TRANSLATION WORKSHOP
AN EFFECTIVE APPROACH IN TRANSLATION TEACHING

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Abstract
Translating is an important productive skill, the cultivation of which is therefore a common concern in the field of translation teaching. The traditional translation teaching approach attaches importance to the final product of translating which has exposed various disadvantages. In view of this situation, this paper suggests Translation Workshop Approach as an effective teaching method to improve the quality of translation teaching. In the actual workshop, the teacher mainly plays the roles of a mediator, an organizer, a creator, a facilitator, a supervisor, and a guide. As the mediator and organizer, the teacher helps to establish cooperative connection between students and promote their interest in translation. As the guide and facilitator, he helps students to comprehend fully the original text and solve their problems in translation. As the creator and supervisor, he creates opportunities and a relaxed atmosphere for students’ active participation in translation teaching activity. Students are the real center of this workshop activity. They work jointly to seek unified solutions to translation problems, generalizing rules or principles which help produce better version in their later translation activity.

Key words
translation teaching, translation workshop, translation workshop approach

Introduction
In the field of college English teaching in China, more and more emphasis has been laid on the development of students’ productive skills. Translating as an important productive skill has been drawing an increasingly public and academic attention which foretells a pressing need for qualified translators and interpreters. However, the traditional translation teaching approach which is teacher-centered lays emphasis on the final product of translating—the student’s version. Usually, the teacher first demonstrates translation techniques with the help of a few example sentences or makes a comparative study of two or more versions and then assigns some homework. Next, the teacher corrects student assignments with emphasis on correcting mistakes. Finally, the teacher makes some comment on students’ translation work, his emphasis still on students’ mistakes occasionally commenting on one or two good versions. In this way, the whole process of translation teaching has come to an end.

Obviously, this approach has the following disadvantages. As it belongs to product-oriented approach, it cannot ensure that students will bring their major role into full play. The teacher plays the role of a nurse, thus generating students’ heavy dependence on the teacher and their half-heartedness about learning translation. In correcting and commenting on student assignments, the teacher always lays emphasis on students’ mistakes which is liable to dampen students’ enthusiasm for translating, causing them to psychologically generate the fear of and disgust for the translation course. This product-oriented approach deviates from the aim of quality-oriented
education, failing to develop students' comprehensive ability — the ability to innovate and the abilities to discover, analyze and solve translation problems independently. In translating assignments after class, students lack their teacher's guidance and the teacher cannot monitor his students' translation activities nor does he discover his students' mistakes or guide them in problem-solving during comprehension and representation. Consequently, students are apt to skip their work. If translation is compared to an iceberg, the translated work is merely a very small part of the iceberg floating above the water, the majority of the iceberg deep under the water. The complex process of translation is not yet discovered by the teachers. In short, a traditional translation teaching approach has come to a dead end. The translation class based on it has become a one-way communication, generating little desired effect.

In view of this situation in translation teaching, this paper attempts to suggest a Translation Workshop Approach which is an effective way to develop students' ability of translating. The author of this paper has been applying in his translation teaching practice for many years.

4 Translation Workshop Approach

Translation Workshop is a forum similar to a translation center where two or more translators gather together to conduct translation activities. Gentzler 1993. When this practice is conducted in a classroom, it can be considered as a way to teach translation. The nature of this approach is to promote students' "learning by translation." As a teaching approach, it is student-centered and process-oriented. The teacher plays a leading role — a guide, an organizer, a counselor, a supervisor, and a creator of opportunities. All rolled into one and the students a major role in the process of translating — active participants, learners, and team workers.

It has the following advantages: 1. The teacher can monitor the whole process of students translating, which enables the teacher to get prompt feedback of his students' translation. 2. This approach can arouse students' interest in translation and involve all students' active participation in translating. 3. It can promote the exchange and cooperation between the students and their teacher, which benefits the teacher and his students alike. It promotes the interaction among the participants, which helps to develop a team spirit since they assume shared responsibilities and work towards the same objective. It emphasizes the major role of students and creates a democratic and competitive atmosphere which is pleasant and suitable for students to bring into full play their creative thinking, enthusiasm and initiative. In a word, the translation workshop approach encourages students' autonomy — independent or self-reliant learning by raising workshop participants' consciousness as the center of learning translation skills instead of spoon-feeding students with a static body of knowledge.

