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# **A TWO-DIMENSIONAL HYPOTHETICAL MODEL FOR LEGAL TRANSLATION COMPETENCE ENHANCEMENT**

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## **Abstract**

Legal translation competence has been conceived as the combination of language knowledge, subject knowledge, cultural knowledge and cognitive psychological process of translation activities. Based upon the conceptualization, this study proposed a two-dimensional hypothetical model for cultivating legal translation ability. The model was illustrated by a pair of coordinates with language features at different language levels as the transverse and various cognitive activities as the vertical. A module composed of ten aspects of curricular objectives was generated from the model by the Q-methodology inferential research process.

**Keywords:** a two-dimensional hypothetical model, legal translation competence, Q-methodology.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The cultivation of translation ability or translation competence enhancement is the core objective to guide the course construction for the curricular design of translation training. Scholars in this field try to analyze the concept composition of translation competence from such aspects as language knowledge, subject knowledge, cultural knowledge and cognitive psychological process of translation activities. After doing the curricular research on the training of legal translation competence, the author puts forward the assumption that the core competence for cultivating professional translation ability depends on the translator's ability in translation research, which is more or less neglected by previous translation studies. To some extent, it explains the difficulties in translation teaching and the rhetorical difficulties in reporting translation research. The translator's ability of translation research refers to the ability of contrastive analysis of the source text with the target one. The ability can be illustrated by constructing a pair of coordinates, the transverse and the vertical: the former refers to the ability to understand language features at different language levels, including phonetic, morphological, lexical, grammatical, semantic,

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pragmatic, or discursive levels; the latter refers to various cognitive activities, from primary to advanced, including knowledge, memorization, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation or creation. The translator's research ability is the ability to conduct various cognitive activities to study the interactions across language levels. The acquisition of this ability is gradual and ultimately determines the perfection of the process of translation activities and the quality of the translational works.

The teaching objectives of cultivating legal translation ability are derived from the theoretical review of the concept of legal translation competence. By integrating the systematically constructed model to build the research conceptualization base with three dimensions, the empirical study of Q-methodology is carried out. The inferential process guided by Q-methodology highlights some aspects of knowledge and skills for enhancing legal translation competence, which compose an integrated module for designing the legal translation competence enhancement curriculum.

## **2. DEFINING LEGAL TRANSLATION**

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## **COMPETENCE**

In order to analyze the teaching objectives of legal translation competence, we should first clarify the conceptual connotation of legal translation competence, which is composed of language competence, translation competence and legal translation competence. Language competence has been conceived to be the integration of such linguistic features of accuracy and complexity in vocabulary and grammar, fluency of language use, appropriacy of applying communicative strategies and skills to promote social exchanges in addition to consideration of cultural differences manifested by semiotic literacy of the language user (Bygate, 2001; Gao, 2017, p.67; Hughes, 2003). Compared with linguistic competence, translation ability has been further analyzed and comprehensively illustrated by researchers of translation teaching (Wang 2013; Tao 2013). Mainly, two of the studies (Prieto Ramos, 2011; PACTE, 2005) have sufficiently explored possible parameters to conceptualize the taxonomy of translation competence. By the pragmatic or empirical approach, Prieto Ramos (2011) proposed a model of six parameters: (1) language competence, (2) textual competence (text reception and analysis, production and quality assessment), (3) subject or

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thematic competence, (4) cultural competence, (5) research competence and (6) transfer competence. By referring to bilingualism, the key concept in SLA (Second Language Acquisition), PACTE (Process in the Acquisition of Translation Competence and Evaluation) enunciated those concrete sub-competencies: bilingual, extra-linguistic, translation knowledge, instrumental, strategic sub-competencies and psycho-physiological components (PACTE, 2005, p.610).

