

# Exploring the Application of Micro-lessons in Graphic Design Teaching in Higher Vocational Education

Xiaofei Yu\*

Jiangsu Vocational Institute of Commerce, Nanjing Jiangsu 210000, China

\*Corresponding author: Xiaofei Yu, sjmzb@163.com

**Copyright:** © 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is cited.

## Abstract:

In the Internet era, micro-courses have injected vitality into the teaching of graphic design in higher vocational colleges. It can not only explain the operation process of various graphic design software dynamically, but also introduce excellent design cases, stimulate students' design inspiration, and help improve the teaching quality of graphic design. Graphic design teachers in higher vocational colleges should broaden the teaching channels of micro-class and link up the links before, during and after class; Use micro-class to create interesting situations to promote the connection between post skills and teaching content; Meticulously record graphic design software operation videos to explain the steps of drawing revision and design in detail, to improve students' graphic design ability; Micro-classes link theory and practice classes to build an integrated teaching model of science and practice; The school and enterprise jointly develop teaching micro-courses, build digital teaching resource database, further enrich teaching resources, and improve the teaching quality of graphic design micro-courses in higher vocational colleges.

## Keywords:

Graphic design in higher vocational colleges  
Micro class  
Design principles  
Current situation and countermeasures

**Online publication:** February 7, 2025

## 1. Introduction

Micro-class length is usually 5–10 minutes, the content is refined, the language is concise and comprehensive, and the key and difficult points of teaching are explained dynamically. It can integrate text, pictures, mind maps, video, etc., which is conducive to students' independent learning combined with video, further improve their independent learning ability, and help teachers

optimize the introduction of classroom links and create a diversified teaching situation. To better link up the teaching inside and outside the classroom to improve the quality of teaching. Vocational graphic design teachers should actively learn the production of micro-lessons, select micro-lesson materials according to the teaching content, integrate excellent graphic design cases into the teaching, expand the teaching content, stimulate students'

design inspiration, and encourage them to try diversified graphic design styles. They can also use micro-lessons to record Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator and other software operation videos to facilitate students to learn software operation according to micro-lessons, further improve their practical operation ability, and lay a good foundation for their future employment.

## **2. Micro-course design principles for graphic design courses in higher vocational colleges**

### **2.1. Student-centered principle**

Students are the users of micro-lessons, and their learning effect directly reflects the production level and use value of micro-lessons. Therefore, graphic design teachers in vocational colleges should always adhere to the student-centered principle in the process of making micro lessons<sup>[1]</sup>. On the one hand, they should collect materials for micro lessons according to the recent teaching content and students' graphic design basis, and try to select some works that meet the aesthetics of post-00 college students, such as national style print advertising, cultural and creative supplies and packaging design to stimulate their interest in learning. On the other hand, teachers should use concise language and clear mind maps and other materials in the design of micro-lessons to catch students' eyes and deepen their memory of graphic design knowledge points<sup>[2]</sup>.

### **2.2. The principle of docking positions**

Vocational graphic design teachers should adhere to the employment-oriented approach, integrate excellent graphic advertisements, posters, illustrations, UI design, packaging design and other works of enterprises into the micro-class, further promote the connection between job skills and graphic design teaching, and integrate professional quality education into the micro-class teaching, so that students can understand the new technology and new concept of the graphic design industry in advance to further enhance their post competency. At the same time, teachers can jointly record micro-lessons focusing on the skills of graphic designers, demonstrate the operation process of various graphic design software in detail, and integrate typical

work cases into micro-lessons. Real working situations can stimulate students' enthusiasm for independent learning and further improve their professional ability<sup>[3]</sup>.

