

OBE-Informed Teaching Model for *Translation for International Communication*: Design and Implementation

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Abstract

Against the background of the “Three Integrations” Initiative and in light of the heightened ideological and political emphasis currently placed on *Translation for International Communication* and the interdisciplinary nature of this course, this study introduces the principles of Outcome-Based Education and constructs a “One Core, Three Stages, Five Dimensions” teaching model, centered on cultivating students’ competence to undertake translation tasks that are oriented at international communication. Empirical results demonstrate that this model effectively strengthens students’ ability to apply translation skills in international communication and promotes the integration of translation skills instruction with patriotic education; it thus offers a valuable reference and practical model for pedagogical reform in relevant external publicity translation courses.

Keywords: Three Integrations Initiative, International Communication, Outcome-Based Education (OBE), Pedagogical Reform, Translation for International Communication.

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1. INTRODUCTION

To integrate the multilingual editions of The Governance of China into universities, textbooks and classrooms – commonly known as the “Three Integrations” Initiative is deemed as a key measure of curriculum-based ideological and political education which is intended to facilitate more virtuous talents for the country, particularly to nurture more talents who can translate and spread China’s stories to the world. A major platform for this is the Understanding Contemporary China textbook series, which are in alignment with the overall teaching objectives of *Translation for International Communication*.

This study aims to construct a “one core, Three Stages, Five Dimensions” teaching model for the course of Translation for International Communication, grounded in the principles of (OBE). By doing so, it is intended to enhance translation majors to develop a better understanding of contemporary China, equip them with the knowledge about language and other socio-cultural information to tell China’s story well.

2. PREVIOUS STUDIES

2.1 Curriculum-based Ideological and Political Education

Curriculum-based ideological and political education is recognized as an indispensable part of

China’s efforts to nurture virtuous and patriotic talents, endowing foreign language education in China with a unique mission and value. Therefore, it has become one of the major issues under discussion in current foreign language teaching and research. Till now, research mainly unfolds in terms of the following three aspects. To begin with, previous studies explore the meaning, top-level design, curriculum and framework of implementation of ideological and political education (He, 2022; Sun, 2020; Wen, 2021; Zhang & Wu, 2024). This strand of theoretical studies has laid down a solid foundation for ideological and political education, showing that the practice in general depends on how teachers integrate those abstract, higher-level thinking patterns into their teaching naturally. Another group of studies focus on the approaches that teachers of specific language courses adopt in their class to deepen students’ understanding of the country and of what is right. Researchers showed that teachers can design multiple activities, choose teaching methods and evaluation benchmarks in accordance with the objectives of their course and the characteristics of learners in it, so as to lead the students to establish a sound and right stance and identify themselves as members of the mainstream society (Zhang, 2023; Hu, 2024). This provides more dimensions to the teaching research of foreign language education; however, it does not care about the

comprehensiveness and depth of the ideological-political elements incorporated into foreign language classes. The third kind of studies place their emphasis on foreign language teachers' abilities to implement ideological and political education in their classes. For instance, some researchers have explored the discursive strategies that teachers utilize in their class (Tang, 2021; Wang & Liu, 2023) and how teachers may reconstrue their discursive system (Liu, 2021; Duan & Liang, 2022). These studies have highlighted how teacher discourse may affect the way and extent students develop values; yet, few have examined how to integrate the discursive system characteristic of contemporary China into classroom teaching.

