

# Reflections on the Construction of Practical System of Undergraduate Teaching in Translation Major\*

Qi Chen

School of Foreign Languages  
Chengdu University of Information Technology  
Chengdu, China

**Abstract**—Translation is a highly practical subject. In order to train qualified translators to meet the needs of society, the practicality of undergraduate teaching in translation major must be strengthened. In the first and second years of college, the study of basic language competence, basic translation theory and skills, and letting the students do some translation exercises at the same time should be paid specially attention to. In the third and fourth years, the training of translation projects in school, the participation of real translation projects out of school, and the declaration and research of translation projects are very important.

**Keywords**—translation major; undergraduate teaching; practicality

## I. INTRODUCTION

The report on the Development of the Chinese Language Service Industry in 2016 released by the Translators Association of China shows that the annual output value of the Chinese language service industry increased by nearly 19.7 percent from 2011 to 2015, reaching about RMB 282.2 billion Yuan. As a component of the emerging service industry, the language service industry already has a considerable scale. At present, there are more than 40,000 professional translators in China, more than 500,000 related employees and more than 3000 professional translation companies. But the qualified professional translators are extremely deficient. In addition to the scarcity of senior interpreters and the shortage of Chinese-foreign language translators and minority language translators, one of the outstanding problems is professional translators who are good at translation in a certain industry is also relatively scarce. Professional translators who are good at translation in a certain industry refer to those translators who understand foreign languages and have professional knowledge in a certain industry. In order to train students into qualified professional translators, colleges and universities put forward strict and specific requirements for undergraduate students majoring in translation. In general, students are required to have three areas of knowledge and abilities: language knowledge and ability, translation knowledge and skills, and general education knowledge. Translation is a highly skilled,

practical and industry-related discipline, in which translation practice is the core. How to Design an appropriate teaching system about the cultivation goal and orientation is one of the important problems to be solved in the training of professional translators. Reasonable and scientific teaching system construction can help to achieve the purpose of training qualified professional translators to meet the needs of society.

## II. CURRENT SITUATION OF UNDERGRADUATE TRANSLATION TEACHING

Wen Jun and Li Hongxia point out that the proportion of theoretical courses in many colleges and universities is too large and the practical courses are insufficient.[5] He Xueyun and others think that most colleges and universities attach the importance to translation theory, culture and practical translation courses, and many colleges and universities create the professional characteristics in translation major, but a few of them attach the importance to translation assessment, Chinese, computer assisted translation and translation vocational education.[3] Some scholars also believe that in the practical teaching links of translation major, the content of practical teaching in schools is simple, the form is single, and the learning effect is not obvious; the enterprises that work together with schools to build the cooperative base of practical teaching lack the corresponding preparation, and there is no perfect practice teaching standard system and restraint mechanism.[6] Translation is a cognitive activity and a communication tool. Translation professionals need to master a variety of translation skills and carry out a large number of translation practices in order to improve their translation ability. The strong practicality of translation requires that undergraduate translation teaching should emphasize the application and professionalization, give students as many practical scenes and opportunities as possible, and constantly improve the students' actual translation ability.

## III. CONSTRUCTION OF THE PRACTICAL SYSTEM OF TEACHING IN THE FIRST AND SECOND YEARS OF UNIVERSITY

### A. The Study of Practical Theory

As freshmen and sophomores, the study of basic translation theory and basic knowledge is the foundation and the premise of constructing innovative practical teaching

\*The essay is an achievement of the project "Research on the Construction of Talents Training Model for Applied Translation Specialty Based on OBE-CDIO" by Chengdu University of Information Technology (ZL2018051).

system in translation major. Therefore, it is necessary to study the basic theory and knowledge of translation in addition to general language proficiency training courses. The courses of foreign language proficiency training, such as listening, speaking, reading, writing and so on, can run through the whole process of learning in the freshman and sophomore years and lay a solid language foundation for the practice of translation in the future. Courses on basic translation theory and basic knowledge, such as the introduction to translation and the comparison between English and Chinese, can be taught every semester in a concentrated manner, so that students can learn systematically more about them in a relatively short period of time. In addition, students can also learn English language knowledge and basic translation theory and knowledge from Mooc, micro-courses, etc.

