

Research on Interpretation Practice Teaching in Local Application-Oriented Universities Based on Authentic Interpreting Project

Li Su, Yingying Zhang, Lei Dong

School of Foreign Language Education and International Business, Baoding University, Baoding, China

Email: 13513280226@163.com

How to cite this paper: Su, L., Zhang, Y. Y., & Dong, L. (2023). Research on Interpretation Practice Teaching in Local Application-Oriented Universities Based on Authentic Interpreting Project. *Creative Education*, 14, 569-577.

<https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2023.143039>

Received: February 4, 2023

Accepted: March 27, 2023

Published: March 30, 2023

Copyright © 2023 by author(s) and Scientific Research Publishing Inc. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

Abstract

Based on the provincial University Students' Innovation and Entrepreneurship Project "Red General Spectrum of Baoding Military Academy (Series 1)", from the perspective of interpretation practice teaching, this paper provides solutions to the existing problems in interpretation practice teaching, such as the lack of connection between interpretation teaching content and local culture, the single interpretation classroom mode, the solidification of learning thinking, and the lack of practical experience of interpretation teachers. As a local application-oriented university, serving the local economic and social development is the main goal of training talents. Interpretation teaching is based on the authentic project of local cultural interpretation service, bringing students from the interpretation classroom into the authentic interpretation project venue, changing the teaching content from general content to general content as the guide, project demand as the main play, learners from students to dual identity as students and interpreters. Teaching is not only confined to the course materials, but also into the interpretation service. The reconstruction of teaching content and teaching objectives from a practical point of view can achieve the goal of serving the local interpretation teaching and practicing interpretation locally.

Keywords

Interpretation Practice Teaching, Interpretation Practice Project, Service of Local Culture

1. Introduction

Most of the training objectives of local application-oriented universities are to

serve the local social, economic and cultural development (such as the training objectives made by Baoding University, Shijiazhuang University, Handan University in Hebei Province, just to name a few), but in terms of interpretation practice teaching, it is acceptable to cultivate students' awareness of local service, but their ability to provide services is not enough, and there is lack of practice. The main reasons are that the content of teaching materials is not closely related to the local areas, students' learning style and thinking mode are not in line with interpretation teaching, and interpretation teachers are not professional enough to train interpretation talents efficiently.

In order to solve the contradiction between the student's interpretation ability and the lack of local culture cultivation, based on the writer's own interpretation teaching practice, the writer establishes a set of interpretation practice teaching mode, which takes the authentic project as the interpretation task, the interpretation client and audience evaluation plus teacher-student evaluation as the process evaluation, and the real output as the goal, in order to produce qualified junior interpreters, serve the local, and provide some ideas for the establishment of qualified interpretation teachers.

2. The Dilemma of Interpretation Practice Teaching in Local Application-Oriented Universities

The training objectives of English majors in local application-oriented universities in Hebei Province are to tell local stories and serve the local people in English. Taking the writer's university as an example, it is clearly proposed to serve Baoding and radiate Beijing City, Tianjin City and Hebei Province. Other universities, such as Shijiazhuang University and Handan University, also put forward the goals of serving the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and serving the local economy. However, service is not a slogan, but falls on personnel training and output. In this regard, the contradiction between local demand and students' inadequate ability is highlighted. How to cultivate students' ability to serve the local is an urgent problem to be solved.

The cultivation of students' ability in interpretation teaching is reflected in "listening comprehension, memory, analysis of meaning structure, information processing, attention allocation and other aspects" (Wang, 2015). As far as the current curriculum is concerned, the ability training does not meet this requirement.

As far as the interpretation market demand is concerned, there are different levels of demand pyramid in the current interpretation talent market. Local application-oriented universities are at the bottom of the pyramid and train junior interpreters, who are engaged in daily translation work and other work (Liu, 2007). As an interpretation course, its goal is to cultivate local service-oriented interpreters. However, judging from the current content of interpretation courses, the mode of interpretation classes and the team of interpretation teachers, it is impossible to produce qualified interpreters who meet the local needs. Its predi-

cament mainly includes the following three points:

2.1. Little Connection between Local Culture and the Content of Interpretation Course

Taking the writer's university as an example, the interpretation course is a selective course for senior students. Its prerequisite courses include "English-Chinese/Chinese-English Translation", "Selected Reading of British and American Newspapers", "Appreciation of Translation Masterpieces", etc. Its content is mostly the knowledge of common sense. The teaching materials of interpretation courses are mostly based on "tourism and leisure", "environment and climate", "enterprise and management" and other thematic teaching in the form of units, which have little connection with local culture. When students receive local interpretation projects, they are still helpless and do not play a supporting role in the needs of enterprise clients.