Legal translation competence is illustrated on the basis of the above-mentioned two essential concepts by taking into account the special professional requirements involved in this complicated intercultural legal exchange. Legal translation professionalism requires that a prospective legal translator be steeped in linguistics and have adequate knowledge concerning legal terminology, logical principles, the target and source legal system in addition to skills of logical reasoning, problem-solving, and text analysis (Šarčević, 1997). Law has been the field where different textual formats called genres, such as university degrees and diplomas, certificates, statutes, law reports, judgments, the examination of witnesses at the public hearing, counsels' closing speeches to the jury, judge's

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summing-up and charge to the jury, contracts, have been existent, which caused great difficulties in comprehension and translation (Alcaraz, Hughes & Pym, 2014). It is also characterized by thousands of legal terms or concepts which cause great difficulties in legal translation in terms of equivalent translation of legal terminology (Benmaman, 1989). Recognition of the significance of the differences in the “conceptualization, implementation and comprehension of legal notions across cultures” matters to cultivating legal translation professionalism (Marinetti, 2008, p.122). The three-dimensional conceptualization of legal terms motivates translators to seek idealistic equivalence on three levels respectively: linguistic, referential and conceptual, which seems to be too complicated to be possible due to cultural constraints. The solution to this complexity is to borrow legal terms between the legal systems of the same type of languages, i.e. alphabetic or logographic, e.g. *minfa* (civil law) and *xianfa* (constitution) were concepts introduced into Chinese legal terminology from Continental Europe through translation from Japanese (Cao, 2007, p.56; Geeroms 2002).

### **3. HYPOTHESYZING A TWO-DIMENSIONAL MODEL FOR ENHANCING LEGAL**

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## **TRANSLATION COMPETENCE**

The translator's ability in translation research, in the narrow sense, refers to the search through relevant literature for the expression of the target language equivalent to the source language to maintain faithfulness to the corresponding features of the original text in terms of form, meaning and function. Translators need to be familiar with reliable sources of information, including general or professional dictionaries and encyclopaedias, electronic databases, official or more formal websites and search engines. This research capacity is essential for the translation of terminology, and reliable sources of information guarantee the professionalism of terminology translation. In Chinese translation practice, we often refer to CNKI database to locate the right bilingual keywords in order to choose the most formal or accurate terminology translation, but the content of the translation task is often ahead of or beyond the academic research scope, so that such a way of searching cannot fully meet the needs of terminology translation. Another alternative way is the official or more formal websites or search engines where timely updated corpus is provided for language learners and translators.

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Research methods have been integrated into curriculum of translation studies, which was aimed at the information literacy, the genre literacy and the self-reflective mindset (Cifuentes-Goodbody & Harding, 2016, p.7; Stolze, 2013). The topic studied in this paper mainly refers to the general translation research ability, which is the ability to study the interaction between language units by using different cognitive activities, including knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, 2002; Luebke & Lorié, 2013). As the basis for research, understanding, memorization and use of language knowledge are relatively primary language cognitive activities, and mainly deal with the process of language input and output, equipping translators with the accumulation of knowledge, experience or methods needed to carry out complex language processing activities. The broad translation research ability is built upon the simple research ability of searching, locating, comparison and contrast, and at the same time it has several theoretical underpinnings.

### **3.1 Syntactic theory**

The structural organization rules of sentences, also



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known as syntactic theory, are the core theoretical system of linguistics. This theoretical system can be approached from two perspectives, which describe the organization rules of sentences with different thinking patterns (Tallerman, 2011). The first perspective is the grammar knowledge system that is mainly used in language teaching, called construction grammar, which advocates that sentence composition can be split into sentences, clauses, phrases, words, and morphemes. Among them, sentences are composed of clauses, in which there can be the subject, predicate, object, modifier or determiner, adverbial, and complement. The predicate is an essential component of the formation of a clause. The roles of subjects, objects and some complements are generally played by nouns or words equivalent to nouns; predicates are served by verbs or verbs plus their auxiliary components; the modifiers and some complements are served by adjectives or phrases and clauses used for modifying; and adverbials are generally served by adverbs or phrases and clauses that represent time, place, manner, and reason. Construction grammar emphasizes that complete sentences consist of different sentence compositions, whose significance is not ranked, and express a complete meaning. If there is a subject, the predicate verb should be

