

The Digital-informationalized Holistic Whole-Person Translation Education in Chinese Mainland

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Keywords: Whole-Person Translation Education, Holistic Whole-Person Translation Education, Translation Engineering, Ideological and Political Theory, Digital-Information Technology, Integration

Abstract: In the information age, everything in our society has increasingly changed, including translation. In order to meet with the changing situation, especially prepare students for changing translation industry, based on “whole-person translation education model”, a digital-informationalized holistic whole-person translation education is proposed in this paper conceptually. Through the literature study and review, after deductive analysis of all elements of this model horizontally, the concrete vertical route to the holistic education of professional translators at the context of the mainland of China is specified as apprenticeship. Consequently, with the exploration of all elements of the holistic education of professional translators and the concrete route to it, the two contributions to the present translation education are summarized as the followings : the introduction of translation engineering into the education as well as that of ideological and political theory, and the role of integration as the priority of this education model for students to transform from discipline-knowledge-orientation to professional-competence-one with digital-information-technology competence.

1. Introduction

In the information age, typical of mobile internet, information and technology serves as a catalyst to accelerate the development of current society, especially industry. More and more new industries mushroom. More importantly, the fine division of labor increasingly speeds up. This brings a great challenge for human resources. It greatly changes the content and structure of human resources. In order to meet with the change, especially maximize the role of the driving force of socio-economic

development of human resources, policy makers have realized the importance of investing in education and training as a way of improving the existing stock of skills [1]. However in China, long-time persistence of higher education lies in the education of academic talents. This is largely because of lacking enough awareness of the transformation of economic reality in China. In recent years, China has been focusing on supply-side reform. The structural reform of Chinese economy aims to improve the quality of supply to meet needs [2]. The structure has changed from the labor-intensive in the past to the skilled and technical. The original orientation of educating elite for society is out of date. It has to give its way to the new orientation of educating skilled and technical laborforce. In this context, higher education is far away from Chinese social reality. On the one hand, more and more students cannot find their jobs directly matching with their majors; on the other hand, employers cannot get proper employees in specific positions [3]. The increasing gap between the two parties involved represents the embarrassing situation of Chinese higher education. Accordingly, the situation results in the reform of Chinese higher education. In nature, it belongs to the supply-side reform within Chinese education, greatly influenced by the reform in economic fields in China. The structural reform within higher education is typical of the transformation of the majority of local colleges and universities in China from academy-oriented to application-oriented [4]. The reform aims to educate technique-oriented talents not so-called “Pseudo Elite” [5]. The development of translation major is the very miniature of higher education in China. Students attending translation education often face with such a similar paradoxical situation. They cannot find a job related to translation or something linked with it. Meanwhile, translation companies or language service providers cannot find qualified graduates for their daily operation. The increasingly falling rate of students majoring in translation stirs up feelings of dissatisfaction in public as well as in education institutes involved, even having the extreme of calling for canceling such majors. The deep-rooted reason lies in the fact that students lack enough professional competence required by corresponding professions. It is echoed by the truth that the labor market is jammed with graduates rather than competent translators [6]. In order to seek its new development and meet the trend of the reform of higher education as well as that of economy in China, Translation education in China has to walk its way to profession-oriented education, making students with the professional competence to survive in the real life. It does not mean translation education in China goes to another extreme with the only focus on developing the true or real professional competence. Conversely, professional competence is merely transplanted into translator education as the essential and central part but not only one of it. This is why in this paper one whole-person educational holistic model is proposed. The model will be explored in details in the following sections.

2. Terms

2.1 Whole-person Education Translator Education

“whole-person education” as a concept arises from general mission and goals of higher education. It is defined as such a concept that a whole-person education would make students “well-rounded,” “well-adjusted” and “adaptable”(Bligh,1990 cited in Tan, 2008). Tan [7] creatively introduced “whole-person education” into translation education as a special translation mode. The central of the model is to educate students in an all-round manner. Within the model, students are not only specialised in special areas of knowledge and expertise on translation, but gain more general abilities to meet all

kinds of challenges in translation.

