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Field Research-Driven Teaching Practice in Publishing Market Analysis —— A Case Study of the "Old Books, New Knowledge" at 2025 Beijing Book Fair

Fang Wu*. Xin Li
University of Shanghai for Science and Technology, Shanghai 200093, China
Email: wufang@usst.edu.cn

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Abstract

This paper summarizes the teaching practice of using field research to drive publishing market analysis in a graduate course in publishing. It explores how book fair research can train graduate students' problem awareness, interviewing skills, data coding ability, and market analysis ability. Adopting teaching action research, this study combines participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, photographic documentation, official data verification, and evaluation of student presentations. Using the 2025 Beijing Chaoyang Book Fair and Ditan Book Fair as teaching cases, graduate students were organized into groups to complete spatial observation, consumer interviews, vendor interviews, pricing records, and marketing channel analysis. The teaching practice produced four reusable outputs: a book fair spatial and operational observation form, interview guides and interview summaries, an analysis table of second-hand book condition grading and pricing, and a matrix of cultural derivation and marketing channel extension. Through comparative analysis, students were able to transform market phenomena such as second-hand book pricing, cultural and creative product derivation, and onlineoffline integration into analytical propositions. Field research can effectively connect publishing market theory with real business scenarios and enhance graduate students' market sensitivity, evidence awareness, and ability to transform findings into outputs. Future teaching should increase sample size, extend observation periods, introduce double coding, and strengthen university-enterprise collaboration to improve the reliability and application value of teaching research.

Keywords

Field Research; Publishing Market; Teaching Practice; Second-hand Book Fair

1. Teaching Background and Instructional Design

1.1. Teaching Background and Course Positioning

Publishing market analysis is an important component of graduate education in publishing. It involves theoretical knowledge of market structure, consumer behavior, pricing mechanisms, and marketing channels, and also requires students to enter real publishing scenarios and understand the interactions among vendors, readers, managers, and the spatial environment. Traditional classroom teaching tends to simplify market analysis into concept clarification and case discussion. Although students can repeat terms such as "channel," "scene," and "consumer segmentation," they often find it difficult to judge which information in a real market is worth recording, how to design interview questions, and how to extract an analytical framework from scattered materials. For this reason, this course introduced field research into teaching, using the Beijing Chaoyang Book Fair and Ditan Book Fair as practical sites and organizing graduate students to conduct market research around the "Old Books, New Knowledge" special zones. The aim was to transform abstract market theory into observable, interviewable, and analyzable teaching tasks.

The choice of book fairs as a teaching site was based on three considerations. First, book fairs are authentic and complex. The Chaoyang Book Fair adopted a layout of "central main exhibition + sunken plaza extension," with ten major functional exhibition areas, bringing together nearly 200 publishing and distribution institutions, cultural and creative brands, and cultural tourism units from 19 provinces and cities across the country[1]. The Ditan Book Fair, themed "I and Ditan," had a total exhibition area of 20,000 square meters, 13 exhibition areas, and more than 350 publishing, distribution, and cultural tourism units. The two book fairs were large in scale, rich in exhibition areas, and diverse in visitor groups, providing abundant observation objects for teaching. Second, book fairs are accessible. As open public cultural events, they allow students to conduct observation and interviews while respecting order and the willingness of respondents. Third, book fairs have a teaching focus. The "Old Books, New Knowledge" special zones combined ancient book exhibitions, second-hand book sales, interactive experiences, and digital interpretation, involving not only pricing and condition but also cultural derivation and channel extension, making them suitable as a micro-level entry point for publishing market analysis.

The teaching target was master's students in publishing. The teaching cycle included two class hours of theoretical lectures, two class hours of research preparation, two days of on-site research, two weeks of data organization and coding, and two class hours of output presentations. The teaching adopted task-driven, group collaboration, and output-oriented methods. Students were divided into a spatial observation group, a consumer interview group, a vendor interview group, and a data organization group. Each group was required to submit observation notes, interview summaries, data tables, and case analysis reports after the research. The teacher was responsible for problem guidance, tool review, on-site coordination,

and output evaluation throughout the process, avoiding turning field research into a mere sightseeing visit.

1.2. Teaching Objectives and Competency Matrix

The goal of this teaching practice was not simply to let students "visit a book fair," but to achieve training at three levels: knowledge, ability, and values. At the knowledge level, students were required to understand concepts such as spatial organization, price stratification, consumer segmentation, cultural derivation, and channel synergy in the publishing market. At the ability level, students were required to master observation recording, interview guide design, interview implementation, data coding, comparative analysis, and output presentation. At the values level, students were required to respect respondents, observe research ethics, understand the real situation of second-hand book operators, and develop empathy for the diverse actors in the publishing market.

