

Market-oriented Research on Master of Translation and Interpreting Talents in China

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ABSTRACT : Since the opening of MTI program over the years, the cultivation mode of MTI talents has been formed. Some colleges with MTI program in Wuhan, Chongqing and Guangzhou have been selected to explore their cultivation model of MTI talents respectively. After investigation, it has found out that the curriculum system in these colleges is basically comprised of mandatory courses and unique elective courses. In order to fulfill the target of MTI program which is to cultivate translation and interpreting talents catering to the changing market, the curriculum arrangement and teaching pattern should be inevitably market-oriented and timely optimized to ensure the development of MTI sustainable in the market accordingly. Therefore, in accordance to the applied, practical and professional cultivation principle, a three-dimensional cultivating model of personalization-cooperation-marketization in MTI program is proposed to guarantee MTI talents to be potentially employed in the market after the end of MTI programmed.

KEYWORDS - Cultivation Mode, MTI, Three-dimensional Cultivation

I. Introduction

Master of Translation and Interpreting, MTI for short, was approved by Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council in 2007, affiliated to Ministry of Education. MTI has been set up in over 253 colleges. MTI aims at fostering translation talents featuring in applied, practical and professional principle which caters to the demands of China's politics, economy and social development.^[1] Varying from Master of Arts, MTI focuses on cultivating professional talents, which has posed a challenge for translation teaching.

In terms of teaching model of translation, fruitful achievements have been gained in foreign countries. J. Holmes was the first one who listed translation teaching, translation tools, translation policy and translation criticism into the category of applied translation. Besides, he also divided translation study into applied translation, theory translation and descriptive translation, of which three of them are closely connected.^[2] S. Colina, when illustrating translation teaching, also emphasized that translation teaching should combine these three fields.^[3] W. Wliss claimed that applied translation, as the most complicated field of translation study, mainly aimed at practical use. Therefore, it should be market-oriented.^[4] Døllerup believed that truly profession-oriented translation should be taught in class.^[5] J. Fraser gave top priority to market-oriented teaching pattern such as Johnson's profession portfolio, Ulrych's file writing method, which had a close connection with both market and clients.^[6] F. Austermuhi advocated that translators should master factors like function, language and culture during translation process. He also thought that translators should learn to wield Internet searching skills, online language resources and disk translation resource to form their own translation memory bank and translation corpus.^[7]

After the establishment of MTI programs in many countries, domestic translation study also began to flourish. Zhong Weihe, a well-known expert in translation field, has given illustrations about MTI in many aspects including subject orientation, cultivation objects, teaching purpose, teaching system, tools using and talents training. He Qishen also talked about faculty cultivation of MTI and found that most teachers lack of working experience in fields of diplomacy, foreign affairs, foreign trade, scientific and technological research, publication. Hence, employing part-time teacher serves as one of the solutions.^[8] In addition, Wang Kefei,^[9]

Liu Heping,[10] Xu Jun,[11] Mu Lei,[12] Wang Jingping, [13] Pei Qiang[14] also conduct studies in theory, practices, methods about translation and interpretation and literature and non-literature studies, which laid a solid foundation for the implementation of BTI(Bachelor of Translation) and MTI teaching pattern and provided theory guidance and study reference.

It is clear that the reform of a three-dimensional cultivation pattern of MTI talents is a must for education, theory and practical fields. MTI is designed to foster professional talents, so more emphasis is put on students' application ability so as to render them adapt to the market requirements. Therefore, this paper, taking national 211 key colleges as its research areas with MTI students the main object, puts forward a three-dimensional teaching mode in the principle of application, practice and profession in order to train translation talents gearing to the market demands, which is full of theory value and guidance meaning.

II. Study on MTI Talents Cultivation

In accordance with training program issued by Department of Degree Management & Postgraduate Education in 2007, affiliated to Ministry of Education, the curriculum of MTI is divided into compulsory course which includes public compulsory course, professional compulsory course and required courses for major direction and optional course. On this basis, the author conducted a survey on translation providers and universities through interviews and questionnaires in Wuhan, Chongqing and Guangzhou respectively. It is found that almost all colleges with MTI program in China have formed the curriculum system consisted of professional compulsory course and optional course with their own characteristics, which greatly conforms to the principle of Department of Degree Management & Postgraduate Education.

