The Application of Story Method in Product Design Teaching

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Abstract. In order to improve the product design teaching effect, through the classroom teaching experience and the theoretical guidance, to learn the story method is an effective method. As a design thinking method, the story method is used to explore potential consumers and use situations to create opportunities for the development of new products. In addition, the method of storytelling causes the students' professional interest and the ability to exercise students' diversity.

1. Story and product design

The story is an ancient narrative method, including the theme, the plot and the topic. The literature works by means of telling the story and touching the reader, the story method connects the literary creation and the product design, which reflects that the major of product design is an interdisciplinary subject. The rise of narrative design has a great relationship with the postmodern literature, which is the important nutrient source of the postmodern design representation\textsuperscript{1}. A good story will not only move the storyteller, but also impress the listener in your mind. Design and storytelling are similar, and when people have a good product, they trigger a pleasurable purchase and use experience. Everyone has the urge to act their role in the subconscious, and the process of buying and using the product is the process of self-image positioning\textsuperscript{2}. People use themselves as the protagonist of the story, taking the product and the surrounding situation as the local part of the story to gain emotional and psychological satisfaction. For example, consumers who buy muji are positioning themselves as simple and modern. People who drink coffee at starbucks will feel like a small asset.

Besides the product design criteria of appearance language, function and color, its own story will be the direction of product design. China is transformed from a manufacturing country to a creative one, and product design is an important major in improving the competitiveness of industries. The product is in a huge market, the competition of similar products is particularly fierce. If the product only stays in the pursuit of the change of forms, but not really solves the problems of the users and meets the demand of consumer psychology, then it lacks of a deeper meaning and cannot to resonate with users. The story method provides a kind of thinking and method for product designers, which is also a product marketing strategy to create opportunities for the development of new markets\textsuperscript{3}.

2. The importance of story method in product design teaching

Product design is an interdisciplinary subject combining theory and practice, apart from having professional knowledge and skills, students have communication skills, teamwork skills, analytical interpretation and creativity, etc. The traditional teaching concept should be optimized in the face of changing social demands. Teaching and learning are interrelated, the story method can serve as effective tools in the process of teaching, fully mobilize the enthusiasm of students, promote teaching efficiency and the development of students ability in many aspects. Enrich the content and form of classroom teaching and cultivate students' say and do in a synchronous development and grow into T type talents.
The design of the future is to find a new direction in the increasingly homogenous, over-branded and over-segmented market. Introduce the story method into the teaching field of product design to provide students with new ideas and methods. The more advanced science and technology, the more people need high emotional compensation, and the balanced development of both promotes the emergence of new products. In the era of experience and service, consumers choose products based on sensibility, and design will pursue the lyric value of humanistic spirit. The story method has a wide application space in product design. The design works have the so-called use function and express some profound meaning.

3. The application of story method in product design teaching

3.1 Arouse the interest of the student to study independently

After years of testing education, students are used to acquiring knowledge passively. Even when they get to college, they still lack the motivation to study independently. To change the traditional classroom teaching, students will listen to what they hear. Students are the real protagonists of the course, so that students can participate in the classroom interaction. In class, the design and life are closely related in the form of story-telling, guiding students’ interest in product design and stimulating students’ self-learning enthusiasm.

Interest is the key to learn professional knowledge, in the teaching process of design and the history of industrial design, the way of telling a story can activate the atmosphere of the class and make the boring theoretical knowledge in a vivid example. For instance, in the elaboration of emotional design, a case study of mountain tiger incense table (fig. 1) is listed. In a speech, Jia Wei, the founder of IKK design, told the audience a story. Many young people will find themselves in a dilemma after struggling in the first-tier cities. On the one hand, they can't afford the high prices of big cities, and they can't take root in the ideal place. On the other hand, they do not want to go back to their hometown to enjoy the easy life. These young people are like a mountain tiger in front of the cliff and behind the chase. So, Jia wei designed the mountain tiger incense table. The sculptural aspect represents the sharp hills, with the tiger as people. The mountain tiger is in a state of climbing, even if the incense sticks have been burnt out, but the trajectory still remains. Discover the hidden story behind the product, add emotionalized elements to the product design, and let the user hear the story of the product.

