

The Study of Foreign Language Ability Rating Scale Applied to Military English

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ABSTRACT

At present, there are few studies on English teaching based on China English proficiency rating scale. The purpose of this study is to explore whether the China English proficiency rating scale has practical value for English teaching in military academies, and to explore how to use the scale to implement English teaching in military academies so as to promote the English learning of military cadets.

Keywords: foreign language ability rating scale, evaluation standard, military language capabilities

I. INTRODUCTION

Language teaching is a large-scale teaching activity involving millions of students every year. The ability of language learners in different levels and categories of schools is different, and a variety of teaching standards and syllabus have been established for different teaching. As for the teaching effect, it needs to be checked through tests, according to different levels of learning, and a variety of examination syllabus and forms need to be developed. The description and gradation of language ability in different learning levels of the syllabus vary, which leads to difficult communication between language teaching and language test, unified measurement of language ability of learners, and poor test results of language learners. Based on the above description, many countries and regions have developed a unified language proficiency rating scale.

II. STUDY OF LANGUAGE SCALES IN EUROPE

The language competence scale originated from North America. Influenced by structuralist linguistics and behaviorist psychology, it uses language knowledge as a descriptive index [1] (Han Baocheng, 2006). Up to now, there has been nearly 60 years of research on language proficiency scale in the world [1] (Han Baocheng, 2006). In order to fully serve the standards of foreign language teaching, the American Educational Testing Service (ETS) has compiled the *American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages* (ACTFL). In the process of making the scale, the actual needs of foreign language teaching are taken into full consideration, and the four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are included in the description, as well as the cultural level of foreign language learners.

The scale describes the language ability mainly through the language user can achieve what through the target language to make a specific statement. In the past, the United States has developed a series of standards that describe oral ability; now the *Interagency Language Roundtable Scale* (ILR) focuses on five skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating. In the 1990s, it was emphasized that the goal of foreign language learning was not only language knowledge, but also communication skills. Theory of communicative competence according to Herzog, M (2006), communication, culture, connections, comparisons and communities, five aspects detailed interpretation on foreign language teaching goal[2]. Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century (SFL), developed by the American council on Foreign Language education, guides foreign language teaching from kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12), setting specific and realistic Learning goals for up to nine languages.

At the same time, in order to evaluate and standardize the English proficiency of immigrant population, the Canadian language proficiency standard was compiled according to the communicative language competence theory (Canadian Language Benchmarks, CLB). In order to describe the second language ability of adolescents and adults in Australia, four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are described with reference to the existing standards of foreign language ability and foreign language teaching experience, developed the Australian Second Language Proficiency Ratings (ASLPR), later renamed International Second Language Proficiency Ratings (ISLPR).

Based on the theory of communicative Language ability, Europe has developed the European Association of Language Testers Language ability standard(the

Association of Language Testers in Europe, ALTE) and the European Language common frame of reference: learning, teaching and evaluation (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment, CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001). As a representative language proficiency scale in Europe, the two scales are quite different. ALTE is not only limited to the development of language competence standards from the aspects of language knowledge and skills, but also describes the completion of language use tasks in different language environments from the perspective of language communication activities. CEFR divides the language behavior into the output type, the acceptance type and the mediation type, adopts the "action-based method", divides the language ability mainly according to the communicative language activity type.

III. STUDY OF LANGUAGE SCALES IN CHINA

In recent years, there has been a growing demand in the teaching and testing of foreign languages (mainly English) in Asia to establish a common language proficiency rating scale. Yang Huizhong and Gui Shichun (2007) proposed to develop a unified English language proficiency rating scale in Asia, and pointed out that it is appropriate to combine qualitative analysis with quantitative analysis in the development of the unified English proficiency rating scale in Asia [3]. Detailed, accurate, intuitive and user-friendly descriptions are made for each level of the language competence rating scale from the aspects of language communication function and language skills. Meanwhile, quantitative indicators are proposed for each level from the aspects of vocabulary, reading speed, listening material speed and language material difficulty.