2.2 Modern Apprenticeship

Traditionally, ‘Apprenticeship’ means the attachment of a young person to an employer for a period of years with labour services exchanged for the opportunity to learn a skilled occupation [8]. Today apprenticeship has increasingly been beyond the crafts, to trades, arts or sciences due to the “professional” rise of academic qualifications after the Second World War [9]. New Apprenticeships refers to structured training arrangements, usually involving on- and off-the-job training, for a person employed under an apprenticeship/traineeship training contract [10]. At the context of schools, apprenticeships are a combination of on-the-job training and related classroom instruction for workers to learn the practical and theoretical aspects of a highly skilled occupation [11]. The later nineteenth century is often seen as a period in which the institution was redefined and modernized. ‘Modern apprenticeship’ can be traced back to later nineteenth century. It is defined as a vocational education system of school-enterprise cooperation with the traditional apprenticeship incorporated into thoughts of modern school education [12].

3. Digital-informationalized Holistic Education Model

Digital-informationalized holistic education is a conceptual model of how translation program should be guided in Chinese mainland. This model is a hierarchy one. It consists of three layers. This first is digital-informationalized circle. The circle first serves as a periphery background of the six elements, also that one of the education of professional translators. It exerts great influences over the development of the six elements of the education and the education itself. With the driving force from digital-informationalization, everything including the education and its elements speeds up at the unprecedented rate. Then naturally digital-informational technologies melted into all elements as one in them respectively, either as the driving force or engineer within each element or as a model of the operation of each one. No matter what role digital-information technology play in the working of the whole mode or in the development of each element, it is obvious that digital-information technology serves as the role of one of factors of productivity, pushing the education of professional translators forward. This is the great change and development of the education brought by the present productivity with digitalized information technology.

The second one is the circle of all elements of the holistic education model. It means academic education of professional translation competence has to be combined with or integrated with specialty, practicality, market, and profession, translation engineering, ideological and politic theory, and so on, as shown in Figure1.

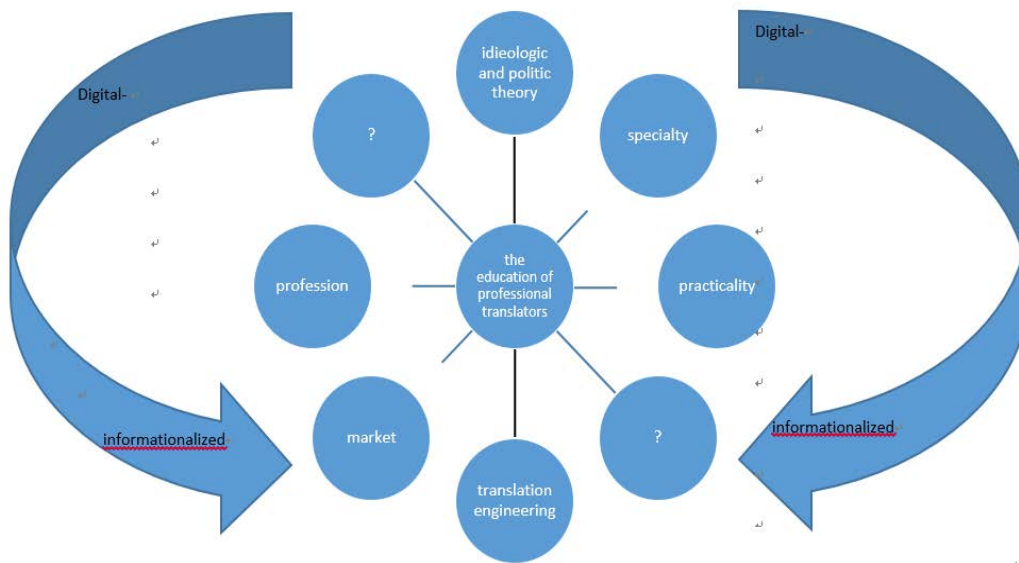


Figure 1: Digital-informationalized Holistic Education of Professional Translators

Six elements or more in the above figure are essential ones for the education of professional translators. All elements involved in the model, the relations of three elements in the same line, and the relations of all lines in the circle of the education will be explored in the sections below.

3.1 Specialty–Market Line

From Figure 2, the relation of specialty to market in this line is established in the following figure.

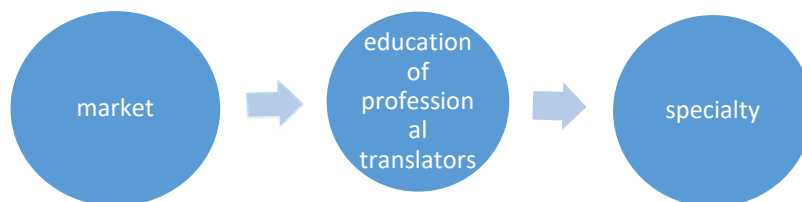


Figure 2: Market-specialty Line

Here specialty in holistic education means knowledge in special field, not translation itself.

