINO-FOREIGN COOPERATIVE EDUCATION OF ART DESIGN

#### A. *Alleviate the Contradiction between English Learning and Professional Learning*

Firstly, the fact that bilingual courses of art design are not English classes must be clarified. Expanding enrollment has resulted in the decreasing quality of students and deviated from the elite target of art education. The art students become the so-called poor performance students in cultural lessons, which leads to the general low English level of students majoring in art and thus objectively brings resistance for implementing professional bilingual courses. Belonging to the practical majors, art design is aiming to cultivate talents with strong practical ability. If professional teachers translate every sentence to English, teach according to the preset pattern and not dare to teach freely or say a word not written in the teaching plan, this kind of teaching is little more than making students memorize some English vocabulary. Art design subject has its professional features and knowledge system which students have to master. If the teachers of art design lack initiative and creativeness and make the teaching mode of art subject be that of science & technology, proper interaction and communication are lacked between students and teachers, which ossifies teaching. Finally, it will become that English teachers are teaching professional subjects. And students' reverse psychology is predicable. As extensive and profound as art education, various art subjects have strict discipline characteristics. When preparing lessons, teachers of art design shall give more consideration to how to make students discover, research and solve problems in their professional fields but not be kidnapped by English and become overcautious slaves of English.

What's more, it is necessary to directly face the shock of bilingual teaching to professional study and balance and combine the benefits of both kinds of students. Students are the body of teaching and receiver of knowledge. The purpose of bilingual teaching is to make students learn professional knowledge by using foreign language well when absorbing and understanding the culture of other countries. If carrying out bilingual teaching without considering students' foreign language ability, the students would not approve it. Now, the English level of students in the Sino-foreign cooperative education of Chengdu University varies greatly. And the English learning enthusiasm is different between students who tried to study abroad or study and work at home. The students who have a plan of studying abroad take a lot of time to learn IELTS, TOEFL, etc. For these students, English is a threshold that they have to cross. Therefore, their English level is generally higher than other students; the students with a plan of staying at home regard English as a burden. Most of them think that the time for professional courses learning is reduced if spending too much energy on English learning in bilingual

courses. They will gain 50% of half-cooked knowledge after spending the same time and high tuition cost. This is attending to trifles and neglects the essentials for them, leading to their poor English and professional courses learning performance and no competitive advantage. If teachers use English with a high frequency in professional courses teaching, this kind of students would think the learning is too difficult and require teachers to teach by using more Chinese; however, if teachers use Chinese a lot in teaching, students who expect bilingual teaching would be unsatisfied. Professional curriculum is generally taught through the unit of class. While the English level of students within one class varies due to individual difference, which leads to the information received by students varies because of different English level when teachers are teaching the same content. This makes teachers' curriculum design become very difficult. On one hand, the practical needs of a small amount of students to go abroad should be considered by introducing learning experience and content in other countries; on the other hand, the employment and development of a large number of students who will study at home should also be attached consideration and teach the professional knowledge and skills for settling down and getting on well with their pursuits to the largest extent. From the personal view of the author, find a balancing point as well as a universal value and general rule to introduce the excellent Western design experience and cases into classes, so as to trigger the interest of students. Then secondly, teach their necessary English knowledge and cultivate their actual language communication competence around the basis of professional contents. Meanwhile, we should timely lead students to go abroad and require students according to different levels. For instance, when doing Workbook, coursework, course reply and learning design software, encourage students to go abroad to use English and English software, and do not compulsorily require the same for students without overseas studying plan. But inspire all students' desire to communicate professionally by using English, release their learning pressure, and feel easy to learn and usefulness of knowledge.

#### *B. Don't Blindly Pursue for Origin and Properly Localize the Introduced Courses*

Due to the courses in Sino-foreign cooperative education mostly are introduced the original edition and using the original English teaching materials, and because of the existing problems that cases, class exercises and assignment in the teaching materials are rooted in the local culture of other countries, the domestic students and teachers who lack language environment and cultural background cannot totally understand and digest sometimes which influences students' mastery of professional knowledge. For instance, in the third part – Signs of the core courses -- Visual Arts Practice 2 for Level1 students introduced from the academy of media arts of Waikato Institute of Technology in New Zealand by Chengdu University, the referring lecture notes and reading materials after class provided by teachers of New Zealand have a great number of study on signs of Maori culture in New Zealand. Although the core teachers of this curriculum have studied it in New Zealand and the teaching team also has done great study on the Maori culture and learned from foreign teachers of New

Zealand, the exactly and faultless teaching about this part to students cannot be guaranteed. Therefore, the teaching team adopts the strategy of reversing part easily-understanding materials of signs in New Zealand and adding more class discussion and case study on China even Sichuan local culture signs according to the requirements of teaching materials, outline and training plan. The teaching team also compiles easily-understanding lecture notes in both English and Chinese to make students easily absorb and understand so as to apply to design.

