Study of Process-oriented Translation Competence Training in Translation Project Teaching

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Abstract. China has become the second largest economy in the world. Owning to the rising of China's international status, China's language service industry is in a period of rapid growth. In this case, cultivation and training for translation talents is essentially significant. However, it is observed that the traditional infusion teaching is centered on teachers obviously. As a result, the paper introduces specifically the steps of process-oriented teaching approach aiming to train the undergraduate students’ translation competence. On the compassion between infusion education and process-oriented project translation teaching, it is investigated that students benefic from the active learning by achieving translation competence. They have made a significantly higher evaluation in the project translation.

1 Introduction

With the development of economy and deepening of reform and opening up, China links closely with other countries in the world in international business exchanges and cross-culture communication. Economy globalization is considered as the major trend in the world. In fact, exchanges between countries in the world have not been confined to economy but culture, science and technology, politics and education. Therefore, translation in cross-communication has become increasingly important. China's language service industry has sprouted up with China's reform and opening up in the 1980s. Since 21st century, it has promoted the prosperity of the language service in job market owing to the development of globalization and service outsourcing industry.

In addition, the demand for translation talents especially those who graduated with outstanding translation competence have been gradually grown in the job market. According to the data revealed by the China Association of Translators, in recent years, there are more than 40,000 professional translators and interpreters in China, who are under employment of more than 3,000 translation companies\textsuperscript{[1]}. It is seemingly a large number, but actually it does not meet the needs of current economy development, because the high-proficiency translations account for 5\% or less. In this case, how to cultivate students who are majored in translation and how to train them equipped with professional translation competence are also the focuses of translation teaching research.

2 Analysis of Translation Competence

In the last few years, due to translation talents deficit both at home and abroad, teaching for students who major in translation has attracted much attention in education research. Undoubtedly, to train students' translation competence is the primary task in translation teaching. Based on this, it is necessary to figure out what is translation competence and what’s its core competence indeed. Still, it is
a heated debate issue. With respect to how to define translation competence, scholars hold different opinions. Newbert (Neubert, 2000: 3-18) [2] pointed out that translation competence refers to the abilities of a translator to cope with various tasks in the translation process, including language ability, subject ability, and conversion ability. In general, with respect to Newbert’s statement, he considered a translator’s competence should be comprehensive. Also, he especially highlighted the immediate thinking of a translator, sensitive observation judgment and contingency ability. PACTE Translation Capabilities Acquisition and Assessment Process Research Project Group (2003, 2005)[3,4] were trying to model for translation ability, defining translation competence as the essential potential knowledge and skills system in translation process. The translation competence is proposed by various components including bilingual ability, non-verbal ability, translation expertise, professional operational ability, strategic ability, psycho-physiological factors and so on.

As a matter of fact, in a word, translation competence is nothing more than the ability to convert naturally between two languages. Similarly, Li Ruilin[5], a domestic Chinese scholar, believes that a translator's ability exists in a multidimensional space that interacts with elements such as the environment, the translator, and his or her knowledge. It is the process by which a translator relies on when translation problems occurred. Additionally, high-order thinking is continuously developed in solving these problems (Li Ruilin, 2011: 46-51). A qualified translator should be trained with basic translation skills and a variety of knowledge, different abilities and strategies. More importantly, one language can be transformed into another language freely in target language application and the process of translation.

3 Existing Problems in Translation Teaching

According to the investigations, as college translation teaching is observed, shortage and limitations have been found out including highlight the importance of translation theories and skills, lagged-effect of translation training and the drawbacks in traditional infusion teaching. Consequently, it leads to the following problems:

3.1 Highlight Translation Theories but not Competence

As for a considerate part of teachers in China, Studying translation theories and skills is considered to be one of basic and essential part in actual undergraduate translation teaching. What’s even worse, translation training has separated from actual and practical translation practice. At present, some teachers highlight the importance of studying on translation theories and skills but ignoring translation competence training for students. The traditional training model has long been implemented in translation teaching, which leads to the following consequences. When many students majored in translation are seeking translation job occupations or related works. Yet, they have no idea on translation project management process in translation company. In particular, parts of students are granted with translation or interpretation certificate but without being qualified to handle a translation project. Indeed, they are not familiar with the translation practice after they graduated from college.

3.2 Lagged-effect of Translation Training

Whether it can meet the needs in job market has become an important criterion for measuring the success of talent cultivation. Translation training in college education is severely lagging behind the demand from job market due to the following factors. First of all, most topics in translation materials that students are exposed to in their study are literary translations, but not on the subjects of life, such as economy, international trade, science and technology and cross-culture communication. In the traditional translation teaching, lots of translation teachers still follow the textbook in their teaching and excessively depend on the specified textbook. On the other hand, the translation materials for students
are out of date. Even, the appointed textbook in one of college of Southern part of China can be traced back to the year of 1987.