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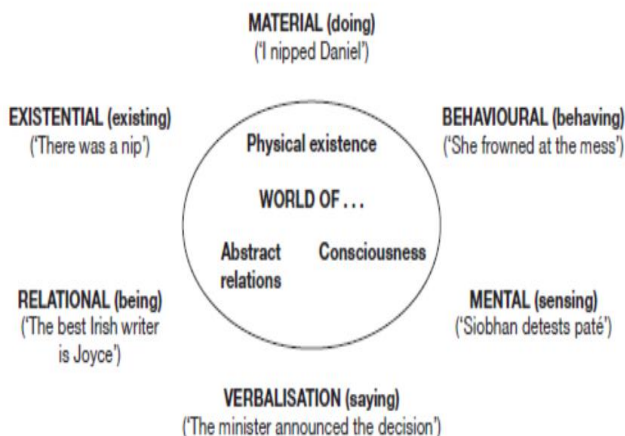
consistent with the subject in terms of person, singular or plural (at least in some alphabetic language grammar system).

The second perspective is called dependency grammar, as the name implies, which refers to the syntactic components with primary and secondary positions, predicate verbs as important central components, and the rest of the components attached to the predicate verbs, known as complement components (complement) and additional components (adjunct). The subject and complement of predicate verbs in a sentence are also called arguments, and the number of such elements can be used to describe the basic properties of verbs. The important contribution of dependent grammar in modern linguistics is the inspiration to understand the theory of arguments of verbs and the transitivity system, the latter of which has become an important linguistic theoretical basis for the analysis of modern literary style. The theory takes verbs as the core of the theoretical system. Different verbs represent different human life experiences and are divided into six processes: material, mental, behavioural, verbalization, relational, and existential processes. These six processes depict the human experience system in words, as shown in

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Figure 1 (Simpson, 2004, p.27).

Figure 1. The Transitivity System



### 3.2 Semantic taxonomy and frames

The study of language meaning often involves three levels: expression meaning, utterance meaning, and communicative meaning (Löbner, 2013, p.16). The first two levels are subordinate to the category of semantic research, and the study of communicative meaning is the main research interests of pragmatics. Studying expression meaning is the research on different levels of language hierarchy: the meanings of lexicons, derived words, synthetic

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words, phrases and sentences. The low-level semantic study is the basis of higher-level semantic research, which constitutes the overall goal of semantic inquiries, and mainly investigates the semantic influence of syntactic relations between different expressions. The study of semantics is based on lexical and syntactical organization rules, and analyzes the original meaning of language expressions irrespective of contexts. The study of utterance meaning is the core task of semantic research, which mainly explores the breadth or influence of the meaning of the expression form by examining such elements as the author, reader, time, place and facts of the context. Two important concepts involved are reference and authenticity (truth). The authenticity of the meaning expressed in a sentence can be judged by studying the reference relationship in the sentence (Löbner, 2013, p.16). The study of utterance meaning also includes the speculation made by the author and the reader under the influence of context and the implicit meaning. This part of the study, subordinate to the category of pragmatics, will be further analyzed in the next part. Semantic frames refer to a framework structure applied to reveal the meaning of vocabulary in multiple aspects through the application of multi-dimensional model, representing some important

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concepts or theories embedded in the meaning of the vocabulary. By the exploration of a certain depth and breadth of the meaning, this analytical approach mainly reveals the vocabulary-related specific use of situational factors, such as the characters involved, behavior, manner, conditions, status and reasons, etc. Also known as a cognitive framework for understanding the meaning of words, it is a complement and development of a variety of ways to interpret the meaning of a word (like synonyms, antonyms, and definitions), and is an essential way to comprehensively interpret certain professional concepts, such as business, medicine, and law (Fillmore, 2006; Gao, 2019). Frame semantics was further theorized into four aspects called qualia structure (Riemer, 2010, p. 281) to implicate crucial levels of word meaning: the constitutive, formal, telic and agentive roles, which are demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Qualia Structure

Qualia Structure	Illustrations
the constitutive role	material, weight, parts
the formal role	orientation, magnitude, shape, dimensionality, color, position
the telic role	purpose and function of the object

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the agentive role	creator, artifact, natural kind, causal chain
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### 3.3 Pragmatic/discoursal/communicative theories

