

A study of Tang poetry translation from the perspective of cognitive poetics

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Abstract: Tang poetry, renowned for its profound cultural significance and artistic expression, presents a unique set of difficulties when rendered into different languages due to its reliance on intricate imagery, rhyme, and rhythm. The study emphasizes the necessity of employing cognitive poetics as a guiding perspective for translators, enabling them to navigate the intricacies of Tang poetry's imagery, rhyme, and rhythm, and suggests to utilize modern translation tools to better convey the emotional depth of the original works, while also providing cultural context to enhance readers' understanding. The cross-cultural communication aspect of Tang poetry translation is explored, as it transcends linguistic boundaries to become a channel for cultural exchange. Translators are challenged to strike a balance between faithfulness to the original poem and adaptability to the target culture's sensibilities. This balance is crucial in preserving the cognitive elements of the original work. To ensure the effective cross-cultural communication of Tang poetry, it is essential to retain the unique imagery that carries profound cultural connotations. The study culminates in offering a set of strategies and suggestions for optimizing Tang poetry translation, including maintaining cultural background, preserving rhyme and rhythm, adding explanatory elements, respecting the poet's style, and ensuring proper literariness in the translation.

Key words: cognitive poetics; Tang poetry translation; cross-cultural communication of poetry; cultural experience

1 Introduction

As a treasure of Chinese literature, Tang poetry has always attracted the attention of readers and translators. However, the translation of Tang poetry is not a simple task, because it covers rich cultural connotations and unique cognitive characteristics. This study will focus on the cognitive poetics perspective and try to reveal the internal mechanism of Tang poetry translation, and will explore how elements of poetry such as imagery, rhyme, and rhythm are preserved in translation, and examine how these reservations affect readers, and cultural experience. This research will contribute to a better understanding of the cognitive complexity of poetry translation and how to disseminate and appreciate the treasures of Chinese literature on a global scale [1].

2 The translation of Tang poetry from the perspective of cognitive poetics

Tang poetry is a treasure of Chinese literature. Its profound cultural connotation and exquisite expression have always attracted the interest of readers around the world. However, translating Tang poetry into other languages is a complex and challenging task. In this section, this article delves into the cognitive problems in Tang poetry translation and clarifies why we need a cognitive poetical perspective to solve these problems.

Let us examine the cognitive characteristics of Tang poetry. Tang poetry is not just a combination of words, it

contains a large number of image, rhyme and rhythm elements. These elements together make up the unique charm of Tang poetry. However, they also make translating Tang poems into other languages complicated, as different languages have different sounds, rhythms, and cultural backgrounds that may not accurately convey the feeling of the original poem [2].

The translation of Tang poetry is confronted with a series of complex challenges. First, the imagery in Tang poetry is often rooted in Chinese culture, history, and philosophy, which may not be directly expressed in other cultures. Therefore, translators need to skillfully search for alternative images that convey the same emotions and ideas [3]. The rhyme of Tang poetry is its unique feature, but in the process of translation, the phonological system of different languages may not be able to perfectly restore the beauty of the original poem. The sense of rhythm of Tang poetry is also its essence, but how to preserve the sense of rhythm of the original poem in translation has become a challenge. The rhythm of the original poem needs to be subtly shifted to ensure that the translation remains attractive and intoxicating. The translation of Tang poetry requires the translator to deal with the image, rhyme and rhythm skillfully in order to retain the emotion and beauty of the original poem. It is a complex and satisfying art.

To address these challenges, we need to apply the perspective of cognitive poetics, which means that translators need to have a deep understanding of the cognitive characteristics of Tang poetry, including its imagery, rhyme and rhythm, and how these elements function in the reader's mind [4]. Translators can make use of modern translation technologies, such as computer-aided translation, natural language processing, etc., to better convey the feelings and ideas of the original poem. In addition, translators can also help readers better understand the cultural connotation of Tang poetry by explaining and annotating the cultural background.

3 Cross-cultural communication in Tang poetry translation

As a treasure of Chinese culture, the translation of Tang poetry involves crossing the boundary between language and culture, which is not only a language conversion, but also a cultural transmission [5]. In this section, this article delves into how the translation of Tang poetry affects readers' understanding, and how the translator skillfully preserves the cognitive elements of the original poem in cross-cultural communication.

In the face of cross-cultural communication, translators often need to balance the fidelity of the original poem with the acceptability of the target language readers. They may choose literal translation, preserving cultural elements of the original text, or cultural transformation to suit the tastes of the target culture. These strategies will affect readers' cultural communication of Tang poetry.

In the cross-cultural communication of Tang poetry, it is essential to retain the cognitive elements of the original poetry. This includes preserving the unique images in the original poems, which often carry profound cultural connotations and emotions and serve as a bridge for readers to immerse themselves in. For example, transforming specific elements of Chinese culture such as mountains and rivers, Confucianism, etc., into symbols that the target culture can understand to ensure that readers can experience similar emotions and thoughts.