Some people in China have repeatedly called for the realization of a "streamline" approach in foreign language teaching, whose premise is to have a unified language proficiency rating scale. Chinese scholars have been doing relevant research and have put forward many suggestions for the establishment of a unified foreign language proficiency rating scale in China. Han Baocheng (2006) introduced several foreign influential language proficiency scales and their development background, grade classification and description characteristics, and commented on the advantages and disadvantages of each scale, and proposed that a unified English proficiency scale should be developed in China^[1]. What's more, he pointed out that at present, China's foreign language teaching level is complex, there are many different kinds of foreign language test and the corresponding teaching and exam outline descriptions of language ability and hierarchy is divided, to language teaching organizations and the interpretation of the test scores to bring so much inconvenience. They put forward the principle of

developing a national unified language proficiency rating scale, and through the data analysis of the empirical study of "can do" descriptors, proved that it is feasible to conduct quantitative analysis of descriptors and then classify language proficiency levels. Wang Qiang (2017) drew lessons from CEFR and developed a set of English comprehension scale for Chinese students on the basis of educational target taxonomy [4]. Zhu Zhengcai (2016) proposed to establish the common Chinese framework of reference [5]. He points out that the establishment of a common Chinese language framework is not only a professional matter, but also a macro and micro consideration of China's political environment, the establishment of the framework must take into account the Chinese education system and the current situation of English teaching.

According to Zhu Zhengcai, "language competence mainly includes five basic language skills" [5], namely, listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating. At the same time, language ability is inseparable from "language knowledge" and "the use of language strategies". Therefore, language knowledge, language activities and strategies become the three most basic ways to describe the target language ability of the scale. The scale developers constructed a relatively complete indicator system of target English ability, that is, a set of comprehensive and detailed description parameter system, and then created a description corpus according to the parameter system. Zhu thinks that description corpus has two dimensions, "one is the horizontal classification of language competence and the other is the vertical classification of competence". According to Liu Jianda, "the establishment of a national foreign language proficiency rating scale is the basis for the establishment of a national foreign language proficiency rating system". Wang Shouren said "scale will help the top design, the overall plan for China's foreign language education, make all kinds of foreign language teaching at all levels to cultivate the students' language ability, have a clear goal in an orderly way, and scientific testing and evaluation standard", for China's English teaching to provide a macroscopic guide, the teaching and examination, review will have a strong guidance.

IV. RESEARCH ON ENGLISH TEACHING TOWARDS EVALUATION STANDARD

In the Chinese education model, the traditional "cramming" teaching is still very popular. Obviously, this kind of teaching mode emphasizes theory and ignores practice, which is unfavorable to the majority of students. This traditional teaching mode is still prevalent in the practice of English teaching in military academies in China. Most students learn English for the sake of learning English, ignoring that the real purpose of learning English is to use it in the future. Students

are often imprisoned in their thinking and do not understand the practicality of their vocational abilities. Because of the above reasons, there is a shortage of English professionals with vocational military ability in China.

China's military academies are seriously affected by the traditional education model, and their teaching design cannot keep up with the trend of the times, which weakens cadets' interest in English, and some cadets will have a negative psychological aversion to language learning. Considering the weak foundation of language ability of cadets in military academies, the dull and old-fashioned teaching mode restricts the improvement of cadets' language ability to some extent. In the workplace, the requirements for English ability cannot be completed in the book study, need to continue to practice in daily life, in order to more effectively play their English professional ability.

Military language capability refers to the capability of the state and the army to use language resources to implement and guarantee military activities according to the national security strategy and military strategic needs; according to the language attribution, military language ability can be divided into native language ability and foreign language ability; according to the structure, the military language capability can be divided into defense language capability, military language capability and military language capability. According to the form of expression, military language capability can be divided into language resource development capability, language resource reserve capability and language resource utilization capability.

V. CONCLUSION

Combat effectiveness includes people, weapons, and the combination of people and weapons, as well as military language capabilities. First, military language is a special combat weapon. Combat reconnaissance, combat mobilization, combat deployment, combat command, combat liaison, combat coordination...each combat link is inseparable from the guarantee of language tools. In public opinion, legal struggle and psychological attack and defense, language is even the main weapon. Secondly, military language talents are special forces of armed groups. Military language is an important military resource, and the talent team with the necessary language resources is the human factor of combat effectiveness. Third, military language capability is the combination of human and language. The military value of language resources is mainly reflected in the proficiency and effective use of language by members of armed groups. No weapon or equipment can play its due role without human control. The relationship between language weapons and people is closer than that between guns, artillery, missiles, aircraft, ships, tanks and other weapons and equipment.

Without the skilled use of language resources, the language's combat weapon function cannot be reflected. In other words, military language capability is the ability to be proficient in all languages and carry their cultures to serve and support the personnel in combat operations.

As a trait of combat effectiveness, military language capability has three distinct characteristics: the first is antagonism, which is the feature that language warfare is applicable to antagonism and struggle against the enemy in the war, and it is also the basic embodiment of military language warfare function. Secondly, soft destruction, which refers to the use of language symbols as the basic tool in the implementation of language warfare, the damage effect is not directly reflected in life and physical; Thirdly, it is systematic, which means that language warfare is a systematic confrontation between belligerents in psychology, public opinion, law, morality and values.

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