The Teaching Reform of Business English Translation Based on Flipped Classroom Model

Huan YU
School of Foreign Languages of China West Normal University, Nanchong, Sichuan, China
82672464@qq.com

Keywords: Business English Translation, Flipped Classroom, Model, Teaching.

Abstract. With increasing foreign business contacts in China, the demand for high quality and compound business English talents is increasing. However, the cultivation of business English professionals in universities cannot meet the needs of the modern society. Especially, the traditional teaching model of business English translation has been unable to adapt to the needs of the new era and a new teaching model is urgently needed. In recent years, the flipped classroom model has aroused wide attention in China’s education circle as an innovative teaching model. After analyzing the features of the flipped classroom model in business English translation teaching, the author tends to construct a new teaching model based on the notion of the flipped classroom so as to improve the effectiveness of business English translation teaching.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, large-scale international exchanges of culture, economy and trade are arising from the demand for language services, which is the direct driving force to promote the rapid development of China’s language service industry. Therefore, the translation industry is gradually upgrading and the demand for the amount of translation talents is increasing. At present, the situation of business English translation teaching is not optimistic. There are a series of problems in curriculum setting, teaching methods, assessment methods and students’ knowledge structure, such as the unreasonable teaching content, too much translation practice of literary subjects, the limited knowledge of the students, the single model of teaching and assessment method, and the lack of translation technology module. What’s more, the teacher, but not the students, is considered as the center in translation classroom, and the scope of translation knowledge and the translation speed is not paid enough attention to. Finally, the disjunction between the information feedback and the teaching is serious. In a word, there is a large gap between the translation of professional graduates and career requirements. Therefore, we need to change the existing teaching model in the business English translation teaching in order to get out the predicament.

2. The Analysis of Present Situation of Business English Translation Teaching

2.1 Too prominent theories and skills teaching in the business English translation

The translation contents in Business English are mainly business letters, business contracts, product instructions, etc., which have formal style and clear expression. Meanwhile, sentences in the translation texts in Business English are mainly long and difficult, and their structures are complex and diverse [1]. Therefore, a considerable length in many business English translation textbooks is arranged to explain the translation theories and skills. On the one hand, these contents are overlapped with other English and Chinese translation or interpreting courses. This arrangement further shortens the inadequate teaching time of business English translation course. On the other hand, difficult translation theories also reduce the students’ interest in learning and participation in this course.
2.2 Students’ weak language foundation and inadequate professional knowledge

The business English translation course is generally arranged in the third year in many universities. At this stage, students have accumulated some language knowledge. In the first two years in many universities, students have to learn other public courses as well as business foundation courses. However the language foundation and professional knowledge of many students are weak. As a result, teachers in business English translation course are often busy making up for students’ weak links and cannot increase the proportion of applied translation practices in the overall teaching process.

2.3 The single mode of the assessment method

With the strong practical characteristic of the business English translation course, teachers should not only teach students a large quantity of background knowledge about business English translation, but also provide students with the language scene which is close to the real one. However, the business English translation teaching is mainly completed in the classroom, and its assessment is only reflected by the semester test, which cannot dynamically display the various stages of students’ participation and practice in the learning process. Under the traditional teaching model, the assessment method of the business English translation is single.

In a word, the current situation of business English translation teaching is not optimistic. There are a series of problems in curriculum setting, teaching methods, assessment methods and students’ knowledge structure. What’s more, the teacher, but not the students, is considered as the center in translation classroom. Meanwhile the disjunction between information feedback and teaching is serious. Therefore, we need to change the existing teaching model in business English translation teaching in order to get out the predicament.

3. The Features of Flipped Classroom Model

3.1 The development of flipped classroom model

Flipped Classroom was originated in the United States in 2007. Two chemistry teachers Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams in Woodland Park High School became driving forces in flipped classroom at the high school level when they recorded their lectures and posted them online in order to accommodate students who missed their classes. This teaching model reverses the traditional teaching methods by delivering instructional contents online outside of the classroom. This teaching model gave birth to a wave of educational reform, and was rated as a major technological change influencing classroom teaching by the Canadian “Global Post” in 2011 [2].

Flipped classroom appeared in China in 2012, attracting a high degree of academic attention. From the following year, it began to enter into the expansion period quickly. Thousands of schools carried out an outbreak experiment of the flipped classroom model [3].

3.2 The advantages of flipped classroom model

Flipped classroom is a new type of teaching model. In this model, teachers use modern educational technology to produce teaching micro-videos, in order to achieve the purpose of fragmenting knowledge. Students watch the videos before the class and try to understand the teacher’s explanation of the hierarchical knowledge points, and then they complete the internalization of knowledge in the class through the interaction between teachers and students. After class they can use micro-videos to review and consolidate knowledge they have learnt [4].

Compared with the traditional classroom teaching model, flipped classroom model is more in line with the students’ learning rules. It can provide help to students who most likely to encounter difficulties in the knowledge internalization stage. Flipped classroom model not only reverses the teaching process, but also transforms the roles between teachers and students. In the classroom teachers will change the role from the traditional imparter of knowledge into a learning facilitator, and students transform from the passive recipients into the main researcher. Because students have more autonomy in the allocation of learning time, they can control the progress of learning.
according to their own pace, which thoroughly reflects the subjectivity of student learning. What’s more, through the study of interactive learning in the classroom, flipped classroom model can stimulate the release of students’ critical thinking and creativity as well as develop students’ wisdom.

