

A Study of English Translation of Vocabulary with Chinese Characteristics in Xi Jinping: The Governance of China III from the Perspective of Eco-translatology

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Abstract: This paper based on Eco-translatology, selects vocabulary with Chinese characteristics in *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China III* from the platform of Learning Power as the research object, and analyzes the translator's adaptation to the eco-environment in the translation process and the translation strategies and methods adopted by translators in three dimension of language, culture and communication on the influence of translation effect. This study finds that the translator needs adapt to the eco-environment from the following aspects: internal and external translation eco-environment, as well as different translation methods and strategies from linguistic, dimension and communicative dimension to produce optimal adaptive selection. This study aims to provide a new theoretical perspective for relevant researches, offer certain enlightenment for the Chinese culture "Going Out" strategy, and provide certain reference for the translation of publicity texts.

Keywords: Eco-translatology, vocabulary with Chinese characteristics, *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China III*

1. Introduction

With the improvement of China's comprehensive national strength and its economy, China's politics and policies have received increasing attention from the outside world. *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China III* reflects the governance policies and guidelines of the new generation of our Chinese Communist Party's collective leadership. And the various expressions in this book are filled with Chinese characteristics. In addition to the general political vocabulary, the book also uses rhetorical devices such as parallelism and repetition to enhance the persuasiveness of language. A large number of poems, proverbs and idioms rich in Chinese culture are also used in this book. These vocabularies with Chinese characteristics put forward higher requirements on the accuracy of the translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China III* and have an influence on the national image and the international relations.

Therefore, guided by the Eco-translatology, this study explores the translation strategies of Eco-translatology in *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China III* from three dimensions: language, culture and communication. The analysis of translated texts from the three dimensions are conducive to showing the accurate translation of vocabulary with Chinese characteristics, reflecting the cultural connotation of translation content, and improving the effectiveness of Chinese cultural communication, as well as establishing China's image as a great power and promoting cultural confidence. In the translation process, translators should combine the vocabularies with Chinese characteristics in the original text with their

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eco-environment and adopt the concept of three-dimensional transformation in Eco-translatology, so that the quality of translation will get improved and Chinese culture will get transmitted as expected.

2. Studies on Eco-translatology

In the 1990s, the study on translation transited from “language” to “culture”, and then entered the stage of interdisciplinary research^[1]. Based on this trend, Hu Gengshen (2001) proposed the concept of “ecological translation studies”, which conducts translation studies from an ecological perspective. Ecological translation emphasizes the shift from the original “adaptation and selection^[2]” to the “three parts of ecology” theory^[3], including “translation in an ecological environment, original and target text translation with ecology, the survival of the translator in eco-environment”, which requires continuous exploration of collaborative symbiosis among text, the translator and the ecological environment. As a result, the ecological perspective of translation studies paradigm was established. The traditional translation studies lack the developing process of text’s inner meaning and structure, such as how they are composed, organized and developed. However, Hu Gengshen (2001) put forward the “four parts of ecology” subsequently, which covering the concept, process, effects and the goal of the Eco-translatology, and exploring the whole process of “transplanting” the text as well as filling the gaps in the traditional translation theory.

Eco-translatology combines the two disciplines of ecology and translatology. The theory of adaptation and selection which proposed by Hu Gengshen emphasizes that translator should follow the principle of multi-dimensional selective adaptation and adaptive selection in the process of translation. Translator should at least try their best to adapt themselves to the eco-environment of translation from three dimensions of language, culture and communication. The essence of Eco-translatology theory is the holistic study of text translation from an ecological perspective. This theory elaborates the interpretive function of “adaptation and selection theory” to translated texts, and its four aspects are followed: First, the translation process -- the alternating cycle of translator adaptation and translator selection; Second, the principle of translation -- multi-dimensional selective adaptation and adaptive selection; The third is the translation method -- “three dimensions”, including the transformation of linguistic dimension, cultural dimension and communicative dimension; The fourth is the evaluation criteria -- multidimensional transformation degree, reader’s feedback and translator ability.

Eco-translatology helps translator translate texts. The concept of “survival of the fittest” proposed by Darwin means that the environment has a selective effect on the lives on earth, and only those lives that adapt to the eco-environment can survive in this environment. The same is true of translation. A translation can only be “appropriate” if readers can have an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the original text through translation and have a better understanding of the thoughts conveyed by the author. Only by following these principles can the translation survive in the ecological environment of translation.

