

# **Nurturing Students' English Communication Skills through the Translation of Ancient Greek Classics**

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**Abstract:** Traditional Chinese teaching often relies on domestic materials for students' understanding of English-speaking countries, limiting exploration of Western concepts and hindering the recognition of English as a foreign language. Recognizing the influence of ancient Greek civilization on Western culture, this article advocates for improving English communication skills through the translation of ancient Greek classics. It emphasizes the importance of this approach in gaining a deeper understanding of Western expressions and highlights the practical value of such translations. Additionally, the article underscores the role of learning classic English translation appreciation in enhancing language proficiency, literary appreciation, cross-cultural communication, and cultural confidence. Lastly, it suggests that employing the teaching method of classic translation can effectively support students' vocabulary learning, memory, and understanding of special meanings in cross-cultural contexts, fostering natural experiences of cultural differences in language and text conversions and promoting cross-cultural awareness.

**Keywords:** Translation Perspective of Ancient Greek Classics; Students; English Communication Ability; Culture

## **1. Introduction**

Globalization's advancement has intensified international interactions, offering English majors expanded opportunities. Classic translation, a key facet of English majors' education, hones cross-cultural expression and language proficiency. Through translating classics, students grasp cultural disparities between China and the West, as well as

differences across ancient and modern eras. In teaching, educators should assess students' cross-cultural awareness using their translations of ancient Greek classics. Supplying classic materials and organizing translation activities are crucial. Aligning the curriculum with the essential demands of ancient Greek classics translation, enhancing cross-cultural communication, and cultivating an understanding of cultural distinctions benefit students' professional development in various English language contexts. <sup>[1]</sup>

## **2. Explanations on the Translation of Ancient Greek Classics**

Classical literature, a product of human civilization, varies across nations like the wisdom classics of ancient Greece and China. Despite cultural differences, all classics bear lasting vitality, carrying the essence of their respective cultures <sup>[2]</sup>. In translating ancient Greek classics, the focus should be on clear, accurate, and profound communication to enhance cultural understanding. College students, learning ancient Greek classics translation, should prioritize cross-cultural language communication and English proficiency. This ensures the timeless dissemination of wisdom and philosophy hidden within these classics, fulfilling their cultural mission.

## **3. The Practical Value of Cultivating Students' English Communicative Ability from the Perspective of Translating Ancient Greek Classics**

The translation of ancient Greek classics is a key course in English translation majors, characterized by its extensive coverage and rich content. The goal is to cultivate students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities, emphasizing cross-cultural English communication skills. With the ongoing

curriculum reform, cultural classics translation has been integrated, requiring students to deeply understand the philosophy of the text, experience Chinese and Western cultural differences, and enhance overall literacy<sup>[3]</sup>.

In university curriculum reform, introducing ancient Greek classics stimulates students' learning enthusiasm and facilitates the development of cross-cultural communication awareness. Teaching activities immerse students in a bilingual and cross-cultural context, expanding their cultural horizons. Cultivating English communication skills not only enhances students' literacy but also adjusts and optimizes teaching methods, breaking through limitations and promoting the development of English major education<sup>[4]</sup>.

#### **4. The Practical Needs of Cultivating Students' English Communicative Ability from the Perspective of Translating Ancient Greek Classics**

##### **4.1 Analyzing Real Needs from the Perspective of Intercultural Communication**

In the era of globalization, understanding the practical needs of cross-cultural communication is essential. As international relationships become more intricate, nations strive to enhance their cultural image and soft power for global influence. While China actively promotes its classical works globally, there's a gap in understanding and introducing classics from other countries. To foster cross-cultural exchange, it's crucial for China to break internal barriers, such as by translating ancient Greek classics, to deepen mutual understanding and enhance its cultural strength on the global stage<sup>[5]</sup>. This entails enhancing the development of talents in cultural classics translation, particularly by prioritizing the cultivation of students' English communication skills at the university level. Students should adeptly employ language conversion between English and Chinese, demonstrating cultural awareness. Through active interpretation in diverse cultural contexts, students can ensure the preservation of the cultural essence in translating classics by delving deep into the philosophy and meaning while conveying fundamental text information.