Under the drive of output orientation, interpretation teachers will consciously add local materials, but most of the materials come from publicity materials, students' interpretation level and interpretation quality are assessed by teachers and students, which is subjective and cannot achieve objective evaluation, lack of examples for students to adapt to market demand, and students themselves have a vague understanding of interpretation results.

2.2. Single Interpretation Classroom Mode and Solidified Learning Thinking

Taking the writer's university as an example, the current interpretation course adopts Online and Offline Hybrid Teaching, with the Production-oriented Approach (POA) as the main teaching method. Set up a scenario before class, and put it in the course on the learning platform (such as chaoxing.com), upload the interpretation materials and related audios and videos as the support for the preview and group cooperation to produce interpretation assignments, check the "before class" learning effect and evaluate it in class, and continue to give the output translation materials after class to drive the next round of output. In this process, students are faced with teachers and classmates from the beginning of the course till end, lacking the ability to deal with emergencies and real communication scenes. At the same time, interpretation materials are mostly prepared before class, lacking on-the-spot adaptability and practicality.

At the same time, in the course of more than ten years of English learning, students have formed fixed learning habits and ways of thinking, which are difficult to break. For example, when learning interpretation materials, students still analyze them word by word, sentence by sentence according to the level of words, syntax and text, and are more accustomed to reading the materials according to the text, lacking communication and emotional expression with the audience. Once they leave the materials in their hands, they will become incoherent. Simple grammatical errors such as singular and plural, person and so on often occur, affecting the audience's mood and low satisfaction with students'

interpretation tasks is given by the audience and the clients.

2.3. The Weakness of Interpretation Teachers' Practical Ability

Taking the writer's university as an example, most of the interpretation courses are undertaken by translation teachers, even by teachers of non-translation majors. Teachers have not received special training in interpretation practice, and as an elective course, interpretation courses have not received enough attention, resulting in the lack of the setting of teaching objectives, the writing of syllabus, the selection of teaching content and the formation of process evaluation. It is inevitable to select a textbook and teach it for a whole semester, which does not play a positive role in guiding the improvement of students' interpretation ability.

In view of the above dilemmas in interpretation practice teaching, the writer proposes to drive interpretation practice teaching by authentic projects, and put interpretation practice in the real scene of Baoding Military Academy Memorial Hall by declaring the University Students Innovation and Entrepreneurship Project "Red General Spectrum of Baoding Military Academy (Series 1)" (hereinafter referred to as "Series 1"). The teaching materials are authentic and effective, and the evaluation is jointly completed by the staff of the Military Academy, the audience and the teachers and students. The translated works are exhibited in the Military Academy for criticism and correction by tourists and researchers, and get continuous improvement. Students can see the real effect of translation services, which is objective for self-evaluation and it is a good guidance for students' employment intention after graduation.

3. Interpretation Practical Teaching Measures Based on Authentic Interpreting Project

"(Series 1)" is the first series of "Red General Spectrum of Baoding Military Academy", a provincial University Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship Project directed by the writer. This project is commissioned by the Baoding Military Academy Memorial Hall to produce videos for it. Each video lasts 3 - 5 minutes, telling the life stories of the Red Generals in English. The series contains the deeds of 10 generals (Ye Ting, Jin Fozhuang, Ji Zhentong, Dong Zhen-tang, etc.). The source of the deeds come from Baoding Military Academy Memorial Hall, relevant papers and journals, magazines, newspapers, network resources and other channels. Based on this project, students need to go out of the classroom to do video recording, organize interpretation materials, and introduce the deeds of 10 generals in a generous and decent manner. Interpretation practice teaching has changed from knowledge of common sense materials to knowledge of common sense as the guide, local materials as the main focus, teaching venues from classroom to classroom and field, learners' identity from students to dual identities as students and interpreters. In authentic practice projects, it is to solve the real interpretation problems encountered by students,

and to cultivate students' interpretation and translation ability. To make a good reserve of interpreters and translators for local needs, specific measures are taken as follows:

3.1. Objective Evaluation in In-Depth Cooperation between Universities and Enterprises

University-enterprise cooperation is one aspect for interpreting teaching practice. Taking Baoding Military Academy Memorial Hall as an example, from the interpretation service of cultural relics and historical materials in the hall to the production of signs such as the big lion in front of Shangwu Hall, to the interpretation service of couplets and mottos in Shangwu Hall, the Memorial Hall has cooperated with the university for many times, and its collected materials are open to teachers and students in the writer's university, which has effectively promoted the dissemination of Military Academy culture. It also promotes the university to have a better understanding of Military Academy culture and cadets. In the "Series 1" project, the Memorial Hall provides the teachers and students with Ye Ting Memorial Hall, bronze statues of ten generals, four exhibition halls and other places as teaching practice venues. The Memorial Hall provides experienced staff for the interpretation team. The interpretation team conducts interpretation service on the spot of the Memorial Hall. The interpretation service has changed from recessive to dominant. Students' works can be displayed in the Memorial Hall with a daily passenger flow of more than 100 tourists. Students are enthusiastic about learning interpretation and translation knowledge and studying Military Academy culture. At the same time, the Memorial Hall staff guide and evaluate students' interpretation services, and the audience also participates in the evaluation system. The evaluation of results is open, transparent and well-founded. Students are truly responsible for their own achievements and have a correct attitude. This interpretation practice project is conducive to the continuous and in-depth cooperation between universities and enterprises, as well as to enhancing students' awareness of serving local culture and injecting fresh blood into the local economy.

3.2. The Provision of Terminology Database for Interpretation Content

The construction of terminology database is an important part of interpretation service. At the same time, the construction of terminology database is also the most complicated work of interpretation service. After receiving the task of interpretation, teachers and students should first screen terms, collect and sort out different translation versions from papers, network resources and other ways, and unify terms. At present, the writer's university has collated more than 600 terms for Baoding Military Academy Memorial Hall. Taking "Series 1" as an example, the terms are collected as shown in the following table (part of the content):

宁都起义 (二十六军起义)	Ningdu Uprising (the 26th Routh Army Uprising): a rebellion by the 26th Routh Army of the National Revolutionary Army of the POC in Ningdu County, Jiangxi Province on December 14th, 1931. 17,000 soldiers of the 26th Roth Army defected from the KMT to the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army of the Communist Party of China
《囚歌》	The Song of Prisoners, written by Ye Ting, to show the time Ye Ting was yoked in prison and he had the courage to fight KMT's white horror
皖系军阀	Anhui Clique
奉系军阀	Fengtian clique

In the process of collecting and sorting out terms, students also expand the reading of Military Academy culture, which lays a foundation for the clear output of students' later interpretation tasks.

3.3. Abundant and Complete Interpretation Materials with the Join Force with Enterprise Tutors

In the interpretation classroom oriented by outcome, the teacher is the one who imparts knowledge, skills and emotions, while the enterprise tutor is the one who experiences interpretation practice. First of all, enterprise tutors have rich cultural knowledge of the enterprise, taking "Series 1" as an example, which lists the deeds of 10 generals, enterprise tutors can not only preach the deeds of 10 generals according to the materials provided by the Memorial Hall, but also insert a lot of anecdotes about the generals, and the image of the generals is full and rich (Ma, 201). Students' understanding of generals not only stays in the military career of wars and battles, but also in the roles of flesh-and-blood Communists, fathers, teachers and brothers etc. At the same time, the enterprise tutors provide vivid examples as the staff with many years of experience in guidance, full of emotions for the history and characters of Baoding Military Academy, giving emotional guidance for students' interpretation practice, and immersive feelings for the audience.

For example, when describing General Dong Zhentang's deeds, the enterprise tutor mentioned that General Secretary Xi Jinping had made a special trip to Gaotai County, Zhangye City, Gansu Province to visit the Memorial Hall of the West Route Army of the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, where the highest-ranking martyr was Dong Zhentang, then commander of the 5th Red Army. After the introduction, the tutor read the article *Dong Zhentang: Comrade of Resolute Revolution* (Jiang & Jiang, 2020). The students were greatly encouraged and had obvious emotional changes when they followed the interpretation task of the enterprise tutor.

3.4. The Found of Interpretation Teaching and Research Teams and the Cooperation with Enterprises

The professionalism of interpretation teachers is one of the keys to the success of

interpretation practice teaching. Interpretation teachers should form a teaching team, which can form different teams according to different interpretation tasks, or establish the same team to carry out different interpretation tasks. At the same time, the interpretation teaching and research team should also invite the client of the interpretation task to join, providing sufficient Chinese materials for the team, which can save time and effort for the practice of the interpretation task, and ensure the authenticity of the data.

