

Teaching Model Reform on Applied Translation Based on Parallel Corpus

Hongwei Na^{1,*}

¹Jilin International Studies University, Changchun, Jilin, China

* Corresponding author. Email: nahongwei@jisu.edu.cn

ABSTRACT

The traditional teaching model on applied translation is teacher-centered and cannot spur students' learning initiative. This paper intends to explore the teaching model reform on applied translation by compiling parallel corpus on applied texts and applying the corpus to applied translation teaching, homework evaluation, extracurricular training and extracurricular initiative learning, which is a beneficial attempt to translation teaching and translation learning.

Keywords: parallel corpus, applied translation, teaching model reform

I. INTRODUCTION

A corpus is a large-scale collection of electronic texts which is built by collecting natural continuous language according to certain language principles and random sampling method [1]. The study of corpus began in the 1960s, initially for the study of monolingual corpus, and gradually developed to the study of parallel corpus and multilingual corpus. With the rapid development of corpus linguistics, some large-scale corpora have come into being, such as Corpus of Contemporary American English of Brigham Young University in America, Chinese-English On-line of Beijing Foreign Studies University in China, etc., and have been applied to different research fields. In recent years, some well-known scholars have applied corpus-based approach to translation study and translation teaching, and made great achievements. Mona Baker of the University of Manchester in the U.K. is one of the key representatives [2]. In China, scholars have carried out various researches on the compilation and application of corpus, mainly focusing on the compilation and retrieval of data, corpus-based translation studies and corpus-based translation teaching. Wang Kefei (2004) has explored the application of bilingual parallel corpus in translation teaching [3]. Hu Kaibao (2009) has compiled the English-Chinese Parallel Corpus of Shakespeare's Plays, and carried out research based on the corpus [4]. Parallel corpus has a large number of original and translated data, which are of great benefit to translation teaching and translation practice. This paper aims to explore the teaching model reform on applied translation on the basis of self-built bidirectional

parallel corpus, encourage students to explore translation strategies independently under the guidance of teachers, actively participate in translation practice, so as to improve their translation.

II. THE NECESSITY OF REFORMING TEACHING MODEL ON APPLIED TRANSLATION

In the traditional teaching model on applied translation, teachers usually introduce translation theory and explain translation skills, carry out some vocabulary translation, sentence translation or text translation exercises, so that students can apply the translation theory taught by teachers through these exercises. In this teaching model, classroom teaching is mainly dominated by teachers, and teaching contents are based on the designated teaching materials or self-made handouts. Students only can passively participate in the classroom exercises and complete the translation practice assigned by the teachers. Their participation in classroom activity is weak. This kind of model can not spur students' learning initiative and enthusiasm. It is obvious that the traditional teaching model on applied translation has some defects in stimulating students' interest in translation and improving their translation abilities. Therefore, the introduction of corpus to applied translation teaching is helpful for students to search data in the translation context, which is conducive to inspire students' thinking, cultivate their translation awareness and carry out inquiry learning.

III. COMPILATION AND RETRIEVAL OF PARALLEL CORPUS ON APPLIED TRANSLATION

To carry out teaching model reform, a bidirectional parallel corpus for English-Chinese and Chinese-English translation of applied texts is compiled first. Here bidirection means the texts in the corpus include

*Fund: This paper is sponsored by the teaching reform project of Jilin Provincial Department of Education [2018]40: Teaching Model Reform on Applied Translation Based on Parallel Corpus

both the original text in English and the translation text in Chinese, as well as the original text in Chinese and translation text in English. According to the purposes of the texts, this study intends to collect linguistic data from four aspects, including news translation, science and technology translation, business translation and tourism translation. The compilation and retrieval of the bidirectional parallel corpus mainly includes the following steps, which are determining the purpose of compiling the corpus, collecting linguistic data, collating data, aligning data, retrieving data, maintaining and updating the corpus.

A. Determining the purpose of compiling the corpus

Before the compilation of the corpus, there should be a general plan and clear purpose. The purpose of compiling a corpus will directly affect the type, collection and scale of the corpus, and the way of collating and aligning data. The purpose of compiling the bidirectional applied translation corpus is to assist the teaching of applied translation, therefore, the category and difficulty of collected data should meet the needs of applied translation teaching as far as possible. The corpus can be simply aligned without involving complicated details such as coding and segmentation. At the beginning of the compilation, the scale of the corpus is not large, with an estimated 400,000 words. However, with the updating and maintenance of the corpus, it can be expanded continuously.