To facilitate teaching evaluation, the teaching objectives were broken down into five competencies: problem decomposition, on-site observation, interview communication, data analysis, and output transformation. Problem decomposition required students to transform "how does a second-hand book fair operate" into observable indicators. On-site observation required students to record booth area, aisle width, display methods, visitor flow periods, and consumer behavior. Interview communication required students to design semi-structured guides and to follow up and clarify during interviews. Data analysis required students to code observation notes and interview summaries and form themes. Output transformation required students to present analytical conclusions through tables, matrices, and reports. These competencies ran through the entire teaching process and were assessed through both process evaluation and output evaluation.

1.3. Teaching Questions and Research Tasks

The teaching practice was organized around three teaching questions. First, how can publishing market theory be transformed into field observation indicators? Second, how can semi-structured interviews be used to obtain the real experiences of vendors and consumers? Third, how can an analytical framework be extracted from field materials and turned into applicable teaching cases? Around these three questions, the course designed four research tasks: first, overall spatial and operational observation of the book fair, recording exhibition area layout, booth size, aisle width, exhibited varieties, pricing strategies, and supporting services; second, in-depth observation of the "Old Books, New Knowledge" special zones, recording sub-area division, ancient book exhibitions, second-hand book classification, pricing rules, and interactive activities; third, interviews with vendors and consumers to understand sources of supply, costs, pricing, changes in customer groups, and consumer preferences; fourth, data organization and thematic analysis to produce

comparison tables, pricing tables, and marketing channel matrices.

The correspondence between research tasks and teaching objectives is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Teaching Practice Process and Task Arrangement of Field Research

Teaching stage	Main tasks	Student activities	Teacher guidance	Output forms
Theoretical preparation	Lectures on publishing market and marketing channel theory	Read literature and propose hypotheses	Explain concepts and provide cases	Question list
Research preparation	Problem decomposition and tool design	Design observation forms and interview guides in groups	Review guides and emphasize ethics	Observation forms, interview guides
On-site research	Spatial observation, interviews, photographic records	Record data, conduct intercept interviews, photograph scenes	On-site coordination and safety reminders	Observation notes, interview summaries
Data organization	Coding, classification, cross-verification	Transcribe summaries and extract themes	Guide coding and check evidence	Coding sheets, theme lists
Analysis and application	Comparative analysis and matrix construction	Produce tables and write reports	Guide argumentation and correct deviations	Analysis reports, presentation PPT
Summary and evaluation	Classroom presentations and teaching reflection	Present outputs and conduct peer review	Comment and summarize	Teaching case library

Table 1 shows that teaching practice is not a single on-site activity but a complete chain consisting of theoretical preparation, tool design, on-site implementation, data organization, analysis and application, and summary and evaluation. Each stage has clear tasks and outputs, facilitating process evaluation by the teacher and allowing students to form an accumulative learning portfolio.

1.4. Teaching Organization and Implementation Process

The teaching organization combined teacher guidance, group collaboration, individual reflection. Before the research, the teacher used two class hours to explain the background of the book fairs, the analytical framework of the publishing market, and research ethics. Students were required to read public reports on the Chaoyang and Ditan book fairs and understand their scale, themes, and exhibition areas. Subsequently, students designed observation forms and interview guides in groups. The teacher reviewed each group's work, focusing on whether the questions were specific, whether leading questions were avoided, and whether respondents' privacy was respected. During the research, each group entered the book fair according to the planned route. The spatial observation group recorded exhibition area layout, booth size, aisle width, peak visitor periods, and rest facilities. The consumer interview group conducted intercept interviews near the "Old Books, New Knowledge" special zones. The vendor interview group conducted semi-structured interviews with vendors of different operating years and categories. The photographic documentation group photographed entrances, guide maps, exhibition areas, display cases, and activity scenes as materials for classroom analysis.

After the research, students spent two weeks organizing materials. The first step was to transcribe interview summaries, retaining respondents' original words and key data. The second step was to establish a coding table, classifying materials into themes such as "spatial layout," "sources and costs," "pricing strategies," "consumer behavior," "cultural derivation," and "channel suggestions." The third step was cross-verification, comparing on-site observation, interview content, and public reports. The fourth step was to produce analysis tables and reports. Finally, two class hours were used for classroom presentations. Each group presented observation findings, interview evidence, and analytical conclusions. The teacher evaluated them from four dimensions: problem awareness, sufficiency of evidence, depth of analysis, and standardization of expression. Through this process, students experienced complete research training from "seeing phenomena" to "raising questions," from "interviewing" to "coding," and from "materials" to "conclusions."

