A Study on the Cultivation of English Translators of Chinese Classics Based on Corpus and Simulated Language Environment

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Abstract. With the development of information technology, the emergence of corpus and simulated language environment provides possible conditions for the training of translation talents. Corpus is an innovative teaching tool as well as an effective learning strategy. It is not only a supplement to the traditional English teaching model, but also completely changes students' understanding of vocabulary acquisition and learning strategies. Computer simulation of the language environment refers to providing translators with a real translation scene and the introduction of the intended translation work, so that translators can practice in the language environment and faithfully express the original text with the help of information technology. The present situation of the Chinese classic translation is that the number of competent translators is insufficient and their basic skills are not solid enough to understand the Chinese classical culture. Therefore, it is very important to train the students' translation skills and improve their cultural awareness based on corpus and simulated language environment.

Keywords: cultivation · English translators · Chinese classics · corpus · computer simulated language environment

1 Introduction

With the development of information technology and economic globalization, China is increasingly communicating with other countries in the world. The English translation of Chinese classics is of great significance for spreading Chinese culture overseas. On the one hand, to make the world know more about Chinese culture and enhance the influence of Chinese culture, on the other hand, to promote China's image, which is also an inevitable requirement of improving China's cultural soft power. Therefore, the demand for interdisciplinary translators is increasing. Facts have proved that the speed, scale and quality of Chinese classic translator training lags far behind the needs of social development and cultural exchanges. The emergence of corpus and computer simulation of the language environment provides necessary support and strong guarantee for the cultivation of translation talents with proficient translation skills and cultural awareness.

2 Present Situation of Chinese Classics Translators into English

In recent years, the cultivation of translators of cultural classics has made some break-through progress and achievements. However, the present situation of Chinese classic translation talents is not optimistic, which are mainly reflected in the lack of talents. According to a survey of English translations of Chinese classics sold on Amazon Books, only 22 percent of them are Chinese mainland translators, while 65 percent are foreign translators. This shows that the number of domestic translators accepted by foreign readers is far less than that of foreign translators [1]. Moreover, there are not many senior Chinese translation experts in China who are capable of translating Chinese classics into English without further modifications.

Secondly, the basic skills of the translators are not solid enough. Although some scholars point out the Chinese classics translation can only be done by the translators in China, it has become an indisputable fact that many translators are poor in English expressions and some even fail to understand the Chinese classical culture, which leads to such problems as text misreading and mistranslation.

The above-mentioned problems mainly reflect that the speed, scale and quality of the training of Chinese classic translation talents are far behind the needs of social development and cultural exchanges.

3 Cultivation of English Translators of Chinese Classics Based on Corpus and Simulated Environment

The rapid development of information technology has changed the traditional way of translation teaching and learning, providing development space for promoting the process of educational reform and better promoting translation teaching and learning. In view of this, in order to effectively improve the effect of translation teaching and students' translation level, this paper attempts to construct a new model of English translation teaching based on corpus and simulated language environment, the combining of which is an innovative teaching tool as well as an effective learning strategy. It is not only a supplement to the traditional English teaching model, but also completely changes students' understanding of vocabulary acquisition and learning strategies.

3.1 The Advantages of Corpus and Simulated Language Environment in Translation Teaching

3.1.1 Bilingual Parallel Corpus Helps Students Improve Their Awareness of Word Collocation

When a certain word appears, no matter what text it appears in, it will always appear with some fixed words, which is helpful for students to understand the collocation of words, and then better understand why they should memorize words with complete meaning as a unit, rather than as a unit of words.

3.1.2   Bilingual Parallel Corpus Can Help Students Discover the Rules of Word Formation and Enhance Their Learning Strategies of Root Affixes

In the process of searching words in bilingual parallel corpus, students will find that words with the same root have similar meanings. This discovery makes students start to actively think about the rules of word formation of English words, according to which they memorize vocabulary regularly, so as to achieve a good result.

