

Approach Design to Cultivate MTI's Translation Ethics to Realize Moral Education: Based on the Course of "Introduction to Translation"

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Abstract

Aiming at moral education of MTI, this paper looks into cultivating approaches of MTI students' translation ethics. Previous researches mainly explore the composition of translation ethics and cultivation approaches of translation ethics in translation classes as a whole, lacking micro studies on translation ethics education specifically designed for MTI. Choosing the course "Introduction to Translation", this paper analyzes approaches to assimilate cultivation of translation ethics into MTI's translation class, and evaluate these approaches based on SWOT and paired samples test. Research results can inspire further study on cultivation approaches of MTI's translation ethical consciousness, also shedding lights on ethical cultivation for other kinds of education.

Keywords

Moral Education, MTI Education, Translation Ethics, Introduction to Translation

1. Introduction

Instruction on Moral Education for University Students proposed by the Ministry of Education, PRC on May 28th, 2020 states the necessity to promote moral education, which emphasizes value education together with knowledge and ability cultivation, to help university students form positive views toward the world, optimistic outlooks on life and career. Cultivation of professional ideals and morals, as indispensable components of moral education, aims at guiding university students to understand and follow professional regulations, to strengthen

professional responsibilities, and to form professional characteristics and behaviors (Ministry of Education, 2020).

Master of Translating and Interpreting (i.e. MTI), set up under the urgent need for professional translating and interpreting talents, refers to those high-level professional translators and interpreters contributing to China's social, economic and cultural development. The specialty of translator/interpreter as a profession calls for moral education in MTI education. Only through understanding professional regulations, and forming professional habits, can MTI students meet professional requirements and serve social, economic, cultural needs of the nation.

As a social practice, translation consists of a network of various elements, among which ethics is an indispensable one. Translation ethics refers to moral regulations of translation activities, applicable to every subject involved in the translation system. It is used to mediate possible value conflict among various subjects, to ensure the successful processing of translation as a system, and to achieve possible balance between the translation system and other possible exterior social systems (Feng, 2018: pp. 1-4). It can be seen that cultivation of translator/interpreter's translation ethics is in accordance with the aim of moral education. The current study bears in mind the overall aim of moral education, takes into consideration the actual implementation of MTI education, strives to present a proper approach to cultivate MTI students' translation ethics to realize an all-around development of MTI students.

2. Literature Review

Translation ethics has long been a hot topic in translation studies. American translation theorist Lawrence Venuti holds the view that translators should follow the principle of ethics of difference, which helps target readers to understand the original culture better (Venuti, 1998: p. 11). Indian translation scholars Niranjana (1992), Spivak (1993) hold similar opinions to Venuti in that they tend to think translators should maintain the original cultural elements when doing translation. British translation scholars such as Tymoczko (2003) and Baker (2006) have also related translation ethics to translators' political view. Andrew Chesterman, a translation scholar from Finland summarizes 5 models for translation ethics: ethics of representation, ethics of service, ethics of communication, norm-based ethics and ethics of commitment (Chesterman, 2001: pp. 139-154).

Chinese studies on translation ethics have been carried out from the following perspectives: first, literature review have been done (Wang, 2005; Luo, 2009); second, multi-dimensional discussions have been carried out centered on theoretical and practical values of translation ethics-related studies (Wang, 2005; Tang, 2007; Zhu, 2009; Yang & Zeng, 2010; Peng, 2013; Wang, 2016). Peng Ping, in her monograph *On Translation Ethics* published in 2013, combing Chinese ethical tradition and translation practice, systematically analyzed the nature, status, research object, objectives, and methodologies of translation ethics as a discipline. She has also investigated theoretical translation studies, translation

practice, translation criticism, translation teaching and learning, etc. from the perspective of translation ethics. Third, new nature and criteria of translation ethics are discussed. Liu (2014) emphasizes the necessity to construct translators/interpreters' professional ethical regulation in a hypertext context. He has also talked about the ethical confusion brought about by crowd sourced translation. Feng (2014) starts her research from translator identity and holds the opinion that only by taking translator's multi-identity into consideration can translation ethics be better understood (Feng, 2020). Ren (2020) points out the combination of Chesterman's five ethical models, philosophy of morality and skopos, and ethics embedded in individuals and professions, can regulate translator's translation activity and evaluate translator's moral decision. Besides, Jonas's responsibility ethics, as a complementary element, can help face new challenges brought about by technological progress.

