

Study on The Cultivation of Interdisciplinary Language Service Talents under the background of the Belt and Road Initiative

Liang Jing^{1,2,*}

¹Faculty of Education, Shaanxi Normal University, 710062 Xi'an, China

²International Exchange and Cooperation Office, Xi'an University of Science and Technology, 710054 Xi'an, China

Abstract. With the rapid development of the Belt and Road Initiative, the cultivate of interdisciplinary language talents should be further explored. As the International Language Service has become a sub-discipline under the Discipline of Foreign Language and Literature, the cultivation and training of contemporary language service talents has began to accelerate. This paper discussed overall development of language service industry, the challenges, principles, macro strategy and micro approaches of cultivating qualified language service talents to meet the requirements for the Belt and Road Initiative. This paper addresses the importance of strategy and planning of the subject of language service, and the necessity to hand over the rights to set sub-discipline to teaching units. Specific approaches includes but not limited to disciplinary integration from the begin to the end of course framework, integration of discipline and technology, integration of various entities involved in the cultivation, such as government, industry and enterprises, universities and research institutes.

1 Language Service

The concept of language services emerged from 1990s. According to the report released by Common Sense Advisory Research (CSA Research) in 2019, the industry of language service is divided into three categories, including language service, language science and technology, and non-lingual related services. Language service contains translation, interpretation, editing services of machine translation and other services. Language science and technology contains management system of interpretation, computer-aid interpretation, localized technology, machine interpretation, content creation and publishing, etc. non-lingual related services include language investment, language capital management, etc.

2 Overall Development

The industry of language service has embraced a rapid development, thanks to the globalization and the revolution of information technology. It has formed a valuable market of billions of dollars.

2.1 Worldwide development

According to *The Language Service Market 2019*, there are 18,000 companies engaging in language service around the world, with the market scale of 49.6 billion US dollars, indicating a 6.67% growth rate compared with the year of 2018^[1]. The market value of European Union language services account for 49% of that of global

market, and US account for 39%. Therefore, the US and EU have become the world's largest provider of language services regarding either market scale and service capabilities.

2.2 Development in China

China, despite its rapid growth in language services industry, has still a long way to march in terms of becoming a giant entity on providing language services. The language service industry of China has been growing for forty years continuously since the Reform and Opening-up Policy was launched. According to the *2019 China Language Service Industry Development Report* released by Translators Association of China (TAC) and The Institute of China Translation Industry Development Strategy, there are 369,935 language services enterprises and 9734 translating companies by the end of June 2019^[2]. The total industry value of language service is around 37.2 billion RMB, with an annual growth rate at 10%.

Along with the development 5G and new technology, such as big data, AI and cloud computing, the language services industry in China would mostly likely experience an exponential growth regarding both quantities and qualities. Therefore, it is crucial to take this opportunity and transit from a large language service provider to a powerful and competitive one.

3 Language Service Talents

The key to promote language service industry lies on the cultivation of interdisciplinary language service talents, as

* Corresponding author: 2949509520@qq.com

they are the fundamental guarantee to run enterprises, to provide products and services and to create economic value. Talents are also the key factors for the Belt and Road Initiative. Li Yuming points out that it is the interdisciplinary talents, or language plus X talents that are needed for the Belt and Road Initiative^[3]. The X stands for professional knowledge and skills of a particular industry or field.

3.1 Talents in great demand

It is very important and cost-effective for Chinese enterprises to hire interdisciplinary talents to conduct business overseas. They can not only speak foreign language and communicate with local institutions and local people, but also acquire specific knowledge and skills to complete the task. Therefore, language service talents are in high demand by overseas Chinese enterprises, but are in short supply due to multiple reasons.

3.2 Talents in short supply

The reasons for the short supply of interdisciplinary language service talents are threefold.

3.2.1 Unclear discipline status

The sub-discipline status and quality were not clear for language service. Language service is established as a new sub-discipline under the discipline of Foreign Language and Literature in June 2021. Before that, language service was only seen as a new trend but had not gain much importance.