4 Procedures of Workshop Approach

Translation workshop approach can be undertaken in the form of teamwork. After handing out assignments, the teacher may allow students about twenty or thirty minutes depending upon the length of the material to be translated to translate them. During the process of comprehension, students can discuss what they cannot understand either with a partner or in groups, and then put pen to paper independently. Next, they correct each other's work, read their own versions within the group, and select the best version, which is read to the whole class. After that, the whole class makes a judgment as to which version is perfect. At this stage, other students can also offer what they consider as better versions. Finally, the teacher makes a comment on students' version, leading students to draw conclusions for translation from their own translation practice.

To be exact, this approach involves the following three stages: before translating, while translating, and after translating.

Stage One: Before Translating

This stage consists mainly of teacher instruction. In the first class hour, the teacher spends about twenty minutes expounding translation theory or demonstrating translation techniques as scheduled. According to the Syllabus, English majors should be offered two years of translation course with English-Chinese translation and Chinese-English translation each occupying one academic year. Time is limited, whereas teaching materials are as vast as the open sea. Therefore, the explanation should be brief and explicit, focusing on the key items, highlighting the difficult points, and teaching only
the essential For example as to translation theory emphasis should be laid on translation principles or criteria translation techniques and translation of stylistic varieties with the focus on translation techniques.

The commonly used translation techniques should be explained clearly and concisely just in order to get to the crucial point whereas some less commonly used ones should be taught only for the sake of practicality and convenience. Take the teaching of translating long sentences for example. The teacher should focus on teaching his students the essentials of the techniques of translating long sentences.

1. present the skeleton form of a long sentence and find out the interrelation between sentence elements
2. cut the long sentence into several simple parts
3. translate the simple parts into Chinese one by one
4. rearrange the order according to Chinese idiomatic expression
5. give finishing touches to the version

Stage Two While Translating

This stage falls into two steps comprehension and representation.

Step One Comprehension

1. Predicting the Text After his necessary explanation the teacher gives out assignment relevant to his lecture. Students should first get a global understanding of the original text by pre-reading it and then get an accurate comprehension of it through close reading. Then students are divided into groups to predict and discuss the content of the text. Through discussion students not only solve the linguistic problems and overcome the obstacles caused by different disciplines but also bridge the cultural gaps between English and Chinese. In this interactive activity students' interest and curiosity are aroused and their potentials' creativity and wisdom are also stimulated to a greater extent. Besides students are also required to work fast on some guiding questions prepared by the teacher to extract significant facts and specific information from the text. Working on guiding questions not only helps students get an overall impression of the text but also gives students good foundation for further understanding of it. Therefore such task based activities as anticipating the content of and working on the guiding questions about the assignment are significant approaches whereby to prepare for a full understanding of the original text. Take the following long sentence for example:

It is nothing else than impurities prenatally inherent in ore that seriously affect the quality of the latter which is formed as a result of geological vicissitudes including diastrophic movement eruption of volcano sedimentation glaciation and weathering etc. under the action of which pyrogenic rocks volcanic complex aqueous rocks sedimentary rocks etc. come into being some of which exist in a state of symbiosis the main cause of the absence of pure rocks in nature wherein lies the reason for the need of separation technology and apparatus namely ore dressing devices and equipment which has so far been impotent to meet the requirements of metallurgical industry the scientists make every endeavor to elevate to a new high by laser separation.

After assigning students the above task the teacher may ask the following guiding questions:

1. What does the word “latter” refer to?
2. What affects the quality of ores?
3. How does the ore come into being as a result of geological vicissitudes including diastrophic movement eruption of volcano sedimentation glaciation and weathering etc.?
4. What do the above mentioned geological vicissitudes produce pyrogenic rocks volcanic complex aqueous rocks sedimentary rocks etc.?
5. Why is there no pure ore in nature and why do we need separation technology and apparatus because some of the above mentioned rocks exist in a state of symbiosis the main cause of the absence of pure rocks in nature?
6. What do you think of the present separation technology and apparatus They have so far been impotent to meet the requirements of metallurgical industry.

With these questions in mind the students should make a close reading of the original to
further comprehend the original information.

