

Translation Strategies and Communicative Effects of the English Translation of Chinese Excellent Short Videos from a Cross-cultural Perspective

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Abstract

In the information age, with the further development of the international network technology and platform, Chinese excellent short videos have rapidly become an important carrier of global cultural exchange because of its convenience in dissemination and the richness of its content. In this process, the quality of the English translation of Chinese excellent short videos plays an important role in whether the videos can be effectively transmitted among foreign countries. From a cross-cultural perspective, this paper discusses the translation strategies of Chinese excellent short videos and analyzes its communicative effect, in order to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for our country's videos translation so as to improve the international communication power of Chinese excellent short videos.

Keywords

Cross-cultural; Translation Strategy; Communicative Effect; Short Videos.

1. Introduction

As a new form of media, short video has quickly won the favor of users all over the world because of its convenience and entertainment. Chinese short video creators use this platform to show Chinese culture, lifestyle and social phenomenon, attracting a large number of international viewers. However, linguistics and cultural differences have become the key factors affecting its international communication. Therefore, it is of great significance to explore effective translation strategies to improve the international dissemination of short videos in China. At present, the research on cross-cultural communication is mainly focused on the translation of movies, TV dramas and literary works. While the research on short videos is relatively few. Previous studies have pointed out that translation is not only the transformation of language, but also the transmission of culture. The choice of translation strategies directly affects the accuracy of information and the suitability of culture. In addition, the evaluation of communicative effect is also an important part of the research, which involves audience acceptance, understanding and cultural identity.

2. Translation Strategies for the English Translation of Excellent Chinese Short Videos

As the popularity of Chinese short videos continues to soar globally, the demand for accurate and engaging English translations has also increased. In the translation process, it is crucial for

translators to be mindful of the intricate nuances that exist between the source and target languages, as well as the cultural differences that often accompany them so as to make the translation conform to the cultural habits and expressions of the target language. This paper delves into the various translation strategies that can be employed to achieve excellent English translations of Chinese short videos.

2.1. Cultural Adaptation

Understanding the target culture: when translating into English, translators must first have an in-depth understanding of the target culture, including history, geography, customs, values and so on. This helps translators to better understand the content of the source text and how to adapt the content to the target culture. For example, when translating short videos related to traditional Chinese festivals, translators can use the corresponding festival names and celebration methods in the target language to enhance the cultural fit of the translation. At the same time, when translating short videos with Chinese characteristics, translators really need to deal with cultural elements and expressions carefully so that foreign audiences can better understand and appreciate the cultural characteristics. Here are some specific translation strategies and examples:

In Chinese, “东风” is often used to symbolize spring and warmth, such as “东风送暖入屠苏。”. In British culture, due to geographical location and climate, the news of spring is brought by the west wind, such as the Ode to the West Wind by the English poet Shelley.

In Chinese culture, “龙” is a symbol of imperial power, representing dignity and strength. In Western culture, “dragon” is often described as an evil and horrible monster. This difference can be understood by comparing Chinese and Western literary works, artistic works and folklore, such as the different positions of Chinese dragon totems and western dragon images in their respective cultures.

In Chinese culture, “红色” is often associated with happiness and auspiciousness, such as red decorations at weddings. In Western culture, “red” sometimes smacks of violence, anger or danger, such as “see red”.

2.2. Semantic Equivalence

Semantic equivalence refers to keeping the semantic equivalence between the source text and the target text as far as possible in the process of translation. Translators often encounter many problems in translation, among which the core is the core. The question is: “How to deal with the relationship between the source text and the translation?” (Tang, 2024: 30). The answer is “translation”. The text should be equivalent to the original, but the definition of equivalence is different. For the English translation of excellent Chinese short videos, translators should accurately understand the meaning of the source text and choose appropriate English words and sentence patterns to ensure that the translation can accurately convey the information of the source text. Keeping contextual consistency: when translating short videos, translators should pay attention to maintaining contextual consistency. This means that translators need to take into account the context of the target culture in the process of translation to ensure that the translated content has the same meaning and effect in the target culture.

2.3. Structure Transformation

Due to the differences in language structure between Chinese and English, translators need to make appropriate structural transformation in translation. English sentences pay more attention to hypotaxis, that is, connecting sentence components through conjunctions, prepositions and so on. Therefore, in translation, translators should flexibly adjust the sentence structure to make the translation more in line with the habits of English expression. Adopting localization strategy: in order to better adapt to the target culture, localization strategy can be

adopted to replace specific elements in the source language with similar elements in the target culture. For example, replace the food or festival of one country with the food or festival of another country to make it easier for the audience to understand and accept.