2. Teaching Practice Process

2.1. Research Preparation: Problem Decomposition and Tool Design

The core of the research preparation stage was to train students to decompose abstract questions into observable and interviewable indicators. The teacher first posed the overall question: "How does a second-hand book fair realize the transformation of cultural value into market value ?" Students were then guided to decompose it into four sub-questions: How is the book fair space organized? How are second-hand books priced? Why do consumers buy second-hand books offline? What operational difficulties do vendors face? Around these sub-questions, students designed observation forms and interview guides in groups.

The observation forms included an overall book fair observation form and an "Old Books, New Knowledge" special zone observation form. The overall observation form recorded the number of exhibition areas, booth size, aisle width, exhibited varieties, price ranges, visitor flow periods, rest seats, and drinking water points. The special zone observation form recorded sub-area division, number of display cases, second-hand book classification, exhibit descriptions, interactive activities, digital equipment, lighting, and flooring details. The interview guides were divided into a vendor version and a consumer version. The vendor version covered operating years, supply channels, category structure, pricing basis, booth costs, changes in visitor flow, and suggestions. The consumer version covered information channels, number of participations, categories purchased, factors valued, spending amount, length of stay, onlineoffline differences, and suggestions.

During tool design, the teacher focused on correcting two types of problems. The first was overly broad questions, such as "What do you think of the second-hand book market?" Students were required to change them into answerable specific questions, such as "What categories of second-hand books do you mainly handle? What proportion does each supply channel account for?" The second was leading

questions, such as “Don’t you think too many cultural and creative products have affected second-hand books?” Students were required to change them into neutral expressions, such as “How do you view the proportion of cultural and creative products to second-hand book displays?” Through repeated revisions, students gradually understood that an interview guide is not a questionnaire but a dialogue framework that requires follow-up and clarification on site.

2.2. On-Site Observation: Space, Visitor Flow, and Operational Records

On-site observation was the foundational stage of teaching practice. The Chaoyang Book Fair research was conducted on May 12, 2025, and the Ditan Book Fair research on September 1516, 2025. Students entered the book fairs in groups, first confirming the locations of exhibition areas against the guide map, and then conducting systematic observation along the main and secondary aisles. At the Chaoyang Book Fair, individual booths were 24 square meters, the main aisle was 4 meters wide, and secondary aisles were 2.5 meters wide, allowing smooth passage without congestion. The “Old Books, New Knowledge” special zone was located east of the second-hand book section, covering about 200 square meters, adjacent to the parentchild reading area and the Beijing Tianjin Hebei cultural tourism area. Its signage used a retro font combined with modern layout, making it highly recognizable. At the Ditan Book Fair, individual booths were mostly 23 square meters, with about 1.5 meters between booths. The core exhibition area was concentrated along the central axis of the park. The “Old Books, New Knowledge” special zone was located at the core of the second-hand book section, adjacent to the Beijing Tianjin Hebei Shandong Shanxi second-hand book joint exhibition and sales area.

Students observed that the spatial organization of both book fairs reflected the idea of “functional zoning+circulation guidance,” but the atmosphere differed. The Chaoyang Book Fair emphasized the hierarchical diffusion of the main exhibition venue and the sunken plaza. The science and technology reading area was equipped with VR reading experience devices, and the animation and e-sports area introduced game IP peripheral sales, making the overall atmosphere livelier. The Ditan Book Fair relied on the park environment to form a garden-style circulation. The lecture and sharing area and the ancient book exhibition area were relatively quiet, and the overall atmosphere was more oriented toward cultural exchange. In their observation notes, students wrote: “For the same second-hand book zone, the Chaoyang Book Fair feels more like a ‘cultural market,’ while the Ditan Book Fair feels more like a ‘cultural exhibition gallery.’” This comparative observation provided material for subsequent analysis.

In terms of visitor flow observation, students recorded that the peak period at the Chaoyang Book Fair was concentrated between 10:30 and 16:00. Young consumers preferred the “Old Books, New Knowledge” special zone and the animation and

e-sports area, mostly visiting in couples or with friends, and were keen to photograph their book-hunting results and share them on Douyin and Xiaohongshu. Middle-aged and older groups focused on the second-hand book area, emphasizing book condition and content practicality. Parentchild groups concentrated in the parentchild reading area, where picture-book sharing and stamp-collection activities had high participation. At the Ditan Book Fair, young consumers accounted for about 60%, middle-aged and older groups about 30%, and parentchild groups about 10%. Young consumers stayed for an average of about 90 minutes. Through time-segment counting and on-site observation, students initially formed a "customer group—time period—exhibition area" correspondence and proposed in classroom discussion the judgment that "book fair consumption is shifting from purposeful book buying to experiential browsing."