B. Collecting linguistic data

The most convenient way to collect data is to download English-Chinese and Chinese-English corpora from Internet by using search engines. In view of the need of applied translation teaching, English-Chinese and Chinese-English bilingual corpora are mainly collected from news, science and technology, business and tourism texts. In addition, various English learning websites can be used to collect the bilingual data. However, internet search is not the only source of compiling corpus. The linguistic data from paper books, manuals and other documents can be scanned and collected. In the process of compiling the corpus, special attention should be paid to the quality of translation, so that the corpus can be really beneficial to applied translation teaching and translation practice.

C. Collating data

After the parallel data is copied and pasted into Microsoft Word, Excel or Wordpad, the layout format of the data should be unified. Generally speaking, if the collected data is not standardized in format, it is suggested that the collected data should be arranged in the format of arranging the source text and the target text in different lines in consideration of the clarity and beauty of the data retrieval interface. In addition, it is

necessary to carry out the “data denoising” work, such as removing shading, border, garbled code, background color, web page marks, etc., and set font size, font, text color, segment spacing, line spacing, etc., so as to make the data format unified and meet the needs of further operation.

D. Aligning data

In the process of compiling the corpus, the most important step is to align the bilingual texts. Data alignment needs a good deal of workload and is directly related to the subsequent corpus retrieval. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure the alignment of the source data and the translated data. The alignment at the lexical level is cumbersome and difficult to carry out. The alignment at the paragraph level is not conducive to the analysis of the data. In view of this, the alignment at the sentence level is adopted in the process of compilation. After the data are aligned, they are saved and generated into TXT documents, because most of the corpus retrieval softwares only support .TXT format. According to the above steps, the parallel corpus of applied texts is compiled.

E. Retrieving data

Retrieving data can be carried out after the compilation of the corpus. At present, only a few softwares can be used in parallel corpus retrieval, such as Paraconc, CUC_Paraconc and BFSU sentcounter, among which paraconc is a paid software and the latter two are free. BFSU sentcounter developed by Jia Yunlong of China Foreign Language Education Research Center of Beijing Foreign Studies University is used in our study for corpus retrieval. Data retrieval with this software requires that the software and the corpus to be retrieved should be placed in the same folder.

F. Maintaining and updating the corpus

After the compilation of the bidirectional parallel corpus on applied translation, it is necessary to constantly add new data, update and maintain the corpus, so as to expand the scale and maximize the value of the corpus.

IV. TEACHING MODEL REFORM ON APPLIED TRANSLATION BASED ON PARALLEL CORPUS

A. Thematic teaching based on applied translation corpus

After the compilation of the bidirectional parallel corpus on applied translation, thematic teaching can be carried out according to the contents of news translation, science and technology translation, business translation and tourism translation. For example, in the teaching of tourism translation, the translation teaching of tourism

vocabulary and tourism sentence patterns can be carried out by retrieving the data of parallel corpus on tourism translation. In the process of teaching vocabulary translation, teachers can encourage students to retrieve various bilingual translation cases of a certain word or phrase from the corpus, discover the dynamic usage of the word or phrase in various contexts, and find out the characteristics and rules of the word selection and word collocation in English and Chinese. In the process of teaching sentence translation, teachers can encourage students to retrieve a variety of sample sentences from the corpus, deepen their cognition and application of relevant sentences in certain context, and summarize flexible and effective translation strategies and methods.

B. Homework evaluation based on applied translation corpus

In the traditional evaluation of homework on applied translation, it is difficult to list all the mistakes of students, because it is too time-consuming and laborious. Teachers can only select some typical mistakes and comment on the translation of several students. However, by compiling a small parallel corpus of all students' assignments on applied translation, teachers can directly search the word translation or sentence translation of all students, and the retrieval results are generated quickly. After a simple comparison of the retrieval results, it is easy to find out whether the students' translation of the word or sentence is appropriate or if there are some common problems in translation. Through the compilation of students' personal homework corpus, teachers can also make a horizontal comparison of a student's translation homework in a certain period to check whether the student has corrected the mistakes he made in the previous translation, so as to evaluate whether the student's translation has been improved or not.