2.2 The Course *Translation for International communication*

Translation for International Communication, typically called *Chinese-English Translation* in the curriculum of translation majors, has long been seen as of great significance to the cultivation of foreign language talents. However, current research on this course focuses on how to translate contents that are part of Chinese traditional culture or characteristic of an industry such as Chinese medicine, having not incorporated the discourse system of contemporary China into translation teaching. Relevant research can be classified into the following three kinds. First, previous studies are concerned with students' language abilities, especially those related to translation skills or techniques. They explore how teachers make comparisons between Chinese and English in terms of vocabulary, syntax and text, with focus on specific skills (Ma, 2012; Zhang, 2020). Secondly, researchers have also highlighted the role of translation theories or pedagogy that originate in western countries. They discuss how theories like Constructivism, Skopos Theory, Figure-Ground Theory are used to guide translation practice in class (Yang, 2009; Hou, 2015); meanwhile, lexical approach has also been applied (Sun, 2014). The third strand of studies examine how corpus, computer technology and artificial intelligence may facilitate the improvement of translation quality in teaching. Researchers has proved that corpus helps students to choose the right word or proper collocation, improves their ability to make sentences or larger stretches of text (Wu, 2010; Han, 2015; Chai & Wang, 2017).

More recently, researchers explore how to integrate ideological and political elements into their translation class (Dai, 2020), the overall theoretical approach that can be adopted (Li, 2020) and self-awareness that should be developed in translation teaching (Si, 2021). To sum up, there is limited literature on the teaching research of *Translation for International Communication*, which is mainly about the integration of ideological and political elements and the raising of students' awareness. More work needs to be done

concerning how teachers can improve students' abilities to tell China's stories by helping them to better and systematically understand the discursive system of contemporary China.

Against the background of the "Three Integrations" and of curriculum-based ideological and political education, *Translation for International Communication* has been endowed with distinct properties and features. Therefore, the teaching model for it is distinguished from other foreign language courses and is in need of thorough exploration. To start with, this course is more ideologically and politically oriented. Unlike most foreign language courses which require the natural and unnoticeable integration of those elements to guide students' thinking and help them establish the correct value, *Translation for International Communication* highlights the discourse system of Contemporary China. In other words, what is to be learned is the discourse system, not its more concrete or specific manifestations in the society. Another point is that *Translation for International Communication* requires a deeper and thorough understanding of contemporary China, including its context, system, paths and theories, which extends far beyond that of other courses. Also, this course involves the knowledge of multiple disciplines, i.e., translation, cross-cultural communication and communication in general. It attaches greater importance to students' knowledge of multiple disciplines and is intended to broaden their understanding of international political, economy and culture, and improve their intercultural communication competence. Finally, this course values both what is translated and what is achieved by translation. Unlike other courses which prioritize what is produced by students, this course values whether and how the translation and its products are better accepted by the international audience.

3. Teaching Model in *Translation for International Communication*

3.1 Overall approach to the course: OBE

Guided by the principles of OBE, this study focuses on the construction and implementation of a teaching model for the course *Translation for External Communication*. The OBE pedagogical model emphasizes what students are expected to learn, how to enhance student engagement, and how to facilitate the achievement of desired objectives; it employs a backward-design approach to curriculum development, working from the intended outcomes back to the course structure. In their instructional practice, educators are required to simultaneously fulfill current teaching objectives and address the future developmental needs of their students. In other words, the OBE philosophy entails a process of backward design commencing with identified needs followed by forward implementation; it underscores the alignment between educational goals and educational outcomes while prioritizing the student's

central role as the active subject within the learning process.

Based on preliminary explorations, this study has established a comprehensive pedagogical framework for *Translation for International Communication* as illustrated in Figure 1. This framework entails defining

intended learning outcomes through the rational formulation of teaching objectives and content; achieving these intended outcomes through a synergistic and innovative combination of multifaceted measures; and consistently employing multidimensional, interactive assessment methods to evaluate the actual learning outcomes.

