

# Study on Interpretation Education in Sichuan Province from the Perspective of Occupation

**Yang Ke**

*Southwest Minzu University, China*

**ABSTRACT.** *With the continuous development of economic cooperation between China and foreign countries, the demand for interpreters in society is also increasing. Located in the west, Sichuan Province gathers many ethnic minorities living together. How to cultivate excellent interpreters for economic development in ethnic minority areas of Sichuan? In this paper, the interpretation education in ethnic minority areas of Sichuan was studied from the perspective of occupation in combination with interpretation theories, translation theories, interpreting practices and industry resources.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Sichuan, Ethnic minority, Interpretation, Vocational education*

## **1. Introduction**

In recent years, with the increasingly frequent exchanges in politics, economy, culture and diplomacy between China and other countries in the world, the demand for interpreters has increased dramatically and the quality requirements for interpreters have become higher and higher. The market demand for translators, especially interpreters, has increased significantly, which has also made the teaching and learning of interpreting skills become the focus of attention. As the state gives priority to the economic development of western ethnic minority areas, language communication is essential and interpreter training is greatly significant for seeking regional development, carrying forward ethnic culture and allowing more people to know about the western region [1]. In order to meet the requirements of curriculum development and construction of colleges and universities, the ethnic colleges and universities set up interpreting courses in English major to develop qualified interpreters in the 1990s. Following the direction and method of interpreting education of ethnic colleges and universities in Sichuan for the ethnic minority areas of Sichuan Province, a study was conducted on the interpreting education for ethnic minorities in this paper to more clearly understand the current situation and problems of interpreting vocational education, and relevant solutions are also put forward.

## 2. Problems in Interpreting Vocational Education

With the continuous development of economy, politics, culture and education in China, the demand for interpreters has increased in the society, and the interpreters will also be required to be more standardized and specialized. At present, the "going out" strategy has been vigorously implemented in China. However, the shortage of professional translators and translation and interpreting teachers has become a huge bottleneck for China to implement the "going out" strategy. Therefore, it is extremely urgent to strengthen the training of specialized translators and translation researchers. The training of interpreters in Sichuan colleges and universities should take Sichuan Province as a hub to reach out to Southwest China, even to the whole country. To provide high-level interpreters for the society and the country, it is more important to improve the interpreting teachers and strengthen the planning for interpreting vocational education to promote the economic and international development of Sichuan Province and even the whole country, further contributing to the development the interpreting education in Sichuan Province and the prosperity of China. Due to the actual economic condition and lifestyle in ethnic minority areas of Sichuan Province, the interpreting vocational education is necessary to be developed in the light of local conditions, and then promoted from platforms at all levels, including enterprises, industry organizations, and universities. The implementation of projects supported by Tibet Development Fund and various ethnic education funded projects has improved the basic equipment and supporting facilities for foreign language education in ethnic minority areas [2].

Interpreting education is still in its infancy in China. At present, there are three main problems:

(1) Language foundation of students. In the schools setting up interpreting course in ethnic minority areas in Sichuan, English interpreting is only an optional course for senior English majors, and the interpreting course is set only for about 17 weeks of in a semester, which is obviously not enough. Moreover, some students in this major have no impetus to study the interpreting course and not pay enough attention to it. Secondly, interpreters need to have substantial linguistic knowledge, and students need to continue to consolidate and improve their bilingual language skills in terms of professional competence, therefore, the students face a great challenge.

(2) Teaching conditions and methods. At present, in most colleges and universities, the interpreting course is held in the ordinary classroom or the audio classroom and no professional audio classroom is set for interpretation teachers and learners. Without such a simulated interpretation site, the teaching quality will be greatly reduced. In addition, there are only a few interpretation textbooks, not enough to arouse the enthusiasm of students, leading to the dull interpretation teaching. At present, teachers can not get rid of the traditional teaching mode, and continue to focus on language knowledge, a large number of interpreting theories and even grammar knowledge in the teaching, but neglect the interpreting skills, interpreting thinking and psychological quality.