Translation technology and skills can be developed as professional translation competence only used in the special field; here specialty does not only refer to simple subject matter named by scholars of current translation study, it goes beyond the notion of simple contents or constituents of fields involved and into the very notion of specific industries, such as real estate, oil industry, IT industry, etc. In such a model, students have to accumulate the knowledge in the relevant fields, up to the major level equal to that of their translation major. Lack of corresponding knowledge in the fields involved, students often make their translation what they learn from their major only stay on the surface of language proficiency or the trajectory of literature translation. They cannot get themselves into real translation profession. Once combined with specific field, translation immediately finds its position, especially its orientation, even further goes into the very depth of the fields rather than stop outside. In fact, in Chinese mainland, so many colleges or universities of translation programs cannot combine strong disciplines standing for the major characteristics of their own colleges and universities with translator education, leaving their students educated in a similar or even the same way. It is serious homogenization, closing the door to form their own style of educating translation talents. On the one hand, translation programs cannot make great improvement; on the other hand, students under these programs cannot gain real professional translation competence for their future career. Meanwhile, market serves as the counterpart of specialty in this line. Market is the guideline of education of professional translators. This means education of students' professional translation competence cannot be only confined in a little classroom. It should follow the change of market. Indisputably, market can bring new information into the education of professional translators, guiding it into market orbit; education of professional translators can also prepare translation talents for market, meeting its needs in the respect of human resources decided by the law of market. Without the integration of market into education of professional translators, students cannot be educated as talents needed by market. Market is the impetus to guide or push education of translator education and the final testing field to assess products of education of translation program. Realization, using, and integration of market matter with students' future professional career, even the existence of translation program itself.

Obviously, specialty and market in this line are systematically related to each other, to great extent they are cause-and-effect relations. This relation is a long-time discussed topic worthy of being researched by translation programmes for the further development of the education of professional translators. Actually, it involves how translation programmes deal with its relation to market. Naturally, it decides the orientation of translation education, not as traditional translation education decided by translation discipline. The two orientations are far away from each other. The former follows the pace of market; the latter comes up with the development of translation discipline. The former prepares professional translators; the latter educates academic translation talents [13]. Once the education of professional translators is arranged logically with the change of market, students' specialty can be acquired as it goes as usual.

3.2 Practicality-profession Line

This line is as shown below.



Figure 3: Profession-practicality Line

As is shown Figure 3 above, similar to the role of market, profession is also the orientation of the education of professional translators. Market and profession are two spots for translation professionals. One lays more emphasis on what translation professionals have to deal with; the other attaches more to identity of translation professionals and professional norms involved. Thus without integration of profession, education of professional translators only stays on pedagogical level, to great extent, such a translation competence gained by students is far away from real professional one. Once integrated with profession, the education of translation can be guided in contents, direction, and the standards or norms. It brings great benefit to students' future career. They only face with very short transitional stage from a newcomer to a professional, greatly enhancing their confidence in surviving in the society and seeking their happy life. Meaning while, education of professional translation can provide qualified translation talents for professional field of translation.

As the counterpart of practicality in this line is the very representation of the nature of translation. If translation is only taught and learned theoretically in a traditional classroom in a so-called 'talk and chalk' way [14]. Students cannot gain real or practical translation competence for their future career as translator. The first priority should be attached to practicality of translation skills in the classroom and outside it. From the very beginning translation teaching or education should integrate practicality with theory teaching. Practicality does not only refers to "doing something" but also a participation into life, through which the connection between classroom and outside or life is built.

The emphasis on practicality is also decided by market and professional. Both of them need translation talents with practical competence. Without practicality linked with market, profession or participation in life, teaching and learning in the classroom is lifeless for students' future career or life. This type of practicality makes the education of professional translators greatly different from the past academy-oriented education, really getting itself into the proper orbit, far away from pure language education.