In order to train the professional translators who are good at translation in a certain industry, it is necessary to focus on the interdisciplinary nature of knowledge in the first and second years' education of college, which can help students broaden their horizons and enhance their understanding of other subjects. It is beneficial to the students' future translation study and career planning. It must be pointed out that this can not be achieved by foreign language departments alone. Foreign language departments need to cooperate with other faculties and departments, so that students can easily take elective courses across faculties, especially some specialized courses that foreign language departments cannot offer. To some degree, it also helps the students to Prepare for the choice of the direction in their future professional translation.

### *B. Students' Translation Practice*

On the basis of developing the general language ability and learning the basic theory and knowledge of translation, the freshmen and sophomores majoring in translation should also carry out translation practice. There are many forms of translation practice. On the one hand, teachers can purposefully choose different language styles, different types, different periods of articles and paragraphs, allowing students to carry out a certain amount of translation practice alone. On the other hand, today's actual translation is often done in cooperation with many translators. Therefore, it is necessary to create opportunities and conditions for students to work together to complete translation work. For example, a "translation workshop" could be set up in which two or more than two translators gather together to engage in translation activities. A "translation workshop" can let the freshmen and sophomores understand the cooperative translation, team translation process and steps. In this way, translation practice can be introduced into the classroom of the freshmen and sophomores. This approach can also change the teacher-centered teaching approach in the past, and become process-oriented and learner-centered. It focuses on the authenticity of the selected translation materials, pays attention to the various steps in the translation process, and emphasizes on language knowledge's and professional knowledge's accumulation and updating. Li Ming and Zhong Weihe believe that paying attention to the translator's

professional skills and interpersonal skills, translation ability, translator's ability, cooperative spirit, cooperative ability, responsibility consciousness and so on, can lay the foundation for them to successfully embark on the road of professional translation in the future. [4]

### *C. Translation Practice Lectures*

Although there are still some deficiencies in the translation ability of the freshmen and sophomores majoring in translation, they are not able to carry out the actual translation project training, but in their own translation practice, there are bound to be a variety of problems and puzzles. Teachers can give lectures on some common problems and puzzles in translation. All students may be required to attend lectures on universal translation issues. At the same time, students can choose to listen to the appropriate lectures according to their own learning conditions. In addition, some representatives in the field of translation in and out of school can be invited to do interviews or lectures at the school. All of them can play very good driving and guiding roles to the translation study of the freshmen and sophomores majoring in translation.

## **IV. CONSTRUCTION OF PRACTICAL TEACHING SYSTEM IN THE THIRD AND FOURTH YEARS OF UNIVERSITY**

### *A. Internal Translation Project Training in Schools*

In order to improve their translation's professional ability and lay a good foundation for translation after graduation, junior and senior students majoring in translation need more translation training and experience in real situations. The schools can set up a laboratory to simulate the real translation scene as far as possible. In the course of teaching, the teachers may carry on the teaching by the way of the implementation of the translation project. The students may be divided into different project groups and each student may perform different roles of a translation project in the lab. The translation project in school attaches importance to team work. The project team members should discuss and study together and the adviser may participate in the project work seminar at least once a month to correct the direction error and give necessary instruction in time. After the project work is finished, the project report should be completed together and involved in the examination related to their translation project. In the process of project work, the adviser is the guide, the assistant, even the participant, who is mainly to motivate the students, to provide them with the guidance of theory and method, and to monitor the implementation of the project work.[2] Students can really feel the relevant jobs' atmosphere through a specific workflow. In order to improve their practical experience and practical skills, students can make use of their own knowledge to carry out the translation practices, and find out the main problems and deficiencies in their own learning in practical operation. In the course of in-school translation project training, the central position of the students is highlighted, and the students' knowledge and professional ability are further improved and perfected in the project work.