2.3. Semi-Structured Interviews: Guide Design and Interview Skills

Semi-structured interviews were a key stage of teaching practice and the part students found most challenging. Before the research, the teacher emphasized interview ethics: students must explain their identity and purpose, obtain consent, avoid forceful follow-up questions, avoid photographing respondents' faces, and avoid disclosing personal information. During interviews, students adopted a strategy of "observe first, approach second, ask third." They first observed whether the respondent was focused on selecting books, then chose an appropriate time to explain their purpose, avoiding interruption of transactions.

At the Chaoyang Book Fair, the consumer interview group interviewed C-R1, a 60-year-old retired library administrator. She had been visiting book fairs for 10 years and preferred local gazetteers, old editions of literary classics, and discarded library holdings. When selecting books, she valued condition, publication information, and the completeness of the copyright page. Her budget for each visit was about 300 yuan, and she stayed for an average of 5 hours. She believed that the book fair environment was now more standardized and that the "Old Books, New Knowledge" special zone was clearly classified and clean. However, genuine "old editions" were becoming fewer, and too many cultural and creative products might crowd out space for second-hand book displays. She hoped the book fair would regularly organize "second-hand book exchange meetings" and add reading corners with desk lamps. Through follow-up questions, students learned that she occasionally used Kongfuzi Old Book Network but almost never placed orders, because online platforms only show pictures and she could not judge paper brittleness or binding firmness. Offline book hunting also allowed her to chat with vendors about book history and collection stories.

The vendor interview group interviewed T-R1, a second-hand book vendor at the Chaoyang Book Fair. She had been in the second-hand book business for 8 years and had participated in the Beijing Book Fair for 5 consecutive years. Her sources of

supply included university library discards (30%), community second-hand book recycling (25%), auction purchases (20%), wholesale from Kongfuzi Old Book Network (15%), and screening at waste recycling stations (10%). Her booth focused on local gazetteers (35%), old editions of literary classics (30%), old university textbooks (25%), and niche out-of-print books (10%). The total cost of transportation, labor, and book maintenance for this book fair was about 4,000 yuan. Daily turnover was 1,1001,300 yuan, an increase of 15% over the previous year. She believed the biggest difficulty was that high-quality scarce second-hand book sources were becoming fewer and fewer, and procurement costs were rising by 8%12% annually. Younger vendors were better at online promotion, which posed a considerable challenge to traditional vendors. She suggested that the book fair provide promotional support, extend opening hours, and standardize second-hand book pricing.

At the Ditan Book Fair, the consumer interview group interviewed C-D1, a 65-year-old retired worker. He had persisted in book hunting for 5 years and preferred Republican-era second-hand books and literary and historical books from the 1950s. When selecting books, he valued condition and edition scarcity most and was willing to pay a high price for scarce items. He believed that the Ditan Book Fair was larger in scale and more standardized in zoning, but the "gold content" of second-hand books had declined, with fewer genuine rare books and unique copies. The newly added "Old Books, New Knowledge" special zone was novel; in the past, hunting for second-hand books was like "finding a needle in a haystack," but now the thematic area made it more convenient. Through these interviews, students realized that the second-hand book market is not a simple buyerseller relationship but a market supported jointly by edition knowledge, condition judgment, cultural exchange, and trust relationships.

2.4. Data Organization and Coding: From Field Notes to Analytical Framework

After the research, students entered the stage of data organization and coding. The teacher required each group to enter observation notes and interview summaries into a unified template and conduct preliminary coding under five themes: "space," "operations," "consumption," "culture," and "suggestions." For example, "main aisle 4 meters wide," "10 display cases arranged in a rectangular shape," and "light gray non-slip carpet laid on the floor" were classified under space. "Transportation, labor, and maintenance costs about 4,000 yuan," "daily turnover 1,1001,300 yuan," and "procurement costs rising 8%12% annually" were classified under operations. "Budget of 300 yuan per visit," "average stay of 5 hours," and "95% use mobile payment" were classified under consumption. "Old books exchanged for cultural and creative products," "stamp collection for redemption," and "scanning codes to listen to explanations" were classified under culture. "Extend opening hours," "standardize

pricing," and "add reading corners" were classified under suggestions.