### **2.3. The principle of combining technology and artistry**

The micro-course design of higher vocational graphic design courses should follow the principle of micro-course of higher vocational graphic design courses. Technical means that teachers should have solid short video production ability and professional knowledge of graphic design, making exquisite micro-lessons according to the teaching content, integrating high-quality graphic design education resources, enriching the content of micro-lessons, and meeting the personalized learning needs of students. This can avoid misleading students by micro-class. Artistry refers to the fact that teachers should pay attention to vividness and interest in the production of micro-lessons, the pictures should be simple, beautiful, and generous, can stimulate students' emotional resonance, optimize the design of color, filter, composition, and layout, etc., bring students a strong visual impact and visual enjoyment, to deepen students' memory of the content of micro-lessons and further improve their graphic design ability.

### **2.4. The principle of integration of science and practice**

Graphic design is both theoretical and practical. In micro-course design, teachers should base on this specialty feature, adhere to the principle of integration of science and practice, break the boundaries between courses and teaching materials inside and outside class, re-integrate course resources, integrate theory with practice courses, and enable students to master marketing, color science, hand-painting and design software operation skills in practice to further enhance their practical ability. At the same time, teachers should integrate enterprise cases into micro-class design, analyze the characteristics of excellent advertising, UI design and packaging design, and use graphic design software to restore the design steps, integrate theory and practical knowledge, help students understand complex and abstract graphic design knowledge, to improve their graphic design ability<sup>[4]</sup>.

### **3. Analysis of the current situation of graphic design teaching in higher vocational colleges in the new era**

#### **3.1. The connection between theory and practice courses is not close**

Graphic design major not only requires students to master marketing, art design and other theoretical knowledge, but also requires them to master all kinds of design software operation skills, the practical skills of students are relatively high requirements, but at present, the teaching theory and practice of graphic design major in higher vocational colleges are derailed, affecting the teaching quality of professional courses<sup>[5]</sup>. In graphic design teaching, teachers habitually explain theoretical knowledge first and then arrange practical training for students, ignoring the construction of an integrated teaching mode of theory and practice. Theory and practice teaching are derailed, which is not conducive to the cultivation of students' practical ability and affects the teaching quality of graphic design.

#### **3.2. The level of information teaching needs to be improved**

With the rapid development of Internet technology, new technologies such as micro-class, blended teaching and big data have become a hot topic in the reform of information-based teaching in higher vocational colleges. However, graphic design teachers have uneven ability in information-based teaching, which affects the teaching quality of graphic design. Some teachers are used to using PPT to explain professional knowledge such as packaging design, poster design and web design, or downloading teaching micro-lessons on the Internet, ignoring the independent production of micro-lessons and carrying out online and offline mixed teaching. The connection between online and offline teaching is not smooth. Some teachers neglect to use micro-lessons to explain the operation process of graphic design software<sup>[6]</sup>. Due to the different functions and operation steps of each software, it is difficult for simple demonstration teaching to explain the software functions in depth, and it is difficult to guide students to practice the operation of graphic software after class.

#### **3.3. Single teaching mode of graphic design software**

Graphic design teaching in higher vocational colleges cannot be separated from various kinds of software, such as Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator and AutoCAD, and software operation is an important part of the practical teaching of graphic design. However, the current teaching method of graphic design software is simple and unattractive, and it is difficult to stimulate students' interest in learning<sup>[7]</sup>. Teachers are more accustomed to demonstrating the operation process of various graphic design software, explaining it to students while operating it, and then assigning software operation assignments. They take the software design works submitted by students as the teaching evaluation criteria, ignoring the use of graphic design software to restore excellent posters, product packaging and other design works, and integrating them into an excellent case of enterprises. This is not conducive to cultivating students' ability to operate graphic design software.

#### **3.4. The effect of school-enterprise cooperation in educating students is not good**

The integration of production and education and the cooperation between schools and enterprises in vocational graphic design are not effective, which is mainly reflected in the following aspects:

(1) The school neglects to hire corporate graphic designers and artists to participate in campus teaching, which affects the connection between graphic design post skills and professional course teaching.