C. Extracurricular training based on applied translation corpus

Teachers can arrange sentence-based or text-based translation exercises after class to strengthen students' translation skills by using corpus. In extracurricular exercises, by searching the parallel corpus, students can get the corresponding expressions of the target language. Using the statistical function of corpus, students can have data-based and deeper understanding of the words and structures in the conversion from source language to target language, and adopt different translation strategies and methods in different contexts.

D. Extracurricular initiative learning based on applied translation corpus

In students' spare time, they can use the parallel corpus of applied translation to carry out translation practice, repeatedly practice the similar articles of the thematic translation conducted during class hours. They

can compare their translation with the reference translation, so as to find their advantages and disadvantages, and get to know how to flexibly handle the translation of vocabulary and sentence in a specific context. In this way, they can fully grasp the principles and common skills in the translation of certain type of applied texts and their initiative of learning is enhanced.

V. ADVANTAGES OF APPLYING PARALLEL CORPUS TO APPLIED TRANSLATION TEACHING

Parallel corpus is composed of a large number of linguistic data. By adopting corpus retrieval technology, teachers and students can quickly retrieve the translation and its context. The corpus can not only enrich teaching content, enhance students' initiative to learn, but also promote the connection between translation teaching and translation industry.

One of the advantages of applying parallel corpus to applied translation teaching is that it is helpful to promote the teaching model reform on applied translation.

In terms of teaching content, parallel corpus can enrich the teaching materials of application translation, and function as a beneficial supplement. It contains a large number of practical texts and can provide objective sentence pairs of translation. Students can realize the different translation standards of different text types and no longer regard "faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance" as the only creed of translation.

In terms of teaching methods and means, parallel corpus provides a new method for applied translation teaching. In the teaching of translation, the role of teachers has changed from conductor to director when the electronic version of corpus is used for teaching. Under teachers' guidance in data retrieval, students will find that the same word has different expressions in the target language, which can help them realize the diversity of translation. At the same time, students can take the initiative to explore the collocation of words in a specific context. This kind of inquiry learning helps to change students' learning concept from passive learning into active learning.

In terms of teaching effect, parallel corpus is helpful to improve teaching quality. A large number of translation examples provided by corpus are the strong support for teachers to carry out thematic translation teaching. Through thematic learning, students can compare the differences in words, sentences and paragraphs between the source language and the target language, and understand how to carry out creative translation according to the needs of text types.

Another advantage of applying parallel corpus to applied translation teaching is that parallel corpus is

helpful for students to carry out inquiry learning and improve their translation ability. After class, students can use the corpus to carry out translation practice on their own, which can stimulate their critical thinking. They can query and compare the bilingual terms and translation examples in the corpus, so as to find the appropriate translation in certain context and better their translation.

Moreover, the use of parallel corpus in applied translation teaching can promote the connection between translation teaching and translation industry. Parallel corpus covers a wide range of contents, which can meet the professional requirements of the society in different fields (such as news, business, science and technology). The professionals needed in the translation industry are hence cultivated.

VI. CONCLUSION

The compilation of parallel corpus and its application to applied translation teaching is a beneficial attempt in the teaching model reform, but it is still in the stage of exploration. It can deepen students' understanding of word choice, sentence patterns and discourse features in a certain topic, hence improve teaching quality. Through the extracurricular intensive training and students' initiative learning based on parallel corpus, students can carry out inquiry learning actively, consolidate what they have learned in class, and gradually improve their translation.

References

- [1] Yang Huizhong. Introduction to corpus linguistics [M]. Shanghai: history of foreign language education and publishing in Shanghai, 2002.
- [2] Baker, M. The role of corpora in investigating the linguistic behavior of professional translation[J]. International Journal of Corpus Linguistics, 1999.
- [3] Hu Kaibao. An introduction to corpus translation [M]. Shanghai Jiaotong University Press, 2011
- [4] Wang Kefei. The use of bilingual parallel corpus in Translation Teaching [J]. Audio visual foreign language teaching, 2004 (12)
- [5] Xiong Bing. Study on the English-Chinese parallel corpus based model of translation teaching [J].Foreign Language World, 2015(04):2-10.
- [6] Yang Huizhong. Introduction to corpus linguistics [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2002.