

Research on the Flipped Classroom Model in Translation Teaching: A constructivism Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Translation competence serves as a core literacy in cross-lingual and cross-cultural communication, representing a significant goal in the cultivation of English major students. However, the current teaching effect of translation for English undergraduates in non-translation majors is less than satisfactory. Although traditional teaching modes are highly systematic, issues such as outdated textbooks and students' excessive dependence on reference translations hinder meeting the rapid development of the discipline, leading to inadequate practical skills and limited innovative thinking among students. Based on the constructivism learning theory and incorporating the flipped classroom model, this paper proposes a new path for translation teaching reform. By creating authentic translation contexts, strengthening collaborative learning and conversational exchanges, and integrating multimodal learning resources, a student-centered translation teaching model is constructed. Research shows that this model not only enhances students' translation practical abilities and innovative thinking but also stimulates their autonomous learning awareness and cultivates team collaboration spirit, laying a solid foundation for students' academic development and professional competitiveness. This paper aims to provide new insights into the theory and practice of translation teaching, facilitating the cultivation of composite translation talents who meet the demands of the times.

KEYWORDS

translation teaching; constructivism learning theory; flipped classroom

In cross-lingual and cross-cultural communication, translation competence is a crucial indicator for evaluating the proficiency of English major students and an important training objective in undergraduate education. However, many students struggle to competently undertake translation tasks and effectively apply theory to practice after completing a series of translation courses. Some students even feel exhausted by translation courses, with their learning interest diminishing. Therefore, translation teaching urgently needs to explore effective pathways to improve teaching quality.

1 Current Issues in Translation Teaching for English Undergraduates in Non-Translation Majors

Scholars in the field of education have continuously improved undergraduate translation teaching models, seeking the optimal solution for translation teaching. However, for English undergraduates in non-translation majors, the current translation teaching effect remains unsatisfactory. In current English translation teaching at universities, teachers commonly adopt a traditional teaching mode of "professional textbooks supplemented by translation practice exercises." This teaching mode excels in imparting translation skills through systematic professional textbooks, providing students with a solid theoretical framework and high-quality materials for imitation and reference. Nevertheless, with the rapid development of the translation discipline, this teaching mode gradually exposes the following issues:

1.1 Time Lag of Authoritative Translation Textbooks

Traditional English-Chinese translation teaching tends to adopt English-Chinese translation textbooks compiled by major publishers or authoritative textbooks widely recognized within academia as the core of instruction. Teachers select various chapters from the textbooks according to the teaching plan, systematically imparting the theoretical essence and practical skills of English-Chinese translation^[1].

This approach enables students to initially acquire systematic translation methods and techniques, while teachers can save some effort in lesson preparation by relying on the reference translations and supplementary audio-visual materials provided in the textbooks. However, the compilation and publication of authoritative translation textbooks are complex and time-consuming processes, often with long cycles, making it difficult for textbook content to keep pace with the rapid development of the translation discipline. As translation theory continues to deepen and translation practice accumulates extensively, new translation methods and techniques emerge like mushrooms after rain, injecting continuous vitality into the translation field. However, due to the cumbersome compilation and publication process, coupled with the need to ensure content accuracy and authority, the update speed is relatively slow. As a result, students struggle to access the latest research findings and industry trends during their learning process, limiting their horizon expansion and ability enhancement.

1.2 Students' Excessive Dependence on Reference Translations Limits the Development of Innovative Thinking

Within the traditional teaching mode framework, students often fall into a noticeable dilemma: excessive dependence on reference translations provided by authorities. This ingrained dependency psychology, like an invisible shackle, manifests specifically in translation practice as students habitually copying and pasting, unconsciously applying examples given in textbooks by rote, lacking the endogenous motivation for independent exploration and deep thinking. This not only leads to homogenization in their translation works, resembling products from an assembly line and lacking individuality and novelty, but also severely undermines students' confidence in their translation outcomes, subtly suppressing their valuable creative potential. This dependency psychology not only directly hinders the comprehensive improvement of students' translation abilities, making them helpless when faced with complex and varied translation tasks, but also invisibly sets numerous obstacles for their career development. In future careers, whether in translation work or other fields involving cross-cultural communication, lacking independent thinking and innovation abilities will make it difficult for them to stand out and occupy a competitive position in fierce competition.

2 The Flipped Classroom in Translation Teaching from a constructivism Learning Theory Perspective

2.1 constructivism Learning Theory

constructivism learning theory is an important school of thought in cognitive psychology, focusing on how individuals construct, establish, or shape their knowledge structures and cognitive models in the process of cognizing and understanding the surrounding world. constructivism learning theory changes the teacher-dominated cognition in traditional teaching modes, emphasizing learners' subjective cognition and placing greater importance on establishing situations conducive to learners' active exploration of knowledge^[2]. Within this framework, learners actively construct their knowledge systems based on existing knowledge and experience, applying these constructions to subsequent learning tasks and practical activities.

In the learning environment advocated by constructivism, "context," "collaboration," "conversation," and "resources" constitute the four core elements. Context refers to the environment or background in which learners are situated, providing learners with opportunities and conditions for learning; collaboration and conversation refer to learners engaging in communication and cooperation with others during the learning process, deepening their understanding and flexible application of knowledge through joint exploration and discussion to help construct their learning systems; resources refer to various learning materials and tools required by learners during the learning process, providing necessary learning support and assistance. These elements collectively act on the learning process, promoting effective construction and deepening of learners' knowledge.