(2) Enterprises do not participate in the development of graphic design courses, personnel training and teaching evaluation, which leads to some teaching content lagging behind the needs of graphic design talents of enterprises, resulting in students' difficulty in meeting the needs of talents of enterprises and affecting students' employment<sup>[8]</sup>.

### **4. The application strategy of micro-courses in the teaching of graphic design in higher vocational colleges**

#### **4.1. Elaborately make teaching micro-lessons and broaden the application channels of micro-**

## lessons

Vocational graphic design teachers should change their teaching concepts, actively learn the skills of making micro-lessons, and use micro-lessons to link up the three major links before, during and after class to form a closed loop of teaching, which can not only guide students to study independently but also understand students' learning progress in time to improve the quality of teaching<sup>[9]</sup>. First of all, teachers should make pre-class micro-lessons according to the teaching content, extract the key and difficult knowledge points in the textbook, and make micro-lessons according to the key and difficult knowledge points. They should combine text, mind maps and pictures to dynamically explain the knowledge of web design, UI design, packaging design, and poster design, flexibly adjust the content of micro-lessons, and assign pre-class homework in micro-lessons. Guide the students to preview before class. Students can collect relevant materials according to the knowledge points of the pre-class textbook, according to the pre-class homework, and use the Internet to search relevant materials to further improve the efficiency of the pre-class.

Secondly, teachers can elaborate micro-lessons for classroom teaching, introduce excellent design works, explain graphic design knowledge combined with the works, guide students to explore according to the content of micro-lessons, and further stimulate their enthusiasm for independent learning. Students can discuss micro-lesson cases, analyze case design concepts, design software used, design highlights, etc., and further master graphic design skills. In addition, teachers can also make micro-lessons for review, record micro-lessons for important and difficult points and graphic design cases, and explain the design steps, so that students can review independently after class according to micro-lessons, and further improve their learning ability of professional courses<sup>[10]</sup>.

### 4.2. Micro-lessons create interesting situations to stimulate students' interest in learning

Graphic design teachers in vocational colleges can use micro-lessons to introduce new lessons, create diversified and immersive teaching situations, further stimulate students' interest in exploring graphic design knowledge

and guide them to explore it<sup>[11]</sup>. For example, in poster design teaching, teachers can collect popular movie posters and Wuhe Kirin posters, and make these posters into micro-lessons to create a teaching atmosphere with a more visual impact effect, to stimulate students' enthusiasm for independent learning. Micro-class can be integrated into the "Wandering Earth 2," "Chang'an Thirty Thousand Miles" movie posters, as well as the "National Memorial," "The Memory of Yuan Longping" and "Return Boat" posters created by Wuhe Qilin, guide students to analyze these poster design highlights, encourage them to appreciate excellent works, and further improve their aesthetic ability and innovation ability. Some students think that "Wandering Earth" is a representative of Chinese science fiction movies, the movie poster to "human choice" as the theme, the sunset under the fighter jets, artillery shells flying, and the main actors looking into the distance. Some students analyzed the National Memorial created by the illustrator Wu He Kirin. The overall color is black and gray. The background of the picture is heavy black clouds and smoke of gunpowder. A monument in the shape of a cross stands straight in the center of the picture. Condolence for the victims of the Nanjing Massacre and a call for people not to forget history and for us to strengthen ourselves. Micro classes can create interesting teaching situations, guide students to explore on their own and deepen their understanding of graphic design expertise<sup>[12]</sup>.

### 4.3. Micro-lessons explain the software operation steps to improve students' practical ability

Vocational graphic design teachers should integrate micro-lessons into the teaching of various design software, record different design software operation tutorials, dynamically explain software steps, and add text descriptions to help students understand software functions and operation steps as soon as possible to improve their graphic design software operation ability<sup>[13]</sup>. For example, when teachers explain the operation of Photoshop software, they can record micro-lessons, explain in detail the retouching skills such as layer superposition and filter, and comprehensively explain the functions and operation processes of the software, so

that students can master the retouching skills as soon as possible and lay a good foundation for graphic design.