3. Studies on the English Translation of Vocabularies with Chinese Characteristics

It is no doubt that the English translation of vocabularies with Chinese characteristics play an important role on spreading Chinese culture to other countries, which usually could convey China’s development and innovation in politic, economy and culture, and plays a decisive role in China’s external publicity. And translation researches of vocabularies with Chinese characteristics have been gradually appealing in the translation field. For the past few years, a number of scholars have analyzed the translation of vocabularies with Chinese characteristics and expressions from two aspects: news reports and diplomatic documents. Fan Yong confirmed various factors affecting the translation of vocabularies with Chinese characteristics^[4]. Xing Jie and Gan Lu analyzed the translation strategies of vocabularies with Chinese characteristics collected by two magazines *Time* and *The Economist*, and put forward various factors influencing the selection of translation strategies from four aspects: ideology, word characteristics, style conventions and translators’ preferences^[5]. Yang Mingxin believed the problem existed in the diplomatic translation practice was the standard translation of Chinese diplomatic neologisms, which associated with vocabularies with Chinese characteristics^[6]. Therefore, translator needs take into account more factors, including political information and emotional meaning. Wang Kefei and Wang Yinchong pointed out that the difficulty in the translation of vocabularies with Chinese characteristics mainly focused on the phenomenon of “vacancy”^[7]. Tang Yuan analyzed the alienation trend of interpretation in the translation of

vocabularies with Chinese characteristics in President Xi Jinping's speech^[8]. And she also thought the application of alienation strategy to interpreting was more restricted than that of in written translation. Therefore, interpreters should pay more attention to proper principle of alienation strategy in practice.

It can be seen from the above studies that although many scholars have studied the English translation of vocabularies with Chinese characteristics, there are few studies on the translation of vocabularies with Chinese characteristics in *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*. Therefore, more researches are needed on the translation of vocabularies with Chinese characteristics. Based on this, the author of this paper proposes to study the translation of vocabularies with Chinese characteristics in *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China III* into English on the basis of Eco-translatology firstly, explore the characteristics of vocabularies with Chinese characteristics and analyze their translation ecological environment; Secondly, it studies the adaptation and selection of vocabularies with Chinese characteristics into English based on Eco-translatology.

4. Case Analysis

In this section, Eco-translatology is used to explore how translators make adaptive selection to the translational eco-environment and what translation methods are adopted to achieve “the optimal degree of integral adaptation and selection”.

4.1 The Adaptation and Selection of Linguistic Dimension

As the carrier of text information, language is also the major factor that translators should consider in the process of translation. The speeches contain a large number of words, syntax and style with Chinese characteristics. To achieve the purpose of publicity, translators must actively adapt to the target language environment while using foreign expressions. The most basic part of the adaptive selection of linguistic dimension is the semantic conversion, which refers to the process of changing or converting the meaning of words' connotation without changing their forms. However, word meaning conversion is by no means “word to word” translation. It requires translators to carry out comprehensive translation on the basis of grasping the connotations of vocabularies with Chinese characteristics.

Example 1:

SL: 2012 年 11 月, 中共十八大提出, “两个一百年”奋斗目标, 是建设中国特色社会主义的奋斗目标。

TL: The Two Centenary Goals were put forth by the Communist Party of China (CPC) at its 18th National Congress in November 2012 for building socialism with Chinese characteristics^[9].

Translation between the original text and the target language is not a simple word-to-word correspondence, but the meaning of the original text could be transferred accurately in the target language. In this case, “两个一百年” is typically a political abbreviation in Chinese. It refers to two goals that are set to be achieved in two centuries. The two goals are to complete a moderately prosperous society in all respects by the centenary of the CPC (founded in 1921) and to build China into a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, and harmonious by the centenary of the PRC (founded in 1949). However, these numeral abbreviations would be difficult for the target readers to understand without the corresponding cultural background knowledge. In the translation process, translators adopt the method of literal translation to better adapt to the target language and readers in the external translation ecological environment, and translates the “‘两个一百年’ 奋斗目标” into “The Two Centenary Goals” with annotations. The annotations interpret in more detail what “two goals” means.

Example 2:

SL: 必须树立和践行绿水青山就是金山银山的理念, 坚持节约资源和保护环境的基本国策, 像对待生命一样对待生态环境。

TL: We must realize that lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets and act on this understanding, implement our fundamental national policy of conserving resources and protecting the environment, and cherish the environment as we cherish our own lives^[9].

In this sentence, a figurative figure of speech is used to compare “lucid waters and lush mountains to “invaluable assets”. In addition, translators translated “金山银山” into “invaluable assets” instead of “mountains filled with gold and silver”. From the perspective of Eco-translatology, we can see the different expressions between Chinese and English. In

order to better realize information transmission, translators process it into easy-to-understand texts.

In terms of the above four examples, the translators have realized the selective adaptation from the vocabularies with Chinese characteristics to English expressions, and have promoted the translated version to better adapt to the target reader's requirements and the eco-environment through the application of certain translation strategies.

4.2 The Adaptation and Selection of Cultural Dimension

In the process of translation, translators should not only pay attention to the transformation between the source language and the target language, but also concentrate on the overall cultural eco-environment between these two aspects, so as to better convey the cultural connotation of the source language. Therefore, the translator must actively adapt to the eco-environment of the target language in the cultural environment of the source language, and pay attention to the transmission and interpretation of the two cultural connotations. Since the two cultures are different from the form and content, it is necessary to avoid distorting the original text from the cultural point of view of the target language.