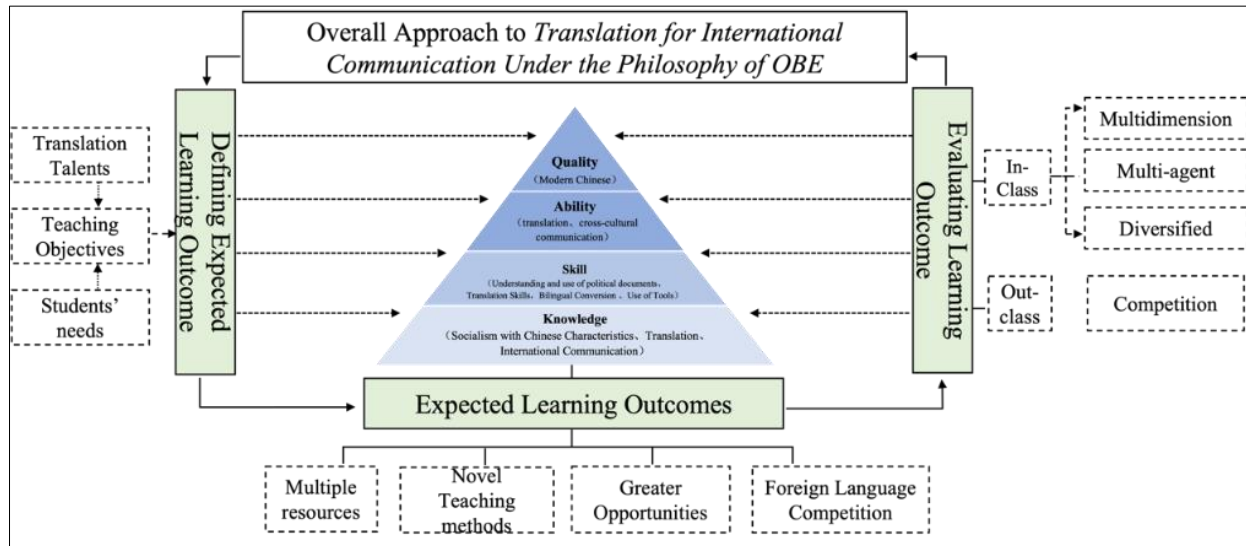


Figure 1: Overall Approach to Translation for International Communication Under the Philosophy of OBE

3.2 The OBE model in *Translation for International Communication*

Translation for International Communication is a compulsory professional course designed for third-year undergraduate students majoring in Translation. As a preliminary step, this study conducted a questionnaire survey and interviews regarding the *Translation Competence of Undergraduate Translation Majors* to gain a comprehensive understanding of the third-year students' specific needs for this course, thereby laying a solid foundation for effective instructional design and implementation.

Drawing upon the interdisciplinary nature of *Translation for International Communication*, this study has constructed a teaching model guided by the principles of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) characterized by a "One Core, Three Stages, and Five Dimensions" framework. First, it identified the student specifically, their competence in external translation and communication as the central core of the course's teaching. Subsequently, the course objectives (i.e., the expected student outcomes) were categorized into distinct stages, establishing a three-tiered hierarchy of teaching objectives. The first stage is to enable students to acquire the knowledge that is needed to ensure solid international communication. It aims to equip the students with the following four types of knowledge: (1) Theories of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics; (2) basic principles for international communication, developing a clear understanding of what to translate and

how to translate; (3) common techniques for translating political documents, getting acquainted with this special genre and relevant translation strategies; (4) translation technologies and tools such as Trados, DeepL, etc. The second stage is expected to improve students' ability to do translation in practice. More specifically, students will be able to translate political documents or news, utilizing their knowledge of cross-cultural communication techniques. The third stage

Building upon this foundation, this study integrated the course content, deconstructed and operationalized the intended learning outcomes, and implemented them directly into classroom instruction. The teaching of the course of *Translation for International Communication* primarily revolves around ten key facets of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era including "the most essential feature of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and the greatest strength of the system of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics," "the general task of upholding and developing Socialism with Chinese Characteristics," "adhering to a people-centered philosophy of development," and "the overall layout and strategic layout of the cause of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics." The content of each facet encompasses interpretations of China's systems and theories; analyses of the value orientations embedded in political discourse with Chinese characteristics; instruction on the bilingual expression of vocabulary, syntax, discourse, and rhetoric

unique to the Chinese context; and the translation and dissemination of content related to these specific themes.

