

# Analyzing the Design of Translation Content in College English Textbooks from Students' Perspective

Yi Xue

School of Foreign Languages, University of Science and Technology Liaoning, Anshan 114001, Liaoning, China.

## Abstract

**Textbooks are the core and main basis of teaching content. Students rely on textbooks to acquire systematic knowledge, while teachers teach and teach according to the textbooks. Especially in college English textbooks, their content not only guides the training of students' basic language skills, but also guides the cultivation of students' cultural literacy and values. Especially the configuration of translated content can better reflect whether these two aspects have been effectively utilized. Therefore, this article investigates students' satisfaction with translation content through questionnaires and interviews, and analyzes the configuration of translation content in college English textbooks from the perspective of textbook users. And propose feasible solutions and suggestions for the allocation of translation resources in college English textbooks in terms of basic skill training and cultural value cultivation.**

## Keywords

**Students' Perspective, College English Textbook, Translation Content Design.**

## 1. Introduction

College English textbooks play an irreplaceable role in guiding students to train language skills, guiding students to form cultural values, and guiding teachers to organize classrooms. Especially the translation content in textbooks comprehensively reflects English language skills and cultural literacy, and the form, quantity, and theme of its configuration play an important role in the training of students' language abilities and the formation of their values. As the main users of textbooks, students' feelings and expectations towards the use of translated content in textbooks are of great significance for analyzing the configuration of translated content in textbooks. This article analyzes from the perspective of students and proposes suggestions and solutions for improving the translation content of college English textbooks in two aspects: basic skill training and cultural value cultivation.

## 2. Research methods

This study selected Volume 1-4 of the 2023 edition of the "New Comprehensive Course of Advanced College English", which has been updated under the guidance of the ideological and political policy of the course and meets the evaluation standards for ideological and political education. It is currently one of the latest college English textbooks and also a widely used textbook. The survey adopts the methods of questionnaire survey and interview. The questionnaire questions refer to Sun Chunli's (2023) survey on cultural content in foreign language textbooks. The questionnaire includes the form, quantity, and theme of the translation content presentation. 972 questionnaires were distributed and 923 were collected. The reliability of the variance test is 0.81, the validity is 0.72, and the composite reliability and validity criteria are used. The interview was conducted in the form of group interviews with 20 people in the questionnaire survey, inquiring about the advantages and disadvantages of

translating teaching materials in ability training, as well as the reception and expectations in cultural literacy.

### 3. Training of translation skills

After two levels of classification and organization of the data, it was found that firstly, there is a lack of paragraph translation in terms of translation form. After the first article in the textbook, Chinese English translation exercises are arranged, mainly focusing on vocabulary training. After the second text, English Chinese translation exercises were assigned, mainly focusing on sentence structure training. There is no other exercise content besides this. However, paragraph translation training is a more comprehensive form of training, which not only includes vocabulary practice and sentence structure training, but also includes understanding of the overall context, analysis of contextual discourse, and the connection and transition between sentences. In translation training, it is necessary to configure complete paragraphs. Translation training should not only emphasize the practice of vocabulary and sentence patterns, but also emphasize the analysis and understanding of the overall context.

Secondly, there is a lack of translation skills to explain. Translation training is a creative labor that cannot rely solely on word to word or sentence to sentence translation, nor can it rely solely on comparing standard answers. As language learners, students should master certain translation skills and be able to proactively generate translation results through their own analysis, judgment, and selection when facing specific translation content. The textbooks not only have too few settings for translation training, but also lack explanations of translation skills. Therefore, it is necessary to supplement basic translation techniques, such as literal translation, free translation, reverse translation, supplementary translation, and omission translation, as well as the selection and expression effects of these translation methods, to help students acquire translation skills after mastering vocabulary and sentence structures.

Thirdly, there is a lack of Chinese English translation exercises. The purpose of college English learning is not only to cultivate students' basic language skills, but also to shoulder the responsibility of transmitting Chinese culture. Chinese English translation practice can help students gain the responsibility of conveying Chinese culture, telling stories that happened in China, and conveying excellent Chinese ideas. However, the exercises in the textbooks are relatively few and mainly focus on the vocabulary and sentence structure of the main content of the article, which is not enough to help students broaden their horizons, constrain their higher-order thinking, and hinder them from acquiring higher-order abilities. Therefore, it is necessary to increase the proportion of Chinese to English translation in textbooks, and attach importance to the selection of Chinese to English translation content to enhance students' thinking and translation skills.

Fourthly, there is a lack of applied literary materials. The genres of translation are diverse, and the diverse styles meet the future professional and social needs of students. At present, the translation style in college English textbooks mainly consists of literary forms, such as science fiction, travel chronicles, biographies, life letters, popular science stories, etc. However, there is a lack of relevant content in product manuals, patent documents, contracts, bidding documents, and scientific literature. And these applied literary and industry articles are urgently needed for students' future life and career fields. Therefore, college English textbooks need to select more diverse genres of translation to help students gain broader ability training and enhance their translation application abilities.

### 4. Cultivation of cultural values

The cultivation of translation ability should focus on shaping students' values. Translating for whom, what, and how are all issues that need to be addressed in translation teaching. At present,

there is still room for improvement in the selection of material themes in college English textbooks.

Firstly, there is a lack of Chinese cultural content. The textbook pays special attention to Chinese culture, focusing on four major themes of as many as 18, namely, people and self-awareness, people and self, people and society, and people and high-tech. These themes are selected as reading texts, placed at the end of each unit's selection, only for informative reading, and there are no translation exercises to assist in text comprehension. There is no strengthened understanding, meticulous learning, and translation training on the great ideas, cultural terms, and other aspects of Chinese culture. Therefore, it is recommended to add translation exercises to further deepen the understanding of Chinese culture.

Secondly, there is a lack of cultural comparison between English and Chinese. Learning only English culture and being exposed to too many Western ideas is not conducive to students thinking about values based on China's national conditions and cultural background. In teaching, it is necessary to compare English and Chinese cultures, gain a better understanding of oneself, selectively learn from others, and avoid arrogance or foreign worship. There is only a comparison between English and Chinese cultures in the proverb translation section of the textbook, but the comparison is unconscious. Some units only have Western proverbs, some units only have Chinese proverbs, and some units have proverbs from both Chinese and Western cultures. It is recommended to list the proverbs of both Chinese and Western cultures under the same theme, and consciously compare the different perspectives of the two cultures on the same issue, and compare them for cultural mutual learning.

Thirdly, there is a lack of follow-up cultural exploration. College English textbooks carry many cultural themes, and students are very interested in learning topics such as high-tech, environmental protection, and entrepreneurial planning. They hope to have more expanded materials, index connections, and other resources to help them further learn and explore. In addition, as textbooks are used for English learning, they focus on the culture of many English speaking countries, but there is less attention paid to the culture of many countries whose native language is not English but English is the official language. Therefore, more bilingual content and multicultural theme connections can be provided to help supplement the textbook content.

## 5. Conclusion

At present, there is insufficient emphasis on translation in college English textbooks. Both skill training and value cultivation need improvement. By effectively allocating the quantity, types, genres, and themes of translation training in English textbooks, the quality of the textbooks can be improved, and students' translation ability and level can be improved, thereby effectively enhancing their language skills and cultural literacy.

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