Taking “Series 1” as an example, Baoding Military Academy Memorial Hall provides the team with the pictures and videos of the diaries, letters, daily necessities and other relics of 10 generals, as well as three volumes of relevant books on the generals, which provide sufficient Chinese corpus for interpretation practice teaching.

4. Preliminary Achievements in Interpreting Practice Teaching

Through the interpretation practice teaching of Baoding local culture, students have a deeper understanding of the culture, and can tell a certain number of Baoding stories in English, which basically meets the requirements of interpretation teaching.

4.1. Improving Students’ Ability to Participate in Interpreting Practice

Up to now, students have participated in local interpretation tasks, including the guide map of Zhili Governor-general’s Office Museum and the introduction of important scenic spots, the introduction of cultural relics and historical materials of Baoding Military Academy Memorial Hall, the introduction of Quyang Museum, the restaurant cultural introduction of Anguo Qisanfang Restaurant, the introduction of Baoding Writers’ Group Exhibition Hall, the commentary of the Baoding University History Museum, and the commentary of the Volunteer Teaching in the West. During the course of 36 class hours in one semester, the students not only master the relevant theoretical knowledge of interpretation, but also exercise their communication skills, on-the-spot performance ability and comprehensive application ability of knowledge through practice. The phenomena of forgetting lines before the audience and simple grammatical errors have been significantly reduced, and the interaction with tourists has been increased. The voice and gait have been improved. At the same time, in the repeated practice of interpretation, students’ oral expression ability and language comprehension ability have also been improved, which has played a positive role in the study of other courses.

4.2. Preliminary Formation of Teaching and Scientific Research Team of Interpretation Teachers

In the process of leading students to carry out project-based interpretation tasks, the team of interpretation teachers has also been initially formed. Taking the

writer's university as an example, the team of interpretation teachers has formed from the perspectives of professional title level, age level and professional development. At present, the team has output more than 30,000 words of English translation to the local area, including the commentary of cultural relics and historical materials of Baoding Military Academy Memorial Hall (English version) and other above-mentioned materials. At the same time, in the process of teaching and research, the team of interpretation teachers has made achievements in declaring first-class courses, teaching reform projects and excellent teaching cases of the school level, and writing papers, which also provides a good opportunity for teachers' personal development.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, interpretation practice teaching should be based on authentic projects. In daily teaching, it is necessary to cultivate students' project awareness. At the same time, localized materials should be added to the teaching content to expand students' local vision and cultivate students' awareness of serving the local and the abilities to do so. At the same time, students are encouraged to go out of the school and enter the authentic interpretation scene, learn to communicate with clients and audiences, constantly improve the interpretation content and sense of scene, and take the evaluation of clients and audiences as an important part of teaching evaluation to complete the comprehensive evaluation of students.

Interpretation teaching in local application-oriented universities is also promising, which plays a role in promoting the development of local economy and culture. At the same time, it provides ideas for students' future employment direction from the aspects of personnel training and outcome orientation. From the perspective of teachers' teaching skills and personal development, it paves a way for teachers to declare teaching projects, build courses and promote their professional titles. Only when teachers are full of spirit and have ideas to do something, can they lead students to a smooth and better road, and the interpretation practice teaching in local application-oriented universities can be carried out smoothly and fruitful, thus contributing to the local economic and cultural construction.

Funding

This paper is for Baoding University Transformation Development Research Fund Project (本文系保定学院转型发展研究基金项目(产学研合作教育专项): 保定军校文史资料口译实践研究 2018C02 最终成果).

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

Jiang, Z., & Jiang, G.D. (2020) Dong Zhentang. *Comrades of Resolute Revolution, Party*

History Collection, No. 8, 4-8.

Liu, H.P. (2007) Positioning and Professionalism in Interpreter Training. *Journal of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, No. 5, 8-11.*

Ma, Y.X. (2010) Communists in Baoding Military Academy. Huaxia Publishing House.

Wang, F.F. (2015) Teaching Strategies of Interpreting Course for English Majors in Local Universities Aiming at Cultivating Applied Interpreting Talents. *Journal of Kaifeng Institute of Education, No. 4, 67-69.*