The last two levels of semantic research, namely, utterance meaning and communicative meaning linking semantics with pragmatics, mainly discuss the interaction between context and linguistic meaning, and the influence of participants' subjective judgment upon verbal and non-verbal forms on their responsive behaviors and communication process. Speech act theory is a typical example of the perfect combination of syntactic structure, meaning and communication functions: the specific communication function is generally accomplished by the corresponding sentence pattern. For example, commands or requests are generally made by imperative sentences, and announcing an important result is generally accomplished with verbs with corresponding verbal functions, such as *declare*, *announce*, and *claim*. The social function of speech acts mainly depends on the meaning of words or phrases, or in other words, the literal meaning of language units is the semantic basis of the communicative meaning of speech acts. Pragmatics mainly studies the semantic consultation between

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the text producer and the recipient, the context of speech and the implicit meaning of speech (Thomas, 2013). The basis of semantic consultation is the communicator's understanding of the grammatical structure, the semantic relationship between language forms and the logical association, as well as the knowledge and experience accumulated in the process of social communication and the well-established social communication rules, such as politeness principle or interest rules. Because of the rules of social communication, the study of pragmatics on the meaning of speech, especially the study of implied meaning, is influenced by many cultural factors, and the difference of intercultural pragmatic meaning has become a common research approach for the interpretation of texts in recent years.

### **3.4 The contrastive analysis hypothesis for translation**

The contrastive analysis hypothesis is the theoretical hypothesis that is more important in the field of second language acquisition, which means that the linguistic difference between the second language and the mother tongue may become an obstacle in the process of second language acquisition and affect the progress of learners' language learning

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(Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991). Thus, the author illustrates the contrastive analysis of translation activities just as language acquisition, in that the difference between the source language and the target one in the language form and cultural background may cause great difficulties in translation between two languages to achieve formal and semantic equivalence. Even if dynamic or functional equivalence is achieved, the prerequisite is to go through a rigorous semantic framework analysis and comparison, in order to decide upon a certain degree of equivalent translation. Sometimes, it is necessary to add footnotes to explain the differences in cultural background. The contrastive analysis of translation can be conducted on the following levels: syntactic structures, the semantic connotation and denotation and pragmatic/discoursal/cultural differences. The contrastive analysis hypothesis of translation provides the theoretical and methodological basis for cultivating the translator's research ability, answers the questions in translation research about how to compare, what to compare and contrast, and implies the solution strategy for non-translatable problems caused by cultural and linguistic differences. The theoretical basis or hypothesis of solving these problems requires the translator to strive to improve



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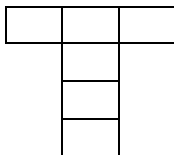
the perception and understanding of the subtleties of language in learning and practice before gradually grasping and internalizing the appreciation and keen sense of language, which is the only way to improve the translation ability and the artistic value of translation works.

#### **4. THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY TO TRANSFORM THE MODEL INTO A CURRICULAR MODULE**

The research objective is to testify the feasibility and effectiveness of the model hypothesized by the underpinning of several primary linguistic theories in achieving the goal of enhancing legal translation competence. To achieve this objective, the Q-methodology is conducted by following the stages of defining concourse, organizing concourse and developing statements, selecting the respondents, Q-sorting, data analysis and interpretation (Brown,1993; Exel & Graaf, 2005; Liu, 2014; Gao, 2017, p.73). The step-by-step incremental analysis of the three concepts: linguistic competence, translation competence and legal translation competence, combined with the theoretical assumption of honing translators' research skills illustrated above, finally generated 50 statements



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From these individual rankings, numerical data are obtained for factor analysis. Correlation between personal profiles identifies similarity in viewpoints or subjectivity, from which four groups were identified as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Four Groups of Viewpoints

Groups	Eigenvalue	% of Variance
F1	4.923	35.162
F2	1.946	13.900
F3	1.522	10.872
F4	1.229	8.781

Based on the analysis of the 4 groups of participants' sorting of the corresponding statements, the following results are obtained as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Highlighted statements

