On the Construct Validity of Translation Accreditation Test: A Prior Theory-based Validation Approach

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摘　要

翻译资格认证是翻译行业职业化的重要标志和手段，对翻译行业及语言服务业的健康有序发展有重要意义。笔译资格考试是翻译资格认证最常用的手段，同时也是翻译学研究的对象。基于以上考虑，本论文以笔译资格考试为研究对象，借鉴测试学中的构念效度及测前理论效度理论，探讨现有笔译资格考试存在的问题。本研究提出 3 个研究问题：

1. 笔译资格考试应测量构念有哪些特征？
2. 现有笔译资格考试构念有哪些特征？
3. 现有笔译资格考试构念存在哪些问题？如何解决这些问题？

为回答以上 3 个研究问题，笔者提出从测前理论效度角度进行笔译资格考试构念效度研究的理论框架，并采用文献法、对比分析、综合分析、理论思辨等方法开展本研究，属于定性研究。

本研究的结论如下：

1. 本研究通过对比分析翻译学研究中 29 个笔译能力理论模型、4 个翻译行业调研和 3 个翻译企业报告，归纳总结出了现有笔译资格考试应测量构念构成。

2. 本论文选取国内国际 21 个笔译资格考试作为研究对象，并分析了各考试的构念构成和构念呈现形式。就构念构成来看，现有笔译资格考试构念主要由 5 个成分构成。从呈现形式上看，大部分笔译资格考试都向考试利益相关方公开了考试性质、考试目的、考试内容、考试要求、考试评分等考试信息，不过在信息的详细程度上有所不同。

3. 本论文从构念中可能存在的构念效度威胁、构念对考生特征的适切性和构念呈现三个方面，分析现有笔译资格考试构念构成及清晰度上存在的问题。通过对比现有笔译资格考试的构念特征和应测量构念特征，可以发现，现有笔译资格考试构念构成和应测量构念构成既有诸多共同之处，但同时也存在构念无关因素和构念代表不良，从而可能会对考试的构念效度造成威胁；对考生特征来说构念构成也基本达到了适切性的标准。构念呈现方面，大部分笔译资格考试都符合构念清晰度的要求，只有个别笔译资格考试因未向考生明确说明报考条件并公布考试内容、考试评分等信息而对构念的清晰度产生影响。进一步分

析表明，现有笔译资格考试构念构成及呈现上存在的问题和笔译资格考试的性质与目的、各构念成分及要素测量的难度及其重要性差异、测试质量评价的整体标准、考试的组织管理等方面有密切关系。基于以上讨论，本研究建议在考试大纲中明确说明考试构念，并增加应测量的构念成分及要素，去除不应测量的构念成分及要素；采用各种形式和渠道公开考试信息，并通过考试设置和报考条件限制等形式实现对构念的关注。

关键词

笔译资格考试；构念效度；测前理论效度；效度验证

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ABSTRACT

Translation credentialing is an important sign of the professionalization of the translation industry, and can promote the development of the language services industries in a broad sense. This dissertation chooses the translation accreditation test (TAT), commonly used as one means of translation credentialing, as the subject of the study and focuses on the present situation and problems of TAT. Three research questions addressed in the dissertation are:

1.　　　　What are the characteristics of ideal TAT construct?

2.　　　　What are the characteristics of the present TAT construct?

3.　　　　What are the problems of the present TAT construct? How can these problems be solved?

The present study puts forward a theoretical framework for the study of TAT construct validity from the prior theory-based validation approach. Being qualitative in nature, literature research, comparative analysis, integrative analysis and theoretical reasoning are applied to addressing the research questions.

Findings and conclusions drawn from the present study include:

1. An ideal model of TAT construct is put forward based on 29 translation competence models, 4 survey results and 3 professional reports in the translation industry and professional translators.

2. 21 TATs are chosen as the subject of survey and data on individual TATs are gathered for analysis. Results show that there are both similarities and differences among 21 TATs concerning the constitution and layout of the construct. In terms of the construct constitution, the present TAT construct includes 5 components. In terms of the construct layout, most of the TATs make information on the nature, aim, content, requirements, scoring of the test clear and accessible to test stake-holders, yet the level of detail varies from one test to another.

3. An analysis of the present TAT construct and those of the ideal TAT construct in terms of the potential threat to test construct, the appropriateness of the test construct, and the clarity of the test construct reveals the following results. Firstly, despite some overlapping between the two in the constitution of the construct, construct irrelevant variances and construct under-representation also exist, leading to potential threat to the construct validity of the test. Secondly, most of the test-taker characteristics are addressed in the present TAT construct, indicating the appropriateness of the construct. Thirdly, in terms of the construct layout, most of the TATs try to make the test construct clear and accessible to the test stake-holders, while some of the TATs still fail to do so. Possible reasons include the nature and objectives of individual TATs, the difficulty of measuring some construct components and elements and their degree of significance, the overall criteria of assessing test quality, and the organizational regulations of some TATs. Suggestions for the present TATs include a clearer statement of the test construct in test syllabus, addition of some construct components and elements and omission of some irrelevant ones, making information on test content and scoring clearer and more accessible to test stake-holders, and combining test design and requirements together for the realization of construct assessment.

KEYWORDS: construct validity, prior theory-based validation, translation accreditation test (TAT), validation

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