2.2 The Flipped Classroom Teaching Mode

The flipped classroom teaching mode originated from two high school chemistry teachers, Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams, from Woodland Park, Colorado. Their initial idea was to prepare lesson explanations for students who missed class, later developing into using videos to review and reinforce the knowledge taught in class. This mode transfers the decision-making power of learning from teachers to students, with students engaging in autonomous learning by watching video explanations and other teaching resources before class or outside class, while classroom time is primarily used for answering questions, collaborative inquiry, and completing academic activities.

The core logic of the flipped classroom teaching mode lies in revolutionizing the traditional teacher-student interaction mode, placing students at the center of teaching activities, emphasizing students' autonomous learning abilities and creative thinking. In the flipped classroom, the role of teachers undergoes a fundamental transformation, shifting from the core of knowledge impartation and application to a key guide and facilitator in students' learning journey. The flipped classroom reverses the process of knowledge impartation and internalization, granting students broader learning autonomy, prompting them to construct personalized knowledge systems through autonomous learning.

2.3 Exploration of the Flipped Classroom Model in Translation Teaching from a constructivism Perspective

Through exploration of constructivism learning theory and the flipped classroom teaching mode, it is evident that both emphasize the central role of learners in the learning process, highlighting students' autonomous learning, internalization of knowledge, and knowledge system construction. In response to the current status of translation learning among English undergraduates in non-translation majors, the author believes that changes in translation

teaching can be made based on the four elements of constructivism: "context," "collaboration," "conversation," and "resources."

2.3.1 Creating Authentic Contexts to Enhance Translation Practice Experience

For English undergraduate students in non-translation majors, it is challenging to allocate time to reinforce theoretical knowledge and implement translation practice while balancing the learning of translation theory and other professional knowledge. This necessitates teachers playing the role of learning facilitators, helping students create authentic translation contexts, such as simulating international conferences or tourist guidance. Taking Model United Nations activities as an example, students need to play different national roles during simulated sessions, mastering basic English expressions and learning knowledge about meeting agendas, cultural etiquette, and diplomatic philosophies of different countries, thereby promoting more diversified English expressions. To better understand and immerse students in these contexts, teachers can provide them with rich background information and cultural knowledge through micro-lessons or online resources before class. These resources can include professional terminology, commonly used expressions, cultural background introductions, etc., in relevant fields. By previewing these materials, students prepare adequately for practical exercises in class based on a preliminary understanding of specific requirements for translation tasks.

2.3.2 Strengthening Collaborative Learning and Conversational Exchanges to Promote Idea Collisions and Translation Quality

Constructivism emphasizes the core value of "collaborative learning," where students engage in discussions, inquiries, and exchanges within learning communities composed of teachers, peers, and learning partners. Within this community, wisdom is shared, with the learning community collectively completing meaning construction^[3]. This discussion and exchange process can be divided into in-class and after-school parts.

In class, teachers' instruction should not be limited to explanations of translation theory and methods but can also involve discussions with students on the translation of a particular issue or passage. This not only sparks new translation ideas through collisions of ideas but also breaks students' excessive dependence on a single reference translation, stimulating their interest in exploring more innovative translations. Importantly, during the inquiry process, students should not merely stay at the level of "how to do it" but should also delve deeper into the underlying reasons of "why do it this way" to cultivate their consciousness of deep thinking and active knowledge construction.

After school, translation support groups can be formed to allow students to independently carry out translation activities. For example, when translating a particular article, members of the support group can discuss translation difficulties and issues encountered during the process, share insights, and record their translation thoughts. After completing the translation, they can compile the internal translations of the group, discuss and identify the relatively optimal solution, and summarize commonly used translation techniques and methods for that type of text. Teachers should play the role of guides and supervisors in this process, ensuring that the discussion direction is correct and the content is substantial. They can also summarize common translation difficulties and issues within the group and provide corresponding guidance and instruction.

2.3.3 Integrating Rich Resources to Expand Translation Learning Pathways

With the continuous development of the internet era, students can access various online translation teaching courses for autonomous learning. Leveraging the temporal diversity and spatial convenience of online video teaching, teachers can integrate multimodal translation teaching materials, such as audio, video, and image-text aligned translation cases, and upload them to an online interactive translation learning platform for students to preview course content before class and consolidate knowledge through translation practice after class. For instance, teachers can upload single-English-subtitle videos of TED talks and bilingual videos, allowing students to first complete translation exercises based on the single-subtitle video, then refine their translations based on the bilingual video, and record questions and difficulties to discuss and resolve with teachers and peers in class.

3 Conclusion

In summary, combining constructivism learning theory with the flipped classroom model in translation teaching achieves a union of theory and practice, making translation theory specific to translation practice applied to different types of texts for students. By creating learning situations, constructing collaborative conversational learning groups, and integrating rich learning resources, this learning model significantly enhances classroom teaching efficiency and

optimizes overall teaching effects on the one hand. On the other hand, it effectively boosts students' learning autonomy, encourages them to actively build bridges between old and new knowledge, deepens their understanding and mastery of knowledge, and improves their translation skills and tool application abilities. More importantly, this model motivates students to discover and solve problems through practice, thereby cultivating their exploratory spirit and teamwork abilities, laying a solid foundation in thinking and learning habits for their future academic and career paths.

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