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N O	Statements	G1	G2	G3	G4
1	Academic vocabulary accumulation	<b>8.67</b>	<b>7.33</b>	<b>8.50</b>	<b>6.50</b>
2	Academic grammar acquisition	<b>6.67</b>	5.67	<b>7.00</b>	<b>6.75</b>
5	Reading skills	<b>6.33</b>	<b>7.33</b>	<b>6.50</b>	<b>6.50</b>
6	Writing skills	5.00	<b>7.67</b>	<b>7.25</b>	5.75
7	General Translation skills	<b>6.67</b>	<b>7.67</b>	<b>8.25</b>	<b>6.75</b>
9	Production accuracy	5.33	<b>6.33</b>	<b>7.75</b>	<b>7.25</b>
12	Comprehension: understanding meaning, interpreting, translating	5.00	<b>6.33</b>	<b>7.75</b>	<b>7.75</b>
13	Application: applying what is known to a new situation or problem	4.67	<b>6.33</b>	<b>8.75</b>	<b>6.25</b>
34	The analysis of the translation briefs, including the type of translation, the communication context and the original and the target text.	<b>7.00</b>	5.00	<b>6.50</b>	<b>7.00</b>
35	Legal system (i.e. linguistic and geographical coordinates of jurisdictions);	<b>7.67</b>	<b>6.33</b>	<b>7.50</b>	<b>6.75</b>
36	Branch of law (i.e. thematic and statutory coordinates);	<b>6.33</b>	<b>7.00</b>	<b>7.00</b>	<b>7.25</b>
37	Legal text typology (legislative, judicial, administrative, etc.);	<b>8.67</b>	<b>8.67</b>	<b>6.50</b>	<b>8.00</b>
38	Verifying the key features of the source text in terms of coherence, cohesion and style (legal linguistic elements);	<b>7.00</b>	<b>8.00</b>	5.00	<b>7.25</b>
39	Perfectly understanding the legal function of the text;	<b>6.00</b>	<b>8.67</b>	6.00	<b>6.75</b>
40	Identifying any comprehension problems; primarily relying on legal sources (and legal experts or authors if	<b>8.00</b>	5.33	6.00	<b>6.75</b>

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	necessary, and/or possible);				
41	Familiarity with legal reasoning (or legal argumentation) and principles of legal hermeneutics e.g. applicable rules of interpretation in the case of international treaties.	<b>7.00</b>	<b>6.33</b>	4.25	<b>7.00</b>
42	Quality control in legal translation requires particular emphasis on accuracy and effectiveness of legal communication, when assuring the macro-textual coherence of solutions to the semantic, procedural, and reformulation problems encountered.	5.33	<b>7.00</b>	4.75	<b>6.50</b>
43	Linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic knowledge, including knowledge of linguistic variants, registers, specialized legal linguistic uses and legal genre conventions	<b>8.67</b>	<b>7.67</b>	5.25	<b>6.50</b>
44	Knowledge of legal systems, hierarchy of legal sources, branches of law and main legal concepts	<b>7.33</b>	<b>6.67</b>	5.50	<b>6.75</b>
45	Awareness of asymmetry between legal notions and structures in different legal traditions	<b>6.67</b>	<b>8.00</b>	<b>7.00</b>	<b>7.75</b>
46	Knowledge of specialized sources, information and terminology management	<b>7.00</b>	<b>6.67</b>	5.00	<b>6.50</b>
49	Teamwork, interaction with clients and other professionals	<b>7.00</b>	<b>7.33</b>	5.25	<b>6.75</b>
50	Knowledge of legal framework for professional practice and fiscal obligations, and deontological aspects.	<b>7.33</b>	<b>7.00</b>	<b>6.50</b>	<b>7.00</b>

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With qualitative reflections upon the whole process of the study, especially the conceptualization of the core concept of legal translation competence as well as the construction of the two-dimensional model, integrated with the categories generated by factor analysis, categories of the highlighted statements emerge and a curricular module for teaching legal translation gradually takes its shape.

## **5. ELABORATION UPON THE CURRICULAR MODULE AND ITS PEDOGOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The module is built for curricular design of teaching Chinese and English legal translation by ten aspects of knowledge and skills hypothesized as effective by the Q-methodology research process illustrated above. The ten aspects are listed as follows:

- 1) history of legal translation and legal translation studies;
- 2) legal translation and legal culture;
- 3) stylistic features of legal language;
- 4) approaches and strategies of legal translation;
- 5) comparative study of Chinese and English legal language;
- 6) legal translation and Anglo-American legal system;

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- 7) interpretation of legal terms and equivalence of translating legal terms;
- 8) the types of legal translation;
- 9) parallel text analysis in legal translation;
- 10) common problems and solutions in legal translation.