Example 1:

SL: 共建“一带一路”倡议源于中国, 但机会和成果属于世界, 中国不打地缘博弈小算盘, 不搞封闭排他小圈子, 不做凌驾于人的强买强卖。

TL: The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) may be China's idea, but its opportunities and outcomes are going to benefit the world. China has no geopolitical motives, seeks no exclusionary blocs, and imposes no business deals on others^[9].

In the target language, The Belt and Road Initiative is translated in a literal way, which is quite intuitive and clear. But in order to help the readers understand better, translators made a deeper explanation after it, that is, the Belt and Road is composed of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. The translation of this phrase adapt to the target language eco-environment in an ideal way through literal translation.

Example 2:

SL: 我们不需要更多的溢美之词, 我们一贯欢迎客观的介绍和有益的建议, 正所谓“不要人夸颜色好, 只留清气满乾坤”。

TL: We do not need lavish praise from others. But we do welcome objective reporting and constructive suggestions, for this is our motto, “Not bent on praise for its bright colors, but on leaving its fragrance to all”^[9].”

In this example, “不要人夸颜色好, 只留清气满乾坤” comes from a poetry written by Wang Mian of Yuan Dynasty, which indicates the expression of the poet and his attitude towards life with a noble sentiment. Considering the rhetorical characteristics of the source language, the translators translate “不要人夸颜色好, 只留清气满乾坤” into “Not bent on praise for its bright colors, but on leaving its fragrance to all” by adopting the imperative sentence and the translation method of free translation, which not only expresses the refined beauty and noble character of both the blossom and poet, but also makes the target readers understand its meaning better. At the same time, “bent” “praise” and “leave” are also used by the translators to express the personified meaning in the original text, which is an optimally adaptive selection of eco-environment in the target language.

4.3 The Adaptation and Selection of Communicative Dimension

The transformation in communicative dimension emphasizes the realization of the communicative purpose of the source language. Thus, in this dimension, translator needs ensure that the communicative purpose is conveyed throughout the translation activity. *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China III* is a typical government document that reflects China's foreign policy and presents China's image, and vocabularies with Chinese characteristics have the same effects. Therefore, translator needs to be careful to avoid misunderstandings of words and achieve communicative purposes properly.

Example 1:

SL: 坚定不移贯彻新发展理念（创新、协调、绿色、开放、共享的发展理念），坚决端正发展观念、转变发展方式，发展质量和效益不断提升。

TL: We have remained committed to the new development philosophy (concept of innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development), adopted the right approach to development, and endeavored to transform the growth model. The result has been a constant improvement in the quality and effect of development^[9].

In this example, translators do not directly translate “新发展理念” into the new development concept, that is, if there is no detailed annotation, the reader will feel overwhelmed. In order to achieve better communication, translators do not just focus on the literal meaning of the words but explain with connotations, so that target readers would understand it more easily. In order to promote a profound communication between translator and reader and adapt to the translational eco-environment, translators translate “新发展理念” into “concept of innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development” with explanation. In this way, the connotative meaning of this word expressed is more understandable to the readers.

Example 2:

SL: 把坚持以人民为中心的发展思想贯穿到“五位一体”总体布局和“四个全面”战略布局之中。

TL: The people-centered approach should be integrated into the Five-sphere Integrated Plan and the Four-pronged Comprehensive Strategy^[9].

From the perspective of Eco-translatology, translators explained these two political terminology by literal translation with connotation. In English, “sphere” means “an area of activity, influence or interest; a particular section of society” and “strategy” means “the process of planning something or putting a plan into operation in a skillful way”. Thus, using these two words can express the connotative meaning of source language. In addition, considering the concise form and political feature of source language, as well as target readers, translators follow the linguistic structure of source language and translate “五位一体” into “The Five-sphere Integrated Plan” and “四个全面” into “The Four-pronged Comprehensive Strategy” by literal translation. And the specific content is explained in the endnote, presenting Chinese political connotation and successfully transmitting information.

5. Conclusion

Eco-translatology is committed to the translator’s selective adaptation and adaptive selection to the whole translational eco-environment, including source language, target language, culture, readers and so on. Based on this theory, the translator needs adapt to the eco-environment from the following aspects: firstly, the translator needs adapt to internal translation eco-environment, such as the translation ability, professional skills and communication skills; secondly, the translator needs adopt to the external eco-environment translation, including original language, target readers, culture. Translator should pay more attention to whether the target text adapts to readers’ cultural eco-environment and whether the target text can be easily understood in different cultures when converting the source text into the target language. In this way, interpreting the original text is the optimal choice. In addition, it is necessary for the translator to master translation methods, accumulate knowledge in various fields, and understand the cultural characteristics and social environment of other countries and our own nation. Only in this way vocabularies with Chinese characteristics would be translated more accurately, and Chinese culture would be introduced to the outside world in a more comprehensive and precise way.

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