Studies on how to cultivate MTI students' translation ethics are relatively few, except some representative ones such as: Chen (2011) emphasizes the importance of translation ethics cultivation for MTI education, and explores problem-based approach to embed translation ethics cultivation into the course of "Translation History". Yang (2018) conducts teaching action research upon interpretation cases to investigate professional ethics. Li & Chen (2020) points out the limitations of translation ethics studies in the era of new technology. They put forward measures to expand the scope of translation ethics studies, and clearly indicate the ethical responsibilities of professional translators/interpreters and educators. Wang & Yu (2020) aim to establish evaluation mechanism for professional ethics through adding examination items to test examinees' translation ethical consciousness in CATTI (i.e. China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters).

In recent years, scholars have noticed that for university translation/interpretation teaching practice, translation ethics can be cultivated through moral education. On the one hand, what translation ethics include, under demands of discipline construction from the perspective of moral education, should be reexamined. Translation/interpretation talents in the new era should form their own criteria to evaluate translation activities, bearing in mind nation consciousness. Educators should not only cultivate students' professional and cross-discipline abilities, but also constantly enrich the theoretical framework of translation ethics (Yang, 2019; Liu, 2021). On the other hand, how translation ethics can be trained, under the guidance of moral education, should be clarified. Scholars talk about the approaches to embed moral education into translation teaching, answering questions like: how moral education can be included in teaching content, how moral education can innovate teaching methods, how moral education can affect teaching outputs, etc. (Xia & Huang, 2021; Sun & Wang, 2021).

Seen from the literature review, upon translation ethics cultivation in translation/interpretation teaching practice, previous studies have mainly placed emphasis on general teaching design. Studies on translation ethics cultivation in MTI education have been few, not to mention studies on translation ethics train-

ing under the guidance of moral education. Therefore, the present study takes “Introduction to Translation”, one compulsory course for MTI, as an example, to explore ways to combine cultivation of translation ethics with course learning, aiming at making indications for teaching practice of translation ethics cultivation and further related studies.

3. About the Course: “Introduction to Translation”

Since the course arrangement for MTI education is compact, it is unpractical to open a separate course to conduct translation ethics education. Moreover, it is better to elevate students’ translation ethical level to combine translation ethics education with other courses due to the nature of translation ethics, according to *Instruction for MTI Education* put forward by the National Guidance Committee of MTI education. As a compulsory course for MTI students, “Introduction to Translation” aims at “helping students know about the profession of translator/interpreter and language service, the development of translation practice both domestically and abroad, how to elevate language abilities needed for translation/interpretation activities, translation technologies, and how to solve practical problems encountered in actual contexts” (Mu, 2021: p. 24).

Seen from the objective of “Introduction to Translation”, it can act as an effective carrier to elevate MTI students’ translation ethical level. Furthermore, the content of the course makes it possible to cultivate students’ ethical consciousness. The development of translation practice both in China and the western world, together with the fast-developing language service industry in the new era, constitutes the course “Introduction to Translation”. To put it in more details, on the one hand, after combing the development of translation practice both in China and the western world and explaining the reason for the forming of translation ethics in a deeper level of social and historical context, students can be guided to think about the ethical meaning of translation activities from the angle of overall development of human being, and form concrete translation ethical view (Chen, 2011: p. 46). On the other, translator/interpreter as a profession, together with language service industry, has been enduring tremendous changes, resulting in new ethical challenges. It is necessary to embed ethical discussion into the introduction of language service industry.

4. Approach Design to cultivate MTI Students’ Translation Ethical Level

4.1. Research Content

Baker thinks translation ethics teaching should follow the following principles: first, the teaching content should help students to form thinking mode and evaluate its influence; second, the teaching content should provide students with methods to deal with possible ethical dilemma in translation practices; third, teachers should manage to imitate real translation/interpretation context for students to make their own ethical choices and foresee possible impacts (Baker &

Maier, 2011: pp. 1-14). Based on the above analysis, the teaching approach has been designed in both synchronic and diachronic directions. The diachronic investigates the development of translation practices both in China and the western world, while the synchronic introduces current situation of translation/interpretation and language service industry. After students get an all-around understanding on translation practice and translation industry, real translation contexts have also been imitated to help students to make ethical choices, and to guide students to build correct ethical views.

