The Teaching Principles and Design of the Course of "Introduction to Translation" of MTI

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Abstract. The Master of Translation and Interpreting (MTI) program was launched in mainland in 2007 with the aim of nurturing high-level and qualified translation profess-ionals. The course of "Introduction to Translation", a crucial foundational course of the MTI program, plays a vital role in developing students' professional competencies. However, the MTI's "Introduction to Translation" course may face several challenges in teaching. This article explores principles and course designs to address these challenges based on the author's extensive teaching experience. Strategies include defining course objectives and positioning, emphasizing a student-centered approach, strengthening process assessment, and enhancing the understanding of theoretical teaching.

Keywords: "Introduction to Translation"; Student-centered; Theoretical case studies

1. Introduction

The Master of Translation and Interpreting (MTI) program was initialized in 2007 to cultivate highly skilled, application-focused, and qualified translation professionals. In this program, the "Introduction to Translation" course serves as a foundational course that significantly contributes to students' professional development. Nevertheless, teaching the MTI "Introduction to Translation" course can present a variety of challenges. These challenges include the course's abstract and profound content, its incorporation of various interdisciplinary areas, the linguistic diversity within the program, high academic expectations, the need to establish the connection between theory and practice, enhancing student engagement and motivation, accommodating a culturally diverse student body, resource requirements, selecting appropriate teaching methods, determining assessment techniques, and managing class time effectively. To address these teaching challenges, this article probes into solutions like providing clear teaching guidance, guiding students to establish connections, offering practical opportunities, encouraging discussions and interaction, and timely adjustment of teaching methods to meet students' needs.

Drawing upon long-term teaching experience, the author has also identified several key factors that contribute to effective teaching. These factors include clarifying course objectives and positioning, adopting a student-centered approach, strengthening process-based assessment, and enhancing the understanding of theoretical teaching.

2. Clarifying Course Objectives and Positioning

The "Introduction to Translation" course has well-defined objectives, which include enabling students to comprehend the historical development and evolution of translation theories. Additionally, students will gain insights into various translation theory and their fundamental principles and develop critical thinking skills, allowing students to independently craft small research reports and academic papers. The course serves as a crucial part of the MTI program, ensuring students build a profound understanding of the translation field's theoretical and practical foundations, equipping them to tackle the various challenges they may encounter within the translation profession. Students will explore the course's historical evolution, encompassing translation's definition, significance, and its role within different cultural and social contexts. The course further introduces students to various translation theories, including functional equivalence translation, culture-adapted translation, interlingual translation, among others. Students will gain in-depth knowledge of these theories' fundamental principles and methods, enabling them to

analyze and comprehend the translation process.

3. Classroom Design of the Course

In addition to theoretical understanding, the course is designed to cultivate students' capacity for theoretical analysis and critical thinking. Students will learn to assess the strengths and weaknesses of different translation theories, develop critical insights, and contemplate ethical and moral considerations within translation practice. This equips them with the ability to engage in profound research and reflection within the field of translation, ultimately transforming them into thoughtful and competent translation professionals. Lastly, the course aims to develop students' independent research and paper-writing skills. Students will select specific translation topics, embark on small-scale research projects, and compose research reports and papers. These activities help students engage in advanced academic research within the field of translation, contributing to the field's development and knowledge innovation. Therefore, the "Introduction to Translation" course plays a pivotal role within the MTI program, providing students with a solid academic and professional foundation to excel in their future translation careers.

3.1Strengthening Student-Centered Teaching Approach. In educational activities, the interaction between "teaching" and "learning" always places the student at the core. While "Introduction to Translation" is considered a theoretical course, emphasizing an interpretive approach to teaching, it doesn't imply that only traditional lecturing methods are suitable.

Fully application of a student-centered approach in the teaching of "Introduction to Translation" is crucial to improving teaching effectiveness and the overall learning experience. The following teaching model can be adopted to enhance their understanding and analytical skills of translation theory.

Preparation Stage: Read relevant textbooks, particularly chapters by Jeremy Munday, and write chapter summaries. Search for supplementary literature related to the studied chapters, such as relevant theoretical sections in "Selected Readings in Contemporary Western Theories," and write reports. Download at least two master's theses related to the chapter's topic from academic databases like CNKI and write reviews. Engage in self-reflection, focusing on the challenges of pre-class reading and comprehension, as well as personal learning objectives and expectations. Provide comments, emphasizing critical analysis.

Take the third chapter as an example: Read relevant chapters by Jeremy Munday and write summaries to ensure a grasp of key concepts from the textbook. Read relevant theoretical sections from "Selected Readings in Contemporary Western Theories" and complete reports to expand the scope of theoretical knowledge. Download at least two master's theses related to the chapter's topic and write reviews to understand the practical applications of the theory and current research trends. Collaborate in groups to prepare presentations for the class. Teaching Stage: Teachers provide knowledge explanations, emphasizing challenging and in-depth content. Student groups conduct presentations to share their research findings and understanding, promoting interaction and academic exchange among students. Post-Class Consolidation and Reflection Stage:

Based on classroom feedback, students revise their presentations, create videos, write reports, and share personal reflections and experiences. Provide an opportunity for students to reflect on their learning experiences and personal growth.

