

# Research on the Cultivation of Translation Competence of International Students in Yunnan under the Background of "Understanding Contemporary China"

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**Abstract:** In the context of "Understanding Contemporary China", with the vigorous development of China's translation industry, there is an urgent need for professional translation talents. Yunnan attracts a large number of international students with its unique geographical location and cultural resources. Studying the cultivation of their translation abilities is of great significance for promoting regional cultural exchanges. Currently, there are many problems in the cultivation of the translation abilities of international students in Yunnan. There is a disconnection between translation theory and practice, and international students have insufficient understanding and application of knowledge about contemporary Chinese society and culture. The difficulties in cultivation include unreasonable positioning of translation teaching and curriculum design, significant differences in the language foundations and cultural backgrounds of international students, weak Chinese expression and cultural transformation abilities, disconnection between translation theory and practice teaching, and insufficient translation teaching abilities of teachers. To address these issues, corresponding strategies are proposed. These include optimizing the translation teaching system by adjusting courses, adopting diverse teaching methods, and developing characteristic teaching using Yunnan's regional cultural resources; consolidating the language and cultural foundations of international students through stratified teaching and cultural courses; strengthening Chinese expression and cultural transformation training to improve the ability to translate culture - loaded content; enhancing the integration of translation theory and practice by increasing practical courses and internship opportunities; and improving teachers' translation teaching abilities through organizing training, encouraging research, and introducing professional talents. It is expected that through these measures, the translation abilities and cross - cultural communication levels of international students can be enhanced, and more outstanding translation talents can be cultivated for exchanges between China and foreign countries.

**Keywords:** Contemporary China; University; Translation Competence; International Students

## 1. Current Situation of the Cultivation of Translation Ability of Foreign Students in Yunnan

Under the teaching goal of "Understanding Contemporary China", the cultivation of translation ability of foreign students in Yunnan universities should closely focus on the needs of employment market and cultural promotion, and devote to promoting the comprehensive development of foreign students in knowledge acquisition, cultural adaptation and language use, so as to meet the actual needs of international exchanges and cooperation under the background of globalization. This requires integrating Yunnan's unique regional advantages, such as the location characteristics of border areas and the diversity of ethnic cultures, into the translation teaching system, so that foreign students can not only master the basic translation skills, but also deeply understand the cultural connotation and practical application scenarios behind Chinese language.

However, there are many problems to be solved in the training system of translation ability of foreign students in Yunnan. In teaching practice, there is a serious gap between translation theory teaching and practical application, which leads to the uneven translation skills of foreign students, the

lack of understanding and application of contemporary Chinese social and cultural knowledge, and the relatively limited opportunities for translation practice. For example, the translation courses for foreign students in some universities are still mainly based on traditional theories, lacking practical projects combined with the actual scenes of Yunnan's local culture and economic development, such as the translation practice of ethnic minority cultural festivals, border trade negotiations and other scenarios, which makes it difficult for foreign students to use their knowledge flexibly in the face of real translation tasks.

This not only affects the improvement of foreign students' translation ability, but also restricts their active role in cross-cultural exchanges, which makes it difficult to meet the needs of Yunnan and even the whole country for translation talents in international exchanges. At the same time, the lack of targeted teaching strategies for the cultural background and language characteristics of different countries of foreign students also leads to the inability to form a personalized training model, resulting in the translation ability training being difficult to achieve the expected effect.

## **2. Understanding the Connotation and Requirements of Translation Competence**

Translation is a complex and challenging cross-cultural communicative activity, which requires the translator to convey the meaning of the source language fluently and accurately in the target language on the basis of accurate understanding of the source language information. This process involves not only grammatical rules and vocabulary accumulation, but also a thorough grasp of the cultural connotation, logical structure and rhetorical characteristics behind the language. For foreign students in Yunnan, the cultivation of translation competence involves not only language conversion skills, but also a deep understanding of the social and cultural background of contemporary China and the ability to use language flexibly in different contexts.

It is particularly important to combine Yunnan's local cultural elements, such as the rich ethnic customs, border trade culture and ecological civilization construction cases in the region. These practical scenarios can help foreign students understand how social context influences language use, and master the skill of adjusting translation strategies according to different audiences and purposes. For example, translating promotional materials for Yunnan's ethnic minority handicrafts requires not only literal conversion, but also conveying the cultural symbolism behind the products, which tests the translator's comprehensive ability to integrate language and culture.