In addition, the cultivation of MTI talents makes pragmatic principle as its priority, namely the high level of professional skills, highly dedicated professional ethics and dedication spirit, cultivates morally, intellectually, physically developed talents who possess proficient translation skills and extensive knowledge, and to meet the need of various industries. This requires that the training of translation professionals should follow the principle of "application, practice and professionalism". Since the MTI major was established in 2007, 253 colleges and universities have established MTI program, and the enrollment scale has been expanding. However, unchecked teaching quality is unable to meet the market demand. Such prosperity is likely to lead to the unreasonable use of resources and fail to achieve the purpose of training qualified translation professionals.

In accordance to the applied, practical and professional cultivation principle, a three-dimensional cultivating model of personalization-cooperation-marketization in MTI program is proposed to explore cultivation pattern of MTI students suited to the market.

2.1 Curriculum Arrangement of Translation Talents

The cultivation goal and pattern of BA and MA differs from that of BTI and MTI especially in curriculum arrangement. Therefore, optimizing curriculum plays an integral role in the training of translation professionals.

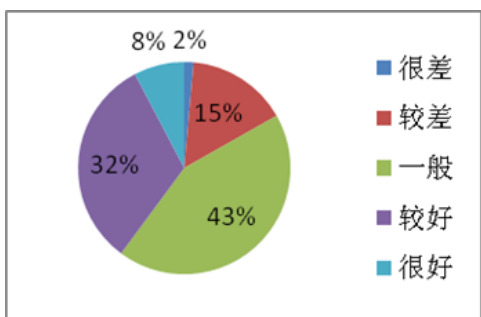
Compulsory courses are basically the same, including political theory, Chinese language and culture, Introduction to Translation, translation theory and skills, interpretation theory and skills, applied translation and literary translation in translation direction, or alternate interpretation and simultaneous interpretation in interpretation direction. It is widely acknowledged that five types of translators are of high-demand: technical interpreters, conference interpreters, court interpreters, business interpreters, liaison interpreters and document interpreters. In translation companies, computer-aided translation software is widely used, and mastering the mainstream computer-aided translation software has become an essential part for translation teaching. In view of this, colleges and universities can increase the proportion of some compulsory courses. In addition to ensuring students' basic professional ability, derailment between course offered and actual market demand should be avoided.

Elective courses include comprehensive courses, interpretation courses and translation courses. Colleges and universities can, based on students' general ability, set special elective courses according to their training objectives and school characteristics. The simultaneous training of mother tongue and foreign language

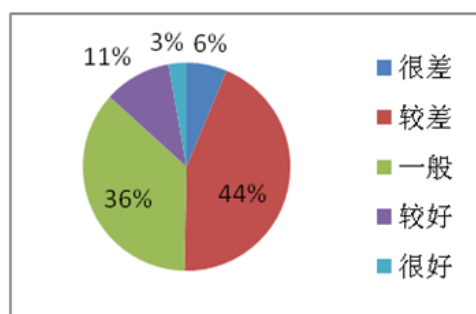
should be emphasized. The open teaching mode should be adopted to emphasize the specialty features and meet the characteristics and needs of diversified students. Science and engineering colleges can set up professional elective courses considering their characteristics, such as computer, automobile, material, information technology, finance, business management and other professional translation knowledge; Or set the corresponding professional courses according to the advantages of the college, so that students have a certain advantage in the future market competition.

