

Integrating Ordnance Culture into Ideological and Political Education in Translation Curricula: Reflections and Practical Pathways

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Abstract: Ordnance culture, with the ordnance spirit as its core, is a distinctive form of Chinese industrial culture and red culture. It contains such values as loyalty and responsibility, self-reliant innovation, rigorous workmanship, dedication, and the pursuit of excellence. These values are highly consistent with the goals of cultivating translation professionals who possess not only bilingual competence but also intercultural awareness, professional ethics, national consciousness, and a sense of mission. Based on the general requirements of curriculum-based ideological and political education and the practical needs of translation talent cultivation, this paper discusses the rationale, principles, and pathways for integrating ordnance culture into ideological and political education in translation curricula. It argues that such integration can provide a concrete cultural carrier for value education, help translation majors develop cultural confidence and professional commitment, and enable institutions with an ordnance background to form a more distinctive model of talent cultivation. The paper first analyzes current challenges faced by ideological and political education in translation programs, including insufficient top-level design, superficial integration, weak disciplinary specificity, and the lack of a coordinated mechanism. It then proposes a framework built around differentiated education, systematic curriculum design, resource development, practice-oriented teaching, and collaborative education. Finally, it suggests that a layered curriculum system, a thematic resource bank, project-based practice, and diversified assessment can make ideological and political education more visible, teachable, and assessable in translation training.

Keywords: Ordnance culture; Curriculum-based ideological and political education; Translation major; Translation talent cultivation

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1. Introduction

In recent years, curriculum-based ideological and political education has become an important direction in Chinese higher education. Its basic logic is not to add moral instruction mechanically to professional

courses, but to make the classroom function as the main channel through which value shaping, knowledge transmission, and ability development are integrated ^[1]. For foreign language and translation programs, this task is especially significant. Language learning is never a purely technical process. It involves contact with different histories, value systems, discourse patterns, and cultural narratives. Wen Qiufang points out that ideological and political education in college foreign language courses should connect language competence with moral cultivation, cultural understanding, and the formation of a responsible worldview ^[2]. Wang Yinquan also stresses that the deep integration of curriculum-based ideological and political education and foreign language teaching requires a transformation of teaching objectives, materials, tasks, and evaluation rather than a simple insertion of political slogans ^[3].

Translation education is located at the intersection of language, culture, knowledge production, and international communication. In the context of profound global changes, China needs high-level translators who can accurately transfer meaning between languages, interpret Chinese experience in a credible way, participate in international discourse construction, and promote mutual understanding among civilizations. This expectation places higher demands on translation majors. They should develop solid bilingual competence, subject knowledge, cultural literacy, professional ethics, teamwork, and the ability to deal with complex communicative situations. At the same time, English translation majors are inevitably exposed to Western cultural trends and ideological assumptions in the process of reading, translation, and intercultural communication. This does not mean that foreign cultures should be rejected; rather, it means that students need the ability to understand them critically, compare them rationally, and maintain cultural confidence while engaging in dialogue.

The integration of ordnance culture into translation curricula responds to this need. Ordnance culture was formed in the long historical development of China's ordnance industry. It is both an industrial culture rooted in manufacturing, science, and engineering practice, and a form of red culture shaped by revolutionary traditions and national defense construction. Its core is the ordnance spirit, which can be summarized as loyalty to the Party and the nation, self-reliance, hard struggle, pioneering innovation, selfless dedication, and excellence in work. These values are not remote from translation education. The translator also needs responsibility, accuracy, discipline, ethical awareness, and the courage to solve difficult problems. The translation of political, industrial, scientific, and national defense texts in particular requires a careful attitude, a strong sense of confidentiality, and an awareness of national discourse.

Existing studies on foreign language curriculum ideology have explored cooperative education models, the implementation of the "Three Entries", and the construction of value-oriented classroom practice ^[4]. Studies on Translation education have also discussed the reform of professional degree training and the balance between translation competence and humanistic literacy ^[5-7]. However, research that connects translation education with the cultural resources of specific industry-oriented institutions remains relatively limited. For universities with an ordnance background, ordnance culture is not an external theme imposed on the curriculum. It is part of the institution's historical memory, disciplinary ecology, and educational identity. Therefore, it can become a meaningful resource for building a distinctive, systematic, and practice-oriented model of ideological and political education in translation programs.

