

# Study on the Application of Presentation Approach to C-E Translation Teaching

## --A Case Study of Vocational English Students

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**Abstract.** By applying presentation approach in C-E translation class for vocational English-majoring students, this paper probes into the effectiveness of giving presentation of lexical translation on C-E classes. Through study, it was discovered that giving presentations could not only help students boost their vocabulary storage, both vertically and horizontally, but also spur their interest in C-E translation, which would add to their C-E translation competence.

### Introduction

In recent years, with the acceleration of international integration, demands for higher vocational English talents adapting to the market are also expanding rapidly. Employment oriented, it becomes the key of the higher vocational English teaching to enhance English major students' employment competitiveness. On the other hand, suffering the limit by its own properties, characteristics and learning state, English translation courses are always time consuming and take a slow effect. The traditional translation class tends to centre on translation skills and the comparison between English and Chinese language culture, cooperating with translation exercises of sentence and paragraph to consolidate. Syntactic structure becomes the "highlight" of the translation teaching and syntax is attached great importance to while vocabulary is an object of contempt. As a result, vocabulary translation then is placed in a secondary position, being left out. As a matter of fact, due to the poor vocabulary and synonym confusion, the translated text, although well-structured, always mistakes words with others or confuses their meanings. Therefore, the lack of vocabulary has become a great stumbling block to students in the way of translation. Just as the famous British linguist D.A. Wilkins said in his book, "without grammar, little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed." [1] Thus, making use of the limited time in class, stimulating the students' interest in vocabulary learning, improving the translation vocabulary of higher vocational English major students and strengthening the awareness of vocabulary translation become important parts of translation teaching. The Presentation approach supported by constructivism theory emphasizes the idea of "taking students as the center" and presents class through team work. It also can mobilize students' enthusiasm for vocabulary learning, and provide reference for the study and accumulation of translation vocabulary.

### A Brief Introduction to Presentation Approach

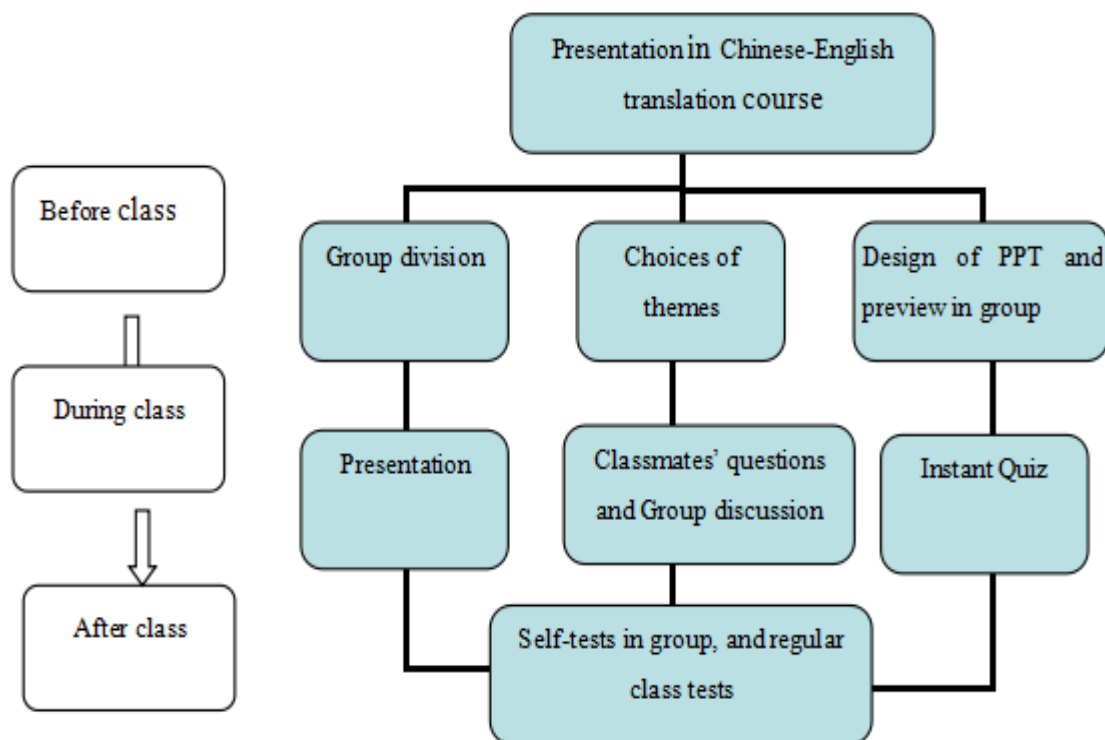
As an effective method under the constructivism teaching theory, the Presentation approach gains support from psychology, sociology and cognitive linguistics theories, Humanistic psychology thinks of the learning process as "participation of everyone", or a process that "people can give play to the potential according to their own will." [2] Carl Rogers, a main representative of American humanistic psychology also expresses in his "student-centered" theory that the teaching process should be centered on students while teachers should act as "midwives" or "catalysts" to help the learners absorb and comprehend the knowledge well. He puts forward the "peer education", "group work" and other teaching methods as well. [3] Presentation approach can change students' "being crammed" into "taking the initiative to teach" through organizing students to give presentations in class, thus the