During coding, students found two types of problems. First, there were inconsistencies between observation records and interview content. For example, on-site observation suggested that young consumers accounted for about half, and vendors also mentioned an increase in young students, but the exact proportion was difficult to verify precisely. The teacher guided students to express it as "about half" and "mainly 2030 years old," avoiding over-precision. Second, some interview materials were biased toward personal experience and needed to be cross-verified with public data. Students compared public reports—such as the Chaoyang Book Fair receiving more than 800,000 visits in total[2][5] and the Ditan Book Fair receiving 550,000 visits in total[6][8]—with on-site observations.

After coding, students wrote analytical memos by theme. The space group compared the layout differences between the two book fairs, the operations group organized second-hand book pricing and condition grading, the consumption group analyzed the consumption preferences of different age groups, the culture group sorted out cultural and creative products and interactive activities, and the suggestions group summarized the demands of vendors and consumers. The teacher required each analytical conclusion to correspond to at least two pieces of evidence, avoiding "conclusion first." This training gradually helped students understand that market analysis is not a pile of materials but the use of evidence to support judgments.

2.5. Output Transformation: Reports, Charts, and Classroom Presentations

The output transformation stage required students to turn field materials into presentable and discussable teaching outputs. Each group submitted a research report, two analysis tables, and a presentation PPT. The analysis tables included a "Comparison of Basic Conditions of the Two Book Fairs" and an "Observation of Second-Hand Book Condition Grading and Pricing Strategies." Groups with sufficient data also produced a "Matrix of Cultural Derivation and Marketing Channel Extension." In classroom presentations, each group used 810 minutes to present core findings, while other groups asked questions and conducted peer review. The teacher evaluated from four dimensions: whether the problem was clear, whether the evidence was sufficient, whether the analysis was layered, and whether the suggestions were actionable.

During presentations, students put forward many valuable judgments. For example, one group pointed out that second-hand book pricing is not simple discounting but a stratified price system based on condition, edition scarcity, and use value. Another group pointed out that the core competitiveness of second-hand book fairs lies in offline "inspection" and cultural exchange, which online platforms cannot replace. Another group proposed that book fairs should build a closed loop of "online traffic generation—offline experience—community sedimentation," extending the life

cycle of book fairs through short videos, public accounts, second-hand book exchange groups, and vendor alliances. Although these judgments were not yet mature, they already demonstrated students' ability to extract market logic from field materials.

3. Analytical Application: Pedagogical Interpretation of Book Fair Research

3.1. Analysis of Book Fair Spatial Layout and Market Structure

In the analytical application stage, the teacher guided students to use comparative methods to interpret the spatial layout and market structure of the two book fairs. The Chaoyang Book Fair adopted a layout of "central main exhibition + sunken plaza extension." The central plaza housed the thematic publication exhibition area and the fine books of famous publishers sales area, while the sunken plaza concentrated the fine publishing sales area. Surrounding the main exhibition area were the second-hand book section, the "Old Books, New Knowledge" special zone, the BeijingTianjinHebei cultural tourism integration area, the animation and e-sports area, the parentchild reading area, the science and technology reading area, and the dining and leisure area. It brought together nearly 200 publishing and distribution institutions, cultural and creative brands, and cultural tourism units from 19 provinces and cities across the country [1]. The Ditan Book Fair, themed "I and Ditan," had a total exhibition area of 20,000 square meters and 13 exhibition areas in a surrounding layout, covering publication sales, cultural tourism integration, and interactive experiences, and bringing together more than 350 publishing, distribution, and cultural tourism units. A comparison of the basic conditions of the two book fairs is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Comparison of Basic Conditions of 2025 Beijing Chaoyang Book Fair and Ditan Book Fair

Comparison Dimension	Chaoyang Book Fair	Ditan Book Fair
Research Time	2025-05-01 2025-05-02	2025-09-15 2025-09-16
Theme	Scholarly Capital, Joyful Spring Reading	I and Ditan
Spatial Layout	Central main exhibition + sunken plaza extension, 10 major exhibition areas	Surrounding layout, 13 exhibition areas
Exhibition Scale	Nearly 200 institutions from 19 provinces and cities	**More than 350 publishing, distribution, and cultural tourism units**
Exhibited Varieties	**Nearly 600,000 publications and cultural products**	Nearly 500,000 publications and cultural products
Second-hand Book Zone	"Old Books, New Knowledge" about 200 square meters, second-hand bookstores from 12 provinces and cities, 100,000 varieties	"Old Books, New Knowledge" about 200 square meters, more than 100,000 second-hand books
Visitor Flow Data	More than 800,000 visits over 14 days [2][5]	550,000 visits in total; 180,000 in the first three days and 270,000 in six days [6][7][8]

