

The Implementation of Formative Assessment in the Teaching of CET-4 Paragraph Translation

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Abstract. The translation content of the latest CET-4 involves the economy, history, culture and social development of China. The score for the Chinese-English paragraph translation was adjusted to 15%, which is equivalent to the score for the composition. However, the current teaching methods and teaching assessment mechanism of college English translation teaching need to be adjusted as soon as possible to meet the requirement of CET-4 translation test. The adjustment of translation in CET-4 makes English teachers attach importance to college English translation teaching and constantly study and explore new teaching methods. The research group intends to apply the formative assessment mechanism to college English translation teaching in order to promote the quality of it. The research mainly applied formative assessment to college English translation teaching by combining comparative study and empirical study. It compared and analyzed the learning interests, cooperative learning and achievements of the experimental class and the controlled class which were selected as research objects. Our purpose is to study the practical significance of the implementation of formative assessment to college English translation teaching. The result showed that the implementation of formative assessment in English translation teaching provides a fundamental guarantee for college English teachers to do well in English translation teaching. This paper will discuss the role of formative assessment in promoting college English paragraph translation teaching.

Keywords: Formative assessment; College English; Paragraph translation; CET-4

1. Introduction

The adjustment of CET-4 translation has brought new challenges to college English teachers. With the existing teaching conditions and materials, English teachers must explore new teaching modes and teaching assessment mechanisms to meet the teaching and examination requirements under the new situation. College English Curriculum Requirements formulated by the Ministry of Education put forward the requirements for five basic skills in English listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating. "Curriculum Requirements" points out that colleges should carry out formative and summative assessment on English teaching. It is undeniable that the summative assessment is indeed a crucial method to measure the teaching results, but it can not assess the teaching process, so it can not timely and effectively feedback the teaching information, which is an obstacle to the timely improvement of teaching methods and the improvement of teaching level. Formative assessment can make up for the deficiency of summative evaluation. By means of formative assessment, teachers may gain feedback information in time, adjust teaching modes, and facilitate students' efficient learning. At present, college English teaching is mainly based on the implementation of summative assessment, such as mid-term tests, final tests and other comprehensive tests. This study aims to apply the formative assessment mechanism to college English translation teaching, together with the summative assessment, in order to reduce students' learning anxiety, enhance their self-confidence and interest, and promote the effectiveness of English translation learning.

2. Problems in Current College English Translation Teaching

2.1 College English Translation Teaching has not been Paid Enough Attention. Currently, the teaching hours dedicated to translation in college English instruction are insufficient, and there is a

lack of adequate attention given to the significance of translation. This situation will have a negative influence on students' acquirement of translation techniques to some extent. Furthermore, college English textbooks scarcely incorporate any translation theory and techniques. Apart from sentence-level translations assigned as after-class exercises, there is an absence of substantial translation teaching content; moreover, these sentence translations primarily serve as mere reproductions of the text rather than new translation teaching materials. Consequently, it can be observed that translation teaching occupies a peripheral position in college English instruction.

2.2 College English Translation Teaching is Limited to Traditional Teaching Mode. The investigation shows that the present teaching mode of college English translation is still limited to the traditional teaching mode. It is reflected in the teaching method adopted by most teachers: the teaching method of "teachers as the center of teaching and students as the object of knowledge infusion" ignores the active participation of students in teaching and lacks teacher-student interaction, which makes it hard to stimulate students' interest in translation study. It is also one of the reasons for the emergence of "phubbers" in many classrooms. Obviously, this kind of teaching mode is not helpful to the promotion of the teaching process, and it is not easy to obtain good learning effect.

2.3 The Main Assessment Mechanism in College English Translation Teaching and its Drawbacks. At present, the assessment mechanism commonly used in college English translation teaching mainly include proficiency tests, such as CET-4, CET-6, and achievement tests, such as, mid-term tests, final tests. Summative assessment plays an irreplaceable role in "evaluating students' achievements". This assessment approach emphasizes knowledge, result and teaching but underemphasizes competence, teaching process and the development of students' thinking level.