3.1.3   Bilingual Parallel Corpus Helps to Improve Students' Attention to and Understanding of Context

By using indexing software, students can observe the exact use of a certain word in different contexts, enhancing perceptual understanding of the context as well as their cultural awareness.

3.2   Teaching and Leaning Methods Based on Corpus and Simulated Language Environment

3.2.1   Data-Driven Learning

Data-driven Learning, founded by Tim Johns (2002), makes full use of corpus linguistics under multimedia technology and provides a new perspective for the traditional English teaching model. Data-driven learning is based on the theory of constructivism, whose purpose is to guide language learners to make full use of the Internet and corpus resources and discover the meaning expression and pragmatic features of language grammar rules by observing and analyzing a large number of objective and real corpus, and actively solve problems. The teaching mode based on data-driven learning advocates student-centered and focuses on cultivating students' learning interest and autonomous learning ability.

At the same time, data-driven learning teaching mainly takes corpus and search engine as the platform, which can provide abundant and authentic corpus, construct a real and effective learning environment for language learners and improve their learning efficiency [2].

3.2.2   Mobile Learning

Mobile learning, broadly speaking, refers to learning that can be applied to any device at any time, anywhere. Mobile learning is the result of the interactive development of distance education and E-learning. With the help of mobile devices (computers and smart phones), it can realize the effective two-way communication and learning of learners at any time and place.

Mobile learning has the characteristics of flexibility, learners can learn anytime and anywhere without the restrictions of place and time. Meanwhile, it emphasizes the subjectivity of the learners who can choose learning content and make learning plans according to their actual needs. Moreover, it also emphasizes interactivity. Learners can have more interactive communication through convenient means of communication in the learning process.

3.2.3 Learner-Centered Mode

Classics translation teaching should change the traditional way in which priority is given to teachers' teaching, students only passively receiving teaching materials. Attention should be paid to improving translators' translation ability and vocational and quality-oriented education of the translators, focusing on process teaching instead of translation results. Teachers should try to create a learner-centered mode in which the formative evaluation is focused on instead of the summative evaluation by means of information technology.

Based on the original knowledge, experience and skills, students should cooperate with others in certain situations and use corpus or simulated language environment to improve their translation ability by means of meaning construction. Due to the characteristics and stylistic categories of classics translation, students should be encouraged to conduct independent research through their own reading, observation, thinking and discussion, and discover translation principles suitable for different classic styles.

Under the guidance of teachers, reasonable teaching methods and evaluation methods of teaching tasks should be designed to truly treat students as the subjects of translation activities, so that they can consciously and actively explore, master the methods and steps to understand and solve translation problems so as to find out the rules of translation of different classic books, and constantly improve their translation ability.

3.3 Curriculum Setting

With the establishment of the bachelor's degree in translation and the Master's Degree in Translation, the teaching of translation of Chinese classics should become an important aspect of professional translation teaching and provide continuous talent guarantee for the translation of Chinese classics. China not only needs a large number of Foreign language-to-Chinese translation talents, but also needs a lot of Chinese-to-Foreign language translation talents, especially those who are qualified for the foreign translation of traditional Chinese culture and China's national conditions.

The translator is required to be familiar with the basic knowledge of Chinese philosophy, history, ancient Chinese, sociology, culture, folklore, religion, classical literature, art and architecture, and at the same time they should have deep attainments in foreign history and culture [3]. And nowadays it is also necessary for the translators to obtain the ability to master information technology such as corpus and simulated language environment.

3.4 The Faculty of Translation Professionals

Teachers are the practitioners of teaching tasks, syllabus and talent training objectives. The quality of the teachers is directly related to the quality of talent training. Therefore, teacher training is a necessary premise and important content of discipline construction.

However, the existing teachers of classic translation into English have some problems, such as the uncoordinated proportion and unreasonable structure, in terms of age, educational background, knowledge structure and academic ability, which will become the hidden trouble and fetters of the construction and development of classic translation into English.

