

# On the Teaching Reform of Translation Practice Course Based on Professional Accreditation under the Belt and Road Initiative

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## Abstract

**With the overall and smooth progress of the Belt and Road Initiative, there has been a large and diverse demand for language services at different levels. Qualified translators are the necessary guarantee to meet this demand. As training institutions for translators, universities naturally shoulder an inescapable responsibility. They must integrate the training of translators with the needs of the Belt and Road Initiative, boldly carry out teaching reform, and focus on cultivating students' practical ability and professional qualities. Emphasizing the cultivation of practical ability and the provision of vocational guidance, the course Translation Practice precisely fit the requirements of the translator cultivation and teaching reform under the background of the Belt and Road Initiative. The reform of this course should articulate with the professional accreditation with the aim of making more students get translation certificates and then provide services for the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative.**

## Keywords

**The Belt and Road Initiative; Professional accreditation; Teaching reform.**

## 1. Introduction

Since the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative, China's foreign economic and cultural activities have become more frequent, and its exchanges with countries along the Belt and Road have become more extensive and in-depth. Translators are the essentials for smoothly carrying out the initiative, and their required qualities has also increased significantly. Colleges and universities' task to improve the cultivation quality of translation majors has consequently become more urgent. Colleges and universities must therefore attach great importance to the problems existing in the cultivation process, carefully analyze the present situation of market demand, take the market standards and translation professional accreditation as guidance and make bold teaching reforms.

## 2. Translators' Mission and Significance of Translation Professional Accreditation under the Belt and Road Initiative

### 2.1. Translators' Mission

The proposal of the Belt and Road Initiative reflects China's mission as a major country and raises its responsibility to a new level. Under the initiative, China takes greater responsibility to promote global economic development and harmonious coexistence of mankind. As a bridge of communication, translators play an important role in the exchange and cooperation in trade, technology, culture, education and other fields. Translators should provide good language and intellectual support for the smooth implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative. Whether they can play their role well is of vital importance. Therefore, the translators participating in the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative must have excellent translation ability and various qualities required by the translation market. However, China's current translation

market is far from mature and lacks unified entry threshold. Many translation practitioners have not passed the China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters, that is, they do not get the professional accreditation, which means their qualities are not guaranteed. As China “goes further” to the world, this situation is bound to change, the translation industry will be more standardized, and the qualification of translation practitioners should be guaranteed.

## **2.2. Significance of Translation Professional Accreditation**

Under this macro-background, the translation professional accreditation, namely China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters, is of particular significance. This test has been incorporated into the national system of vocational qualification certificates and belongs to the level evaluation in the national catalogue of vocational qualifications. At present, the translation professional accreditation is the most authoritative national evaluation system in this field, which is increasingly valued and recognized by professionals in the translation field. This accreditation can test whether the translation ability of the examinee meets the basic requirements of the profession. It is quite conducive to regulating translation practitioners, so as to ensure the quality of translators participating in the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative. This provides a clear direction for the cultivation of translation majors and the reform of translation teaching, which should be articulate with the professional accreditation and facilitate the language services of the Belt and Road Initiative.

## **3. Teaching Reform of Translation Practice Course Based on Translation Professional Accreditation**

Translation Practice is a course that emphasizes the cultivation of the students’ professional ability and vocational quality, which requires the teachers to improve students’ practical translation capacity and necessary vocational skills by adopting a variety of teaching means. In the university where the author works, this is an optional course for undergraduate students majoring in translation. It lasts for four semesters and has a total of 128 class hours, which shows the importance of this course and its significance in cultivating students’ practical translation ability. Bases on its feature and importance, the reform of Translation Practice course should be carried out in the following four aspects.

### **3.1. Resetting the Teaching Objectives with the Standards of Translation Professional Accreditation as the Framework**

The teaching objectives of Translation Practice course should be in line with the current market demand and its development trend, and should emphasizes students’ practical ability and professional skills, so as to help them pass the accreditation test and achieve the national standard of qualified translators. As a result, the teaching objectives of Translation Practice has been rearranged according to the syllabus of China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters. The passing standards of China Accreditation Test for Translators Band 3 (CATTI-3) are: 1. Have a vocabulary of 5000 words or more; 2. Master English grammar and expression habits; 3. Have good bilingual expression ability; 4. Be able to translate articles of general difficulty with correct gist, facts and details; 5. Have a preliminary understanding of the cultural background of China and English speaking countries. The aim of the course is to help students achieve the standards, and the teaching objectives are further refined under the framework of these standards, with the focus on cultivating students’ practical translation ability. After the adjustment, the teaching objectives of the course are as follows: 1. Accumulate high-frequency words and idiomatic expressions in translation practice with a vocabulary of 8000 words ; 2. Use common translation strategies and skills proficiently in translation practice to ensure that the translation is faithful and smooth; 3. Be consciously apply the translation theories to improve the bilingual expressions; 4. Be able to use reference books and network resources to

translate Chinese and English texts with general difficulty; 5. Understand the social culture of China and English-speaking countries, and have basic intercultural communication skills.