As art design profession lays particular emphasis on the training of students' practical innovation ability and design application ability as well as students' experience and its accumulation of practical application, do not blindly copy the original teaching materials or pursue for origin in the selection of teaching auxiliary materials. Combining the applying status of this curriculum in practical works, properly compile teaching material, lecture notes and design curriculum content according to the domestic and local status. Make foreign things serve China and proper curriculum localization. The international teachers of Wintec have come some times to Chengdu University for teaching research with teachers in our university. This has poured into the international leading teaching concepts and showed rich interest for university-enterprise cooperation practice innovation project introduced into the classes. In the communication with foreign teachers of New Zealand, make students learn and use under teachers' instruction in the core course -- Website Design of graphic and digital design direction. They have provided abundant website design scheme. In the professional course – Typography, teachers make students design a set of English font of every student and sale it on university's website. Thus it can be seen that the curriculum contents shall be designed from the international and universal view by teachers of art design. Cases and practice-oriented teaching shall be adopted. Integrating with the local practical design project makes students use knowledge and master design method and skill in practice and improve students' ability in solving practical problems.

#### *C. Strengthen Teaching Staff Training and Improve Enrollment Quality*

Currently, the lacking of teaching staff and poor-quality enrollment are the bottleneck which restricts the quickly development and high level of Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design in colleges and universities. The bilingual classes in Sino-foreign cooperative education have a high requirement of professional teachers' teaching ability, professional ability and language ability, and need foreign teachers participate in teaching and coach for a long term in principle. The bilingual teachers in Sino-foreign cooperative education mostly are backbone teachers who are trained for bilingual teaching in New Zealand. Their professional and teaching ability are great while their foreign language ability is different. The teaching staff of bilingual teaching staff shall be experts in profession and foreign language. But the realistic truth is that teachers with the two abilities are so rare that they cannot satisfy the needs of rapidly developing students' number and practical teaching. Furthermore, how to keep the

positivity of teachers engaged in bilingual teaching for a long term is a problem due to large amount of course preparation and burden as well as lack of corresponding incentive mechanism. The language environment is a necessary basis and guarantee for successful bilingual teaching. The language acquisition is the result of accumulation over a long period and its effect cannot be seen in one day. The bilingual teachers all hope for learning chances to improve their bilingual teaching ability. The university opening Sino-foreign cooperative education shall formulate reasonable teacher training program plan to continuously and unbrokenly select outstanding teachers to learn, visit and follow courses in overseas universities. Besides, strengthen talent introduction, absorb teachers with overseas profession background and good foreign language level, and invite experts and scholars of foreign countries to do teaching exchange for taking from outside with training inside. At present, besides regularly selecting excellent teachers visiting and being trained in America, Canada, New Zealand and so on, Chengdu University begins to introduce professional teachers of New Zealand to teach professional courses in the joint training project. In each semester, Chengdu University would select one to two professional courses of New Zealand and let teachers of New Zealand teach in English according to their teaching mode meanwhile equipping with 1-2 teachers engaging in the same courses of China in charge of translation and tutoring. Looking from the overall feedback of teachers and students, the teaching team of one teacher of China plus one teacher of New Zealand has gained good teaching effects and is welcomed generally by students.

Enrollment quality is the resource of Sino-foreign cooperative education and meanwhile the significant element to guarantee the healthy and continuous development of Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design in colleges and universities. However, under the industrialization of education background, cooperation in running schools have descended to tools for making money of some institutions and colleges. The enrollment of students with lower professional and foreign language abilities leads to the general low quality of enrollment in Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design. According to this situation, on one hand, colleges shall improve the enrollment threshold and admit students with good professional and foreign language ability as well as provide good study hardware and living condition. On the other hand, strengthen the incentive measure for students, set up a special scholarship for students in Sino-foreign cooperative education, encourage students with outstanding professional quality and English ability to study abroad and then work in China, and improve the rate of studying abroad and school reputation. If so, a virtuous cycle is formed and make more students go abroad to accept a higher level international education.

## V. CONCLUSION

The Sino-foreign cooperative education, not being wholesale westernization or accepting without question, propose to introduce superior education resources from abroad to use domestically and continuously improve the international level of domestic education. Belonging to the practical and

applied subject, art design in Sino-foreign cooperative education is centered on making students capable of using foreign language to design. With the promotion of students' art accomplishment and design skills as leading and foreign language as assistance, the two of them exist side by side and play a part together to reach the double aims of professional knowledge and foreign language learning. In a word, the bilingual teaching of Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design is a long and arduous task, which needs to address the contradiction between English learning and professional knowledge learning, constantly increase the teaching staff force and enrollment quality. Only doing this can the Sino-foreign cooperative education of art design walk more distantly and deeply.

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