The summative assessment is a traditional way to evaluate students' learning ability and teaching quality by test results. It refers to the assessment on students' learning results after they have experienced a period of learning, often quantifying the learning content, mostly reflected in the exact percentage system. This assessment approach is usually implemented in a formal, closed and serious situation, so students usually feel nervous. Because translation learning has always been one of the most difficult parts for students, paragraph translation is one of the main obstacles for students to successfully pass CET-4. Students are afraid of paragraph translation. Under such a premise, if the summative assessment of translation teaching is carried out, it will undoubtedly increase students' negative emotions towards translation learning, which is not conducive to boost the quality of translation teaching and can not stimulate students' interest in learning. Therefore, the students' subjective initiative in learning is not fully reflected, which is bad for the development of English translation teaching. The summative assessment is a vital way to measure the teaching result, but it can not assess the teaching process.

3. Measures to Solve the Existing Problems in College English Translation Teaching

3.1 Fully Utilize Extracurricular Time. In light of the limited hours dedicated to translation teaching in college English classes, it is advisable to fully utilize extracurricular time. This can be achieved by assigning translation tasks for students to complete after class through group collaboration, based on the translation skills explained by the teacher during class. By completing these tasks beforehand and summarizing any encountered difficulties, students provide teachers with ample time to teach translation skills and address feedback questions during class, thereby enhancing the quality of instruction. At the outset of assigning translation tasks, teachers may arrange relatively less challenging and more interesting content in order to gradually build students' confidence in learning translation. Additionally, teachers should emphasize the significance of translation learning and progressively enhance students' awareness of independent study.

3.2 Complete the Role Transformation. College English teachers should adopt an innovative approach by deviating from traditional ones. As facilitators, teachers should offer students increased opportunities for active participation while simultaneously imparting theoretical knowledge and practical skills related to translation. Through activities such as group feedback, class discussions, and peer evaluations, students can develop abilities in public speaking, stimulate proactive thinking

capacities, gain encouragement and praise from their peers, which may foster self-confidence among learners while promoting friendly relationships within the student community.

3.3 Implement Formative Assessment Mechanism in English Translation Teaching. Implementing the formative assessment mechanism is crucial within English translation teaching as opposed to relying solely on traditional summative assessments. The concept of formative assessment was initially introduced by philosopher Scriffin at Harvard University in 1967 in his book *Evaluation Methodology*. Its aim is to encourage students to study, make students conduct their learning process with effect, so they can get a sense of achievement, improve self-confidence and foster cooperative spirit.

Formative assessment not only starts from the requirement of evaluators, but focuses more on the requirements of the appraised employees. It not only emphasizes the learning process and the students' feeling but also stresses the communication between people, the interaction of different elements in assessment, and the relation between teachers and students. In formative assessment, the teacher's duty is to arrange assignment, gather information, have discussions with the students, infiltrate the teacher's guidance role in their discussion-based learning. In this way, the distance between students and teachers is narrowed and students will be more active in reporting their practical difficulties encountered in the translation process to teachers. As teachers, only by understanding the obstacles from students in learning can they establish teaching objectives and teaching focuses for the next stage of teaching. Good teacher-student relationship is the prerequisite and necessary element to ensure the improvement of teaching quality. Formative assessment provides the opportunity for teachers to participate in students' evaluation activities.

In paragraph translation teaching, this assessment method was applied to in two different aspects: in-class translation and after-class translation. In the in-class translation process, in a relatively open and relaxed atmosphere, students can put down their ideological burden and receive recognition from their peers through the students' mutual assessment, which can enhance their confidence in English translation learning. In addition, teachers' comments will make students clearly realize some common problems that still exist in their translation. In the after-class translation process, students may take the initiative to complete the translation tasks assigned by teachers seriously due to the tasks of student self-evaluation and student mutual evaluation. Only in this way can they truly and accurately complete the self-evaluation and mutual evaluation reports.

4. The Promotive Effect of Formative Assessment on CET-4 Paragraph Translation Teaching

To meet the demands of new CET-4 paragraph translation, English teachers must constantly study innovative teaching modes and teaching assessment mechanisms to break through the bottleneck of college English translation teaching. In this study, the research group applied the formative assessment to college English translation teaching through questionnaire surveys, pre-tests, post-tests, interviews and other methods to show the significance of implementing formative assessment in college English translation teaching.

