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Chinese-English Translation Teaching in the Context of "Understanding Contemporary China": Problems and Countermeasures

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Abstract: Translation is a typical cultural communication behavior. Enabling college students to spread China's voice in English is an important purpose of translation teaching in the context of "Understanding Contemporary China". But the problems existing in the current Chinese-English translation teaching are also obvious: the teaching purpose is mainly exam-oriented; translation materials are CET-4 and CET-6 related; Teaching method equals to sentence analysis. Thus, only by constructing a translation teaching model with the purpose of communication, contemporary "China stories" as the main translation materials, and interpretation as the leading training, can it meet the requirements of the new context.

Keywords: Understanding Contemporary China; Translation Teaching; Problems and Countermeasures.

1. Introduction

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the relationship between China and the world has been constantly changing, and China is increasingly approaching to the center of the world stage. Countries all over the world pay close attention to China and look forward to hearing China's voice and seeing China's plan. At the same time, China's initiative in foreign exchanges are increasingly enhanced, and new ideas, new views and new policies are constantly put forward. China needs to better tell the world about itself, and the world needs to better understand China's proposal and China's plan.

The goal of college English teaching in the context of "understanding contemporary China" is to cultivate a "new person of the times" -- the disseminator of China's voice to enhance the national image, who can understand and tell the story of China well to enhance the influence of Chinese culture, and then to enhance the soft power of the country. Translation is a typical cultural communication behavior. How to make college students more proficient in using the English they have learned to spread China's voice and show the world a more stereoscopic and authentic China is one of the important missions of college Chinese-English translation teaching.

2. Problems Existing in Chinese-English Translation Teaching at Present

Under the new demand of "understanding contemporary China", the existing problems in college Chinese-English translation teaching are also obvious.

(1) Purpose of Teaching is Mainly Exam-oriented

Translation is an important means of cultural communication. At present, the purpose of college Chinese-English translation teaching is mainly to help students pass CET-4 and CET-6, but the role of translation teaching in the development of college students' cultural communication ability and China's cultural communication ability is not stressed. Although there are translation exercises in each unit of the textbooks for comprehensive courses or intensive reading courses, their purpose is to strengthen useful phrases or sentence patterns in the text, rather than real translation. In the CET-4 and CET-6, which have always been regarded as the weathervane of college English teaching, translation has only been fixed in recent years, but the score is very low, accounting for only 15%. The translation ability of most non-English majors is very weak. According to the statistics of a postgraduate training institution, the loss rate of translation questions is the highest almost every year in the postgraduate entrance examination, with an average score of only 2.58, while the full score of this question is 10. Not to mention the promotion of college students' ability to spread China culture internationally and to tell China stories well through translation teaching. The communicative purpose of translation teaching needs to be further clarified.

(2) Teaching Content is Mainly Based on CET-4 and CET-6 Translation

In terms of teaching content, the current college Chinese-English translation teaching is mainly based on the language materials in the translation part of CET-4 and CET-6 and the translation materials related to China in the textbooks. However, because teachers' classroom teaching and students' study in and out of class rarely involve the contents related to contemporary China, students' knowledge about contemporary China is not systematic enough. When they need to tell the story related to contemporary China in English, it is inappropriate or inaccurate to express it in English. Especially when it comes to China's current politics, students have only a little knowledge, and they have only one-sided understanding or no understanding of many issues. Therefore, in the face of the new demand of "understanding contemporary China and telling the story of China well", there are obvious deficiencies in the teaching content of college Chinese- English translation related to contemporary China.

(3) Teaching Mode is Unitary and Mechanized

At present, translation teaching is still a part of basic college English teaching. Translation teaching focuses on simple text translation and explanation, ignoring the communicative situation of translation. Compared with the

popularity of listening and speaking courses, few schools offer translation courses. With the continuous compression of college English classes, it is almost impossible to offer compulsory translation courses, and many colleges and universities don't even have elective courses in translation. Translation teaching is neglected. College English teachers almost never mention translation theory and translation methods, and just compare the translation exercises after class with the answers. In this teaching environment lacking translation theory and practice, most students' translation ability is very weak.

3. Constructing a Translation Teaching mode Based on Understanding Contemporary China and Aiming at Communication

(1) The Teaching Purpose Should be Communication-oriented

The teaching of Chinese-English translation should help Chinese college students to properly spread Chinese culture and tell the story of China in English in the context of cross-cultural communication. Students need to really understand the world and the interaction between China and the world while using English as a communication tool. Students should accurately tell the world the voice of China in English, share the culture of China and enhance the international image of China. Therefore, Chinese-English translation teaching should not only improve students' translation ability and understand the English expressions of China's stories, but also strengthen the role of translation as the basis of communication and emphasize the communicative purpose of Chinese-English translation teaching.

(2) Translation of Contemporary "China stories" Should be Added to Teaching Content

College students need to really know and understand China in order to better spread China culture and tell the story of China. They need to have certain professional knowledge and professional foundation other than English. The Chinese-English Translation Course in the series of English textbooks "Understanding Contemporary China" focuses on the translation strategies of China's current political documents. Therefore, we can take the relevant contents of Chinese-English Translation Course as the corpus of translation teaching, so that students can truly understand China, including road confidence, theoretical confidence, institutional confidence and cultural confidence, as well as China's history, national conditions, policies, opinions and China's practice in various fields. It can also help students know and understand the world and the interaction between China and the world, which includes not only macro contents such as the overall international order and pattern, but also specific fields such as climate change, international security and international law.

In the selection of language materials for translation practice, teachers should avoid dogmatic teaching and talk about translation on the basis of language. Instead, they should grasp the high-quality problems and language materials that are easy to trigger students' thinking and discussion, stimulate students' interest in self-exploration, help students accurately understand the theoretical system and practical strategy of new ideas about China, and make students fully agree with the text content and the logic and feelings behind it, so as to actively think about how to accurately and vividly explain China's story.

(3) Construct Teaching Mode With Focus on Interpretation and Emphasize on Communication

Cross-cultural communication often involves the major policies of a country, as well as the position expression of some specific issues. Facing the increasingly complex international environment, it is necessary to cultivate college students' political awareness and sensitivity in the context of cross-cultural communication. Under the background of increasingly powerful communication media tools, cross-cultural oral communication has become the mainstream of cultural communication. In the teaching mode of college Chinese-English translation, interpretation should be the leading mode and communication should be emphasized.

When telling the story of China in cross-cultural communication, students should pay attention to the accuracy of language expression. The main texts of the series of textbooks "Understanding Contemporary China" are all from authoritative translations of authoritative documents such as "Talking about Governing the Country", and the language is accurate. Teachers can make full use of specific texts, specific vocabulary expressions and related background explanations from it in the teaching process to improve students' political sensitivity and language accuracy, so that students can tell the story of China in English and spread the voice of China, and at the same time tell China about the world and let China know the world better.

4. Conclusion

Translation is an important way of external communication. However, non-English majors, as the disseminators of Chinese culture and the narrators of China's stories in the realistic cross-cultural communication context, their external communication are more in the form of oral communication. Therefore, how to integrate the content of contemporary China into Chinese-English translation teaching is an important issue to be considered. Reexamining the communicative context of translation teaching from the perspective of oral across-cultural communication is also significant in the new context of "understanding contemporary China and telling the story of China well", which requires further in-depth discussion.

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