2.2 Questionnaire and Analysis

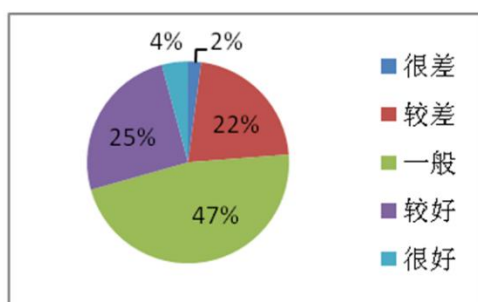
Through the investigation of translation enterprises, MTI institutions of higher learning, employment and guidance centers of universities, and engineering offices of foreign institutes in Wuhan, Guangzhou and Chongqing, and through expert interviews and expert scoring, as well as the collation of collected data, a number of primary and secondary data were obtained. It mainly includes questionnaires and statistical data related to translation industry, translation teaching, translation research and three-dimensional platform construction. At first, the authors gave out 80 questionnaires in Wuhan University of Technology where they belong with 62 filled-out questionnaires handed back and collected information about MTI education, translation studies and three-dimensional platforms through telephone interviews with lecturers and professors in Wuhan University of Technology. After that, the authors revised the design of the questionnaire to lay stress on the key points. Later, the authors gave out questionnaires in nine universities in Wuhan, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies and Chongqing University with 92 filled-out questionnaires collected and communicated with lecturers and professors in those universities. Meanwhile, the authors got information about translation industry through interviewing with renowned translation providers in Wuhan. A total of 200 questionnaires were sent out to MTI major or translation major of Foreign Language College in 9 universities in Wuhan, 104 of which were filled out, 98 of which were valid. This paper conducts a survey on students' participation in practical courses, passing rate of professional exams and participation in conferences, and the results are as follows.



Graph 2 Practical Class Hour of Students



Graph 3 The Number of Important Meetings Attended by Students as Interpreters before Graduation



Graph 4 Number of Participants and Passing Rate of Students in National Professional Examinations

The survey shows that in each module of practice arrangements, 3%-8% of the respondents rate it as very good; 47%-86% of the respondents rate it as average or above average; 1%-6% of the respondents rate it as bad with 6% of the respondents rating the number of times a student is in charge of interpreting a major conference as very bad. 15% of the respondents give the fourth module a below-average; 22% of the respondents give the fifth module a below average; 44% of the respondents give the last module a below average. Therefore, in terms of practical education, universities should increase students' participation in practical activities, improve students' passing rate in professional exams so as to enable them to be entitled with important task.

2.3 Summary of Open Questions

Aspect	Problems
On the Aspect of Business Leaders and Tutors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Less Strong Faculty 2. Relatively Few Practical Opportunities for Students 3. Insufficient Cooperation with Enterprises 4. Weak Academic Foundation
Aspect of Postgraduates	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Loose Connection between MTI Education and Language Services Industry 2. Less Distinctive Characteristics in MTI Schools 3. Inadequate Attention on Students' Distinctive Cultivation

For the above two aspects, solutions are put forward as follows.

(1) Improve Market-oriented MTI Cultivation Pattern

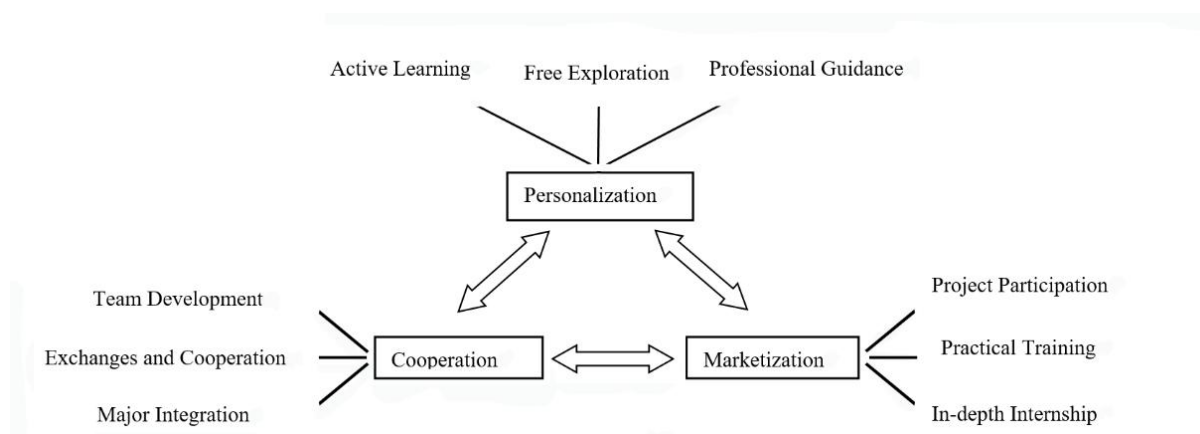
MTI teaching should be combined with scientific research and driven by it. Interactive development should be realized between schools and industries so as to boost students' application and innovation ability. Teaching pattern should, grounded on fundamental theory and all-round cultivation with the focus on application and innovation capacity, improve teaching quality and students' comprehensive ability and practical ability by making full use of multiple teaching resources, practices base, on-the-spot teaching and actual practice.