Universities should be equipped with teachers qualified to translate Chinese classics into English, who should not only have a profound knowledge of both Chinese and English, but also be proficient in literature, history and philosophy. What's more, mastering of the usage of corpus and simulated language environment is also a necessary condition.

3.5   Translation Practice Based on Corpus and Simulated Language Environment

It emphasizes the combination of translation theory teaching and translation practice, and requires students to complete enough translation exercises in and out of class based on corpus which provides them with additional versions different from that on the dictionaries. Teachers and students are required to form teams and boldly participate in the English translation of ethnic literary and artistic works and even cultural classics, so as to promote Chinese culture and promote multi-cultural exchanges in the world.

The practical courses mainly include: practical training on classic book translation, graduation thesis writing, translation competition, translation certificate, searching and manipulating the corpus, analyzing and comparing the translated versions, etc., aiming to encourage students to lay a solid foundation and improve their translation ability independently through the practice of classic translation.

In the translation practice of classic books, students should be encouraged to adopt the following two strategies according to different recipients:

3.5.1   Academic Translation

The target audience of academic translation should be sinology experts and scholars who study Sinology. Translators should pay attention to the interpretation of the original text, and the translation should be rigorous and standard with highly academic characteristics.

In addition to the original translation, the detailed explanation of the original work, the explanation of allusions, the origin of the story should also be given so as to highlight the cultural value and narrative value of the translation.

3.5.2   Popular Translation

The target audience of popular translation is the general readers, so translators should pay attention to the vividness of the writing style, readability and acceptance, conforming to the aesthetic taste and reading preference of ordinary readers.

The psychology of the target text readers needs to be considered and translators should flexibly deal with the information conveyed in the text and the way of information expression, such as adding, deleting or reconstructing, so as to construct the target text with semantic logic coherence, ensuring the effect and purpose of the popularity [4].

Teachers should make an in-depth comparative analysis of the relationship between English translation of classic books and other types of translation, as well as their similarities and differences. They are expected to design different translation practice based on computer simulated language environment, starting with political translation, business and economic translation, foreign affairs translation, science and technology translation, literary translation and finally English translation of Chinese classics. Through

comparative analysis and research based on corpus and simulated language environment, similarities and differences are found out as well as their uniqueness. Teachers should be familiar with the use and teaching mode of corpus and organize teaching activities by using the Chinese-English bilingual parallel corpus of classic books.

3.6 The Construction of Classic Translation Textbooks

Teaching materials are the main content and important basis of teaching. The quality of teaching materials is directly related to the realization of teaching objectives and the quality of personnel training. Therefore, the construction of teaching materials plays a crucial role in the construction of disciplines.

Unfortunately, the construction of textbooks for the translation of classic books into English in China is still immature, and the published textbooks for the translation of classic books into English are rare, far from meeting the multi-level needs of talent training and discipline construction in terms of quantity and scale [5].

The existing textbooks emphasize the practice of classic translation into English and embody the guiding role of theory in practice. The translation examples selected in these textbooks are mostly classics with diversified themes and harmonious proportions. Most of them guide students to master the basic principles and skills of translating classic books into English through translation appreciation and analysis.

On the one hand, the theoretical depth and breadth of the textbook has been expanded, on the other hand, it lays certain theoretical foundation for the cultivation of students' correct translation concept and innovative thinking ability.

The content arrangement of the textbook not only reflects the cultural communication of the classic translation into English, but also conforms to the cognitive practice law of the classic translation. The compilation format of textbooks shows the rigor of structure and the systematization of the knowledge. Textbooks should include applications of modern technologies such as corpus and simulated language systems.

3.7 Difficulties in Cultivation of English Translators of Chinese Classics Based on Corpus

Of course, there are still some practical difficulties in using bilingual parallel language corpus to assist English translation teaching.