(3) Experience of teachers. It is self-evident that a teacher with rich interpreting

experience is of great importance to interpreting education. However, at present, most domestic teachers have not participated in the actual interpretation work, so they cannot apply practical experience to learning and do not pay much attention to the teaching of practical interpreting experience. With more frequent diplomatic activities, as an important city in Southwest China, Sichuan also increasingly contacts with foreign countries. The cultivation of excellent interpreters for foreign affairs in Sichuan has become an important factor for the great development of Sichuan. Although the practice and teaching of interpretation has developed prosperously in China in recent years, the emerging discipline of interpretation still lacks a solid theoretical foundation and systematic research methods. With the establishment of Bachelor of Translation and Interpreting, Master and Doctor of Philosophy in Translation and Master of Translation and Interpreting in mainland China in recent years, translatology has become a prominent discipline. According to incomplete statistics, more than 2,000 international conferences and exhibitions of different scales are held in China every year, and about million professional interpreters are required. However, only 300 to 500 qualified interpreters graduate each year. It indicates that the market demand is huge, but the current quality of interpreter training is not optimistic. Sichuan Province, as an important city in Southwest China, is committed to building an international city and undertakes many large international conferences and needs a lot of interpreters, it is increasingly important to train interpreters. Moreover, there is a lack of in-depth research on the interpretation in ethnic minority areas in Sichuan, while the interpretation research is very important for the development of Sichuan.

Interpretation is an important tool for international communication and plays a special and important role in China's foreign affairs. In China, the interpretation is still under weak development, especially in ethnic minority areas. There is a certain gap between ethnic minority areas and economically developed areas in terms of economy and education, and the language proficiency and interpreting skill of student in ethnic minority areas are relatively at low level. The development of interpreting vocational education in ethnic minority areas can achieve the following results: under the conditions of low requirements for students and limited educational resources in minority areas, improve the interpreting knowledge and skills and international adaptability of students, meet the needs of the strategy of reinvigorating China through human resource development, and improve the cultural and educational level of the whole West China.

### **3. Solutions for Improvement of Interpreting Vocational Education in Ethnic Minority Areas in Sichuan**

Firstly, strengthen the teaching staff of interpreting education. In recent years, reflective teaching, as a new interpreting education mode, is highly respected in the reform of foreign interpreting education. Its essence is to transform from the traditional mode of training interpreting teachers with the exploration of teaching contents and methods to the modern mode of training interpreting teachers with teacher education and professional development. The teacher education is to guide

teachers to consider professional knowledge and teaching experience as the fundamental starting point, pay attention to discovering and analyzing problems in the process of teaching practice, and explore ways to solve problems through research, planning, actual practice and evaluation, and ultimately improve own self-teaching level and teaching practice ability. Interpreting, as a course with high professional skills, usually involves multidisciplinary knowledge such as psychology, culture, history, linguistics and art, and has high requirements for the psychological quality, language proficiency, scope of knowledge, flexible application ability and response capability of interpreting teachers. Therefore, interpreting teachers should actively strengthen reflective teaching, strive to improve their interpreting skills and understanding and experience of interpretation, enhance their interpreting level through various practices and interactions, and strive to improve teaching effectiveness and satisfaction.

Secondly, use featured interpreting textbooks. As for interpreting education of undergraduates, its basic intention is to improve the basic interpreting skills of the students, develop their ability to put into practice what they have learned, that is, encourage students to apply the knowledge they have learned to their daily work, life, and study, adapt to the needs of talents in the social market, and improve students' competitiveness in the fierce job market. The interpreting textbooks of colleges and universities should have the assistance and support of systematic tutorials on the one hand, and should be in line with the actual social conditions on the other hand, that is, the some content in the textbook is closely related to the social development. Only in this way is it possible to expand the interpreting vision of students on the basis of teaching students much more theoretical interpreting knowledge, and stimulate the motivation and enthusiasm of undergraduates to the greatest extent. For example, guide the students to study some classic interpreting videos or audio clips from the Internet, and some representative articles in foreign newspapers and periodicals, and actively organize exchanges between Chinese and foreign students. Therefore, the interpreting teachers in colleges and universities shall break through the narrow-minded traditional mode of using only textbooks as teaching materials, make full use of the Internet, newspaper, periodicals and other means to collect teaching materials, actively expand students' interpreting knowledge and horizons on the basis of consolidating their interpreting skills, and improve their ability to understand and apply the foreign language and culture.