2 Textual Analysis. After close reading, students are required to make a textual analysis which is an important means of understanding the original text accurately. The teacher should teach his students the techniques of grasping the thread of thought in the material to be translated: making sound judgment and inference; recognizing denotation and connotation of words and understanding figurative language. The analysis of the above long sentence is a typical example. The students work jointly on the original text with the help of the guiding questions asked by the teacher, and grasp the spirit of the original text by analyzing its grammatical structure and inherent logical relation between sentence elements, negotiating the following layers of meaning.

1. The ore is formed as a result of geological vicissitudes including diastrophic movement eruption of volcano sedimentation glaciation and weathering.

2. The aforementioned geological vicissitudes produce pyrogenic rocks volcanic complex aqueous rocks sedimentary rocks etc.

3. Some of the above mentioned rocks exist in a state of symbiosis which is the reason for the absence of pure ore in nature.

4. It is just the impurities prenatally inherent in ore that seriously affect its quality.

5. Therefore separation technology and apparatus are needed.

6. But so far separation technology and apparatus are far from meeting the requirements of metallurgical industry.

7. The scientists are working very hard to elevate it to a new high by laser separation.

Such tasks should be carried out in groups or in class. By analyzing the text, students provide themselves with a chance to improve their ability in understanding fully the original text.

Step Two Representation

An accurate comprehension of the original text does not necessarily ensure an adequate representation. The quality of translated work depends upon the workshop participants' accurate comprehension of the original, his good mastery of the target language and his flexible application of translation techniques. With the solution of the comprehension problems, adequate representation should become the foremost concern. Based on an accurate comprehension of the original, students work independently on the production of a proper version within the given time. At this stage the teacher should not interfere with students' independent work on their translation. Instead he becomes a supervisor organizing and monitoring students' translation activities. The teacher should make sure that the students' choice of words and construction of sentences must convey accurately the real meaning of the original and at the same time conform to the usage of the target language so as to achieve the unity of an accurate comprehension on the one hand and an adequate representation on the other. To ensure this, the teacher should enable his students to meet the following requirements: 1 to be able to flexibly apply literal and free translation and avoid word-for-word translation which will get them nowhere; 2 to be able to make a contextual analysis of difficult words; Students are required to bear in mind that words become alive only when they are used in the right context and that in a complex discourse the exact meaning of many words can be grasped only when it is studied in the light of the context. 3 to be familiar with the subject matter by reading extensively. The teacher should give students in advance some materials concerning the subject matter covered in the text to be translated so as to enable students to familiarize themselves with the subject matter which is also an indispensable factor in achieving accuracy in translation.

Stage Three After Translating

This stage includes revision and evaluation. During revision students work in pairs to revise each other's version by comparing their versions with the original text to see if there is anything unintelligible or improper. They are required to underline where there is good translation, make a cross where there is misunderstanding or mistranslation, and make a wave where there is improper translation.

After revision students work in groups to evaluate their versions and then pick out the best one which will next be read to the whole class involved. And then other classmates point out the strengths and weaknesses and offer better versions if there are any.

To be more detailed, the after-translating...
stage includes three phases: pair work, group work, and class work. They share the same goal that all students can benefit from their joint work and learn much from one another so as to deepen their awareness of translation art and solve the problems in their translation activities, ultimately improving their own versions.

1. Pair Work
An English class usually has twenty students or so who may be roughly divided into ten pairs with each pair sitting at the same desk. Either the students sitting in pairs revise each other's version or the students in the first pair revise the versions of the second pair before selecting a better version to be read to the group in the following phase.

2. Group Work
The ten pairs can be divided into three or four groups. All the better versions selected in different pairs are now read to the whole group. All the other students in the same group point out the strengths, misunderstandings or improper renderings in the versions and then select the best one to be read in the third phase.

3. Class Work
The three or four best versions selected from different groups are read to the whole class. After that, other classmates point out their strengths, misunderstandings and improper renderings or offer what they consider as good versions. During this phase, the teacher should make a timely judgment of students' discussion and evaluation, leading students to draw conclusions and generalize rules for translation.

This practice involves all students' active participation in revision and evaluation activities and arouses students' sense of competition. Besides, it provides a prompt feedback which not only makes the group see their own problems but also enables the other groups to become aware of the problems so that they can avoid them in future translation activities.