2. Current challenges in ideological and political education for translation majors

Although ideological and political education in foreign language and translation courses has developed

rapidly, several problems remain in actual teaching. The first problem is insufficient top-level design. In some programs, ideological and political elements are treated as supplementary materials selected by individual teachers. They may appear in one class, one example, or one assignment, but they are not clearly connected with the overall objectives of talent cultivation. The result is that students can hardly perceive a coherent educational logic. For translation majors, such design should not stop at general value education. It should be linked with translation competence, professional identity, ethics, intercultural communication, and service to national strategies.

The second problem is superficial integration. Some courses simply add a short discussion of values before or after translation practice. Others use a red text, a policy document, or a patriotic topic as a decorative case, while the teaching method remains unchanged. This easily leads to a “two skins” phenomenon: professional teaching and ideological education are present in the same classroom but do not truly support each other. In translation teaching, effective integration should be embedded in the whole process of text analysis, terminology management, translation strategy selection, revision, peer review, and reflection. For example, the discussion of accuracy can be connected with responsibility; the discussion of register can be connected with national image; and the discussion of confidentiality can be connected with professional ethics.

The third problem is weak disciplinary specificity. Translation is a highly practical discipline, but it is also a discipline that requires cultural judgment and humanistic depth. As Cha Mingjian argues in relation to translation education, translation competence should not be separated from humanistic quality^[7]. If ideological and political education in translation programs remains at the level of general moral preaching, it will fail to respond to the professional logic of translation. What students need is not abstract persuasion, but concrete situations in which they can understand why a translator must be accurate, faithful, responsible, culturally sensitive, and ethically disciplined.

The fourth problem is the lack of a collaborative mechanism. Ideological and political education cannot be completed by one teacher or one course. It needs coordination among curriculum design, teaching resources, practice bases, assessment, mentors, and industry partners. Existing research on collaborative education in foreign language courses shows that the connection between policy learning, language practice, and professional development is crucial^[4]. In translation programs, this connection can be strengthened through project-based translation, terminology databases, simulated translation workshops, internships, and cooperation with enterprises or institutions in related industries.

3. The educational value of ordnance culture in translation training

Ordnance culture provides a distinctive value framework for translation education. First, it highlights loyalty and responsibility. In translation practice, loyalty should not be understood narrowly as word-for-word imitation. It involves loyalty to communicative purpose, professional ethics, the source text, the target reader, and, in many institutional contexts, the national interest. A translator dealing with policy discourse, technical documents, or external publicity materials must be aware that translation choices may influence how facts, positions, and images are understood by international readers. The ordnance tradition of “devoting everything to the Party” and serving national needs can therefore be transformed into a professional consciousness of responsibility^[8-9].

Second, ordnance culture emphasizes self-reliant innovation. Translation is often mistakenly viewed as a routine linguistic activity, but high-quality translation requires problem-solving. Translators must deal with terminology gaps, cultural asymmetry, genre differences, and audience expectations. In scientific and technical translation, they also need to understand concepts, consult parallel texts, and build terminology systems. The ordnance spirit of self-reliance and pioneering progress can encourage students not to rely mechanically on machine translation or ready-made equivalents, but to investigate, compare, verify, and make justified decisions.

Third, ordnance culture embodies rigorous workmanship and the pursuit of excellence. The idea of “zero defects” in industrial production can be transformed into a quality standard in translation. A mistranslated term, an omitted condition, or an inaccurate expression may cause misunderstanding, especially in technical, legal, or policy-related texts. Therefore, the craftsman spirit is directly relevant to translation revision, proofreading, terminology consistency, and project management. By linking these professional procedures with ordnance culture, teachers can make value education concrete and operational.

Fourth, ordnance culture can strengthen cultural confidence and institutional identity. Zhao Xianjie and others have discussed possible pathways for integrating ordnance culture into ideological and political education in universities^[10]. For translation majors in an institution with an ordnance background, this culture offers local and industry-specific resources that are closer to students’ learning environment than abstract slogans. Through the translation of ordnance history, military-industry stories, scientific achievements, and model figures, students can understand the connection between individual professional growth and the development of the nation.