4.1 Analysis of Questionnaire Survey Results. In the initial questionnaire survey, 500 questionnaires were sent out to all participants, 469 were effectively received, with a recovery rate of 93.8%. We extracted 220 samples for analysis. Subsequently, a second exclusive questionnaire survey was conducted for students in the experimental class after completing the experiment. Questionnaire 2 contained similar questions as those in Questionnaire 1 but also included additional inquiries regarding understanding of formative evaluation. Out of 200 sent out questionnaires, there was a recovery rate of 92.50% with 185 returned, from which 120 samples were extracted for analysis.

The findings from these surveys indicate that the implementation of formative assessment successfully alleviated students' fears in translation learning while enhancing their awareness of cooperative learning activities. Students have become more mentally relaxed and are willing to communicate openly with their English teacher by shedding any burdensome thoughts they may have had about language acquisition or performance expectations, which provided significant encouragement for students to regain confidence in their English translation learning.

4.2 Comparative Analysis of Pre-test and Post-test Results. The research team conducted pre-tests and post-tests on students from both the experimental class and the controlled class before the experiment and after the experiment respectively. The difficulty level of test questions remained consistent in the two tests, which were prepared by teachers not affiliated with the research team. The following are the results obtained from both tests:

Table 1. The results obtained from both tests

Item	Experimental Class		Controlled Class	
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
Average score	49.6	55.3	50.1	50.9
Highest score	64	78	67	69
Lowest score	29	45	28	37
Pass rate	5.2%	21.3%	5.4%	9.8%

The results show that the translation standard of the students in the controlled class and the experimental class was almost equivalent before the test. According to the data, the average score, the highest score and the pass rate of the controlled class were all slightly higher than those of the experimental class in the pre-test. The results of the subsequent test show that after the one-year experiment, the average score of the experimental class increased by 5.7 and the pass rate increased by 16.1%; The average score of the controlled class increased by 0.8, and the passing rate increased by 4.4%. Although both the experimental class and the controlled class have improved their English translation scores, the pass rate of the experimental class is 11.5% higher than that of the controlled class, which indicates that the effect of improvement is remarkable.

4.3 Analysis of Interviews. In order to have a more integrated and effective knowledge of students' understanding, recognition and acceptance of formative assessment, the research team interviewed 10 students from different majors in different schools before and after the experiment. At the same time, in order to further promote the implementation of formative assessment in English teaching, the research team members also interviewed 8 college English teachers. Through the interviews with the students, we learned that the students had almost no understanding of formative assessment before the experiment. Although they knew its importance for their English translation learning, they lacked the confidence to learn translation well. In the interview after the experiment, it is found that students have a thorough understanding of formative assessment and are willing to apply this assessment mechanism to other parts of English learning. By interviewing with college English teachers, we also know that although some teachers have some understanding of formative assessment, they have not implemented it in their own classroom teaching for various reasons, and some teachers have expressed their willingness to try it in their future teaching. Based on the above interview results, we can draw a conclusion that both teachers and students support the application of formative assessment in English teaching.

The results of this research show that the applications of formative assessment mechanism in English translation teaching provide a fundamental guarantee for college English teachers to do a good job in English translation teaching. In the formative evaluation system, teachers can get feedback information according to classroom evaluation and student mutual evaluation, get familiar with the change of participants' interest in learning, adjust teaching methods in time, and further promote the teaching effect. It provides a reference for English translation teaching, improves students' interest in English translation learning, and improves students' English application ability.

5. Summary

The target of implementing formative assessment is to motivate students to learn and enhance their independent learning ability. In the specific teaching practice, formative assessment is a continuous assessment of students' learning behaviors, of their abilities in learning through teachers' survey, questionnaires, students' mutual assessment, teachers' assessment and other forms.

During the process of implementing the formative assessment, we encountered some problems. For example, the guidance for the Chinese-English translation takes a relatively long time, and if it is carried out completely in accordance with the implementation process of formative assessment, it will take too long, which will affect the process of other parts of English course. After many discussions among the members of our research team, we have been determined to make students complete part of the texts and exercises independently. In this way, it not only improves the students' independent learning ability, but also increases the available time in class, which is used to boost the students' generally low performance in translation. Our implementation of formative assessment in translation teaching has undoubtedly achieved success. Therefore, we envisage applying this mechanism to other parts of college English teaching.

To sum up, formative assessment can make up for the deficiency of summative assessment in college English translation teaching. By means of formative assessment, teachers may get immediate feedback information, modulate teaching modes and stimulate students' initiative in English translation learning.

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