(2) Enhance Market-oriented Development by Considering Regional Disparity

Market-oriented cultivation pattern has various features in school-market connection given that universities are in separate regions. Colleges should cooperate with local government, translation company and scientific research institutions in view of regional characteristics, industry features and market demands. For example, colleges can have project cooperation with major transnational corporation or translation company, or they can organize students to visit skill-oriented department in language services companies. Besides, they can also set up laboratory with scientific research institution to introduce some translation equipment.

2.4 Three-dimensional Teaching Mode of personalization-cooperation-marketization

Although cultivating market-oriented translation talents is the ultimate goal, marketization and students' quality supplement each other. With students as its center, personalized and cooperative teaching patterns, starting from constructivism, aim to foster students' creativity and problem-solving ability through participants' positive participation and active construction. Two teaching modes claim that teachers is responsible for guiding students to vigorously explore and mastering learning methods and constructing knowledge framework by themselves through discussion and simulated practice instead of imparting knowledge to students. The organic combination of the two can not only meet the requirements of translation major students' personality development, but also cultivate their cooperation ability and social skills. Translation teaching should also explore social needs and improve translation quality and skills through project participation and practice. The three-dimensional teaching mode of "personalization + cooperation + marketization" will be the main feature of the teaching quality system. Through the constant application of modern information technology, the optimization and practice of the teaching mode of MTI will be explored.



Graph 1 Teaching Mode of “Personalization + Cooperation+ Marketization”

(1) Personalized Teaching Mode

Personalized teaching mode requires teachers to treat students as the main performer and stimulate students’ initiative, creativity to enhance their autonomy, independence and cooperation spirit. Flexible teaching methods, including heuristic method, discussion, discovery and research, should be adopted to guide students to acquire knowledge and master learning methods through their active mind activities. This mode pays close attention to discovering students’ potential character which requires teachers to have a complete understanding of students and respect them so as to explore their potential and motivate their learning interests.

Teachers can, by talking, questionnaire, have a general grasp of students’ English proficiency, learning motivation, interested field and knowledge coverage. In this way, teachers can help students determine their learning target and make feasible learning plan and enable them to have more self-control and courage and ability to confront with challenges. In view of students’ willing and teaching object, teaching activities and practical activities promoting personalized learning can also be conducted such as discussion, lecture and translation or interpretation practices aimed at technology, literature, business and other different fields.

(2) Cooperative Teaching Mode

Cooperation teaching emphasizes that cooperative learning could strengthen emotional and knowledge exchange among group members. Faculty groups should be formed to cooperate in many aspects including course preparation, teaching links, teaching tasks, problem solving and teaching and research activities on the basis of professional characteristics. Teachers can promote each other’s study and lift their own cultural and occupational qualities by sharing all kinds of knowledge. Cooperative mechanism between teachers and students should be formed. For example, teachers can boost students’ communication skills and professional ability by introducing their students to have internship in translation companies or encouraging them to participate in translation competitions. Besides, forms like group discussion, mutual help and evaluation are also included in cooperative teaching mode to facilitate students’ cooperation awareness and team spirit.

