RESEARCH ARTICLE

# EXPLORATION AND PRACTICE OF CHINESE-ENGLISH BILINGUAL TEACHING IN 3D ANIMATION COURSES

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**ABSTRACT**

More and more Chinese University offer 3D animation courses to students. The Chinese-English bilingual teaching becomes one kind of choice in the course. 3D animation bilingual teaching mode is a thematic teaching method, an advanced mode of the Chinese-English bilingual teaching. The Chinese-English bilingual education practiced in China from the beginning of the 20 century, but it is still a new area in animation subject. Learning advanced animation concepts and precious experiences from foreign countries is quite necessary for promoting the industry of Chinese animation while bilingual education is so helpful to quick dissemination of advanced knowledge. 3D animation Chinese-English bilingual teaching in China has own strategies for actual teaching including: stimulating student's interest with appreciation, helping students memorize specialized vocabularies under animation software teaching, Compare learning between the original textbook and the translation version, making full use of Internet information for better practice, participating overseas exchange students program. The final purpose of education is not to teach existing knowledge but to induce the creative power of human beings and to arouse the sense of life and sense of worth." Animation education does not only involve academic research, occupation training and software training, but also is more of cultivation of creativity. And bilingual education is just one of the essential channels to stimulate creativity.

**Key words:** 3D animation, bilingual, thematic teaching

## INTRODUCTION

3D animation becomes one kind of mainstream technology to utilize in the movie, the game, the scientific research. 3D animation study itself has a very strong multi-cultural characteristic. As we know 3D Animators from America, India, Japan, China and other countries with different native languages, but they use the same software, similar production environments, cooperation and exchange ideas in English, so in the field of animation showing a world multi-cultural, multi-lingual features. Nowadays universities provide 3D animation courses in china. Chinese animation education also needs to provide a Chinese-English bilingual teaching for those innovative animation students. So bilingual teaching can become one choice in the 3D animation courses.

What is Chinese-English Bilingual education? The Chinese-English bilingual education refers to the non-language teaching which carries on with English environment. In fact Chinese-English bilingual education unifies language learning and content learning (Wu Ping 2007). The bilingual education is

"uses two languages in a school the situations, is simple symbol which a complex phenomenon uses (An Ran 2007).

According to the concept of CLIL (Content Language Integrated Learning) The integration of language and content learning approach has gradually been recognized by educators (Li Hongmei 2011). With practical teaching, CLIL concept has two main teaching modes:

Immersion method: completely immersed in the related content in English learning, non-native speakers learn subject content with English, learning the subject content also grasped the English communication in professional field, so that the professional skills and language functions progress in same time.

Thematic teaching method: Unified non-native language and subject content with specially designed in the form of thematic teaching. Thematic teaching method can provide better effects than the immersion method, by means of a second language re-integration of the subject content; as a consequence students' non-mother-tongue thinking ability obtained significant improvement.

3D animation is a main course animation disciplines in Chinese universities. The purpose of 3D animation Chinese-English Bilingual teaching courses is not only a 3D animation technology and theory with English teaching, but also a Thematic teaching method combined with animation disciplines. Animation education started relatively late in Chinese Universities, only 10 years history, So animation education need to learn from developed countries, including the theory, technology and experience. 3D animation course is a very comprehensive course, because its theory and technology is developing rapidly, and the latest theories and technologies are mostly English-speaking environment. For non-native English speaker, Chinese animation students, English learning becomes important part in animation subject. For instance, in software tutoring class 3D animation software operation is not difficult, but the variety of English command makes beginner level students feel panic, so that students have limited in creative assignments.

Chinese-English Bilingual teaching is a kind of effective method helpful for students thinking form the pluralistic. Students can study animation from two aspects of art and technology to realize the intersection of eastern and western language and culture, multicultural fusion. Chinese-English Bilingual teaching not only improves the students' language understanding and expression ability, but also provides an international view about animation. Therefore, actively carry out the 3D animation course bilingual teaching theory and practice research has important practical significance.