Rhyme is also the soul of Tang poetry. Through the rhythm of the sound and the beauty of the rhyme, Tang poetry conveys a unique musicality, which needs to be preserved in translation so that readers can feel the beauty of the rhythm of the poem under the target culture. Although the phonological system of the target language may be different from that of the original, the translator may choose words and expressions with similar phonological effects to maintain the sonic beauty of the original poem.

It is also indispensable to preserve the sense of rhythm of Tang poetry which often captivates readers with their subtle rhythms and rhymes. In the process of translation, the translator needs to skillfully find expressions in the target language that can convey similar feelings, so as to ensure that the rhythm of the original poem is preserved. This may include

choosing specific words, sentence patterns, and arrangements that maintain the rhythm and rhyme of the poem.

These efforts contribute to the global dissemination of Tang poetry, making it transcend linguistic and cultural barriers and become a cultural treasure shared by readers around the world. By maintaining the cognitive character of Tang poetry, we can ensure that these precious literary works are passed down and appreciated across different cultures, contributing to the richness of cultural diversity. This also demonstrates the importance of translation, and its role as a bridge between literature and culture, aimed at preserving and transmitting the treasures of culture.

4 Strategies and suggestions for optimizing Tang poetry translation

4.1 Paying attention to the communication of cultural background

Tang poetry often integrates the essence of ancient Chinese culture, and translation should strive to convey these cultural elements. For instance, in Wang Zhihuan's *An Ascent to Stork Hall*, the phrases "The setting sun behind the mountains glows" and "The muddy Yellow River seawards flows" are not only geographical concepts, but also symbols in Chinese history and culture, which should be preserved in translation.

4.2 Preserving rhyme and rhythm

The rhyme and rhythm of Tang poetry are crucial to its aesthetic beauty. In translation, the rhyme and rhythm of the original text should be preserved as much as possible. Not adhering to literal translation: Sometimes, literal translation may lead to the loss of the poetry and beauty of the original. For example, when it comes to the translation of Tang poetry, the strategy of not sticking to the literal translation is particularly critical. Taking Du Mu's *In the Autumn night* as an example, the literal translation of the original lines "Silver candle autumn light chills the painted screen, light silk fan flicks at the floating fireflies" might lose the rhythm and emotion of the original poem [6].

Therefore, we need to use language flexibly in translation to convey the calm and cold atmosphere of autumn night. A reasonable translation would be: "The silver candles cast a cold light on the painted screen, while a light silk fan gently shooed away the drifting fireflies." This translation pays more attention to maintaining the artistic conception of the original poem, taking the reader into the beauty and tranquility of the autumn night, rather than simply translating the original text. This translation strategy helps to better convey the poetry and beauty of Tang poetry.

4.3 Combining explanation

In the translation, appropriate annotations or explanations can be added to help readers better understand the background and connotation of Tang poetry. For example, For instance, when translating Wang Zhihuan's *An Ascent to Stork Hall*, one could include explanatory notes about the geographical background of "The setting sun behind the mountains glows" to enhance the reader's understanding [7].

4.4 Respecting the poet's way of expression

The words and expressions of Tang poetry often have unique aesthetic characteristics, so the original meaning of the poet should be respected in translation and its unique style should be maintained as far as possible. For example, in Li Bai's *Invitation to Wine*, the boldness and expressiveness in "Heaven has made us talents, we are not made in vain; A thousand gold coins spent, more will turn up again." should be preserved in the translation to maintain the atmosphere.

4.5 Maintaining proper literariness

Tang poetry is a literary work, and its translation should have a certain literary character. The translator should pursue the delicacy and fluency of the language so as to make the translation more poetic and artistic. However, the translation should be clear and easy to understand and not too obscure. This requires a balance in the translation to ensure that the beauty of the original text is conveyed.

By deeply understanding the cultural background, paying attention to phonology and rhythm, considering rhetorical devices, retaining the original artistic conception, choosing the appropriate translation style and maintaining the appropriate literariness, translators can better optimize the translation of Tang poetry and make it more widely appreciated and disseminated in the world. These strategies and suggestions will contribute to the transmission and promotion of Tang poetry, a valuable literary heritage.

5 Conclusion

This research delves into the complexity of Tang poetry translation, analyzing its challenges and opportunities from a cognitive poetics perspective. As a treasure of Chinese literature, Tang poetry has drawn much attention to its cross-cultural communication and cultural experience. The critical role of cognitive elements in Tang poetry translation is emphasized, such as image, rhyme, and rhythm, in preserving the aesthetic and emotional beauty of the original poem. At the same time, this article also highlights the translator's strategies and choices in translation, and how to deal with cultural differences in translation through creative methods, and puts forward some strategies and suggestions to optimize the translation of Tang poetry, including in-depth understanding of culture, formulating translation norms and improving readers' cultural perception ability. These suggestions aim to promote the dissemination of Tang poetry globally, so that more people can appreciate and understand this literary treasure. The translation of Tang poetry is a challenging task, but it is also a cultural exchange and transmission, and it's believed that through continuous efforts, Tang poetry will continue to shine its unique literary glory in the world.

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Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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