With the deepening of university English reform, the society's demand for translation is getting higher and higher, and the translation theory literacy, practical ability and teaching level of university English teachers cannot meet the requirements of cultivating students' translation ability, so continuing education is needed.[1] According to Roderick Jones in his book *Interpretation of Conference Interpreting*, the core work of consecutive interpreters is divided into understanding, analysis and translation. If the above three activities are not done properly, no matter how well the notes are done, it will not help. [2]

## **3. Difficulties in Training the Translation Ability of Foreign Students in Yunnan**

### ***3.1 The orientation and curriculum of translation teaching are unreasonable***

In the training system of foreign students, translation teaching is often in a marginal position. Most colleges and universities still focus on the training of basic language skills, pay insufficient attention to translation courses, and lack of systematicness and pertinence in curriculum setting. Especially, there is a lack of teaching resources for the translation of the theme of "Understanding Contemporary China", such as the interpretation of Chinese policies and the dissemination of culture. At the same time, the teaching method is single, teacher-oriented, lack of interaction and practicality, and it is difficult to stimulate the learning interest and enthusiasm of foreign students, which makes it difficult for foreign students to effectively improve their translation ability.

### ***3.2 Significant differences in language foundation and cultural background of foreign students***

The overseas students in Yunnan have a wide range of sources, their mother tongue and cultural background are different, and their language foundation is also uneven. For instance, students from Southeast Asian countries may struggle with tonal differences in Chinese, while those from

non-Sino-Tibetan language backgrounds often face challenges in mastering character structures and grammatical patterns. Some foreign students have a low level of Chinese and have not yet reached the requirements of professional translation learning, and they have many difficulties in vocabulary, grammar use and language expression. This foundation gap makes it hard for them to keep up with advanced translation theories, such as the nuanced differences between literal translation and free translation.

In addition, due to the limited understanding of contemporary Chinese society and culture, foreign students often misunderstand and misexpress because of cultural differences in the process of translation. For example, when it comes to traditional Chinese festivals, customs or political and economic terms, it is often difficult for foreign students to accurately convey their connotations, which affects the quality of translation. Concepts like "Double Ninth Festival filial piety culture" or "new development philosophy" require not only language proficiency but also cultural contextualization. Moreover, idiomatic expressions such as "Lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets" pose unique challenges, as direct translation fails to capture the ecological philosophy behind them.

To make matters worse, current teaching rarely addresses these individual differences. There is a lack of hierarchical teaching strategies, so whether students have a strong foundation or a weak foundation, they often receive uniform teaching. This not only fails to meet the diverse learning needs, but also aggravates the gap of translation ability among students, making it difficult to form a systematic and targeted training system.

### ***3.3 The ability of Chinese expression and cultural transformation is weak***

In the process of cultivating translation ability, teachers pay more attention to the improvement of foreign students' foreign language ability, but neglect the cultivation of their Chinese expression ability. Although some foreign students have a certain level of foreign language, they cannot translate foreign language information into Chinese accurately and fluently because of their lack of Chinese expression ability. At the same time, due to the lack of in-depth understanding of Chinese culture, it is difficult for foreign students to achieve effective transformation of cultural connotations when translating culture-loaded words or cultural phenomena, which leads to the lack of cultural charm and appeal in the translation.

### ***3.4 Translation theory is out of touch with practical teaching***

At present, in the translation teaching for foreign students, the teaching of basic translation theory and practical skills is relatively inadequate. Teachers often teach on the basis of textbook cases and lack simulation training of real translation scenes and actual translation tasks, such as cross-border e-commerce negotiations, international tourism interpretation, or ethnic cultural exchange activities in Yunnan. This makes it difficult for foreign students to apply theoretical knowledge to practice, resulting in a significant gap between their translation output and professional standards. In addition, the teaching content is not closely combined with the local characteristics of Yunnan and the actual needs of "understanding contemporary China". For instance, it rarely involves translation materials related to Yunnan's efforts in ecological civilization construction (e.g., the Three Parallel Rivers protection project) or its role as a bridge in the China-ASEAN Economic Corridor. As a result, foreign students cannot deeply understand the current situation and characteristics of China's social development through translation learning, which limits the overall development of their translation ability.

In addition, the evaluation system of translation teaching pays too much attention to grammatical accuracy and literal correspondence, and neglects the assessment of cultural adaptability and contextual flexibility. This leads to the lack of awareness and ability of balancing "faithfulness" and "expressiveness" in the actual translation of foreign students, which further restricts the improvement of their comprehensive translation ability.

### ***3.5 Teachers' translation teaching ability needs to be improved***

There are shortcomings in the construction of the teaching staff of translation teaching for foreign students in colleges and universities. Some teachers lack professional translation background and practical experience, and their mastery of translation theory and teaching methods is not deep enough to meet the needs of foreign students' translation ability training. At the same time, teachers have

insufficient research and understanding of contemporary Chinese social culture, and cannot effectively guide foreign students to understand and translate the content related to China in the teaching process, which affects the quality and effect of teaching.