**The Role of Chinese-English Bilingual in Animation Industry**

Chinese animation production teams have become an important component of the international animation industry and a key link in the animation industry chain. Thus, students who went for internship needed to adapt to such environment of communication in English. According to the feedback of lots of students, they had learned cutting-edge digital animation technology and concepts, which helped pave the way for them to become domestic Top talents of animation production. Even it made them actively participate in competition and communication in the international market to become the leaders in the industry. After accepting training in such environment, students truly realized that bilingual education on animation had helped them lay some foundation.

Learning advanced animation concepts and precious experiences from foreign countries is quite necessary for promoting the career of domestic animation education while bilingual education is so helpful to quick dissemination of advanced knowledge. The application of bilingual education on animation is both helpful to cultivating students and to promoting teachers' growth. Through this process, students can get familiar with language specifications for professional international exchange and be confident with completing English tasks in the professional field. Students can form a perspective embracing the world, understand and respect different nations, customs and culture, and absorb essences of animation in foreign countries.

**Chinese-English Bilingual teaching in 3D animation courses Strategies**

Bilingual education on animation can be carried out based on the characteristics of image culture by learning from methods and experiences used in other relevant discipline systems. After several years of practices, bilingual education on animation has continuously explored strategies.

**Stimulating student's interest with appreciation**

The primary problem is that different English levels of students bring about substantial barriers to implementing bilingual education on animation. It is hard for many students to listen to all courses in English, but it may lose the meaning if teaching in Chinese is adopted. Therefore, it is desirable to implement maintenance bilingual education, a transition from teaching in Chinese for all lessons to teaching in English for some lessons. Maintenance bilingual education: Native languages are used for students when they are admitted to schools, and then second language is gradually used for some lessons while native language is still used for other lessons. At the early stage, nouns and concepts in English should be explained in Chinese. Moreover, background knowledge, excellent animation works and background stories from foreign countries are helpful to stimulating students' interest and increasing their sense of participation. Teaching for teaching is not encouraged. For example, what does it mean behind the word "Pixar", and are there animators and works around it? Appreciation of animation in English can stimulate students' interest, and guide students to find common and special characteristics of animation art. It can also enlighten and guide students to complement materials by referring to English books or English websites and translate the meaning.

**Helping students memorize specialized vocabularies in software teaching**

In animation software teaching, many students are resistant to interfaces in English. In particular, 3D animation software like Maya and 3Dmax are complicated in the menus and orders. Although it is a little difficult to teach with the aid of animation software in English, it creates a point cut for bilingual education on animation. Students can get to memorize relevant vocabularies by getting familiar with interfaces and orders so as to better learn the software. Orders in animation software are almost all terminologies for animation, explaining specialized terminologies by illustrating the actual situations in the industry and helping students acquire specialized vocabularies. For example, the module of Maya is mainly divided into such modules as modeling, animation and rendering, designed in accordance with industrial processes of 3D animation. It is namely construction of the model of characters and setting, production of animation, adding texture, rendering and compositing. Vocabularies including modeling, animation, material, texture, rendering and compositing should be included to the introduction of the process of 3D animation production. By referring to vocabularies in the software, sense of strangeness for the software could be reduced. Thus, vocabularies in the main menus are introduced, and then vocabularies in the minor menus aided by illustration. In this way, the aim of bilingual education on animation with software is finally achieved along with completion of animation works.

Moreover, students could make a presentation in English about the production process of their own works or discuss in English on some new works, technology and theory and record the discussion in a report in English. Students will have a more active attitude towards description of their own works or looking up information on their own, more conducive to improving their listening, speaking and writing skills.