##### **4.2 Analyzing Real Needs from the Perspective of Translation of Classical**

#### **Books**

Translating classics serves as the revival and transmission of timeless literary works, transforming them into modern texts in contemporary society. When translating ancient Greek classics, it is crucial to empower translators in producing secondary translations, classic plays, and cultural propaganda. Adopting diverse vocabulary conversion methods, particularly considering the disparities between Chinese and Western cultures, is essential for elevating cross-domain translation proficiency. Translators must possess a nuanced understanding of diverse cultures, recognizing distinctions in language logic, vocabulary usage, and speaking styles between different countries<sup>[6]</sup>. Hence, there's a need to enhance the cultivation of English communication skills among college students. This equips them with the perspectives and abilities for effective communication in English across different countries, laying the foundation for becoming adept translators of classics.

Translating ancient Greek classics is essentially a language translation process encompassing vocabulary, grammar, colloquialism, fixed phrases, and specialized expressions. The goal is to cultivate students' language communication skills and English proficiency. In this process, students delve into the philosophical and profound meaning of the text while preserving the original theme. Although students possess a foundational grasp of the English language, translating ancient Greek classics involves navigating special languages from diverse cultural and historical contexts. This necessitates strong communication abilities, drawing on knowledge of both Chinese and Western cultures, and applying contextual understanding to achieve high-quality translations. Evidently, the translation of ancient Greek classics demands a high level of comprehensive English communication skills from students.

#### **5. Fostering English Communication Skills from Translating Ancient Greek Classics Perspective**

##### **5.1 Revitalizing Translation Courses for English Majors: A Focus on Cross-Cultural Awareness**

Introducing appropriate materials from ancient Greek classics to expand students' cross-cultural communication horizons [7]. Teachers present ancient Greek classics at appropriate difficulty levels, aligning with students' cognitive abilities. This enriches students' cultural translation materials. In class, teachers delve into the generation period, social context, and historical background of these classics, prompting students to mark "incomprehensible vocabulary." Through explanations rooted in ancient Greek social culture, students gain insights into the cultural nuances beneath language differences. This approach fosters a nuanced awareness of English communication. Periodic introductions to diverse fields within ancient Greek classics, such as philosophy, language, humanities, music, and mathematics, further expand students' cross-cultural perspectives, ensuring the robust development of their English communication skills. [8].

## **5.2 Organize Students to Learn the Translation Theory of Ancient Greek Classics and Develop Their Cross-cultural Literacy**

Translating ancient Greek classics differs significantly from modern English text translation. To cultivate students' English communication skills in this context, teachers should introduce theoretical knowledge about ancient Greek cultural translation. This includes guiding students through relevant theories and models, engaging them in translation activities within diverse social and cultural contexts. This approach aims to nurture cross-cultural literacy, further enhancing students' English communication skills.

For instance, when translating Montesquieu's work on ancient Greek classics, emphasis should be placed on the socio-cultural context of late ancient Greece (ancient Rome). This involves exploring dominant social and cultural ideas, values, and historical developments. Learning within this specific historical context enables students to understand translation theory's internal mechanisms, fostering a deeper understanding of cross-cultural literacy.

Additionally, translating Greek myths, legends, philosophical viewpoints, and literary works requires considering the social and "spiritual

environment" of a specific period. Teachers can guide students to learn cultural translation theory, originating from the Roman period. This theory emphasizes translating text content based on specific social and cultural needs within a given context, contributing to the development of students' ability to translate classics and enhancing their English communication skills.

## **5.3 Optimize the Curriculum of English Majors, Taking into Account the Translation of Chinese and Western Classics**

Cultivating students' English communication skills through the translation of ancient Greek classics is crucial not just for societal needs but also to enhance various professional abilities in students. This approach requires not only clear translation skills but also a deep understanding of the texts' inherent philosophy and profound meaning. Students, drawing on their knowledge and cultural reserves, must interpret language, metaphors, and sources in the classics to continuously refine their English communication skills.