students are no longer passive and negative recipients of knowledge but active and positive explorers of it. By looking for information, making PPT, and present in the class, the students gradually internalized translation differences between Chinese-English vocabularies and understand them thoroughly. As a result, the Presentation is helpful to improve the language learners' abilities to use language in real situation, arouse learners' interests and initiative, and enhance the class vitality, making the class teaching mode lively, content rich, and effect prominent. At present, many faculty members have widely applied the Presentation approach to college English vocabulary teaching, spoken English teaching and aural-oral teaching. For instance, they do studies on whether the Presentation approach can improve the students' oral English and practical English ability, and also do research on the efficiency on increasing students' initiative and confidence based on students' feedbacks on the Presentation approach, which have achieved certain results. However, it's applied to translation class by few people to investigate the improvement of the students' translation ability. Therefore, taking vocabulary translation as a breakthrough point, this paper is trying to study the promotion of the Presentation approach to vocabulary translation teaching.

### Instruction Design in Chinese-English Translation Course

The Chinese-English translation course under the support of Presentation method is mainly divided into two aspects. The first is implementation steps of presentation and the second is the choice of presentation theme.

**Implementation steps of presentation.** The Implementation steps of presentation in the Chinese-English translation course are as follows:



Specifically, that is to say, before class, students should work in pairs, and collect relevant information about the selected theme through the Internet or books. Then they should make PPT and send it to the teacher in advance to check and review it. During the presentation, students can ask questions about the content in the slides, or about what is not explained in full detail. They can also put questions to relative or similar expression. For example, a student once chose "the expressions related to animal" as the theme where there's a "black sheep" meaning a bad egg of the community. Suddenly one classmate asked how to say "dark horse"? When faced with such abrupt questions which challenged both the teacher and students greatly, the teacher need to help wrestle with them

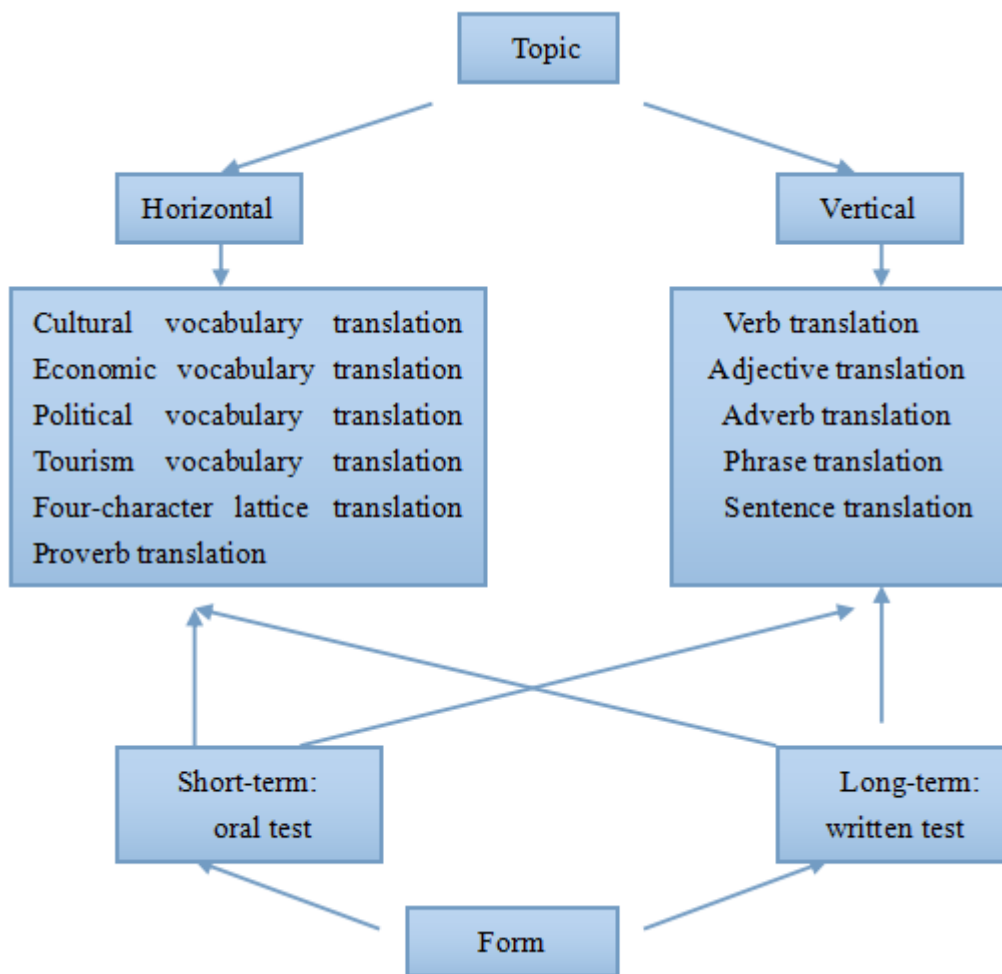
when necessary. This is quite in line with the "discovery approach" theory of Bruner, a representative of the New-Vygotskian school. Bruner holds the idea that learners can accomplish the tasks which could not have been accomplished by themselves with the auxiliary provided by the teacher. Once the task is completed, the auxiliary will withdraw gradually just as a "scaffold" removing after the completion. [4] But on the other hand, this process can help students gradually learn the method of divergent thinking and analogy.