This teaching model effectively extends the time and space for learning. Students dedicate time before class to summarize content, collect relevant materials, and evaluate additional literature. This allows for more in-depth learning and research in the evenings, weekends, and spare time. Additionally, students have access to a wide range of materials, including online journals and educational videos, from both traditional library resources and the internet, expanding their learning environment. The model optimizes classroom time for focusing on key explanations and encourages active participation in discussions.

Each student, every semester, not only reads course materials but also increases their supplementary reading to broaden their scope. Students are required to select and evaluate chosen papers to enhance their critical thinking and academic writing skills. This comprehensive teaching

model helps students gain a more holistic understanding of translation theory, improve their analytical abilities, and develop a well-rounded skill set for academic and professional purposes.

3.2 Emphasizing case study for the Concretization of Abstract Theories. Concretizing abstract theories is highly beneficial as it enhances theoretical comprehension and application. Abstract translation theories often contain concepts and abstract principles that may be challenging for students to grasp and apply directly. By connecting these theories with real-world cases, students can better understand how theories are applied in practical translation, thus improving their ability to apply these theories. Simultaneously, this approach enhances interest and motivation in learning. Through concretization, the course becomes more engaging and vivid as students can see how theories impact real translation scenarios, stimulating their interest and motivation to learn.

Using cases can make learning more interesting, sparking enthusiasm among students. It also reinforces students' practical experience. Abstract theories have certain limitations in learning, and students need real translation experience to consolidate and apply these theories. Through case-based learning, students can accumulate more practical translation experience, which is crucial for their professional development. Case learning not only allows students to understand theory but also enables them to evaluate translation decisions critically in practical scenarios, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Understanding and applying translation theory are key to improving translation proficiency. Through case-based learning, students can better comprehend different translation strategies and decisions and apply this knowledge effectively in real work situations.

In summary, concretizing abstract translation theories through case-based learning helps combine theory with practice, improving students' translation skills and competence. This teaching method empowers students to tackle complex translation tasks with greater confidence and competitiveness in real translation work.

3.3 Enhancing the Use of Modern Information Technology and Online Platforms. Encouraging students to watch relevant MOOCs, such as the national quality course "Introduction to Translation," and numerous translation theory video lectures created by bloggers. Students are required to create video assignments and upload them online. Students' "homework" involves self-studying course content through video lectures, while classroom time is used to help students address any unclear concepts. The classroom is transformed into a place for problem-solving, deepening conceptual understanding, and collaborative learning. Emphasizing "active learning" is rooted in constructivist theory. Learners must understand the concepts to be taught in advance through pre-class tasks so that they can apply these concepts through active learning methods during the class. Pre-class preparation and early mastery of core concepts can effectively enhance students' learning outcomes. In conclusion, fully utilizing modern information technology and online platforms to extend classroom instruction before and after class can improve the effectiveness of classroom teaching, enhance students' interest and efficiency in learning, and address the limitations of traditional translation theory education, which is often considered monotonous and disconnected from practice. Therefore, it is a teaching model that translation theory instructors should consider experimenting with.

3.4 Stressing Comprehensive Entire Process Assessment. In the field of translation studies, a well-designed and effective curriculum is crucial for training future translators and interpreters. The Master of Translation and Interpreting (MTI) course, which introduces students to the complex and multifaceted world of translation, requires an evaluation process that covers the entire curriculum. Comprehensive Entire Process Assessment (CEPA) is essential in the MTI course to ensure students' consistent development and proficiency in translation.

With CEPA, students receive feedback at various stages of the program. This feedback allows them to reflect on their performance, make necessary improvements, and track their progress over time. It promotes a growth mindset and encourages a commitment to lifelong learning.

4. Conclusions

This study emphasizes the importance of teaching translation theory effectively, highlighting how

translating abstract theories into practical applications can enhance students' understanding and skills. Eventually, professors and lectures can teach the course better. In addition, comprehensive process assessment is a fundamental component of the MTI course introduction to translation. It offers a holistic approach to evaluate students' progress and prepares them for successful careers in the field. Last, student-oriented teaching is essential in an MIT "introducing to translation" course because it tailors the learning experience to individual needs. Student-centered teaching promotes active learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving, crucial skills in translation. It also enhances motivation, engagement, and practical application, mirroring real-world scenarios. By adapting to students' proficiency levels and learning styles, this approach ensures a solid foundation while fostering autonomy and adaptability, qualities vital for success in the multifaceted field of translation. With the above teaching methodology, what can be achieved through the course can be immensely expected.

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