Consumer Groups	1940 years about 50.0%; middle-aged and older about 35.0%; parentchild about 15.0%	1940 years about 60.0%; middle-aged and older about 30.0%; parentchild about 10.0%

Table 2 helped students identify two characteristics of the book fair market structure. First, book fairs have formed a combined structure of "new books for traffic generation—second-hand books for customer attraction—cultural and creative products for profit enhancement—activities for retention." New books were mainly in science and technology, literature, children's books, and business management. At the Chaoyang Book Fair, prices were mostly 75% of the original price, superimposed with 2 million yuan in official "book benefit coupons"[3]. At the Ditan Book Fair, new book prices were mostly about 80% of the original price, and some publishers offered "buy two get one free" and "set discounts." Cultural and creative products were priced mainly in the ranges of 15298 yuan and 20198 yuan, assuming the functions of profit supplementation and youthful expression. Second, the spatial organization of the book fairs reflected the hierarchical logic of "main exhibition venue—functional zones—supporting services." The second-hand book zones formed consumer clusters by adjacent parentchild, cultural tourism, and dining areas, indicating that spatial layout itself is a means of market segmentation and channel combination.

3.2. Analysis of Display and Pricing Mechanisms in the Second-Hand Book Zones

The "Old Books, New Knowledge" special zones were the focus of teaching analysis. At the Chaoyang Book Fair, the special zone was divided into an ancient book fine exhibition area, a second-hand book classified sales area, an interactive experience area, and a digital interpretation area. The ancient book fine exhibition area had 10 glass display cases arranged in a "回"-shaped layout, exhibiting 60 ancient books and facsimile editions, including Nongzheng Quanshu (Complete Treatise on Agriculture), Kaogong Ji (The Artificers' Record), and Xu Xiake Youji (The Travels of Xu Xiake). All were non-sale exhibits, each with a paper description card and QR code; scanning the code allowed visitors to listen to professional audio explanations. The second-hand book sales area classified books into "literary classics," "scientific and technological historical materials," "practical life," and "niche out-of-print," with pricing following the principle of "condition coefficient + use value." At the Ditan Book Fair, the special zone was divided into an ancient book exhibition area, a second-hand book sales area, and an interactive experience area. The ancient book display cases, eight in number, were arranged in an arc, exhibiting 50 ancient books such as Jiuzhang Suanshu (The Nine Chapters on the Mathematical Art), Tiangong Kaiwu (The Exploitation of the Works of Nature), and Bencao Gangmu (Compendium of Materia Medica). The second-hand book sales area brought together more than 100,000 second-hand books from institutions such as China Bookstore, Kongfuzi Old Book Network, and Buyi Bookstore. Ordinary second-hand

books were priced at 10%30% of the original price, while scarce editions such as Republican-era reference books and out-of-print classics were priced at 510 times the original price. The observation of second-hand book condition grading and pricing strategies is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Observation of Second-Hand Book Condition Grading and Pricing Strategies

Condition/type	Pricing observation at Chaoyang Book Fair	Pricing observation at Ditan Book Fair	Key points for teaching analysis
Ordinary second-hand books in 90% new condition	50% of original price	Within the 10%30% range for ordinary second-hand books	Condition-sensitive consumers
Ordinary second-hand books in 80% new condition	40% of original price	Within the 10%30% range for ordinary second-hand books	Balance between price and usability
Ordinary second-hand books in 70% new condition	30% of original price	Within the 10%30% range for ordinary second-hand books	Deep reading and joy of book hunting
Below 70% new condition	10%20% of original price	Within the 10%30% range for ordinary second-hand books	Low-price traffic generation and bulk transactions
Scarce editions	30%50% premium, 40%80% of original price	510 times the original price	Collection, gifting, and edition research
University textbooks	Vendor interview: uniformly 30% of original price	No unified standard observed	Student demand and bulk sales

Table 3 helped students understand that second-hand book pricing is a comprehensive result of "condition coefficient + use value + edition scarcity + customer group willingness to pay." In the interview, vendor T-R1 mentioned that ordinary second-hand books were priced at 10%25% of the original price, scarce editions in 90% new condition or above at 50%80% of the original price, and university textbooks uniformly at 30% of the original price. There was no bargaining, but students who bought in bulk were given retro bookmarks. Based on this, students discussed that second-hand book pricing requires both standardization and flexibility. Standardization can reduce consumers' judgment costs, while flexibility can accommodate different conditions and degrees of scarcity. The teacher further guided students to consider how publishing institutions entering second-hand book-related business should establish condition descriptions, edition verification, and price disclosure mechanisms to avoid transaction disputes caused by information asymmetry.