Thirdly, conduct the periodical assessment on interpreting quality. Direct communication between China and foreign countries is the most prominent feature of interpretation. Therefore, interpreters should not only be accurate in language expression, but also pay attention to the details of own conversation style, manner and appearance, which makes the periodical assessment of interpreting quality of college students quite more important. Considering the limited classroom time, the periodical assessment can be conducted regularly after class in forms of assessment of students by teachers, assessment of teachers by students, or mutual assessment between teachers and students, from the following aspects: language proficiency, standardization of sentence expression, naturalness of manner, reasonableness of speed control, and appropriateness of expression, etc. This practical assessment can

not only effectively improve students' language skills and strengthen their psychological quality, but also enable teachers and students to find various problems in the process of interpretation, so as to solve them in a timely and effective manner, truly achieve steady and stable improvement, and lay a solid foundation for college students to be better competent in the future.

In terms of practical application, faced with the problems and shortcomings of interpreting vocational education in ethnic minority areas of Sichuan Province, the author of this paper, taking advantage of the development of a strong socialist culture in China, interviewed relevant management institutions and schools of vocational education, and investigated the students of relevant schools, summarized the problems and shortcomings of interpreting vocational education in ethnic minority areas in Sichuan, and explored and innovated the teaching modes and methods suitable for vocational education in ethnic minority areas of Sichuan Province and the measures to improve their education level to meet the needs of the country for interpreters with high quality. There are only a few interpreters who serve ethnic minority areas. It is necessary to establish a training model for English interpreters to cultivate interpreters who can meet various social needs and serve ethnic minority areas. English interpreters can serve important fields of society, including foreign affairs, tourism, trade, international conferences and exhibitions. As a teacher of English majors in ethnic colleges and universities, we hope to cultivate more excellent interpreters for the society based on our own advantages. According to the specific situation obtained from the investigation, in the process of cultivating interpreters, on the one hand, it is necessary to consolidate the language foundation of students, adjust teaching methods, strategies and professional training difficulties to adapt to the actual situation of multi-ethnic students; on the other hand, it is necessary to set up more practical courses to train interpreters in various forms to meet the needs of society. It is the significance and necessity of this study to develop strengths, avoid weaknesses and give full play to the advantages of ethnic minority areas. In the teaching of English interpretation, attention should be paid to the coordination and balance of ambiguity tolerance and sensitivity. In teaching design, it is required to consciously cultivate students' ability and experience and strengthen the introduction of ethnic characteristics, for example, make a design to guide foreign friends to visit Yi and Tibetan areas and explain the culture and customs of Tibetan and Yi ethnic groups to them. In addition, it is also emphasized to give priority to practice, that is, the interpreters can flexibly interpret on site. Therefore, it is necessary to cultivate the practical ability and adaptability of students in ethnic minority areas.

#### **4. Conclusions**

An optimization method for interpreting education was proposed in this paper on the basis of unique geographic position, multiple ethnic minorities living, and problems in interpreter training in Sichuan, trying to solve the problems found in the colleges and universities from a professional perspective and contributing to economic development of China. In the development of foreign language education

with ethnic characteristics in colleges and universities, the characteristics of colleges and universities also can be given full play. Therefore, the language structure layout of foreign language majors in ethnic colleges and universities in China is dominated by the composite mode of "English + other languages with specific geographical advantages". This language structure layout not only considers the wide adaptability of English and other international languages, but also can give full play to the characteristics of the geographically dominant language teaching of colleges and universities [3].

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