#### **4. Strategies for Cultivating the Translation Ability of Foreign Students in Yunnan**

##### ***4.1 Optimizing the Translation Teaching System***

Universities in Yunnan should re-examine the status of translation teaching in the cultivation of foreign students and construct a scientific and reasonable translation teaching system. According to the requirements of "Understanding Contemporary China", the curriculum should be adjusted to increase translation courses and contents related to contemporary Chinese social culture, policy interpretation and economic development. Diversified teaching methods, such as project teaching, case teaching and group cooperative learning, are adopted to enhance the interaction and practicality of teaching. At the same time, we should make full use of Yunnan's rich regional cultural resources and develop translation teaching projects with local characteristics, so that foreign students can have a deep understanding of Chinese culture in practice and improve their translation ability.

##### ***4.2 Consolidating the Language and Culture Foundation of Foreign Students***

In view of the great differences in language foundation and cultural background of foreign students, stratified teaching and personalized counseling are carried out. Strengthen Chinese language teaching to help foreign students improve their Chinese level, expand their vocabulary, master grammar rules and improve their language expression ability. At the same time, Chinese culture courses are offered to systematically introduce Chinese contemporary social culture, historical traditions, customs and habits, so as to enhance foreign students' understanding and recognition of Chinese culture. Through organizing cultural experience activities and field visits, foreign students can experience Chinese culture personally and lay a solid cultural foundation for translation learning. In order to strengthen the cultivation of students' translation ability, teachers should add corresponding cross-cultural knowledge and introduce cultural differences in the process of basic English teaching.[3] The emphasis of training should be placed on the multitask of listening to the source language information, analyzing and memorizing logically, and writing notes at the same time. [4]

##### ***4.3 Strengthen the training of Chinese expression and cultural transformation***

In the process of teaching, we should pay attention to the cultivation of foreign students' Chinese expression ability, and improve their accuracy and fluency in using Chinese through writing training, oral expression, translation practice and other ways. The teaching goal should strengthen cultural translation teaching, guide foreign students to learn cultural translation strategies and skills, master the conversion methods between different cultures, and improve the translation ability of culture-loaded words and cultural phenomena. For example, when translating the relevant contents of Yunnan minority culture, we should help foreign students understand the cultural connotation, choose appropriate translation methods, and ensure that the translation can not only accurately convey information, but also reflect cultural characteristics.

##### ***4.4 Strengthen the combination of translation theory and practice***

We should attach importance to the teaching of translation theory, systematically explain the basic theory and skills of translation, so that foreign students can master the basic principles and methods of translation. At the same time, translation practice courses and projects should be increased to provide rich practice opportunities for foreign students. We all should establish cooperative relations with enterprises, translation agencies and international organizations, carry out practical training activities, let foreign students participate in real translation projects, accumulate experience in practice, and improve translation ability. In addition, foreign students are encouraged to participate in translation competitions and academic exchanges to broaden their horizons and enhance their professional qualities. Dictation requires not only good listening comprehension, but also certain memory strategies. The memory strategy here is actually the short-term memory ability in interpretation. [5]

#### **4.5 Improving Teachers' Translation Teaching Ability**

We should strengthen the construction of teaching staff and improve their translation teaching ability and professional quality. The university can organize teachers to participate in translation training, academic seminars, practical exchanges and other activities, update teachers' translation knowledge and teaching concepts, and improve their translation practice ability and teaching level. Teachers are encouraged to carry out translation research, develop teaching resources and research results in the light of Yunnan's local characteristics and the theme of "understanding contemporary China", and provide theoretical support and practical guidance for teaching. At the same time, we should introduce professionals with rich translation experience and teaching ability to enrich the teaching staff and optimize the structure of teachers.

#### **5. Summary**

Under the background of "understanding contemporary China", it is of great significance to cultivate the translation ability of foreign students in Yunnan for promoting international cultural exchanges and promoting the opening up of Yunnan. Although the cultivation of foreign students' translation ability is facing many challenges, a series of measures, such as optimizing the teaching system, consolidating the language and cultural foundation, strengthening practical training and improving the quality of teachers, can effectively improve the translation ability and cross-cultural communication level of foreign students. In the future, colleges and universities should further deepen the reform of translation teaching, closely integrate the needs of the times and local characteristics, and constantly explore innovative training modes, so as to cultivate more excellent translators with international vision and proficiency in Chinese and foreign languages and cultures, and contribute to the promotion of exchanges and cooperation between China and the world.

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