Ancient Greek classics translation presents unique challenges. Firstly, originating from a different era, it demands consideration of the contrasts between ancient and modern perspectives. Secondly, with cultural significance, it necessitates translation that effectively reflects cultural characteristics and connotations. In this light, teachers can introduce traditional Chinese cultural classics like "The Analects" to enrich students' major curriculum. Beginning with simpler Chinese translations, students explore cultural backgrounds, vocabulary connotations, and hidden meanings in short sentences, progressively advancing their translation practice [9]. Translating ancient Greek classics can be approached by analyzing fields, stylistic types, and philosophical elements. This process helps students develop a clear translation concept for cultural classics, enabling them to utilize their knowledge of ancient Greece for accurate interpretation and proficient English expression. Such an approach is crucial for effective enhancement of students' English proficiency.

## **5.4 Organize Exchanges among International Students from Multiple Countries to Meet Their Cross-cultural**

### **Communication Needs**

Through translating ancient Greek classics, teachers foster students' English communication skills, enriching their cultural reserves and cross-cultural knowledge. This equips them to better understand the cultural customs and characteristics of other countries, facilitating more efficient engagement in cross-cultural communication. Given the widespread influence of ancient Greek civilization in many European regions, teachers can organize regular cultural exchanges between their students and those from local European schools. Using English, they can share their respective cultural classics, fostering mutual understanding <sup>[10]</sup>. In university events, our students proficiently use English to share classic Chinese works and explore cultural aspects with Western counterparts. This cross-cultural exchange extends to discussing ancient Greek classics, enriching students' perspectives. Applying these insights to translation enhances their understanding and supports more profound interpretations of ancient Greek classics <sup>[11]</sup>.

### **5.5 Introducing Ancient Greek Themed Films and Resources to Expand Students' English Knowledge**

To enhance students' English communication skills in translating ancient Greek classics, teachers should focus on key skills such as interpreting vocabulary in different cultural contexts, emotional understanding of sentences, and language application in diverse scenarios. Creating learning scenarios resembling "ancient Greek classics translation," like using English soundtrack movies with ancient Greek themes, helps students develop communication skills. Teachers can expand students' learning range by introducing diverse themes in movies, books, and audio works, progressively improving their English communication skills through daily exercises.

Recognizing limitations in current course content, teachers should supplement with more English literary classics, encouraging independent reading. This student-centric approach fosters autonomous learning, allowing students to arrange their time, utilize translation skills, and record reading experiences in English. This method not only strengthens written language proficiency but also encourages ideological interaction with

authors, further honing students' English communication skills.

### **5.6 Utilizing Western Cultural Knowledge for Teaching and Promoting Standardized English Communication among Students**

Translating ancient Greek classics poses challenges for students due to substantial differences in Chinese and Western cultures, impacting their understanding and expression in the translated text. These cultural disparities encompass lifestyle habits, emotional expressions, ideology, dietary culture, values, and more. Teachers play a crucial role in guiding students to navigate these challenges, offering insights into Western cultural knowledge during classroom activities. To further support students, teachers can compile a comprehensive guidebook on ancient Greek and Western common sense, facilitating independent learning and enhancing students' knowledge base for effective English communication.

### **5.7 Organize Rich Translation Activities of Classics to Standardize Students' Oral Communication through Western Literature**

Cultivating students' English communication skills through translating ancient Greek classics involves organized translation activities where students communicate, consult information, and explain vocabulary in English, fostering language proficiency and standardizing expression. This unique approach not only enhances linguistic abilities but also instills cultural significance, refining students' oral expression and contributing to the development of their English communication skills <sup>[12]</sup>. The implementation path of cultivating students' English communication ability from the perspective of translating ancient Greek classics involves integrating cross-cultural knowledge, organizing translation activities, and supplementing learning through relevant multimedia resources. This approach aims to enhance students' proficiency in English usage, expression, and communication skills, providing a comprehensive foundation for the translation of cultural classics.

## **6. Conclusion**

In conclusion, cross-cultural communication

skills are crucial in translating ancient Greek classics, as it involves understanding not only the language but also the cultural nuances and historical contexts. Strengthening students' English communication skills is essential for minimizing translation differences and improving overall translation proficiency. Future teaching should leverage translation scenarios and cross-cultural communication resources to enhance students' cross-cultural awareness and communication literacy, ensuring standardized communication expression and elevating translation quality. The cultivation of English communication skills should remain a priority in teaching practices to effectively promote students' translation capabilities.

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