First, the micro-lesson can explain the Photoshop menu bar, toolbar, option bar, panel and canvas area, demonstrating the layer editing process, in the layer panel of Photoshop, click the “New layer” button to create a new layer. You can make edits on the new layer, such as drawing, smudging, adding text, etc. You can also change the effect of the layer by adjusting its opacity, blending mode, fill mode and other properties.

Second, teachers can send the tutorial video to students, so that they can practice Photoshop software operation according to micro-lessons after class, master the skills of layer editing, text editing, filter use, image color adjustment and curve adjustment, etc., which lays a good foundation for the subsequent teaching of poster design, illustration design and packaging design. Micro-lessons can help students master the operation skills of graphic design software so that they can review and practice the software operation independently after class to improve their practical operation ability and graphic design ability<sup>[14]</sup>.

#### **4.4. Integrate design cases into micro-classes to carry out integrated teaching of science and practice**

First of all, graphic design teachers in higher vocational colleges should actively collect enterprise design cases and integrate these cases into their teaching with micro-lessons to promote the connection between graphic design post skills and professional teaching, promote the connection between theory and practice teaching, and accelerate the construction of an integrated teaching mode of graphic design major<sup>[15]</sup>. For example, teachers can collect cases of enterprise web design, UI design, cultural and creative design and illustration design, and integrate these works into micro-lessons, and use micro-lessons to display these excellent works, clarify the employment direction of graphic design majors, and further stimulate students’ enthusiasm for independent learning.

Secondly, teachers can use enterprise cases to carry out project-based teaching, encourage students to form groups freely, let them restore enterprise design cases, and cultivate their craftsman spirit. Each group

can select an excellent case of an enterprise, analyze the design concept and design materials of the case within the group, formulate a project-based learning plan, clarify the division of labor of each group member, and work together to complete the graphic design figure. For example, some groups analyzed the design drawings of cultural and creative products of the Forbidden City, tried to draw folding fans and bookmarks with patterns of Kangxi and Qianlong, drawing with Photoshop software, and designed Q-version of emojis, and submitted the works of the group. Teachers can organize the display of project results, encourage each group to elaborate on design concepts and share design drawings, guide each group to evaluate each other, enliven the classroom atmosphere, and further improve students’ innovation ability and graphic design abilities.

#### **4.5. Promote the strategy of integrating production and teaching, and establish a micro-class teaching resource bank**

Higher vocational colleges should comprehensively promote the integration of production and education, school-enterprise cooperation, and invite enterprises to participate in the construction of micro-class teaching resources. On the one hand, they can collect enterprise graphic design cases and make micro-class works of graphic design cases to enrich teaching content. On the other hand, they can go deep into the enterprise to shoot practical teaching videos, and the enterprise graphic designer, illustrator, and artist will serve as the “protagonist” of the micro-course, integrating different graphic design post skills into the teaching, and the school and enterprise can jointly build the micro-course teaching resource library to provide high-quality micro-lessons for teachers and students. For example, graphic design teachers can actively cooperate with enterprise graphic designers, collect their excellent design works, and make their design works into micro-lessons, and use them as teaching cases to provide high-quality teaching materials for subsequent project-based teaching and case teaching. In addition, teachers can go deep into the enterprise to shoot practical teaching videos, shoot graphic designers, artists and illustrators work videos, explaining the graphic design software operation process through the lens, let them share the software’s quick

operation skills for students, and further improve the quality of practical teaching. The micro-class teaching resource library jointly built by schools and enterprises can facilitate enterprises to integrate job skills into the graphic design teaching of higher vocational colleges, meet their talent needs, thus stimulating their enthusiasm to participate in school-enterprise cooperation, facilitating students to understand the employment direction in advance and master job skills to improve their employment competitiveness.