First, teachers are required to use Chinese-English bilingual parallel corpus to organize teaching activities, which requires teachers to be proficient in English, have a profound knowledge of classical literature, and be familiar with the use and teaching mode of corpus, which are essential for the job.

Second, it has high requirements for students to use Chinese and English bilingual parallel corpus to learn, which requires students to have a strong thirst for knowledge and do not exclude learning new technologies; It also requires students to have a good language foundation in order to give full play to the advantages of corpus. The students with more solid language foundation and higher self-requirement are more likely to benefit from the learning strategy of corpus, while the students with weaker language foundation are more indifferent to the learning and use of corpus, or have nothing to do with the test, and are not interested in the attitude.

The third is the high requirement on the school hardware, both the development of corpus and the use of corpus are inseparable from the hardware support. Therefore, the school is equipped with enough hardware to meet the needs of teaching, which is also an important aspect of guaranteeing the teaching mode of corpus.

The construction of the training mode for translators requires us to increase the input of both human and material resources, further cultivate existing translators and explore potential translators, so as to expand the ranks of translators.

The academic community has reached a consensus that the contents of Chinese culture should be increased in college English textbooks [6].

4 Strategies for Translating Classics into English

The purpose of translating Chinese classics into English is to enrich the content of Chinese culture going abroad, to give excellent classics another kind of new life through translation, and to further enhance the cultural confidence of the Chinese people. Therefore, when selecting translation strategies, the translator should try to choose the translation strategies that can faithfully convey the original text.

It is a great project to cultivate talents for translating classics into English. The translator should not only get to know other cultures rationally but also experience other cultures. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the normalization and operability of the talent training mode, construct a certain framework and activity procedures [7], and establish an evaluation system for the translation of classics and the quality of talent training according to certain theories and ideas, so that the talent can stand out successively.

At the same time, the translated version of classic works can adopt various artistic forms and expressions. Various performances and tours can be held both at home and abroad, so that English readers can understand Chinese traditional culture in the most direct and effective way and get interested in Chinese culture, realizing the extensive spread of Chinese excellent culture.

5 Conclusion

Corpus-based and simulated language environment practice is an effective and necessary approach for the cultivation of classic translation talents. It is a comprehensive analysis and comparison of texts by modern means and is suitable for different learning and translation purposes. It is a great project to cultivate talents for translating classic books into English. It is necessary to renew the consciousness of talent training and establish correct and scientific talent view from the goal of cultivating competent and innovative talents. Good atmosphere should be created for the growth of talents, combining universal education with elite education.

We should make full use of the resources in colleges and universities to train reserve translators. To accelerate the subject construction of classic translation and train high-quality reserve talents has become the top priority in the development of classic translation into English in China. Therefore, it is very important for teachers to guide students
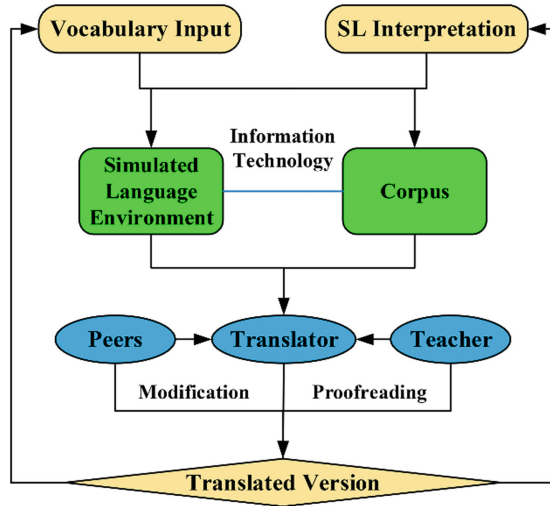
Fig. 1. Cultivation mode of English translators of Chinese classics based on corpus and simulated language environment

to take advantage of modern information technology to learn and have the ability of lifelong learning (Fig. 1).

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