The ten aspects can be grouped into four categories: history of legal translation, approaches and strategies of legal translation, contrastive analysis of legal language, system and culture, and empirical problems.

### **5.1 History of legal translation and related research**

The history of legal translation is also the history of Chinese legal construction, which has witnessed the process of continuous internationalization and improvement of Chinese law. As an important part of the process of legal transplantation, it also reveals the linguistic characteristics of Chinese legal language to a certain extent, mainly the syntactic features. It greatly enriches the form and meaning of Chinese legal language (Qu & Shi, 2007). The period of the Republic of China has played an irreplaceable role in the construction and perfection of the law at that time. In the past 30 years: legal

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translation has undergone a process of recovery, transformation and maturity, along with the continuous internationalization of China's economic culture, and the study of legal translation is also in full swing, mainly from the theory of legal translation, legal language characteristics and translation, legal translation principles, the method of legal translation to the translation of legal terms. (Li& Hu, 2006).

## **5.2 Approaches and strategies of legal translation**

The strategies of legal translation can be divided into macro-strategies and micro-strategies: macro-strategies, which can also be called approaches, refer to the general principles dealing with the difficulties that may be encountered in the translation, such as literal translation and sense-for-sense translation, static equivalence and dynamic equivalence, domestication and foreignization. It is pointed out that literal translation is actually to achieve the purpose of formal equivalence, and the sense-for-sense translation is to achieve dynamic equivalence. However, even with the above two sets of theories, we find that in translation there still exist difficulties brought about by different cultural backgrounds, which is a different concept from form



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and meaning, with more complex abstraction. Therefore, the third set of translation principles, that is, domestication and foreignization was proposed for the translator to solve the cultural differences. To a certain extent, the translation approach of domestication echoes the theory of reader response in the field of rhetoric, emphasizing the readability of the translation. The foreignizing approach stresses that translation practice should be faithful to the original text in terms of form and meaning, and play the role of cultural communication, i.e. transferring the cultural imprint of the original text to the translation, enriching the cultural world of the target language, and improving the inclusiveness and diversity of the translation discourse. Because the countries and regions using different languages have a large variety of legal culture, in the legal translation, three sets of macro-strategies should be compared and analyzed, combined with the direct purpose of translation work, to choose the optimal macro translation approach.

Micro-strategies, to be more specific, mainly refer to choices of corresponding language characteristics in translation of specific language forms, such as choices of the right words, sentence structural conversions, long sentence translation, word

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conversions, word omission, conversions of parts of speech, phrases and sentence conversions, etc. (Sun, 2004). Micro-strategies require translators to have a systematic grasp of the knowledge system of the two languages involved in translation activities, and handle different syntactical characteristics flexibly, while the language selection should follow the appropriate macro translation principles, that is, the principles of equivalence and the function of cultural communication.

### **5.3 Contrastive analysis of legal language, system and culture**

Translation is a kind of language exchange activity between cultures, when the translator is doing code-switching, and simultaneously, comparing the different cultural forms or patterns carried by the languages. Significant differences in culture may be a huge obstacle to translation activities. However, for legal translation, especially when the translation has legal force, different legal cultures bring more difficulties to translation, demanding very serious and formal examination and adjustment procedures, to ensure that the translation have the same legal effect. Law, as a part of culture, is an important part of people's social and cultural activities, whereas

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legal institutions and their functions as well as deep understanding of the principles of law should also be affected by the social culture, and at the same time, social and cultural activities are also regulated and managed by the law. The interaction between law and culture constitutes the full connotation of legal culture. Specifically, the legal culture includes the legal system, beliefs, attitudes and ideas about the law, and the traditions and historical facts of the law (Pommer, 2008). With the globalization process and the internationalization of legal education, the formal and informal exchanges between legal culture are increasing, especially an increasing number of young students educated by international law will certainly promote the legal reform of various cultures, promote the construction of international legal discourse, and make legal and cultural exchanges more smoothly conducted.