The close reading of the original text, joint effort to solve problems, first draft, and finished translation and revision and evaluation of translation make workshop participants more fully aware of the dynamic process of translating. By the end of this course, students shall certainly have had a richer understanding of translation and generated a strong interest in this course.

Suggestions for Workshop Approach
This approach needs some preparatory work on the part of both the teacher and his students. To conduct this approach smoothly and efficiently, the teacher should take into consideration the following points and make a careful teaching plan on the basis of students' specific circumstances.

1. Translation teaching should be based on the integration of translation theory with translation practice. The workshop approach focuses on the techniques of problem-solving and the craft of translation but it does not overlook the teaching of translation theories. According to the Syllabus, the contents of translation teaching include basic translation theory and translation techniques and translation of stylistic varieties such as literary translation, technical translation and cultural translation. The teacher should aim to develop students' theoretical attainment and meanwhile cultivate their rigor in translating. Mu 1999. Therefore the teacher should make a careful teaching plan and allocate time properly for each item. Generally, there are two class hours of translation course every week. The teacher spends approximately twenty minutes in introducing translation theory briefly or demonstrating translation techniques in the first semester and translation of various stylistic texts in the second semester. After about twenty minutes of explanation or demonstration, the teacher then gives out relevant materials to be translated.

It is essential for students to do plenty of translation exercises. However, the view of “The more exercises the better” does not always produce an ideal effect. Choosing the quantity of exercises should serve the purpose of enabling students to master essential translating skills. Therefore the difficulty of the materials to be translated should be suitable for the students' knowledge and the quantity of translation materials should be moderate.

2. This approach aims to involve all students' active participation but some students may refrain from doing so as a result of lacking confidence or experiencing intense anxiety or numerous failures in the process of translating. This kind of psychological interference tends to discourage students and act as an obstacle to successful translation. Therefore the teacher should tolerate
students errors in their translation and sympathize with their feelings of tension and anxiety and create a relaxed and pleasant classroom atmosphere by establishing a friendly teacher-student relationship so as to encourage and motivate students to take an active participation in translating and generate the desired teaching results.

3 Attention should also be paid to the development of students' awareness of cultural differences between Chinese and English. "Language is influenced and shaped by culture." Deng Liu 1995 and different languages reflect different cultures which consequently generates cultural gaps. Translation should overcome such cultural gaps as well as linguistic obstacles. In fact "translation means translating the culture." Chen 2000. Because of cultural differences, misunderstandings may arise and the same words or expressions may not mean the same thing to different peoples. Therefore the teacher should help students to clear away the cultural obstacles before they set about their translating.

4 Since "bilingualism, biculuralism, and adequate knowledge of the content of a text are insufficient without the ability to write effectively," Nida 2001, the teacher should develop the students' competence in writing so as to ensure an adequate representation on the part of students.

Conclusion

The teacher used to be the central figure in translation teaching serving as the knowledge transmitter and offering to his students what he thought as important and worth learning while the students passively took in knowledge by taking notes. Now in the workshop after assigning the translation task to his students the teacher retreats to the backstage for the time being giving advice or help only when necessary and commenting in the end. The teacher is not merely an instructor but a guide, an organizer, and facilitator and more important a creator of opportunities and environment in which students learn how to translate.

The task-based activities in the workshop make all students aware of whether they have fully understood the text what they have learned from one another and where their weaknesses are. Students often work in pairs or in groups which enables students to negotiate meanings of some cultural words and difficult words share ideas among themselves and get inspirations from one another and combine wisdom in problem solving tasks. In successful groups, the interaction promoted by working together can produce active motivation and create a pleasant atmosphere of communication whereby to provide students with a chance to improve their reading comprehension ability through active reading and textual analysis.

This approach has also combined student independent work with their joint work. In working independently students learn how to apply their language skills in solving translation problems and develop the sense of competition. While working with others, they learn how to draw on one another's merits and most important of all, develop the spirit of teamwork. These skills are all necessary for language students as listed in the Syllabus Designs for College English Majors issued by the Ministry of Education in 1999. To some degree these abilities are survival skills which enable students to adapt to an ever changing world.

References