4. The Application of the Flipped Classroom Model in Business English Translation Teaching

4.1 The impartment of knowledge before the class

Teaching materials for business English translation course are extensive, including advertising, product instructions, contracts, e-commerce, trade fairs, logistics, and insurance as well as basic translation methods. Due to the inadequate teaching time in the classroom, teachers can teach students these contents by using the micro-class through the network platform before the class to save time. As an important part in the class, the micro-class directly determines the effect of the pre-class knowledge transfer, which affects the design of the teaching activities in the class and the final learning effect [5]. The content of the micro-class is refined and its time is short. Each video should focus on one translation point, such as a translation technique, and the time should be controlled in about ten minutes. In addition to the micro-class, teachers should also provide the appropriate basic exercises before the class, so that students can test whether they can understand initially. If students have problems in watching videos or in pre-class exercises, they can talk to each other via the exchange platform, or they can also feedback to the teacher. For simple or individual issues, teachers can communicate with students via the platform; if there are difficulties or common problems, teachers can record them to give a unified answer in the classroom. The micro-class is applied to the flipped classroom model, in order to impart translation knowledge before the class, breaking the constraints of traditional translation teaching in time and space. At the same time it can reflect the personalized teaching. Students can control the progress of teaching and suspend or play back the videos according to their own needs, which can solve the students’ complaints about the teachers’ teaching speed in the traditional classroom.

4.2 The internalization of knowledge in the class

In the traditional business English translation teaching model, most of the teachers’ energy is used to realize the low-level cognitive goal of the teaching task and only a small part of the energy is used to realize the high-level. While the flipped classroom model reverses the distribution of teachers’ energy [6]. The flipped classroom model does not replace the teacher with videos. The basic skills of teachers are still an important guarantee for efficient teaching. Teachers should not only impart knowledge during the class, but also have the abilities, such as organization, supervision, guidance, as well as feedback and evaluation. In the classroom, teachers should first make a comment on the results of the pre-class exercises according to the feedback from the students, answering common or difficult questions. Secondly, teachers should design more intensive in-class exercises than pre-class exercises, as practice is a critical stage for students to achieve the internalization of translation knowledge. Under the guidance of the teacher, the students deal with the translation through independent inquiry or cooperative learning. Teachers should observe carefully in this process, and provide individual or collective counseling if necessary. After completing the exercises in the classroom, the teacher should encourage students to share the translation experience and make an objective and positive evaluation, so that students will once again strengthen their comprehension of the basic translation theory and translation skills in the translation achievements.

4.3 The consolidation of knowledge after class

The creative connotation of the flipped classroom model is embodied in the concept of “learning-first-and-teaching-next”, which brings the most important learning process of internalization of knowledge from the post-class step in the traditional teaching to the class step in the new teaching model, so that teachers can provide timely and necessary help for students at this
stage. Therefore, the flipped classroom teaching model is mainly composed of pre-class and in-class parts. However, students could gain new insights through restudying the old material. So it is also important to review lessons after class. Students will inevitably form a fragmented knowledge about translation through the pre-class and in-class learning. Students should comb these knowledge systems timely, and consolidate them with the post-class practice. If necessary, they can once again watch the micro-class to deepen the understanding of the contents they have learnt. After completing the knowledge impartment, internalization and consolidation, students can exchange ideas on the network platform to learn from each other. If there are some puzzled points, they can also discuss with students or teachers online or offline.

In the design process of the post-class teaching activities, there is an important aspect, which is learning evaluation. Unlike the traditional achievements assessment, the flipped classroom model focuses more on the assessment of the process. Although the students’ learning outcomes are still parts of the evaluation system, the proportion is relatively small. What’s more, the evaluation system of the flipped classroom model should include self-assessment and mutual evaluation as well as the learning attitude and learning ability. Students evaluate themselves, classmates and teachers, and vice versa teachers evaluate themselves and their students. Students and teachers know their own evaluation results through the platform, which can supervise, urge and encourage each other [7]. In a word, the flipped classroom model could form a virtuous circle in the subsequent study and teaching process in business English translation teaching (Figure 1).

![Diagram of the Flipped Classroom Model in Business English Translation Teaching](image)

Figure 1. The Flipped Classroom Model in Business English Translation Teaching.

5. Conclusion

Nowadays the flipped classroom model is increasingly being used in modern teaching. Based on the concept of learning-first-and-teaching-next, teachers complete the knowledge teaching before
the class through the micro-class. And the class time is arranged to answer questions and solve problems for the students with teachers’ guidance, as well as the knowledge internalization. This teaching model focuses on individual differences among students, who can arrange the learning time and the progress according to their own situation. At the same time, this teaching model provides students with active learning and cooperative discussion opportunities, imperceptibly cultivating students’ comprehensive abilities, such as self-learning, speculation and innovation. The flipped classroom model subverts the traditional translation teaching model, which conforms to the current trend of informationization reform of education, and is beneficial for the business English translation teaching to get out of the predicament.

Acknowledgement
This research was financially supported by Fundamental Research Funds of China West Normal University (Project No. 17D046).

References