### B. Translation Project Participation out of School

The outside-school translation project participation should adopt the way of "the school-enterprise cooperation". The so-called cooperation between school and enterprise is to train applied professional translators suitable for the development of market economy through the integration and sharing of talents, technology and resources between enterprises and schools.[1] The school can introduce the professional translators out of school to the school to explain the formal operation process and each link of the translation industry, and to emphasize on the matters needing attention and the key points in the various links of the translation industry. It is benefit for the junior and senior students majoring in translation to go out and actually participate in the enterprises' work in translation. External translation programs enable students to better understand the operation of the translation industry and to participate in formal process training in the translation industry. On the one hand, schools can obtain high quality education resources coming from enterprises and make education in line with the translation industry, and at the same time help solve the problem of difficult employment for graduates. On the other hand, the enterprise can find, train and absorb excellent students suitable for the development of their own company, and reduce the cost of selecting and training employees through the students' real translation project performance out of the school. The advantage of this model is that it integrates the optimal allocation of resources between schools and enterprises. For those undergraduates majoring in translation, they will be given the opportunity to learn translation most closely to the actual work.

### C. The Declaration and Research of Translation Projects

With regard to the declaration and research of translation projects, students who are interested in a particular question may be organized into a task group, each of which will be provided with an adviser. With the guidance and assistance of advisers, students may undertake the different corresponding work to complete the projects' declaration and conclusion together. Lectures coming from teachers, and interviews with or lectures coming from representatives in the field of translation industry in the past may help students identify their projects. Of course, the projects do not have to come from outside school. After all, the number of translation projects out of school is limited. To encourage and assist students in translation studies, a certain number of translation projects in school could be set up with detailed evaluation rules and final requirements. Schools may let students choose a specialized field to do an in-depth study and research according to their own interests, in order to form a specific area of professional translation expertise. For the project of high quality, the student group could be supported to declare for higher level translation project actively, and help them to study further. At this time, the conclusion of the project in the school can be used as the basis of the earlier work of the declaration.

## V. CONCLUSION

"The Belt and Road" strategy as put forward by the state, includes three major missions and five unimpeded tasks. Translation is an important part in order to turn the three missions and the realization of the five unimpeded tasks into realities. With the remarkable improvement of China's overall national strength and international status, the responsibility of translation has not only been to help China introduce advanced science and technology and management experience of other countries, but also to go out and spread the Chinese voice for China's culture and build comfortable, harmonious communication system service between Chinese and foreign countries. All these need to improve the translation ability of students majoring in translation. Translation ability and comprehensive professional ability are especially prominent in the goal of cultivating undergraduates majoring in translation. That is to say, the translation practice ability is the core. The construction of practical teaching system can improve undergraduate students' practical translation ability, and adapt to the needs of translation industry in today's society.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Cai Hui, Zhang Chengzhi. "On the Cooperation Between Schools and Enterprises in the Cultivation of Master's Degree in Translation Major". *Chinese Translators Journal*, 2013(1), pp. 51-55.
- [2] Cui Jun, "A case study on Curriculum Reform of International Higher Engineering Education: the PBL Curriculum Model in AalborgAlbourg University", *Journal of Distance Education*, 2013 (4), pp.100-105.
- [3] He Xueyun, etc., "Undergraduate Teaching of Translation Major: Current Situation and Countermeasures". Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2016, pp. 76.
- [4] Li Ming, Zhong Weihe. "A probe into the Teaching of Translation Workshop". *Chinese Translators Journal*, 2010(4), pp. 32-36.
- [5] Wen Jun, Li Hongxia, "A study on Undergraduate Courses for Translation Major Centered on Translation Competence", *Foreign Language World* 2010(2), pp.2-7.
- [6] Xiao Min, "Construction of Innovative Practical Teaching System for Translation Major under the Mode of School-Enterprise Cooperation", *Journal of Hubei University of Economics (Humanities S and Social Sciences)*, 2017 (4), pp. 151.