3.2.2 Outdated cultivation mode

The talents cultivation mode of language service is the same with that of foreign language^[4]. In other words, there is no different between the cultivation of language talents and language service talents. That is partly because of the unclear discipline category. As a result, many universities cultivate language service students with the traditional approaches of cultivating language talents, despite their differences on the connotations, targeting, requirement and career paths. The cultivation of language talents are professional-oriented training, while the cultivation of language service talents aims at position-oriented training. That is the biggest difference between language talents and language services talents.

3.2.3 Disconnection between school and market

There is a lack of connection between the cultivation of language service talents and market needs and demands. For a long time, the universities has overlook the market demand of language service talents, and fails to adjust course regime and training plan based on the actual needs of the market.

4 Language Service Cultivation Goals

In order to design the language service program in such a way that the graduates are ready to meet the requirements of the employers, There are four objectives in cultivating language service talents.

4.1 Interdisciplinary capabilities

One should acquire the interdisciplinary capabilities with a focus on language training. The New Liberal Arts Reforms call on the cross integration of various disciplines. The universities need to comply with the revised requirements under the background of the reform, while insisting on language teaching at the same time.

4.2 Capability-oriented

The cultivation of language services talents should be capability-oriented, meaning the ultimate objectives for the students are to acquire necessary skills and abilities to complete language service tasks and assignments. These skills and abilities include but not limited to language skills, communication skills, ability to learn new things quickly, cross-culture awareness and communication skills, etc.

4.3 Adopt various research methods

One should be able to adopt different research methods and approaches from various disciplines based on the needs of the research plan. Language service involves linguistics, psychology, economics, management, social studies, etc^[5]. Each of the field may adopt different research methods due to the characteristics of the discipline.

4.4 Utilize information technology

One should be able to utilize information technology, and keep updated with latest technological tools, in order to facilitate the language service. This is not only the goal of the cultivation of language service talents, but also an approach in the process of the cultivation. In the era of digitization and artificial intelligence, it is for sure that the information technology will empower education to a greater extent.

5 Language Service Talents Strategy

From the macro perspective, there are some crucial factors to take into consideration when making plans and strategy for the cultivation of language service in a whole.

5.1 Rational and far-sighted planning

The planning and distribution of the professional programs by the government, and the major and programs settings by the universities should be both rational and far-sighted. The cultivation of language service talents is a systematic program with a long period of time and

generous amount of investment. The planning of the professional programs should serve national strategy, and meet social needs^[6]. The major and program setting by the universities should consider the overall mission and strategic goals of the universities, as well as the career development of each individual.

Moreover, As the Belt and Road Initiative is a long term mission, it requires different kinds of language service talents at different stages and times. In addition to that, each province and university have their own advantages and disadvantages, which all need to be considered when making plannings and strategies to cultivate language service talents.

5.2 Acceleration of sub-discipline building

It is highly suggested to accelerate the establishment of language service as sub-discipline and release more control and rights to universities. From the theoretical point of view, the discipline system of language service needs to be further completed, identifying the industry and fields being served^[7]. The teaching faculty of language service needs to be expanded as we are in great short of qualified teachers. In addition to teachers shortage, the shortage of teaching resources needs to be addressed as well. One possible solution is to integrate teaching staff and resources from related disciplines. In one word, in order to fulfill the cultivation goal of language service talents, more efforts need to be put into studying and researching about the internal rules of the discipline, and follow the rules of language cultivation and language service cultivation.

6 Approaches of cultivating language service talents

From the micro perspective, several approaches should be adopted to further cultivate language service talents to better serve the Belt and Road Initiative. The approaches include enhancing the discipline importance, strengthening interdisciplinary integration, reinforcing the integration of discipline and technology, and consolidating the integration of government, industry, universities and research institutions.

6.1 Interdisciplinary integration

It is suggested to strengthen interdisciplinary integration as it is the core virtue of language service discipline. Though including interpretation and translation, language service is an multi-discipline combing linguistics, information science, sociology, communications, etc^[8]. Integration of the discipline above is more than simple adding one to another, but a seamless fusion of various sections into one single session.