### **3.2. Adjusting the Teaching Content with Textbooks Prescribed by Translation Professional Accreditation as Teaching Materials**

During the reform of Translation Practice course, teaching content and translation practice materials are of vital importance, which need to be carefully selected by teachers. At present, there are few translation practice textbooks available on the market, and the publication time is generally too early to meet the needs of the course featuring timeliness. The content of these textbooks are relatively out-of-date, and most of them are unrelated to the Belt and Road Initiative and the current social and economic development. Such teaching materials are undoubtedly of little value. Textbook of English Translation Practice (Band 3), officially designated by China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters, has been constantly revised and republished in accordance with the social and economic development and the international situations. The translation materials in the book are highly timely, applicable and market-oriented. Using the textbook prescribed by national professional accreditation can not only enable students to do the translation practice with the latest materials, but may also help them to pass the accreditation test, achieving the ideal teaching objectives of the course. Textbook of English Translation Practice (Band 3) covers different topics, such as economy, politics, environmental protection, science, education, culture and health etc, therefore, the main teaching content revolves around different topics to train the students' translation competence. On this basis, the students' learning interest has been taken into account, and during the teaching process, popular and readable translation materials are supplemented, such as excerpts from English novels and popular books. The teaching content of Translation Practice course reflects the market-oriented principle, attaches more importance to pragmatic texts and covers various fields of the Belt and Road Initiative. Moreover, the literariness and the interest of teaching materials are also guaranteed, which contributes to motivating the students learning interest to the maximum degree and enhancing students' practical translation ability from different dimensions.

### **3.3. Updating the Teaching Methods with "Translation Workshop + Project-Based Approach" as the Main Teaching Mode**

The teaching goal of Translation Practice course is to improve the students' practical translation ability, enhancing their understanding of the various factors in translation work, enable them to apply translation theories and techniques to translation practice, and master necessary translation tools. The ultimate goal of the course is to make students quickly adapt to the translation jobs after graduation with a set of translation methods and techniques suitable for themselves. In view of the practical and vocation-oriented characteristics of the course, teachers should reform their teaching methods and abandon the conventional "three steps" lecturing, namely, skill explanation, example practice and simple evaluation. Instead, the teaching methods should be student-centered and highlight the practical operation, so as to truly cultivate students' professional skills. Based on this consideration, the author has adopted "translation workshop + project-based approach" in the teaching process. The two teaching methods form an organic combination in the Translation Practice class. Under the teaching mode of translation workshop, students take the way of team cooperation to complete the translation projects in simulated work situations. During the completion of the project, they go through a series of steps: finding translation difficulties, making discussions, putting forward solutions, forming the translated text, making revisions, and produce the final version. In this process, students take the initiative in learning, and improve their translation ability autonomously. Under the mode of "translation workshop + project-based approach", the roles of teachers and students have changed with the teacher as the guide and the students as the

real center of the classroom. The essence of this teaching mode is to train students' practical ability through real-problem solving. By simulating the real translation working environment, students can experience the various steps of a translation project and possible problems in the workplace, improving their translation skills and teamwork ability so as to lay a foundation for future translation work as well as get the professional accreditation.

### **3.4. Changing the Assessment Form with Multi-dimensional and Whole Process Evaluation as Examining Mode**

For the Translation Practice course, the multi-dimensional and whole process assessment should be taken, so as to avoid the disadvantage of the final examination which is determined by a test paper. In the traditional examination, students often pay too much attention to test-taking skills and final scores, while ignore the accumulation of knowledge and skills in the translation process. As a result, they lack the necessary reflection on the translation activity, thus failing to improve their translation ability and the essential quality for a translator. The ultimate goal of the course reform is to articulate Translation Practice with the professional accreditation, making students obtain vocational qualifications to serve the Belt and Road Initiative. Therefore, the evaluation of learning effects should follow the norms and standards of the translation industry, and the students' professional quality should be included in the assessment scope. In addition, the teaching mode of "translation workshop + project-based approach" has been adopted in the Translation Practice class, so the assessment way should coordinate with this mode and have a positive backwash effect on it. By integrating the teaching objectives, the teaching methods, and the assessment forms, the students' learning enthusiasm will be fully motivated, and they will actively participate in the translation project through team cooperation, which will substantially enhance their translation competence and help them pass the accreditation test. In view of the above considerations, the multi-dimensional and whole process assessment has been adopted in the Translation Practice course, which means there is no final exam but a process evaluation from four aspects: attendance, participation, student's individual ability and teamwork ability for carrying out translation projects. Attendance and participation are the basis and guarantee of the other assessment dimensions. The assessment of student's personal ability is mainly carried out through tests and the purpose is to distinguish individual differences and encourage students to strive for better personal capability. Teamwork ability for carrying out translation projects is an examination of students' vocational competence and translators' quality. This kind of assessment will help students get the professional accreditation, reach the entry threshold of translation jobs, and better serve the Belt and Road Initiative.

## **4. Conclusion**

Given the macro-background of the Belt and Road Initiative and the practicality feature of the Translation Practice course, teachers should make bold teaching reform, stick to the market-oriented principle, and strive to let students possess the professional qualifications. In the teaching process, teachers should adjust the teaching content and methods so as to meet the market demand and adhere to the idea of "articulating the course with the professional accreditation". With the integration of translation teaching and professional accreditation, more student will pass the accreditation test and meet the national standards of translation competence, hence contributing to the smooth implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative.

## Acknowledgments

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