2.4. Maintaining the Context and Style of the Original Text

During the intricate process of translation, it is of utmost importance to preserve the context and style of the original text with utmost fidelity. The essence of this lies in ensuring that the translated work accurately reflects the true intention and emotion embedded within the source text. After all, words are not just mere symbols; they carry the essence of the author's thoughts and feelings. For instance, when embarking on the translation of short videos that are imbued with distinctive Chinese characteristics, one must be particularly mindful of retaining their unique cultural elements and expressions. These videos often serve as a window to the rich and diverse Chinese culture, and thus, it is crucial to ensure that their authenticity and charm are not lost in the translation process. By doing so, translators can ensure that foreign audiences are not just presented with a translation, but rather, an authentic representation of the original, which they can better understand and appreciate.

2.5. Attaching Importance to Cultural Differences

There are huge differences in the cultural backgrounds of English and Chinese, and there are also differences in the cultural knowledge accepted by people in different regions and their understanding of the relevant content (Cao, 2024: 153). It is necessary to pay attention to these differences in the translation process and avoid cultural conflicts as much as possible. For example, some expressions commonly used in English may not be in line with Chinese cultural habits, and appropriate translation strategies need to be used to adjust them. Choosing appropriate words and expressions: in the process of translation, choosing words and expressions that are consistent with the target culture. For example, some words may have positive meanings in the source language, but negative meanings in the target language. Therefore, translators need to choose more appropriate words and expressions according to the characteristics of the target culture. Maintaining a sense of humor and relaxed atmosphere, short videos usually have the characteristics of relaxed and humorous, so this atmosphere should be maintained in the process of translation. Translators need to note that there may be differences in the understanding and acceptance of humor in different cultures, so they should try their best to choose humorous elements that resonate in the target culture.

2.6. Making Use of Translation Skills

In the process of translation, it is necessary to flexibly use various translation techniques, such as additive translation, subtraction, literal translation, paraphrase translation, etc. Choose the right translation technique for the specific situation of the original text to ensure that the translated text accurately conveys the meaning of the original text. For example, when dealing with some short videos with Chinese characteristics, the augmentation method can be used to supplement some necessary cultural background information so that foreign audiences can better understand it. Paying attention to rhythm and duration: the rhythm and duration of short videos are very important to attract viewers. In the process of translation, translators should pay attention to maintaining the rhythm and duration of the source text so that the audience can obtain information and maintain interest in a short period of time.

2.7. Working with Professionals

In order to better achieve cultural adaptability, translators can work with professional of the target culture, such as local film and television producers, directors, actors, etc. They can provide professional knowledge and advice on the target culture to help translators better complete the translation task.

3. Translation Methods

Concise and clear, short videos usually take a short time, so the translation needs to be as concise and clear as possible to avoid lengthy explanations. Try to use short sentences and words so that the audience can understand them quickly.

3.1. The Choice of Different Translation Skills

Focus on the balance between literal translation and free translation. When translating Chinese short videos, appropriate translation strategies should be chosen according to the cultural connotation of the content and the expectations of the audience. Literal translation can retain the form and style of the original text, while free translation pays more attention to conveying the meaning and cultural spirit of the original text. Cultural adaptation adjustment, taking into account the reception habits of different cultural backgrounds, some cultural elements should be appropriately adjusted in translation in order to enhance the understanding and resonance of the target language audience. Pay attention to hot spots of current events, short videos usually involve hot spots of current events and social phenomena, so translators should pay attention to the relevant background knowledge in the process of translation to ensure the accuracy of translation. Keep a sense of humor: short videos are usually entertaining, so keep a sense of humor in the translation process to make the translation more lively and interesting. Be consistent with the original video: in the process of translation, try to be consistent with the picture, music and rhythm of the original video, so that the audience can better immerse themselves in the video. Context reconstruction, the context in short videos often contains rich non-verbal information, which should be fully considered in translation and reconstructed in the target language. Creative translation: for short videos with profound cultural characteristics, creative translation strategies can be adopted to convey the cultural connotations of the original text by adding notes, creating new words or using metaphors.

3.2. Subtitle and Dubbing in Videos Making

In order to better convey video content, subtitles and dubbing can be used. Subtitles can help viewers better understand the content of the video, while dubbing can make the video more attractive. Pay attention to timeliness: short videos usually have a strong timeliness, so they should be completed as soon as possible in the process of translation in order to release them in time. Proof reading and revision: after the completion of the translation, proofreading and revision should be carried out carefully to ensure the accuracy of the translation. If necessary, you can consult a professional or use a translation tool to check.

3.3. Improving Translation Knowledge and Skills

Constantly learn new translation skills and methods to improve your translation level. At the same time, translators should pay attention to the latest developments in the field of short video translation in order to better meet the needs of the market.

4. The Communicative Effect of Chinese Excellent Short Videos Translation

Through high-quality English translation, Chinese excellent short videos can better demonstrate the charm of Chinese culture and attract the attention of the international community. At the same time, the wide spread of these short videos also helps to enhance recognition and influence in the international community.