In order to guarantee the quality of the Presentation, three aspects are graded. They're pronunciation, content and effect with each 100 points. The teacher scores an average grade of the three terms as a student's presentation grade and regards it as a reference to his regular performance. The time of presentation should be controlled within 5 minutes, each time two students. While presenting, interaction about the topic between students are encouraged by the teacher so as to mobilize students' participation and enthusiasm.

At the same time, to ensure the students' participation and their absorption of the presented content, Near-term and long-term vocabulary translation tests will be carried out in the oral and written form. Oral test is taken after the presentation, mainly in the form of scare-answering. Students are asked to translate the words mentioned in the slides without reference. In order to assure the fairness of the test, the words are chosen by the teacher. While the written test is set at the end of each month, with the teacher randomly selecting 20 to 25 words appearing in the class in nearly a month. In the form of dictation, when the teacher speaks Chinese, the students should write down the corresponding translation (or vice versa).

**The choice of topic of the presentation.** In order to keep the topic of presentation outstanding, and content practical, the author divides the content to be presented into horizontal and vertical parts. Horizontal presentation mainly revolves around the topics to extend the expression of related words, and aims to enhance students' mastership of vocabulary translation of related topics. Horizontal presentation can be refined into six modules, namely cultural vocabulary translation, economic vocabulary translation, political vocabulary translation, tourism vocabulary translation, four-character lattice translation and proverb translation. Among them, the cultural vocabulary is divided into many sub-modules because of its large scope, such as translation of color, literary works, solar terms, festivals and historical allusions and so on. The teacher here just enlightens the student and students don't need to select from the outline of topics offered by the teacher. Vertical presentation mainly makes comparisons between the methods of translating the words in different contexts. It can be verbs like "smile" and "cry"; it also can be adjectives such as "young". Students can make full use of online parallel corpora, such as the widely used bilingual parallel corpus of Xiamen University ([www.luweixmu.com/ec-corpus/query.asp](http://www.luweixmu.com/ec-corpus/query.asp)). They can search for a certain Chinese or English expression, and summarize the translation methods of its corresponding term. Adhering to voluntary principles, students can select the topic in accordance with their own interests. The topics can overlap, but the content can not, and students can diverge appropriately according to the topic, involving translating the related expressions.

The details are shown as follows:



### The Application of the Implementation of Presentation Approach in Chinese-English Translation Course

**Participants.** 48 students in total from Professional English Class 3 in this school were chosen as an experimental class while 45 students from Class 2 as the control class, a total of 93 students. There are few differences between the levels of their English ability because both two classes are ordinary college students and they have almost the same number of students. Class 2 received traditional face-to-face translation teaching, while Class 3 was implemented the Chinese-English translation teaching combined with the Presentation approach. The experiment took a period of 16 weeks.