(3) Market-oriented Teaching Mode

Leaders and teachers of foreign language department should conduct a deep study on MTI curriculum arrangement and extend the content in both depth and width to cater to modern economy. Students’ learning interest and practical ability can be enhanced by comprehensive training in terms of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating. For instance, students can have a free discussion about one topic put forward by teachers and then summarize in a conference form. Furthermore, teachers can guide 5 to 10 students of a certain field to do further translation learning and extra-curriculum practice by participating in translation programs and practices.

2.5 Application of CAT and MT in Translation Teaching

Rapidly-developed Internet serves as an integral part in people's life, so does IT application in all types of industries. Translation efficiency should also be lifted by means of computer information system to deal with format conversion, content analysis, word account, task distribution, translation, proofreading, compiling and publication. Commonly-used Computer Aided Translation, CAT in short, has provided convenience for translation, which can be utilized in translation teaching among colleges and universities to integrate information resources and optimize teaching content in a freer way.

CAT teaching never means to do translation by software but to design and update translation strategies, tools and technology resources to ensure the smooth undergoing of translation scientific research and teaching activities in terms of teaching quality, teaching method and teaching content. Firstly, in the perspective of teaching quality, CAT teaching, based on language processing, requires teachers to integrate all kinds of resources to conduct multiple level teaching. For example, students should be trained to use translation tools and resources about pre-translation, in-translation and post-translation before class as well as translation process and bilingual management after translation. Secondly, in terms of teaching method, teaching will be divided into project-driven, data-driven and online driven teaching by having translation project the basis and translation corpus, term bank and translation memory the main part. In this way, teaching quality and students' application ability can be improved by doing so. Thirdly, in term of teaching content, students should be equipped with some basic knowledge about computer and be taught to use common CAT software as well as type composition and screenshot skills. Besides, they should also have a holistic comprehension of procedures of translation project so as to communicate with potential clients, other translators and translation experts via Internet.

Commonly used CAT software include SDL Trados, Deja Vu, Wordfast and Yasin, etc. Trados is developed by Trados GmbH in Germany, which was acquired by SDL International in 2005. SDL Trados includes a translator workstation, a tag editor, a term manager and many other functions. Deja Vu is developed by Atril in France. It can create terminology and translation memory, create project files, and translate results with translation, proofreading and quality control machine in its own interface. Wordfast comes in three versions: the classic is a plug-in, the Professional is a standalone interface tool, and the online version is free to use in web browsers with just an email registration. Yaxin is developed by Beijing Oriental Yaxin Software Co., LTD. It has the functions of translation memory, human-computer interaction, CAM and CAP. The four software have rich functions such as translation memory system, alignment tool, term management tool, automatic translation, file filter, electronic dictionary, etc. Deja Vu is the most compatible translation memory, Wordfast is the worst. Alignment tools belong to SDL, Trados and Wordfast work well; Only Yasin has its own glossary; Project management tools belong to SDL Trados and Deja Vu for easy operation. Colleges and universities can choose one or several kinds of software as tools according to the characteristics and needs of the software when using computer-aided instruction, and pay attention to the autonomy and criticality of the use process, so that the software can be used for their own use.

III. Conclusion

This paper did a profound analysis on the cultivation pattern of translation talents in three aspects, including curriculum arrangement, three-dimensional teaching pattern and CAT&MT application in teaching, and proposed corresponding optimization method focusing on market-orientation. Curriculum arrangement should be adjusted on the grounds of market demands, like making efforts to foster talents that are in high demand in the market. Colleges with MTI programs should set up their own characteristic courses to enhance students' competitive edge. In each phase of teaching, teachers should try to give full play to students' personality and cultivate their teamwork ability. Besides, they can encourage students to take more participation in practical activities and have a general understanding of their future workplace and simulate the process of translation project by CAT software. Last but not least, teaching should be combined with scientific research and reinforce each other. An interactive development among schools, industries and companies will have a positive effect on students' application and innovation ability. Regional disparity should be considered to create a channel with distinctive characteristics.

Acknowledgements

Supported by Scientific Research Project whose Number is W2019135.

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