3.3. Analysis of Consumer Behavior and Marketing Channels

Consumer behavior analysis required students to transform interview materials into customer group profiles. The Chaoyang Book Fair showed a "all-age + younger" consumer structure: 1940 years about 50%, middle-aged and older about 35%, and parentchild about 15%. Young consumers preferred the "Old Books, New Knowledge" special zone and the animation and e-sports area, mostly visiting in couples or with friends, and were keen to photograph their book-hunting results

and share them on Douyin and Xiaohongshu. Middle-aged and older groups focused on the second-hand book area, emphasizing condition and content practicality, and stayed longer on average. Parentchild groups mainly engaged in "parent accompaniment + interactive experience," with high participation in picture-book sharing and stamp-collection activities in the parentchild reading area. Payment was mainly mobile payment, accounting for about 95%, with only about 5% of middle-aged and older consumers choosing cash. Some booths supported digital RMB payment. At the Ditan Book Fair, young consumers accounted for about 60%, middle-aged and older about 30%, and parentchild about 10%, with young consumers staying for an average of about 90 minutes.

Students divided consumers into three types: leisure book hunters, cultural experiencers, and parentchild interactors. Leisure book hunters were mainly young consumers who valued price, condition, and social sharing. Cultural experiencers were represented by middle-aged and older people and some young people who valued editions, content, and communication. Parentchild interactors valued activity participation and educational meaning. For different customer groups, book fairs and publishing institutions could design different channels: for young customers, short videos, Xiaohongshu, live streaming of book fair tours, and cultural and creative co-branding; for middle-aged and older customers, retaining cash payment, setting up reading corners, and organizing second-hand book exchange meetings; for parentchild customers, developing stamp-collection activities, ancient book knowledge classes, and parentchild reading activities. Students thus understood that marketing channels are not a single sales channel but a consumer journey composed of content, scene, payment, social interaction, and service.

3.4. Construction of a Matrix of Cultural Derivation and Marketing Channels

In the analysis of cultural derivation, students identified three levels: content derivation, namely new books and interpretation services themed on second-hand book editions and ancient book knowledge, such as The Beauty of Old Books and A Beginner's Guide to Ancient Books; product derivation, namely bookmarks, notebooks, stamps, intangible cultural heritage handicrafts, and other cultural and creative products; and experience derivation, namely second-hand book exchanges, knowledge tours, repair consultations, and stamp-collection activities. At the Chaoyang Book Fair, some booths launched "exchange old books for cultural and creative products" and "3 books packaged together for 10 yuan off," while also selling new books, forming a model of "second-hand book reading + new knowledge supplementation." At the Ditan Book Fair, the interactive experience area conducted a knowledge tour about every two hours, each lasting 10 minutes, and some second-hand book booths provided repair consultation. Based on this, students constructed a matrix of cultural derivation and marketing channel extension, as

shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Matrix of Cultural Derivation and Marketing Channel Extension of Second-Hand Book Fairs

Channel Type	Carrier/Scene	Typical Practices	Market Function	Teaching Application
Offline Experience Channel	Ancient book display cases, second-hand book booths, interactive areas	Exhibition + inspection + knowledge tours + repair consultation	Build trust, increase customer spending, create memories	Train on-site observation and consumer interviews
Cultural and Creative Derivation Channel	Bookmarks, notebooks, stamps, intangible cultural heritage handicrafts	Exchange old books for cultural and creative products, co-branded development, stamp redemption	Increase gross margin, attract young customers	Train product analysis and cultural translation
Digital Interpretation Channel	QR codes, touch screens, audio explanations	Scan codes to listen to explanations, edition queries, online book lists	Lower knowledge barriers, extend stay	Train onlineoffline integration analysis
Community Marketing Channel	Second-hand book exchange meetings, vendor alliances, social platforms	Second-hand book exchanges, book-hunting sharing, live book fair tours	Retain users, promote repeat purchases	Train community operations and user profiling
Nighttime and Festival Channel	Extended opening hours, themed markets, cultural tourism linkages	Night book fairs, BeijingTianjinHebei joint exhibitions, parentchild activities	Expand visitor flow, enhance urban cultural vitality	Train event planning and risk management

Table 4 is not only an analytical tool but also a teaching tool. The teacher required each group to choose one channel from the matrix and propose a specific plan based on interview evidence. For example, the group that chose the "community marketing channel" suggested that the book fair establish a second-hand book exchange group and a vendor alliance, release scarce book lists before the fair, organize book-hunting sharing during the fair, and maintain a version knowledge community after the fair. The group that chose the "nighttime and festival channel" cited vendor T-R1's suggestion to "extend opening hours" and proposed a pilot summer night book fair, but with supporting lighting, security, and noise management. Through matrix analysis, students learned to organize scattered market phenomena into a logical channel combination and to consider feasibility and risks when making suggestions.