**Compare learning between the original textbook and the translation version**

Lack of textbooks is the biggest problem for bilingual education. There are nearly no any textbooks for bilingual education on animation. If any, it is also limited within the scope of teaching with animation software. Students may feel bored as they could not understand the original textbook and materials in English. However, bilingual education will lose its meaning if Chinese textbooks are used. Therefore, under the condition of lacking bilingual textbooks, the way of teaching with by comparing the original textbook and the translation version can be adopted, or the teachers could compile handouts by combining teaching plans and courseware and referring to collected materials on

the basis of being familiar with courses and textbooks. Such bilingual textbooks offer a pool of resources for students to obtain knowledge in various fields.

Take the course of animation motion rule for example. The concept of animation motion rule mainly derives from the concept of American Disney animation and experience. Such knowledge was spread to China along with the development of animation processing industry, and became the main basic course for animation major. Animation motion rule is an essential basic for an experienced animator, but is unfamiliar and difficult for a beginner who needs to spend lots of time mastering and understanding it. Thus, systematic textbooks are needed in such courses. At present, the **Animator's Survival Kit** is adopted or partly adopted for the course of animation motion rule, and it has been translated into Chinese. Although the Chinese version has greatly accelerated the knowledge dissemination, it has its potential disadvantages which are harmful to the update and feedback of knowledge in the future as it lacks popularized terminologies in the internationalized industry. Thus, animation education should think deeply about how to impart knowledge by combining the "authenticity" of original textbooks in English and how to integrate with the world.

Making full use of Internet information for better practice

It is very important to guide students to master forefront information as a means of learning. Reasonably using Internet is very helpful for students in bilingual education. Animation works from foreign countries in domestic websites are after all translation. If students can search for information and latest trend in animation directly in overseas websites, it is helpful to enhance their English and professional level. Since students are accustomed to searching for information on the internet, teachers could introduce some good overseas forums on animation, websites on educational institutions, libraries and art galleries to students. They could search for theories and materials on their own, which can definitely contribute to the development of bilingual education. Also, students could participate in contests home and abroad and international

exchange to improve their English. At present, many Chinese students post their excellent works to some famous international animation network communities, having won good international reputation. But it is still insufficient for animation majors. Thus, communication on the Internet is much needed to promote communication and learning in English, to absorb advanced knowledge and experience to China, and to introduce our own works to the world.

**Participating overseas exchange students program**

At present, students in many colleges and universities advocate the program of international exchange of students if economic situation allows. Some can earn international credits, and some can get paid internship. Although such bilingual education is limited by economic situation which is not applicable to all students, 5% of students can participate in the program in China. Overseas exchange can practice all-round abilities as a brilliant method for the implementation of bilingual education. Take animation major in some university in Nanjing for example, students were send to some university in Texas, America to learn, in an activity of assessment of animation creativity industry held in summer session. They got valuable experiences in creative enterprise like Sony Online and communicated with international professionals using what they've learned. Apart from practicing English, students could obtain professional knowledge through communication. Such overseas exchange could make students learn about the function and meaning of bilingual education. The final purpose of bilingual education is still to offer a way of learning to students, and to help them form a habit of independent learning. Actively learning English, and learning and acquiring professional knowledge could facilitate a better development in the future.

**CONCLUSION**

Cummins interoperates bilingual language model from the perspective of cognition, the first language and the second language like a Dual Iceberg. The Dual iceberg looks like unrelated independent two icebergs, but shares a big foundation underwater. An underlying cognitive/academic proficiency that is common across languages like the foundation of Dual Iceberg

(Cummins, 1996, 110-111). For animation students in Chinese-English bilingual courses, animation expertise, software and creative thinking are the foundation of Dual Iceberg. Bilingual education's ultimate goal is to teach students a learning method, so that they develop good learning habits, take the initiative to learn English, learn professional knowledge, in order to have better development in the future. Eduard Spranger believes that the final purpose of education is not to teach existing knowledge but to induce the creative power of human beings and to arouse the sense of life and sense of worth. 3D Animation Chinese-English Bilingual teaching is one of the essential channels to stimulate creativity 3D Animation Chinese-English Bilingual teaching not only involves academic research, occupation training and software training, but also is more of cultivation of creativity.

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