

On the C-E Translation Strategies of Chinese Folk Culture from the Perspective of Eco-translatology

Li Zhou*

School of Humanity and Education, Foshan University, Foshan 528000, China

Abstract

Folk culture, as an important part of Chinese culture, is characterized by collective, regional, repetitive and typological features. From the point view of Eco-translatology, this paper explores how the translator makes the adaptive selection and transformation from the linguistic, cultural and communicative dimensions in order to achieve the best translation effects under the guidance of the principle of "multi-dimensional adaptation and adaptive selection" by analyzing some typical C-E translations of folk culture, which is expected to offer references to the translation of the Chinese folk culture.

Keywords

Folk Culture; Eco-translatology; Multi-dimensional Transformations; Translation.

1. Introduction

Folk culture, as an important part of culture, refers to the folk custom formed and passed down in the long-term historical life of a country or nation [1]. It is the repeated way of life followed and recognized consciously or unconsciously by groups. The folk culture involves very complicated folk affairs, covering almost all aspects of folk life, from food, clothing, housing and transportation to people's social communication, from family organization to village customs, from utensils culture to folk beliefs, from weddings, funerals and festivals to language and folk customs. Communication is the fundamental reason for the existence and development of culture, it not only brings the same or similar culture, but also brings the opportunity of cultural collision, so as to create new culture. Chinese folk culture has a long history and is colorful. Nowadays, when "Chinese culture goes out" is advocated, the international communication of Chinese folk culture is particularly important.

In recent years, the research on the translation of folk culture in China mainly focuses on the strategies and methods, the analysis of specific cases, the theoretical discussions and so on. However, the theoretical study of folk culture translation is mostly limited from the perspective of language and culture. This paper attempts to apply the theory of adaptation and selection, the core theory of Eco-translatology, to explore and analyze the translation of Chinese folk culture from the principle of "three-dimensional transformation" of Eco-translatology, in order to provide reference for the translation of folk culture in the future.

2. Eco-translatology

Eco translatology is a macro theoretical study of translation conducted by Professor Hu Gengshen from the perspective of ecology under the influence of the academic trend of global eco culture. The core theory of eco translatology is the theory of translation adaptation and selection. Translation adaptation and selection theory defines translation as "the translator's choice activities to adapt to the translation ecological environment." [2] The "translation ecological environment" refers to the world presented by the original text, the source language and the target language, that is, the whole interconnected interaction of language, communication, culture, society, author, reader, client and so on. [2] From the perspective of

"adaptation" and "selection", this core theory gives a new explanation to the process, principles, methods and evaluation criteria of translation. The theory of translation adaptation and selection holds that the process of translation is the translator's "adaptation" to the translation ecological environment in which the original text is the typical element and the "choice" of the translation ecological environment in which the translator is the typical element. The translation method of adaptive choice theory can be briefly summarized as "three-dimensional transformation", that is, under the principle of "multi-dimensional adaptation and adaptive choice", it relatively focuses on the adaptive choice transformation of language dimension, culture dimension and communication dimension.

3. The Translation of Folk Culture from the "Three-dimensional Transformation" Principle of Ecological Translatology

3.1. The Translator's Adaptive Selection and Transformation of Language Dimension

The translator's adaptive selection and transformation of language dimension refers to the translator's adaptive selection of language form in the translation of the original text, which is carried out from different aspects and different levels. There are many linguistic differences between English and Chinese, the most important one being hypotaxis and parataxis. Chinese emphasizes parataxis, function and meaning, and often does not use any connective means. English emphasizes hypotaxis, structure and form, often with the help of various connective means. Chinese words emphasize precise meaning, standard and rigorous, colorful style and rhetoric, while English words are flexible and concise, objective and strict.