4. Teaching Summary and Reflection

4.1. Teaching Effectiveness

From the perspective of teaching effectiveness, field research achieved the expected objectives. First, students' problem awareness improved significantly. Before the research, most students understood the book fair as "a place to sell books." After the research, they were able to raise questions from the perspectives of spatial layout, price stratification, customer group differences, cultural derivation, and channel synergy. Second, students' interviewing skills were trained. Students learned to explain their identity, obtain consent, choose timing, follow up and clarify, and record original words, and were able to extract market information from respondents' personal experiences. Third, students' data analysis ability improved. Through coding, comparison, and cross-verification, students were able to transform observation notes and interview summaries into analysis tables and judgments rather than remaining at the level of impressions. Fourth, students'

output transformation ability was exercised. Research reports, analysis tables, and classroom presentations forced students to support views with evidence, present thinking with structure, and respond to real problems with suggestions.

From the perspective of teaching outputs, this practice produced four reusable types of materials: book fair spatial and operational observation forms, vendor and consumer interview guides and summaries, second-hand book condition grading and pricing analysis tables, and a matrix of cultural derivation and marketing channels. These materials can enter the course case library for future teaching. Students also mentioned in their reflections that field research helped them understand the complexity of the publishing market and the real situations of diverse actors, enhancing their empathy for second-hand book operators, librarians, ordinary readers, and parent-child families.

4.2. Existing Problems

The teaching practice also exposed some problems. First, the sample size was limited. Constrained by research time and on-site conditions, the number of vendors and consumers interviewed by students was limited. Some judgments relied on a small number of interviews and on-site observations and could not represent the overall market. Second, there was holiday visitor flow bias. The Chaoyang Book Fair research was conducted during the May Day holiday, and the Ditan Book Fair research was conducted around a weekend. Visitor flow was higher than on ordinary days, which may have affected students' judgment of the book fairs' daily operations. Third, interview refusals and data verification were difficult. Some vendors were busy with transactions and unwilling to answer questions about costs and turnover in detail. Some consumers were cautious about recording and photography, so students could only rely on notes and post hoc recall. Fourth, the depth of student analysis was uneven. Some groups were able to extract analytical frameworks from materials, while others remained at the descriptive level, lacking comparative and causal analysis. Fifth, teaching evaluation emphasized output presentation but did not track the research process with sufficient precision.

4.3. Suggestions for Improvement

In response to these problems, future teaching can be improved in five ways. First, increase sample size and observation periods. Multiple observations can be arranged on different dates and at different times of the book fair, increasing the number of vendor and consumer interviews and reducing holiday bias. Second, introduce questionnaires and counting tools. In addition to interviews, brief questionnaires and time-segmented visitor counting can be added to form triangulation between quantitative data and qualitative materials. Third, implement double coding and cross-review. Students can code the same interview material in pairs, compare coding differences, discuss the basis for judgments, and improve

analytical reliability. Fourth, strengthen training in analytical tools. Before the research, classroom exercises in comparative analysis, coding analysis, and matrix analysis can be added so that students enter the field with an analytical framework rather than thinking about how to analyze only after the research. Fifth, promote universityenterprise collaboration and output transformation. Cooperation with publishers, bookstores, second-hand book dealers, and book fair operators can turn student research reports into operational suggestions, invite practitioners to participate in classroom comments, and enhance the applicability and career orientation of teaching.

5. Conclusion

This paper took the 2025 Beijing Chaoyang Book Fair and Ditan Book Fair as teaching cases and summarized the teaching practice of field research-driven publishing market analysis. The teaching practice shows that field research can transform publishing market theory into observable, interviewable, and analyzable teaching tasks, helping graduate students train problem awareness, interviewing skills, data coding ability, and output transformation ability in real scenarios. Book fair research not only allowed students to see market phenomena such as second-hand book pricing, cultural and creative derivation, consumer segmentation, and channel synergy, but also helped them understand the real situations of vendors, readers, and managers. The teaching loop of "problem—observation—interview—coding—analysis—application" is operable and transferable and can provide a reference for practical teaching in publishing graduate programs. Future teaching should further improve research design, increase sample size, strengthen training in analytical tools and universityenterprise collaboration, and make field research a true teaching bridge connecting the classroom and the market, knowledge and ability.

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