3.3 Translation Engineering-Ideological-and-Political-Theory Line

The third line of the proposed holistic education model of professional translators shown in figure 4 is a little bit different from what is said to be about translation education as usual. The very surprising fact lies in two terms. The term on the left end is translation engineering. It means “the application of the principles of translation profession and engineering to the formation of the transference of languages, the localization of products, and even transcreation” [15]. This definition emphasizes translation engineering here as a special practice, the application of translation theories involved into practice, and through this engineering facilitates the transference of languages, the localization, transcreation, etc. This is a new coined term owing to the development of the combination of translation industry, information technology, and engineering in an era of mobile internet. Within the term, engineering thinking, procedure, and management are transplanted into traditional translation as practice, even a comprehensive technology, and make it equal to other engineering with its own specialty. All elements involved with translation as practice can be integrated as translation engineering. This can greatly promote the development translation industry and translation profession. It also does great benefits to the education of professional translators, with engineering requirements into it. To some extent, this will change today’s identity or roles of translation participants. Under the umbrella concept of translation engineering, students attending the education of translation engineering can seek many positions of language engineer or translation engineer, not translator or interpreter.

Ideological and political theory is also something new. It has been stipulated by the Ministry of Chinese Education. It has been required to be immersed into every subject within any disciplines in colleges and universities in Chinese mainland. This is decided by Chinese reality. The emphasis on the education of ideological and political theory is largely because of two purposes. One is stressed that Chinese higher education has to educate talents beneficial to the development of country and society as well as the development of different industries, rather than those lacking patriotic feeling, humane spirit, and professional ethics.

The education of ideological and political theory in paralleled with translation engineering in the third line with the very aims to steer the direction of the education of professional translators as well as that of translation engineering. It means any education or any engineering has to understand who they serve for. This is basically required for all citizens or all professionals in any professions, no exceptional one in the world. Self-evidently, the two ends in this line play a very important role in the education of professional translators. Translation engineering seems to be at the top in the series of practicality and specialty. The education of ideological and political theory seems to be at the top in the series of market and profession. Both of them stand in the middle, highlighting the role of them in the circle of the holistic education of professional translators.

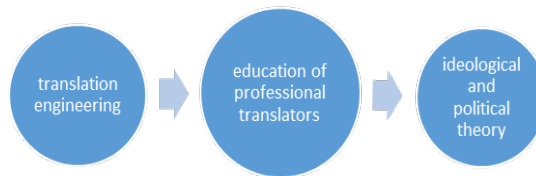


Figure 4: Translation Engineering-ideological-and-political-theory Line

3.4 The??-? Line

The ?? line is supposed to be designed for the change of science, economy, and society. It indicates that the components of holist education of professional translators will change with the times. As the center of each line, the education involved has to pay close attention to the change, and makes corresponding adjustment, adaption, or even a big reform.

3.5 The Interaction of All Elements within Three Lines Respectively and the Integration of the Three Lines in the Circle Above

From the figure 1, firstly, within three lines discussed above, all elements involved interact with each other, seek chemical reaction among them, and build dynamic balance in the development of its own. More importantly, attention is still paid to the nearly binary structure of the two elements at the two ends of each line. The binary structure consists of two elements. One is at the top as something abstract; the other is at the bottom as specific. It means the education of professional translators have to care about the two levels, macro-and-micro, when the education is specified in details. Then three lines as the bigger elements in the circle get together, react with, and integrate with one another, building dynamic competence wheel, leading to the acquisition of professional translation competence. Admittedly, the integration cannot happen at random. It still needs to be decided by all components within each line and within the competence wheel or the cycle. It is the horizontal description of the holistic education of professional translators. The vertical holistic description will be explored in the next section. It will involve the different stages and corresponding integration within and beyond. It is actually the route how professional translation competence can be acquired at the context of translation programmes in the mainland China.

4. The Route to the Holistic Education with a Vertically Chronic Model

Based on Modern-apprenticeship education, the concrete route of holistic education is built in the developing process of professional translator competence. It means the development of translator competence has its own developing route. Each phase has its typical feature with concrete contents. Different contents in different phases are gradually developed into professional translation competence with the integration of academic education and modern apprenticeship. The apprenticeship can be specified into different training packages in four grades. This training packages will be designed with the participation of translation teachers, translation professionals, and translation association. Based on the combination of British dual modern apprenticeship and Germany sandwiched modern apprenticeship, the route, contents and ladder map can be shown as Figure 5 follows:

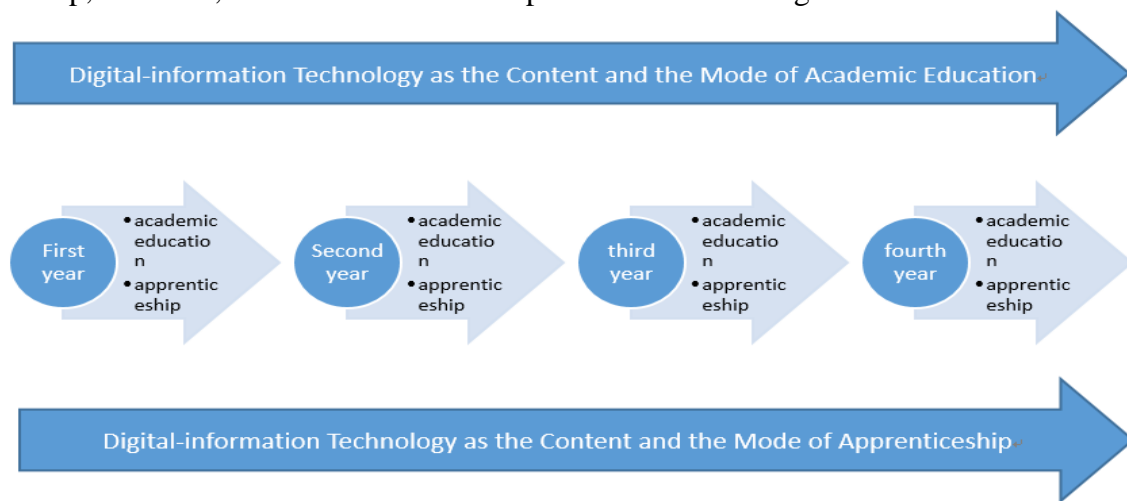


Figure 5: The Route to Digital-informationalized Holistic Education of Whole-person Professional Translators

The route model of the digital-informationalized holistic education above also consists of three layers. The layer at the top is the line demonstrating digital-information technology as the content and mode of academic education. It means at each stage of academic education digital-information technology is arranged at any point of each one. The very aims to make students empowered with the sophisticated technology in the age of information technology. The acquisition of this type of technology will benefit students through their whole career and life. More importantly, digital-information technology plays very increasing important role in the education in the world in the form of diversified forms such as on-line classroom, blended classroom with the combination of online and offline. In the model of holistic translation education here, students have to learn digital-information technology in the form of general subjects in the first year and second year with the basic requirements for computer grade certificate. And in the third and fourth year, they have to attend the compulsory translation technology with the combination of translation and different types of digital-information technologies such as computer-aided technology, machinery translation technology, localization technology, etc.

The second one is the apprenticeship one in the route. In this vertical route, in order to acquire professional translation competence, the holistic education consists of two lines. One is academic education; the other is apprenticeship. It is an integration of the two lines. What and how should be integrated at each stage are left to education institutes with translation programmes. In this paper, the focus is only on all elements or components within the circle of the education of professional translators, especially based on the modern-apprenticeship system, how to develop students professional competence stage by stage. At each stage, the training and educating objectives are decided by elements or components within the circle of the education of professional translators. Professional translation competence is orientated at each stage with different emphasis on all elements involved. The detailed description is illustrated in the figure below.

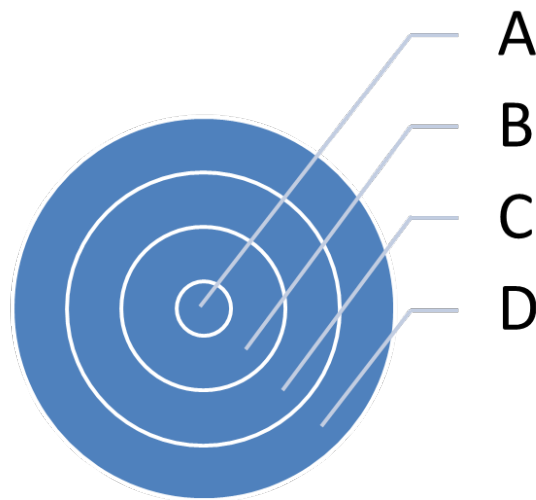


Figure 6: The Contents of the Holistic Education of Professional Translators

- A: Profession Cognition
- B: Profession Experiencing
- C: Job Rotation
- D: On-the-job internship

A, B, C, and D can be also illustrated by following figure 7.