#### **5.4 Empirical issues in legal translation practice, teaching and research**

The problems in the practice of legal translation are mainly reflected in the seven main aspects: (1) spelling and grammatical errors; (2) erroneous omission, addition and understanding of the original text's meaning; (3) inappropriate translation of legal

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terms; (4) stylistic inappropriacy of the target text; (5) inadequate understanding of the source text; (6) poor language cultivation; (7) errors caused by legal cultural differences (Kim & Hu, 2000, p.45). The problems in the teaching of legal translation are mainly learners' lack of understanding of the relevant laws: the lack of understanding of the differences between relevant legal concepts and legal systems, the lack of perceptual understanding and practice of English and Chinese legal languages, and therefore the lack of recognition and rational analysis of differences, and the rules of use of English and Chinese legal languages. Stylistic characteristics, legal discourse norms and the rules of conversion between them require more research studies (Sun, 2004). The problems in the study of legal translation are mainly manifested in the lack of systematic research: from the current research results, the theoretical level of legal translation needing to be strengthened, the lack of methodological guidance and the lack of clear objectives of in-depth studies. The study of legal translation should be consistent with the history of legal translation, the theory of legal translation, and the comprehensive study of legal translation criticism (Li & Hu, 2006). The common problems in the practice of legal translation, teaching and

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research are involved in each other, and problems in teaching and research are often the causes of problems in translation practice. Therefore, to solve the problems in translation practice, three problems should be treated in unified and coordinated manner.

These ten aspects include the theoretical knowledge and translation strategies as well as techniques that should be mastered by legal translation learners, and the basic knowledge concerning the legal profession. In addition to theories, strategies, skills and expertise, practical and research methods for training legal translation skills, namely parallel text analysis, contrastive analysis of Chinese and English languages, and comparison and contrast of legal systems and culture are also integrated into the curricular design for a legal translation course called *Introduction to Legal Translation*, provided to senior undergraduate and graduate students in *China University of Political Science and Law*. The course has been under persistent construction, guided by the competence-based and profession-oriented notion of curricular design (Gao, 2016) in the past years. An increasing number of students have been better informed and trained when taking the course and their confidence in legal translation has reported to be boosted, too.

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## **6. THE EMPIRICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR LEGAL TRANSLATION**

The seriousness of legal translation can be comparable to that of scientific translation, and some legal translations have the same legal effect, so legal translation not only requires the accuracy in code-switching, but also strict semantic and functional equivalence of bilingual texts, which can be perceived as the target texts to have the same legal significance or even the same legal power. In the past, the understanding of cultural concepts in the study of culture and translation has not been clear, which makes the cultural research in the field of translation cannot be clearly defined, and there is a great randomness and a lack of systematicity in the language comparison between cultures. Whereas, the legal culture is specific. Legal culture has a relatively specific scope of research, and at the same time, is characterized to be both universal and relative: each political system can be regarded as a certain cultural unity, with a strict legal system and complicated legal culture. The specificity of the political system, economic system and legal provisions equip the study of legal culture with warranty data. Legal language is depicted to have distinct normative stylistic features. In terms of

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functional analysis of legal statements, a typical legislative or legal sentence is generally composed of three basic components: legal subject, legal action, case, condition or qualifications (Li, 2013).

Different languages connect sentences by different means at the levels of vocabulary, syntax, and semantics. English sentences are mainly composed of syntactic units, associated by some structurally auxiliary words to indicate the subordinate relationship between words. English syntax structure is mainly organized by formal connections. However, Chinese sentences are mainly made up of semantic connections, with fewer conjunctions or prepositions, and the relationship between sentence components is perceived by semantic consultation. Translation equivalence can generally be divided into formal and dynamic types: formal equivalent translation strategy emphasizes that the translation be faithful to the structure of the source text grammar and lexical composition details, and dynamic equivalent translation strategy tends to cater to translation readability. The best translation strategy of legal translation is the formal equivalence under the premise of adhering to the principle of functional or dynamic equivalence. In other words, the study of legal translation needs to

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use semantic framework theory and methodology to make a strict meaningful comparison on the basis of syntactic contrast. The theory of contrastive rhetoric reveals that different languages reflect different cultures and different ways of thinking, leading to different ways of thinking and syntactic characteristics. Chinese four-word phrases are very widely used, so, when translated into English, we must pay attention to the meaning of the original words.

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