3.3 Traditional Teacher-based Teaching

The translation training for students is merely confined to the classroom teaching in part of colleges in China (See figure 1). Students are sitting in the classroom just managing to follow teachers’ demonstration and orders, which is called passive learning. To be more specific, those teachers keep stick to the principle of traditional translation teaching procedures: firstly, the teacher introduced and analyzed the basic translation theories and skills, secondly assigned the corresponding translation tasks which are related to the particular translation skills. Finally, teachers explained the referenced translation answer and make a conclusion. This model is essentially a teacher-organized teaching process centered on teachers, with error correction as the major teaching aims. In this case, the basic translation theory and skills are infused to the target students. This is what we call infusion education shown in Fig.1. Students learn how to translate passively. It is not conducive to cultivate the innovative thinking, also the competence to actively seek and to solve problems according to Li Ruilin as stated in the above paragraph. The teacher in traditional translation teaching is in a “leader” throughout the translation teaching process. Students cannot get involved in translation training.

![Figure 1. Traditional teacher-based teaching.](image)

4 Solution to the Problems

Students who are trained with comprehensive translation competence are qualified for general translation tasks after graduation. Based on the standard, in the translation teaching, the focus is on the students’ competence in translation practice. In order to truly improve the students' competence, it is necessary to simulate the existing company's translation project management process for college students. That is, during the learning process, introducing translation projects into the teaching process of translation can effectively develop a student's ability to translate.

4.1 Case Study based on Process-oriented Project Translation Teaching

On the investigation of process-oriented teaching, to take advanced English-Chinese translation course in Classes Three of Grade 2016 for an example, whose major is business English in one of college in Guangzhou City in China as research object, the traditional translation teaching approach are abandoned. Students have been trained on translation for one semester. Therefore, they are supposed to lay basic foundation translation and acquire some translation skills. The teaching process of the translation is integrated project-oriented translation training which is based on constructivism, multiple intelligence theory and discovery learning theory as the theoretical basis of teaching. The project-oriented teaching process is centered on students’ learning and students’ activities and evaluation in the end. The following presents that the project-oriented teaching implements in the process of translation teaching practice. The steps are presented specifically as follows, see figure 2:
4.2 Steps of Project Translation Teaching

Step 1. Selection of translation project. Translation project is selected basically both by teachers and students’ recommendation. First of all, the teaching objectives are students who are in business English majors. Therefore, topics on translation materials selected by the teachers to achieve the requirement for students’ application competence training, since the students who have graduated will make contribution on the local industry. Then students should gradually learn practical translation material with interesting topics during the training process. On the other hand, another way to determine the translation project is based on students’ recommendation. It is important to note that before their recommendation, students have to read abundant of articles, including books, essays, and newspapers to find the proper topic which is considered as one way of discovery learning. Consequently, one active learning is introduced here, consisted of web-based, collaborative, research projects[6]. At the same time, instead of passively accept translation project, students actively search for translation project materials aiming to stimulate the initiative of students for learning.

Step 2 Group work in project translation. In the observation of translation project teaching, there are 28 students in total in the class Three. Once the translation project is determined, it will be executed by groups. There are 7 members students in each group, that’s 4 groups in total. Each team has a group leader as the project manager who is responsible for coordinating the translation project. The group leader is essentially important. In general, the major responsibilities of the translation project manager are: (1) to initiate the overall planning, including communication with customers, and analysis of customer needs, and to assign specific translation tasks for each member. (2) to implement project monitoring, and translation schedule management, especially timing of the project (3) to submit the project, including to proofread the final draft, to exact translation terminology of the project, to enrich translation memory database, and to submit the final translation manuscript.

Step 3: mutual evaluation between groups and general evaluation. After completing the translation, each group is required to evaluate the rest groups and makes comments mutually. Group mutual evaluation is the process of learning from each other. The group's mutual evaluation is kind of customer's assessment. In addition, the final translation of the manuscript is in compliance with the customer's requirements. The evaluation team is composed by teachers who will make an overall assessment based on the final translation manuscript and evaluation report of comments on other groups’ translation submitted by each group. To differentiate students’ general performance, the classifications of the assessment are divided into five categories: A, B, C, D and F. The detailed scoring rule to evaluate students’ job in translation is shown in Table 1.

| Category | Overall planning | Schedule management | Final manuscript | Mutual evaluation | Teachers’ evaluation | General evaluation |
|----------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| A        | 13-15           | 13-15             | 28-30           | 18-20            | 18-20               | 90-100            |
| B        | 10-12           | 10-12             | 26-27           | 17-19            | 17-19               | 80-89             |
| C        | 7-9             | 7-9               | 24-25           | 16-18            | 16-18               | 70-79             |
| D        | 6-8             | 6-8               | 22-23           | 14-15            | 14-15               | 60-69             |
| F        | 0-5             | 0-5               | 0-21            | 0-14             | 0-14                | 0-59              |
5. Conclusions

Process-oriented translation teaching based on specific translation projects specially highlight the importance of team work, it is considered as a way to improve students' translation competence effectively. To be more specific, the benefits of process-oriented project teaching are presented as follows: 1) as for the students, the enthusiasm for translation has been significantly improved. Their interest on learning translation has been greatly aroused. It helps students develop a habit of discovery learning in seeking the interesting and up-to-date topics of translation materials. 2) Second, the students can get involved in and acted as a translator in the process of project translation. They are learning by doing and experiencing rather than just sitting in the classroom and listening to the teachers. 3) The teacher just works as a guide rather than a leader in project translation teaching. However, there are also shortcomings and limitations of the new teaching mode. After all, there is still a gap between the “simulated setting” teaching of the translation project in the classroom and the actual translation process in the translation company. Second, in the group’s translation, there are few students who cannot fulfill his or her duty on time.

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