**Research process.** Before the experiment, the two classes were tested with a Chinese-English paragraph translation from a simulation test of CET-4. The test cost 30 minutes, and by using SPSS 19.0 statistical software to take an independent samples T test on the results, the data are as follows:

Class	Mean	SD	T	Sig.(2-tailed)
3(48)	69.315	6.541	0.037	0.749
2(45)	68.647	7.473		

Discovered from the experimental data, the averages of the two classes differ little. That results of  $t = 0.037$  and  $p = 0.749 > 0.05$  show the translation level of two classes are about the same, namely before the trial, the experimental group and control group translation ability are of the same capability.

16 weeks later, two classes were tested still with a Chinese-English paragraph translation from a simulation test of CET-4 after the experiment, taking 30 minutes. Again by using SPSS19.0 statistical software to do the independent samples T test on their grades, the results are as follows:

Class	Mean	SD	T	Sig.(2-tailed)
3(48)	76.529	7.132	3.755	0.026
2(45)	71.846	7.822		

Found by calculation, the averages of the two classes differ a lot for t is 3.755. The grades of experimental class have obvious discrepancies compared with that in comparative class ( $t = 3.755$ ,  $p = 0.026 < 0.05$ ), which means the two classes grades have significant differences, the experiment achieves the expected, so to speak.

### Research Results and Analysis

In order to guarantee the reliability of the experiment and figure out the students' feedbacks, the author designed a relevant questionnaire. It collected the students' translation learning habits, frequency to do translation exercises, and recognition and opinions of the current translation teaching experiment. Altogether 48 questionnaires were valid. Statistics of the questionnaire are as follow: (Due to the involvement of some open questions, there are only statistics according to part of the problems.)

Improvement of attention to Vocabulary translation	Almost no improvement 28%	A little improvement 44%	Improved 22%	Greatly improved 4%
To accumulate translation vocabulary	Almost no influence 2%	A little influence 43%	Influenced 47%	Greatly influenced 8%
To increase the interests in translating	Almost no improvement 8%	A little improvement 56%	Improved 28%	Greatly improved 8%
Uplift of self-confidence in improving English translation	Almost no improvement 10%	A little improvement 70%	Improved 16%	Greatly improved 4%
Enhancement of awareness of cultural differences between the two languages	Almost no improvement 14%	A little improvement 58%	Improved 26%	Greatly improved 2%

It is not hard to find out a high recognition of students about the teaching experiment. Up to 70% of the students think the presentation improves their confidence in translation. Only 10% of students think there is almost no improvement, and 16% believe that there is a comparatively greater improvement than before. Meanwhile, the presentation also has great impacts on increasing students' interests in translation. 56% of the students think the presentation improves their understanding of

translation and interests in translation studies and only 8% think that it has little impact. Some students begin to pay attention in life and take the initiative to search for some English expressions of Chinese after four weeks. What's more, a change request to the students' autonomous learning ability also has been put forward.

But on the other hand, some weaknesses of the students are also exposed by the Presentation approach. In the teaching process of presentation, the author finds that students are good at horizontal theme divergence while vertical theme class seems not so popular. Among 40 students, only two students choose the longitudinal theme, namely the translation of the verb "go" and the verb "input". On one hand, it is because the horizontal theme resources are abundant and easy to prepare. On the other hand, it reflects the students' shortage of translation experience and translation accumulation. It also put forward new challenges to the subsequent teaching experiment, that how to promote the improvement of students' translation quality and comprehensive ability through strengthening vocabulary translation and the help of the existing teaching resources and network resources.

## **Conclusions**

The experiment shows that the Presentation approach in deed improves the students' vocabulary accumulation, interests in translation, understandings of the Chinese-English cultural differences and their divergent associative thinking to a certain degree, especially plays a more important role in increasing the students' self-confidence in English translation. Students have changed a lot from collecting translation vocabulary passively into positively thinking of commonly used Chinese expressions in life later. They discuss with each other and use the Internet and other modern means to find the answer. Therefore, as long as we adopt the right and effective method, presentation approach can have greater effect on the vocabulary teaching of English-Chinese translation. Nevertheless, there is no denying that the accumulation of vocabulary translation does not represent the improvement of the comprehensive translation ability. Therefore, on the basis of enlarging students' vocabulary translation, how to enhance such ability and combine the ability of vocabulary translation with that of translation is going to be figured out in the future.

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