## 5. Conclusion

In short, graphic design teachers in higher vocational colleges should make rational use of micro-lessons, independently make micro-lessons, use them to link

up the teaching before, during and after class, guide students to study independently scientifically, integrate high-quality Internet design cases into micro-lessons, let students learn about new concepts and technologies in the field of graphic design on time, and improve their innovation and design ability. At the same time, teachers can use micro-lessons to explain the operation of graphic design software, record all kinds of software tutorial videos, and share the videos with students, so that students can refer to the videos for practice, use micro-lessons to explain excellent design cases of enterprises, promote the connection between graphic design post skills and professional courses teaching, and comprehensively improve the teaching quality of graphic design in vocational colleges.

### Funding

China Campus Health Action Education Teaching and Research Results Project, “Design and Application of Micro-lessons in Graphic Design Courses in Higher Vocational Colleges” (Project No.: EDU0550)

### Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

## Reference

- [1] Lv J, 2021, The Application of Micro-course in Graphic Design Teaching in Higher Vocational Colleges. *Modern Communication*, 2021(18): 162–164.
- [2] Xiong Y, 2021, Research on the Design and Application of Micro-Lessons in Graphic Design Courses in Higher Vocational Colleges. *Science and Technology Innovation*, 2021(15): 166–167.
- [3] Yang Y, 2021, Research on Higher Vocational Education Teaching Based on Information Technology and Curriculum Integration – A Case Study of Graphic Design Teaching. *China New Communications*, 23(15): 171–172.
- [4] Pan J, 2020, Practice and Exploration of Micro-project Teaching Method in the Construction of Cross-specialty Online Course of Graphic Design Software. *Modern Vocational Education*, 2020(4): 216–217.
- [5] He Q, 2024, Application Measures of Project-based Teaching Method in Graphic Design Teaching. *Journal of Hubei Open Vocational College*, 37(17): 187–188 + 191.
- [6] Li H, 2024, Research on the Implementation of Project Teaching in the Teaching of “Graphic Advertising Design.” *Silk Screen Printing*, 2024(10): 121–123.
- [7] Xia G, 2024, Exploration on the Integration Path of Excellent Chinese Traditional Culture and New Form Teaching Materials for Higher Vocational Education – Taking the Development of Chinese Version of CorelDRAW2020 Graphic Design Case Course as an Example. *Research on Fine Arts Education*, 2024(8): 160–162.
- [8] Tang L, 2024, Study on Evaluation and Quality Management of Graphic Design Courses in Higher Vocational Colleges.

Chengcai, 2024(1): 136–137.

- [9] Shen H, Guo Q, 2023, To Graphic Design Course Ideological Construction Practice. *Computer Knowledge and Technology*, 12(28): 113–115.
- [10] Du Y, 2023, Ideological and Political Teaching Design and Practice of Art Design Major Course in Higher Vocational Colleges from the Perspective of Traditional Culture – A Case Study of Graphic Design Course. *Science and Technology*, 2023(26): 39–42.
- [11] Zhan Y, 2024, Research on the Application of Micro-lesson in Higher Vocational Teaching Reform. *Knowledge Library*, 40(20): 73–76.
- [12] Cao L, 2019, Research on Teaching Model Innovation in Higher Vocational Education Under the Background of “Internet +.” *Journal of Huainan Vocational and Technical College*, 24(5): 64–66.
- [13] Wang Y, Chen Y, 2024, The Construction of Digital Literacy Micro-course System in Higher Vocational Education. *Journal of Guangxi Open University*, 35(5): 49–53.
- [14] Dong Y, Liu C, Cao Z, et al., 2024, Research on Teaching Reform of Information Technology Course in Higher Vocational Colleges in Digital Age. *China Management Information*, 27(17): 196–199.
- [15] Lu Z, 2024, Exploration and Practice of Mixed Teaching Mode of Ideological and Political Courses in Higher Vocational Colleges. *Industry and Science and Technology Forum*, 23(13): 220–222.

**Publisher’s note**

*Whoice Publishing remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.*