Diachronically, for the development of translation practice in both China and the western world, typical translators and translation events have been introduced to lead students to think: What have been translated? Why they are translated? How they are translated? What translation ethical views are manifested in these translation activities? Are these translation activities different from previous ones from the perspective of translation ethics? If yes, what are the social and historical reasons behind? The typical translators and translation events are shown in **Table 1** and **Table 2**.

Synchronically, the use of new translation technology and rapid economic development of the society have created new ethical dilemma.

Beside the above discussions, the researcher would keep optimizing the research design, look closely into the research process, analyze the research result, and improve the research details, to ensure the effectiveness of ethical education for MTI students.

4.2. Research Procedures

According to various ethical features manifested in different translation practice, the current research selects 24 topics in translation practice through human history and contemporary translation context in the new era for discussion (see **Table 1**, **Table 2** and **Table 3**). Every discussion consists of “cooperative discussion”, “group presentation”, “mutual assessment”, “teacher’s assessment”, “relevant lecture”, “in-class discussion”, “after-class review”, etc. All these steps aim at helping students to understand the social and historical reasons behind different translation ethical views and to form advisable translation ethical views for themselves. These steps are also beneficial for students to realize ethical dilemma in modern times and elevate their ability to solve ethical problems. The whole lecture would be conducted in English, together with Chinese for some difficult items, to train students’ language ability.

First, preparation of the course. There are two aspects for this step: one is to design a questionnaire to examine MTI students’ translation ethical level according to *Moral Regulations for Chinese Professional Translators and Interpreters*; the other is to post the questionnaire online and collect data.

There are two parts in the questionnaire: one is multiple choices designed according to the *Moral Regulations* mentioned above. Questions are concerned with 9 basic principles and 4 action rules for translators/interpreters. The 9 basic principles are: good attitude, competitive ability, faithful to the original, neutral,

secret-keeping, abiding by the contract, cooperative and helpful, properly utilizing techniques, and self-improvement. The 4 action rules are: basic rule, before-the-activity rule, during-the-activity rule, and after-the-activity rule. The other is short answers based on possible translation ethical contexts (Table 4).

Second, Preview of the course. At the beginning of the research, students are divided into 24 groups, each group taking charge of one topic. Every topic is allocated with two teaching sections. The teacher would paste topics and presentation requirement on the teaching platform, for the corresponding group to prepare in

Table 1. Discussion on translation ethics (China).

No.	Topics for Discussion
1	Zhi Qian and <i>Fajujing Xu</i>
2	Dao'an: "Five Losses" and "Three Difficulties"
3	Kumarajiva: "Discussing Western Rhetoric with Sengruì"
4	The First Intellectual to Pay Attention to Translation Activity Ethics: Xuanzang
5	Matteo Ricci, Xu Guangqi: Pioneers of the Translation Wave for Scientific and Technological Documents
6	Liang Qichao: Ethical Difference between Literary Translation and Buddhist Translation
7	One of the Most Influential Views on Translation Ethics: Yan Fu and His "Three Difficulties for Translation"
8	Lin Shu: Not Knowing English Equals to Violating Translation Ethics?
9	Lu Xun's Translation Ethical View: Word-for-word Translation and Survival of the Nation

Table 2. Discussion on translation ethics (west).

No.	Topics for Discussion
1	Cicero: "Dole out Piece by Piece" and "Pay out by Weight"
2	Jerome and Augustine: Debate on Translation Strategy for the Bible
3	John Dryden: Translation Ethics in Metaphrase, Paraphrase and Imitation
4	Translation Ethics Seen from the Perspective of Linguistics
5	Deconstructionism: Deconstruct Ethics?
6	Translation Ethics Seen from the Cultural Perspective
7	Gideon Toury: The Discipline of Translation
8	Lawrence Venuti: Ethics of Difference
9	Translation and Power: Post-colonial Translation Ethics

Table 3. Discussion on translation ethics (new era).

No.	Topics for Discussion
1	“The Translator” and “The Other”: Ethical Choice in the New Era
2	Gains and Losses: Ethical Challenges Brought about by Translation Techniques
3	“Customer-centered”: Ethical Dilemma in Language Service Industry
4	Translator/interpreter as a Profession to be Constructed: Lower-rank and Medium-rank Translation/interpretation Market
5	Ethical Thinking in the Context of Crowdsourced Translation
6	Ethical Difference Lying in Translation for Different Industries

Table 4. Items for the questionnaire and points assigned.