4.1. Promoting Cultural Exchanges

English translation and dissemination of excellent Chinese short videos not only helps to promote Chinese culture, but also promotes communication and understanding between

different cultures. By watching these short videos, foreign viewers can have a more intuitive understanding of Chinese local conditions and customs, social style and people's spiritual outlook, so as to enhance their understanding and recognition of China.

4.2. Expanding the International Market

High-quality English translation and dissemination will help Chinese excellent short videos to gain more attention and recognition in the international market. These short videos can be spread and promoted through various channels, such as social media, video sites, etc. At the same time, these short videos can also be exported to other countries as cultural products, opening up new markets for the development of Chinese cultural industry.

4.3. Enhancing the Development of Cultural Industries

English translation and dissemination of Chinese excellent short videos will also help promote the development of the cultural industry. With the dissemination and promotion of short videos in the international market, more and more Chinese cultural elements and creative products will be noticed and loved by foreign audiences, thereby driving the prosperity and development of related industries.

5. Cases Study

This paper selects a number of representative Chinese excellent short videos as cases for analysis. Through an in-depth study of the English translation strategies and communicative effects of these cases, this paper finds that different translation strategies and communication channels have an important impact on the communicative effect of short videos. For example, in terms of translation strategies, short videos with cultural fit strategies are more easily accepted by target language audiences; in communication channels, new media platforms such as social media and video sites have stronger communication power and influence. In the practice of the Short Video English Translation Workshop, translators can take a specific short video project as an example to discuss the process and strategy of English translation in detail. The following is a fictional example based on the information in the reference article, which aims to show the whole process of translating a short video into English.

5.1. Project Background

Let's say translators have a short video series called "Traditional Chinese Handicrafts", which aims to show the charm and uniqueness of traditional Chinese handicrafts to a global audience through the form of short videos. Each short video is about 3-5 minutes long and covers a variety of crafts such as ceramics, paper-cutting, embroidery, etc.

5.2. Translation Preparation Stage

In order to maintain consistency between videos, translators read through all video scripts, extract technical terms related to crafts, and create a glossary in Excel. For example, "陶瓷" is translated as "Ceramics", "剪纸" is translated as "Paper cutting", etc. As this is a video series showcasing traditional Chinese culture, translators pay special attention to preserving the cultural charm and expression of the original text when translating. That's why translators have developed a style guide, including translation styles, formatting specifications, and more. For example, translators may ask that the translation be concise and clear and avoid overly complex sentences. At the same time, translators will also require the format of bilingual subtitles to be consistent.

5.3. Translation Stage

Group translation: 40 translators working on the project, they are divided into 8 teams. Each team is assigned a team leader who is responsible for coordinating and managing the progress and quality of the team's translations.

Translation Practices: During the translation process, translators are required to follow previously established glossaries and style guides to ensure accuracy and consistency in the translation.

5.4. Communicative Effect

Through the translations and dissemination of these short video works in English, translators hope to enhance the influence and popularity of traditional Chinese culture in the world. Specifically, these short video works can be disseminated through major video platforms, social media and other channels to attract global audiences to pay attention to and understand traditional Chinese culture. At the same time, these short video works can also serve as a bridge for cultural exchange, promoting the exchange and integration between different cultures.

5.5. Summary

Through this fictional example, people can see that the short video English translation workshop needs to go through multiple stages and links in practice. Translators' attention to detail and quality control are required to ensure that the translation accurately conveys the meaning of the original text and is culturally appropriate to the target language. At the same time, translators need to constantly explore and innovate translation strategies and methods to adapt to the needs of different video content and audiences.

6. Conclusion

From a cross-cultural perspective, this paper discusses the translation strategies and communicative effects of excellent English translation of Chinese short videos. Through the study, it is found that the adoption of translation strategies such as cultural fit, semantic equivalence and structural transformation will help to improve the quality of English translation of short videos, while high-quality English translation and dissemination will help to enhance the international dissemination and influence of excellent short videos in China. Based on the above research conclusions, this paper puts forward the following suggestions: The training and introduction of translators should be strengthened to improve their professional accomplishment and cross-cultural communicative competence. At the same time, the management and supervision of translation quality should be strengthened to ensure the quality of English translation of short videos. Translators should make full use of the advantages and characteristics of social media, video sites and other new media platforms to formulate targeted communication strategies and promotion plans. At the same time, cooperation and exchanges with international media should be strengthened to expand the international communication channels and influence of short videos. In the process of creating and making short videos, translators should pay attention to content innovation and brand building, and create excellent short video works with Chinese characteristics and cultural heritage. At the same time, the docking and cooperation with the international market should be strengthened to promote China's excellent short videos to the world stage.

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