4. Guiding principles for integration

4.1. Distinctive education based on institutional characteristics

Curriculum-based ideological and political education should be shaped by a university’s history, positioning, and disciplinary strengths. For institutions with an ordnance background, translation programs should make full use of ordnance culture as a signature resource. This does not mean turning translation courses into history courses. Instead, it means selecting themes, texts, cases, and projects that allow students to learn translation while also understanding the spirit behind the national defense industry and scientific development. Such a design can avoid homogeneous and formalistic curriculum ideology.

In practice, distinctive education should answer three questions: what kind of translators are to be cultivated, what cultural resources can support this goal, and how these resources can be transformed into classroom tasks. The answer should be embedded in the training scheme, syllabus, teaching materials, practice projects, and assessment criteria. Only in this way can ordnance culture become part of a stable educational system rather than an occasional teaching example.

4.2. Systematic design across the whole curriculum

The integration of ordnance culture requires a systematic curriculum map. General education courses may introduce the historical background and spiritual connotation of ordnance culture. Foundational translation courses may select bilingual texts about red culture, industrial development, national defense science, and outstanding figures. Core courses may focus on professional ethics, confidentiality, technical terminology, discourse analysis, and translation quality control. Practice courses may use simulated or authentic translation

projects to train students' ability to work in teams and solve real problems.

This layered design corresponds to students' cognitive development. Students first form basic cultural awareness, then learn to connect cultural resources with translation tasks, and finally transform values into professional habits through repeated practice. It also reflects the requirements of translation education. Research on its reform stresses that professional degree education should respond to social needs, industry development, and the improvement of practice-oriented competence^[5-6].

4.3. Integration of competence, ethics, and humanistic literacy

Translation talent cultivation should not separate skills from values. Zhang Zheng and Li Meng argue that textbook construction for undergraduate programs from the perspective of curriculum ideology should combine professional content with value guidance^[11]. Lan Hongjun also emphasizes that curriculum-based ideological and political education in undergraduate programs needs clear connotation, objectives, and pathways^[12]. Following this logic, ordnance culture should not be presented as background knowledge only. It should be connected with translation competence, ethics, teamwork, project awareness, and humanistic literacy.

For instance, when teaching Chinese-English translation of external publicity texts, teachers can guide students to consider how China's industrial achievements and cultural narratives can be expressed in accurate and reader-friendly English. When teaching scientific and technical translation, teachers can connect terminology management with the ordnance tradition of rigor. When teaching translation ethics, teachers can use confidentiality and responsibility as key themes. In each case, professional competence and ideological education support rather than interrupt each other.

5. Practical pathways for integrating ordnance culture

5.1. Optimizing the curriculum system through layered integration

The curriculum system can be optimized according to the stages of learning. At the stage of entrance education and general education, lectures, reading materials, visits to school history museums, and bilingual introductions to ordnance culture can help students form initial value awareness. At the stage of professional foundation, teachers can introduce ordnance-related terminology, red translation texts, historical narratives, and materials for international communication. At the stage of core courses, students can receive systematic training in confidentiality ethics, quality standards, terminology consistency, revision procedures, and the craftsman spirit. At the stage of practical training, real or simulated projects can help students develop loyalty, responsibility, rigor, and meticulousness.

This staged arrangement should be reflected in the syllabus. Each course may identify one or two value objectives that naturally match its professional content. For example, "Translation Theory" can include Chinese translation traditions and local translation discourse; "Practical Translation" can include revision standards and ethical reflection; "Scientific and Technical Translation" can include terminology management and industrial texts; "Translation Project Management" can include teamwork, confidentiality, and quality control. Such a design makes ideological and political education measurable and prevents repetition.

5.2. Innovating teaching models and classroom tasks

Classroom teaching should move from teacher-centered explanation to task-based and inquiry-based learning.