Item	No.	Points	Remarks
Multiple Choices	10	50	0 point for over-selection, half of the total points for less-selection
Short Answers	5	50	Points assigned according to different levels, 2, 5, 8, 10 points for level 1, 2, 3, 4
total	15	100	

advance and post their presentation material on the online teaching platform. Other groups would preview the material, to get familiar with it and prepare for mutual assessment.

Third, in-class discussion. Based on related ethical topics, each group conducts a presentation, after which, other groups put forward their assessment based on the presentation. Thereafter, the teacher makes comments, paying special attention to cultivate students' ethical awareness and abilities to handle ethical problems.

Fourth, after-class discussion. After in-class presentation, mutual assessment and teacher's guidance, every group uploads their revised presentation material to the online teaching platform for other classmates' reference. Meanwhile, the teacher conducts interview with students separately, to know in detail the cultivation of their ethical awareness.

Fifth, data analysis. There are two parts in this step: one is to conduct SWOT analysis for students' presentation material, to investigate the strength, weakness, opportunities and threats of students' ethical awareness; the other is to invite students to do the questionnaire in step 1 again and compare the survey result with the one in step 1, to examine students' current level of ethical awareness.

SWOT analysis has been put forward by professor Verrick from University of Los Angeles in 1980s. SW means strength and weakness; OT means opportunity

and threat. This method can analyze strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of markets and enterprises scientifically (Cao & Jin, 2016: p. 51). Taking both internal and external elements into consideration, SWOT analysis is appropriate to evaluate the overall performance of students' ethical awareness.

The cultivation approach designed in the current research has been experimented in one Chinese university for pilot research. The researcher has investigated the cultivation of students' ethical awareness in grade-1 MTI students of this university. Presentation materials of various groups and intensive interview materials with students are collected to form SWOT analysis of these students. The pilot study has served as beneficial reference to the main study: (Table 5).

Sixth, writing of research report and teaching reform plan. While writing, the researcher reflects the gains and losses of the approach adopted here and forms ideas for follow-up research.

4.3. Research Characteristics

Based on the course "Introduction to Translation" for MTI, utilizing mixed teaching mode, this research imitates concrete translation contexts, to design effective approaches to cultivate MTI students' ethical awareness. Qualitative and quantitative analyses have been conducted toward first-hand data to evaluate the cultivation approach and to form further teaching plan. This exploration can act as a beneficial reference for follow-up researches in relative field.

First, there are relative few quantitative studies concerning cultivation of MTI students' ethical awareness. There are also few evaluative studies in this field. Through questionnaire, the current research conducts paired samples test to assess directly the research results; through SWOT analysis model, individual and overall ethical performance have been systematically summarized;

Second, the current research chooses a compulsory course for MTI: "Introduction to Translation", to embed cultivation of students' ethical awareness into the introduction of translation, making the whole research concrete and reliable.

Table 5. SWOT analysis of MTI students' translation ethical awareness (pilot study).

Strength	Relatively good awareness of translation ethics
Weakness	Weak theoretical basis, resulting in impressionist ethical choices
Opportunity	The new demand to strengthen our international communications ability has brought new opportunities to the construction of our translation ability, resulting in MTI students' relatively strong sense of their identity as translators/interpreters.
Threat	The rapid development of information technology has to some extent weakened the sense of morality of translator/interpreter as a profession.

Moreover, the current research imitates actual translation/interpretation context, which ensures students' ethical and moral choices close to those choices they make in real world. This approach helps the researcher to infer the actual effects of ethical awareness cultivation.

Other than the main research, the current study includes pilot research and follow-up research. Pilot research tests the research design, helping to confirm the research approach, while follow-up research, based on the research results of the main research, optimizes the research design.

5. Conclusion

Adapting to the demand of “Moral Cultivation” proposed by the Ministry of Education, PRC, and objective of MTI education, this research explores the cultivation approach to elevate students' ethical awareness. Previous studies neglect micro studies paying special attention to MTI students' ethical awareness. The current research explains how to cultivate students' translation ethical awareness in the teaching of “Introduction to Translation” and evaluate the research design using paired sample test and SWOT analysis model. The current research acts as a beneficial trial to further related researches, not only for cultivation of translation ethics based on specific courses, but also for cultivation of translation ethics designed for other types of education.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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