For example, there is an old saying in *A Dream of Red Mansions*: “不知天有多高，地有多厚，成日家调三窝四，干出这些没天理，没王法，败家破业的营生。”(the 68th chapter) Its translation is “Even your dead mother’s spirit will disown you, so will all your ancestors. How dare you appeal to me?” [3] In this sentence, “天有多高，地有多厚” uses the antithesis rhetoric in Chinese, but there is no such antithesis expression in English. This requires the translator to make adaptive selection of the target language from the linguistic form to the source language. It is because the translator is aware of the linguistic differences between English and Chinese that he makes an ecologically adaptive selection of the antithesis as “How dare you...”, this emotion-oriented translation method not only expresses the emotional factors of the original text, but also fills in the gaps in the forms of the two languages, which is consistent with the syntactic ecological characteristics of the target language.

3.2. The Translator's Adaptive Selection and Transformation of Cultural Dimension

The adaptive selection and transformation of cultural dimension means that translators should have cultural awareness in the process of translation, and pay attention to overcoming the obstacles caused by cultural differences to ensure the smooth realization of information exchange. [2] As we all know; different nations have different cultures. The difficulty in translation lies in the understanding and translation of the cultural background knowledge of different nations. For example, due to the regional characteristics of folk culture, different regions have different ways of expressing the same custom. Such as the custom of sleeping. Northerners sleep in beds called “炕”, while southerners sleep in beds called “床”. In addition to sleeping, Northerners have other activities on the “炕”, such as eating, receiving guests, and discussing matters. Southern “床” has only one function, that is, for people to sleep in. If “bed” is used in translation to refer to “炕” and “床”, the cultural and regional identity of “炕” is obviously lost. Jiang Honghong suggested that “炕” be translated into “Kang (a Heatable Brick Bed)”. [4]

The translator, taking into account the cultural differences between English and Chinese, not only retained the cultural connotation and characteristics of Chinese, but also adapted to the ecological environment of the target language.

3.3. Translator's Adaptive Selection and Transformation of Communicative Dimension

The adaptive selection and transformation of the communicative dimension refers to that the translator puts emphasis on the communicative level and pays attention to whether the communicative intention in the original text is reflected in the translation. [2] Take the translation of "唐装" as an example, "唐装" is a traditional Chinese national costume. At present, common translations are: "attire of traditional Chinese style; dresses of Tang Dynasty; Tang style suit; traditional Chinese garments." From the existing translations, "the attire of traditional Chinese style" and "traditional Chinese garments" have the suspicion of expanding the meaning of "唐装", because the traditional Chinese dress is not a kind of "唐装". "dresses of Tang Dynasty" refers to dresses from the Tang Dynasty which are no longer in use. Comparatively speaking, only "Tang style suit" can better achieve the same communicative intention as the original language, so that the target language readers can understand that "Tang style suit" refers to the Chinese Tang Dynasty style clothing, so as to achieve the accurate communicative intention.

4. Conclusion

The Eco-translatology proposed by Professor Hu Gengshen is based on Darwin's theory of "adaptation/selection", which holds that "translation is adaptation and selection", highlights "translator as the center", and opens up a new perspective for translation studies. This paper mainly discusses and analyzes the translation of folk culture based on the principle of "three-dimensional transformation". However, it should be pointed out that this paper divides the principle of "three-dimensional transformation" into three aspects for the convenience of discussion, but this does not mean that these three dimensions are independent, on the contrary, they often interweave and interact with each other. Therefore, only when translators truly achieve "multidimensional adaptation" and "three-dimensional" selection and transformation in the process of translating folk culture, it is possible to produce appropriate translations, realize the ecological transplantation of texts, and then accurately translate Chinese folk culture, so that Chinese culture truly goes to the world.

References

- [1] Huawen Chen. Folk Culture (Zhejiang Industrial and Commercial University Press, China 2014).
- [2] Gengshen Hu. Translation Adaptation and Selection (Hubei Education Press, China 2004).
- [3] Lili Yan: On the Colloquial Translation of A Dream of Red Mansions from the Perspective of Ecological Translation (English Square) (2016) No.1, p3-5.
- [4] Honghong Jiang. Exploration of Folk Culture Translation (Foreign Language Teaching abroad) (2007) No.3, p52-57.