This study also established a five-dimensional teaching design aimed at achieving the desired student learning outcomes specifically by leveraging diversified resources, updating pedagogical methods, creating innovative spaces for practical application, and utilizing foreign language competition platforms while employing multifaceted assessment methods to evaluate student performance. During the preparatory phase, the team curated a comprehensive suite of course resources anchored by the primary textbook yet encompassing a wide array of academic literature, media assets, and supplementary materials. *Understanding Contemporary China: A Course in Chinese-to-English Translation* serves as the core textbook for the course of Translation for International Communication, providing a structural framework that guides the selection of instructional content and facilitates the mastery of key concepts and challenging topics. The academic literature resources lay a solid foundation for analyzing the linguistic features and the historical evolution of core concepts found in contemporary political documents, while simultaneously providing students with resources and platforms for independent study. The media resources are designed to provide students with bilingual input in both Chinese and English, thereby establishing a firm foundation for translation practice and fostering both a global perspective and a deep sense of national identity. Finally, the supplementary resources are intended to provide students with additional support in the form of specialized terminology databases and extensive question banks for translation exercises.

The teaching of the course *Translation for International Communication* is broadly divided into three stages: pre-class knowledge acquisition, in-class knowledge internalization, and post-class knowledge consolidation; it employs a blended learning approach that combines both offline and online modalities. Concurrently, the course team has established innovative practical spaces, incorporating the latest materials for external publicity (including Government Work Reports) and instituting simulated translation projects (such as mock international conferences) to enable students to hone their translation skills within simulated scenarios. Furthermore, by fully leveraging platforms for foreign language competitions specifically by guiding students to participate in the “Understanding Contemporary China” National Foreign Language Proficiency Competition for College Students the program assists students in further enhancing their translation and broadcasting capabilities. Based on the evaluators, evaluation methods, and evaluation content, a comprehensive assessment model has been constructed that is tailored to the specific instructional format. Figure 4 illustrates the OBE teaching model for the course of Translation for International Communication against the

background of the integration of the multilingual editions of *The Governance of China* into universities, textbooks and classrooms.

3.3 The application of the model

The teaching model for *Translation for International Communication* was carried out through a comprehensive restructuring that addressed unit-specific instructional objectives, content, instructional design, and assessment. First, unit objectives were redesigned to be both targeted and forward-looking, ensuring alignment between immediate learning outcomes and long-term professional competencies. Second, representative materials drawn from external publicity translation were selected as teaching case studies, and current developments and trending topics in international politics, economics, and culture were systematically integrated into the curriculum to broaden students' horizons and strengthen their practical application skills. Third, in implementing the revised instructional design, diverse teaching methods including case analysis, group discussions, and role-playing were introduced to guide students toward a deeper understanding of the characteristics and techniques of external publicity translation. Finally, a multifaceted assessment system was established, incorporating a broader range of evaluative dimensions into the grading process, including students' classroom performance, assignment completion, and practical operational proficiency.

4. CONCLUSION

This study addresses the current pedagogical demands of the *Translation for International Communication* course, which are characterized by a heightened emphasis on ideological and political education, rigorous interdisciplinary requirements and the need to prioritize the outcomes or effects of translation in international communication. To meet these needs, the study introduces the philosophy of OBE into classroom teaching, constructing and applying a model termed “One Core, Three Stages, Five Dimension” model. At its core, this model aims to cultivate students' proficiency in not only translation but also communication for international audiences. It establishes a three-stage hierarchy of objectives and undertakes a systematic pedagogical restructuring across five distinct dimensions.

The results of this practical application demonstrate that this pedagogical model characterized by a process of “backward design driven by needs, followed by forward implementation” effectively enhances students' practical application capabilities in external communication. Moreover, it achieves a deep integration of translation skills training, the cultivation of comprehensive interdisciplinary competencies, and the fostering of a profound sense of national identity and commitment. This study not only advances innovation in pedagogical philosophy but also provides a practical

exemplar of significant replicable value for cultivating a new generation of international communication professionals capable of fulfilling the contemporary mission of “telling China’s story well”.

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