3.2 Cultivate students' diversified ability

3.2.1 Talk and do things together

A designer is a profession that requires good expression and communication skills. At present, most students have weak expressive ability, even if they design good works, they do not know how to express themselves better. People tell stories by nature, and designers tell stories through their works. Therefore, besides teaching the knowledge points, the teacher will provide students with the opportunity to exercise to speak. In the early stage of thematic design, students need to collect excellent cases and organize them into PPT. When students share information, it is a form of role-playing that makes it easier to form an open and happy classroom environment. In the process of design, students gain bonus harvest by explaining and communicating.
3.2.2 Wide and deep share

Today's society requires T-type talent, who has the breadth of knowledge and the depth of professional knowledge. The wonderful story needs a certain knowledge reserve, the student should widen the design vision in the university, it helps to have a good idea. As the channels for people to get information are wide, and the cognitive level of things is improved, people have higher requirements for matter. Product design is closely related to marketing, and students should be aware of how to add value to their products. Many international brands use story-telling as a way to show deep cultural heritage, disseminate brand values and concepts in a way that will allow consumers to embrace brands. The quality of the story affects the value of the product, the historical memory of the product is not formed between the day and night. There is usually a story behind high-end products, such as the case of the Titanic, in which the Louis vuitton suitcase become famous because of the lack of water. When a product has a memory and a story, the product is a symbol and to show yourself, it occupies the important position of emotional element, satisfying people's material consumption while also gaining emotional accumulation. People try to reproduce their original appearance by listening to stories and perceiving the content and meaning behind it.

3.3 Enrich students' design thinking and methods

Product design processes include product definition, thinking divergence, research analysis, morphological design, functional optimization, and program evaluation. The application of story method in product design is not isolated, and the thinking and methods provided at different stages are different and related.

3.3.1 Product thinking divergence incubator

Unlike procedural thinking, the story focuses on the imagination and the ability to simulate, and the process involves determining the design subject, the idea and the whole story outline. Story includes elements such as time, place, characters, activity and behavior and so on. Designers in different time and scenario extract people, object, environment and activity. This information creates a lot of ideas for the product's story. Judge whether the idea is relevant to the design theme, and then create and refine the product. The students adopt the story method to explore the product design, and put forward the possibility of innovation from different angles, so as to make the design process and products more humanistic care.

Life is made up of stories, which are made up of periods of time. The designer guides the storyline to achieve the cohesion of each process segment, and the time dimension of the product is created from a new angle by observing the process of the user's operation of the product. For example, the tilting teapot (fig. 2) of the German company has a different placement in each step of the tea making process. When the tea leaves are put into the hot water, the teapot is lying flat. When tea is fully soaked in hot water, the teapot is in 45° inclined. Then, the vertical teapot separates the tea, making it easy to pour out the tea water. Each time the teapot is used as a story line. Products can express hidden stories through form and usage of the user. Making a good cup of tea is like telling a good story that brings fun and a sense of humor.

3.3.2 Catalyst for product analysis and evaluation

Design is a process of constant adjustment. In the product design and analysis stage, the story board can be used. Break down the behavior of a virtual character in a particular context into a picture, and consider the technical, social, cultural, and economic factors associated with the product. Depending on the needs and objectives, the performance level of the choice is different. This information analyzes the product and evaluates whether the idea is relevant to the design theme, thus creating and improving the product. Product analysis and evaluation steps are repeated, drawing a vivid story board process helps comb design idea. Compare the design concept to the target product, assess the differences of the two, decide whether to reanalyze the definition of the product. The story method is used to analyze the products from multiple angles and design products that are more consistent with users' products.
3.3.3 A booster for product design expression

In addition to express product design with product sketches, renderings, models, etc, the story is also an effective way to express product design, which can help to improve the product. A good story theme is equal to half the success, it is the finishing point of the design. Philip stark is good at giving product names such as Miss Sissi and Mr Bliss. Users and designers create a special relationship through the name of the product, and the story behind the product is so obvious. Adopt the story method, create fictional characters and scenes with names and specific personalities, to visualize and personalize the many factors in the design process. Then the product will be more likely to resonate with users. In addition, Phillip stark had a show in Shanghai called I love you, the product is arranged in a scene, and the product is visualized, experiential and emotional with the story method. In the first scene (fig. 3), the red chair symbolizes the meeting of the main characters, and the chair suggests the dialogue between the two. In the second scene (fig. 4), there is an elegant cup, and a small red meteor seems to fall from the sky, falling into the cup, indicating that love is coming. The third scene (fig. 5) has a very different effect from the projection of the bathtub. Is the metaphor love going into the grave or the sweet ending? The story method focuses on the theme and structure, and applies to the product design in the specific culture and situation. By observing and experiencing life, create a situation that simulates the use of products, and tells the story of the user as the core.

Figure 3. Scene 1. Figure 4. Scene 2. Figure 5. Scene 3.

4. Summary

Story method has a wide application in the product design course teaching, arouses the students' love for professional product design, attaches great importance to improve the students' comprehensive ability, and provides effective product design thinking methods. The students draw inspiration from the story method, dig out the potential demand, fully consider the characteristics of consumers, the relationship between product and situation, the user's behavior pattern, etc. Use the story test to determine whether the conception meets the needs of the user. Design the product that the person feels the heartthrob, making design process full of poetic.

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