Reform and Practice of Translator Training in the Context of Local Culture Translation: A Case Study of Stories of Place Name in Wuhan

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Abstract. In the context of translating local culture, translator training in regional universities should focus on serving local society. Under this circumstances, translation projects can be introduced into the classroom by implementing the "Project-Practice-Corpus-Case (PPCC)" model. This paper illustrates the PPCC model in translation teaching with a simulated project "Compilation and International Dissemination of Stories of Place Name in Wuhan". Interviews with students also demonstrate that the PPCC model effectively cultivates leaner's translation skills and professional competencies.

Keywords: Local Culture; Translation; Wuhan; Stories of Place Name

1   Introduction

Local culture, unique to specific regions and still influential today, has become an integral part of cultural dissemination as China increasingly opens to the outside world. As all is known, translation plays an indispensable role in the international dissemination of local culture[1]. However, the translation of local culture is currently in its exploratory stage, and has not yet achieved the desired effects[2].

Local universities serve as the main force in training regional qualified translators and the cultivation in academic settings should align with the demands of the region and society[2,3,4], creating a development path unique to each institution[5]. In practice, Liu Manyun intended to enhance student's translation skills through the Workshop Model[6], while Xiong Jun suggested that teaching content should be closely related to requirements of local society, incorporating materials related to local economic and cultural characteristics to help students understand the local economy and culture[7].

In summary, local universities can integrate the training of translator with the international dissemination of local culture. On one hand, this approach cultivates qualified translators in cultural translation. On the other hand, it help to addresses the issue of insufficient practical training in teaching process. This is conducive to enhancing students' translation abilities as well as professional qualities.

2   The Ppcc Model in The Context of Local Culture Translation

In the context of translating local culture to the outside world, the training of qualified translators in universities should be oriented towards social and market demands and centered on serving the regional economy. Teachers, according to the positioning and characteristics of their universities, should bring real translation projects into the classroom and integrate teaching content with actual translation projects. It will definitely allow students to enhance their translation skills and professional demeanor in practice, and sense and validate their alignment with industry demands before graduation.

Specifically, the training process may incorporate real or simulated projects to make classroom teaching content "career-oriented." In the actual teaching process, by agreeing on themes before class, interactive discussions between teachers and students during class, and summarizing and reflecting after class, students' translation abilities are cultivated. On this basis, a practice-oriented translator training model is formed, namely, the "project-oriented practices." Because this model focuses on projects and practice, and the bilingual corpus and case bank formed in training can be used to feed back into translation teaching, it can be condensed into the "Project-Practice-Corpus-Case" model, shortened as "PPCC" model.

The model for cultivating translator in local universities falls into two steps: translation teaching and the establishment of a translation case bank. These two complement each other, as translation teaching is the foundation for establishing a translation case bank, and the established case bank, in turn, will feed back into future teaching. The specific steps are given as follows:

First, projects are issued before class. Teachers demonstrate a completed project based on the selected theme before class, instructing students to learn from it. Subsequently, a simulated project on the same theme is released, requiring students to search the existing "News and Media Bilingual Corpus" and various online and offline resources to complete their translations. During the translation process, annotations are made to record highlights of their work and difficulties encountered during the initial translation. Next, the translations are discussed in class. After presenters report their initial translations and describe the difficulties and highlights noted in their annotations, teachers and students review the reports, focusing on vocabulary, syntax, discourse, rhetoric, cultural background, language style, and norms, and students are inspired to apply related translation theories they have learned for interpretation. Then, the teacher summarizes the linguistic and cultural features of the original and translated texts and the translation techniques used. Finally, students sum up and reflect on their project as well as issues encountered, and based on a template provided by the teacher, form a written summary, which also serves as a candidate to the case bank. This can enhance students' sense of achievement and prepare materials for the next round of translation teaching.

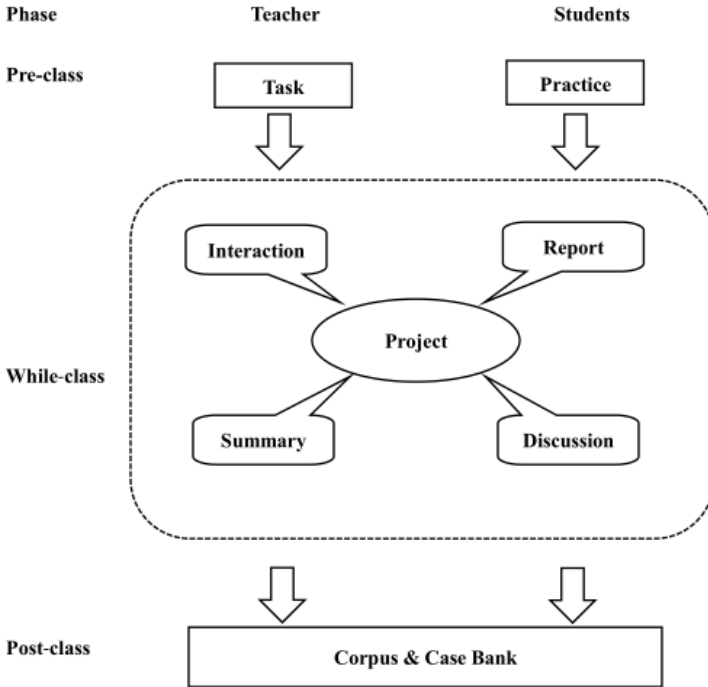The entire process is illustrated in the figure below:

Fig. 1. The Teaching Process under the PPCC Model for Translation of Local Culture

3   Translation Teaching Practices

Incorporating appropriate projects into translation teaching is fundamental under the PPCC model for training translators. This section uses the simulated translation project "Compilation and International Dissemination of Stories of Place Name in Wuhan" designed by the author as an example to illustrate the application of the PPCC model in translation teaching.

Place names, containing rich cultural information, are temporal and spatial symbols embedded throughout history. As a central city in Central China, Wuhan, with its abundant cultural and tourism resources, has become a popular destination both domestically and internationally. Effectively translating and disseminating the stories behind Wuhan's place names internationally can showcase Wuhan's image to the world and foster international exchanges.

At the beginning of the semester, the teacher and students agreed to take "Compilation and International Dissemination of Stories of Place Name in Wuhan" as the theme of the translation course. After that, the specific implementation steps, as illustrated in figure 1, are given as follows:

1) Release of Simulated Project. Prior to the class, the teacher, in line with the educational goals of the teaching unit, agreed on the course theme with the students. Subsequently, based on the students' linguistic abilities and cultural backgrounds, an

English introduction of "Hawk Releasing Terrace" was selected as the task for this course, and the original text along with related linguistic resources was published on an online platform. Upon receiving the task, students accessed various online and offline resources to complete a first draft, making annotations during the translation process to record difficulties and highlights, and preparing material for in-class discussion.

2) Discussion and Interaction of Translations. In-class discussion of translations is the focal point of the training process, which can be divided into four stages: presentation, discussion, teacher-student interaction, and summary.

A. Presentation. During this phase, presenters showcase their translations, reporting on the linguistic and cultural features of the original and translated texts and discussing the highlights and challenges encountered during the translation process. For instance, when discussing how to deal with place names in their translations, students might argue that typical place names like "Anlu, Jiangxia, Liangzi Lake, Longquan Temple, Hongshan, East Lake" are not the focus in translations. However, since the primary aim here is to introduce the stories behind the place names, these become focal points in the text and should be preserved in the translation. Additionally, students may discuss translation challenges in the stage of debate. For instance, the reporter felt it is inappropriate that the original sentence "*xue wo zhe si, si wo zhe su*" translated as "Those who learn from me die and those who look like me are tacky", but could not revise it further. All of these will be discussed in the next stage.

B. Discussions. After the presenter's report, the teacher guides the students in discussing all the issues raised in the previous stage. During the discussion, listeners first acknowledge the presenter's handling of place names and suggest modifications from the perspective of target readers, such as adding Chinese annotations to comply with conventional requirements. Regarding the aforementioned translation problem "*xue wo zhe si, si wo zhe su*", students, after discussion, concluded that the main reason for its inappropriateness was the translator's lack of understanding of the original text, where "*si* (die) " does not mean "death" but "hopeless for success." Therefore, the original sentence should be rendered as "Those who learn from me will end up with hopeless; and those who imitate me will become merely ordinary. "

C. Teacher-Student Interaction. After guiding students discussing on key challenges and reaching certain conclusions, the teacher can lead students to explore deeper issues that have not yet been identified. For example, "The place where Li Bai (a renowned Tang Dynasty poet) flew the hawk, known as Hawk Releasing Terrace, became a sight for tourists at East Lake (*Libai fangying zhi chu， rencheng fangyingtai， chengwei donghu youren yanzhong de yijing*) " is the closing sentence in the original text. Since this is a descriptive text, it is important in English translation to follow the characteristics of English expository writing. After comparing with similar texts, students suggested that since English writing tends to highlight main points and often places them at the beginning of a linguistic unit[8,9], it would be more appropriate to position the above Chinese closing sentence at the beginning of the English text to align with the title and cater to English textual conventions.