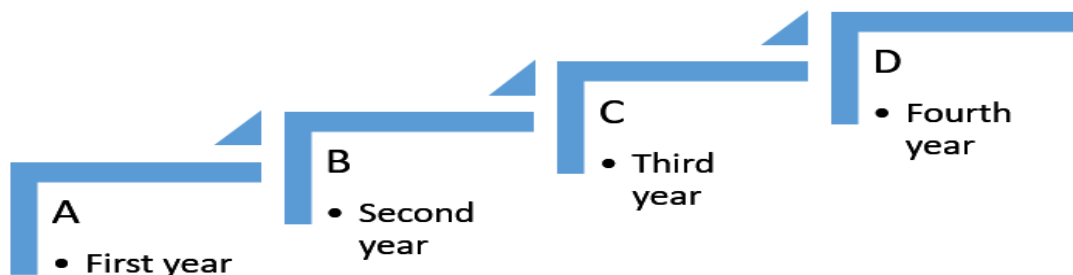


Figure 7: The Ladder Map of the Process of the Holistic Education of Professional Translators

The third line in the route model is the line of digital-information technology as the content and mode of apprenticeship. It means in the apprenticeship at each stage or every point digital-information technology as the content has to be used and tested by students themselves. Only in the real situation in profession, students can make the knowledge of digital-information technology transformed as real technical competence, no matter what they are general digital-information technology or digitalized translation technology. Through this apprenticeship, professional translation competence coupled with digital-information technology can really be acquired in the reality of profession or life. Besides, in order to gain such a professional competence, digital-information technology serves as the real platform or the network for the apprenticeship of translation education. Obviously, as content or educating mode, digital-information technology is essential for students to be empowered with professional translation competence.

In brief, in the two figures above, the development of professional translation competence is demonstrated from two aspects. One lays more emphasis on the chronological development from the first year to the fourth one. It means professional translation competence is not easily acquired within a very short time. It is a long-time effort. The other stresses that the development of professional translation competence at each stage is different from each other. It is a gradual process from the low to the high. In the first year, freshman students are arranged at special time for professional cognition in the form of knowledge-based study on campus and on-spot visits. Through knowledge-based study, students come to be familiar with translation industry and translation profession as well as other elements or components within the framework of holistic education above. It is a general knowledge-based cognition. Then, based on enough knowledge-based accumulation about translation profession or industry, students are arranged to visit some famous enterprises or companies for observations on spot. Through the observations, students can gain a direct general perception of their would-be career as well as other elements or components related. At this stage, knowledge-based study on campus and visits on spot have to be designed as compulsory curriculum or curriculum models.

In addition, from the figure 7, within each stage, the holistic education in this paper requires the integration of academic education and apprenticeship or professional training. Moreover, the integration is still needed to happen among all elements or components at each stage. Only if they are integrated at their own stages, the professional translation competence at the corresponding stages can serve as the precondition of next stage, otherwise, loose knowledge cannot be naturally developed into professional competence. The triangle between two stages next to each other suggests the difficulty from one stage to the next and requires such an integration within each stage [16].

5. Conclusion

In a nutshell, holistic education in this study aims to establish a systematic education model of professional translation competence and the modern-apprenticeship education as its concrete or practical route to realize its objectives or orientations. No matter what they are, the digital-informationized technology is designed melted in the holistic education model and through the whole route stage by stage. This represents the great influence of digital-information technology over translation education. Moreover, as the objectives or orientations, translation engineering and ideological and political theory are introduced as one of them. These are great contributions to the development of translation education in the mainland of China. One stays on the technological level

with the great advance in science and technology as times goes by. The other stays on ideological level. Both of them serve as great forces to push forward the progress of the education of professional translators with the safeguarding of its direction. More importantly, holistic education of professional translators is defined and designed with three levels of integration through the whole process of translation education. The first level lies at the integration of six lines or more of holistic education of professional translators. The second one lies at the integration of two lines of academic one and apprenticeship one from the point of view of translation education on the whole with the integration of digital-information technology within each line respectively. The third one lies at the integration of all elements as a comprehensive competence at any cross intersection of each stage, especially at the turning point next to the next stage in the apprenticeship ladder map. Obviously holistic education of professional translators lays more emphasis on the integration within and beyond through the whole educating process. Thus digital-information technology in all the integrations above is the key factor for students to acquire professional competence, especially professional translation competence within the context of translation education in the mainland of China. Assuredly, when and how the integration happens still leaves a large scope for scholars to go further study, especially needing longitude of empirical study in future.

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