It is important to clarify the priority among foreign language programs and major programs. The target talents we aim to cultivate are language talents with professional knowledge and skills, rather than professionals who speak foreign language. There are several approaches to achieve interdisciplinary integration.

Textbooks and other learning materials, for example, are attainable resources to acquire professional knowledge. Experts from other fields, projects from enterprise, or internship are also suitable approaches to take.

6.2 Integration of discipline and technology

The training of language service talents should also consider how to integrate with technology, because technical ability is one of the important abilities that language service talents cannot ignore. The language service market cannot be separated from big data, corpus, text extraction, text processing technology and tools. Therefore, language service and technology become the important content of language service personnel training.

The cultivation of language service professionals is inseparable from technology, but the goal is not to cultivate students into technical talents, but language talents who understand technology. How to realize the integration of specialty and technology? On one hand, we should promote the reform of the curriculum system of information technology. On the other hand, we should promote the cultivation of professional information literacy ability of language and information technology. In this way, we shall cultivate students' knowledge structure and ways of thinking across disciplines. Students should be able to use modern technology and tools well. This is the basic ability characteristic of language service talents. At the same time, the training process is also highly dependent on modern information technology as well.

6.3 Gov-Industry-Univ-Research Platform

The university shall establish a platform for cooperation between the government, the industry, the university and the research institute^[9]. The cultivation of language service talents should be closely linked with college education and the market demand for talents, so that students can get experience in practice. On this platform, each party has an independent and related function, with the students as the center, and the university and the employer shall jointly develop the training plan according to the training objectives. Government departments are responsible for coordination and industry supervision. Specific measures include the following five steps.

6.3.1 Before classroom

First, before entering the classroom, enterprises should arrange students with suitable abilities to enter the enterprise for internship, so as to pave the way for the completion of expected classroom activities.

6.3.2 Enterprises into classroom

Second, invite language service entrepreneurs into the classroom to bring real language service cases into textbooks and classrooms. Integrate teaching content with real cases of the industry, so that students can fully

understand the connotation of language service during the school^[10]. Through practice, students can test the matching degree between their personal ability development and the needs of the industry, verify the ability of interdisciplinary language service and career adaptability in advance, and lay the foundation for career selection.

6.3.3 Joint lectures and salons

Third, based on specific cases and scenarios, enterprises and interns are invited to jointly run lectures and salons to embed real language service scenarios into classrooms to share growth experiences. Experiences and lesson learned from previous schoolmates can be more convincing than the teaching faculty as they sometimes fail to put themselves in the students' shoes and think about the difficulties from their standpoint.

6.3.4 Before classroom

Fourthly, the enterprise evaluates and defines the abilities of internship students in an all-round way, so as to form a language service curriculum framework, and then revise the teaching syllabus and training program. This can help students to form an objective evaluation of their professional ability, to help them set directions for future improvement.

6.3.5 Project simulation

Fifth, according to the market demand, as well as the degree of integration of project and teaching content, scenario-based teaching is introduced into some projects. The teacher guides the students to complete the project initiation, division of labor, promotion, management, item settlement, after-sales service and evaluation according to the operation mode of the language service company^[11]. Students form a team to formulate reasonable compensation distribution principles. After the completion of the project, teachers guide students to reflect on and summarize the practice to form a practice report or research results. Teachers can also track students' career development, complete relevant research topics, and realize the organic integration of industry, education and scientific research.

7 Conclusion

As the Belt and Road Initiative continues to progress, there is a high demand for language services along the relevant countries. The current cultivation mode and training system fails to connect with the market needs, resulting in multiple problems for both universities, governments and graduates. Therefore, this paper suggest several feasible measures to take after exploring the challenges, objective and principles of language service talents. The measures need to be taken by all entities involved, engaging in a systematic and comprehensive design to cultivate the interdisciplinary language service talents. By combining enterprises and universities,

integrating teaching faculty and industry professional, consolidating in-class sessions and out-class practical activities, we shall be able to cultivate more and more qualified interdisciplinary language talents, and better service the national strategy of Belt and Road Initiative.

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