A typical teaching unit may include background introduction, text analysis, terminology preparation, group translation, peer review, teacher feedback, and reflective writing. Ordnance culture can enter each step. During the background introduction, students learn the historical and cultural context of the text. During terminology preparation, they examine the accuracy and consistency of key terms. During peer review, they discuss whether the translation is faithful, readable, and appropriate for international readers. During reflection, they connect translation decisions with professional responsibility.

Teaching content can also transform the ordnance spirit into professional norms. The idea of “zero defects” can be used to explain why translation revision is not optional but necessary. Confidentiality can be connected with the translator’s ethical obligations. Dedication can be reflected in careful preparation before translation. Innovation can be reflected in problem-solving when no ready equivalent exists. In this way, values are not preached separately; they are experienced through the translation process itself.

5.3. Building a distinctive resource bank

A resource bank is necessary for stable and sustainable teaching. It may include four categories. The first category is theoretical resources, including Chinese translation theory, discussions of foreign language curriculum ideology, and studies on translation education. The second category is textual resources, including red translation texts, ordnance history, national defense publicity materials, policy documents, and scientific and technical texts. The third category is translator resources, including stories of translators, diplomats, and language workers in revolutionary history and national construction. The fourth category is ethical resources, including cases related to confidentiality, accuracy, teamwork, and translation quality.

The resource bank should not be a static collection of documents. It should be organized according to course objectives, difficulty levels, text types, and teaching tasks. Each resource may include a short introduction, key vocabulary, possible translation difficulties, ideological and professional objectives, suggested classroom activities, and assessment criteria. Such a design can reduce teachers’ workload and improve the consistency of curriculum implementation. It can also help students see the connection between resources, translation practice, and professional growth.

5.4. Deepening collaborative education through practice

Practice is the most effective way to internalize values. Universities can rely on school-enterprise cooperation platforms, practice bases, and research projects to bring industry standards, professional needs, and authentic translation tasks into teaching. A collaborative model involving universities, industries, and enterprises can help students understand how translation is used in real institutional contexts. They can learn not only how to translate, but also how to communicate with clients, manage terminology, divide labor, revise drafts, protect information, and deliver a final product.

Such practice-oriented teaching is especially important for translation majors. The sense of mission cannot be built only through classroom explanation. When students participate in projects related to Chinese culture, industrial development, or international communication, they can better understand the social value of translation. They come to see their major as part of China’s effort to build international discourse, tell Chinese stories, and promote exchanges and mutual learning between Chinese and foreign civilizations.

5.5. Improving assessment and feedback mechanisms

Assessment should include both professional performance and value-oriented growth. Traditional translation

assessment often focuses on accuracy, fluency, and expression. These criteria remain necessary, but they can be expanded. Formative assessment may include terminology preparation, participation in peer review, revision quality, responsibility in group work, awareness of confidentiality, and reflective ability. Summative assessment may include translation products, project reports, and portfolios. In this way, ideological and political education becomes observable and assessable rather than vague.

Teacher evaluation is also important. Teachers should not only complete teaching tasks but also demonstrate professional ethics, academic integrity, and rigorous scholarship. The demonstrative role of teachers and students is part of the whole educational environment. When teachers show respect for facts, accuracy, sources, and revision, students can understand the craftsman spirit more directly than through abstract explanation.

6. Conclusion

Ordnance culture, with its emphasis on loyalty, responsibility, self-reliant innovation, rigorous workmanship, and excellence, offers valuable resources for ideological and political education in translation curricula. For institutions with an ordnance background, integrating this culture into translation talent cultivation is not only a response to the general requirements of curriculum-based ideological and political education, but also a way to develop a distinctive educational model. It can help solve common problems such as insufficient top-level design, superficial integration, weak disciplinary specificity, and the absence of collaborative mechanisms.

The effective integration of ordnance culture requires systematic design. It should be carried out through a layered curriculum system, classroom task innovation, distinctive resources, practice-oriented cooperation, and diversified assessment. More importantly, it should always respect the professional logic of translation education. Only when value guidance is connected with text analysis, translation strategy, terminology management, revision, ethics, and project practice can it become meaningful for students. In this sense, ordnance culture can help translation majors develop not only the ability to translate, but also the responsibility to translate well, the confidence to express Chinese culture, and the professional commitment to serve national and social needs.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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