D. Summary. After the presentation, discussion, and interaction, the teacher can summarize the contents of the class before it ends. Summaries could follow the

framework provided by the case bank, covering aspects such as vocabulary, syntax, discourse, culture, rhetoric, and conventions. And students are asked to revise their translations after class and reflect the project, the issues encountered, and their learning outcomes in the process.

3) Post-Class Reflection. After completing the project, students consolidate their understanding of the teaching content and translation skills through written summaries of the translation and revisions. On this basis, teachers and students select outstanding translations for inclusion in the case bank, thus preparing resources for the next round of translation teaching. This process not only extends students' knowledge of translation theories and skills but also enhances their sense of achievement.

4   Feedback From Students

As students are primary focus of translation teaching, a post-class interview serves as a crucial basis for evaluating the effectiveness of instruction and is a major driver of pedagogical reform. After the teaching practice, researchers employ a semi-structured interview to inquire about students' learning outcomes from the translation course and their opinions on the teaching methods. Two questions are listed as follow:

1) What aspects do you think need attention during the translation process?
2) What are your opinions on this teaching model?

From the interview, it was evident that students experienced a significant difference when engaging with project-based translation of local cultural texts compared to their usual textbook exercises.

Firstly, a thorough understanding of the original text is imperative for translation. Prior to translating, it is necessary to fully comprehend the original text, utilizing authoritative dictionaries and online resources as much as possible. Several students identified "terms" and "background" as challenges in the translating process. Generally, a basic understanding of cultural terms in the original text, such as dialects, colloquialisms, and unique vocabulary, is essential. This, as one student stated, involves "researching materials related to the terms" and "digging deeper into these terms online. " For official terms like place names, one should search relevant local websites for their specific locations and related anecdotes. When uncertainties arise, one should consult international versions of websites like "Bing" to find the English correspondents. As for understanding classical poetry, one should not interpret it literally but rather research thoroughly to grasp its meaning. Special attention is also necessary in translating sentences, especially in understanding classical poetry and selecting appropriate sentence structures for them. For instance, when dealing with a sentence like "*xue wo zhe si, si wo zhe su*" in the original text, one should refer to other literature for its authoritative Mandarin explanation to fully comprehend its real meaning. Additionally, during translation, one should avoid a step-by-step literal approach and opt for more interpretative methods.

Secondly, when translating, one must consider the readers' reception of the translation, ensuring the text conforms to the characteristics of English. For example, when the name "Li Bai" first appears in the target text, it should be transliterated, and an

explanatory note, "(a renowned Tang Dynasty poet)", should be added to aid understanding for English readers who may not recognize the name. In the interview, students also noted that "sentence structure, coherence, and connection are more important than wording and grammar. " It is also crucial to prioritize key information at the beginning or even at the start of a passage to comply with the conventions of English discourse.

Furthermore, in discussing the differences between the PPCC model and traditional methods, interviewed students unanimously appreciated the integration of translation projects into the classroom, which enhanced their translation skills and professional competence. Some students noted their lack of experience with real, reader-focused translation at the text level before training. Through real project practice, they recognized the importance of prioritizing the translation readers. In terms of conveying information, one must "truly understand the original text" and "be accountable for the quality of the translation. " For accurate translation, one may need to consult dictionaries or conduct online searches to comprehend the information in the original text.

Additionally, texts from real projects, instead of previous exercises of sentence translation excerpted from textbook, reflect the characteristics of actual translation, moving from sentence-level to text-level translation. Therefore, the focus of translation is on conveying information, which sometimes requires adding or omitting elements, or adjusting the order of phrases or even sentences, an experience not felt in previous exercises. Besides project introduced in training, students also commented on specific practices, noting that "annotations in translating can provide a clear understanding of students' thoughts", which is vital to cultivate students' abilities to identify and solve problems through discussion, interaction and contemplation.

In conclusion, the introduction of projects into the translation classroom through the PPCC model significantly enhances students' translation skills and professional development, receiving predominantly positive evaluations from most students.

5   Conclusion

In the context of translating local culture abroad, the training of qualified translators in higher education should focus on serving regional development. Under this circumstances, university instructors, in line with institutional characteristics, should bring real translation projects into the classroom to "professionalize" teaching content. Accordingly, this study proposes a "Project-Practice-Corpus-Case (PPCC)" model, an practice oriented method, for translation learners. On the basis of the simulated translation project "Compilation and International Dissemination of Stories of Place Name in Wuhan", the application of PPCC model in translation teaching is elucidated through three steps: pre-class topic agreement, in-class interactive discussions, and post-class reflective summarization. Finally, an interview with students shows that incorporating projects into translation teaching helps them realize the importance of thoroughly understanding the original text and considering the feelings of the readers of the target text. The study confirms that the PPCC model effectively develops students' translation skills and professional competencies.

Acknowledgement

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